

# Senate OKs teacher tenure bill

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — A major bill requiring periodic evaluations of Ohio's public school teachers but also protecting them from arbitrary dismissals cleared the Ohio Senate 26-6 Tuesday.

Some relatively minor amendments sent the measure back to the House where Rep. Michael P. Stinziano, D-30 Columbus, the chief sponsor, predicted final approval today.

The measure then goes to Gov. James A. Rhodes, who vetoed a similar bill last session. Aides declined to speculate on the governor's action this time, although the bill is considerably less stringent than the earlier proposal and aimed more at compromise.

Sen. Kinsey Milleson (D-Freeport) voted for the bill. "It's very clear to me that in my district we only have three out of 28 school districts that have contracts to provide for evaluation," he said.

"And I think that the evaluation is a very strong part of the bill. It does two things. It not only provides the teacher some security but it's

also a vehicle to get rid of a bad teacher. I think teachers should be evaluated and properly done and it's not presently being done."

The teacher evaluation bill, despite heated objections from some Republicans, picked up bipartisan support on the final roll call.

Five Republicans joined the Senate's 21 Democrats in support of the legislation. They were Minority Leader Michael J. Maloney, R-7 Cincinnati, Oakley C. Collins, R-17 Ironton, Paul E. Gillmor, R-2 Port Clinton, Sam Speck, R-20 New Concord, and Walter L. White, R-12 Lima.

Under the measure, every school district would have to adopt a procedure to evaluate teachers no later than March 1, 1978. Beginning teachers would have to be evaluated twice in their first year, and others once a year except for those on continuing contracts who would undergo the process every other year.

The bill was carried in the upper chamber by Sen. Anthony J. Celebrezze Jr., D-25 Cleveland, who noted it provides three grounds for dismissal—ineffectiveness in the classroom,

failure to perform contractual duties, and gross immoral conduct.

The first two criteria would be subject to interpretation by the school board, while gross immoral conduct is defined in the bill as that which "has an adverse impact on such employee's competent performance of assigned contractual duties or upon the operation of the school district."

The second major part of the bill provides due process rights for teachers, based on the individual contracts held by them. Certain actions would be required when a school board made a decision not to renew a teacher's contract.

A first-year, probationary teacher would be required to be told in writing of a decision not to renew, and he or she then could ask for a meeting with the school superintendent.

Teachers on probationary contracts with more than one year of service could request a hearing before the school board, but the board's decision would be final.

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Those on limited contracts, with more than three years' service but lacking continuing education requirements spelled out in the bill (18 semester hours since initial employment), could request a hearing before an impartial referee whose decision would be advisory to the school board.

Continuing contract teachers, having met the educational requirements and having completed three years in the same system, would get a hearing before a referee whose decision would be binding on the school board.

Both parties, in the case of continuing contract teachers, would have the right to carry appeals to the courts of common pleas.

In other action Tuesday, the House approved 66-25 and sent the Senate a far-reaching measure that expands eligibility for unemployment benefits across the state. Rep. J. Leonard Camera, D-53 Lorain, said the bill is needed to comply Ohio benefits with federal standards.

Groups which would qualify for jobless pay, if the Senate and governor go along with the bill, include substitute teachers, employes at private schools, unclassified public employes, and some agricultural workers at large farming operations.

The Senate, in other matters, added its approval 26-6 to a House bill creating an eight-member legislative committee to make unannounced visits to Ohio's correctional institutions. Overcrowding, food and charges or brutality would be among problems the group could investigate.