

1 State of Arkansas  
2 85th General Assembly  
3 First Extraordinary Session, 2006  
4

# A Bill

Call Item 6

HOUSE BILL 1031

5 By: Representatives J. Johnson, Medley  
6 By: Senator Higginbothom  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF  
11 EDUCATION RECOGNIZE ANNUALLY AN ARKANSAS STATE  
12 TEACHER OF THE YEAR AND RECOGNIZE THAT THE  
13 TEACHER SHALL BE PLACED ON ADMINISTRATIVE PAID  
14 LEAVE FOR ONE YEAR TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL  
15 DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ASSISTANCE; AND FOR OTHER  
16 PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

18 THE ARKANSAS TEACHER OF THE YEAR ACT.  
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
23

24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 17, is amended to add an  
25 additional subchapter to read as follows:

26 6-17-2501. Title.

27 This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas  
28 Teacher Of The Year Act."

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30 6-17-2502. Definitions.

31 (a) As used in this section:

32 (1) "Classroom teacher" means a person who:

33 (A) Is required to be licensed under § 6-17-401 et seq.;

34 (B) Is engaged directly in instruction with students in a  
35 classroom setting for more than seventy percent (70%) of the person's  
36 contracted time; and



1                   (C) Is not a guidance counselor or librarian;

2                   (2) "In residence" means working exclusively with the Department  
 3 of Education at a location agreed upon between the department and the teacher  
 4 of the year;

5                   (3) "Superintendent" means the executive officer of a school  
 6 district board of directors directing the affairs of the school district and  
 7 teaching not more than one-half (1/2) of the time in the school day; and

8                   (4) "School district board of directors" means the local  
 9 board of directors of a school district which are duly elected and qualified  
 10 to hold office pursuant to §6-13-604 et seq.

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 12                   6-17-2503. Teacher of the Year Program.

13                   (a)(1) The Department of Education shall develop a process for  
 14 selecting the Arkansas teacher of the year.

15                   (2) This process shall work in conjunction with and in support  
 16 of the process for selecting a national teacher of the year.

17                   (b) The process shall allow that each Arkansas school district board  
 18 of directors may submit a single applicant for the Arkansas teacher of the  
 19 year.

20                   (c) The applicants shall be reduced to sixteen (16) finalists  
 21 representing one (1) applicant for each of the fifteen (15) education service  
 22 areas and one (1) applicant for school districts in Pulaski County.

23                   (d) In submitting an application for Arkansas teacher of the year, a  
 24 school district agrees that if its applicant is selected, the district shall  
 25 place the teacher on paid administrative leave for the school year  
 26 immediately following his or her selection, as provided in § 6-17-2504.

27                   (e) While on paid administrative leave, the Arkansas teacher of the  
 28 year shall:

29                   (1) work in residence with the Department of Education to:

30                   (A) Create professional development programs for other  
 31 teachers;

32                   (B) Provide educational technical assistance to students  
 33 and teachers statewide;

34                   (C) Enhance the Arkansas teacher of the year program; and

35                   (D) Enhance the quality of elementary and secondary  
 36 education in Arkansas; and

1           (2) Represent the state in the national teacher of the year  
2 competition.

3           (f) During the school year in which a school district’s teacher of the  
4 year is on paid administrative leave, the department shall reimburse the  
5 school district as provided in § 6-17-2505.

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7           6-17-2504. School district responsibility.

8           (a) Each school district whose applicant is selected as Arkansas  
9 teacher of the year shall place that teacher on paid administrative leave for  
10 the school year immediately following the teacher’s selection as Arkansas  
11 teacher of the year for the time period that the teacher actually serves as  
12 the Arkansas teacher of the year.

13           (b) The teacher shall be entitled to return to her or his former  
14 employment with the school district for the school year following the paid  
15 administrative leave provided pursuant to this section.

16           (c) The school district shall be responsible for providing a  
17 replacement teacher or restructuring class loads during the school year in  
18 which the teacher selected as Arkansas teacher of the year is on  
19 administrative leave.

20           (d) Any school district that employs a substitute teacher to replace a  
21 teacher of the year shall not be subject to any earning limitations set in  
22 place by law or the Arkansas teacher retirement system.

23           (e) Each school district classroom teacher contract shall reflect the  
24 administrative leave provisions of this section for any teacher selected as  
25 Arkansas teacher of the year.

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27           6-17-2505. Department of Education responsibility.

28           (a) During the school year in which a school district’s teacher of the  
29 year is on paid administrative leave, the Department of Education shall  
30 reimburse the school district for:

31                   (1) The teacher’s salary and benefits; and

32                   (2)(A) Incidental expenses incurred by a teacher of the year as  
33 a result of his or her participation in the teacher of the year program.

34                   (B) All incidental expenses shall be approved by the  
35 department.

36           (b) The Department of Education shall be responsible for the

1 reimbursement of any incidental expenses incurred by the teacher of the year  
2 during the implementation of the program for the current year.

3 (c) The department may receive private donations, grants or other  
4 forms of assistance to help fund any aspect of the Arkansas teacher of the  
5 year program.

6 (d) The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules as necessary  
7 to administer the provisions of this section.

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9 6-17-2506. Non-voting member of the State Board of Education.

10 (a) While serving as Arkansas Teacher of the Year, the teacher of the  
11 year shall also serve in an advisory position as a non-voting member to the  
12 Arkansas State Board of Education.

13 (b) The Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall provide a written advisory  
14 report to the State Board of Education on how to better provide teacher  
15 professional development and student instruction assistance for Arkansas  
16 public school teachers.

17 (c) The Arkansas Teacher of the Year shall not be entitled to any  
18 compensation or per-diem for serving as a non-voting member of the state  
19 board.

20 (d) As a non-voting member of the state board, the Arkansas teacher of  
21 the year shall be immune from any liability with regard to any act or  
22 omission of the state board.

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24 SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
25 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the Arkansas Supreme Court  
26 found that the public school funding system continues to be inadequate and  
27 the public schools are operating under a constitutional infirmity which must  
28 be corrected immediately; that direct quality teacher instruction and quality  
29 professional teacher development are among those necessary core components  
30 for an adequate education; that the General Assembly has determined that the  
31 provisions of this act are in compliance with the mandate of the Arkansas  
32 Supreme Court; and that the provisions of this act must be implemented  
33 immediately for the good of public school students in Arkansas. Therefore,  
34 an emergency is declared to exist and this act being necessary for the  
35 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective  
36 on:

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(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

APPROVED: 4/11/2006