

"AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE COMMISSION ON TEACHING EXCELLENCE;
TO PROVIDE THAT THERE SHALL BE CONDUCTED ANNUALLY AN ACADEMY
FOR TEACHERS EXCELLENCE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Purpose. The purpose of this Act is to improve classroom instruction in the Arkansas public schools by upgrading the skills of classroom teachers and school principals through the development of a cadre of teachers and principals who have been exposed to exemplary teaching methodology, most recent educational research and enriched academic offerings.

SECTION 2. There is hereby created the "Commission on Teaching Excellence". The Commission shall consist of twenty-one (21) members of whom at least a majority must be practicing classroom teachers. The Governor shall appoint the members of the Commission for three (3) year terms, except that of those first appointed, seven (7) shall be appointed for terms of one (1) year, seven shall be appointed for terms of two (2) years, and seven (7) shall be appointed for terms of three (3) years. Vacancies which leave unexpired terms shall be filled in the regular manner for the unexpired period of time, and vacancies as a result of expiration of terms shall be filled in the regular manner for three (3) year periods. A member may be eligible for reappointment for one (1) additional term. The Commission shall annually elect its own chairman and vice-chairman. The State Board of Education shall provide meeting facilities and staff services to the Commission.

SECTION 3. There shall be conducted annually, after June 1 and before September 1, an Academy for Teaching Excellence. The Commission shall, in consultation with the State Board of Education, develop the curriculum of the Academy and select the instructors and participants. Any public school teacher or principal in the state may apply to the Commission for consideration as a participant or be nominated by a member of the Commission. The Commission shall establish criteria for the selection of outstanding teachers and principals to participate in the Academy. The State Board of Education in consultation with the Commission may establish a stipend which may be paid to each participant and may negotiate with a higher education institution or institutions for graduate credit to be given to participants.

SECTION 4. The participants at the Academy shall as part of the training experience assist the Commission and the State Board of Education in planning how participants may share the benefits of this program with other teachers and principals in the state. Such plans shall include, but not be limited to, helping conduct staff development sessions in local school districts, regional, and area meetings and in a two-day statewide teacher instructional session. Academy trained participants, who participate in local, area or regional meetings, shall be reimbursed for their actual expenses incurred in attending the meetings and may be granted an honorarium as determined by the State Board of Education.

SECTION 5. The Commission on Teaching Excellence in cooperation with the State Department of Education shall annually file a written report with the Joint Interim Committee on Education detailing the activities of the

Commission, the Academy, and follow-up activities in local school districts and at the two-day statewide instructional session.

SECTION 6. In addition to any other rights, powers, functions and duties herein granted the Commission, the Commission is hereby authorized to promote and cooperate in the establishment under the Arkansas non-profit corporation laws of a Teaching Excellence Foundation, to share resources and facilities with the foundation and to accept support and assistance in the form of money, property or otherwise from the foundation to be used to promote the Academy for Teaching Excellence of the State. The Commission may utilize the Arkansas Community Foundation as their fiscal agent.

SECTION 7. If a Teaching Excellence Foundation is established and the Commission shares resources or facilities with the Foundation or accepts support or assistance from the Foundation, the Foundation shall annually file a report with the Governor, the Legislative Council and the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee showing the amount and source of all gifts, grants and donations of money or property received by the Foundation and all expenditures or other dispositions of money or property by the Foundation during the preceding year.

SECTION 8. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

APPROVED: April 8, 1987
