

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

Act 969 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas
2 87th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2009
4

As Engrossed: S3/26/09

A Bill

SENATE BILL 980

5 By: Senator Crumbly
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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES FOR
10 TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN HIGH-
11 PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS; TO EQUALIZE TEACHER
12 SALARIES BETWEEN HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
13 AND HIGHER PAYING SURROUNDING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN
14 ARKANSAS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
15

Subtitle

16 TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES FOR
17 TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION AND
18 EQUALIZE TEACHER SALARIES IN HIGH-
19 PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS.
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23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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25 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-17-811 is amended to read as follows:
26 6-17-811. Incentives for teacher recruitment and retention in high-
27 priority districts.

28 (a)(1) As used in this section:

29 (A) "High-priority district" means a public school district:

30 (i) In which eighty percent (80%) or more of public
31 school students are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program
32 under the National School Lunch Act based on the October 1 student count of
33 the previous year submitted to the Department of Education; and

34 (ii)(a) That Except as provided by subdivision
35 (a)(1)(A)(ii)(b) of this section, that had a three-quarter average daily



1 membership in the previous year of one thousand (1,000) or fewer students+.

2 (b) In order to further the state's policy of
 3 encouraging efficiency and the expansion of available course offerings that
 4 might be achieved through the voluntary consolidation or annexation of school
 5 districts, qualifying teachers in the resulting school district in an
 6 approved voluntary consolidation under §6-13-1404(a)(2) or § 6-13-1603(a) or
 7 in a receiving district in an approved voluntary annexation under §6-13-
 8 1403(a)(2)-(4) or § 6-13-1603(a) shall continue to receive the funding
 9 provided under this section if all school districts in the voluntary
 10 consolidation or annexation were high-priority districts in the immediately
 11 preceding school year, even if the average daily membership of the resulting
 12 or receiving school district is one thousand (1,000) or above.

13 (c) By April 15 of each year, the State Board
 14 of Education shall determine the districts that qualify as high-priority
 15 districts of the state;

16 ~~(B)-(i)~~(3)(A) "New teacher bonus" means an incentive bonus
 17 provided under subdivisions (b)(1)-(3) of this section to a teacher ~~that~~ who
 18 is within the first three (3) years of employment with a single high-priority
 19 district.

20 ~~(ii)~~(B) A teacher is not entitled to receive a new teacher
 21 bonus from any high-priority district other than the high-priority district
 22 that first employed the teacher and paid the teacher a new teacher bonus;

23 ~~(C)~~(4) "Previous year" means the school year immediately
 24 preceding the present school year;

25 ~~(D)~~(5) "Retention bonus" means an incentive bonus provided under
 26 subdivision (b)(4) or subdivision (b)(5) of this section; and

27 ~~(E)-(i)~~ (6)(A) "Teacher" means a ~~certified~~ licensed classroom
 28 teacher who spends seventy percent (70%) of his or her time working directly
 29 with students in a classroom setting teaching all grade-level or subject-
 30 matter appropriate classes.

31 ~~(ii)~~(B) "Teacher" includes a guidance ~~counselors and~~
 32 ~~librarians~~ counselor or librarian.

33 ~~(2) The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules to~~
 34 ~~determine high-priority districts of the state.~~

35 (b) ~~Beginning in the 2007-2008 school year and each school year~~
 36 ~~thereafter,~~ At the end of the school year and upon completion of a licensed

1 ~~teacher's contracted teaching obligations,~~ a teacher ~~licensed by the state~~
2 ~~board who enters into a teaching contract and~~ who completes the entire
3 current school year teaching in a high-priority district ~~shall at the end of~~
4 ~~the school year and upon completion of his or her contracted teaching~~
5 ~~obligations be~~ may be entitled to receive in addition to all other contracted
6 salary and benefits:

7 (1) For a newly hired teacher who has not previously taught in a
8 high-priority district, a ~~one (1) time~~ one-time signing bonus of ~~four~~
9 ~~thousand dollars (\$4,000)~~ five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the first year
10 of service in the high-priority district, to be paid upon completion of the
11 full year of teaching;

12 (2) For a newly hired teacher who meets the requirements of
13 subdivision (b)(1) of this section, who continues to teach in the same high-
14 priority district, and who completes the second full year of contracted
15 teaching obligations, a new teacher bonus ~~in the amount of three thousand~~
16 ~~dollars (\$3,000)~~ four thousand dollars (\$4,000) in addition to all other
17 contracted salary and benefits;

18 (3) For a teacher who meets the requirements of subdivisions
19 (b)(1) and (2) of this section, who continues to teach in the same high-
20 priority district, and who completes a third year of contracted teaching
21 obligations, a new teacher bonus of ~~three thousand dollars (\$3,000)~~ four
22 thousand dollars (\$4,000) in addition to all other contracted salary and
23 benefits;

24 (4) For a teacher who meets the requirements of subdivisions
25 (b)(1)-(3) of this section, who enters his or her fourth or subsequent year
26 of service with the same high-priority district or begins employment with a
27 high-priority district other than the high-priority district where he or she
28 was employed at the time he or she received a new teacher bonus under
29 subdivisions (b)(1)-(3) of this section, a retention bonus ~~in the amount of~~
30 ~~two thousand dollars (\$2,000)~~ three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for the fourth
31 and each subsequent complete year of service in the high-priority district,
32 to be paid at the end of the school year after completing all contractual
33 obligations; and

34 (5) For a teacher employed in a high-priority district who does
35 not meet the requirements of subdivisions (b)(1)-(3) of this section, a
36 retention bonus ~~in the amount of two thousand dollars (\$2,000)~~ three thousand

1 dollars (\$3,000) for each complete year of service in the high-priority
2 district, to be paid at the end of the school year after completing all
3 contractual obligations.

4 (c)(1) ~~No~~ A teacher shall not be entitled to a bonus provided under
5 this section unless the teacher has fulfilled his or her contractual
6 obligations for the current school year.

7 (2) The superintendent of the high-priority district where
8 the teacher is employed shall certify in writing to the department that the
9 teacher has completed all contractual obligations for the school year.

10 ~~(d) Any bonus pay awarded under this section to eligible full-~~
11 ~~time equivalent teachers who do not work the entire school year shall be pro~~
12 ~~rated based on the portion of the school year that the eligible teacher was~~
13 ~~employed by the high priority district.~~

14 ~~(e)(d)~~ The department shall:

15 (1) Monitor the implementation of the incentive program
16 established by this section;

17 (2) Collect data to be used to evaluate the incentive program's
18 effectiveness; and

19 (3) Promulgate any necessary rules to administer the
20 *requirements of this teacher recruitment and retention program.*

21 (e)(1) The bonus amounts provided under this section are the maximum
22 amounts to be paid to qualifying teachers in high-priority districts, and are
23 subject to the appropriation and availability of funding for the payment of
24 the bonuses.

25 (2) If the funds appropriated and available for the payment of
26 the bonuses under this section are insufficient to pay the maximum bonus
27 amounts to each qualifying teacher, the Department of Education shall
28 distribute the available funding to qualified teachers on a pro rata basis.

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30 SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
31 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that there are school districts in
32 economically depressed and low property-wealth areas of the state that face
33 difficulties competing with surrounding, geographically close school
34 districts with regard to teacher salaries and that this makes it difficult
35 for districts in such economically depressed and low property-wealth areas to
36 recruit and retain qualified teachers; that this act will provide assistance

1 to those high-priority districts to assist them in recruiting and retaining
2 such teachers; and that this act is immediately necessary to provide that
3 assistance for the 2009-2010 school year. Therefore, an emergency is
4 declared to exist and this act being immediately necessary for the
5 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective
6 on July 1, 2009.

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/s/ Crumbly

APPROVED: 4/6/2009