

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.

State of Arkansas

As Engrossed: H2/28/01 H3/7/01

83rd General Assembly

## A Bill

Regular Session, 2001

HOUSE BILL 1938

By: Representatives Cook, C. Johnson, Broadway, Ledbetter, W. Walker, *Bond, Bookout, Cleveland, Dees, Fite, Green, Jacobs, G. Jeffress, Oglesby, Seawel, Salmon, Thomas, Weaver, White*

By: Senators D. Malone, Mahony, Argue, Brown, Riggs, *J. Jeffress*

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE *GOVERNOR'S DISTINGUISHED TEACHING SCHOLARS* PROGRAM; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

AN ACT TO CREATE THE *GOVERNOR'S DISTINGUISHED TEACHING SCHOLARS* PROGRAM.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

6-82-1501. Title.

This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program Act of 2001."

6-82-1502. Definitions.

For purposes of this subchapter:

(1) "Five-year teacher education program" means a program within a regionally accredited institution of Higher Education in Arkansas that will lead to obtaining a teacher certification and designed for completion in five (5) years with an award of a master's degree in education.

(2) "Four-year teacher education program" means a program within a regionally accredited institution of higher education in Arkansas that will lead to obtaining a teacher certification and designed for completion in four

1 (4) years with an award of a baccalaureate degree in education.

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3 6-82-1503. Creation - Purpose.

4 (a)(1) There is created the Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars  
5 Program.

6 (2) Recipients of the forgivable loans funded through this  
7 program shall be known as Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars.

8 (b) The Governor's Distinguished Teaching Schools Program shall be used  
9 to provide a four-year forgivable loan if the recipient is in a four-year  
10 teacher education program, or a five-year forgivable loan if the recipient is  
11 in a five-year teacher education program, in the amount of six thousand five  
12 hundred dollars (\$6,500) per year to an Arkansas high school senior who  
13 express a desire to prepare to teach in the public schools of the state.

14 (c) Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars should be exposed to a  
15 range of extra-curricular activities while in college. These activities  
16 should be geared to instilling a strong motivation not only to remain in  
17 teaching but to provide leadership for tomorrow's schools.

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19 6-82-1504. Administration of and authority of the Department of Higher  
20 Education.

21 (a) The Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program shall be  
22 administered by the Department of Higher Education.

23 (b) The Department of Higher Education shall adopt very stringent  
24 standards, including minimum grade point average and scholastic aptitude test  
25 scores, for awarding these forgivable loans to ensure that only high school  
26 seniors with the best potential for success receive a forgivable loan.

27 (c) The Department of Higher Education shall administer the program in  
28 cooperation with teacher training institutions selected by the Department of  
29 Higher Education.

30 (d) The requirements of this subchapter are contingent on the funding  
31 available for the Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program.

32 (e) The Department of Higher Education is authorized to determine the  
33 necessary procedures for the awarding of forgivable loans should the number of  
34 eligible applicants and recipients exceed the funds available.

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36 6-82-1505. Eligibility.

1       (a) Any student receiving an Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars  
2 forgivable loan shall meet the eligibility requirements for an academic  
3 challenge scholarship, excluding the financial need requirements.

4       (b) The Department of Higher Education shall develop rules and  
5 regulations for the following selection procedure:

6               (1) High school students shall complete their application forms  
7 and return the forms and three (3) sealed references to their high school  
8 principal on or before the application deadline;

9               (2)(A) The school counselor shall receive and prepare the student  
10 application for the screening committee;

11                       (B)(i) Preparing the student application involves  
12 completing the scholastic profile and filling out a composite form;

13                               (ii) The profile criteria and composite form shall be  
14 developed by the Department of Education;

15               (3) Counselors shall forward all applicant files to the  
16 chairperson of the School District Screening Committee;

17               (4) The School District Screening Committee chairperson shall  
18 schedule writing and interview sessions for all applicants to be completed by  
19 the deadline set by the Department of Higher Education;

20               (5) The School District Screening Committee shall interview and  
21 assess all applicants;

22               (6) The School District Screening Committee shall rank  
23 applicant's potential and the school principal must approve the rankings based  
24 on the application, composite, and student profile;

25               (7) All applicant files shall be forwarded to the Governor's  
26 Distinguished Teaching Scholars Commission by the deadline set by the  
27 Department of Higher Education;

28               (8) The Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Commission  
29 shall review all of the district composites and announce the teaching fellows  
30 awards by the deadline set by the Department of Higher Education.

31       (c) The Department of Higher Education and the review committees shall  
32 make an effort to identify and encourage minority students and students who  
33 may not otherwise consider a career in teaching to enter the program.

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35       6-82-1506. Duration - Amount - Repayment.

36       (a)(1) The Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program shall be

1 used to provide a four-year forgivable loan if the *recipient* is in a four-year  
2 teacher education program, or a five-year forgivable loan if the *recipient* is  
3 in a five-year teacher education program, in the amount of six thousand five  
4 hundred dollars (\$6,500) per year for Arkansas high school seniors who express  
5 a desire to prepare to teach in the public schools of the state.

6 (2)(A) No student shall receive a forgivable loan that, when  
7 totalled with all other sources of student financial assistance, exceeds the  
8 cost of attendance at the institution to be attended.

9 (B) Recipients of Governor's Distinguished Scholarships are  
10 prohibited from receiving an *Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars*  
11 forgivable loan.

12 (C) No student shall be allowed to participate in more than  
13 one (1) forgivable loan program supported with state money.

14 (3) Loan recipients shall execute a note made payable to the  
15 Department of Higher Education that shall bear interest at the rate of ten  
16 percent (10%) per year beginning September 1 after completion of the program,  
17 or immediately after termination of the scholarship loan, whichever is  
18 earlier.

19 (4) The scholarship loan may be terminated by the recipient  
20 withdrawing from school, by the recipient not meeting the standards set by the  
21 Department of Higher Education, or other reasons as designated by the  
22 Department of Higher Education.

23 (b)(1) This subsection (b) shall apply to loan recipients who receive a  
24 four (4) year forgivable loan and who complete a four-year teacher education  
25 program.

26 (2) The Department of Higher Education shall forgive the loan if  
27 within seven (7) years after graduation, the recipient teaches full-time for  
28 four (4) years at an Arkansas public school. Upon annual certification by an  
29 appropriate school official, the loan shall be forgiven at a rate of one-  
30 fourth (1/4) and related interest, for each year the recipient is employed as  
31 a full-time teacher to a maximum of four (4) years, when the total loan and  
32 accumulated interest will be forgiven.

33 (3) The Department of Higher Education shall forgive the loan if  
34 within seven (7) years after graduation, the recipient teaches full-time for  
35 three (3) years at an Arkansas public school that has been designated by the  
36 Department of Education as being in academic distress or as having a

geographically critical shortage of teachers. Upon annual certification by an appropriate school official, the loan shall be forgiven at a rate of one-third (1/3) and related interest, for each year the recipient is employed as a full-time teacher in a school designated by the Department of Education as being in academic distress or as having a geographically critical shortage of teachers to a maximum of three (3) years, when the total loan and accumulated interest will be forgiven.

(4) The Department of Higher Education shall also forgive the loan if it finds that it is impossible for the recipient to teach for four (4) years within seven (7) years after graduation at an Arkansas public school, because of the death or permanent disability of the recipient.

(c)(1) This subsection (c) shall apply to loan recipients who receive a five (5) year forgivable loan and who complete a five-year teacher education program.

(2) The Department of Higher Education shall forgive the loan if within eight (8) years after graduation, the recipient teaches full-time for five (5) years at an Arkansas public school. Upon annual certification by an appropriate school official, the loan shall be forgiven at a rate of one-fifth (1/5) and related interest, for each year the recipient is employed as a full-time teacher in a public school in Arkansas to a maximum of five (5) years, when the total loan and accumulated interest will be forgiven.

(3) The Department of Higher Education shall forgive the loan if within seven (7) years after graduation, the recipient teaches for four (4) years at an Arkansas public school that has been designated by the Department of Education as being in academic distress or as having a geographically critical shortage of teachers. Upon annual certification by an appropriate school official, the loan shall be forgiven at a rate of one-fourth (1/4) and related interest, for each year the recipient is employed as a full-time teacher in a school district designated by the Department of Education as being in academic distress or as having a geographically critical shortage of teachers to a maximum of four (4) years, when the total loan and accumulated interest will be forgiven.

(4) The Department of Higher Education shall also forgive the loan if it finds that it is impossible for the recipient to teach for four (4) years within seven (7) years after graduation because of the death or permanent disability of the recipient.

1        (d) Loan recipients required to repay loans as provided in subsection  
2 (b) and (c) of this section who fail to meet their repayment obligations may  
3 have added to their total obligation any costs for collection of the debt and  
4 shall have their teaching license in Arkansas revoked by the State Board of  
5 Education.

6        (e)(1) All funds appropriated to or otherwise received by the  
7 Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program for forgivable loans, all  
8 funds received as repayment of forgivable loans, and all interest earned on  
9 these funds, shall be placed in a revolving fund.

10        (2) This revolving fund shall be used for forgivable loans  
11 granted under the Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program.

12        (3) With the prior approval of the General Assembly, the  
13 revolving fund may also be used for campus and summer program support, and  
14 costs related to disbursement of awards and collection of loan repayments.

15        (f) The Department of Higher Education, as administrator for the  
16 Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program, may use up to fifty  
17 thousand dollars (\$50,000) annually from the fund balance for costs associated  
18 with administration of the Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program.  
19 These funds are in addition to funds required for collection costs related to  
20 loan repayments.

21  
22        SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, is amended to add an  
23 additional subchapter to read as follows:

24        6-82-1601. (a)(1) There is established The Governor's Distinguished  
25 Teaching Scholars Commission.

26        (2) The Department of Higher Education shall provide staff and  
27 office space to the commission.

28        (b) The commission shall consist of eleven (11) nonlegislative members  
29 as follows:

30        (1) The Lieutenant Governor, or his designee;

31        (2) The Chairman of the State Board of Education, or his or her  
32 designee;

33        (3) Three (3) persons appointed by the Governor;

34        (4) Three (3) persons appointed the President Pro Tempore of the  
35 Senate; and

36        (5) Three (3) persons appointed by the Speaker of the House of

1 Representatives.

2 (c) Terms of commission members appointed under this section expire on  
3 June 30 of the year of expiration.

4 (1) In 2001, three (3) members shall be appointed by the Speaker  
5 of the House of Representatives as follows:

6 (A) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2003;

7 (B) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2004; and

8 (C) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2005.

9 (2) In 2001, three (3) members shall be appointed by the  
10 President Pro Tempore of the Senate as follows:

11 (A) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2003;

12 (B) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2004; and

13 (C) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2005.

14 (3) In 2001, three (3) members shall be appointed by the Governor  
15 as follows:

16 (A) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2003;

17 (B) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2004; and

18 (C) One (1) for a term to expire June 30, 2005.

19 (4) Subsequent appointments are for a term of four (4) years.

20 (d)(1) Each of the appointing entities shall seek to achieve a balanced  
21 membership representing, to the maximum extent possible, the state as a whole.

22 (2) The commission members shall be chosen from among individuals  
23 who have demonstrated a commitment to education.

24 (e) In the event a vacancy occurs for any reason, the vacancy shall be  
25 filled by appointment by the entity that made the appointment. The new  
26 appointee shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

27 (f) The Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee shall serve as  
28 chairman.

29 (g) The commission shall meet regularly at times and places the  
30 chairman deems necessary.

31 (h)(1) The commission shall be charged with the duty of promoting the  
32 Governor's Distinguished Teaching Scholars Program and of encouraging  
33 participation by high school students.

34 (2) The commission shall select the recipients of the Governor's  
35 Distinguished Teaching Scholars forgivable loans.

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*/s/ Cook, et al.*