

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.

1 State of Arkansas
2 85th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2005

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1982

4
5 By: Representative Mahony
6
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO EXPAND THE STATE TEACHER ASSISTED
10 RESOURCE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS TO
11 TEACHERS RETURNING TO COLLEGE TO RECEIVE AN
12 ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
13

Subtitle

14
15 AN ACT TO EXPAND THE STATE TEACHER
16 ASSISTED RESOURCE PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE
17 SCHOLARSHIPS TO TEACHERS RETURNING TO
18 COLLEGE.
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
22

23 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-81-1507 is amended to read as follows:
24 6-81-1507. State Teacher Assistance Resource Commission.

25 (a) There is established a commission to be known as the State Teacher
26 Assistance Resource Commission.

27 (b) The commission shall consist of eleven (11) members as follows:

28 (1) The Lieutenant Governor, or his or her designee;

29 (2) The chair of the State Board of Education, or his or her
30 designee;

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

32 (4) Three (3) persons appointed by the President Pro Tempore of
33 the Senate; and

34 (5) Three (3) persons appointed by the Speaker of the House of
35 Representatives.

36 (c) The appointed commission members shall be:



1 (1) Individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to education;
2 and

3 (2) Residents of the State of Arkansas at the time of
4 appointment and throughout their terms.

5 (d) Appointments are for a term of four (4) years.

6 (e)(1) If, for any reason, a vacancy occurs in an appointed position,
7 the vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the official that made the
8 appointment.

9 (2) The new appointee shall serve for the remainder of the
10 unexpired term.

11 (f) The Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee shall serve as
12 chair.

13 (g)(1) The commission shall meet at times and places the chair deems
14 necessary, but no meetings shall be held outside of the State of Arkansas.

15 (2) A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute
16 a quorum for the purpose of transacting business.

17 (3) All action of the commission shall be by a majority vote of
18 the full membership of the commission.

19 (h) The commission shall:

20 (1) Promote the State Teacher Assistance Resource Program and
21 encourage participation by high school students; ~~and~~

22 (2) Select the recipients of the State Teacher Assistance
23 Resource forgivable loans;

24 (3) Select the recipients of the Dual State Teacher Assistance
25 Resource forgivable loans based upon recommendations from school districts
26 and the requirements of this section.

27 (4) Promote the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program
28 and inform school districts and classroom teachers about the opportunities to
29 obtain dual certification under the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource
30 Program.

31 (i)(1) The Department of Higher Education shall provide staff and
32 office space to the commission.

33 (2)(A) Members of the commission shall serve without pay.

34 (B) Members of the commission may receive expense
35 reimbursement in accordance with § 25-16-902, to be paid by the department to
36 the extent money is available.

1
 2 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 81, Subchapter 15 is amended
 3 to add additional sections to read as follows:

4 6-81-1508. Definitions.

5 For purposes of this subchapter:

6 (1) "Classroom teacher" means an individual who is required to
 7 hold a teaching license from the Department of Education and who is:

8 (A) Engaged directly in instruction with students in a
 9 classroom setting for more than seventy percent (70%) of the individual's
 10 contracted time;

11 (B) A media specialist or librarian; or

12 (C) A guidance counselor;

13 (2) "Dual certification" means certification to teach in more
 14 than one (1) subject matter; and

15 (3) "Dual certification incentive bonus" means a bonus that is
 16 given one (1) time every school year following the year of obtaining dual
 17 certification under the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

18
 19 6-81-1509. Dual certification incentive program.

20 (a) There is created the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource
 21 Program to encourage classroom teachers currently employed by school
 22 districts in the state to return to college to obtain certification in one
 23 (1) or more additional subject areas.

24 (b) The Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program shall be
 25 administered by the Department of Higher Education.

26
 27 6-81-1510. Dual certification funding.

28 (a)(1)(A) A classroom teacher employed by a school district in the
 29 state may receive a scholarship from the Dual State Teacher Assistance
 30 Resource Program if he or she:

31 (i) Is recommended for a scholarship by his or her
 32 superintendent, principal, or local school board of directors of the school
 33 district in which he or she is employed;

34 (ii) Agrees to return to an approved institution of
 35 higher education to obtain certification in:

36 (a) An additional subject matter declared to

1 be a shortage area by the Department of Education;

2 (b) An additional subject matter that he or
 3 she is currently teaching, but for which he or she does not have a
 4 certification; or

5 (c) An additional subject matter and grade
 6 level in which the school district has requested a waiver under § 6-17-309.

7 (B)(i) A scholarship from the Dual State Teacher
 8 Assistance Resource Program shall include funding for the cost of tuition,
 9 books, and fees not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000) each college
 10 year.

11 (ii) Each scholarship awarded under the Dual State
 12 Teacher Assistance Resource Program shall be funded with a two-to-one match
 13 with the local school districts, whereby the Department of Higher Education
 14 shall provide two dollars (\$2) for each dollar (\$1) a local school district
 15 provides for scholarships.

16 (iii) The number and the amount of scholarship
 17 recipients selected by the State Teacher Assistance Resource Commission shall
 18 be contingent on the appropriation and availability of funding for such
 19 purpose.

20 (C)(i) Local school districts may use moneys appropriated
 21 from the public school funds or any other source to fund the school
 22 district's local match requirements for no more than four (4) scholarships
 23 under the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program for classroom
 24 teachers currently employed by the school district who have no less than
 25 three (3) years of experience as a licensed classroom teacher in a public
 26 school located in the State of Arkansas.

27 (ii) Any school district that requests a waiver of
 28 teacher certification requirements under § 6-17-309 because the school
 29 district is not able to hire a qualified certified teacher to fill the
 30 position shall offer and fund a Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource
 31 Program scholarship to any qualified applicant willing to obtain dual
 32 certification in the grade level and subject matter for which the waiver was
 33 requested.

34 (2) To be eligible for a scholarship under the Dual State
 35 Teacher Assistance Resource Program, the person shall be:

36 (A) Employed as a classroom teacher by the same school

1 district for no less than three (3) years of teaching immediately preceding
 2 the application; and

3 (B) Accepted for enrollment in a classroom teacher
 4 education program that will lead to a certification to teach in a subject
 5 area that:

6 (i) Is different from the classroom teacher's
 7 current area of certification; and

8 (ii)(a) Has been identified as a subject area with a
 9 shortage of classroom teachers as declared by the Department of Education; or

10 (b) Is in the grade level and subject-matter
 11 area for which the school district has requested a waiver under § 6-17-309.

12 (b) The recipients of the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource
 13 Program scholarships awarded by a school district shall be selected by that
 14 district's local board of directors subject to the approval of the classroom
 15 teacher's building level principal or as required by subsection
 16 (a)(1)(C)(ii).

17 (c)(1) Any classroom teacher awarded a scholarship under the Dual
 18 State Teacher Assistance Resource Program shall be allowed administrative
 19 leave with pay as provided under the district's certified personnel salary
 20 schedule as is necessary for the classroom teacher to:

21 (A) Attend college classes necessary to obtain the
 22 additional certification;

23 (B) Travel to or from the college; and

24 (C) Take state-mandated tests as may be necessary to
 25 obtain the additional certification.

26 (2) The cost of a classroom teacher's administrative leave
 27 required under this subsection (c) shall be credited toward the local
 28 district's funding match obligations under this section.

29 (d)(1) A classroom teacher who receives funds from the state or school
 30 district for participation in the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource
 31 Program shall repay the Department of Education, Department of Higher
 32 Education, or the school district the total amount of the scholarships
 33 received under the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program if the
 34 classroom teacher:

35 (A) Does not receive an additional certification within
 36 three (3) calendar years after he or she first received funding under the

1 Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program; or

2 (B) Becomes certified under the Dual State Teacher
 3 Assistance Resource Program but does not teach or serve as a classroom
 4 teacher in an Arkansas public school district for three (3) continuous years
 5 immediately following receipt of the additional certification.

6 (2) The State Board of Education may suspend the Arkansas
 7 classroom teacher's license of any individual who fails, when required to do
 8 so, to repay moneys contributed by the Department of Education, Department of
 9 Higher Education, or a school district for participation in the Dual State
 10 Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

11 (3) Repayment of moneys contributed by the Department of
 12 Education, or Department of Higher Education or school district is not
 13 required if, due to the death or disability of the classroom teacher or other
 14 extenuating circumstances as may be recognized by the State Board of
 15 Education, the classroom teacher does not complete the certification process
 16 or does not teach in the Arkansas public school system for three (3)
 17 continuous school years after completing the certification funded by the Dual
 18 State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

19 (e)(1) The Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, shall
 20 promulgate rules as necessary to implement the Dual State Teacher Assistance
 21 Resource Program.

22 (2) The number of classroom teacher participants each year shall
 23 be determined by the amount of funding available for the program and the
 24 limitations set under this section.

25
 26 6-81-1511. Dual certification bonus.

27 (a)(1) Upon attainment of a dual certification under the Dual State
 28 Teacher Assistance Resource Program, the Department of Education shall pay
 29 the dually certified classroom teacher a bonus of three thousand dollars
 30 (\$3,000) each school year that the classroom teacher:

31 (A) Is employed full-time as a classroom teacher in an
 32 Arkansas public school district; and

33 (B) Is teaching no fewer than two (2) class periods in
 34 each of the different subject matter areas for which he or she received
 35 certification.

36 (2) The dual certification incentive bonus provided in this

1 section shall not be retroactive.

2 (3) No person shall receive a dual certification incentive bonus
3 irrespective of the person's past participation in the Dual State Teacher
4 Assistance Resource Program if he or she:

5 (A) Leaves the full-time employment of an Arkansas public
6 school district;

7 (B) Becomes employed as a district-level central office
8 administrator or any other position that does not include teaching students;

9 (C) Is employed by an Arkansas institution of higher
10 education, Department of Higher Education, or the Department of Education; or

11 (D) Is employed by an education service cooperative and
12 does not teach in a classroom with students.

13 (b) The Department of Education shall pay the cost of one (1) Praxis
14 or other state-mandated exam necessary for the teacher to obtain his or her
15 additional certification upon completion of the college level course work
16 funded by the Dual State Teacher Assistance Resource Program.

17 (c) Provisions of this section shall apply only to the extent that
18 funds are appropriated to the Department of Education for that purpose.

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