

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 2654

4
5 By: Representative Elliott
6
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CLARIFY REQUIREMENTS FOR REPAYING
10 INCENTIVE BONUSES PAID IN HIGH-PRIORITY SCHOOL
11 DISTRICTS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12

Subtitle

13 AN ACT TO CLARIFY REQUIREMENTS FOR
14 REPAYING INCENTIVE BONUSES PAID IN HIGH-
15 PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS.
16
17
18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
20

21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-17-811 is amended to read as follows:

22 6-17-811. Incentives for teacher recruitment and retention in high-
23 priority districts.

24 (a)(1) For purposes of this section:

25 (A) "High-priority district" means a:

26 (i) A district of one thousand (1,000) or fewer
27 students in which eighty percent (80%) or more of public school students are
28 eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program under the National
29 School Lunch Act and have a three-quarter average daily membership of one
30 thousand (1,000) or fewer for the 2003-2004 school year or;

31 (ii) The district is essentially a countywide
32 district with no less than ninety-five percent (95%) of the public school
33 students in the county attending one (1) school district and eighty percent
34 (80%) or more of the students attending the district are eligible for the
35 free or reduced-price lunch program under the National School Lunch Act;

36 (B) "Previous year" means the school year immediately



1 preceding the present school year; and

2 (C) "Teacher" or "Teachers" means ~~those~~;

3 (i) Those certified personnel who spend seventy
4 percent (70%) of their time ~~interacting~~ working directly with students in a
5 classroom setting teaching all grade-level or subject-matter appropriate
6 classes;

7 (ii) Guidance counselors; and

8 (iii) Librarians or media specialists.

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

11 (b) Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, a teacher licensed by the
12 state board who teaches in a school in a high-priority district shall receive
13 in addition to all other salary and benefits:

14 (1)(A) For new teachers, a one-time signing bonus to work in any
15 high-priority district to be paid as follows:

16 (i) Four thousand dollars (\$4,000) at the time a
17 teacher not currently employed by the district signs a new contract to teach
18 in a high-priority district; and

19 (ii) Three thousand dollars (\$3,000) at the
20 beginning of each of the next two (2) subsequent years if the teacher
21 continues teaching in the same high-priority district.

22 (B)(i) If a teacher has received bonus pay under
23 subdivision (b)(1)(A) of this section and leaves the high-priority district
24 before the end of the three-year bonus pay period, the teacher shall pay back
25 the amount of the bonus received in the previous year.

26 (ii) If the teacher leaves the district during the
27 school year, the teacher shall pay back the previous year's bonus and the
28 current year's bonus; and

29 (2)(A) For all teachers not newly signed to work in the
30 district, a retention bonus of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) shall be paid
31 for the 2004-2005 school year, and a retention bonus of two thousand dollars
32 (\$2,000) shall be paid at the beginning of each of the next two (2)
33 subsequent years if the teacher continues to work in a high-priority
34 district.

35 (B)(i) If a teacher has received bonus pay under
36 subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section and voluntarily leaves the high-

1 priority district before the end of the three-year bonus pay period, the
 2 teacher shall pay back on a pro rata basis the amount of the bonus received
 3 in the current and previous year years.

4 (ii) If the teacher voluntarily leaves the district
 5 during the school year, the teacher shall pay back the previous year's bonus
 6 and the current year's bonus.

7 (iii) If a teacher who is a full-time equivalent is
 8 reassigned involuntarily to a position not eligible to receive the bonuses or
 9 the teacher is dismissed involuntarily by a school district, the teacher
 10 shall not be required to repay the applicable incentive bonus for the
 11 relevant time period. The school district shall provide documentation of the
 12 involuntary assignment or dismissal.

13 (iv) If a teacher who qualified to receive a bonus
 14 must leave employment with the district because of a serious medical
 15 condition, that teacher shall not be obligated to repay the applicable
 16 incentive bonus for the relevant time period provided that the teacher can
 17 provide a written statement from a licensed medical doctor stating the
 18 teacher is unable to work and must terminate employment.

19 (3) Any incentive bonus awarded to eligible full-time equivalent
 20 teachers who do not work the entire school year shall be prorated based on
 21 the portion of the fiscal year the eligible teacher was employed by the high-
 22 priority school district.

23 (c)(1) In addition to the teacher bonuses provided under subsection
 24 (b) of this section and all other funding provided by law, each high-priority
 25 school district shall receive incentive funding equal to one thousand dollars
 26 (\$1,000) multiplied by the school district three-quarter average daily
 27 membership for the previous school year.

28 (2) The incentive funding under this subsection (c) shall be
 29 used to support programs developed and targeted to closing the achievement
 30 gap for students in high-priority school districts, including, but not
 31 limited to:

32 (A) Before and after school programs;

33 (B) Summer school programs;

34 (C) Tutorial programs;

35 (D) High-cost intensive learning programs such as reading
 36 recovery; and

1 (E) Additional course offerings necessary to provide
2 opportunities for all levels of learning such as advanced placement, honors
3 courses, or developmental courses.

4 (d) School districts eligible to receive incentive funding under this
5 act based on its average daily membership for the 2004-2005 or 2005-2006
6 school years shall continue to be eligible to receive funding under
7 subsections (b) and (c) of this section even if the district no longer meets
8 the definition of a high-priority district under this section because of a
9 consolidation or annexation with another school district that was a high-
10 priority district prior to consolidation or annexation.

11 ~~(e)~~(e) The department shall:

12 (1) Monitor the implementation of the incentive program
13 established by this section; and

14 (2) Collect data to be used to evaluate the incentive program's
15 effectiveness.

16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36