

State of Arkansas
86th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2007

A Bill

SENATE BILL 826

By: Senator Bryles
By: Representative Kenney

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND ARKANSAS CODE § 6-17-811
CONCERNING INCENTIVES FOR TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND
RETENTION IN HIGH-PRIORITY DISTRICTS; AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

AN ACT TO AMEND ARKANSAS CODE § 6-17-811
CONCERNING INCENTIVES FOR TEACHER
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN HIGH-
PRIORITY DISTRICTS.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-17-811 is amended to read as follows:
6-17-811. Incentives for teacher recruitment and retention in high-
priority districts.

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

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

(i) of one thousand (1,000) or fewer students in In
which eighty percent (80%) or more of public school students are eligible for
the free or reduced-price lunch program under the National School Lunch Act
based on the October 1 student count of the previous year submitted to the
Department of Education; and

(ii) That had ~~have~~ a three-quarter average daily
membership in the previous year of one thousand (1,000) or fewer students ~~for~~



1 ~~the 2003-2004 school year;~~

2 (B)(i) "New teacher bonus" means an incentive bonus
 3 provided under subdivisions (b)(1)-(3) of this section to a teacher that is
 4 within the first three (3) years of employment with a single high-priority
 5 district.

6 (ii) A teacher is not entitled to receive a new
 7 teacher bonus from any high-priority district other than the high-priority
 8 district that first employed the teacher and paid the teacher a new teacher
 9 bonus;

10 ~~(B)(C)~~ "Previous year" means the school year immediately
 11 preceding the present school year; and

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

14 ~~(C)(i)(E)(i)~~ "Teacher" or "teachers" means those a
 15 certified classroom teacher personnel who spend spends seventy percent (70%)
 16 of their his or her time working directly with students in a classroom
 17 setting teaching all grade-level or subject-matter appropriate classes.

18 (ii) "Teacher" or "teachers" includes guidance
 19 counselors and librarians.

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

22 (b) Beginning in the ~~2004-2005~~ 2007-2008 school year and each school
 23 year thereafter, a teacher licensed by the state board who ~~teaches~~ enters
 24 into a teaching contract and who completes the entire current school year
 25 teaching in a school in a high-priority district shall at the end of the
 26 school year and upon completion of his or her contracted teaching obligations
 27 be entitled to receive in addition to all other contracted salary and
 28 benefits:

29 (1) For a newly hired teacher who has not previously taught in a
 30 high-priority district, a one (1) time signing bonus of two thousand dollars
 31 (\$2,000) for the first year of service in the district to be paid upon
 32 completion of the full year of teaching;

33 (2) For a newly hired teacher who meets the requirements of
 34 subdivision (b)(1) of this section, who continues to teach in the same high-
 35 priority district, and who completes the second full year of contracted
 36 teaching obligations, a new teacher bonus in the amount of three thousand

dollars (\$3,000) in addition to all other contracted salary and benefits;

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

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

(5) For a teacher employed in a high-priority district who does not meet the requirements of subdivisions (b)(1)-(3) of this section, a retention bonus in the amount of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for each complete year of service in the high-priority district to be paid at the end of the school year after completing all contractual obligations.

(c)(1) No teacher shall be entitled to a bonus provided under this section unless the teacher has fulfilled his or her contractual obligations for the current school year.

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

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

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

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

~~(B)(i) If a teacher has received bonus pay under subdivision (b)(1)(A) of this section and leaves the high priority district~~

1 ~~before the end of the three year bonus pay period, the teacher shall pay back~~
 2 ~~the amount of the bonus received in the previous year.~~

3 ~~(ii) If the teacher leaves the district during the~~
 4 ~~school year, the teacher shall pay back the previous year's bonus and the~~
 5 ~~current year's bonus; and~~

6 ~~(2)(A) For all teachers not newly signed to work in the~~
 7 ~~district, a retention bonus of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) shall be paid;~~

8 ~~(i) For the 2004-2005 school year; and~~

9 ~~(ii) At the beginning of each of the next two (2)~~
 10 ~~subsequent years if the teacher continues to work in a high-priority~~
 11 ~~district.~~

12 ~~(B)(i) If a teacher has received bonus pay under~~
 13 ~~subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section and voluntarily leaves the high-~~
 14 ~~priority district before the end of the three year bonus pay period, the~~
 15 ~~teacher shall pay back on a pro-rata basis the amount of the bonus received~~
 16 ~~in the previous years.~~

17 ~~(ii) If the teacher voluntarily leaves the district~~
 18 ~~during the school year, the teacher shall pay back the previous year's bonus~~
 19 ~~and the current year's bonus.~~

20 ~~(iii)(a) If a full-time equivalent teacher is~~
 21 ~~reassigned involuntarily to a position that is not eligible for bonus pay~~
 22 ~~under this section or is dismissed involuntarily by a school district, the~~
 23 ~~teacher shall not be required to repay the applicable bonus pay.~~

24 ~~(b) The school district shall provide~~
 25 ~~documentation to the Department of Education of the involuntary assignment or~~
 26 ~~dismissal.~~

27 ~~(iv) If a teacher qualified to receive bonus pay~~
 28 ~~under this section leaves the district due to a serious medical emergency,~~
 29 ~~the teacher shall not be obligated to repay the bonus if the teacher provides~~
 30 ~~a written statement from a licensed physician stating that the teacher is~~
 31 ~~unable to work and must terminate his or her employment.~~

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

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

1 (1) Monitor the implementation of the incentive program
2 established by this section; ~~and~~

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

5 (3) Promulgate any necessary rules to administer the
6 requirements of this teacher recruitment and retention program.