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135th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Lightbody and Manning

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SUMMARY

Grow Your Own Teacher College Scholarship program

- Establishes the Grow Your Own Teacher College Scholarship program to award four-year scholarships for up to \$7,500 per year to qualifying high school seniors and other qualifying employees.
- Requires the Chancellor of Higher Education and Department of Education to oversee the program, including developing the application process and repayment procedures for failure to meet program requirements.

STEM teacher loan repayment program

- Creates a loan repayment program to provide awards to eligible teachers who provide STEM instruction in grades 7-12 for five consecutive years at public schools that have persistently low performance ratings on the state report card and difficulty attracting and retaining STEM teachers.
- Establishes the Teacher Loan Repayment Fund to consist of the amounts designated for the program and transfers \$25 million to that fund from the General Revenue Fund.
- Makes an appropriation.

Ohio Teacher Residency program

- Effective April 12, 2023, makes the following changes to the Ohio Teacher Residency program:
 - Specifically permits both online and in-person mentoring;
 - Requires the Department to provide access to online professional development resources;

- Provides the opportunity for online coaching to individuals who do not pass the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA);
- Prohibits the State Board of Education from limiting the number of attempts participants have to successfully complete the RESA.
- Requires districts and schools to provide one day of professional development leave for classroom teachers each year to observe a veteran teacher.
- Reduces the alternative resident educator license from four to two years.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Grow Your Own Teacher College Scholarship program

The bill establishes the Grow Your Own Teacher College Scholarship program to provide scholarships to eligible high school seniors and district employees who commit to teach in a “qualifying school” operated by their school district after becoming a teacher. If a scholarship recipient does not fulfill that obligation, the scholarship is converted into a loan.¹

Specifically, the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Department of Education must award a four-year scholarship for up to \$7,500 per year to an eligible applicant. To receive a scholarship, the applicant must commit to teaching in a “qualifying school” for at least four years within six years of completing a teacher training program. The teacher training program may be at a state institution of higher education or a private, nonprofit college or university in Ohio.²

Under the bill, a “qualifying school” is a school building:

1. That is identified as “high need” by the Chancellor;
2. Where at least 50% of the students are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch; and
3. That is operated by the same school district from which the scholarship recipient graduated high school or was employed.³

Eligibility

To be eligible for a scholarship under the program, an applicant must be either:

1. A high school senior who:
 - a. Received a high school diploma; and
 - b. Was eligible for a free or reduced price lunch for all four years of high school.

¹ R.C. 3333.393(B) and (F).

² R.C. 3333.393(B).

³ R.C. 3333.393(A)(4).

2. An individual who:
 - a. Is employed at a school where at least 50% of the students are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch; and
 - b. Holds any of the following:
 - i. An educational aide permit;
 - ii. An educational paraprofessional license; or
 - iii. A substitute teacher license.⁴

Application process

The bill requires the Chancellor and the Department to develop an application process for awarding scholarships under the program, including appointing a highly qualified and diverse application committee to assist in the selection of scholarship recipients.⁵ As part of that process, the Chancellor must require that all applicants file a statement of service status in compliance with continuing law, if applicable. Additionally, the Chancellor must require that all applicants have not been convicted of, plead guilty to, or adjudicated a delinquent child for any violation listed under continuing law.⁶

Promissory note

The bill requires any scholarship recipient, or the recipient's parent if the recipient is under the age of 18, to sign a promissory note payable to the state if the recipient either does not satisfy the four-year teaching commitment within six years of completing the teacher training program or if the scholarship is terminated.⁷

The bill requires that the amount payable under the note be the amount of total scholarships accepted by the recipient plus 10% interest accrued annually beginning on the first day of September after the recipient's graduation from the teacher training program or immediately after termination of the scholarship. The Chancellor must determine the repayment period under the note. The note must stipulate that the obligation to make payments is canceled if the recipient completes the four-year teaching commitment, dies, becomes totally and permanently disabled, or is unable to complete the commitment as a result of a reduction in force at the recipient's school.⁸

The bill requires that the repayment of the principal and interest be deferred while the recipient is enrolled in an approved teaching program, while the recipient is seeking

⁴ R.C. 3333.393(A), (B), and (D).

⁵ R.C. 3333.393(C).

⁶ R.C. 3333.393(E). Also see R.C. 3345.32, not in the bill.

⁷ R.C. 3333.394(A).

⁸ R.C. 3333.394(A).

employment to fulfill the teaching commitment, for a period of no more than six months, or while the recipient is engaged in teaching in a “qualifying” school.⁹

During the six-year period following the recipient’s graduation from an approved teaching program, the bill requires the Chancellor to deduct 25% of the outstanding balance that may be converted to a loan for each year the recipient teaches at a qualifying school.¹⁰

For any scholarship that is converted to a loan, the bill specifies that the Chancellor and the Attorney General must collect payment on the loan in accordance with continuing law.¹¹

Termination of scholarship

The bill permits the Department and the Chancellor to terminate a scholarship, in which case the scholarship must be converted to a loan to be repaid as described above.¹² A scholarship is considered “terminated” if a recipient withdraws from school or fails to meet standards as determined by the Department and the Chancellor.¹³

Appropriation

The bill appropriates \$25 million in each of FY 2022 and FY 2023 to the Grow Your Own Teacher Program.¹⁴

STEM teacher loan repayment program

The bill requires the Department and the Chancellor to establish and administer a loan repayment program for eligible teachers providing science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) instruction at qualifying public schools.¹⁵ Under the bill, a “qualifying school” is a school operated by a school district, a community school, a STEM school, or a college-preparatory boarding school that the Department and the Chancellor jointly determine has:

1. Persistently low performance ratings on the state report card; and
2. Difficulty attracting and retaining classroom teachers who provide STEM instruction and who hold a valid educator license to provide instruction in grades 7-12.¹⁶

An eligible teacher must apply to receive an award under the program upon being employed by a qualifying school and qualifies for it by remaining employed in that position for five consecutive years providing STEM instruction to students enrolled in grades 7-12. The

⁹ R.C. 3333.394(B).

¹⁰ R.C. 3333.394(C).

¹¹ R.C. 3333.394(F). Also see R.C. 131.02, not in the bill.

¹² R.C. 3333.394(D).

¹³ R.C. 3333.394(E).

¹⁴ Sections 6, 7, and 8.

¹⁵ R.C. 3319.58(B).

¹⁶ R.C. 3319.58(A)(2).

award consists of a direct payment by the Department to the teacher's lender in an amount of the lesser of \$40,000 or the balance of any outstanding loans the teacher incurred while attaining a bachelor's degree. A teacher may receive only one award under the program.¹⁷

The bill requires the Department and the Chancellor to jointly adopt rules to administer the program. Additionally, it also specifies that the program must cease to accept new applications five calendar years after the bill's effective date and cease to operate ten calendar years after that date.¹⁸

Teacher eligibility

To be eligible under the program, a teacher must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. Be an Ohio resident;
2. Hold a valid educator license to provide instruction in grades 7-12;
3. Be employed full-time for the first time as a classroom teacher;
4. Have received a bachelor's degree awarded by any public or private institution of higher education in Ohio;
5. Have outstanding student loans for that bachelor's degree; and
6. Have made timely payments in accordance with the terms of the individual's repayment schedule for those outstanding loans.¹⁹

Teacher Loan Repayment Fund

The bill establishes the Teacher Loan Repayment Fund in the state treasury to consist of the amounts designated by the General Assembly to make awards under the program.²⁰

It requires the Director of Budget and Management on the bill's effective date, or as soon as possible thereafter, to transfer \$25 million to that fund from the General Revenue Fund.²¹

Ohio Teacher Residency Program

The bill makes changes to the three components of the Ohio Teacher Residency (OTR) program: (1) mentoring, (2) counseling, and (3) measures of appropriate progression through the program (successful completion of the Resident Educator Summative Assessment (RESA)).

¹⁷ R.C. 3319.58(B) and (C).

¹⁸ R.C. 3319.58(D) and (F).

¹⁹ R.C. 3319.58(A)(1).

²⁰ R.C. 3319.58(E).

²¹ Section 9.

Mentoring

The bill specifically permits both online and in-person mentoring to participants. It also requires the Department of Education to provide participants and mentors with no-cost access to online professional development resources and sample videos of Ohio classroom lessons submitted for the RESA.²²

Counseling

The bill requires the Department to provide to each participant who does not receive a passing score on the RESA the opportunity to meet online with an instructional coach who is a certified assessor of the RESA to review the participant's results and discuss improvement strategies and professional development. These participants must receive the training at no cost.

Participants who choose to meet with an instructional coach must select from an online pool of instructional coaches who have completed training and are approved by the Department. The characteristics of each coach's school or district, including its size, typology, and demographics, must be made available. However, participants are not required to choose an instructional coach from a similar district and school.

The bill also permits participants who have not taken the RESA to meet with Department-approved coaches if the participant's district or school pays the costs associated with the meetings.²³

Measures of progression

Under administrative rule, participants are prohibited from attempting the RESA more than three times.²⁴ The bill, however, prohibits the State Board of Education from limiting the number of attempts participants have to successfully complete the RESA.

The bill creates a window of time within which participants may submit their RESA. Participants may send their RESA submissions to the Department between the first Tuesday of October and the first Friday of April of participants' second year in the program. The results of each RESA must be returned within 30 days after submission unless a new assessor is contracted by the Department. In that case, the results of each RESA must be returned within 45 days.²⁵

Professional development

The bill requires each school district and other public school, beginning the first school year after the bill's effective date, to provide one day of professional development leave each

²² R.C. 3319.223(A)(1).

²³ R.C. 3319.223(A)(2).

²⁴ Ohio Administrative Code 3301-24-04(D).

²⁵ R.C. 3319.223(A)(3).

school year for each classroom teacher to observe a veteran classroom teacher. The bill excludes district superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and other administrators from the requirement.²⁶

Alternative resident educator license

The bill reduces the alternative resident educator license from four to two years to comport with the reduced duration of the resident educator license and OTR program made by H.B. 442 of the 133rd General Assembly.²⁷

An alternative resident educator license is an entry-level license for a teacher who has not completed a traditional teacher preparation program, but who instead meets other specified education and testing requirements and agrees to complete other conditions while teaching under the license.

Background

The Ohio Teacher Residency program is an entry-level support program that both resident educator and alternative resident educator license holders must complete to qualify for a professional educator license. H.B. 442 of the 133rd General Assembly reduced the program from four years to two.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-15-23

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²⁶ R.C. 3319.225; applies to community and STEM schools through references in R.C. 3314.03(A)(11)(d) and 3326.11.

²⁷ R.C. 3319.26 and Section 3.