

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 55th Legislature (2016)

3 HOUSE BILL 2849

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6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to schools; creating the Oklahoma
8 Teacher Recruitment Act; providing short title;
9 establishing the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment
10 Program; directing the State Regents for Higher
11 Education, in certain consultation, to administer the
12 program; setting forth benefits of the program;
13 providing eligibility criteria; requiring execution
14 of certain agreement; providing for agreement forms;
15 providing for reimbursement of certain fees; allowing
16 the State Regents for Higher Education and the
17 Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability
18 to waive certain requirements; providing for bonus
19 amounts to be paid upon certain completion; providing
20 for tuition reimbursement upon meeting certain
21 criteria; providing limits for tuition
22 reimbursements; providing for distribution; requiring
23 certain confirmation of employment; requiring
24 submission of certain documentation; providing for
stipend amounts to be paid upon meeting certain
criteria; creating the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment
Revolving Fund; stating source of funding; providing
for use of funds; providing for payments upon
warrants; directing the State Regents for Higher
Education and the Commission for Educational Quality
and Accountability to conduct certain review and make
modifications as needed to the Oklahoma Teacher
Recruitment Program; directing promulgation of rules;
providing for codification; providing an effective
date; and declaring an emergency.

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2 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

1 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.1 of Title 70, unless there
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma
5 Teacher Recruitment Act".

6 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
7 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.2 of Title 70, unless there
8 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

9 A. 1. There is hereby established the Oklahoma Teacher
10 Recruitment Program. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
11 Education in consultation with the Commission for Educational
12 Quality and Accountability shall administer the Oklahoma Teacher
13 Recruitment Program.

14 2. The program shall provide assistance to students who meet
15 the criteria set forth in subsection B of this section and who
16 execute an agreement as set forth in subsection C of this section.

17 B. To be eligible to participate in the Oklahoma Teacher
18 Recruitment Program during the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter,
19 a student shall:

20 1. Have completed the first two (2) years or equivalent number
21 of hours to have sophomore standing and achieved a minimum grade
22 point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale;

23 2. Have passed the general education examination approved by
24 the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability and been

1 accepted at an accredited college of education at an institution
2 within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education; and

3 3. Have submitted an application on a form established by the
4 Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability and the State
5 Regents for Higher Education and been approved by the Commission and
6 the State Regents.

7 C. Students who meet the criteria set forth in subsection B of
8 this section shall execute an agreement stating that the student
9 shall:

10 1. Agree to earn a degree from an accredited college of
11 education at an institution within the Oklahoma State System of
12 Higher Education;

13 2. Take a minimum of thirty (30) hours within twelve (12)
14 months of the date of acceptance into the Oklahoma Teacher
15 Recruitment Program;

16 3. Complete the junior and senior years of the student within
17 twenty-four (24) months of the date of acceptance into the Oklahoma
18 Teacher Recruitment Program;

19 4. Maintain a minimum grade point average of not less than 3.5
20 on a 4.0 scale through the senior year of the student;

21 5. Agree to obtain a standard Oklahoma teaching certificate;
22 and

23 6. Agree to teach at an Oklahoma public school for not less
24 than five (5) consecutive years.

1 D. Agreements executed as provided for in subsection C of this
2 section shall be on forms provided by the State Regents for Higher
3 Education and the Commission for Educational Quality and
4 Accountability, who shall verify compliance with the agreements.
5 The date upon which the agreement is executed shall be the "date of
6 acceptance" for the purposes of this program.

7 E. Subject to the availability of funds, students who meet the
8 criteria established in subsection B of this section and execute an
9 agreement pursuant to subsection C of this section shall be
10 reimbursed an amount equal to the amount of fees for teacher
11 certification assessments approved by the Commission for Educational
12 Quality and Accountability.

13 F. If a participant in the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program
14 is prevented from meeting any of the requirements set forth in the
15 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Act due to factors beyond the control
16 of the participant, the State Regents for Higher Education in
17 consultation with the Commission for Educational Quality and
18 Accountability may temporarily waive the relevant requirements. The
19 State Regents and the Commission may rescind any award granted to a
20 participant in the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program if the
21 participant does not maintain eligibility as set forth in this
22 section.

1 SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.3 of Title 70, unless there
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 A. Subject to the availability of funds, a participant in the
5 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program who graduates from an
6 accredited college of education at an institution within the
7 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, receives a standard
8 certificate to teach pursuant to the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation
9 Act and has entered into a contract with an Oklahoma public school
10 shall be eligible to receive a completion bonus in the amount of
11 Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00), if the participant received a
12 bachelor's degree in science education, math education or special
13 education.

14 B. Subject to the availability of funds, a participant in the
15 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program who graduates from an
16 accredited college of education at an institution within the
17 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education and receives a certificate
18 to teach pursuant to the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall be
19 eligible to receive a completion bonus in the amount of Two Thousand
20 Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00), if the participant received a
21 bachelor's degree in an area not listed in subsection A of this
22 section.

1 SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.4 of Title 70, unless there
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 A. Subject to the availability of funds, a participant in the
5 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program shall be eligible to receive
6 tuition reimbursement assistance awards as provided for in this
7 section if the participant:

8 1. Graduates from an accredited college of education at an
9 institution within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education;

10 2. Receives a standard certificate to teach pursuant to the
11 Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act; and

12 3. Executes a contract to teach at a public school district in
13 Oklahoma.

14 B. An amount equivalent to twenty percent (20%) of the
15 nonguaranteed resident tuition and generally applicable fees for
16 which an eligible participant in the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment
17 Program is obligated shall be awarded by allocation from the
18 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Revolving Fund created in Section 6 of
19 this act. Each award of tuition reimbursement assistance shall be
20 distributed at the end of each school year during which the
21 participant taught at an Oklahoma public school. The total number
22 of awards shall not exceed five for each participant. The amount of
23 the tuition reimbursement shall be reduced by the amount of
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1 scholarship and grant aid the student received that could be used
2 for the payment of tuition and applicable fees.

3 C. A tuition reimbursement assistance award as provided for in
4 this section shall not be allowed for tuition and fees incurred for
5 courses or other postsecondary units taken more than twenty-four
6 (24) months from the date of acceptance into the Oklahoma Teacher
7 Recruitment Program.

8 D. Tuition reimbursement assistance awards granted pursuant to
9 the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program shall be awarded to all
10 eligible participants without any limitation on the number of awards
11 in any year other than the amount of funds available for the program
12 and the number of eligible applicants. If funds are not sufficient
13 to provide awards for all eligible participants, available funds
14 shall be distributed on a pro rata basis.

15 E. For the purposes of this section, the State Regents for
16 Higher Education and the Commission for Educational Quality and
17 Accountability shall confirm the status of a participant in the
18 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program by obtaining proof of
19 employment from the contracting school district.

20 F. A participant in the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program
21 shall submit to the State Regents for Higher Education documentation
22 of all scholarship and grant aid received by the participant during
23 the junior and senior years of college of the participant.
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1 SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.5 of Title 70, unless there
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 A. Subject to the availability of funds, a participant in the
5 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program who received a bachelor's
6 degree in science education, math education or special education and
7 spends not less than sixty percent (60%) of classroom activity in
8 the degree area shall be eligible to receive an annual salary
9 stipend in the amount of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00), if the
10 participant:

11 1. Graduated from an accredited college of education at an
12 institution within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education;

13 2. Received a standard certificate to teach pursuant to the
14 Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act; and

15 3. Executed a contract to teach at a public school district in
16 Oklahoma.

17 B. Subject to the availability of funds, a participant in the
18 Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program who received a bachelor's
19 degree in an area not listed in subsection A of this section shall
20 be eligible to receive an annual salary stipend in the amount of Two
21 Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00), if the participant:

22 1. Graduated from an accredited college of education at an
23 institution within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education;

1 2. Received a certificate to teach pursuant to the Oklahoma
2 Teacher Preparation Act; and

3 3. Executed a contract to teach at a public school district in
4 Oklahoma.

5 SECTION 6. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
6 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.6 of Title 70, unless there
7 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

8 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund
9 for the State Regents for Higher Education to be designated the
10 "Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a
11 continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall
12 consist of all monies appropriated or transferred to the fund by the
13 Legislature or contributions made to it by any person or entity.

14 All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby
15 appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the Oklahoma State
16 Regents for Higher Education to meet the obligations set forth in
17 the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Act. Expenditures from the fund
18 shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against
19 claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of
20 Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

21 SECTION 7. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
22 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.7 of Title 70, unless there
23 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1 A. Following the completion of the educator supply-and-demand
2 study that is conducted every three (3) years pursuant to Section 6-
3 211 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes, the State Regents for
4 Higher Education and the Commission for Educational Quality and
5 Accountability shall review the teaching areas identified as
6 "critical need". If the State Regents and the Commission determine
7 that the critical need teaching areas are different than those
8 outlined in subsection A of Section 5 of this act, the State Regents
9 and the Commission may modify the bachelor degrees eligible for the
10 annual salary stipend of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) as
11 provided for in Section 5 of this act.

12 B. Any change to the list of bachelor degrees eligible for an
13 annual salary stipend as provided for in subsection A of this
14 section shall go into effect the following school year and shall not
15 apply to anyone who had been selected to receive the annual salary
16 stipend of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) prior to the change.

17 SECTION 8. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
18 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.8 of Title 70, unless there
19 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

20 The State Regents for Higher Education and the Commission for
21 Educational Quality and Accountability shall develop and administer
22 professional development, support, mentorship and coaching programs
23 for participants in the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Program
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1 consistent with the provisions of Section 6-195 of Title 70 of the
2 Oklahoma Statutes.

3 SECTION 9. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
4 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 699.9 of Title 70, unless there
5 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

6 The State Regents for Higher Education and the Commission for
7 Educational Quality and Accountability shall promulgate rules to
8 implement the provisions of the Oklahoma Teacher Recruitment Act.

9 SECTION 10. This act shall become effective July 1, 2016.

10 SECTION 11. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
11 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
12 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
13 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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