

An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 3564

By: McBride, Fugate, Baker,
Phillips, Nollan, Conley,
Waldron, Stark, and
Provenzano of the House

and

Pemberton and Stephens of
the Senate

An Act relating to teachers; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 698.1, which relates to teacher preparation scholarships; describing program purpose; creating the Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program; providing program eligibility criteria; including payment of specified costs and fees; listing scholarship amounts for participants; specifying maximum scholarship amount per participant; modifying membership and duties of certain committee; setting minimum years of teaching for program; listing standards for program participants; providing for incentive payments after graduation and upon certain employment; providing annual amount of incentive and including incentive cap; requiring execution of certain agreements; declaring certain participants ineligible for program; authorizing Chancellor to contract with certain entities; permitting reduction in payments if funds are insufficient; allowing funds to be set aside at certain time; authorizing use of funds for program administration; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Teachers

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 698.1, is amended to read as follows:

Section 698.1 A. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education ~~are authorized to~~ shall establish and maintain an incentive scholarship program and teacher employment incentive program, as funding is available, to encourage the preparation of public school teachers for prekindergarten through twelfth grade, including minority teachers, ~~in critical shortage areas for the public schools at one or more of the Oklahoma~~ all state public higher education institutions or private higher education institutions accredited pursuant to Section 4103 of this title and incentivize employment as public teachers for prekindergarten through twelfth grade in the state for at least five (5) years, to be known as the Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program. Prospective teachers, ~~whether~~ planning to pursue an undergraduate teacher education program ~~or to become qualified to teach after earning a bachelor's degree in a critical shortage area~~, at an accredited Oklahoma teacher preparation program shall be considered if they ~~have~~ graduated from an Oklahoma high school with a grade point average ranking them in the top fifteen percent (15%) of their graduating class, meet the higher education admission standards, and declare a major in an approved Oklahoma teacher preparation degree program leading to a standard teaching certificate. To the extent that funds are available, scholarships ~~of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500.00) per year~~, renewable for up to three (3) additional years for qualified students meeting satisfactory academic progress standards in completing a teacher preparation degree program leading to a standard teaching certificate, shall be awarded to cover costs of tuition, general enrollment fees, other fees, books, materials, and services provided by the institution, including room and board, in the following manner:

1. One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per academic year for up to three (3) academic years for full-time students who have earned less than ninety (90) credit hours; and

2. Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) for the final academic year for full-time students who have earned ninety (90) or more credit hours.

The maximum amount of scholarship funds awarded as provided in this subsection to any qualified student shall not exceed Five Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$5,500.00).

B. It is the intent of the Oklahoma Legislature that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education create a committee composed of educators, teacher educators from the participating institutions, ~~other professionals from the shortage area fields,~~ and representatives of the public schools and the State Department of Education to ~~recommend~~ provide recommendations to the State Regents ~~the following:~~

- ~~1. Further criteria for the selection of participants;~~
- ~~2. Procedures for admission;~~
- ~~3. Procedures and instruments for assessing the effectiveness of the program; and~~
- ~~4. Any other criteria or procedures deemed necessary by the State Regents~~ to improve effectiveness of the program.

The committee shall prepare and deliver a report on the program to the Legislature on or before July 1 of each year.

C. Each scholarship participant, prior to entry into the program, shall have agreed to teach in ~~the shortage areas in the an~~ Oklahoma public schools prekindergarten through twelfth grade school of this state for a minimum of ~~three (3)~~ five (5) consecutive years upon graduation and licensure as a teacher. Any scholarship participant failing to maintain a 2.5 grade point average, changing to an ~~inappropriate~~ ineligible area of study, failing to meet satisfactory academic progress standards, withdrawing or otherwise leaving school, or failing to meet requirements for licensure and certification to teach as established by law shall be subject to disqualification from the program.

D. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are authorized to make employment incentive payments pursuant to the provisions of this section to program participants who are employed as traditionally certified teachers in Oklahoma public prekindergarten through twelfth grade schools following graduation. Incentive payments may be awarded following each consecutive year of satisfactory service as documented by the employing school district, up to five (5) years of service for scholarship recipients as

provided in subsection A of this section, upon graduation from an accredited Oklahoma teacher preparation degree program. The maximum amount of employment incentive payments for any qualified participant shall be Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) per year for up to five (5) years, not to exceed a total of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) per participant.

E. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall require the execution of appropriate contracts with eligible program participants. Participants failing to comply with the requirements of this section or failing to provide current contact information shall not be eligible for the employment incentive payments provided for in this section. The Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, with the approval of the State Regents, may contract with any other appropriate organization or unit of government for the administration of the provisions of this section.

F. If sufficient funds are not available for employment incentive payments to qualified participants during any fiscal year, the Chancellor may make reductions in the payments made to qualified participants.

G. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may, at the time an award is made on behalf of the Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program, set aside funds for the full commitment made to an eligible student.

H. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may utilize Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program designated funds for administration of the program.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2022.

SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the House of Representatives the 19th day of May, 2022.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 20th day of May, 2022.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____