

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

FOR ENGROSSED

SENATE BILL 235

By: Pugh of the Senate

and

Kerbs and Deck of the House

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to teachers; defining term; establishing the Grow Your Own Educator Program to be maintained by the State Department of Education; providing purpose; providing for grant applications to be made on certain form; providing for contents of application; directing grants to be allocated on certain basis from certain fund; requiring grant recipients to submit certain report by certain date; providing for contents of report; directing the State Department of Education to submit certain report by certain date; providing for contents of report; providing for promulgation of rules; creating the Grow Your Own Educator Revolving Fund; specifying source of fund; providing for expenditures; providing purpose of fund; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 698.4 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. As used in this section, "eligible school district" means a public school district or public school district foundation in this

1 state that has established a program to provide tuition or loan  
2 repayment assistance to school district employees who pursue an  
3 undergraduate degree from a teacher preparation program accredited  
4 by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability leading  
5 to a standard teaching certificate.

6 B. There is hereby created the Grow Your Own Educator Program  
7 to provide matching fund grants to eligible school districts. The  
8 program shall be established and maintained by the State Department  
9 of Education.

10 C. An eligible school district seeking to participate in the  
11 Grow Your Own Educator Program shall submit an application in the  
12 manner and on a form prescribed by the State Department of  
13 Education. The application shall include:

- 14 1. The amount of matching fund grants requested;
- 15 2. The position of the employee pursuing an undergraduate  
16 degree from a teacher preparation program; and
- 17 3. The subject area in which the employee is pursuing an  
18 undergraduate degree from a teacher preparation program.

19 D. Matching fund grants shall be awarded on a first-come,  
20 first-served basis. Grants shall be provided without any limitation  
21 other than the amount of funds available in the Grow Your Own  
22 Educator Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this act  
23 and the number of eligible school districts that apply.  
24

1 E. By June 30, 2026, and each June 30 thereafter, an eligible  
2 school district that receives a matching fund grant pursuant to this  
3 section shall electronically submit a report to the State Department  
4 of Education that includes:

5 1. A status update on the progress the employee receiving  
6 tuition assistance is making in the teacher preparation program in  
7 which he or she is enrolled; or

8 2. The employment status of the employee receiving loan  
9 repayment assistance.

10 F. By December 31, 2026, and each December 31 thereafter, the  
11 State Department of Education shall electronically submit a report  
12 to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the  
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives that includes:

14 1. The school district matching fund grant recipients;

15 2. The amount of matching fund grants allocated to each  
16 recipient;

17 3. The subject area in which the employee receiving tuition  
18 assistance is pursuing an undergraduate degree, or the subject area  
19 in which the employee receiving loan repayment assistance has  
20 received an undergraduate degree; and

21 4. The information submitted pursuant to subsection E of this  
22 section.

23 G. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules to  
24 implement the provisions of this section.

1       SECTION 2.       NEW LAW       A new section of law to be codified  
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 698.5 of Title 70, unless there  
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4       There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund  
5 for the State Board of Education to be designated the "Grow Your Own  
6 Educator Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not  
7 subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies  
8 received by the State Board of Education from legislative  
9 appropriations provided for the purpose of implementing the Grow  
10 Your Own Educator Program created in Section 1 of this act. All  
11 monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated  
12 and may be budgeted and expended by the Board for the purpose  
13 provided for in this section. Expenditures from the fund shall be  
14 made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims  
15 filed as prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of  
16 Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

17       SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

18       SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
19 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby  
20 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
21 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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