

An Act

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 235

By: Pugh of the Senate

and

Kerbs, Deck, and Pogemiller
of the House

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.

SUBJECT: Teachers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. The school district matching fund grant recipients;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION 4. 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 Senate the 28th day of May, 2025.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the 28th day of May, 2025.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

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: _____