

STATE OF NEW YORK

6402

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 4, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. JACKSON -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing a student mental health apprenticeship retention and training (SMART) internship grant program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new section 319 to
2 read as follows:

3 § 319. Student mental health apprenticeship retention and training
4 (SMART) internship grant program. 1. As used in this section, the
5 following terms shall have the following meanings:

6 (a) "Debt or expenses repayment" means debt or expenses connected to a
7 recipient's student loans.

8 (b) "Department" means the department of education.

9 (c) "Designated recipient" means an individual who is enrolled in, and
10 in good standing at, as determined by the program, a graduate-level
11 mental health professional program maintained by an institution of high-
12 er education located in this state or out-of-state, which includes a
13 department-approved school counselor education or preparation program
14 maintained by an institution of higher education located in this state
15 or out-of-state, school social worker education or preparation program
16 maintained by an institution of higher education located in this state
17 or out-of-state, or school psychology education or preparation program
18 maintained by an institution of higher education located in this state
19 or out-of-state that offers designations, a focus, or special certif-
20 ications in the provision of school mental health services, and who is
21 working toward obtaining any of the following:

22 (i) a license to practice social work pursuant to article one hundred
23 fifty-four of this chapter;

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 (ii) a school counseling endorsement issued by the department on their
2 teaching certificate;

3 (iii) a school psychologist; or

4 (iv) a school social worker.

5 (d) "Extenuating circumstance" means a circumstance determined by the
6 department in consultation with the designated recipient to whom the
7 circumstance applies or who is impacted by the circumstance.

8 (e) "Field supervisor", "field instructor", or "supervisor" means an
9 individual who supervises an eligible designated recipient and to whom
10 the following apply, as applicable:

11 (i) For an individual who is supervising, as described in this subdi-
12 vision, a designated recipient who is working toward obtaining a prelim-
13 inary school psychologist certificate, or a school psychologist certif-
14 icate, the individual providing supervision maintains a school
15 psychologist certificate during the supervision.

16 (ii) For an individual who is supervising, as described in this subdi-
17 vision, a designated recipient who is working toward obtaining temporary
18 or full school social worker approval, the individual providing super-
19 vision maintains full school social worker approval during the super-
20 vision.

21 (iii) For an individual who is supervising a designated recipient who
22 is working toward obtaining a school counselor license, a preliminary
23 school counselor credential, or a school counselor endorsement issued by
24 the department on their teaching certificate, the individual providing
25 supervision maintains a school counselor, maintains a school counselor
26 endorsement on their teaching certificate, or is a school counselor
27 educator in a department-approved school counselor preparation program
28 during the supervision.

29 (f) "School fiscal year" means a fiscal year that commences July first
30 and continues through June thirtieth.

31 (g) "The grant program" means the student mental health apprenticeship
32 retention and training (SMART) internship grant program created in
33 subdivision two of this section.

34 2. (a) The department shall create and administer a student mental
35 health apprenticeship retention and training (SMART) internship grant
36 program to provide grants to designated recipients and to provide grants
37 to field supervisors, field instructors, and supervisors as described in
38 this section. It is the intent of the legislature that the grant program
39 lead to, at a minimum, both of the following:

40 (i) The provision of paid and educationally meaningful internship
41 practicum in school settings for designated recipients; and

42 (ii) The utilization of funding obtained by a public school to hire
43 designated recipients who obtained a grant under this section.

44 (b) The department shall administer grant funding through the grant
45 program to designated recipients through agreements. The agreements
46 described in this subdivision shall meet the following criteria:

47 (i) The department shall administer grant funding as described in this
48 subdivision in an amount per eligible designated recipient that is equal
49 to twenty-five dollars per hour for each hour spent in an intern capaci-
50 ty for up to twenty hours per week of an internship in a public school
51 that occurs over a thirty-week period in a school year or a lump sum
52 amount equal to fifteen thousand dollars for up to twenty hours per week
53 of an internship in a public school that occurs over a thirty-week peri-
54 od in a school year. The lump sum amount described in this subdivision
55 must be paid at the end of the thirty-week period described in this

1 subdivision. As used in this subdivision, "eligible designated recipi-
2 ent" means a designated recipient to whom both of the following apply:

3 (A) Either of the following:

4 (1) The individual is enrolled in a graduate-level mental health
5 professional program described in paragraph (c) of subdivision one of
6 this section who is in the first year of an internship period required
7 by the program and who is serving as a substitute teacher or in a para-
8 professional role in a public school as described in this subdivision or
9 who is in a supervised role in a public school as described in this
10 subdivision and following best-practice training and supervision
11 requirements as indicated by national standards set forth by the appro-
12 priate national professional organizations. As used in this clause,
13 "supervised role" means a role in which the individual is supervised by
14 a field supervisor, field instructor, or supervisor while serving in the
15 role; or

16 (2) The individual is enrolled in a graduate-level mental health
17 professional program described in paragraph (c) of subdivision one of
18 this section who is in the second year of an internship period required
19 by the program and who is in a supervised role in a public school as
20 described in this subdivision and following best-practice training and
21 supervision requirements as indicated by national standards set forth by
22 the appropriate national professional organizations. As used in this
23 clause, "supervised role" means a role in which the individual is super-
24 vised by a field supervisor, field instructor, or supervisor while serv-
25 ing in the role.

26 (B) At least one of the following applies to the individual's work as
27 described under this subdivision:

28 (1) The individual is interning in a discipline that has been desig-
29 nated as critical shortage by the superintendent of public instruction
30 for the immediately preceding school fiscal year;

31 (2) The individual is interning in a public school in which not less
32 than fifty percent of pupils enrolled are eligible for free or reduced-
33 price meals; or

34 (3) The individual is interning in a public school that received fund-
35 ing in the immediately preceding school fiscal year.

36 (c) Include a requirement that the designated recipient who receives
37 funding through the grant program shall work at a public school for not
38 less than three school years as of the date of the agreement.

39 (d) A payment or payments of funding through the grant program must be
40 made as follows to designated recipients, pursuant to an agreement
41 between the designated recipient, the public school in which they are
42 interning as described in this subdivision and the graduate-level mental
43 health professional program described in paragraph (c) of subdivision
44 one of this section that they are enrolled:

45 (i) On the same pay period or schedule offered to other educational
46 professionals at the public school in which the designated recipient is
47 serving for purposes of qualifying for funding under this section; or

48 (ii) Through one lump-sum payment on the date on which the designated
49 recipient's service for purposes of qualifying for funding under this
50 section ends.

51 (e) Both of the following apply to funding distributions as described
52 in this subdivision, as applicable:

53 (i) For recipients of the funding who receive twenty-five dollars per
54 hour as described in this subdivision:

55 (A) If the recipient permanently ceases to satisfy the qualification
56 requirements that initially made the recipient eligible for funding

1 under this section either by their own initiative, by initiative of the
2 public school in which they were interning, or by initiative of the
3 graduate-level mental health professional program described in paragraph
4 (c) of subdivision one of this section, payments must stop as of the
5 date on which this occurs; and

6 (B) If the recipient temporarily ceases to satisfy the qualification
7 requirements that initially made the recipient eligible for funding
8 under this act because they are relocating to intern in another public
9 school or due to a leave of absence, payments must stop during the peri-
10 od which the individual does not meet the requirements, but may be
11 continued when the individual again meets the qualification require-
12 ments, but must not be continued beyond thirty weeks from the date the
13 individual initially started their internship at the public school under
14 this subdivision.

15 (ii) For recipients of the funding who receive the lump sum of fifteen
16 thousand dollars as described in this section:

17 (A) If the recipient permanently ceases to satisfy the qualification
18 requirements that initially made the recipient eligible for funding
19 under this section either by their own initiative, by initiative of the
20 public school in which they were interning, or by initiative of the
21 graduate-level mental health professional program described in paragraph
22 (c) of subdivision one of this section, the recipient may receive a pro
23 rata amount of the lump sum that reflects the number of hours the indi-
24 vidual interned at the public school while meeting the qualification
25 requirements for funding under this section; or

26 (B) If the recipient temporarily ceases to satisfy the qualification
27 requirements that initially made the recipient eligible for funding
28 under this section because they are relocating to intern in another
29 public school or due to a leave of absence, the individual is still
30 eligible to receive the full amount of the lump sum if they complete all
31 of the qualification requirements for funding under this section.

32 3. The department may, for extenuating circumstances, make a debt or
33 expense repayment to a designated recipient before or during each year
34 of service that the designated recipient shall complete or is completing
35 for purposes of qualifying for funding under this section.

36 4. Each state university that designated recipients are enrolled in
37 for the graduate-level mental health professional program described in
38 paragraph (c) of subdivision one of this section may continue implement-
39 ing any existing evaluation processes required as part of any certif-
40 ication, licensing, or approval requirements associated with serving as
41 a school mental health professional. For purposes of this section, the
42 results from an evaluation described in this subdivision may be used as
43 a reason for the individual's disqualification for grant funding under
44 this section.

45 5. A designated recipient that receives a grant under this act shall
46 submit any evaluations they receive as described in subdivision four of
47 this section and any evaluations received from the public school in
48 which they are interning. Upon receiving an evaluation, the department
49 shall determine whether the designated recipient is still eligible to
50 receive grant funding under this section or whether the recipient is
51 subject to subdivision four of this section and shall notify the recipi-
52 ent of its determination.

53 6. The department shall administer grant funding through the grant
54 program to field supervisors, field instructors, or supervisors. A grant
55 to a field supervisor, field instructor, or supervisor under this

1 subsection must not exceed two hundred fifty dollars for each designated
2 recipient that they supervise.

3 7. A designated recipient who receives a grant under this section is
4 not prohibited from applying for another grant under this section if
5 they meet the qualifications for grant funding under this section.

6 § 2. Beginning one year after the effective date of this act, the
7 department of education shall report to the governor, the temporary
8 president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly, the status and
9 outcomes of the student mental health apprenticeship retention and
10 training (SMART) internship grant program.

11 § 3. This act shall take effect on the first of July next succeeding
12 the date on which it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the
13 addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary
14 for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized
15 to be made and completed on or before such effective date.