

STATE OF NEW YORK

9286

IN ASSEMBLY

February 23, 2022

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

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the bilingual teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment and retention 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 3615
2 to read as follows:

3 § 3615. Bilingual teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment and
4 retention program. 1. Definitions. a. The term "bilingual teacher short-
5 age area" means a public school or subject area in which there was a
6 shortage of bilingual, certified teachers in the previous school year
7 and there is a projected shortage in the current school year as deter-
8 mined by the commissioner.

9 b. The term "bilingual, certified teacher" means a teacher who holds a
10 permanent or professional state teaching certificate appropriate to the
11 teaching position, including the subject area if applicable, in which he
12 or she is to be employed and who is fully qualified to teach in a bilin-
13 qual education program.

14 c. The term "school district" shall mean a common, union free,
15 central, central high school, or city school district.

16 d. The term "board of education" shall mean the governing board of any
17 public school or public school district defined in paragraph c of this
18 subdivision.

19 e. The term "low-performing, limited English proficiency school" shall
20 mean a school building which is under registration review or a school
21 building performing significantly below state standards as defined by
22 the commissioner and which has a substantial proportion of limited
23 English proficiency pupils, as determined by the commissioner.

24 f. The term "year of service" shall mean ten months of continuous
25 full-time service as a teacher during a school year, generally occurring
26 between September first and June thirtieth.

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

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1 2. Application and funding. a. Grants shall be made to school
2 districts for bilingual, certified teacher recruitment and retention
3 activities necessary to increase the supply of bilingual, certified
4 teachers in school districts experiencing a bilingual, certified teacher
5 shortage in accordance with subdivision three of this section and in
6 school districts containing a low-performing, limited English proficien-
7 cy school.

8 b. Such grants shall be awarded to school districts, within the limits
9 of funds appropriated therefor, through a competitive process that takes
10 into consideration the magnitude of any shortage of bilingual, certified
11 teachers in the school district, the fiscal capacity and geographic
12 sparsity of the district, and the number of new bilingual, certified
13 teachers the school district intends to hire in the coming school year.
14 Grants provided pursuant to this section shall be used only for the
15 purposes enumerated in this section.

16 c. Not more than sixty percent of the funds allocated pursuant to this
17 section shall be made available to any one school district and provided
18 further that a city school district in a city with populations in excess
19 of one million inhabitants may, notwithstanding any other provision of
20 this section, allocate a portion of the grant received pursuant to this
21 section for bilingual, certified teacher recruitment and outreach activ-
22 ities provided that any allocation for bilingual, certified teacher
23 recruitment and outreach activities shall not exceed two hundred twen-
24 ty-five thousand dollars.

25 d. In allocating grants pursuant to this section, a school district
26 shall give priority in the following order:

27 (1) first, to a school under registration review that is designated as
28 a bilingual teacher shortage area;

29 (2) second, to any low-performing, limited English proficiency school;
30 and

31 (3) third, to any school that is designated as a bilingual teacher
32 shortage area.

33 e. Any school district receiving funds under this section shall main-
34 tain any local effort in the current year equivalent to such effort in
35 the base year for any local program related to the recruitment or
36 retention of teachers or any program that has purposes that are similar
37 to any purpose of this section or the district shall provide a local
38 match to state funds received pursuant to this section. State funds
39 provided pursuant to this section shall not supplant local funds for any
40 purpose similar to the purposes of this section.

41 f. Applications by a school district for funding pursuant to this
42 section shall be filed with the commissioner, in a form determined by
43 the commissioner, by June first of the base year and school districts
44 shall be notified of their grant award by June thirtieth of the base
45 year, provided that in any year such application and award dates may be
46 modified by the commissioner for the reasonable administration of the
47 program. Such application shall include a plan by the school district
48 for the expenditure of the funds in each category of allowable expenses
49 authorized by subdivision three of this section, and such expenditures
50 shall be consistent with such plan and the provisions of this section.

51 g. A person receiving an award pursuant to any subdivision of this
52 section shall not be eligible for an award pursuant to any other subdivi-
53 vision of this section in a school year.

54 3. Bilingual teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment incentive
55 program. Bilingual teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment incentive
56 awards may be available to teachers pursuant to the provisions of this

1 subdivision to attract teachers to employment in bilingual teacher short-
2 age areas.

3 a. Eligibility. To be eligible for an award pursuant to this subdivi-
4 sion, an applicant shall:

5 (1) be a bilingual, certified teacher;

6 (2) agree to a service obligation of one year of service in a bilin-
7 gual teacher shortage area as a condition of receiving an award pursuant
8 to this subdivision; and

9 (3) be employed for the first time as a bilingual, certified teacher
10 in the school district.

11 b. Application and selection. (1) The board of education shall deter-
12 mine the form of the application and the application process for teach-
13 ers deemed eligible for the award, and shall in its discretion select
14 the number of eligible applicants who will receive an award pursuant to
15 this subdivision.

16 (2) If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of awards
17 determined by the board pursuant to this subdivision, then the board
18 shall use an objective competitive process based on educational quali-
19 fications to determine which eligible applicants shall receive awards.

20 c. Payment of awards. (1) Annual awards from state and local funds
21 provided for this purpose shall be paid by the board of education to the
22 award recipient. Award recipients shall be entitled to receive awards
23 pursuant to the provisions of this subdivision and such awards shall be
24 in addition to and not part of any award recipient's base salary.

25 (2) The initial annual award shall be ten thousand dollars, and such
26 initial award may be renewable each year, for up to three additional
27 years, provided that the recipient agrees to one year of service as a
28 full-time bilingual, certified teacher in a bilingual teacher shortage
29 area for each year of a renewed award and has provided satisfactory
30 service in any prior year in which an initial or renewed award was
31 granted to the recipient. No awards shall be made for less than one
32 school year of service and the sum of any initial and renewed awards
33 shall not exceed forty thousand dollars.

34 Awards made pursuant to this subdivision shall be used to reimburse
35 any educational costs, including those for which student loans may have
36 been taken, incurred by the recipient prior to receipt of the award for
37 certification as a teacher in the public schools of the state.

38 (3) The board of education shall develop and secure from the award
39 recipient a written agreement outlining the service obligation. Such
40 agreement shall include provisions for the recipient to repay the amount
41 of the award to the school district if the recipient fails to complete
42 his or her service obligation in any year where an initial or renewed
43 award is granted, and such repaid amounts shall be deducted from any
44 grant amounts due to the district from the state pursuant to this
45 section. Upon a written appeal by an award recipient, the board of
46 education, in its discretion, may provide a waiver of repayment
47 provisions for an award recipient who fails to complete his or her
48 service requirement for documented reasons of health or other severe
49 hardship, as determined by the commissioner.

50 d. Notification. The board of education shall notify both successful
51 and unsuccessful applicants by September first of any school year for
52 which an initial or renewed award is provided to teachers pursuant to
53 this subdivision.

54 4. Reporting. By November first following the completion of each
55 school year, the commissioner shall report to the governor and the
56 legislature regarding the bilingual teachers of tomorrow teacher

1 recruitment and retention program. Such report shall list the amount of
2 each school district's total grant pursuant to this section, the uses of
3 the grant by each eligible category of expense, and the number of awards
4 granted by type pursuant to this section, as well as an analysis of the
5 effectiveness of the program in recruiting and retaining bilingual,
6 certified teachers in the public schools of the state designated as
7 bilingual teacher shortage areas.

8 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.