STATE OF NEW YORK

2673

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 24, 2023

Introduced by Sens. FERNANDEZ, JACKSON, LIU -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the "New York Teach Program" conditional tuition waiver

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and be cited as the "New York Teach Program".

§ 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 679-k to read as follows:

§ 679-k. New York teach program. 1. Purpose. The president shall establish a conditional tuition waiver for accelerated five-year bachelor's and master's program in education for eligible public universities for the purpose of increasing the number of teachers serving underserved districts in the state.

2. Eligibility. To be eligible for a conditional tuition waiver pursuant to this section, applicants shall (a) be accepted in an accelerated five-year bachelor's and master's degree program at a public university in the state; (b) sign a contract to agree to teach at their assigned hard to staff city school district for at least four years after graduation; (c) complete the accelerated five-year bachelor's and master's degree program within five years of enrollment; (d) be a New York state resident; and (e) maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average for each academic year enrolled in the program.

3. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the term (a) "eligible public universities" shall mean a public university in New York state with both a bachelor's and master's degree in education; (b) "hard to staff city school districts" shall mean school districts in a city that have a shortage of teachers, as designated by the department; and (c) "accelerated five-year bachelor's and master's program" shall mean

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

LBD06179-01-3

an academic course of study which allows a student to complete their bachelor's and master's degrees in education in five academic years.

4. Priority. Priority for this conditional tuition waiver shall be given to applicants who are economically disadvantaged as determined by the corporation.

5. Waiver amount determination. The corporation shall grant five thousand conditional waivers pursuant to this subdivision in each of the first ten academic years after the effective date of this subdivision. Upon completion of the ten academic years after the effective date of this subdivision, the corporation shall study the effectiveness of this tuition waiver program. Such study shall include the success rate of participants, including test scores for the students taught by program participants and school administrator reviews of program participants. Upon completion of the study, the corporation shall determine the number of conditional waivers that shall be granted in the academic years thereafter.

6. Assignment of graduates. Prior to graduation, the corporation shall assign students that have been granted a conditional tuition waiver to a hard to staff city school district. The assignment shall be made pursuant to the need for teachers at such school districts. The student shall be eligible to appeal the assigned district and request a specific placement in the case of extenuating circumstances including, but not limited to, an illness in the student's family.

7. Failure to comply. The conditional tuition waiver shall be voided by the corporation, and such person shall owe the tuition amount for the five-year accelerated program to the corporation in the form of an educational loan in the event a person receiving this conditional tuition waiver fails to comply with the requirements of (a) completing the degree program in five academic years; or (b) teaching in their assigned school district for four years.

8. Transfer. A student receiving a conditional tuition waiver pursuant to this section shall be eligible to transfer between eligible public universities without being disqualified from the conditional tuition waiver program. An eligible public university shall allow a student with a conditional tuition waiver pursuant to this section to transfer any credits earned at a different eligible public university.

9. Other financial aid. A student receiving a conditional tuition waiver pursuant to this section shall not be disallowed from receiving any other awards, aid, or scholarships. The waiver shall apply to the remaining tuition balance after any such awards, aid, or scholarships are applied to the tuition balance.

10. Rules and regulations. The corporation is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations and may promulgate emergency regulations necessary for the implementation of the provisions of this section. In the event that there are more applicants who have the same priority, as provided in subdivision four of this section, than there are remaining conditional tuition waivers, the corporation shall provide in regulation the method of distributing the remaining number of such conditional tuition waivers, which may include a lottery or other form of random selection.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.