

# STATE OF NEW YORK

519

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

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

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing the underrepresented 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 3612-a  
2 to read as follows:

3 § 3612-a. Underrepresented teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment  
4 and retention program. 1. Definitions. a. The term "underrepresented  
5 certified teacher" means a teacher who holds a permanent or professional  
6 state teaching certificate appropriate to the teaching position, includ-  
7 ing the subject area if applicable, in which they are to be employed,  
8 who is fully qualified to teach in an education program and participated  
9 in a school district/post-secondary partnership "grow your own" initi-  
10 ative, My Brother's Keeper, Teacher Opportunity Corps program, higher  
11 education opportunity program, education opportunity program, or other  
12 similar program.

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

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

18 d. The term "underrepresented school" shall mean a school building  
19 which has an underrepresentation of certified teachers who participated  
20 in a school district/post-secondary partnership "grow your own" initi-  
21 ative, My Brother's Keeper, Teacher Opportunity Corps program, higher

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

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1 education opportunity program, education opportunity program, or other  
2 similar programs, as determined by the commissioner.

3 e. The term "year of service" shall mean ten months of continuous  
4 full-time service as a teacher during a school year, generally occurring  
5 between September first and June thirtieth.

6 2. Application and funding. a. Grants shall be made to school  
7 districts for underrepresented certified teacher recruitment and  
8 retention activities necessary to increase the number of underrepre-  
9 sented certified teachers in underrepresented schools.

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

18 c. Not more than sixty percent of the funds allocated pursuant to this  
19 section shall be made available to any one school district.

20 d. Any school district receiving funds under this section shall main-  
21 tain any local effort in the current year equivalent to such effort in  
22 the base year for any local program related to the recruitment or  
23 retention of teachers or any program that has purposes that are similar  
24 to any purpose of this section or the district shall provide a local  
25 match to state funds received pursuant to this section. State funds  
26 provided pursuant to this section shall not supplant local funds for any  
27 purpose similar to the purposes of this section.

28 e. Applications by a school district for funding pursuant to this  
29 section shall be filed with the commissioner, in a form determined by  
30 the commissioner, by June first of the base year and school districts  
31 shall be notified of their grant award by June thirtieth of the base  
32 year, provided that in any year such application and award dates may be  
33 modified by the commissioner for the reasonable administration of the  
34 program. Such application shall include a plan by the school district  
35 for the expenditure of the funds in each category of allowable expenses  
36 authorized by subdivision three of this section, and such expenditures  
37 shall be consistent with such plan and the provisions of this section.

38 f. A person receiving an award pursuant to any subdivision of this  
39 section shall not be eligible for an award pursuant to any other subdivi-  
40 vision of this section in a school year.

41 3. Underrepresented teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment incentive  
42 program. Underrepresented teachers of tomorrow teacher recruitment  
43 incentive awards may be available to teachers pursuant to the provisions  
44 of this subdivision to attract underrepresented certified teachers to  
45 employment in underrepresented schools.

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

48 (1) be an underrepresented certified teacher;

49 (2) agree to a service obligation of one year of service in an under-  
50 represented school as a condition of receiving an award pursuant to this  
51 subdivision; and

52 (3) be employed for the first time as a certified teacher in the  
53 school district.

54 b. Application and selection. (1) The board of education shall deter-  
55 mine the form of the application and the application process for teach-  
56 ers deemed eligible for the award, and shall in its discretion select

1 the number of eligible applicants who will receive an award pursuant to  
2 this subdivision.

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

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

12 (2) The initial annual award shall be ten thousand dollars, and such  
13 initial award may be renewable each year, for up to three additional  
14 years, provided that the recipient agrees to one year of service as a  
15 full-time certified teacher in an underrepresented school for each year  
16 of a renewed award and has provided satisfactory service in any prior  
17 year in which an initial or renewed award was granted to the recipient.  
18 No awards shall be made for less than one school year of service and the  
19 sum of any initial and renewed awards shall not exceed forty thousand  
20 dollars.

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

25 (3) The board of education shall develop and secure from the award  
26 recipient a written agreement outlining the service obligation. Such  
27 agreement shall include provisions for the recipient to repay the amount  
28 of the award to the school district if the recipient fails to complete  
29 their service obligation in any year where an initial or renewed award  
30 is granted, and such repaid amounts shall be deducted from any grant  
31 amounts due to the district from the state pursuant to this section.  
32 Upon a written appeal by an award recipient, the board of education, in  
33 its discretion, may provide a waiver of repayment provisions for an  
34 award recipient who fails to complete their service requirement for  
35 documented reasons of health or other severe hardship, as determined by  
36 the commissioner.

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

41 4. Reporting. By November first following the completion of each  
42 school year, the commissioner shall report to the governor and the  
43 legislature regarding the underrepresented teachers of tomorrow teacher  
44 recruitment and retention program. Such report shall list the amount of  
45 each school district's total grant pursuant to this section, the uses of  
46 the grant, and the number of awards granted by type pursuant to this  
47 section, as well as an analysis of the effectiveness of the program in  
48 recruiting and retaining underrepresented certified teachers in under-  
49 represented schools of the state.

50 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.