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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 494
133rd General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Lightbody

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SUMMARY

- Creates a loan repayment program to provide awards to eligible teachers who provide STEM instruction in grades 7-12 for five consecutive years at qualifying public schools that have persistently low performance ratings on the state report card and difficulty attracting and retaining STEM teachers.
- Establishes the Teacher Loan Repayment Fund to consist of the amounts designated for the program and transfers \$25 million to that fund from the General Revenue Fund.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

STEM teacher loan repayment program

The bill requires the Department of Education and the Chancellor of Higher Education to establish and administer a loan repayment program for eligible teachers providing science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) instruction at qualifying public schools.¹ Under the bill, a “qualifying school” is a school operated by a school district, a community school, a STEM school, or a college-preparatory boarding school that the Department and the Chancellor jointly determine has:

1. Persistently low performance ratings on the state report card; and
2. Difficulty attracting and retaining classroom teachers who provide STEM instruction and who hold a valid educator license to provide instruction in grades 7-12.²

An eligible teacher must apply to receive an award under the program upon being employed by a qualifying school and qualifies for it by remaining employed in that position for

¹ R.C. 3319.58(B).

² R.C. 3319.58(A)(2).

five consecutive years providing STEM instruction to students enrolled in grades 7-12. The award consists of a direct payment by the Department to the teacher's lender in an amount of the lesser of \$40,000 or the balance of any outstanding loans the teacher incurred while attaining a bachelor's degree. A teacher may receive only one award under the program.³

The bill requires the Department and the Chancellor to jointly adopt rules to administer the program. Additionally, it also specifies that the program must cease to accept new applications five calendar years after the bill's effective date and cease to operate ten calendar years after that date.⁴

Teacher eligibility

To be eligible under the program, a teacher must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. Be an Ohio resident;
2. Hold a valid educator license to provide instruction in grades 7-12;
3. Be employed full-time for the first time as a classroom teacher;
4. Have received a bachelor's degree awarded by any public or private institution of higher education in Ohio;
5. Have outstanding student loans for that bachelor's degree; and
6. Have made timely payments in accordance with the terms of the individual's repayment schedule for those outstanding loans.⁵

Teacher Loan Repayment Fund

The bill establishes the Teacher Loan Repayment Fund in the state treasury to consist of the amounts designated by the General Assembly to make awards under the program.⁶

It also requires the Director of Budget and Management on July 1, 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter, to transfer \$25 million to that fund from the General Revenue Fund.⁷

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-04-20

H0494-I-133/ks

³ R.C. 3319.58(B) and (C).

⁴ R.C. 3319.58(D) and (F).

⁵ R.C. 3319.58(A)(1).

⁶ R.C. 3319.58(E).

⁷ Section 2.