

By: West

S.B. No. 2322

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to measures to improve school district classroom teacher  
3 retention, including child-care subsidies, eligibility of those  
4 teachers' children for prekindergarten programs, and student loan  
5 repayment assistance.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

7 SECTION 1. Subchapter I, Chapter 21, Education Code, is  
8 amended by adding Section 21.418 to read as follows:

9 Sec. 21.418. CHILD-CARE SUBSIDY FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS.

10 (a) From money appropriated or otherwise available for the  
11 purpose, the agency shall provide a subsidy to each classroom  
12 teacher in the amount of the teacher's child-care expenses.

13 (b) The agency may adopt rules as necessary to implement  
14 this section.

15 SECTION 2. Section 29.153(b), Education Code, is amended to  
16 read as follows:

17 (b) A child is eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten  
18 class under this section if the child is at least three years of age  
19 and:

20 (1) is unable to speak and comprehend the English  
21 language;

22 (2) is educationally disadvantaged;

23 (3) is homeless, regardless of the residence of the  
24 child, of either parent of the child, or of the child's guardian or

1 other person having lawful control of the child;

2 (4) is the child of an active duty member of the armed  
3 forces of the United States, including the state military forces or  
4 a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active  
5 duty by proper authority;

6 (5) is the child of a member of the armed forces of the  
7 United States, including the state military forces or a reserve  
8 component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while  
9 serving on active duty;

10 (6) is or ever has been in:

11 (A) the conservatorship of the Department of  
12 Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held  
13 as provided by Section 262.201, Family Code; or

14 (B) foster care in another state or territory, if  
15 the child resides in this state; ~~or~~

16 (7) is the child of a person eligible for the Star of  
17 Texas Award as:

18 (A) a peace officer under Section 3106.002,  
19 Government Code;

20 (B) a firefighter under Section 3106.003,  
21 Government Code; or

22 (C) an emergency medical first responder under  
23 Section 3106.004, Government Code; or

24 (8) is the child of a classroom teacher.

25 SECTION 3. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding  
26 Subchapter M-1 to read as follows:

27 SUBCHAPTER M-1. REPAYMENT OF CERTAIN TEACHER LOANS

1       Sec. 61.715. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "classroom  
2 teacher" has the meaning assigned by Section 5.001.

3       Sec. 61.716. LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED. The  
4 board shall provide, in accordance with this subchapter and board  
5 rules, assistance in the repayment of student loans for eligible  
6 classroom teachers.

7       Sec. 61.717. ELIGIBILITY. To be eligible to receive loan  
8 repayment assistance under this subchapter, a person must:

9           (1) submit to the board, in the manner prescribed by  
10 the board, an application that includes a statement of the total  
11 amount of principal, accrued interest, fees, and other charges due  
12 on all outstanding eligible loans for which the person is applying  
13 for repayment assistance;

14           (2) be currently employed as a classroom teacher; and

15           (3) have completed at least five years of employment  
16 as a classroom teacher.

17       Sec. 61.718. CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY. After initially  
18 qualifying for loan repayment assistance under Section 61.717, a  
19 person may continue to receive loan repayment assistance in a  
20 subsequent year only if the person is employed as a classroom  
21 teacher for that year.

22       Sec. 61.719. ELIGIBLE LOANS. The board may provide loan  
23 repayment assistance under this subchapter for the repayment of any  
24 student loan received by an eligible person through any lender for:

25           (1) education at an institution of higher education;

26 or

27           (2) an alternative teacher certification program in

1 this state.

2 Sec. 61.720. AWARD AMOUNT. An eligible classroom teacher  
3 is entitled to receive an annual amount of loan repayment  
4 assistance payments under this subchapter payable to the holders of  
5 the teacher's eligible loans equal to the following percentage of  
6 the total amount stated in the teacher's application under Section  
7 61.717:

8 (1) for the first year the teacher receives loan  
9 repayment assistance:

10 (A) 50 percent; or

11 (B) if the teacher is employed at a campus  
12 assigned an overall performance rating of F under Section 39.054  
13 for the preceding school year, 70 percent;

14 (2) for the second year the teacher receives loan  
15 repayment assistance, 30 percent; and

16 (3) if any amount remains, for the third year the  
17 teacher receives loan repayment assistance, 20 percent.

18 Sec. 61.721. REPAYMENT. (a) The board shall pay any loan  
19 repayment assistance under this subchapter in a lump sum delivered  
20 on the classroom teacher's behalf directly to the holder of the  
21 loan.

22 (b) A repayment under this subchapter may be applied to any  
23 amount due in connection with the loan.

24 Sec. 61.722. RULES. The board shall adopt rules necessary  
25 for the administration of this subchapter.

26 SECTION 4. Section 29.153(b), Education Code, as amended by  
27 this Act, applies beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

1           SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.