

By: West, Royce

S.B. No. 1923

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a pilot project to lower teacher turnover rates in high-need public school districts.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter I, Chapter 21, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 21.419 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.419. SALARY SUPPLEMENTS FOR TEACHERS IN HIGH-NEED PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS; PILOT PROJECT. (a) The commissioner shall establish a pilot project in school districts selected by the commissioner to pay salary supplements to teachers who commit to teach in one of the districts for at least three years.

(b) In selecting school districts under Subsection (a), the commissioner shall select districts that:

(1) include a substantial geographical area with a low-income population;

(2) have a substantial number of campuses considered academically unacceptable under Section 39.132; and

(3) have high teacher turnover rates.

(c) From amounts appropriated to the agency, the commissioner shall award grants to school districts that participate in the program. A grant under this section must be in an amount sufficient to pay the costs to the district of participating in the program, as determined by the commissioner. A determination of the commissioner is final and may not be appealed.

1       (d) A school district may use a grant awarded under  
2 Subsection (c) to pay a salary supplement to a teacher who commits  
3 to teach in the district for three years beginning with the  
4 2007-2008 school year. The salary supplement is payable only at the  
5 end of the teacher's three-year commitment to the district. A  
6 teacher who does not fulfill the three-year commitment is not  
7 entitled to any portion of the salary supplement.

8       (e) A grant a school district receives under this section is  
9 in addition to any funding the district receives under Chapter 42.  
10 The commissioner shall distribute funds under this section with the  
11 Foundation School Program payment to which the district is entitled  
12 as soon as practicable after the end of the school year as  
13 determined by the commissioner. A district to which Chapter 41  
14 applies is entitled to a grant under this section. The commissioner  
15 shall determine the timing of the distribution of a grant to a  
16 district that does not receive Foundation School Program payments.  
17 An open-enrollment charter school is not eligible for a grant under  
18 this section.

19       (f) This section does not create a property right to a grant  
20 or salary supplement. A school district is entitled to a grant to  
21 carry out the purposes of this section only to the extent the  
22 commissioner makes the grant in accordance with this section and  
23 only to the extent sufficient state funds are appropriated for  
24 those purposes. If state funds are appropriated but are  
25 insufficient to fully fund a grant, the commissioner shall reduce  
26 the grant paid to each district and the district shall reduce the  
27 salary supplement the district pays to each teacher under this

1 section proportionately so that each selected teacher receives the  
2 same amount of money.

3 (g) Each district shall, in the manner and at the time  
4 prescribed by the commissioner, provide to the commissioner proof  
5 acceptable to the commissioner of the appropriate certification of  
6 a teacher to whom the district is paying a salary supplement under  
7 this section.

8 (h) The commissioner may audit the expenditure of money  
9 appropriated for purposes of this section. A district's use of the  
10 money appropriated for purposes of this section shall be verified  
11 as part of the district audit under Section 44.008.

12 (i) A salary supplement a teacher receives under this  
13 section is not considered in determining whether the district is  
14 paying the teacher the minimum monthly salary under Section 21.402.

15 (j) The commissioner may adopt any rules necessary to  
16 implement this section.

17 (k) The agency shall report to the legislature describing  
18 the agency's activities under the pilot project, the effect of the  
19 project on the teacher turnover rate and the academic performance  
20 level for each school district participating in the project, and  
21 the recommendations arising from the project. The agency shall  
22 submit an interim report under this subsection not later than  
23 January 1, 2009, and a final report not later than January 1, 2011.

24 (l) This section expires January 1, 2011.

25 SECTION 2. Section 21.419, Education Code, as added by this  
26 Act, applies beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.

27 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007.