

By: Olivo

H.B. No. 3571

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a program to provide financial incentives to students who agree to teach mathematics or science in certain public schools.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter FF to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER FF. FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO PREPARE TEACHERS IN MATHEMATICS OR SCIENCE

Sec. 61.9771. ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM. The board shall establish a program to provide financial incentives such as tuition assistance or student loan repayment to:

(1) assist persons to obtain certification to teach mathematics or science in a public secondary school in this state;  
and

(2) facilitate the employment of those persons by a public secondary school in this state that has a shortage of teachers certified to teach in those fields.

Sec. 61.9772. ELIGIBILITY. To be eligible to receive financial incentives under this subchapter, a person must:

(1) apply to the board in the form and manner prescribed by board rule;

(2) have completed at least 60 semester credit hours of course work toward an associate's degree at a public junior

1 college or a junior college accredited by a recognized accrediting  
2 agency;

3 (3) be admitted into an educator preparation program  
4 at an institution of higher education that prepares students for  
5 certification to teach mathematics or science;

6 (4) enter into an agreement with the board as provided  
7 by Section 61.9773; and

8 (5) satisfy any other criteria jointly prescribed by  
9 the board and the State Board for Educator Certification.

10 Sec. 61.9773. AGREEMENT. To qualify for financial  
11 incentives under this subchapter, a person must enter into a  
12 written agreement with the board as provided by this section. The  
13 agreement must require the person to:

14 (1) obtain, within the period prescribed by board  
15 rule, certification to teach mathematics or science in a public  
16 secondary school in this state;

17 (2) accept, during the first school year that begins  
18 after the date the person becomes certified, an offer of full-time  
19 employment to teach mathematics or science in a public secondary  
20 school in this state that has a shortage of teachers certified to  
21 teach in one or more of those fields; and

22 (3) teach mathematics or science at that school for at  
23 least three school years.

24 Sec. 61.9774. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES. The board shall award  
25 financial incentives such as tuition assistance or student loan  
26 repayment to each participant in the program to assist with the cost  
27 of payment of mandatory tuition and fees for courses required to

1 obtain certification to teach mathematics or science.

2 Sec. 61.9775. REIMBURSEMENT; EXCEPTIONS. (a) A program  
3 participant who fails to meet the requirements of Section 61.9773  
4 shall reimburse the board for the amount of any assistance received  
5 by the participant under this subchapter.

6 (b) The board by rule shall establish exceptions to the  
7 reimbursement requirement under this section for participants who  
8 are unable to meet the requirements of Section 61.9773 as a result  
9 of an unusual hardship.

10 Sec. 61.9776. GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS. In addition to  
11 money appropriated by the legislature, the board may solicit and  
12 accept gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of this  
13 subchapter.

14 Sec. 61.9777. RULES. The board shall adopt rules necessary  
15 for the administration of this subchapter, including a rule that  
16 sets the maximum amount of financial assistance that a person may  
17 receive under this subchapter in one year.

18 SECTION 2. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
19 shall adopt rules for the administration of Subchapter FF, Chapter  
20 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable  
21 after this Act takes effect. For that purpose, the coordinating  
22 board may adopt the initial rules in the manner provided by law for  
23 emergency rules.

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

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.