

By: Seliger, et al.
(Clardy)

S.B. No. 686

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the Math and Science Scholars Loan Repayment Program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 61.9831, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.9831. LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE AUTHORIZED. The board shall provide, in accordance with this subchapter and board rules, assistance in the repayment of eligible student loans for eligible persons who agree to teach mathematics or science for a specified period in schools [~~school districts~~] that receive federal funding under Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.).

SECTION 2. Sections 61.9832(a) and (c), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible to receive loan repayment assistance under this subchapter, a person must:

(1) apply annually for the loan repayment assistance in the manner prescribed by the board;

(2) be a United States citizen;

(3) have completed an undergraduate or graduate program in mathematics or science;

(4) have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent;

(5) be:

1 (A) certified under Subchapter B, Chapter 21, to
2 teach mathematics or science in a public school in this state; or

3 (B) teaching under a probationary teaching
4 certificate [~~be enrolled in an educator preparation program to~~
5 ~~obtain that certification that is accredited by the State Board for~~
6 ~~Educator Certification and is provided by an institution of higher~~
7 ~~education or by a private or independent institution of higher~~
8 ~~education in this state~~];

9 (6) have been employed for at least one year as a
10 teacher teaching mathematics or science at a public school [~~located~~
11 ~~in a school district~~] that receives funding under Title I,
12 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section
13 6301 et seq.);

14 (7) not be in default on any other education loan;

15 (8) not receive any other state or federal loan
16 repayment assistance, including a Teacher Education Assistance for
17 College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant or teacher loan
18 forgiveness;

19 (9) enter into an agreement with the board under
20 Subsection (c); and

21 (10) comply with any other requirement adopted by the
22 board under this subchapter.

23 (c) To receive loan repayment assistance under this
24 subchapter, a person must enter into an agreement with the board
25 that includes the following provisions:

26 (1) the person will accept an offer of full-time
27 employment to teach mathematics or science, as applicable based on

1 the person's certification, in a public school [~~located in a school~~
2 ~~district~~] that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and
3 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.);

4 (2) the person will complete four consecutive years of
5 employment as a full-time classroom teacher in a school described
6 by Subdivision (1) whose primary duty is to teach mathematics or
7 science, as applicable, based on the person's certification;

8 (3) beginning with the school year immediately
9 following the last of the four consecutive school years described
10 by Subdivision (2), the person will complete four additional
11 consecutive school years teaching in any public school in this
12 state; and

13 (4) the person acknowledges the conditional nature of
14 the loan repayment assistance.

15 SECTION 3. Section 61.9837(b), Education Code, is amended
16 to read as follows:

17 (b) The fund is a dedicated account in the general revenue
18 fund and consists of:

19 (1) gifts, grants, and other donations received for
20 the fund; [~~and~~]

21 (2) any amounts appropriated by the legislature for
22 the fund; and

23 (3) interest and other earnings from the investment of
24 the fund.

25 SECTION 4. Sections 61.9839(a) and (b), Education Code, are
26 amended to read as follows:

27 (a) An eligible person may continue to receive loan

1 repayment assistance if the person continues to teach in a public
2 school that receives funding under Title I, Elementary and
3 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.),
4 ~~[described by Section 61.9832(a)(7)]~~ after the first four years of
5 teaching service required ~~[for eligibility]~~ under Section
6 61.9832(c)(2).

7 (b) If an eligible person transfers to a public school
8 ~~[located in a school district]~~ that does not receive funding under
9 Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
10 Section 6301 et seq.), after the first four years required for
11 eligibility under Section 61.9832(c)(2), the person may not receive
12 more than 75 percent of the maximum annual amount of the loan
13 repayment assistance as determined by the board.

14 SECTION 5. Section 61.9837(f), Education Code, is repealed.

15 SECTION 6. The changes in law made by this Act apply only to
16 a loan repayment assistance agreement entered into under Subchapter
17 II, Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by Chapter 1229 (S.B.
18 1720), Acts of the 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, on or
19 after the effective date of this Act. A loan repayment assistance
20 agreement entered into before the effective date of this Act is
21 governed by the law in effect immediately before that date, and the
22 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

23 SECTION 7. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
24 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
25 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
26 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
27 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.