

By: King of Hemphill

H.B. No. 3140

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to eligibility requirements for the Teach for Texas Loan Repayment Assistance Program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 56.352(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a) The purpose of this subchapter is to attract to the:

(1) teaching profession any persons who have expressed interest in teaching and to support the employment of those persons as classroom teachers by providing student loan repayment assistance for service as a classroom teacher in the public schools of this state; and

(2) school mental health profession any persons who have expressed interest in providing mental health services to students enrolled in public schools and to support the employment of those persons as school mental health professionals by providing student loan repayment assistance for service as a mental health provider in the public schools of this state.

SECTION 2. Sections 56.353(a) and (c), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) Teach for Texas repayment assistance is available only to a person who applies for the assistance and who:

(1) is certified in a teaching field identified by the commissioner of education as experiencing a critical shortage of

1 teachers in this state in the year in which the person receives the
2 assistance and has for at least one year taught full-time at, and is
3 currently teaching full-time at, the preschool, primary, or
4 secondary level in a public school in this state in that teaching
5 field; ~~or~~

6 (2) is a certified educator who has for at least one
7 year taught full-time at, and is currently teaching full-time at,
8 the preschool, primary, or secondary level in a public school in
9 this state in a community identified by the commissioner of
10 education as experiencing a critical shortage of teachers in the
11 year in which the person receives the assistance; or

12 (3) is a mental health professional who:

13 (A) for at least one year has been employed
14 full-time at, and provided mental health services to students
15 enrolled in, a public school in this state; and

16 (B) is currently employed and providing mental
17 health services as described by Paragraph (A).

18 (c) If the money available for loan repayment assistance in
19 a period for which assistance is awarded is insufficient to provide
20 assistance to all eligible applicants described by Subsection (b),
21 the coordinating board shall establish priorities for awarding
22 repayment assistance to address only the most critical teacher
23 shortages described by Subsection (a)(1) or (2) ~~(a)~~.

24 SECTION 3. Section 56.355(a), Education Code, is amended to
25 read as follows:

26 (a) The coordinating board may determine the manner in which
27 Teach for Texas loan repayment assistance is to be paid. The

1 coordinating board may provide for the payment of a portion of the
2 repayment assistance in one or more installments before the person
3 completes a full year of service as a teacher or a school mental
4 health professional, as applicable, and for the payment of the
5 remainder of the repayment assistance for that year after the
6 completion of the full year of service.

7 SECTION 4. Section 56.3575(b), Education Code, is amended
8 to read as follows:

9 (b) The coordinating board shall distribute a copy of the
10 rules adopted under this section and pertinent information relating
11 to this subchapter to each public or private institution of higher
12 education in this state that offers:

13 (1) an educator certification program, including an
14 alternative educator certification program or another equivalent
15 program; or

16 (2) an educational program that prepares students for
17 a school mental health profession.

18 SECTION 5. The change in law made by this Act to Section
19 56.353, Education Code, applies only to a person who first
20 establishes eligibility for loan repayment assistance under
21 Subchapter 0, Chapter 56, Education Code, as amended by this Act, on
22 the basis of an application submitted on or after September 1, 2023.
23 A person who first establishes eligibility on the basis of an
24 application submitted before September 1, 2023, is governed by the
25 law in effect on the date the application was submitted, and the
26 former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

27 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.