



2023-2024 General
Assembly

HOUSE BILL 259: 2023 Appropriations Act, Sec. 7.44A: Teacher Apprenticeship Grant Program

Committee:
Introduced by:
Analysis of: Sec. 7.44A of S.L. 2023-134

Date: December 1, 2023
Prepared by: Kara McCraw
Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: Section 7.44A of S.L. 2023-134 directs the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to establish the Teacher Apprenticeship Grant Program (Program). The purpose of the Program is to provide grants to local school administrative units (LEAs) to award funds for (i) the cost of tuition at an educator preparation program (EPP) for eligible teacher apprentices and (ii) salary supplements for teacher apprentices who become teachers in the LEA. LEAs can apply for participation annually through a process established by DPI that identifies current and ongoing needs for licensed teachers and the expected number of eligible teacher apprentices that would participate in the Program.

LEAs can award tuition funds to an eligible teacher apprentice of up to \$4,600 per academic semester for up to four academic years to defray the costs of tuition and fees for part-time or full-time coursework taken while employed in the LEA as an eligible teacher apprentice. An eligible teacher apprentice is an individual who meets all of the following criteria:

- Is a graduate of a high school in the LEA who was enrolled in a Career and College Promise Transfer Pathway Program leading to an associate degree in teacher preparation and earned one or more credits toward that degree.
- Is employed as a teacher apprentice in an elementary school in the same LEA. A teacher assistant works with a teacher of record to develop an expertise in teaching by observing best education practices and gaining classroom experience with the goal of becoming a licensed teacher.
- Is enrolled part-time or full-time in a recognized EPP pursuing coursework toward a college degree that will result in teacher licensure.
- Is a State resident for tuition purposes.

Eligible teacher apprentices can also:

- Be granted academic leave to pursue coursework that can only be taken during working hours.
- Fulfill the student teaching requirements by working as a teacher apprentice at the employing LEA.
- Continue to receive salary and benefits while student teaching in the LEA.

If an eligible teacher apprentice becomes a licensed teacher and accepts employment in the same LEA, that teacher will receive a salary supplement each month during the first four years of employment as a teacher that is equivalent to the difference between the State funded salary of the graduate and the State funded salary of a similarly situated teacher with four years of experience on the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule.

Jeffrey Hudson
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578

House Bill 259

Page 2

Local boards of education receiving grants under the Program must make efforts to promote the Program to high school students enrolled in a Career and College Promise Transfer Pathway Program. DPI must establish criteria for initial and continuing eligibility to participate in the Program, and adopt standards to ensure that only qualified potential recipients receive an award of funds for tuition and fees. The standards must include satisfactory academic progress toward achieving teacher licensure.

LEAs receiving grants pursuant to the Program must prioritize the award of funds for eligible teacher apprentices who received an award in the prior academic year, and must enter into a memorandum of understanding with the institution of higher education in which an award recipient under the Program is enrolled, including procedures for remittance, endorsement, and return of funds in certain circumstances.

DPI must report no later than May 15, 2024, and annually thereafter while funds are awarded under the Program, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the Program, including information on funds awarded by LEA and EPP, demographics of recipients, placement rates, and recommendations to improve the Program and increase the number of teachers in North Carolina.

This section became effective July 1, 2023.