

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1684

An act relating to teacher recruitment; creating the Transition to Teaching Program; providing for grant proposals and applications; requiring an evaluation; authorizing certain activities and placing limitations on expenditures; providing for repayment of certain stipends; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Transition to Teaching Program; Legislative intent.—The Transition to Teaching Program is created to encourage and assist mid-career professionals who want to become teachers.

Section 2. Grants; eligible applicants.—

(1) The Commissioner of Education shall design the process for receiving and evaluating grant proposals in accordance with state and federal appropriations guidelines. Grants may be awarded only to the extent that funding is provided.

(2) The Commissioner of Education shall request proposals from eligible applicants to participate in the program. Each application must:

(a) Describe the target group of career-changing professionals upon which the applicant will focus in carrying out its program, including a description of the characteristics of the target group that shows how the knowledge and experience of its members are likely to improve their ability to become effective teachers.

(b) Describe how the applicant will identify and recruit program participants.

(c) Describe how the applicant will ensure that program participants are placed and teach in eligible school districts in this state.

(d) Describe the teacher support services that program participants will receive throughout at least their first year of teaching.

(e) Describe how the applicant will collaborate with other institutions, agencies, or organizations to recruit, train, place, and support program participants, including evidence of the commitment of those institutions, agencies, or organizations to the applicant's program.

(3) The Commissioner of Education must require an evaluation process to measure the progress and effectiveness of the program. This evaluation must include:

(a) The program's goals and objectives.

(b) The performance indicators that the applicant will use to measure the program's progress.

(c) The outcome measures that will be used to determine the program's effectiveness.

(d) An assurance that the applicant will provide the commissioner with information the commissioner finds necessary to determine the overall effectiveness of the programs.

Section 3. Program implementation; authorized expenditures.—

(1) An applicant shall estimate the funds required for the proposed program. All funds provided for a program must be used as authorized in federal guidelines.

(2) Eligible applicants are encouraged to implement the program using the following components:

(a) Recruiting program participants, including informing them of opportunities under the program and putting them in contact with other institutions, agencies, or organizations that will train, place, and support them in the teaching profession.

(b) Assisting providers of teacher training to tailor their training to meet the particular needs of professionals who are changing their careers to teaching.

(c) Placement activities, including identifying eligible local education agencies with a need for the skills and characteristics of the newly trained program participants and assisting those participants to obtain employment in those school districts.

(d) Post-placement support activities for program participants.

Section 4. Eligible participants; requirements for grant repayment.—

(1) Each participant who receives a grant from the program to pursue a teacher-preparation program must agree to teach in an eligible school district in this state for at least 3 years after certification. To be eligible, a school district must meet the requirements established in regulations that implement the Omnibus Appropriations Bill of 2000.

(2) The commissioner shall establish conditions under which a participant must repay all or a portion of the training stipend if the participant fails to complete his or her service obligation.

Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

Approved by the Governor June 13, 2001.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 13, 2001.