



SPONSOR: Rep. K. Williams & Sen. Sturgeon
Reps. Baumbach, Briggs King

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
150th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 254

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO EDUCATOR LICENSURE, CERTIFICATION, EVALUATION, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND PREPARATOR PROGRAMS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 3461, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 3461 Critical need reimbursement program.

(a) *Purpose* — It is the purpose of this program to ~~reduce the number of Delaware public school teachers who do not hold Standard Certification in their area of instruction by enabling and encouraging those teachers to pursue education that will enable them to become fully certified~~ support Delaware schools by increasing the number of public teachers with a Standard Certificate in their area of instruction and improve student achievement by enabling and encouraging those teachers to pursue education that will enable them to become fully certified and prepared to deliver high-quality instruction in state-approved critical needs areas.

(b) *Eligibility* —

~~(1) Eligible applicants are Delaware school districts and charter schools.~~

~~(2)~~(1) Eligible teachers must meet all of the following criteria:

a. Are full-time employees of a Delaware public school district or a charter school.

b. Teach on a temporary, emergency, or limited standard certificate, or a certification certificate of eligibility.

c. Teach in critical needs areas as defined by the Department of Education.

1. The Department of Education shall identify a list of critical needs areas and publish the list on the Department of Education website.

2. Eligible institutions of higher education include any regionally-accredited college or university, or Secretary of Education approved Alternative Routes to Teacher Licensure and Certification programs.

(c) *Reimbursements* —

(1) Reimbursement shall be provided for approved coursework at a regionally accredited institution of higher education or Secretary of Education approved Alternative Routes to Teacher Licensure and Certification program as follows:

a. For a full-time employee of a public school district or charter school teaching on a temporary, emergency, limited standard certificate, or a certificate of eligibility, up to 1 of the following per academic year:

1. Two noncredit-bearing seminars or workshops required for certification.

2. Up to 6 credits.

3. One noncredit-bearing seminar or workshop required for certification and 1 up to 3 credit course.

(2) Reimbursement funds shall be distributed to the institution of higher education upon course completion with a 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale for credit bearing courses or an equivalent passing grade in a non-credit bearing course. Eligible institutions must verify enrollment and course grades prior to disbursement of funds.

(3) Funding may not exceed the cost of tuition and fees or the equivalent at the highest cost public institution in Delaware. If funding exceeds the appropriation, eligible institutions of higher education will be awarded funds in a prorated share of the applicant pool.

(4) The Department of Education may set aside funds as available for teachers meeting these criteria as demand requires.

~~(3) Awards will be made on behalf of specific teachers, or if demand exceeds available funding, then allocated among the districts and charter schools on a prorated share of the applicant pool.~~

~~(4) Districts and charter schools are authorized to reimburse teachers for all or part of tuition and fees paid for coursework that will enable them to achieve standard certification upon receipt of evidence that the teacher has successfully completed coursework with a grade equivalent of a 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.~~

~~(c) Benefit — Districts and charter schools will receive funding to reimburse eligible teachers (those not certified in the critical need area in which they teach) only for tuition and fees for up to 3 credits per term during the regular academic year. Recipients may attend any accredited college, but reimbursement is not to exceed the cost of 3 credits and fees at the highest cost Delaware public college.~~

~~(d) Awards —~~

~~(1) If funding permits, districts and charter schools will receive funding sufficient to allow each eligible teacher for whom a request is made to receive full tuition and fee reimbursement, pursuant to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, for up to 3 credits in each fall and spring semester. Districts and charter schools must verify course completion with a grade equivalent of a 2.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale before reimbursing tuition.~~

- 52 (2) If funding requests exceed the program's appropriation, districts and charter schools will be awarded funds
- 53 in a prorated share of the applicant pool.

SYNOPSIS

This act will allow a critical need reimbursement to be distributed directly to an institute of higher education or Secretary of Education approved Alternative Routes to Teacher Licensure and Certification program for an eligible teacher who is taking noncredit-bearing seminars or workshops or credit-bearing coursework in order to attain standard certification in a state-approved critical need area.