

LAWS OF DELAWARE
VOLUME 83
CHAPTER 46
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORMERLY
HOUSE BILL NO. 89

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.

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.~~ It is the purpose of this program to increase the number of public teachers with Standard Certificate in their area of instruction. This will 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. This program will provide direct reimbursement to an institute of higher education or Secretary of Education-approved Alternative Routes to Teacher Licensure and Certification program for coursework taken during the academic year, which includes Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer sessions.

(b) *Eligibility.* — ~~(1) Eligible applicants are Delaware school districts and charter schools.~~

~~(1~~ 2) 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 of eligibility~~ an Emergency Certification or a Certificate of Eligibility.

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

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

2. Eligible institutions of higher education include any out-of-state regionally-accredited college or university, or Alternative Routes to Teacher Licensure and Certification programs approved by the Delaware Secretary of Education and authorized to operate in Delaware.

(c) *Reimbursements--*

(1) Reimbursement shall be provided to eligible institutions and for programs identified in subsection (b) of this section for approved coursework that meets Department of Education requirements.

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

1. 2 non credit-bearing seminars or workshops required for certification.

2. Up to 6 credits.

3. 1 non credit-bearing seminar or workshop required for certification up to 1 three-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 noncredit-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 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.~~

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

Approved June 15, 2021