

LAWS OF DELAWARE  
VOLUME 83  
CHAPTER 428  
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FORMERLY  
HOUSE BILL NO. 430

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATOR PROGRAM.

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

WHEREAS, the teacher workforce is expected to grow by 6% over the next ten years as student enrollment at public schools is expected to increase by 7.8%; and

WHEREAS, one quarter of Delaware's public school educators and paraprofessionals will be eligible to retire in the next five years; and

WHEREAS, research suggests that most educators are most likely to teach within 40 miles from where they grew up; and

WHEREAS, only 18% of the educator workforce identifies as a race other than white compared to 58% of the student population; and

WHEREAS, most districts and charter schools have openings and more limited candidate pools; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in educator preparation programs has declined in recent years; and

WHEREAS, approximately 76% of educators were retained in the same school over a 2 year period and 24% of teachers hired in Delaware public schools transferred within the district, between districts, or were no longer employed in Delaware; and

WHEREAS, recruitment and retention of teachers in high-needs public schools is even more challenging; and

WHEREAS, studies document that students are more motivated and inspired to learn, retain and achieve when they are taught by teachers who reflect a rich diverse and cultural background similar to the student population and the school community; and

WHEREAS, the Redding Consortium Educator Work Group recommended grow your own programming to support recruiting and support related education professionals, community members, parents, and other representatives of the school population; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the public school system in Delaware to support Delaware students who wish to obtain their post-secondary teaching degrees and become educators in Delaware; and

WHEREAS, several Delaware school districts have made their own efforts to address the critical educator shortage and lack of educator diversity in their own districts their efforts need to be streamlined and performed in concert to enhance and maximize the success of these recruitment and retention strategies and programs.

NOW, THEREFORE:

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

Section 1. Amend Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline and by creating a new chapter as follows:

Chapter 44. Grow Your Own Educator Program.

§ 4401. Title.

This chapter shall be known as the "Grow your Own Educator Program".

§ 4402. Establishment; statement of purpose.

There is established a Grow Your Own Educator Program to improve the recruitment, retention, and diversity of educators in Delaware's K-12 public schools.

§ 4403. Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Applicant" means a school district, as defined in this title, acting independently, or as part of a consortia with other school districts, or an institution of higher education acting on behalf of school districts, or a charter school established under Chapter 5 of this title.

(2) "Candidate" means a student enrolled in a public school or a post-secondary institution of higher learning in Delaware.

(3) "Department" means the Department of Education.

(4) “District” means a reorganized school district.

(5) “Educator” shall have the meaning set forth in §1202 of this title.

(6) “High-need school” means any school either:

a. In the top quartile in 3 or more of the following:

1. Percentage of low-income students.

2. Percentage of English learners.

3. Percentage of minority students.

4. Percentage of students with disabilities; or

b. Has 90% of its students classified as low-income, English learners, or minority.

(7) “Low-income students” means students within the statewide metric determined by the Department of Education utilizing direct certification for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

(8) “Minority student” means students who are members of a racial or ethnic group other than the racial or ethnic group that represents the majority of the State’s population.

(9) “Program” means a Grow Your Own Educator Program as established under this chapter.

(10) “Students with disabilities” means students who because of mental, physical, emotional, developmental, speech or learning disability problems, as defined by the Department of Education rules and regulations, require special education and related services in order to develop their own capabilities.

(11) “Teacher Academies” means high school programs of study that prepare students for education careers by providing a career and technical education.

#### § 4404. District or Charter School Grow Your Own Educator Programs.

(a) District or charter school Grow Your Own Educator Programs will be established to offer support and guidance to candidates who are on a career path towards becoming future educators, starting as early as middle school, or through non-traditional routes, and continuing through their post-secondary education and training and culminating in their being hired, as an educator, by the district or charter school.

(b) The Department, under the Program, will establish a competitive grant process for applicants to apply for grants to develop their own Grow Your Own Educator Program.

#### § 4405. Grant applications.

(a) The grant application shall be in a form as prescribed by the Department.

(b) The Applicant must submit a new grant application every 2 years, along with any additional information the Department may request, in accordance with the Program’s rules and regulations.

(c) The grant application must include a description of the following:

(1) Applicant’s vision for the Program and process to develop this vision which must include input from students, educators, paraprofessionals, and cultural liaisons in the community.

(2) Applicant’s recruitment and hiring goals as they relate to educator diversity.

(3) Applicant’s staff retention goals, specifically in regard to educators of color, including current and projected hiring needs based on current staff data.

(4) Applicant’s goals and/or strategies to ensure the Program will:

a. Support candidates accepted into the Program through their post-secondary education, student teaching/residency, certification, licensure, and hiring.

b. Stress diversity, equity, and inclusion in the approach to recruiting, supporting and retaining candidates.

c. Create clear partnerships and connections between any current or proposed high school Teacher Academies and institutions of higher education partners to accelerate and improve credential and degree attainment.

d. Assist accepted candidates with obtaining state scholarships, loan forgiveness, and alternative routes to certification programs such as the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Program, Delaware Teacher Corps Incentive Program, Speech-Language Pathologist Incentive Program, Critical Needs Reimbursement Program, and High Needs Loan Repayment Program.

e. Seek candidates from community-based organizations, parents, and paraprofessionals who can be developed through earn and learn models.

f. Propose incentives for accepted candidates to remain employed long-term in applicant's district or charter school.

g. Propose how Program will align with Applicant's current mentoring and induction programs for new teachers.

(5) Applicant's current and proposed partnerships with institutions of higher education and community-based organizations to develop and implement the Program.

(6) Applicant's plan for collecting and providing all data required by the Department for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of the Program.

(7) Applicant's plan to continue and sustain the Program beyond any grant awards as well as leverage other funding to support the Program.

(8) Applicant's success in implementation of the Program, ability to leverage other funding to support the Program, and other best practices that are a result of the grant, should the applicant apply for continued funding under the grant beyond the initial 2-year period.

§ 4406. Timeline and distribution of grant funds.

(a) The Department will award funds annually to approved grant applicants as follows:

(1) Applicants may use funds over a 2-year period to implement the Program, provided the Program was successful in the first year of the grant.

(2) Contingent upon the availability of sufficient funds.

(b) Where there are insufficient funds to award a grant to every Applicant who satisfies the requirements of this chapter, the Department will give priority to applicants who meet the following criteria:

(1) Recruit candidates that reflect the diversity of the student population and community.

(2) Develop programs that support teachers and the placement of candidates in high-need schools.

(3) Increase opportunities in the high school Teacher Academies to support more diverse participants, integrate culturally responsible curriculum, provide meaningful work-based learning opportunities, and accelerate postsecondary credits and credentials during high school.

(4) Create apprenticeship programs in education.

(5) Expand year-long teacher residency models.

§ 4407. Use of grant funds.

(a) Grant funds, awarded under § 4406 of this title, must be used by the Applicant to implement or sustain a Grow your Own Educator Program, including for any of the following purposes:

(1) Design and startup of the Program.

(2) Compensate personnel and contractors hired to assist in the design and implementation of the Program, including technical assistance.

(3) Review and upgrade of Teacher Academies and other existing programs that will complement and support the Program.

(4) Revise Applicant's existing programs and policies to support candidates accepted into the Program who work in educational professional roles such as paraprofessionals.

(5) Hire substitute teachers to enable educators to lend their time to support the Program.

(6) Provide career ladder opportunities and monetary compensation for highly effective educators to serve as leaders and provide coaching and mentoring for their colleagues and candidates participating in the Program.

(7) Provide candidates last-dollar support for postsecondary education, including tuition, student fees, books, technology, credentialing fees, transportation, and support for passing state testing requirements for licensure if the candidate makes a formal commitment to teach in a Delaware high-need school, for a minimum of 3 years, after obtaining their Delaware teachers license or certification.

(8) Provide financial incentives for candidates including paid internships, residency, apprenticeship and professional learning opportunities.

(9) Partner with institutions of higher education to provide tutoring, academic counseling, cohort models, assistance with credential requirements, and support for taking and passing state testing requirements for licensure.

(10) Expand teacher residency models or develop a teacher apprenticeship model in which candidates can learn while earning a salary and participating in competency-based educator preparation.

§ 4408. Funding.

(a) Funding appropriated through the Annual Appropriations Act for teacher recruitment and retention may be used to implement the Program established under this chapter.

(b) The Department is authorized to accept and retain private donations to support the Program.

§ 4409. Annual Reporting.

(a) Each fiscal year, the applicant shall provide to the Department the following summary data and any other data requested by the Department which shall be de-identified to the greatest extent possible:

(1) The number of candidates served, types of programs that were supported, types of occupations that candidates entered, the participating schools and number of candidates who were employed.

(2) The institutions of higher learning that candidates in the Program attend.

(3) The number of candidates who fulfill the Program's 3 year teaching commitment and the percentage of teachers retained by the school district or charter school beyond 3 years.

(4) Demographic information related to candidates who participate in the Program to gauge the success at recruiting demographically underrepresented groups to the education profession.

(5) The amount of private or federal funding, if any, utilized by the applicant to financially support the Program.

(b) Each fiscal year the Department shall report to the Chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees of the General Assembly and shall include, in its report, the summary data received in subsection (a) of this section.

§ 4410. Rules and regulations.

The Department shall adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations as will be necessary for the implementation of the Grow Your Own Educator Program authorized by this chapter.

Approved September 9, 2022