

Chapter 227

(Senate Bill 937)

AN ACT concerning

Grow Your Own Educators Grant Program – Established

FOR the purpose of establishing the Grow Your Own Educators Grant Program to provide grants to certain local school systems for certain employees who pledge to fulfill a certain service obligation as a full-time teacher in the State; requiring the State Department of Education to administer the Program and to take certain actions to develop and implement the program; establishing the eligibility for certain teacher candidates in the Program and requiring teacher candidates to be paid a certain rate and offered certain benefits under the Program; requiring collaboratives to take certain actions under the Program; ~~requiring~~ authorizing the Governor to include ~~a certain~~ an appropriation in the annual budget bill for the Program; requiring the Department to collect and publish on its website certain data on the Program each year; and generally relating to the Grow Your Own Educators Grant Program.

BY adding to

Article – Education

Section 18–27A–01 through 18–27A–06 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 27A.

Grow Your Own Educators Grant Program”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Education**SUBTITLE 27A. GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATORS GRANT PROGRAM.****18–27A–01.**

(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) “COLLABORATIVE” MEANS AN AGREEMENT OUTLINING COMMITMENTS OF A PARTNERSHIP AMONG:

(1) AT LEAST ONE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM;

(2) AT LEAST ONE ~~UNION~~ EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING EMPLOYEES OF A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH TITLE 6, SUBTITLE 4 OR SUBTITLE 5 OF THIS ARTICLE; AND

(3) AT LEAST ONE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION WITH A TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

~~(C) “ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL WHO:~~

~~(1) IS EMPLOYED AS A NONCERTIFIED EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL BY A PARTICIPATING LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM; AND~~

~~(2) MEETS THE EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS DETERMINED BY A COLLABORATIVE.~~

~~(D)~~ (C) “NONCERTIFIED EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL” MEANS A NONCERTIFIED PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEE DESIGNATED AS PART OF A BARGAINING UNIT UNDER TITLE 6, SUBTITLE 5 OF THIS ARTICLE.

~~(E)~~ (D) “PROGRAM” MEANS THE GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATORS GRANT PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS SUBTITLE.

(E) “PROVISIONAL TEACHER” MEANS AN INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYED BY A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM THROUGH A PROVISIONAL CONTRACT AS A CONDITIONAL TEACHER.

18-27A-02.

(A) THERE IS A GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATORS GRANT PROGRAM.

(B) (1) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO:

(I) ARE INTERESTED IN PURSUING A CAREER IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION; AND

(II) ULTIMATELY PLEDGE TO FULFILL A SERVICE OBLIGATION AS A TEACHER EMPLOYED FULL-TIME IN A HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOL, GRADE LEVEL, OR CONTENT AREA IN THE STATE IN WHICH THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS, AS IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM.

(C) ~~(1)~~ TO SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE PROGRAM, A TEACHER CANDIDATE APPLICANT SHALL:

~~(1)~~ (I) BE EMPLOYED AS A NONCERTIFIED EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OR PROVISIONAL TEACHER BY A PARTICIPATING LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM ON THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE PROGRAM; AND

~~(2)~~ (II) MEET THE EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS DETERMINED BY A COLLABORATIVE.

(2) NOT MORE THAN ONE QUARTER OF THE FUNDS USED TO SUPPORT TEACHING CANDIDATE APPLICANTS MAY BE USED TO SUPPORT TEACHING CANDIDATE APPLICANTS WHO ARE PROVISIONAL TEACHERS.

18-27A-03.

(A) A COLLABORATIVE SHALL NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION.

(B) A COLLABORATIVE SHALL DEVELOP AND SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT:

(1) A PLAN TO:

(I) SELECT AT LEAST ONE CONTENT AREA IN THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM IN WHICH THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS, AS IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT;

(II) SELECT AT LEAST ONE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM AT AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION THAT SATISFIES THE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES; AND

(III) DESIGNATE AN INDIVIDUAL FROM A COLLABORATIVE TO ASSIST TEACHER CANDIDATES AND PROVIDE PROGRAM GUIDANCE;

(2) AN ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBERS OF:

(I) TEACHER APPLICANTS LIKELY TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM WHO ARE NONCERTIFICATED EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS;
~~AND~~

(II) TEACHER APPLICANTS LIKELY TO COMPLETE THE PROGRAM WHO ARE PROVISIONAL TEACHERS; AND

(III) MENTOR TEACHERS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT TEACHER CANDIDATES IN THE PROGRAM; AND

(3) EVIDENCE OF A WRITTEN BILLING AGREEMENT WITH AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION THAT INCLUDES:

(I) THE TOTAL COST TO THE COLLABORATIVE FOR THE COHORT OF TEACHER CANDIDATES;

(II) PRORATED TUITION COST THE COLLABORATIVE SHALL PAY THE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IF A CANDIDATE DOES NOT COMPLETE THE PROGRAM; AND

(III) A PROVISION THAT NO TEACHER CANDIDATE SHALL BE REQUIRED TO PAY TUITION, BOOKS, OR FEES AS PART OF THE TEACHER CANDIDATE'S COURSE OF STUDY.

(C) A COLLABORATIVE SHALL DEVELOP AND SUBMIT TO THE DEPARTMENT:

(1) AN OUTREACH PLAN TO RECRUIT TEACHER CANDIDATES AND MENTOR TEACHERS THAT:

(I) PRIORITIZES ~~RACIAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY OF THE NONCERTIFIED EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE~~ CANDIDATES AND MENTOR TEACHERS WITH LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY AND FROM RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION;

(II) ESTIMATES PROGRAM EXPENSES BY CATEGORY, KEEPING PROGRAM EXPENSES RELATED TO PROVISIONAL TEACHERS AT OR BELOW ONE QUARTER OF TOTAL EXPENSES; AND

(III) IDENTIFIES AT LEAST ONE SOURCE OF LONG-TERM FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE PROCESS AND TIMELINE FOR OBTAINING LONG-TERM FUNDING; AND

(2) ANY OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT.

18-27A-04.

(A) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL AWARD A GRANT TO A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM THAT IS PART OF A COLLABORATIVE FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM TO COMPLETE A TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM AT AN

INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION UNDER THE AGREEMENT DESCRIBED IN § 18-27A-03 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL AWARD A GRANT FOR:

(I) TUITION, BOOKS, AND FEES FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES;

(II) STIPENDS FOR MENTOR TEACHERS; AND

(III) COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM.

(3) IN AWARDING A GRANT, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO ENSURE THAT NOT MORE THAN ONE QUARTER OF EXPENSES AWARDED IN THE GRANT GO TO SUPPORTING PROVISIONAL TEACHER PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROGRAM.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, SHALL, ON REQUEST, PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO A COLLABORATIVE IN OBTAINING STATE, FEDERAL, OR OTHER FUNDING FOR THE OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM.

(B) A TEACHER CANDIDATE SHALL BE PAID A RATE OF PAY AND OFFERED BENEFITS THAT ARE AT LEAST EQUAL TO THE RATE OF PAY RECEIVED BY AND BENEFITS OFFERED TO A NONCERTIFIED EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OR PROVISIONAL TEACHER OF THE EQUIVALENT CLASSIFICATION AND TENURE IN THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM PROVIDED IN THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.

(C) (1) A COLLABORATIVE SHALL PROVIDE EACH TEACHER CANDIDATE A MENTOR TEACHER FOR THE ENTIRETY OF THE PROGRAM.

(2) A TEACHER CANDIDATE MAY NOT SERVE AS A TEACHER OF RECORD OR A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER FOR ANY TEACHER OTHER THAN THE MENTOR TEACHER ASSIGNED TO THE TEACHER CANDIDATE.

(D) A LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM AND ~~A UNION~~ AN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION THAT REPRESENTS THE TEACHER CANDIDATES SHALL NEGOTIATE A GRADUAL RELEASE MODEL THAT ALLOWS TEACHER CANDIDATES TO FOCUS PRIMARILY ON INTERNSHIP AND PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS.

(E) ~~(1)~~ A TEACHER CANDIDATE SHALL PERFORM A SERVICE OBLIGATION TO TEACH FULL-TIME IN THE STATE IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL OR A PUBLIC PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM IN A HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOL, AS IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT, OR IN A GRADE LEVEL OR CONTENT AREA IN WHICH THERE IS A

SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED EDUCATORS, AS IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR A MINIMUM OF 2 YEARS.

~~(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE THE LENGTH OF THE SERVICE OBLIGATION.~~

18-27A-05.

~~BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2026, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$5,000,000~~ THE GOVERNOR MAY INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PROGRAM.

18-27A-06.

(A) EACH YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL COLLECT AND PUBLISH ON ITS WEBSITE:

(1) DATA ON TEACHER CANDIDATE RACE, GENDER, AND LINGUISTIC STATUS;

(2) DATA ON TEACHER CANDIDATE STATUS AND RETENTION;

(3) SPENDING BY CATEGORY;

(4) A SUMMARY OF TEACHER CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT METHODS;

AND

(5) IF APPLICABLE, THE HIRING STATUS AND RETENTION DATA OF PROGRAM GRADUATES.

(B) IN REPORTING THE DATA UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAKE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO ANONYMIZE THE DATA TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY OF TEACHER CANDIDATES.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor, April 25, 2024.