

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/ SB 50

SPONSOR: Senator Sullivan

SUBJECT: Teacher Recruitment Program

DATE: December 3, 1999 REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|--------------|------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| 1. | <u>White</u> | <u>O'Farrell</u> | <u>ED</u> | <u>Favorable/CS</u> |
| 2. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

I. Summary:

The bill creates a program that requires school districts to allow principals to recruit accomplished teachers to schools that earn a D or F under Florida's school grading scheme. In a required plan, the school district will identify performance criteria that make teachers eligible, and the principal will identify the individual teachers who meet the criteria. The performance criteria must include evidence of subject-area mastery on the part of the teacher and continuous, superior improvement on the part of his or her students. Teachers recruited for the program will receive an annual bonus or negotiated salary increase as provided in the plan.

The program will be implemented immediately when a school district learns that a school has received a grade of D or F. If plans have not yet been approved, in 2000-2001, the bonus will be the same as is provided for the Excellent Teacher Program, estimated to be at least \$3,700 per year.

If the school continues to earn a D or F grade in the year following the program, the school district must recommend corrective action, including whether or not the principal should be retained.

This bill creates a new section of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

The Excellent Teaching Program is created by s. 236.08106, F.S. The program provides incentives for teachers to gain certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. Those teachers who are successful in earning the certification become eligible for a bonus equal to 10 percent of the prior year's state average teacher's salary. Currently 566 Florida teachers have achieved national board certification.

Currently, s. 240.4063, F.S., is the only state law authorizing a specific incentive to some teachers to work in a particular kind of school. The Florida Teacher Scholarship and Forgivable Loan Program offers double the loan forgiveness rate to program participants for each full year they teach in a high-density, low-income urban school or at a low-density, low-income rural school, as identified by the State Board of Education. There are no statutory provisions offering bonuses or incentives to attract teachers to low performing schools. School boards are required, however, to adopt salary schedules for employees that recognize efficient service and job performance.

Job performance will, in fact, become a preeminent factor in determining compensation for teachers and administrators. Chapter 99-398, L.O.F., the A+ legislation, amended s. 230.23(5)(c), F.S., to require that by June 30, 2002, at least 5 percent of the salary of teachers and administrators be based on job performance as measured by the assessment procedures and criteria contained in s. 231.29, F.S. This section of law was also amended by the A+ act to require the assessment of job performance of instructional and administrative personnel to be based primarily on improvement in student performance. There is some concern that these changes may act as a deterrent to attracting or keeping accomplished teachers in low-performing schools.

The importance of good teachers to student performance is well documented. An interim study report on teacher effectiveness by the Senate Education Committee (Interim Project Report 2000-30) cited a finding by the 1996 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future that the teacher is the single most reliable variable in predicting student gains in achievement. This finding would seem to have particular significance for low-performing schools, many of which serve low-income areas with high percentages of minority students. For example, another study cited in the Education Committee report found that students in such schools have less than a 50 percent chance of having a math or science teacher who is certified to teach math or science.¹

A review of literature on teacher salaries in school systems around the nation revealed that compensation plans in effect or being negotiated are moving toward performance pay; however, the concept of using incentives to attract teachers to low performing schools does not appear to be an item of discussion.

Currently in Florida, the 79 public schools with a grade designation of F employ 3,495 teachers. The 592 with a designation of D employ 27,085 teachers. Elementary schools represent the overwhelming majority of schools with D and F grades.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The legislation under consideration will create the Teacher Recruitment Program to allow principals to recruit accomplished teachers to each school that receives a grade of D or F under the state's school grading system. The school district will develop a plan to allow principals to recruit the teachers, to make it possible for them to transfer to the school, and to pay them a bonus or negotiated salary increase.

¹J. Oakes, *Multiplying Inequalities: the Effects of Race, Social Class, and Tracking on Opportunities to Learn Mathematics and Science*, RAND Corporation, 1990.

The Commissioner of Education must approve each plan, but the bill provides conditions for immediate implementation and a negotiation process in case a plan is not in place when school grades are announced. Implementation must begin immediately when the school district learns that a school has received a grade of D or F. Until a district has an approved plan, the principal may recruit only those teachers who have earned national certification or who have been named teacher-of-the-year at the district or state level.

Each district's plan will state the amount of the bonus. If a plan is not approved by the time the program must be implemented, the bonus is established at the same level as is awarded to nationally certified teachers under the Excellent Teaching Program. That is, 10 percent of the statewide average teacher's salary in the previous year. Currently, the statewide average is \$35,916. In the first year of implementation, 2000-2001, it will be at least 3 percent higher, so the first bonuses will be at least \$3,700.

To be eligible, a teacher must have demonstrated mastery in improving student performance and evidence of mastery of the subject area to be taught. The school district will identify the performance criteria that make a teacher eligible, but the principal will identify the individual teachers who meet the criteria and whom he or she wishes to recruit. The principal must certify that the teachers continue to meet the eligibility requirements.

Thus the principal has considerable flexibility in the program's implementation. The school district must assist by making available some evidence of the academic records of teachers employed by the district, but the principal is not required to recruit from within the district.

Two limitations on the teachers are:

- A teacher currently employed at a school with a grade of F is not eligible for the program unless the teacher is nationally certified or has been selected as district or state teacher of the year.
- A teacher may receive a bonus or salary increase only for teaching at the school that first recruited him or her.

The accountability for the program rests with the principal and the school board. In the year after the program is implemented, if the school does not rise above a grade of D, the school board recommends corrective action. The recommendation must describe how well the school district assisted the principal by facilitating transfer of teachers, and it must recommend whether or not the principal should be retained. These recommendations are submitted to the State Board of Education for approval.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Teachers selected for the program will earn a bonus or salary increase. The amount will be established by each district.

C. Government Sector Impact:

School districts will incur the cost of planning the program; the main expense will be arranging for the transfer of teachers if principals wish to recruit many who are not currently employed at their schools. Currently all except 13 school districts contain at least one school graded D or F, so under current circumstances 54 plans will be required.

The cost for the incentives provided to teachers recruited for the program will vary according to the amounts established in the district plans, the number of teachers recruited, the fluctuations in grades assigned to schools, and whether the incentives provided are bonuses or salary increases. The bill states that the program will be implemented only to the extent funding is provided in an appropriations act.

There are currently 79 failing schools in 15 school districts; they employ 3,495 teachers. There are 592 schools in 52 school districts with grades of D; they employ 27,085 teachers. Eleven charter schools received a grade of D or F, but the Department of Education does not record how many teachers they employ.

The following estimate represents the maximum the program could possibly cost, because it is unlikely that the number of low-graded schools will remain the same or that a principal will replace or recruit every teacher in his or her school:

If schools keep the same grades as last year, if principals recruit or replace all the teachers currently employed, and if the bonus is 10 percent of the statewide average, the cost will be between \$113 and \$114 million.

It is likely that the district plans will provide a larger bonus for teachers at F schools than for those at D schools. If teachers recruited for the program for D schools are awarded a bonus of \$1,000 and teachers at F schools are awarded a bonus of \$3,700, the cost will be \$40 million.

The program will be more expensive if districts provide salary increases instead of bonuses. Salary increases will affect the amount paid to the teachers when they retire, whereas bonuses do not count as salary and so do not increase the entitlement to retirement pay. Salary increases will require additional funding for the Florida Retirement Program.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
