

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 355 Florida Teachers Lead Program Stipend
SPONSOR(S): Schools & Learning Council; Vana and others
TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) <u>Committee on K-12</u>	<u>7 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>Barnhill</u>	<u>Ahearn</u>
2) <u>Schools & Learning Council</u>	<u>12 Y, 0 N, As CS</u>	<u>Barnhill</u>	<u>Cobb</u>
3) <u>Policy & Budget Council</u>	<u>27 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>Voyles</u>	<u>Hansen</u>
4) _____	_____	_____	_____
5) _____	_____	_____	_____

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Teachers Lead Program Stipend (the stipend) provides teachers with an annual stipend to reimburse them for their purchases of classroom materials made throughout the year. CS/HB 355 increases the number of teachers eligible to receive the stipend, by including prekindergarten teachers (defined as those teaching students funded through the Florida Education Finance Program), charter school teachers, and job share teachers.

CS/HB 355 does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state or local governments. However, the stipend amount teachers receive is dependent on the 2007-2008 General Appropriations Act.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

CS/HB 355 does not appear to implicate any of the House Principles.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

The Teachers Lead Program Stipend, created in 1997, provides an annual stipend to certified, regular full-time kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) teachers, media specialists, and guidance counselors (collectively referred to as “teachers”) employed on or before September 1. This stipend provides reimbursement to teachers for their purchase of classroom materials and supplies. Such purchases are not subject to state or local competitive bidding requirements. Funding for this program is determined by the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act. The Commissioner of Education calculates an amount for each school district by prorating each school district’s share of the total K-12 unweighted full time equivalent student enrollment.¹

Eligible teachers must sign an affidavit acknowledging receipt of funds and agreeing to use the funds for the purchase of classroom materials only. Funds must be distributed by the school districts by September 30.²

The Teachers Lead Program Stipend was amended in 2000 to provide direct compensation to teachers for their purchases of classroom materials and supplies. Prior to this amendment, the funds were distributed to each school’s internal account and teachers could spend the funds on classroom materials and supplies until their allocation was fully expended.

This stipend is not currently provided to charter school classroom teachers; however, the students attending charter schools are included in the calculation of a district’s unweighted full time equivalent enrollment, thus increasing the amount of funds disbursed to a district. This stipend is also unavailable to regular, part-time teachers whose full-time job responsibility is the classroom instruction of students in K-12, e.g., job share teachers. However, the students of these teachers are included in the calculation of districts’ unweighted full time equivalent enrollment, thus increasing the amount of funds disbursed to the district.

Effects of Proposed Changes

CS/HB 355 expands the number of teachers eligible for the Teachers Lead Program Stipend (the stipend) from teachers serving children in kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) to teachers serving children in prekindergarten (PreK) through grade 12. CS/HB 355 defines PreK teachers as those teaching students funded through the Florida Education Finance Program. In 2006-07, there were 169,106 public K-12 teachers, media specialists, and guidance counselors. There were 9,261 public PreK teachers. If public PreK teachers were included, the number of eligible teachers would increase to 178,367 PreK-12 teachers. CS/HB 355 further expands the number of teachers eligible to receive the stipend by including charter school teachers and job share teachers.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

¹ section 1012.71, F.S.

² section 1012.71(3), F.S.

- Section 1.** Amends s. 1012.71, F.S., extending the stipend to teachers of prekindergarten students, charter school teachers, and job-share classroom teachers; revising provisions relating to the calculation, deposit, and disbursement of stipend funds; revising definition of the term "classroom teacher".
- Section 2.** Provides an effective date of July 1, 2007.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

CS/HB 355 does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

See Fiscal Comments.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

CS/HB 355 does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

CS/HB 355 does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government expenditures.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

CS/HB 355 does not require the expenditure of state funds. However, in order to maintain the current stipend amount of approximately \$266, and include public prekindergarten teachers, charter school teachers, and job-share classroom teachers, the allocation would need to increase.

Both the House (HB 5001) and Senate (SB 2800) Proposed General Appropriations Act for 2007-08 have a recommended appropriation of \$48,021,406. If this recommended appropriation remains in the final budget, it will be enough to cover an additional 11,268 teachers at the FY 2006-07 level of \$266 per teacher.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

CS/HB 355 does not require a city or county to expend funds or to take any action requiring the expenditure of funds.

CS/HB 355 does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

CS/HB 355 does not reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

D. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR

No statement submitted.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On March 13, 2007, the Committee on K-12 adopted one amendment. The amendment by Representative Flores, clarifies that although the bill extends the stipend to include prekindergarten classroom teachers, that extension does not include VPK teachers. The amendment also includes job share teachers and charter school classroom teachers in those eligible for the stipend.

On March 27, 2007, the Schools and Learning Council adopted one technical amendment. The Council then reported the bill out favorable as a CS.

CS/HB 355 clarifies that although the bill extends the stipend to include prekindergarten classroom teachers, that extension does not include VPK teachers. CS/HB 355 also includes job share teachers and charter school classroom teachers in those eligible for the stipend. CS/HB 355, additionally, amends the definition of "classroom teacher" to include these changes.