

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 1139 Minority Teacher Education Scholars

SPONSOR(S): Davis

TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1422

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Post-Secondary Education Subcommittee	10 Y, 0 N	McAlarney	Bishop
2) Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee	11 Y, 0 N	Butler	Lloyd
3) Education Committee	17 Y, 0 N	McAlarney	Hassell

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program (scholarship program) is a collaborative performance-based scholarship program for African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, and Native American students. The scholarship program provides an annual scholarship in an amount that must be prorated based on available appropriations; the award may not exceed \$4,000. Awards are available to approved minority teacher education scholars who are enrolled in a Florida public or private postsecondary institution in their junior year and who are admitted into a teacher education program.

The bill:

- Revises the eligibility requirements for the scholarship program by removing a requirement that students enrolled in an approved teacher education program must be in their junior year to be eligible for the award, and requires that the student may not have earned more than 18 credit hours of upper-division education courses.
- Allows students to use the scholarship to pursue a graduate degree with a major in education.

The bill's changes potentially increase the number of students eligible for the scholarship program. The scholarship is currently authorized for up to 350 new students and 350 renewal students each year. In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, \$966,000 provided 309 students an average scholarship award of \$3,126. Florida statute requires annual scholarships to be prorated based on available appropriations; awards may not exceed \$4,000. Due to the proration requirement, the bill does not have an impact on state government.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2017.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program

Present Situation

The Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program (scholarship program) is a collaborative performance-based scholarship program for African-American, Hispanic-American, Asian-American, and Native American students. The scholarship program provides an annual scholarship in an amount that must be prorated based on available appropriation and may not exceed \$4,000 for each recipient who is enrolled in one of Florida's public or private universities or Florida College System (FCS) institutions in their junior year and is admitted into a teacher education program.¹

The Florida Fund for Minority Teachers, Inc. and (corporation) is a not-for-profit statutory corporation housed within the College of Education at the University of Florida that administers and manages the scholarship program.

A student may receive a scholarship for three consecutive years, if the student remains enrolled full-time in the scholarship program and makes satisfactory progress toward a baccalaureate degree with a major in education.

An eligible student is required to:²

- Meet Florida residency requirements for receipt of state student financial aid;
- Have earned 60 credit hours or an Associate of Arts degree;
- Have not earned a baccalaureate degree in education;
- Be classified as a junior and have not exceeded 18 hours of upper-division education credit at the time of application;
- Have and maintain a minimum 2.5 grade point average;
- Be a member of one of the following ethnic groups: African-American/Black, Hispanic-Latino, Asian-American/Pacific Islander or American Indian/Alaskan native; and
- Be newly admitted into a teacher education program at any of the scholarship program's participating institutions.

Upon graduation, a recipient is required to teach one year in a Florida public school for each year the scholarship was received. If a recipient does not graduate within the two to three years of receiving scholarship funding, or if a recipient does not teach in a Florida public school, the recipient will be required to repay the total amount of the scholarship received at an annual interest rate of eight percent, paid within ten years.³

¹ s. 1009.60(1), F.S.

² Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Annual Report to the Commissioner 2015-16 (Jan. 2017)*, p. 45; <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/pdf/annualreportcurrent.pdf> (last visited Mar. 28, 2017).

³ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *Minority Teacher Education Scholarship Florida Fund for Minority Teachers, Inc.*, 2016-2017 Fact Sheet, pp. 2-3; <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/factsheets/FFMT.pdf> (last visited Mar. 28, 2017).

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill revises the eligibility requirements for the scholarship program by removing a requirement that students enrolled in an approved teacher education program must be in their junior year to be eligible for the award, and requires that the student may not have earned more than 18 credit hours of upper-division education courses. The bill also allows a student to use the scholarship to pursue a graduate degree with a major in education.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 1009.60, F.S., revising eligibility criteria for receipt of a minority teacher education scholarship.

Section 2. Amends s. 1009.605, F.S. revising the eligibility requirements for new scholarships and scholarship renewals.

Section 3. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2017.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

The bill's changes potentially increase the number of students eligible for the scholarship program. The scholarship is currently authorized for up to 350 new students and 350 renewal students each year. In Fiscal Year 2015-2016, \$966,000 provided 309 students an average scholarship award of \$3,126. Florida statute requires annual scholarships to be prorated based on available appropriations; awards may not exceed \$4,000.⁴

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The Fiscal Year 2016-2017 General Appropriations Act provides \$917,798 for the Minority Teacher Scholarship Program. Absent additional state appropriations in Fiscal Year 2017-2018, an increase in eligible students will require the Florida Fund for Minority Teachers, Inc. (FFMT), the non-profit

⁴ Section 1009.60(1), F.S.
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organization that administers the minority teacher education scholars program to utilize cash reserves to pay for additional scholarships. As of June 30, 2016, the FFMT had cash reserves of approximately \$1 million.⁵

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.

⁵ Section 1009.605(2)(b), F.S., requires the corporation to report this information to the Department of Education by June 30 each fiscal year. This is the latest cash balance information reported to House Higher Education Appropriations staff by DOE.