

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 382

INTRODUCER: Senator Montford

SUBJECT: Teacher Scholarship Program

DATE: April 9, 2019

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Graf	Sikes	ED	Favorable
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 382 establishes the Teacher Scholarship (scholarship) Program to encourage students who exhibit academic excellence to pursue a career in education. The bill specifies the following:

- Eligibility criteria for undergraduate and graduate students in a teacher preparation program to qualify for the scholarship.
 - An eligible undergraduate student may be awarded a scholarship of up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000 per year, for 2 undergraduate years or for a maximum of 3 years for a program that requires a fifth year of instruction to obtain an initial teaching certification.
 - An eligible graduate student may be awarded a scholarship of up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000 per year, for up to 2 years.
- Eligibility criteria for scholarship recipients to receive a one-time stipend in the amount of \$10,000.
- Requirements for the Department of Education (DOE) and public postsecondary education institutions with teacher preparation programs approved by the DOE.

Presently, 54 public and private colleges and universities offer DOE-approved Initial Teacher Preparation Programs. The number of students enrolled in such ITPs who may qualify for the scholarship is currently unknown. Implementation of the bill is subject to legislative appropriation.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.

II. Present Situation:

The Florida Legislature has established scholarship and incentive programs to support the training, and reward the academic achievement and performance of teachers in Florida.

Scholarship and Incentive Programs for Teachers in Florida

Minority Teacher Education Scholars Program

The minority teacher education scholars program provides an annual scholarship in an amount that may not exceed \$4,000 for each approved minority teacher education scholar who is enrolled in one of Florida's public or private colleges or universities, is admitted into a teacher education program, and has not earned more than 18 credit hours of upper-division-level courses in education.¹ A student may receive a scholarship from the program for 3 consecutive years if the student remains enrolled full-time in the teacher education program and makes satisfactory progress toward a baccalaureate degree with a major in education or a graduate degree with a major in education, leading to initial certification.² In 2018, the Legislature appropriated \$917,798 for the minority teacher education scholars program.³ During the 2017-2018 academic year, 269 students from 31 public and private colleges and universities in Florida received an average award of approximately \$3,338.⁴

Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program, administered by the Department of Education (DOE), is established to provide funding for scholarships to classroom teachers who have demonstrated a high level of academic achievement.⁵ Florida law specifies the scholarship eligibility criteria.⁶ In 2018, the Legislature appropriated 233,950,000 for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Scholarship Program, of which \$231,545,485 was allocated for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program.⁷ During the 2017-2018 fiscal year:⁸

- 9,229 classroom teachers received \$6,000 in award based on being evaluated as “highly effective” and scoring at or above the 80th percentile on the SAT or ACT.
- 586 newly hired classroom teachers received \$6,000 in award based on scoring at or above the 80th percentile on the SAT or ACT.
- 82,790 teachers received the \$1,200 award based on being evaluated as “highly effective.”
- 72,126 teachers received the \$800 award based on being evaluated as “effective.”

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 382 establishes the Teacher Scholarship (scholarship) Program to encourage students who exhibit academic excellence to pursue a career in education. The bill specifies the following:

- Eligibility criteria for undergraduate and graduate students in a teacher preparation program to qualify for the scholarship.
 - An eligible undergraduate student may be awarded a scholarship of up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000 per year, for 2 undergraduate years or for a maximum of 3 years for a program that requires a fifth year of instruction to obtain an initial teaching

¹ The award amount must be prorated based on available appropriations. Section 1009.60(1), F.S.

² *Id.* at (4).

³ Specific Appropriations 71, ch. 2018-9, L.O.F.

⁴ Florida Department of Education Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report (2017-18)*, available at https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/PDF/PSI/FFMT_2017_2018.pdf, at 3 of 4.

⁵ Section 1012.731(2), F.S.

⁶ *Id.*, at (3).

⁷ Email, Florida Department of Education (April 8, 2019); *see also* specific Appropriations 101, ch. 2018-9, L.O.F.

⁸ Email, Florida Department of Education (Feb. 25, 2019).

- certification.
- An eligible graduate student may be awarded a scholarship of up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000 per year, for up to 2 years.
 - Eligibility criteria for scholarship recipients to receive a one-time stipend in the amount of \$10,000.
 - Requirements for the Department of Education (DOE or department) and public postsecondary education institutions with teacher preparation programs approved by the DOE.

Initial Teacher Preparation Programs (ITPs) are offered by postsecondary institutions in Florida to prepare instructional personnel, resulting in qualification for an initial Florida Professional Educator's Certificate.⁹ Candidates of ITPs typically work towards earning a bachelor's or a master's degree.¹⁰ Presently, 54 public and private colleges and universities offer DOE-approved ITPs.¹¹ During the 2016-2017 academic year, 16,767 students were enrolled in an ITP at a Florida College System institution, state university, or private college or university in Florida.¹²

The Teacher Scholarship Program

The bill establishes the Teacher Scholarship (scholarship) Program within the DOE to encourage students who exhibit academic excellence to pursue a career in education. The program must provide:

- Scholarships to eligible students for upper-division undergraduate and graduate study.
- A one-time stipend to students who complete their program of study and their first year of employment as a classroom teacher¹³ at a public school in Florida.

Scholarships for Undergraduate Students

To be eligible for an undergraduate scholarship, a student must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be a full-time, upper-division undergraduate student in a teacher preparation program approved by the department.¹⁴
- The general student eligibility requirements for state financial aid,¹⁵ except as otherwise provided.

⁹ Florida Department of Education, *Initial Teacher Preparation Programs*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation/initial-teacher-preparation-programs/> (last visited April 4, 2019).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Florida Department of Education, *State-Approved Educator Preparation Programs*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation/initial-teacher-preparation-programs/approved-teacher-edu-programs.stml> (last visited April 4, 2019).

¹² Email, Florida Department of Education (April 9, 2019).

¹³ Classroom teachers are staff members assigned the professional activity of instructing students in courses in classroom situations, including basic instruction, exceptional student education, career education, and adult education, including substitute teachers. Section 1012.01(2)(a), F.S.

¹⁴ The State Board of Education is required to adopt rules that establish uniform core curricula for each state-approved teacher preparation program. The rules to establish uniform core curricula for each state-approved teacher preparation program must include the components specified in law. Section 1004.04(2), F.S.; see *also* Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

¹⁵ Florida law specifies the general requirements for student eligibility for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants Section 1009.40, F.S.

- The following academic requirements:
 - Earn an SAT score that corresponds to the 80th SAT percentile rank or a concordant ACT score; and
 - Maintain a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale.

The bill authorizes a scholarship for undergraduate students for up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000 per year, for 2 undergraduate years or for a maximum of 3 years for a program that requires a fifth year of instruction to obtain an initial teaching certification. However, the bill specifies that the department may prorate the scholarships if the appropriation is insufficient to fully fund each eligible student.

Scholarship for Graduate Students

To be eligible for a graduate scholarship, a student must meet the state financial aid eligibility and academic requirements specified in the bill for undergraduate students. In addition, the bill specifies the following eligibility requirements for a graduate scholarship:

- Hold a bachelor's degree from any college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association¹⁶ as defined by State Board of Education (state board) rule.
- Be a full-time graduate student in an eligible postsecondary graduate teacher education program leading to a master's, specialist, or doctoral degree.
- Not have previously received a teaching certificate resulting from an undergraduate degree in education.
- Not have received an undergraduate scholarship under the Teacher Scholarship Program.

The bill authorizes a scholarship for graduate students for up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000 per year, for up to 2 years. However, the bill specifies that the department may prorate the scholarships if the appropriation is insufficient to fully fund each eligible student.

Stipend for Scholarship Recipients

To be eligible for a one-time stipend of \$10,000, a scholarship recipient must:

- Complete a teacher education program approved by the department and earn a bachelor's or graduate degree, as applicable.
- Notify the department, in a manner prescribed by department rule, that he or she has been employed by a school district in this state as a classroom teacher; and
- Complete his or her first year of employment as a classroom teacher at a public school in this state.

¹⁶ Currently, there are six regional accrediting organizations: Higher Learning Commission, Middle States Commission on Higher Education; New England Commission on Higher Education; Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities; Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges; Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), Accrediting Commission for Colleges and Junior Colleges and WASC Senior Colleges and University Commission. U.S. Department of Education, *Accreditation in the United States: Recognized Accrediting Agencies*, https://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg5.html#NationallyRecognized (last visited April 8, 2019); see also Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), *Regional Accrediting Organizations*, www.chea.org/regional-accrediting-organizations-accreditor-type (last visited April 8, 2019).

However, the bill specifies that the department may prorate the stipends if the appropriation is insufficient to fully fund each eligible student.

Requirements for the Department of Education

The bill requires the department to disburse, no later than each June 1, the one-time stipend to each school district for an eligible candidate whose employment is confirmed as of May 1. The bill also specifies that:

- A candidate who is hired after the first quarter of the academic year is eligible for a prorated stipend as determined by the department.
- A candidate may not receive both the stipend and an award under the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program.

Requirements for Postsecondary Education Institutions

The bill requires each postsecondary education institution to do all of the following:

- By each September 1, certify to the department the names of students eligible for the program.
- Throughout the academic year, notify the department of any scholarship recipient whose scholarship should be rescinded due to disenrollment from the teacher education program.

Rulemaking

The bill requires the state board to adopt rules to administer the Teacher Scholarship Program.

The scholarship may provide a financial incentive for students to enroll in teacher preparation programs and pursue a teaching career in Florida, which may assist the state in filling vacant teaching positions including those in critical shortage areas.¹⁷

The bill takes effect July 1, 2019.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

¹⁷ The term “critical teacher shortage area” means high-need content areas and high-priority location areas identified by the State Board of Education (state board). The state board is required to adopt rules necessary to annually identify critical teacher shortage areas. Section 1012.07, F.S.; see also Florida Department of Education, *Identification of Critical Teacher Shortage Areas*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7584/urlt/CTSA1819.pdf>.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

The bill extends a financial benefit, through the Teacher Scholarship (scholarship) Program, to students enrolled in teacher preparation programs approved by the Department of Education (DOE), which may assist the students in defraying the costs associated with teacher preparation programs.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Presently, 54 public and private colleges and universities offer DOE-approved Initial Teacher Preparation Programs (ITPs). The number of students enrolled in such ITPs who may qualify for the scholarship is currently unknown. Implementation of the bill is subject to legislative appropriation.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

The bill specifies that to be eligible for a graduate scholarship, a student must meet academic requirements specified in the bill for undergraduate students, which includes maintaining a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 1009.897 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
