

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

Establishes a loan forgiveness program available for up to five years to newly licensed teachers and teachers adding a licensure field who are teaching in an identified teacher shortage area. Appropriates unspecified sums to the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education for the program.

Section

1 Teacher shortage loan forgiveness program.

Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines qualified educational loan, school district, teacher, teacher shortage area, and commissioner for purposes of this program.

Subd. 2. Program established; administration. Directs the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education to establish and administer a teacher shortage loan forgiveness program. Makes a teacher teaching in a teacher shortage area eligible for the program.

Subd. 3. Annual report of teacher shortage areas. Directs the education commissioner to use the annual teacher supply and demand report to identify licensure fields and economic development regions experiencing a teacher shortage.

Subd. 4. Application for loan forgiveness. Directs interested applicants to apply for the program according to the rules of the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education. Requires program participants to reapply annually and to submit an affidavit verifying they are teaching in a shortage area.

Subd. 5. Amount of loan forgiveness. Limits the annual loan forgiveness to an unspecified amount or the cumulative balance of the participant's qualified educational

Section

loans, whichever is less. Makes participants responsible for securing their loans. Allows teachers who graduate from an approved teacher preparation program or add a licensure field and teach in a teacher shortage area to apply for the program.

Subd. 6. Penalties. Allows an applicant's teaching license to be suspended or revoked, allows school districts to discipline an applicant, and allows the commissioner to seek repayment of a loan from an applicant who submits false or misleading information.

Subd. 7. Fund established. Establishes a teacher shortage loan forgiveness repayment fund that does not revert to any state fund in any fiscal year and remains continuously available.

Subd. 8. Annual reporting. Directs the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education to annually report by February 1 to the legislature's K-12 and higher education committees on the number of teachers who received loan forgiveness, the licensure areas and economic development regions in which the teachers taught, the average amount paid to the teachers, and other summary data measuring outcomes identified by the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education.

Subd. 9. Rulemaking. Directs the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education to adopt rules to administer this program.

2 Appropriations. Appropriates unspecified general fund amounts in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 to the commissioner of the Office of Higher Education for the teacher shortage loan forgiveness program and to adopt rules to administer the program.