

1 SB203
2 204093-2
3 By Senators Stutts, Marsh, Chesteen and Butler
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 18-FEB-20

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8 SYNOPSIS: This bill would establish the Alabama
9 Teacher Initiative.

10 This bill would provide scholarships for
11 teacher preparation program students who are
12 enrolled in and attending any college in Alabama
13 and who contract with the Alabama Commission on
14 Higher Education to teach for five years after
15 certification in rural areas of the state with the
16 greatest need for STEM and special education
17 teachers in grades 7 to 12, with funds allocated
18 through the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

19
20 A BILL
21 TO BE ENTITLED
22 AN ACT
23

24 To establish the Alabama Teacher Initiative; to
25 phase in the provision of 200 scholarships per year beginning
26 with 50 scholarships in academic year 2020-2021 for certain
27 teacher preparation program students enrolled in and attending

1 a college located in Alabama and who commit to teach in rural
2 areas of the state with the greatest need for grades 7-12 STEM
3 and special education teachers; to provide that service
4 contracts be entered into between the student and the Alabama
5 Commission on Higher Education and between the Alabama
6 Commission on Higher Education and each of the institutions of
7 higher education in the state offering a teacher preparation
8 program; and to provide for funding through the Alabama
9 Commission on Higher Education.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

11 Section 1. For the purposes of this act, the
12 following terms shall have the following meanings:

13 (1) ACHE. Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

14 (2) COLLEGE. A four year institution of higher
15 education located in the state that offers a teacher
16 preparation program.

17 (3) INITIATIVE. The Alabama Teacher Initiative.

18 (4) SERVICE CONTRACT. A document signed by and
19 agreed to by the student and the Alabama Commission on Higher
20 Education setting forth terms for receiving tuition
21 scholarship funds and service requirements.

22 (5) STUDENT. An individual enrolled in and attending
23 a teacher preparation program in a college.

24 (6) TEACHER. An individual who is certificated by
25 the State Department of Education to teach science,
26 technology, engineering, or mathematics or a special education

1 curriculum in the schools offering instruction in grades 7-12
2 of this state.

3 Section 2. (a) ACHE shall administer a student
4 scholarship program to increase the availability of teachers
5 by providing incentives to students who agree to teach in a
6 rural area of Alabama for five years immediately after
7 certification.

8 (b) A scholarship awarded under this act shall be
9 used to provide tuition funding support to a student enrolled
10 at a college and may not be used to reduce any other financial
11 aid, grant, or scholarship the student may otherwise receive.

12 Section 3. (a) Before the 2021 fall semester, and
13 before each fall semester thereafter, ACHE and the chief
14 academic officer of each participating college shall jointly
15 select up to 50 incoming first year students to participate in
16 the initiative. The maximum number of students participating
17 in the initiative at any one time may not exceed 200. Each
18 student selected shall be enrolled full time at a college in a
19 teacher preparation program that is designed to prepare the
20 student to become certified in a STEM-related field or special
21 education. If a student, upon initial selection, declines to
22 participate in the initiative, ACHE may select a qualified
23 alternate.

24 (b) After selection, to be eligible to receive
25 scholarship funds, the student shall execute a service
26 contract with ACHE committing to complete his or her college
27 degree and certification in a STEM-related field or special

1 education curriculum and to teach for five years in Alabama,
2 under the terms of the service contract, in a rural area of
3 the state defined by current state and national data. A
4 student selected to participate in the initiative shall
5 complete all educational requirements of the college in four
6 years and may not qualify for a scholarship for more than four
7 school years.

8 Section 4. (a) ACHE shall contract with the college
9 to provide scholarship funds for students participating in the
10 initiative. The amount of the scholarship funds awarded each
11 school year shall be determined by ACHE based on the annual
12 tuition charged by the college and appropriated by the
13 Legislature.

14 (b) ACHE shall provide the necessary management,
15 staff, and accountability in implementing the initiative.

16 Section 5. Upon completion of his or her degree and
17 certification, and pursuant to the terms of the service
18 contract, the former student shall teach in a rural area of
19 the state for five years.

20 Section 6. A student or former student who fails to
21 comply with the terms and conditions of the service contract
22 shall return all scholarship funds received pursuant to the
23 service contract, plus interest computed as specified in the
24 binding student service contract, to ACHE.

25 Section 7. The student scholarship program
26 administered by ACHE shall be funded by legislative
27 appropriation through ACHE. To receive funding for

1 scholarships awarded pursuant to this act, ACHE shall make an
2 annual report and funding request to the Legislature.

3 Section 8. ACHE shall adopt rules as necessary to
4 implement this act.

5 Section 9. This act shall become effective on the
6 first day of the third month following its passage and
7 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.