

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE BILL NO. 218

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

AN ACT

1 RELATING TO THE IDAHO RURAL TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT; AMEND-
2 ING TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW CHAPTER 61, TITLE
3 33, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE A SHORT TITLE, TO PROVIDE A DECLARATION OF
4 PURPOSE, TO DEFINE TERMS, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS REGARDING THE RU-
5 RAL TEACHER INCENTIVE PROGRAM, TO PROVIDE FOR PROGRAM FRAMEWORKS, TO
6 PROVIDE FOR A CERTAIN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT, TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR
7 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS, TO PROVIDE FOR MENTORING AND SUPPORT OF PROGRAM
8 PARTICIPANTS, TO PROVIDE FOR A CERTAIN REPORT, TO PROVIDE A TEACHING
9 COMMITMENT, AND TO PROVIDE RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; PROVIDING AN EFFEC-
10 TIVE DATE; AND PROVIDING A SUNSET DATE.
11

12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

13 SECTION 1. That Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended
14 by the addition thereto of a NEW CHAPTER, to be known and designated as Chap-
15 ter 61, Title 33, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

16 CHAPTER 61

17 IDAHO RURAL TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACT

18 33-6101. SHORT TITLE. This chapter shall be known and may be cited as
19 the "Idaho Rural Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act."

20 33-6102. DECLARATION OF PURPOSE. The legislature recognizes the crit-
21 ical need to ensure that each classroom has a qualified, well-trained edu-
22 cator to ensure that Idaho's public schools meet the needs of all students.
23 A shortage of educators in critical content areas or special education in
24 public schools across the state jeopardizes Idaho's ability to maintain the
25 highest standards in education delivery. Therefore, the Idaho legislature
26 declares that it is important that the state department of education and the
27 state board of education create a rural teacher incentive program to develop
28 a pipeline for consistent recruitment and placement of educators in public
29 schools across the state. A shortage in the availability of teachers to fill
30 teaching positions in rural school districts or local education agencies is
31 causing a significant hardship for rural local education providers.

32 33-6103. DEFINITIONS. As used in this chapter:

33 (1) "Classified staff" means a noncertificated staff member.

34 (2) "Eligible participant" means a student or an employee who meets the
35 requirements for a qualifying program as described in section 33-6104, Idaho
36 Code, and is enrolled in an educator preparation program approved by the
37 state board of education.

1 (3) "Paraprofessional" means a noncertificated individual who is em-
 2 ployed by a school district or charter school to support educational pro-
 3 gramming.

4 (4) "Rural school district or local education agency" or "rural school
 5 district or LEA" means a school district or charter school in Idaho that the
 6 state department of education determines is rural, based on the geographic
 7 size of the school district and/or the distance of the school district or
 8 charter school from the nearest large urbanized area.

9 (5) "Teaching fellow" means an eligible individual who participates in
 10 a teaching fellowship program.

11 33-6104. RURAL TEACHER INCENTIVE PROGRAM. The state department of ed-
 12 ucation and the state board of education shall develop a rural teacher incen-
 13 tive program to provide rural school districts or LEAs with strategies for
 14 recruitment and placement of educators in rural public schools across the
 15 state experiencing shortages in critical areas to alleviate Idaho's educa-
 16 tor shortage and enhance the quality of education provided by Idaho's public
 17 schools. Strategies may include:

18 (1) The Idaho rural teacher fellowship. The state department of educa-
 19 tion and the state board of education shall oversee a partnership between a
 20 rural school district or LEA and an institution of higher education to enter
 21 into an agreement to provide a teaching fellowship in the rural school dis-
 22 trict or LEA for selected teacher candidates in their final thirty (30) to
 23 forty (40) credits of an approved teacher preparation program, which leads
 24 to state certification and employment by the rural school district or LEA
 25 upon completion. To qualify for a fellowship, a person must:

26 (a) Be accepted in a traditional or nontraditional teacher preparation
 27 program at an eligible or board-approved public higher education insti-
 28 tution; and

29 (b) Be within forty (40) credits of completion of the program.

30 (2) The grow your own program for paraprofessionals in a qualifying ru-
 31 ral school district or LEA. The program will provide funding for up to thirty
 32 (30) to forty (40) credits or the equivalent in an approved traditional or
 33 nontraditional teacher preparation program, which leads to state certifica-
 34 tion and employment as a certificated teacher by the rural school district or
 35 LEA upon completion. Qualifications include:

36 (a) One (1) consecutive year of consistent employment with the qualify-
 37 ing rural school district or LEA; and

38 (b) A high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED).

39 (3) The rural certification incentive program to provide a stipend for
 40 teachers in a qualifying rural school district or LEA to cover the cost of tu-
 41 tion in earning a traditional or nontraditional endorsement in a hard-to-
 42 fill content area or to meet a critical need in a qualifying rural school dis-
 43 trict or LEA.

44 33-6105. PROGRAM FRAMEWORKS. The state department of education and
 45 the state board of education shall create the framework for each program to
 46 include:

47 (1) The criteria for each participant seeking certification;

1 (2) The roles and expectations of the rural school district or LEA,
2 which are in addition to the standards of the traditional or nontraditional
3 teacher preparation program;

4 (3) How the rural school district or LEA and the teacher preparation
5 program will support the eligible participant in obtaining the agreed-upon
6 certification or endorsement; and

7 (4) Demonstration by the rural school district or LEA that the fel-
8 lowship recipient will receive mentoring and supervision by an experienced
9 teacher.

10 33-6106. OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS. A program
11 participant will receive an offer of employment as a certificated employee
12 upon successful completion of graduation requirements and attainment of a
13 teacher certification.

14 33-6107. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS. An eligible participant
15 must, at a minimum:

16 (1) Be enrolled in a traditional or nontraditional program that leads
17 to an endorsement or certification; and

18 (2) Commit to work in the same rural school district or LEA for three (3)
19 academic years after completion of the program, unless this requirement is
20 waived by the rural school district or LEA.

21 33-6108. MENTORING AND SUPPORT. Each rural school district or LEA
22 shall provide high-quality mentoring and support to program participants
23 throughout the program.

24 33-6109. REPORT. The state board of education shall report to the sen-
25 ate and house of representatives education committees information relating
26 to the program, including:

27 (1) The number of eligible participants placed in each program;

28 (2) The rural school districts or LEAs with whom the eligible partici-
29 pants are employed;

30 (3) The institutions of higher education attended by the eligible par-
31 ticipants;

32 (4) The nontraditional programs eligible participants attended to earn
33 certification;

34 (5) The number of eligible participants who fulfill the program's three
35 (3) year teaching commitment, unless waived in whole or in part by the rural
36 school district or LEA;

37 (6) The percentage retained by a rural school district or LEA beyond the
38 three (3) year period; and

39 (7) The aggregate student achievement and progress for students taught
40 by program cohorts.

41 33-6110. TEACHING COMMITMENT. Each participant is obligated to begin
42 teaching full-time, in the participant's area of certification or endorse-
43 ment, immediately following graduation and continuing for a period of three
44 (3) consecutive years, unless waived by the rural school district or LEA.

1 33-6111. RULEMAKING. The board is authorized to promulgate rules to
2 effectuate the provisions of this chapter.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall be in full force and effect on and after July
4 1, 2020.

5 SECTION 3. The provisions of Section 1 of this act shall be null, void,
6 and of no force and effect on and after July 1, 2025.