

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1663

100TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE RICHEY.

3975H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To amend chapter 168, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to teacher advancement.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 168, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 168.491, to read as follows:

168.491. 1. This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Advancing Missouri Teachers Act".

2. As used in this section, the following terms mean:

(1) "Advanced degree or graduate course", any course that is in a teacher's assigned content areas or pedagogy, is offered by any institution of higher education in this state, and meets at least one of the following descriptions:

(a) An advanced degree or graduate course in the teacher's area of certification or job assignment;

(b) An advanced degree or graduate course in pursuit of another area of certification required by job assignment or in an area where there is a critical teacher shortage, as approved in writing by the teacher's employing school district; or

(c) An advanced degree or graduate course in pursuit of a master's, specialist, or doctoral degree in the teacher's area of certification or job assignment;

(2) "Department", the department of elementary and secondary education;

(3) "Teacher", any person employed by any public school to teach on a full-time basis and duly certificated under the law governing the certification of teachers.

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

17 **3. (1) The department shall develop a program under which a teacher may take**
18 **any advanced degree or graduate course and apply for reimbursement for up to one**
19 **hundred dollars per credit hour taken as provided in this section. Such program shall**
20 **include guidelines for the school district's review, approval, and oversight of applications**
21 **submitted and courses completed. Each school district shall adopt and implement the**
22 **program developed under this subsection.**

23 **(a) The program shall include a procedure allowing a teacher to present to the**
24 **teacher's school district a written application for participating in the program.**

25 **a. A teacher's application shall include a plan for taking and completing the**
26 **advanced degree or graduate course, and the application shall describe any such course the**
27 **teacher intends to take as well as a proposed period of time in which the teacher intends**
28 **to complete the course.**

29 **b. A teacher's application shall include a written agreement that the teacher will**
30 **continue in professional teaching in public schools in this state for one school year for each**
31 **nine credit hours of tuition reimbursement provided.**

32 **(b) After the teacher submits an application to the school district, the school district**
33 **shall review the application. If all information in the application conforms to the**
34 **department's guidelines developed under this subsection, the school district shall approve**
35 **the application.**

36 **(2) After the teacher successfully completes a qualifying advanced degree or**
37 **graduate course, the teacher shall submit to the department evidence, such as a certified**
38 **transcript, demonstrating the advanced degree or graduate course and credit hours**
39 **successfully completed, together with a statement of the tuition the teacher actually paid**
40 **for such credit hours.**

41 **(3) After the teacher reports the successful completion of a qualifying advanced**
42 **degree or graduate course, the school district shall compile all information associated with**
43 **the teacher's application and submit such information to the department for reporting and**
44 **reimbursement purposes under this section.**

45 **4. Reimbursement shall only occur if moneys are available in the advancing**
46 **Missouri teachers fund created in this section.**

47 **5. No reimbursement shall be allowed under this section for any advanced degree**
48 **or graduate course requiring the teacher's physical presence outside the geographical**
49 **boundaries of the state, except for the study of foreign languages abroad when such study**
50 **is pursued through an institution of higher education in this state.**

51 **6. (1) There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Advancing Missouri**
52 **Teachers Fund". The fund shall consist of all moneys that may be appropriated to it by**

53 the general assembly and any gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests received from
54 federal, private, or other sources. The state treasurer shall be custodian of the fund. In
55 accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180, the state treasurer may approve
56 disbursements. The fund shall be a dedicated fund and, upon appropriation, moneys in
57 the fund shall be used solely as provided in this section.

58 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys
59 remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the
60 general revenue fund.

61 (3) The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as other
62 funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be credited
63 to the fund.

64 7. After the school district has approved a teacher's application under this section,
65 any completed advanced degree or graduate course included in the application that
66 complies with the department's salary schedule advancement requirements shall be
67 counted toward salary schedule advancement, and the teacher's employing school district
68 shall neither decline to acknowledge nor deny such course as approved for salary schedule
69 advancement purposes.

70 8. The department shall submit a report on or before November thirtieth of each
71 year to the joint committee on education relating to the program established under this
72 section. Such report shall include but not be limited to the following:

73 (1) The number of teachers applying;

74 (2) The number of teachers approved;

75 (3) The educational background and work experiences of such teachers;

76 (4) The types of courses pursued; and

77 (5) The amount of reimbursements paid by the department under the program.

78 9. The department may promulgate all necessary rules and regulations for the
79 administration of this section. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is defined in
80 section 536.010, that is created under the authority delegated in this section shall become
81 effective only if it complies with and is subject to all of the provisions of chapter 536 and,
82 if applicable, section 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable, and if any
83 of the powers vested with the general assembly pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay
84 the effective date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently held
85 unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking authority and any rule proposed or adopted
86 after August 28, 2020, shall be invalid and void.

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