

1 ENGROSSED HOUSE  
2 BILL NO. 2559

By: McBride, Baker, Waldron,  
Fugate, Dollens, Davis,  
West (Tammy), and Schreiber  
of the House

4 and

5 Pemberton of the Senate

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7  
8 [ teacher scholarships - Inspired to Teach Program -  
9 student eligibility - grade point average  
10 requirement - effective date ]

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14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

15 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 698.1, as  
16 amended by Section 1, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022,  
17 Section 698.1), is amended to read as follows:

18 Section 698.1 A. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher  
19 Education shall establish and maintain an incentive scholarship  
20 program and teacher employment incentive program, as funding is  
21 available, to encourage the preparation of public school teachers  
22 for prekindergarten through twelfth grade, including minority  
23 teachers, at all state public higher education institutions or  
24 private higher education institutions accredited pursuant to Section

1 4103 of this title and incentivize employment as public teachers for  
2 prekindergarten through twelfth grade in the state for at least five  
3 (5) years, to be known as the ~~Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship~~  
4 ~~and Employment Incentive~~ Inspired to Teach Program. Prospective  
5 teachers planning to pursue an undergraduate teacher education  
6 program at an accredited Oklahoma teacher preparation program shall  
7 be considered if they graduated from ~~an Oklahoma~~ high school,  
8 completed high-school level instruction at home, or completed  
9 General Educational Development (GED) test requirements; meet the  
10 higher education admission standards~~;~~; and declare a pre-education  
11 major or major in an approved Oklahoma teacher preparation degree  
12 program leading to a standard teaching certificate.

13 B. To the extent that funds are available, scholarships,  
14 renewable for up to three (3) additional years for qualified  
15 students meeting satisfactory academic progress standards in  
16 completing a teacher preparation degree program leading to a  
17 standard teaching certificate, shall be awarded to cover costs of  
18 tuition, general enrollment fees, other fees, books, materials, and  
19 services provided by the institution, including room and board, in  
20 the following manner:

21 1. One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per academic year for up to  
22 three (3) academic years for full-time students who have earned less  
23 than ninety (90) credit hours; and

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1        2. Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) for the final  
2 academic year for full-time students who have earned ninety (90) or  
3 more credit hours.

4 The maximum amount of scholarship funds awarded as provided in this  
5 subsection to any qualified student shall not exceed Five Thousand  
6 Five Hundred Dollars (\$5,500.00).

7        C. As used in this section, "full-time student" means:

8        1. An undergraduate student enrolled in twelve (12) or more  
9 semester credits toward teacher education degree requirements;

10        2. An undergraduate student who is a teacher education major  
11 who is enrolled in or has completed an internship or student  
12 teaching credit hours in order to complete the degree program prior  
13 to certification and who has been approved to take less than twelve  
14 (12) credit hours; or

15        3. An undergraduate student who is a teacher education major  
16 with an approved reasonable accommodation from Student Accessibility  
17 Services at the institution due to a documented disability and who  
18 has been approved to take less than twelve (12) credit hours.

19        ~~B.~~ D. It is the intent of the Oklahoma Legislature that the  
20 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education create a committee  
21 composed of educators, teacher educators from the participating  
22 institutions, and representatives of the public schools and the  
23 State Department of Education to provide recommendations to the  
24 State Regents to improve effectiveness of the ~~program~~ Inspired to

1 Teach Program. The committee shall prepare and deliver a report on  
2 the program to the Legislature on or before July 1 of each year.

3 ~~C.~~ E. Each scholarship participant, prior to entry into the  
4 ~~program~~ Inspired to Teach Program, shall have agreed to teach in an  
5 Oklahoma public prekindergarten through twelfth grade school for a  
6 minimum of five (5) consecutive years upon graduation and licensure  
7 as a teacher. Any scholarship participant failing to maintain a 2.5  
8 grade point average throughout matriculation, changing to an  
9 ineligible area of study, failing to meet satisfactory academic  
10 progress standards, withdrawing or otherwise leaving school, or  
11 failing to meet requirements for licensure and certification to  
12 teach as established by law shall be subject to disqualification  
13 from the program.

14 ~~D.~~ F. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are  
15 authorized to make employment incentive payments pursuant to the  
16 provisions of this section to ~~program~~ Inspired to Teach Program  
17 participants who are employed as traditionally certified teachers in  
18 Oklahoma public prekindergarten through twelfth grade schools  
19 following graduation. Incentive payments may be awarded following  
20 each consecutive year of satisfactory service as documented by the  
21 employing school district, up to five (5) years of service for  
22 scholarship recipients as provided in subsection A of this section,  
23 upon graduation from an accredited Oklahoma teacher preparation  
24 degree program. The maximum amount of employment incentive payments

1 for any qualified participant shall be Four Thousand Dollars  
2 (\$4,000.00) per year for up to five (5) years, not to exceed a total  
3 of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) per participant.

4 ~~F.~~ G. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall  
5 require the execution of appropriate contracts with eligible ~~program~~  
6 Inspired to Teach Program participants. Participants failing to  
7 comply with the requirements of this section or failing to provide  
8 current contact information shall not be eligible for the employment  
9 incentive payments provided for in this section. The Chancellor of  
10 the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, with the approval  
11 of the State Regents, may contract with any other appropriate  
12 organization or unit of government for the administration of the  
13 provisions of this section.

14 ~~F.~~ H. If sufficient funds are not available for employment  
15 incentive payments to qualified participants during any fiscal year,  
16 the Chancellor may make reductions in the payments made to qualified  
17 participants.

18 ~~G.~~ I. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may, at  
19 the time an award is made on behalf of the ~~Oklahoma Future Teacher~~  
20 ~~Scholarship and Employment Incentive~~ Inspired to Teach Program, set  
21 aside funds for the full commitment made to an eligible student.

22 ~~H.~~ J. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may  
23 utilize ~~Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive~~

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1 Inspired to Teach Program designated funds for administration of the  
2 program.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

4 Passed the House of Representatives the 9th day of March, 2023.

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Presiding Officer of the House  
of Representatives

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9 Passed the Senate the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate

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