

HOUSE BILL NO. HB0106

Teacher incentive program.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Hinckley, Bucholz and Harvey and Senator(s) Anderson, J.

A BILL

for

1 AN ACT relating to school teachers; specifying legislative
2 findings pertaining to teacher shortage areas; establishing
3 a teacher incentive program providing incentive payments to
4 newly certified teachers in mathematics and science;
5 delegating program administration to the Wyoming higher
6 education assistance authority; granting rulemaking
7 authority; imposing criteria and requiring contractual
8 agreements for program participation; imposing duties upon
9 the Wyoming professional teaching standards board;
10 directing continued study of teacher shortage areas and
11 program continuation; providing an appropriation; and
12 providing for an effective date.

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14 *Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:*

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1 **Section 1.** The legislature finds that there is a
2 shortage of certified teachers in the state, especially in
3 the areas of mathematics and science. Further, the
4 legislature finds that incentives are required to attract
5 individuals into the teaching profession, to encourage
6 certification in these shortage areas and to assist
7 districts in employing certified teachers in these shortage
8 areas. The teacher incentive program established by
9 section 2 of this act provides a means of encouraging
10 certification in these shortage areas and increasing the
11 percentage of certified teachers in the state, particularly
12 in the areas of mathematics and science.

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14 **Section 2.**

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16 (a) Subject to amounts appropriated by the
17 legislature for purposes of this act, the Wyoming higher
18 education assistance authority established under W.S.
19 21-16-703 shall administer the teacher incentive program
20 established by this section. The program shall provide
21 incentive payments to newly certified teachers, as defined
22 in subsection (b) of this section, who agree to teach in
23 the elementary and secondary schools of this state in the
24 subjects of mathematics and science for the first four (4)

1 consecutive years following certification. Incentive
2 payments shall be in an amount of up to three thousand
3 dollars (\$3,000.00) per year per newly certified teacher,
4 payable annually, as determined by the authority based upon
5 amounts appropriated by the legislature, not to exceed a
6 total of twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000.00).

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8 (b) As used in this section, "newly certified
9 teacher" means a teacher as defined by W.S.
10 21-7-102(a)(vii) who is certified by the Wyoming
11 professional teaching standards board under W.S. 21-2-802
12 to teach mathematics or science at the elementary or
13 secondary level in this state and is employed by a school
14 district to teach elementary or secondary math or science
15 for the first time during the 2004-2005 school year.

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17 (c) In administering this program, the authority
18 shall:

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20 (i) Establish an application process whereby a
21 newly certified teacher can apply with the authority to
22 participate in the incentive program established under this
23 section, requiring such information as is necessary to
24 determine eligibility;

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(ii) Require each participating newly certified teacher to enter into a contract with the authority as part of the teacher certification process, agreeing to the terms and conditions set forth in the contract including a requirement that the teacher provide classroom instruction in math or science at the elementary or secondary level for four (4) consecutive school years following certification. The Wyoming professional teaching standards board shall cooperate and assist the authority in administering this paragraph;

(iii) Prior to releasing any annual incentive payment to a newly certified teacher participating in the incentive program established under this section, consult with the employing school district of each newly certified teacher contracting with the authority under paragraph (ii) of this subsection to determine contractual compliance. Each employing school district shall certify to the authority employment of the newly certified teacher in accordance with the terms of his contract. No payment shall be made for any school year in which the newly certified teacher fails to comply with the terms of his contract, as determined by the authority;

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2 (iv) Restrict program participation to the
3 extent program funding is made available by the
4 legislature, ensuring sufficient funds are maintained to
5 fulfill contractual obligations entered into pursuant to
6 this section;

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8 (v) Adopt rules and regulations necessary to
9 implement and administer this section and shall in
10 cooperation with the Wyoming professional teaching
11 standards board, provide information to teacher
12 certification candidates on the teacher incentive program
13 established by this section and requirements for teacher
14 incentive payments under this program;

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16 (vi) Report to the joint appropriations interim
17 committee and the joint education interim committee on the
18 implementation of this program including the number of
19 program participants, districts in which program
20 participants are providing math or science instruction and
21 the impact of the program on the identified teacher
22 shortage areas.

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1 (d) On or before December 31, 2004, and based upon
2 information made available under paragraph (vi) of this
3 subsection, the authority and the Wyoming professional
4 teaching standards board shall report to the joint
5 education interim committee on data identifying instruction
6 areas within the state for which certified teacher
7 shortages exist and the need to modify the teacher
8 incentive program to address identified shortage areas.
9 The report shall include recommendations on the need for
10 continuation of the teacher incentive program and for any
11 modification to the program. The joint education interim
12 committee shall report on future operation of the teacher
13 incentive program and recommended program funding levels to
14 the joint appropriations interim committee and the
15 legislature in sufficient time to permit consideration
16 during the 2005 general session.

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18 **Section 3.** Four hundred thousand dollars
19 (\$400,000.00) is appropriated from the general fund to the
20 Wyoming higher education authority for purposes of this
21 act.

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1 **Section 4.** This act is effective July 1, 2004.

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