

Date of Hearing: April 2, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 1623 (Robert Rivas) – As Introduced February 22, 2019

[Note: This bill is doubled referred to the Assembly Education Committee and will be heard by that Committee as it relates to issues under its jurisdiction.]

SUBJECT: Teaching credential: teacher recruitment: Golden State Teacher Grant Program.

SUMMARY: Establishes the Golden State Teacher Grant Program, subject to funding appropriated by the Legislature, in order to provide one-time grant funds of \$20,000 to each student enrolled on or after January 1, 2020, in a professional preparation program leading to a preliminary teaching credential, if the student commits to working in a high-need field for four years after the student receives the teaching credential. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC), subject to funding appropriated by the Legislature, to administer the Golden State Teacher Grant Program.
- 2) Requires CSAC to provide \$20,000 to each student enrolled on or after January 1, 2020, in a professional preparation program leading to a preliminary teaching credential, as approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).
- 3) Specifies a student is eligible to participate in the Golden State Teacher Grant Program, if the student commits to working in a high-need field for four years after the student receives a CTC-approved teaching credential.
- 4) Requires a grant recipient to agree to repay the state \$5,000 annually, up to the full repayment of \$20,000 for each year the recipient fails to do one or more of the following:
 - a) Be enrolled in or have successfully completed a CTC approved teacher preparation program;
 - b) While enrolled in the teacher preparation program, maintain good academic standing;
 - c) Upon completion of the teacher preparation program, satisfy the state basic skills proficiency test requirements; and,
 - d) Complete the required teaching service following completion of the recipient's preparation program.
- 5) Authorizes CSAC to define any exceptions to the requirement for repayment as described in (5) above.
- 6) Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to certify nonperformance of the commitment to teach in a high-need field for four years.
- 7) Requires the CTC to certify nonperformance of the commitment to earn a preliminary teaching credential in a high-need field to CSAC.

- 8) Defines “high-need field” as any of the following:
- a) Bilingual education;
 - b) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM);
 - c) Special education; or,
 - d) Other subjects as designated annually by the CTC, based on an analysis of the state’s teacher supply.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the CSAC for the purpose of administering specified student financial aid programs (Education Code (EC) Section 69510, et seq.).
- 2) Establishes the Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE) program, administered by the CSAC, to provide loan assumption benefits to credentialed teachers; specifies that qualifying schools include those with high proportions of low-income youth or emergency permit teachers and those located in rural areas; and, requires the subject area shortages to annually be determined by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (EC Section 69612, et seq.).
- 3) Establishes the Governor's Teaching Fellowships Program, administered by the California State University (CSU) Chancellor’s Office. Requires the CSU Chancellor’s Office to collaborate with the University of California, the California Community Colleges, the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities, CDE, and the CTC, to ensure that access to the fellowships is available to students in a variety of teaching preparation programs. Requires, commencing January 1, 2001, 250 nonrenewable graduate teaching fellowships in the amount of \$20,000 to be awarded; and during the 2001-02 fiscal year, 1,000 nonrenewable, graduated teaching fellowships in the amount of \$20,000 to be awarded. Requires, commencing with the 2002-03 fiscal year, and each fiscal year thereafter, the number of fellowships awarded to be determined pursuant to an appropriation in the annual Budget Act (EC Section 70000).

To note, Committee Staff understands, per the CSU Chancellor’s Office, that the Governor's Teaching Fellowship program awarded \$20,000 fellowships to approximately 1,200 prospective teachers between 2000 and 2002; however, due to the state's financial condition at the time, the program was discontinued in 2002 and no further fellowships were awarded. The CSU Office of the Chancellor continues to track the status of Governor’s Teaching Fellows who still need to complete their fellowship obligation. As of 2019, 86 fellows are still repaying their loans.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: *Background.* According to the CTC’s November 2018 report, *Assignment Monitoring of Certificated Staff in California*, approximately two-thirds of new, California-prepared special education teachers are on substandard credentials. Additionally, in math, the number of fully-prepared candidates with preliminary credentials has decreased by 50% in six years. Lastly, in science, almost 1,000 substandard credentials were issued in 2016-17, more than double the number issued in 2011-12.

Need for the measure. According to the author, “School districts across California are experiencing a serious shortage of qualified teachers. Increased demand for K-12 teachers in California comes at a time when the supply of new teachers hovers at a 12-year low and the number of new credentials issued has dropped by close to 50% during that period”.

The author contends that, “This bill is critical to encourage more college students to pursue a teaching career because, studies indicate that scholarship programs are highly effective at recruiting students who would not otherwise pursue a career in teaching”.

This measure seeks to address the shortage of teachers by establishing the Golden State Teacher Grant Program. The grant program would provide a financial incentive as a way to attract qualified teachers to teach in subject areas experiencing the highest shortages of teachers.

To note, should a grant recipient fail to meet the conditions of receiving the grant, the recipient would have to remit back to the state the moneys received.

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Created in 1970, by the Ryan Act, the CTC is the oldest of the autonomous state teachers’ standards boards in the nation. The major purposes of the agency are to serve as the standards board for educator preparation for the public schools of California, the licensing and credentialing of professional educators in the state, the enforcement of professional practices of educators, and the discipline of credential holders in the State of California.

Committee comments. Committee Staff understands that CSAC is currently short staffed; moving forward, the author may wish to work with CSAC in order to ascertain whether or not this bill can be implemented with CSAC’s current staffing levels or if CSAC will need to hire more staff specifically to implement this new program.

Additionally, as described in the “Existing Law” section of this analysis, the state already has a fellowship program that is similar in nature to the grant program this measure creates.

The author may wish to amend this measure to add more specificity to the existing program and work with the Department of Finance and the Budget Committees of the Legislature, in order to ensure funding will be available and appropriated for the purpose of funding the program.

Prior and related legislation. AB 169 (O’Donnell) of 2017, which, per the author’s request, was not heard in the Senate Committee on Education, and subsequently died, is very similar in nature to this measure.

AB 843 (Rodriguez) of 2019, also on today’s committee agenda, authorizes CSAC to award 7,200 new warrants for the Assumption Program of Loans for Education.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

The Education Trust - West (Sponsor)
California Association for Bilingual Education
California Catholic Conference
Californians Together

Compton Unified School District
Junior Leagues of California State Public Affairs Committee
Public Advocates
Teach Plus
Torrance Unified School District

Opposition

None on file.

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