

Date of Hearing: April 10, 2019

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Patrick O'Donnell, Chair

AB 1623 (Robert Rivas & O'Donnell) – As Introduced February 22, 2019

[This bill was double referred from the Higher Education Committee and was heard by that Committee as the bill relates to their jurisdiction.]

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

SUMMARY: Establishes the Golden State Teacher Grant Program 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 he or she receives a teaching credential. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires a grant recipient to agree to teach in a high-need field for four years, and to have five years, upon completion of his or her preparation program, to meet that obligation.
- 2) Requires a grant recipient to agree to repay the state \$5,000 for each year the recipient fails to do the following:
 - a) Be enrolled in or have successfully completed a teacher preparation program approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).
 - 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.
 - d) Complete the required teaching service following completion of his or her preparation program.
- 3) Requires that nonperformance of the commitment to teach in a high-need field for four years shall be certified by the California Department of Education (CDE).
- 4) Requires that nonperformance of the commitment to earn a preliminary teaching credential in a high-need field be certified by the CTC to the CDE.
- 5) Requires that any exceptions to the requirement for repayment be defined by the CDE.
- 6) Defines "high-need field" to mean any of the following:
 - a) Bilingual education.
 - b) Mathematics or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
 - c) Science.

- d) Special education.
- e) Other subjects as designated annually by the CTC based on an analysis of California's teacher supply.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Established the Local Solutions Grant program in the 2018-19 state budget, which provided \$125 million to the CTC to administer in the form of grants to address teacher shortages. \$75 million in grants was provided to support teacher residency programs to prepare new special education, science, mathematics, or bilingual teachers. An additional \$50 million was made available to recruit, prepare, and retain special education teachers.
- 2) Established the Governor's Teaching Fellowships Program, which awarded \$20,000 fellowships to candidates who committed to teach in a high priority school for four years. High priority schools are defined as schools in the bottom half of the Academic Performance Index.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: This bill creates the Golden State Teacher Grant Program and awards candidates \$20,000 for a commitment to teach in a teacher shortage area for four years. This bill asks candidates to commit to teach in the following shortage areas, and could include other areas designated by the CTC:

- 1) Bilingual education.
- 2) Mathematics.
- 3) Science.
- 4) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- 5) Special education.

According to the Learning Policy Institute, "The more debt college students incur, the less likely they are to choose to work in a lower-wage profession. A recent study of students at a highly selective undergraduate institution found that incurring debt increased the odds that students chose 'substantially higher-salary jobs' and 'reduce[d] the probability that students [chose] low-paid 'public interest' jobs.' The influence of debt on job choice was 'most notable on the propensity to work in the education industry.' In other words, the top-performing students were more likely to pursue a career in education when they did not have a large debt. Other research has found that minority students and students from low-income households perceive student loans as a greater burden than other students with similar student debt earning similar salaries. This research suggests that loan forgiveness and service scholarships may be especially effective for recruiting teacher candidates from low-income and minority backgrounds."

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 California Commission on Teacher Credentialing's November 2018 report found the following when comparing 2015-16 and 2016-17 data for schools ranked in the bottom three deciles statewide (2012 base API):

- 30 percent of all misassignments were in Special Education.
- 74 percent increase (2yr) in misassignments for teachers of English learners.
- 30 percent increase (2yr) in Teacher Vacancies.

About 2/3 of new, California-prepared special education teachers are on substandard credentials. In math, the number of fully-prepared candidates with preliminary credentials has decreased by 50% in six years. In science, almost 1,000 substandard credentials were issued in 2016-17, more than double the number issued in 2011-12.

In addition, the passage of Proposition 58 in 2016, coupled with the adoption of the English Learner Roadmap policy in 2017, has further increased the demand for bilingual teachers. In 2016-17, California issued just over 800 bilingual authorizations, less than half of the 1,800 authorizations in 1994-95 when the number peaked, and still far below the average of 1,200 per year between 2003-04 and 2009-10. The shortage of bilingual teachers leaves most districts unable to fulfill families' and their community's demand for bilingual programs."

Local Solutions Grant Program: The 2018-19 state budget included \$50 million in funding to support the recruitment, preparation, and support of new special education teachers. The CTC has indicated it plans to fund 41 local education agencies (LEAs) with grant funding of up to \$20,000 per teacher to fund recruitment and retention efforts for up to five years, from 2018-19 through June 30, 2023. The grant funds may be used in a variety of ways that meet local LEA special education staffing needs and could include but are not limited to:

- Supporting the costs of identifying, recruiting, and preparing new special education teachers and/or preparation costs for credentialed teachers interested in becoming special education teachers
- Assisting newly credentialed special education teachers with student debt payment
- Supporting the preparation costs of classified personnel, such as special education aides, to become special education teachers
- Supporting the preparation costs of special education candidates to complete an integrated undergraduate program of preparation for an Education Specialist credential
- Providing signing bonuses for newly credentialed special education teachers
- Providing induction for special education teachers
- Providing living stipends for newly credentialed special education teachers
- Other approaches to meeting local staffing needs that would result in increasing the supply of credentialed special education teachers.

Teachers supported by this grant through a service scholarship, signing bonus, or student debt payment have a service obligation to teach for four years in the LEA that supported them in this program.

While the Local Solutions Grant program allows LEAs to use the funding for service scholarships, it is unclear how many school districts will implement a service scholarship program and it is unclear how many new teachers will be recruited to teach in California

through a district initiated service scholarship program. A statewide program would allow teacher candidates to apply for a scholarship and teach anywhere in the state.

Teacher Shortage: School districts across the State of California are experiencing a serious shortage of qualified teachers. There are chronic shortages in the areas of special education, math, and science. Further, there is a shortage among bilingual teachers, and it is estimated that this shortage will grow with the growing popularity of language immersion and dual language immersion programs.

According to the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), “Over 1,700 underprepared special education teachers in 2015–16 were hired on emergency-style permits, which are issued to teachers with little to no preparation to teach. Substandard credentials and permits are growing in every special education subspecialty, with the greatest increases since 2012 in the areas of moderate/severe disabilities, where they have more than doubled, and mild/moderate disabilities, where they increased by more than 60%. These types of special education authorizations are needed to teach students with complex learning needs, including students diagnosed with autism, intellectual disabilities, and serious emotional disturbance. Shortages in special education are most likely to disproportionately affect English Learners, who are overrepresented in special education by nearly 30%, and Black students, who are overrepresented in special education by nearly 50%.”

Arguments in Support: According to Public Advocates, “The impact of our statewide teacher shortage is harshest in high-poverty schools and those with high concentrations of students of color. In their 2015 report *The STEM Teacher Drought*, The Education Trust—West found that the highest poverty districts not only have the hardest time filling math and science vacancies, but that when compared to wealthier districts, students in these districts are 3 times as likely to have a science teacher lacking a full credential and/or science authorization, and 2.7 times as likely to have a math teacher without a full credential and/or math subject-area authorization. AB 1623 is a targeted approach to closing opportunity and achievement gaps for the state’s neediest students.”

Prior Legislation: AB 169 (O’Donnell) from 2017, which was held by the author in Senate Education Committee, was substantially similar to this bill.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Association For Bilingual Education
California Catholic Conference
Californians Together
Compton Unified School District
Junior Leagues Of California State Public Affairs Committee
Public Advocates Inc.
Teach Plus
The Education Trust - West
Torrance Unified School District

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Chelsea Kelley / ED. / (916) 319-2087