

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Teacher Scholarship Program;
3 creating s. 1009.897, F.S.; establishing the Teacher
4 Scholarship Program within the Department of
5 Education; providing the purpose of and the criteria
6 for student eligibility for the program; specifying
7 duties of each postsecondary institution for the
8 program; providing for disbursement of the scholarship
9 awards; providing for stipends; specifying funding and
10 the department's authority to prorate awards under a
11 certain circumstance; providing for rulemaking;
12 providing an effective date.

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14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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16 Section 1. Section 1009.897, Florida Statutes, is created
17 to read:

18 1009.897 The Teacher Scholarship Program.-

19 (1) The Teacher Scholarship Program is established within
20 the department to encourage students who exhibit academic
21 excellence to pursue a career in education. The program shall
22 provide scholarships to eligible students for upper-division
23 undergraduate and graduate study. The program shall also provide
24 a one-time stipend to students who complete their program of
25 study and their first year of employment as a classroom teacher

26 | at a public school in this state.

27 | (2) To be eligible for an undergraduate scholarship under
 28 | the program, a student must meet all of the following
 29 | requirements:

30 | (a) Be a full-time, upper-division undergraduate student
 31 | in a teacher-preparation program approved by the department
 32 | pursuant to s. 1004.04.

33 | (b) The general student eligibility requirements for state
 34 | financial aid as specified in s. 1009.40, except as otherwise
 35 | provided in this section.

36 | (c) The following academic requirements:

37 | 1. Earn an SAT score that corresponds to the 80th SAT
 38 | percentile rank or a concordant ACT score; and

39 | 2. Maintain a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point
 40 | average of 3.25 on a 4.0 scale.

41 | (3) To be eligible for a graduate scholarship under the
 42 | program, a student must meet all of the following requirements:

43 | (a) The criteria specified in paragraphs (2) (b) and (c).

44 | (b) Hold a bachelor's degree from any college or
 45 | university accredited by a regional accrediting association as
 46 | defined by State Board of Education rule.

47 | (c) Be a full-time graduate student in an eligible
 48 | postsecondary graduate teacher education program leading to a
 49 | master's, specialist, or doctoral degree.

50 | (d) Not have previously received a teaching certificate

51 resulting from an undergraduate degree in education.

52 (e) Not have received an undergraduate scholarship
53 pursuant to this section.

54 (4) Each postsecondary institution shall do all of the
55 following:

56 (a) Annually by September 1, certify to the department the
57 names of students eligible for the program.

58 (b) Throughout the academic year, notify the department of
59 any scholarship recipient whose scholarship should be rescinded
60 due to disenrollment from the teacher education program.

61 (5) (a) An eligible undergraduate student may be awarded a
62 scholarship of up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000
63 per year, for 2 undergraduate years or for a maximum of 3 years
64 for programs that require a fifth year of instruction to obtain
65 an initial teaching certification.

66 (b) An eligible graduate student may be awarded a
67 scholarship of up to \$5,000 per semester, not to exceed \$10,000
68 per year, for up to 2 years.

69 (6) (a) A scholarship recipient may receive a one-time
70 stipend of \$10,000 after:

71 1. Completing the teacher education program required under
72 this section and earning a bachelor's or graduate degree, as
73 applicable;

74 2. Notifying the department, in a manner prescribed by
75 department rule, that he or she has been employed by a school

76 district in this state as a classroom teacher as defined in s.
77 1012.01(2); and

78 3. Completing his or her first year of employment as a
79 classroom teacher at a public school in this state.

80 (b) No later than June 1 of each year, the department
81 shall disburse the stipend to each school district for an
82 eligible candidate whose employment is confirmed as of May 1. A
83 candidate who is hired after the first quarter of the academic
84 year is eligible for a prorated stipend as determined by the
85 department. A candidate may not receive both the stipend and an
86 award under s. 1012.731.

87 (7) This section shall be implemented only to the extent
88 specifically funded and authorized by law. The department may
89 prorate the scholarships and stipends authorized by this section
90 if the appropriation is insufficient to fully fund each eligible
91 student.

92 (8) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
93 administer the program.

94 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.