

IN THE SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 1326

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

AN ACT

1 RELATING TO THE QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; AMENDING TITLE 33,
2 IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW CHAPTER 62, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, TO
3 ESTABLISH THE QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND TO PROVIDE
4 RULEMAKING AUTHORITY, TO DEFINE TERMS, TO PROVIDE DUTIES OF THE STATE
5 BOARD OF EDUCATION AND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION REGARDING CRITICAL
6 QUALITY EDUCATOR SHORTAGES, TO PROVIDE LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE AND
7 ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD CRITERIA, AND TO PROVIDE FOR AWARD PROTOCOLS AND
8 STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION; AND PROVIDING SEVERABILITY.
9

10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

11 SECTION 1. That Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended
12 by the addition thereto of a NEW CHAPTER, to be known and designated as Chap-
13 ter 62, Title 33, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

14 CHAPTER 62

15 QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

16 33-6201. QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM -- RULEMAKING. A
17 quality educator loan assistance program as set forth in this chapter shall
18 be administered by the state board of education. The program shall provide
19 for the direct repayment of educational loans of eligible quality educators.
20 The state board of education shall promulgate rules to implement the provi-
21 sions of this chapter.

22 33-6202. DEFINITIONS. As used in this chapter:

23 (1) "Educational loans" means all loans made pursuant to a federal loan
24 program, except federal parent loans for undergraduate students (PLUS), as
25 provided in 20 U.S.C. 1078-2.

26 (2) "Federal loan program" means educational loans authorized by 20
27 U.S.C. 1071 et seq., 20 U.S.C. 1087a et seq., and 20 U.S.C. 1087aa et seq.

28 (3) "Quality educator" means a full-time, standard certificated indi-
29 vidual employed as an instructional or a pupil service employee in an Idaho
30 school district or at a public charter school.

31 33-6203. CRITICAL QUALITY EDUCATOR SHORTAGES. (1) The state board of
32 education in cooperation with the state department of education shall iden-
33 tify specific schools that are impacted by critical quality educator short-
34 ages using the following criteria:

35 (a) Rural isolation of the school pursuant to section 33-319, Idaho
36 Code; or

37 (b) Economic disadvantage of the school based on eligibility for funds
38 under title I, part A of the federal elementary and secondary education
39 act, as amended.

1 (2) Quality educators who are employed at schools identified in sub-
2 section (1) of this section are eligible for repayment of all or part of any
3 such educator's outstanding educational loans existing at the time of appli-
4 cation in accordance with the eligibility and award criteria established in
5 this chapter up to the amount specified in section 33-6204, Idaho Code, and
6 in rules promulgated by the state board of education.

7 33-6204. LOAN REPAYMENT ASSISTANCE -- ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD CRITE-
8 RIA. (1) Loan repayment assistance may be provided on behalf of a quality
9 educator who:

- 10 (a) Is employed in a school identified pursuant to section 33-6203,
11 Idaho Code;
12 (b) Has a signed contract with such school; and
13 (c) Has an educational loan that is not in default and that has a minimum
14 unpaid current balance of at least one thousand dollars (\$1,000) at the
15 time of application.

16 (2) In order to qualify for loan repayment assistance under this chap-
17 ter, a quality educator shall submit an application to the state board of ed-
18 ucation in accordance with rules promulgated by the state board. The appli-
19 cation shall include official verification or proof of the applicant's total
20 unpaid accumulated educational loan debt and any other documentation as re-
21 quired by the state board for verification of the applicant's eligibility.

22 (3) A quality educator is eligible for loan repayment assistance for up
23 to four (4) years, provided that the educator remains employed at the same
24 school or by the same school district. The total annual loan repayment as-
25 sistance shall be:

- 26 (a) One thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) for the first year;
27 (b) Two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for the second year;
28 (c) Three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500) for the third year;
29 and
30 (d) Four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500) for the fourth year.

31 (4) The state board may remit payment of the loan on behalf of the qual-
32 ity educator in accordance with the requirements of this chapter and rules
33 promulgated by the state board.

34 33-6205. AWARD PROTOCOLS -- CONSTRUCTION. (1) The state board of ed-
35 ucation shall promulgate rules to establish protocols for determining the
36 number of loan repayment assistance awards that will be made annually based
37 on available appropriations for the program.

38 (2) The state board of education shall define the criteria for deter-
39 mining the schools that are most impacted by quality educator shortages.

40 (3) Nothing in this chapter may be construed to require the provision of
41 loan repayment assistance without an appropriation for that purpose.

42 SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this act are hereby declared
43 to be severable and if any provision of this act or the application of such
44 provision to any person or circumstance is declared invalid for any reason,
45 such declaration shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of
46 this act.