

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 SENATE BILL 529

By: Pugh

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5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to teachers; creating the Oklahoma
8 Teacher Corps Program to be administered by the
9 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education;
10 providing purpose; providing eligibility criteria;
11 requiring execution of certain agreement; providing
12 for calculation of assistance amount; providing
13 retention criteria; prohibiting individuals who
14 accept certain assistance from also being eligible
15 for certain award, scholarship, or incentive payment;
16 requiring repayment of assistance for failure to meet
17 certain agreement; providing for calculation of
18 repayment amount; allowing request for hardship
19 waiver; providing for promulgation of rules; creating
20 the Oklahoma Teacher Corps Revolving Fund; specifying
21 source of fund; providing for expenditures; providing
22 purpose of fund; providing for codification;
23 providing an effective date; and declaring an
24 emergency.

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18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

19 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
20 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 700 of Title 70, unless there is
21 created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

22 A. There is hereby created the Oklahoma Teacher Corps Program
23 to be administered by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
24 Education to provide assistance to individuals who earn a degree

1 from an approved teacher preparation degree program at an
2 institution of higher education within The Oklahoma State System of
3 Higher Education and agree to teach in a school district in this
4 state that meets the criteria of paragraph 3 of subsection C of this
5 section for four (4) consecutive years.

6 B. To be eligible to participate in the Oklahoma Teacher Corps
7 Program during the 2023-2024 academic year and thereafter, an
8 individual shall:

9 1. Enroll in an institution of higher education within The
10 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education;

11 2. Submit an application on a form prescribed by the Oklahoma
12 State Regents for Higher Education;

13 3. Declare a major in an approved Oklahoma teacher preparation
14 degree program leading to a standard teaching certificate; and

15 4. Execute an agreement pursuant to subsection C of this
16 section.

17 C. An individual who meets the eligibility criteria set forth
18 in subsection B of this section shall execute an agreement stating
19 that he or she shall:

20 1. Agree to earn a bachelor's degree from an approved Oklahoma
21 teacher preparation degree program leading to a standard teaching
22 certificate;

1 2. Agree to meet the requirements of Section 6-187 of Title 70
2 of the Oklahoma Statutes to earn a standard teaching certificate;
3 and

4 3. Agree to teach in a school district in this state that is
5 designated as a comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) school
6 or targeted support and improvement (TSI) school pursuant to the
7 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as
8 reauthorized and amended by P.L. No. 114-95, also known as the Every
9 Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for four (4) consecutive years. The
10 individual is not required to teach at the same school district for
11 four consecutive years.

12 D. 1. The amount of assistance shall be equivalent to the
13 amount of tuition and mandatory fees for courses in which the
14 eligible individual enrolls for completion of a bachelor's degree.
15 Assistance shall not be allowed for courses or other postsecondary
16 units taken in excess of the requirements for completion of a
17 bachelor's degree or taken more than five (5) years after the
18 individual's first semester of enrollment in an institution of
19 higher education within The Oklahoma State System of Higher
20 Education.

21 2. Assistance provided pursuant to this subsection shall be
22 allocated to the institution of higher education from the Oklahoma
23 Teacher Corps Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this
24 act.

1 E. To retain eligibility for the Oklahoma Teacher Corps
2 Program, an eligible individual shall:

3 1. Maintain good academic standing and satisfactory academic
4 progress while enrolled in an institution of higher education
5 according to the institution's standards; and

6 2. After earning a bachelor's degree, submit annual proof of
7 employment with a school district described in paragraph 3 of
8 subsection C of this section to the Oklahoma State Regents for
9 Higher Education.

10 F. An individual who accepts assistance pursuant to this
11 section shall not also be eligible for an Oklahoma Higher Learning
12 Access Program award provided for by Section 2601 et seq. of Title
13 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes or an Oklahoma Future Teacher
14 Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program scholarship or
15 employment incentive payment provided for by Section 698.1 of Title
16 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

17 G. An individual who has received Oklahoma Teacher Corps
18 Program assistance pursuant to this section and who fails to comply
19 with the agreement executed pursuant to subsection C of this section
20 shall be required to repay an amount to be calculated as follows:

21 1. Determine the total amount of assistance provided pursuant
22 to the provisions of this section;

23 2. Divide the amount determined in paragraph 1 of this
24 subsection by twelve (12); and

1 3. Multiply the amount determined in paragraph 2 of this
2 subsection by the number of months the individual did not fulfill
3 the requirements of the agreement executed pursuant to subsection C
4 of this section. Repayments shall be deposited into the Oklahoma
5 Teacher Corps Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this
6 act.

7 H. An individual who has received Oklahoma Teacher Corps
8 Program assistance pursuant to this section and who fails to comply
9 with the agreement executed pursuant to subsection C of this section
10 due to hardship circumstances may request a waiver from repayment
11 from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

12 I. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall
13 promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this section.

14 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
15 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 700.1 of Title 70, unless there
16 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

17 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund
18 for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to be designated
19 the "Oklahoma Teacher Corps Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a
20 continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall
21 consist of all monies received by the Oklahoma State Regents for
22 Higher Education from state appropriations. All monies accruing to
23 the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted
24 and expended by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for

1 the purpose of implement the provisions of the Oklahoma Teacher
2 Corps Program created pursuant to Section 1 of this act.
3 Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the
4 State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the
5 Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for
6 approval and payment.

7 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2023.

8 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
9 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
10 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
11 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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