

State of South Dakota

NINETIETH SESSION
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2015

956W0450

SENATE BILL NO. 144

Introduced by: Senators Sutton, Bradford, Buhl O'Donnell, Frerichs, Heinert, Hunhoff (Bernie), Parsley, and Peterson (Jim) and Representatives Hawks, Bartling, Gibson, Hawley, Killer, Kirschman, Ring, and Soli

1 FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, An Act to establish a tuition reimbursement program for certain
2 teachers who teach in rural school districts.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

4 Section 1. Terms used in this Act mean:

5 (1) "Eligible teacher," a teacher who teaches in a rural school district, whose first year
6 of teaching is after the 2014-2015 school year, who graduated from an accredited
7 postsecondary institution located in South Dakota, and who complies with the
8 provisions of this Act;

9 (2) "Postsecondary tuition and fees," the tuition and generally applicable fees for thirty
10 credit hours per year at a postsecondary institution under the control of the Board of
11 Regents as of July 1, 2015;

12 (3) "Rural school district," a school district located in a community with a population of
13 ten thousand persons or less.

14 Section 2. The Department of Education shall establish a tuition reimbursement program for



1 teachers to assist rural school districts in recruiting teachers.

2 Section 3. An eligible teacher who teaches in a rural school district for at least five years
3 shall receive reimbursement for postsecondary tuition and fees as follows:

4 (1) Following the eligible teacher's third year of teaching in a rural school district, the
5 teacher shall receive reimbursement for one year of postsecondary tuition and fees;

6 (2) Following the eligible teacher's fourth year of teaching in a rural school district, the
7 teacher shall receive reimbursement for one year of postsecondary tuition and fees;
8 and

9 (3) Following the eligible teacher's fifth year of teaching in a rural school district, the
10 teacher shall receive reimbursement for two years of postsecondary tuition and fees.

11 Section 4. That § 61-5-29.1 be amended to read as follows:

12 61-5-29.1. There is hereby created in the state treasury a special revenue fund to be known
13 as the employer's investment in South Dakota's future fund. Such fund shall be used for
14 purposes related to research and economic development for the state. Expenditures from such
15 fund are subject to the provisions of chapters 4-7, 4-8A and 4-8B. Five percent of the annual
16 receipts into the fund shall be used to fund the teacher tuition reimbursement program
17 established pursuant to this Act.

18 Section 5. There is hereby created in the state treasury the South Dakota teacher tuition
19 reimbursement fund into which shall be deposited any appropriations, private donations, grants,
20 federal funds, and other funds provided to the Department of Education for tuition
21 reimbursement for teachers. Any interest earned on the money in the fund shall be deposited in
22 the fund. Expenditures from this fund shall be appropriated through the normal budgeting
23 process.

24 Section 6. On the thirty-first of December each year, the commissioner of finance and

1 management shall transfer an amount equal to five percent of the annual receipts into the
2 employer's investment in South Dakota's future fund created in § 61-5-29.1 from the employer's
3 investment in South Dakota's future fund to the teacher tuition reimbursement fund created in
4 section 5 of this Act.

5 Section 7. A school district may solicit and accept funds from private entities or individuals
6 for the teacher tuition reimbursement fund. Any funds solicited by a particular school district
7 may only be used to reimburse eligible teachers in the school district.

8 Section 8. The Department of Education shall reimburse eligible teachers as provided in
9 section 3 of this Act from funds available in the teacher tuition reimbursement fund. If, in any
10 year, the total funds available to fund the teacher tuition reimbursement program are insufficient
11 to permit each eligible teacher to receive the full amount provided in section 3 of this Act, the
12 available moneys shall be prorated and distributed to each recipient in proportion to the
13 entitlement contemplated in that section.

14 Section 9. The Department of Education shall promulgate rules pursuant to chapter 1-26 to
15 establish procedures for eligible teachers to apply for tuition reimbursement and procedures for
16 distribution of reimbursement funds.