

State of Arkansas  
91st General Assembly  
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As Engrossed: S2/7/17 H3/22/17  
**A Bill**

SENATE BILL 26

By: Senator A. Clark  
By: Representative Gates

### For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO INCREASE TEACHERS IN HIGH NEEDS SUBJECT  
AREAS; TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TEACHERS WHO AGREE  
TO TEACH IN THE HIGH NEEDS SUBJECT AREAS; AND FOR  
OTHER PURPOSES.

### Subtitle

*TO INCREASE TEACHERS IN HIGH NEEDS  
SUBJECT AREAS; AND TO PROVIDE  
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR TEACHERS WHO AGREE TO  
TEACH IN THE HIGH NEEDS SUBJECT AREAS.*

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

*SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 82, is amended to add an  
additional subchapter to read as follows:*

*Subchapter 18 – Scholarships for Teachers in High-Needs Subject Areas*

*6-82-1801. Scholarships for teachers in high-needs subject areas.*

*(a)(1) A recipient of a scholarship under this subchapter who meets  
the requirements under subsection (b) of this section is eligible for a  
scholarship award of:*

*(A) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the academic year  
in which the recipient either:*

*(i) Has earned at least fifty-seven (57) semester  
credit hours but less than eighty-seven (87) semester credit hours; or*

*(ii) Is classified as a junior by the approved*



institution of higher education in which the recipient is enrolled; and

(B) Five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the academic year in which the recipient either:

(i) Has earned at least eighty-seven (87) semester credit hours but no more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours unless the recipient is enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program that requires more than one hundred twenty (120) semester credit hours; or

(ii) Is classified as a senior by the approved institution of higher education in which the recipient is enrolled.

(2) A recipient is eligible to receive a maximum aggregate scholarship award of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) under subdivision (a)(1) of this section.

(b) To be eligible for a scholarship award under subdivision (a)(1) of this section, a recipient shall:

(1) Maintain a postsecondary grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale at an approved institution of higher education;

(2) Be enrolled in a teacher education program at a four-year approved institution of higher education; and

(3)(A) Enter into a written agreement with the Department of Higher Education to teach at a public school for a minimum of five (5) consecutive years in a high-needs subject area as determined under subdivision (b)(3)(B) of this section.

(B) A recipient shall be deemed to be teaching in a high-needs subject area if the subject area in which the recipient is employed to teach was determined by the Department of Education to be a high-needs subject area in:

(i) The year the recipient entered into the agreement with the Department of Higher Education under subdivision (b)(3)(A);

(ii) Any year the recipient received a scholarship award under this subchapter; or

(iii) The year the recipient is licensed as a teacher by the State Board of Education.

(c) The written agreement entered into by the recipient and the Department of Higher Education under subdivision (b)(3) of this section shall provide that the recipient:

(1) Shall seek licensure as a teacher from the State Board of Education within one (1) year of completing the teacher education program and earning a degree; and

(2) Shall repay the scholarship award amount:

(A) On a pro rata basis at an interest rate and on a schedule as determined by the Department of Higher Education for each year *the recipient does not teach at a public school in a high-needs subject area if the recipient does not teach at a public school in a high-needs subject area as determined by the Department of Education* for five (5) consecutive years after first becoming employed as a licensed teacher; or

(B) In its entirety at an interest rate and on a schedule as determined by the Department of Higher Education if the recipient does not:

(i) Obtain licensure as a teacher from the State Board of Education within one (1) year of completing the teacher education program and earning a degree;

(ii) Begin work at a public school as a licensed teacher in a high-needs subject area, as determined by the Department of Education, in the academic year immediately following becoming licensed; or

(iii) Teach at a public school in a high-needs subject area as determined by the Department of Education in the recipient's first year as a licensed teacher.

(d)(1) The Department of Higher Education may defer the requirements under subdivisions (c)(2)(B)(ii) and (iii) if the Department of Higher Education, in consultation with the Department of Education, determines that *there was no employment position available at a public school that would reasonably enable the recipient to meet the requirements.*

(2) After the period of deferral, the recipient shall begin or resume teaching at a public school in a high-needs subject area or become subject to repayment under subdivision (c)(2) of this section.

(e)(1) By March 1 of each year, the Department of Education shall provide to the Department of Higher Education a maximum on the number of *scholarships that should be awarded under this subchapter for the following academic year based on the projected needs of licensed teachers at public schools in high-needs subject areas.*

(2) The Department of Higher Education shall not award for an

academic year more scholarships than the maximum number provided by the Department of Education under subdivision (e)(1) of this section.

(f) If the Department of Higher Education receives applications from more qualified applicants than the number of scholarships available or if funds are not available to award scholarships to all qualified applicants, the Department of Higher Education shall award the scholarships on a competitive basis as determined by the Department of Higher Education.

(g) If a recipient of a scholarship under this subchapter withdraws from an approved institution of higher education so that under the rules of that approved institution of higher education the recipient is entitled to a refund of any tuition, fees, or other charges, the approved institution of higher education shall pay the refund to which the recipient may be entitled to the Department of Higher Education to the extent of any amount the Department of Higher Education has paid to the recipient for that academic year.

(h) The Department of Higher Education shall promulgate rules to implement this subchapter.

*/s/A. Clark*

**APPROVED: 04/05/2017**