

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 497

102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE LEWIS (6).

0765H.011

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 173.232, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to teacher scholarships.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 173.232, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 173.232, to read as follows:

173.232. 1. There is hereby established the "~~[Urban Flight and Rural Needs]~~ **Teacher Recruitment and Retention State** Scholarship Program", which shall be administered by the department of elementary and secondary education. The program shall, upon appropriation, provide scholarships, subject to the eligibility criteria enumerated in this section, for eligible students who enter a teacher education program and make a commitment to teach as a condition of receiving such scholarship.

2. Subject to appropriation, each year the department of elementary and secondary education shall make available to eligible students ~~[up to one hundred four year urban flight and rural needs]~~ **scholarships for up to two years** in an amount that encompasses one hundred percent of the total cost of eligible students' tuition and fees at a four-year college or university located in Missouri. Such amount shall be paid by funds appropriated to the department. **The maximum number of scholarships made available under this section shall be as follows:**

- (1) **For academic years ending before July 1, 2024, one hundred;**
- (2) **For the 2024-25 academic year, two hundred;**
- (3) **For the 2025-26 academic year, two hundred twenty;**
- (4) **For the 2026-27 academic year, two hundred forty;**

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets ~~[thus]~~ in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

- 18 **(5) For the 2027-28 academic year, two hundred sixty;**
19 **(6) For the 2028-29 academic year, two hundred eighty; and**
20 **(7) For the 2029-30 academic year and all subsequent academic years, three**
21 **hundred.**

22 3. As used in this section, the ~~[term]~~ **following terms mean:**

23 **(1) "Eligible student" ~~[shall mean]~~, an individual who:**

24 ~~[(1)]~~ **(a) Is a United States citizen and a Missouri resident who attended a Missouri**
25 **high school;**

26 ~~[(2)]~~ **(b) Enters and makes a commitment to pursue a teacher education program**
27 **approved by the department of elementary and secondary education and offered by a four-**
28 **year college or university located in Missouri;**

29 ~~[(3)]~~ **(c) Signs an agreement with the department of elementary and secondary**
30 **education in which the recipient agrees to teach in a Missouri public school~~[-the population~~**
31 **of which includes a higher than average "at risk student population", as such term shall be**
32 **defined by the department of elementary and secondary education,] that is a hard-to-staff**
33 **school or to teach at least one hard-to-staff subject area in a Missouri public school that**
34 **offers classes in hard-to-staff subject areas, or both, for two years for every one year the**
35 **recipient received the ~~[urban flight and rural needs]~~ scholarship;**

36 ~~[(4)]~~ **Has graduated from high school with a cumulative grade point average of at least**
37 **two and one half on a four point scale or equivalent;**

38 ~~[(5)]~~ **(d) Maintains a cumulative grade point average of at least two and one-half on a**
39 **four-point scale or equivalent; and**

40 **(e) For scholarships awarded for any academic year beginning after June 30,**
41 **2024, has made a good faith effort to first secure all available federal sources of grant**
42 **funding that could be applied to the total cost of such student's eligible tuition and fees**
43 **as described in subsection 2 of this section;**

44 **(2) "Hard-to-staff schools", attendance centers where the percentage of**
45 **certificated positions in the attendance center that were left vacant or were filled with**
46 **a teacher not fully qualified in the prior academic year exceeds five percent as reported**
47 **to the department of elementary and secondary education;**

48 **(3) "Hard-to-staff subject areas", content areas for which positions were left**
49 **vacant or were filled with a teacher not fully qualified in the prior academic year as**
50 **reported to the department of elementary and secondary education.**

51 4. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of scholarships or revenues
52 available, the department of elementary and secondary education may consider the financial
53 needs of the applicant.

54 5. The scholarships provided in this section shall be available to ~~[otherwise]~~ eligible
55 students who ~~[either]~~ **meet at least one of the following:**

56 (1) ~~[Are currently enrolled in a community college and make a commitment to pursue~~
57 ~~a teacher education program approved by the department of elementary and secondary~~
58 ~~education and offered by a four-year college or university located in Missouri; or]~~ **Have**
59 **successfully completed two years at a community college with a minimum of forty-eight**
60 **credit hours and a grade point average of at least two and one-half on a four-point scale**
61 **or the equivalent;**

62 (2) **Have been awarded an associate degree or the equivalent; or**

63 (3) Have completed their baccalaureate degree ~~[and agree to enter a teacher education~~
64 ~~program and make a commitment to pursue a teacher education program approved by the~~
65 ~~department of elementary and secondary education and offered by a four-year college or~~
66 ~~university located in Missouri].~~

67 6. (1) Every eligible student receiving scholarships under this section shall teach in
68 an elementary or secondary public school in Missouri as provided in **paragraph (c) of**
69 subdivision ~~[(3)]~~ (1) of subsection 3 of this section. The student shall teach for a period of
70 two years for every one year ~~[he or she]~~ **such student** received ~~[an urban flight and rural~~
71 ~~needs]~~ **a scholarship under this section;** otherwise, the scholarship shall be treated as a loan
72 to the eligible student~~], and interest at the rate of nine and one-half percent per year].~~ **Interest**
73 **shall be charged on the unpaid balance of the amount received from the date the eligible**
74 **student ceases to teach until the amount received is paid back to the state. The interest rate**
75 **shall be adjusted annually and shall be equal to one percentage point over the prevailing**
76 **United States prime rate in effect on January first of such year.**

77 (2) In order to provide for the servicing of such loans, the department of elementary
78 and secondary education may sell such loans to the higher education loan authority of the
79 state of Missouri created pursuant to sections 173.350 to 173.445. For each year the student
80 teaches, up to eight years, one-eighth of the amount received pursuant to this section shall be
81 applied against the total amount received and shall not be subject to the repayment
82 requirement of this section; provided that twenty-five percent of such amount, not subject to
83 repayment, shall be repaid by the local school district to the department.

84 (3) The department of elementary and secondary education shall have the power to
85 and shall defer interest and principal payments under certain circumstances, which shall
86 include, but need not be limited to, the enrollment in a graduate program or service in any
87 branch of the Armed Forces of the United States.

88 7. There is hereby established in the state treasury a fund to be known as the "~~Urban~~
89 ~~Flight and Rural Needs]~~ **Teacher Recruitment and Retention State** Scholarship Program
90 Fund", which shall consist of all moneys that may be appropriated to it by the general

91 assembly, and in addition may include any gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests received
92 from federal, state, private, or other sources. The fund shall be administered by the
93 department of elementary and secondary education. Notwithstanding the provisions of
94 section 33.080 to the contrary, moneys in the fund shall not be transferred to the credit of the
95 general revenue fund at the end of the biennium. Interest and moneys earned on the fund
96 shall be credited to the fund. Moneys in the fund shall be used solely for the purpose of
97 awarding scholarships under the provisions of this section.

98 **8. An individual who has qualified as an eligible student under this section shall**
99 **continue to qualify as an eligible student for purposes of paragraph (c) of subdivision (1)**
100 **of subsection 3 of this section as long as such individual remains employed by the school**
101 **district in which such individual agrees to teach regardless of whether such individual's**
102 **employing school no longer qualifies as a hard-to-staff school, such class taught by such**
103 **individual no longer qualifies as a hard-to-staff subject area, or such individual's**
104 **position within the school district changes.**

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