

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section 21B-70 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/21B-70)

Sec. 21B-70. Illinois Teaching Excellence Program.

(a) As used in this Section:

"Diverse candidate" means a candidate who identifies with any of the ethnicities reported on the Illinois Report Card other than White.

"Hard-to-staff school" means a public school in which no less than 30% of the student enrollment is considered low-income as reported by the report card under Section 10-17a of this Code.

"National Board certified teacher candidate cohort facilitator" means a National Board certified teacher who collaborates to advance the goal of supporting all other candidate cohorts other than diverse candidate cohorts through the Illinois National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Comprehensive Support System.

"National Board certified teacher diverse candidate cohort facilitator" means a National Board certified teacher who

collaborates to advance the goal of supporting racially and ethnically diverse candidates through the Illinois National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Comprehensive Support System.

"National Board certified teacher diverse liaison" means an individual or entity that supports the National Board certified teacher leading a diverse candidate cohort.

"National Board certified teacher liaison" means an individual or entity that supports the National Board certified teacher leading candidate cohorts other than diverse candidate cohorts.

"National Board certified teacher rural or remote or distant candidate cohort facilitator" means a National Board certified teacher who collaborates to advance the goal of supporting rural or remote candidates through the Illinois National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Comprehensive Support System.

"National Board certified teacher rural or remote or distant liaison" means an individual or entity that supports the National Board certified teacher leading a rural or remote candidate cohort.

"Qualified educator" means a teacher or school counselor currently employed in a school district who is in the process of obtaining certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or who has completed certification and holds a current Professional Educator

License with a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards designation or a retired teacher or school counselor who holds a Professional Educator License with a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards designation.

"Rural or remote" or "rural or remote or distant" means local codes 32, 33, 41, 42, and 43 of the New Urban-Centric Locale Codes, as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics.

"Tier 1" has the meaning given to that term under Section 18-8.15.

"Tier 2" has the meaning given to that term under Section 18-8.15.

(b) Any funds appropriated for the Illinois Teaching Excellence Program must be used to provide monetary assistance and incentives for qualified educators who are employed by or retired from school districts and who have or are in the process of obtaining licensure through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The goal of the program is to improve instruction and student performance.

The State Board of Education shall allocate an amount as annually appropriated by the General Assembly for the Illinois Teaching Excellence Program for (i) application or re-take fees for each qualified educator seeking to complete certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, to be paid directly to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and (ii) incentives under

paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (c) for each qualified educator, to be distributed to the respective school district, and incentives under paragraph (5) of subsection (c), to be distributed to the respective school district or directly to the qualified educator. The school district shall distribute this payment to each eligible teacher or school counselor as a single payment.

The State Board of Education's annual budget must set out by separate line item the appropriation for the program. Unless otherwise provided by appropriation, qualified educators are eligible for monetary assistance and incentives outlined in subsections (c) and (d) of this Section.

(c) When there are adequate funds available, monetary assistance and incentives shall include the following:

(1) A maximum of \$2,000 towards the application or re-take fee for teachers or school counselors in a Tier 1 school district who apply on a first-come, first-serve basis for National Board certification.

(2) A maximum of \$2,000 towards the application or re-take fee for teachers or school counselors in a school district other than a Tier 1 school district who apply on a first-come, first-serve basis for National Board certification.

(3) A maximum of \$1,000 towards the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' renewal application fee.

(4) (Blank).

(5) An annual incentive of no more than \$1,500 prorated at \$50 per hour, which shall be paid to each qualified educator currently employed in a school district who holds both a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards designation and a current corresponding certificate issued by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who agrees, in writing, to provide up to 30 hours of mentoring or National Board for Professional Teaching Standards professional development or both during the school year to classroom teachers or school counselors, as applicable. Funds must be disbursed on a first-come, first-serve basis, with priority given to Tier 1 school districts. Mentoring shall include, either singly or in combination, the following:

(A) National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification candidates.

(B) National Board for Professional Teaching Standards re-take candidates.

(C) National Board for Professional Teaching Standards renewal candidates.

(D) (Blank).

Funds may also be used for instructional leadership training for qualified educators interested in supporting implementation of the Illinois Learning Standards or teaching and learning priorities of the State Board of Education or both.

(d) In addition to the monetary assistance and incentives provided under subsection (c), if adequate funds are available, incentives shall include the following incentives for the program in rural or remote schools or school districts or for programs working with diverse candidates or for retention bonuses for hard to staff schools, to be distributed to the respective school district or directly to the qualified educator or entity:

(1) A one-time incentive of \$3,000 payable to National Board certified teachers teaching in Tier 1 or Tier 2 rural or remote school districts or rural or remote schools in Tier 1 or Tier 2 school districts, with priority given to teachers teaching in Tier 1 rural or remote school districts or rural or remote schools in Tier 1 school districts.

(2) An annual incentive of \$3,200 for National Board certified teacher rural or remote or distant candidate cohort facilitators, diverse candidate cohort facilitators, and candidate cohort facilitators. Priority shall be given to rural or remote candidate cohort facilitators and diverse candidate cohort facilitators.

(3) An annual incentive of \$2,500 for National Board certified teacher rural or remote or distant liaisons, diverse liaisons, and liaisons. Priority shall be given to rural or remote liaisons and diverse liaisons.

(4) An annual retention bonus of \$4,000 per year for 2

consecutive years shall be awarded to National Board certified teachers employed in hard-to-staff schools. Funds must be disbursed on a first-come, first-served basis.

(Source: P.A. 100-201, eff. 8-18-17; 101-333, eff. 1-1-20; 101-654, eff. 3-8-21.)