

REFERENCE TITLE: experienced teacher retention; pilot program

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-fifth Legislature
First Regular Session
2021

HB 2151

Introduced by
Representative Friese

AN ACT

ESTABLISHING THE EXPERIENCED TEACHER RETENTION PILOT PROGRAM;
APPROPRIATING MONIES.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Experienced teacher retention pilot program;
3 requirements; impact study; report; delayed
4 repeal; definition

5 A. The department of education shall conduct a three-year
6 experienced teacher retention pilot program. Persons who are selected by
7 the department to participate in the pilot program are eligible to receive
8 a discount of seventy-five percent on tuition at universities under the
9 jurisdiction of the Arizona board of regents for the duration of the pilot
10 program. The department shall establish application procedures for
11 persons who wish to apply to participate in the pilot program. The
12 department, in collaboration with the Arizona board of regents, shall
13 limit the number of persons who are selected to participate in the pilot
14 program to ensure that the cost of the pilot program does not exceed the
15 amount appropriated. The department shall prioritize eligible
16 participants who teach in a rural school and select applicants to
17 participate in the pilot program on a first-come, first-served basis.

18 B. The following persons are eligible to participate in the pilot
19 program:

20 1. A certificated teacher who has been employed at one or more
21 school districts or charter schools in this state for a total of at least
22 ten years.

23 2. The spouse of a person who meets the criterion specified in
24 paragraph 1 of this subsection.

25 3. The dependent of a person who meets the criterion specified in
26 paragraph 1 of this subsection.

27 4. A certificated teacher who has been employed at one or more
28 school districts or charter schools for at least three years but fewer
29 than ten years. A certificated teacher who meets the criterion specified
30 in this paragraph may use the discount specified in this section only to
31 obtain one or more graduate degrees in the same or a similar subject
32 matter in which the participant teaches and shall sign a contract with the
33 department of education to continue to teach in a public school in this
34 state for at least four years after obtaining the graduate degree.

35 C. A tuition discount awarded pursuant to this section shall be
36 reduced by the amount of any federal aid scholarships, public grants and
37 other public aid received by that person from or through the university at
38 which the person is enrolled. If a program participant receives
39 discounted tuition pursuant to subsection B of this section and fails to
40 fulfill the service requirement under the contract, or if the program
41 participant's teacher certificate is revoked by the state board of
42 education pursuant to title 15, Arizona Revised Statutes, the program
43 participant shall repay the amount of the discounted tuition to the
44 department of education.

1 D. Each university that enrolls a program participant shall submit
2 an invoice to the department of education to reimburse the university for
3 the amount of the discounted tuition for that participant. The
4 department, after verifying the amount of the invoice and the person's
5 participation in the pilot program, shall distribute to that university an
6 amount to reimburse the university for the amount of the discounted
7 tuition for that program participant from monies appropriated for this
8 purpose.

9 E. On or before December 31, 2022, the department of education
10 shall issue a request for proposals to contract with one or more qualified
11 persons or entities to study the impact and effectiveness of the
12 experienced teacher retention pilot program on the teacher shortage in
13 this state. On or before December 31, 2025, the persons or entities
14 selected by the department shall submit a report that summarizes their
15 findings and conclusions to the governor, the superintendent of public
16 instruction, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of
17 representatives. The superintendent of public instruction shall provide a
18 copy of this report to the secretary of state.

19 F. The department of education may adopt policies and procedures to
20 carry out the purposes of the pilot program.

21 G. This section is repealed from and after February 15, 2028.

22 H. For the purposes of this section, "rural school" means a school
23 that is located in a county with either:

24 1. A population that is less than or equal to ten percent of the
25 population of this state.

26 2. A population that exceeds ten percent of the population of this
27 state but the school is located more than ten miles from a municipality
28 with a population of more than fifty thousand persons.

29 Sec. 2. Appropriations; department of education; experienced
30 teacher retention pilot program; impact study;
31 exemption

32 A. The following amounts are appropriated from the state general
33 fund in the following fiscal years to the department of education for the
34 costs of the experienced teacher retention pilot program:

35 1. In fiscal year 2021-2022, \$2,000,000.

36 2. In fiscal year 2022-2023, either:

37 (a) \$2,000,000 if the department of education awarded less than the
38 total amount of monies appropriated in the previous fiscal year to program
39 participants pursuant to this section, excluding monies the department
40 retained to administer the pilot program.

41 (b) \$2,500,000 if the department of education awarded at least the
42 total amount of monies appropriated in the previous fiscal year to program
43 participants pursuant to this section, excluding monies the department
44 retained to administer the pilot program.

1 3. In fiscal year 2023-2024, either:
2 (a) The amount appropriated pursuant to paragraph 2 of this
3 subsection, excluding monies the department retained to administer the
4 pilot program, if the department of education awarded less than that
5 amount to program participants pursuant to this section.
6 (b) \$5,000,000 if the department of education awarded at least the
7 amount appropriated pursuant to paragraph 2 of this subsection, excluding
8 monies the department retained to administer the pilot program, to program
9 participants pursuant to this section in fiscal year 2022-2023.
10 B. The sum of \$100,000 is appropriated from the state general fund
11 in fiscal year 2022-2023 to the department of education to distribute to
12 the persons or entities that are selected to study the impact of the
13 experienced teacher retention pilot program as prescribed in this act.
14 C. The department may retain up to two percent of the monies
15 appropriated each fiscal year pursuant to subsection A of this section to
16 administer the pilot program.
17 D. The appropriations made in subsections A and B of this section
18 are exempt from the provisions of section 35-190, Arizona Revised
19 Statutes, relating to lapsing of appropriations, except that all monies
20 remaining unencumbered or unexpended on June 30, 2024 revert to the state
21 general fund.