

REFERENCE TITLE: school mental health professionals; academy

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-seventh Legislature
First Regular Session
2025

HB 2500

Introduced by

Representatives Sandoval: Abeytia, Aguilar, Austin, Blattman, Cavero,
Contreras L, Contreras P, Garcia, Hernandez L, Liguori, Luna-Nájera,
Márquez, Mathis, Peshlakai, Simacek, Stahl Hamilton, Tsosie, Villegas;
Senators Kuby, Miranda, Ortiz

AN ACT

AMENDING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 13, ARTICLE 3, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES, BY
ADDING SECTION 15-1655.01; APPROPRIATING MONIES; RELATING TO SCHOOL
EMPLOYEE TRAINING.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

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

2 Section 1. Title 15, chapter 13, article 3, Arizona Revised
3 Statutes, is amended by adding section 15-1655.01, to read:

4 15-1655.01. Arizona school mental health professionals
5 academy; tuition and fees scholarships; fund;
6 reporting requirements; definitions

7 A. ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS SHALL IMPLEMENT AN ARIZONA
8 SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ACADEMY TO INCENTIVIZE STUDENTS TO
9 ENTER THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK AND SCHOOL COUNSELING
10 PROFESSIONS AND TO COMMIT TO WORK AS A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL SOCIAL
11 WORKER OR SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THIS STATE OR FOR OR IN
12 SCHOOLS THAT SERVE PRIMARILY PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES,
13 WHICH ARE CONSIDERED PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION. THE
14 ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS, IN CONSULTATION WITH ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY
15 INSTITUTIONS, SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT CENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATIVE
16 PROCESSES FOR THE ACADEMY, INCLUDING:

17 1. A MARKETING AND PROMOTION PLAN TO RECRUIT STUDENTS FOR THE
18 ACADEMY.

19 2. DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING.

20 3. TRACKING POSTGRADUATION SERVICE REQUIREMENTS.

21 4. DISTRIBUTING MONIES IN THE ARIZONA SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH
22 PROFESSIONALS ACADEMY FUND BETWEEN ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS.

23 5. COLLECTING REIMBURSEMENT FROM INDIVIDUALS WHO FAIL TO MEET
24 SERVICE OBLIGATIONS.

25 B. THE ACADEMY MAY INCLUDE NEW OR EXISTING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST,
26 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER AND SCHOOL COUNSELOR PREPARATION PROGRAM PATHWAYS
27 THAT ARE STUDENT-FOCUSED AND THAT EMPLOY PROVEN, RESEARCH-BASED MODELS OF
28 BEST PRACTICES ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED. EACH ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY
29 INSTITUTION MAY DEVELOP A PORTFOLIO OF PREPARATION PROGRAMS TO OFFER AS
30 PART OF THE ACADEMY. THE ACADEMY SHALL INCLUDE GRADUATE PROGRAMS THAT
31 SATISFY THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR THE STANDARD SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
32 CERTIFICATE AND THE STANDARD SCHOOL COUNSELING CERTIFICATE AND ALL
33 GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL WORK. THE ACADEMY MAY NOT INCLUDE DOCTORAL
34 PROGRAMS. PROGRAMS OFFERED AS PART OF THE ACADEMY SHALL INCLUDE
35 ACCELERATED MODELS FOR CRITICAL NEED AREAS, INCLUDING LOW-INCOME PUBLIC
36 SCHOOLS, PUBLIC SCHOOLS LOCATED ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS, RURAL PUBLIC
37 SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS THAT SERVE PRIMARILY PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH
38 DISABILITIES.

39 C. EACH ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION SHALL DEVELOP
40 PARTNERSHIPS WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THIS STATE TO BUILD COMMITMENTS FOR
41 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER AND SCHOOL COUNSELOR EMPLOYMENT
42 ON COMPLETION OF THE ACADEMY. THE TARGETED DEPLOYMENT OF ACADEMY GRADUATES
43 SHALL BE BASED ON THE NEEDS OF EACH SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE COMMUNITY THAT
44 IS BEING SERVED AS WELL AS THE INDIVIDUAL SKILLS OF EACH GRADUATE.

D. EACH ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION SHALL PROVIDE TO EACH STUDENT WHO IS ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMY AN ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP UP TO THE ACTUAL COST OF TUITION AND FEES FOR A MAXIMUM OF THREE ACADEMIC YEARS OR SIX SEMESTERS FOR GRADUATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND UP TO THE ACTUAL COST OF OBTAINING A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK OR SCHOOL COUNSELING CERTIFICATE, INCLUDING THE ACTUAL COST OF THE EXAM, AFTER ALL OTHER FINANCIAL GIFTS, AID OR GRANTS RECEIVED BY THAT STUDENT. SCHOLARSHIPS UNDER THIS SUBSECTION ARE SUBJECT TO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING, THE STUDENT SHALL REIMBURSE THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS FOR THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP FOR TUITION AND FEES THE STUDENT RECEIVED FOR THAT YEAR.

2. FOR EACH ACADEMIC YEAR THAT THE STUDENT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES AND FOR WHICH THE STUDENT RECEIVES A SCHOLARSHIP FOR ALL TUITION AND FEES, THE STUDENT MUST AGREE TO WORK AS A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER OR SCHOOL COUNSELOR FOR ONE FULL SCHOOL YEAR IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THIS STATE. FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE WORKING AS A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER OR SCHOOL COUNSELOR AND RECEIVING THE SCHOLARSHIP CONCURRENTLY, THE SERVICE OBLIGATION PERIOD BEGINS AFTER THE STUDENT'S GRADUATION FROM THE ACADEMY.

3. IF A STUDENT ENROLLS IN A SUMMER TERM, THAT TERM MAY NOT BE INCLUDED IN THE CALCULATION OF THE STUDENT'S POSTGRADUATION SERVICE OBLIGATION.

4. IF THE SCHOLARSHIP DOES NOT COVER REMAINING TUITION AND FEE COSTS AFTER OTHER AID RECEIVED, THE ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION MAY NOT CHARGE STUDENTS THE REMAINING DIFFERENCE. IF THE SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT EXCEEDS TUITION AND FEE COSTS AT AN ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION, THE ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION MAY USE THE REMAINING AMOUNT TO SUPPORT THE ACADEMY COSTS.

5. IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT FULFILL THE STUDENT'S SERVICE OBLIGATION, THE STUDENT MUST REIMBURSE THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS FOR THE PROPORTIONAL AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP FOR TUITION AND FEES THAT THE STUDENT RECEIVED THAT CORRESPONDS TO THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL YEARS REMAINING IN THE STUDENT'S SERVICE OBLIGATION.

6. IF THE STUDENT IS PHYSICALLY OR MENTALLY UNABLE TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACADEMY, THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS SHALL ESTABLISH A PROCESS FOR ASSESSING THE STUDENT'S ABILITY TO REPAY THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED AND SHALL DETERMINE ANY TERMS OF REPAYMENT.

7. THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS SHALL ESTABLISH A PROCESS FOR DEFERRING SERVICE OR REPAYMENT BASED ON FACTORS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD.

E. THE ARIZONA SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ACADEMY FUND IS ESTABLISHED CONSISTING OF LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS MADE FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADMINISTERING THE ARIZONA SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ACADEMY. MONIES IN THE FUND ARE CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED AND ARE EXEMPT FROM THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 35-190 RELATING TO LAPSING OF APPROPRIATIONS. THE

1 ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS SHALL ADMINISTER THE FUND AND SHALL ESTABLISH
2 CRITERIA FOR DISTRIBUTING MONIES IN THE FUND TO ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY
3 INSTITUTIONS EACH FISCAL YEAR TO FUND THE COSTS OF THE ACADEMY. MONIES IN
4 THE FUND MAY BE USED ONLY FOR:

5 1. REIMBURSING ACADEMY SCHOLARSHIPS THAT COVER THE BALANCE OF
6 TUITION AND FEES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMY
7 AFTER ALL OTHER GIFTS AND AID RECEIVED.

8 2. IMPLEMENTING A MARKETING AND PROMOTION PLAN TO RECRUIT AND
9 RETAIN STUDENTS IN THE ACADEMY WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON ADMINISTERING
10 THE ACADEMY AND ENSURING THAT PARTICIPANTS REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF THIS
11 STATE'S STUDENT POPULATION. ANNUAL EXPENDITURES FOR MARKETING, PROMOTING
12 AND ADMINISTERING THE ACADEMY MAY NOT EXCEED THREE PERCENT OF THE MONIES
13 IN THE FUND EACH FISCAL YEAR.

14 F. MONIES REMAINING IN THE FUND AT THE END OF EACH FISCAL YEAR MAY
15 BE USED BY ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS FOR ACADEMY COSTS IN THE
16 NEXT FISCAL YEAR.

17 G. ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2026 AND EACH YEAR THEREAFTER, THE ARIZONA
18 BOARD OF REGENTS SHALL REPORT TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE BUDGET COMMITTEE
19 AND THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND BUDGETING ON ALL OF
20 THE FOLLOWING:

21 1. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMY AT EACH
22 ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION IN THE CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR.

23 2. THE ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF MONIES COMMITTED FROM THE FUND IN THE
24 CURRENT FISCAL YEAR.

25 H. ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS
26 SHALL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR, THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER
27 OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND SHALL SUBMIT A COPY TO THE SECRETARY
28 OF STATE, ON ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

29 1. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMY AT EACH
30 ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION BY YEAR OF COLLEGE ENROLLMENT.

31 2. THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED EACH YEAR OF THE
32 ACADEMY AND WHO PLAN TO CONTINUE TO THE SUBSEQUENT YEAR, DELINEATED BY
33 EACH PREPARATION PROGRAM OFFERED BY EACH ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY
34 INSTITUTION AS PART OF THE ACADEMY.

35 3. THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS AND
36 SCHOOL COUNSELORS WHO COMPLETED A PROGRAM THROUGH THE ACADEMY AT EACH
37 ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION.

38 4. THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS AND
39 SCHOOL COUNSELORS CURRENTLY WORKING IN A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THIS STATE AS
40 PART OF AN AGREEMENT FOR RECEIVING AN ACADEMY SCHOLARSHIP.

41 5. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE DEFAULTED ON THEIR SERVICE
42 OBLIGATIONS AND WHO ARE IN REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS.

43 6. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE DEFERRED REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS.

44 7. THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED REPAYMENT AGREEMENTS.

1 8. THE METHODOLOGY FOR DISTRIBUTING ANY MONIES APPROPRIATED FOR THE
2 ACADEMY TO EACH ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION AND THE AMOUNTS
3 DISTRIBUTED TO EACH.

4 9. THE AMOUNT OF UNUSED MONIES IN THE ARIZONA SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH
5 PROFESSIONALS ACADEMY FUND FROM THE PRIOR FISCAL YEAR.

6 I. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION:

7 1. "ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION" MEANS A UNIVERSITY UNDER
8 THE JURISDICTION OF THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS.

9 2. "SCHOOL THAT SERVES PRIMARILY PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH
10 DISABILITIES" MEANS A SCHOOL IN WHICH MORE THAN SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF
11 THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOL ARE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ARE
12 PLACED AT THE SCHOOL ACCORDING TO AN AGREEMENT WITH A SCHOOL, A CHARTER
13 SCHOOL OR THE ARIZONA STATE SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND.

14 3. "TUITION AND FEES" MEANS TUITION, MANDATORY FEES AND PROGRAM
15 FEES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH A PROGRAM IN THE ACADEMY LEADING TO SCHOOL
16 PSYCHOLOGIST, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER OR SCHOOL COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION AND
17 THAT ARE CHARGED BY AN ELIGIBLE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION.

18 Sec. 2. Appropriation; Arizona school mental health
19 professionals academy fund

20 The sum of \$_____ is appropriated from the state general fund
21 in fiscal year 2025-2026 to the Arizona school mental health professionals
22 academy fund established by section 15-1655.01, Arizona Revised Statutes,
23 as added by this act.