

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; providing an  
3           intent to demonstrate benefits of a program to  
4           prepare new teachers and to provide certain  
5           professional development activities to support  
6           them; providing for recruitment of persons to  
7           participate in a fellowship program by means of  
8           forgivable loans; providing standards and  
9           conditions for eligibility for the program;  
10          assigning responsibility for recruitment;  
11          requiring regional review committees; providing  
12          for selection of certain postsecondary  
13          education institutions to participate in the  
14          program; providing standards and conditions for  
15          receipt and forgiveness of a loan; providing  
16          conditions for repayment of loans not eligible  
17          for loan forgiveness; authorizing conditions  
18          for deferment of repayment; providing for a  
19          revolving fund; establishing a professional  
20          development program for recipients of a  
21          fellowship and other college graduates;  
22          providing standards for recruitment of  
23          participating teachers, school districts, and  
24          postgraduate programs; requiring certain  
25          conditions of employment of participants;  
26          establishing tiers of sequential professional  
27          development activities; creating a  
28          not-for-profit organization to be  
29          administratively assigned to the Executive  
30          Office of the Governor; providing for  
31          appointment of members of its board of

1 directors; authorizing the employment of staff;  
2 providing its duties and responsibilities;  
3 providing for cooperation with an office of the  
4 Department of Education; providing  
5 implementation to the extent funded in the  
6 General Appropriations Act; providing an  
7 effective date.

8  
9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

10  
11 Section 1. Professional Teaching Fellowship Act; short  
12 title; intent.--

13 (1) This act, which provides for the Student  
14 Fellowship Program and the Teaching Fellowship Program, may be  
15 cited as the "Professional Teaching Fellowship Act."

16 (2) The Legislature intends to demonstrate the need  
17 for and benefits of providing intensive programs of  
18 professional development for new teachers. New teachers need  
19 expertise in the content areas in which they teach, and they  
20 need skill in imparting that content. A teacher attains such  
21 expertise and skill through simultaneous study of the liberal  
22 arts combined with work with school children and master  
23 teachers in a planned, sequential program of increasing  
24 concentration on student achievement. Therefore, the  
25 Professional Teaching Fellowship Act is created to coordinate  
26 the network needed to identify and recruit excellent  
27 candidates to become new teachers, to support them through an  
28 enriched teacher preparation program, and to implement a  
29 program to provide professional development support which has  
30 three tiers of intensive involvement throughout the first 3  
31 years of teaching experience.

1           Section 2. Student Fellowship Program;  
2 recruitment.--The purpose of the recruitment component of the  
3 Student Fellowship Program is to identify the postsecondary  
4 education institutions and fellowship candidates that will  
5 implement the forgivable loan program created in section 3 of  
6 this act.

7           (1) A fellowship candidate must be a citizen and a  
8 resident of this state who is a rising junior enrolled in a  
9 state community college, a state university, or an independent  
10 postsecondary education institution that is eligible for the  
11 Florida Resident Access Grant.

12           (2) The Florida Institute for Teachers shall identify  
13 the postsecondary education institutions that are willing and  
14 able to conduct the educational and professional development  
15 activities required to implement the program. The board of  
16 directors of the institute shall assure that participating  
17 colleges of education agree to work with colleges of liberal  
18 arts so as to attract to the program candidates who possess  
19 the highest qualifications in a content area speciality.

20           (3) The institute shall develop standards and  
21 guidelines for selecting candidates for the Student Fellowship  
22 Program. The guidelines must require a minimum grade point  
23 average, recommendations from liberal arts professors, and  
24 the pursuit of extracurricular activities by a candidate.

25           (4) The institute shall form regional review  
26 committees to assist it in assuring the participation of the  
27 postsecondary education institutions that are best equipped to  
28 implement the program and to recruit the best students.  
29 Recruitment efforts should concentrate on areas that have been  
30 identified through research as most in need of an improved  
31 supply of teachers, including areas where there is a critical

1 teacher shortage, and on teachers having demographic  
2 characteristics that will correct an imbalance in the ratio of  
3 teachers compared to students enrolled in public schools.

4 (5) The regional review committees shall plan and  
5 implement activities designed to inform students concerning  
6 the benefits of the program and to assist postsecondary  
7 education institutions in carrying out the required  
8 activities.

9 (6) A candidate for a student fellowship must agree to  
10 enroll in a participating postsecondary education institution  
11 and to participate in a 12-month program during the junior and  
12 senior years of college.

13 (7) The postsecondary education institution shall  
14 assure that the junior and senior years' 12-month program  
15 provides an opportunity to demonstrate:

16 (a) Competency in the Accomplished Practices for  
17 Teachers adopted by the State Board of Education.

18 (b) Mastery of the subject area requirements in a  
19 subject for which a professional certificate may be issued. If  
20 a student fellow intends to teach elementary education, the  
21 competency demonstrated must be the equivalent of required  
22 coursework in methods of teaching reading and other key  
23 content areas. Traditional coursework toward a major offered  
24 by a college of education is not required.

25 (c) Eligibility for a master's degree in education as  
26 well as a baccalaureate degree in a content area.

27 (d) Any additional requirements to be eligible for a  
28 2-year temporary certificate.

29 Section 3. Student Fellowship Program; postsecondary  
30 education component.--The Florida Institute for Teachers shall  
31 administer the Student Fellowship Program.

1           (1) The program shall provide a 2-year scholarship  
2 loan of \$6,500 per year to citizens who are residents of this  
3 state and who are rising juniors at a state community college,  
4 state university, or independent postsecondary education  
5 institution that is eligible to participate in the Florida  
6 Resident Access Grant.

7           (2) The institute shall administer the program in  
8 cooperation with postsecondary education institutions selected  
9 by the institute.

10           (a) A student fellowship recipient shall participate  
11 in a 12-month program developed by the participating  
12 postsecondary education institution in consultation with the  
13 Florida Institute for Teachers.

14           (b) The recipient must receive an intensive  
15 preparation in a content area combined with ongoing experience  
16 with school children through internships or working with a  
17 master teacher identified as a mentor.

18           (3) To continue to receive a fellowship, a student  
19 fellow must maintain satisfactory progress toward a  
20 baccalaureate degree at a participating postsecondary  
21 institution. The institute shall set standards for  
22 satisfactory progress, which must exceed the standards  
23 required of other students majoring in education and which may  
24 include extracurricular activities related to the program or a  
25 participating school district.

26           (4) A recipient may receive a fellowship loan for 2  
27 years. The institute shall forgive the fellowship loan if,  
28 within 5 years after graduation, the recipient teaches full  
29 time for 2 years at a public school in this state. The  
30 institute shall also forgive a loan if it finds that the  
31

1 recipient cannot teach for 2 years because of the death or  
2 permanent and total disability of the recipient.

3 (5) If a Student Fellowship Program recipient does not  
4 graduate within 2 years, or if the recipient graduates but,  
5 within the first 5 years after graduation, does not fulfill  
6 the required employment as a teacher in a public school in  
7 this state, the fellowship recipient must repay the total  
8 amount awarded plus annual interest of 8 percent.

9 (a) Interest begins accruing the first day of the 13th  
10 month after the fourth anniversary of the month in which the  
11 recipient receives a baccalaureate degree or after the month  
12 in which enrollment as a full-time student is terminated.  
13 Interest does not accrue during any period of deferment or  
14 eligible teaching service.

15 (b) The repayment period begins the first day of the  
16 13th month after the month in which the fourth anniversary of  
17 college graduation occurs or after the month in which  
18 enrollment as a full-time student is terminated.

19 (c) The terms and conditions of the fellowship  
20 repayment must be contained in both a promissory note and a  
21 repayment schedule. The loan must be paid within 10 years  
22 after the date of graduation or termination of full-time  
23 enrollment, including any periods of deferment. A shorter  
24 repayment period may be granted. The minimum monthly repayment  
25 is \$50 or the unpaid balance, unless otherwise approved,  
26 except that the monthly payment may not be less than the  
27 accruing interest. The recipient may prepay all or any part of  
28 the scholarship without penalty.

29 (d) The holder of the promissory note may grant a  
30 deferment of repayment for a recipient who is unable to secure  
31 a teaching position that would qualify as repayment, who

1 becomes disabled, or who experiences other hardships. Such a  
2 deferment may be granted for a total of 24 months and may not  
3 exceed 12 consecutive months.

4 (6) All funds appropriated to or otherwise received by  
5 the Student Fellowship Program for scholarships, all funds  
6 received as repayment of scholarship loans, and all interest  
7 earned on these funds must be placed in a revolving fund  
8 within the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund.  
9 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 216.301, Florida  
10 Statutes, and pursuant to section 216.351, Florida Statutes,  
11 any balance in the fund at the end of any fiscal year which  
12 has been allocated to the Student Fellowship Program must  
13 remain in the fund and will be available for carrying out the  
14 purposes of this section. With the prior approval of the  
15 Legislature in the General Appropriations Act, the revolving  
16 fund may also be used for campus and summer program support  
17 and costs related to disbursement of awards and the collection  
18 of loan repayments.

19 Section 4. Teaching Fellowship Program.--

20 (1) The Teaching Fellowship Program is a concentrated,  
21 sequential professional development program provided to a  
22 teacher under an annual contract during the first 3 years of  
23 teaching. The program is available to all recipients of the  
24 student fellowship created in section 3 of this act, and to  
25 others selected by the Florida Institute for Teachers, if  
26 funds are available. The institute shall establish selection  
27 criteria at least as rigorous as the criteria for selecting  
28 the student fellowship recipients. A graduate may be selected  
29 whether or not he or she has completed college coursework  
30 required to be eligible for certification to teach in this  
31 state, if a school district is willing to employ him or her as

1 a teacher under conditions arranged by the institute. These  
2 conditions must provide for eligibility for a temporary  
3 certificate and a planned route to a professional certificate,  
4 pursuant to section 231.17, Florida Statutes.

5 (2) The Florida Institute for Teachers shall assist  
6 participating school districts in coordinating the activities  
7 required to conduct the program. The institute shall also  
8 select and work with institutions providing postgraduate  
9 programs to assure that the program confers credit toward a  
10 master's degree and to describe conditions under which a  
11 participant may earn a master's degree as a result of  
12 participation. The institute may not require a participant to  
13 pursue a master's degree in education or pedagogy.

14 (3) The program requires a school district to:

15 (a) Employ the teaching fellow under a 12-month  
16 contract with salaries and benefits established pursuant to  
17 part II of chapter 110, Florida Statutes.

18 (b) Identify and provide a salary bonus or additional  
19 stipend to a master teacher to work under a 12-month contract  
20 as a mentor to the new teacher. The master teacher must be  
21 selected based upon criteria adopted by the Florida Institute  
22 for Teachers, such as certification at the national level,  
23 selection as teacher of the year at the state or district  
24 level, or evidence of consistent and superior gains in  
25 achievement by students in the teacher's classes.

26 (c) Provide to the teaching fellow and his or her  
27 mentor a common planning period during the school year, or  
28 make other arrangements to enable daily consultation.

29 (d) Plan an intensive professional development program  
30 in three tiers as required in this section.

31



1           (e) Identify and recruit a cohort of students who,  
2 with the support of their parents, are willing to participate  
3 in the program for 210 days per year. If possible, the same  
4 cohort of 12 to 15 students shall work with the same teaching  
5 fellow during all three tiers of the program.

6           (4) After each tier, the teaching fellow will receive  
7 a bonus of \$500, to be provided by the Florida Institute for  
8 Teachers, in addition to the salary provided by the school  
9 district.

10           (5) The professional development program for the  
11 teaching fellows must be provided in the following tiers:

12           (a) In the first tier, the teaching fellow and the  
13 master teacher assigned to work as a mentor shall receive  
14 orientation and professional development that are planned and  
15 provided by a teacher education center or academy selected by  
16 the Florida Institute for Teachers.

17           1. During the summer of the first tier, the teaching  
18 fellow and master teacher shall work with from 12 to 15  
19 students recruited by the school district for the program.  
20 This work must include preparing an individualized education  
21 plan for each student. The teaching fellow may be required to  
22 conduct other educational or research activities necessary to  
23 earn at least 6 credit hours toward a master's degree.

24           2. During the school year in the first tier, the  
25 teaching fellow may be assigned primary responsibility for a  
26 classroom, with significant involvement by the mentor teacher  
27 or other program participants who have 2 years or more of  
28 experience in the program. Provision must be made for at least  
29 1 hour of daily consultation between the teacher and mentor.  
30 The focus of the professional development must be on effective  
31 methods of teaching the subject matter in which the fellow has

1 majored. Student achievement as demonstrated by assessment  
2 instruments, portfolios, or other measures must be used to  
3 assist the teaching fellow to evaluate his or her progress.

4 (b) During the second tier of the program, the  
5 teaching fellow shall continue the education and research  
6 required for progress toward a master's degree and shall  
7 continue to work with a cohort of students which includes as  
8 many as possible of the same students who were with the  
9 teaching fellow in tier one.

10 1. During the summer of the second tier, in addition  
11 to the professional development activities planned for  
12 postgraduate credit, the teacher shall become the lead teacher  
13 for the cohort of students and shall begin to act as a mentor  
14 for a teacher who is in the program for the first summer. The  
15 program must concentrate upon evaluating student progress and  
16 adapting teaching methods based upon the results.

17 2. During the school year of the second tier, the  
18 teacher may be assigned additional responsibilities for  
19 classroom instruction while continuing to consult with a  
20 mentoring teacher and to work as a mentor to the students in  
21 the cohort.

22 (c) During the third tier, the teaching fellow shall  
23 continue professional development activities planned to earn  
24 postgraduate credit and shall continue to work with a master  
25 teacher and students.

26 1. During the summer of the third tier, the teacher  
27 shall work with increased concentration on pedagogical  
28 research and its incorporation into classroom management.  
29 Recommended fields for this research focus are development of  
30 curricula, use of technology in instruction, and student  
31 assessment and evaluation, including the ability to interpret

1 student performance and adopt varying teaching methods based  
2 upon that interpretation. This tier of professional  
3 development may be planned to allow a teacher to add  
4 additional coverage to his or her certificate to teach  
5 exceptional education classes or another content-area  
6 specialization.

7 2. During the school year of the third tier, the  
8 teacher may be assigned responsibility for classroom  
9 management, which may include specialized assistance with  
10 classroom technology and curriculum development, and may also  
11 provide assistance as a mentor to teaching fellows in their  
12 first or second year in the program.

13 (6) Upon completion of the program, a new teacher is  
14 eligible for:

15 (a) A master's degree in the subject matter provided  
16 through an agreement with a postgraduate program, or a  
17 certificate that guarantees substantial credit toward a  
18 master's degree as provided in the agreement required by  
19 subsection (2);

20 (b) A position as a master teacher in the Teaching  
21 Fellowship Program; and

22 (c) A professional-service contract with the  
23 participating school district, with salary as provided for a  
24 teacher who holds a master's degree. However, the school  
25 district and the teacher have the same rights to employment  
26 decisions that apply with respect to other newly employed  
27 teachers.

28 Section 5. Florida Institute for Teachers.--

29 (1) The Florida Institute for Teachers is created as a  
30 not-for-profit statutory corporation assigned for  
31 administrative purposes to the Executive Office of the

1 Governor. The institute shall plan, organize, administer, and  
2 manage the programs required by the Professional Teaching  
3 Fellowship Act.

4 (2) A board of directors shall administer the  
5 institute. The board consists of 11 nonlegislative members as  
6 follows:

7 (a) Three persons appointed by the Governor;

8 (b) Three persons appointed by the President of the  
9 Senate;

10 (c) Three persons appointed by the Speaker of the  
11 House of Representatives;

12 (d) The Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee;  
13 and

14 (e) The Commissioner of Education or his or her  
15 designee.

16  
17 The Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee shall serve as  
18 chairperson. The appointed members shall serve terms of 4  
19 years, except that three of the initial members shall serve  
20 2-year terms and three shall serve 3-year terms. Those  
21 responsible for appointments shall select members who have  
22 demonstrated a commitment to education. A member may be  
23 reappointed. A vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of  
24 the term. Members of the board are entitled to reimbursement  
25 for travel and per diem expenses, as provided in section  
26 112.061, Florida Statutes.

27 (3) The board shall:

28 (a) Hold meetings as needed to administer this act.

29 (b) Adopt rules for its own government.

30 (c) Appoint an executive director to serve at its  
31 pleasure. The executive director shall be the chief

1 administrative officer and agent of the board and may employ  
2 staff as authorized by the board.

3 (d) Maintain a record of its proceedings.

4 (e) Plan and implement the Student Fellowship Program  
5 and the Teaching Fellowship Program as provided in sections 1  
6 through 4 of this act. The planning and implementation should  
7 be directed toward the state's identified needs for teachers.

8 (f) In cooperation with the Office of Student  
9 Financial Assistance of the Department of Education,  
10 administer the forgivable loan provisions of the Student  
11 Fellowship Program.

12 (g) Evaluate the success of the Professional Teaching  
13 Fellowship Act. The evaluation must include following up on  
14 the fellowship recipients to develop a report of their success  
15 in teaching. The measures of success must include the number  
16 who continue teaching in this state, the number of loans  
17 forgiven and repaid, the number who attain the status of  
18 master teacher, and the achievement gains of students in the  
19 classrooms assigned to the teaching fellows and master  
20 teachers. The student achievement gains must be compared to  
21 the gains of students having similar demographic  
22 characteristics in classrooms of teachers who did not receive  
23 a teaching fellowship.

24 Section 6. This act will be implemented to the extent  
25 funded in the General Appropriations Act.

26 Section 7. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

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