

By the Committee on Colleges & Universities and
 Representatives Fiorentino, Henriquez, McGriff, Heyman and
 Betancourt

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to student financial
 3 assistance; creating s. 240.4061, F.S.;
 4 creating the Teach Florida Scholarship Loan
 5 Program; providing a purpose; defining eligible
 6 institutions and programs of study; authorizing
 7 summer term receipt of funds; authorizing
 8 part-time enrollment; specifying summer
 9 institutes to be developed by the Department of
 10 Education; providing eligibility criteria;
 11 providing for repayment of a scholarship loan;
 12 providing a definition; providing renewal and
 13 restoration requirements; setting a limit upon
 14 repayment authority; providing for an annual
 15 appropriation; authorizing the Department of
 16 Education to adopt rules; providing an
 17 effective date.

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 19 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 21 Section 1. Section 240.4061, Florida Statutes, is
 22 created to read:
 23 240.4061 Teach Florida Scholarship Loan Program.--
 24 The Teach Florida Scholarship Loan Program is created to be
 25 administered by the Department of Education. The primary
 26 purpose of the program is to attract capable and promising
 27 high school and college students to the teaching profession by
 28 offering scholarship loans and to provide an academically and
 29 culturally enriched program that extends beyond the regular
 30 college program.

1 (1) To the extent that funds are provided annually by
2 the Legislature in the General Appropriations Act specifically
3 for the purposes of this section, the Department of Education
4 shall:

5 (a) Provide Teach Florida Scholarship Loan Program
6 participants a scholarship loan to be used at a state
7 postsecondary education institution or an independent
8 postsecondary education institution as defined by s. 240.605
9 for enrollment in a course of study leading to a degree from a
10 state-approved teacher preparation program.

11 1. A recipient of a scholarship loan under the Teach
12 Florida Scholarship Loan Program who enrolls in an eligible
13 program of study at a state university or eligible independent
14 postsecondary education institution is eligible for an annual
15 award equal to the amount required to pay the average cost of
16 full-time tuition and fees at a state university, plus an
17 education allowance.

18 2. A recipient of a scholarship loan who enrolls in an
19 associate in arts degree program at a community college which
20 is transferable to a state-approved teacher preparation
21 program is eligible for an annual award equal to the amount
22 required to pay the average cost of full-time tuition and fees
23 at a community college, plus an education allowance.

24 3. A student may use an award for summer-term
25 enrollment if funds are available.

26 4. An award recipient who is enrolled less than
27 full-time shall be awarded a prorated amount.

28 5. A student may participate in the program for up to
29 110 percent of the number of college credit hours required for
30 completion of the teacher preparation program.

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1 (b) Conduct the following summer institutes, developed
2 and coordinated by the Department of Education, to enhance the
3 campus program and give insights into the challenges facing
4 these students when they enter the classroom:

5 1. Rising sophomore participants shall participate in
6 a "discovery trip" across Florida, with seminars that focus on
7 multicultural education and diversity.

8 2. Rising junior participants shall participate in a
9 seminar on classroom management and teacher leadership,
10 staffed by outstanding teachers identified by the Department
11 of Education, who shall work with small groups of Teach
12 Florida Scholarship Loan Program participants.

13 3. Rising senior participants shall participate in an
14 orientation week designed to give participants an introduction
15 to the school system community and an understanding of the
16 overall operation of a school district. The orientation week
17 may be followed by a paid internship provided by the school
18 district.

19 4. The department may compensate school district staff
20 who serve as staff in summer institute programs.

21 (2) To be eligible to receive an award from the Teach
22 Florida Scholarship Loan Program, an applicant must:

23 (a) Meet the general requirements for student
24 eligibility for state financial aid pursuant to s. 240.404,
25 except as otherwise provided in this section.

26 (b) Be enrolled in an associate in arts degree program
27 that is transferable to a state-approved teacher preparation
28 program or be enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation
29 program for a minimum of 6 semester hours or the equivalent
30 per term.

31 (c) If applying as a high school senior:

1 1. Have earned a minimum cumulative grade point
2 average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent, in high
3 school courses recommended by the State Board of Community
4 Colleges and adopted by the Board of Regents as
5 college-preparatory courses.

6 2. Have received a score of at least 970 on the
7 combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic
8 Assessment Test or an equivalent score on the American College
9 Test.

10 (d) If applying as a college student, have earned the
11 equivalent of a grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale for
12 all postsecondary education work attempted.

13 (e) Declare the intent to complete one-half year of
14 teaching service in a publicly funded school for each
15 semester, or its equivalent, for which a scholarship loan is
16 received pursuant to this section. For purposes of this
17 section, the term "publicly funded school" means a school that
18 receives at least 75 percent of its operating costs from
19 governmental agencies, including schools that operate
20 educational programs under contract with a public school
21 district or the Department of Education.

22 (f) Declare the intent to repay the scholarship loan
23 with teaching service within 7 years after completion of an
24 approved teacher preparation program.

25 (g) To receive a renewal award:

26 1. Have earned the equivalent of a grade point average
27 of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale for all postsecondary education work
28 attempted.

29 2. Have completed annually, during the terms for which
30 a scholarship loan was received, a minimum of 12 credits per
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1 term for full-time assistance or a minimum of 6 credits per
2 term for part-time assistance, or the equivalent.

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4 If, at any time during the eligibility period, a student's
5 grades are insufficient to renew the scholarship, the student
6 may restore eligibility by improving the grade point average
7 to the required level. A student is eligible for such a
8 restoration only once.

9 (3) A scholarship loan recipient may receive loan
10 repayment credit for teaching service rendered at any time
11 during the scheduled repayment period. However, such repayment
12 credit applies only to the current principal and accrued
13 interest balance that remains at the time the repayment credit
14 is earned. A scholarship loan recipient shall not be
15 reimbursed for previous cash payments of principal and
16 interest. Any scholarship loan recipient who fails to teach in
17 a Florida publicly funded school as specified in paragraph
18 (2)(e) is responsible for repaying the loan plus accrued
19 interest.

20 (a) A scholarship loan must be repaid within 10 years
21 after completion of a program of studies.

22 (b) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
23 regarding repayment schedules and applicable interest rates
24 under ss. 240.451 and 240.465.

25 (c) An award recipient who is unable to fulfill the
26 teaching requirement due to his or her death or permanent
27 disability is not required to repay the funds awarded pursuant
28 to this section.

29 (d) Funds repaid according to this section shall be
30 deposited in the State Student Financial Assistance Trust
31 Fund.

1 (4) The Legislature shall annually appropriate an
2 amount sufficient to carry out the provisions of this section
3 which shall include funds for the participation of 5,000
4 students annually. Funds appropriated specifically for the
5 Teach Florida Scholarship Loan Program shall be deposited in
6 the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund.

7 (5) The Department of Education may adopt rules
8 pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 necessary to administer
9 this section.

10 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

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