
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 18

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER EDUCATOR INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

SUMMARY:

This bill redesigns an existing teachers' loan reimbursement program, administered by the Office of Higher Education (OHE), as an incentive grant and loan reimbursement program for college and university students studying to be teachers. Both the existing and proposed programs target those seeking credentials as bilingual education teachers or teachers of English to speakers of other languages. Both are administered within available appropriations. The bill:

1. targets the program to undergraduates enrolled in teacher preparation programs rather than certified teachers,
2. removes the cap on the number of participants,
3. revises the eligibility requirements,
4. revises how funds are distributed,
5. reduces the maximum amount of funds a recipient may receive by \$5,000 (from \$25,000 to \$20,000), and
6. removes employment commitment requirements, and
7. changes the name of the program from the "English language learner educator loan reimbursement program" to the "English language learner educator incentive program."

It also eliminates OHE's authority to adopt implementing regulations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

COMPARISON OF PROGRAMS

Table 1 compares current law's program with the bill's redesigned program.

Table 1: Comparison of Programs

	<i>English language learner educator loan reimbursement program (current law)</i>	<i>English language learner educator incentive program (SB 18)</i>
Number and class of eligible participants	Up to 20 teachers	Unlimited number of undergraduate students
Eligibility requirements	<p>Loan reimbursement. On or after May 1, 2012, a person must do the following to receive a loan reimbursement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) graduate from a higher education teacher preparation program and complete state teaching certification requirements or (b) hold a teaching certificate and complete an in-state program to obtain endorsement in bilingual education or the teaching of English to speakers of other languages, obtain such an endorsement if he or she has not already done so, be employed by Connecticut public schools in a position that requires such an endorsement, and make a written commitment to remain employed in such a position for at least five years. 	<p>Grants. On or after July 1, 2014, a person must do the following to receive a grant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> be enrolled at any four-year Connecticut college or university in the final two years of a teacher preparation program that leads to teacher certification and pursue an endorsement in bilingual education or the teaching of English to speakers of other languages. <p>Loan reimbursement. To receive loan reimbursement upon graduation from such a program, a person must teach in a Connecticut public school in position that requires that endorsement. Employment commitment for a specified number of years is not required, but the number of annual loan reimbursements is capped at four.</p>
Maximum potential amount available	\$25,000 (five years of teaching at \$5,000 per year in loan reimbursement)	\$20,000 (two years as an undergraduate at \$5,000 per year in grants, plus four years of teaching at \$2,500 per year in loan reimbursement)
Employment commitment	Recipients must fulfill a five-year teaching commitment or repay at least 20% of the reimbursement for each unmet year of employment in a manner determined by the OHE executive director.	Recipients are not required to make an employment commitment to participate.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 20 Nay 0 (03/04/2014)