

1 SB225
2 204093-4
3 By Senator Stutts
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 10-FEB-21

8 SYNOPSIS: This bill would establish the Alabama
9 Teacher Initiative.

10 This bill would provide scholarships for
11 teacher preparation program students who are
12 enrolled in and attending a public two-year or
13 four-year college in Alabama and who contract with
14 the Alabama Commission on Higher Education to teach
15 for five years after certification in rural areas
16 of the state with the greatest need for STEM and
17 special education teachers in grades 7 to 12, with
18 funds allocated through the Alabama Commission on
19 Higher Education.

21 A BILL
22 TO BE ENTITLED
23 AN ACT

24
25 To establish the Alabama Teacher Initiative; to
26 phase in the provision of 200 scholarships per year beginning
27 with 50 scholarships in academic year 2021-2022 for certain

1 teacher preparation program students enrolled in and attending
2 a public two-year or four-year college located in Alabama and
3 who commit to teach in rural areas of the state with the
4 greatest need for grades 7-12 STEM and special education
5 teachers; to provide that service contracts be entered into
6 between the student and the Alabama Commission on Higher
7 Education and between the Alabama Commission on Higher
8 Education and each of the public two-year or four-year
9 institutions of higher education in the state; and to provide
10 for funding through the Alabama Commission on Higher
11 Education.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

13 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited
14 as the Alabama Teacher Initiative.

15 Section 2. For the purposes of this act, the
16 following terms shall have the following meanings:

17 (1) ACHE. The Alabama Commission on Higher
18 Education.

19 (2) COLLEGE. A public two-year or four-year
20 institution of higher education located in the state.

21 (3) INITIATIVE. The Alabama Teacher Initiative.

22 (4) SERVICE CONTRACT. A document signed by and
23 agreed to by the student and ACHE setting forth terms for
24 receiving tuition scholarship funds and service requirements.

25 (5) STEM. Science, technology, engineering, or
26 mathematics.

1 (6) STUDENT. An individual enrolled in a program of
2 study that will lead to a degree and teaching certificate in a
3 7-12 grade STEM-related field or special education.

4 (7) TEACHER. An individual who is certificated by
5 the State Department of Education to teach in a STEM-related
6 field or special education curriculum in the schools offering
7 instruction in grades 7-12 of this state.

8 Section 3. (a) ACHE shall administer a student
9 scholarship program to increase the availability of teachers
10 by providing incentives to students who agree to teach in a
11 rural area of Alabama for five years immediately after
12 certification.

13 (b) A scholarship awarded under this act shall be
14 used to provide tuition funding support to a student enrolled
15 at a college and may not be used to reduce any other financial
16 aid, grant, or scholarship the student may otherwise receive.

17 Section 4. (a) Before the 2022 fall semester, and
18 before each fall semester thereafter, ACHE and the chief
19 academic officer of each participating college shall jointly
20 select up to 50 incoming first year students to participate in
21 the initiative. The maximum number of students participating
22 in the initiative at any one time may not exceed 200. Each
23 student selected shall be enrolled full time at a college in a
24 program of study that is designed to prepare the student to
25 become certified in a STEM-related field or special education.
26 If a student, upon initial selection, declines to participate
27 in the initiative, ACHE may select a qualified alternate.

1 (b) After selection, to be eligible to receive
2 scholarship funds, the student shall execute a service
3 contract with ACHE committing to complete his or her college
4 degree and certification in a STEM-related field or special
5 education curriculum and to teach for five years in Alabama,
6 under the terms of the service contract, in a rural area of
7 the state defined by current state and national data. A
8 student selected to participate in the initiative shall
9 complete all educational requirements of the college in four
10 years and may not qualify for a scholarship for more than four
11 school years.

12 Section 5. (a) ACHE shall contract with the college
13 to provide scholarship funds for students participating in the
14 initiative. The amount of the scholarship funds awarded each
15 school year shall be determined by ACHE based on the annual
16 tuition charged by the college and appropriated by the
17 Legislature.

18 (b) ACHE shall provide the necessary management,
19 staff, and accountability in implementing the initiative.

20 Section 6. Upon completion of his or her degree and
21 certification, and pursuant to the terms of the service
22 contract, the former student shall teach in a rural area of
23 the state for five years.

24 Section 7. A student or former student who fails to
25 comply with the terms and conditions of the service contract
26 shall return all scholarship funds received pursuant to the

1 service contract, plus interest computed as specified in the
2 binding student service contract, to ACHE.

3 Section 8. The student scholarship program
4 administered by ACHE shall be funded by legislative
5 appropriation through ACHE. To receive funding for
6 scholarships awarded pursuant to this act, ACHE shall make an
7 annual report and funding request to the Legislature.

8 Section 9. It is the intent of the Legislature that
9 constitutionally-created boards of trustees comply with the
10 requirements of this act.

11 Section 10. ACHE shall adopt rules as necessary to
12 implement this act.

13 Section 11. This act shall become effective on the
14 first day of the third month following its passage and
15 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.