

Rep. Belcher, Carr. 4
Rep. Ladd, Graf. 5
April 23, 2024
2024-1602h
05/02

Amendment to SB 217-FN-A

1 Amend the bill by replacing all after the enacting clause with the following:

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3 1 New Section; Department of Education; Rural and Underserved Area Educator Incentive
4 Program. Amend RSA 21-N by inserting after section 8-d the following new section:

5 21-N:8-e Rural and Underserved Area Educator Incentive Program.

6 I. In this section:

7 (a) "Department" means the department of education.

8 (b) "Division" means the division of educator support and higher education.

9 (c) "Commission" means the New Hampshire higher education commission.

10 (d) "Rural and underserved area educator" means a full-time, credentialed individual
11 employed as an instructional employee in an eligible public school district or at an eligible chartered
12 public school.

13 (e) "Rural school district" means:

14 (1) There are fewer than 20 enrolled students per square mile within the area
15 encompassed by the school district's boundaries; or

16 (2) The regional public health network in which a plurality of the school district's
17 market value for assessment purposes is located is deemed rural as defined by the department of
18 health and human services, division of public health.

19 II. The department shall identify specific schools that are affected by critical educator
20 shortages using the following criteria:

21 (a) Rural isolation of the school; or

22 (b) Economic disadvantage of the school based on eligibility for funds pursuant to title I,
23 part A of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended.

24 III. Rural and underserved area educators who are employed at schools identified in
25 paragraph II shall be eligible for payment of retention grants as outlined in this section.

26 IV. Grant payments may be provided on behalf of a rural and underserved area educator
27 who:

28 (a) Is employed in a school identified in paragraph II; and

29 (b) Has a signed contract with such school.

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1 V. To qualify for grant payments under this section, a rural and underserved area educator
2 shall submit an application to the commission. For grant payment applications, the application shall
3 include any documentation required by the department for verification of the applicant's eligibility.

4 VI. A rural and underserved area educator shall be eligible for grant payments for up to 4
5 years, provided that the educator remains employed at the same school or by the same school
6 district. The department may remit payment of the grant on behalf of the rural and underserved
7 area educator in accordance with the requirements of this section and rules adopted by the
8 commission.

9 VII. The total incentive award shall be:

10 (a) In the amount of \$1,500 upon completion of the first year;

11 (b) In the amount of \$2,500 upon completion of the second year;

12 (c) In the amount of \$3,500 upon completion of the third year; and

13 (d) In the amount of \$4,500 upon completion of the fourth year.

14 VIII. The commission shall adopt rules pursuant to RSA 541-A to establish protocols for
15 determining the number of incentive awards that will be made annually based on available
16 appropriations for the program.

17 IX. Incentive awards under this section shall be offered to the extent of available funding.

18 2 Rural and Underserved Area Educator Incentive Program; Appropriation. There is hereby
19 appropriated the sum of \$1 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, to the department of education,
20 division of educator support and higher education, for the purpose of funding the rural and
21 underserved area educator incentive program established in RSA 21-N:8-e. All funds appropriated
22 for the program shall be nonlapsing. The governor is authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out
23 of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated.

24 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.