

HOUSE BILL NO. 420

INTRODUCED BY T. RUNNINGWOLF

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ADDRESSING EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRUGGLES IN RURAL MONTANA AND INDIAN COUNTRY; ESTABLISHING A MULTI-FACETED GROW YOUR OWN GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO STRENGTHEN TEACHER PIPELINES; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, Montana's rural schools generally, and schools in Indian Country particularly, struggle to recruit and retain teachers; and

WHEREAS, "Grow Your Own" programs show great promise in addressing teacher shortages in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, having Indian teachers teach Indian children will help close the achievement gap and help fulfill Montana's commitment in its educational goals to the preservation of Indian cultural integrity; and

WHEREAS, strengthening the teacher pipeline for Montana's rural and reservation schools will require collaborative efforts between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Grow your own program grants -- administration.** (1) There is a grow your own grant program administered by the commissioner of higher education. The purpose of the grant program is to develop teacher pipelines aimed at serving rural and reservation school districts.

(2) (a) Contingent on appropriation by the legislature, the commissioner shall create and administer a grant program for school districts with one or more schools impacted by a quality educator shortage as identified in 20-4-503 committed to developing a grow your own program that encourages students to pursue a career in teaching and that involves:

- (i) the ability to take dual credit courses in education while in high school;
- (ii) the ability to engage in work-based learning opportunities in the field of education; and
- (iii) collaboration with higher education institutions in developing a career pathway for education.

1 (b) The program must allow and encourage small and proximate districts to collaborate in developing
2 a grow your own program.

3 (c) A school district is eligible for a grant under this section for up to 2 years to develop a grow your own
4 program.

5 (3) Contingent on appropriation by the legislature, the commissioner shall create and administer a grant
6 program for tribal colleges, community colleges, and 2-year campuses to:

7 (a) pursue accreditation for teacher preparation programs in the specific licensure or endorsement areas
8 that are most impacted by quality educator shortages identified as provided in 20-4-503; or

9 (b) develop collaborative programs with 4-year institutions with accredited teacher preparation programs
10 in the specific licensure or endorsement areas that are most impacted by quality educator shortages identified
11 as provided in 20-4-503, with an emphasis on collaborative programs that can be conducted in a manner that
12 does not require residency at the 4-year institution.

13 (4) Contingent on appropriation by the legislature, the commissioner shall create and administer a grow
14 your own scholarship program that:

15 (a) provides a last-dollar grant of up to \$5,000 per year, not to exceed the cost of attendance, and not
16 to exceed \$10,000 total for any student, to students who:

17 (i) have participated in a grow your own program, as described in subsection (2) of this section, while
18 in high school and have earned at least six postsecondary credits towards an education degree or are living in
19 a community with a school impacted by a quality educator shortage as identified in 20-4-503;

20 (ii) are currently enrolled in a teacher preparation program in a licensure or endorsement area identified
21 as most impacted by quality educator shortages as provided in 20-4-503; and

22 (iii) commit to teaching in a school impacted by a quality educator shortage as identified in 20-4-503.

23 (b) The commissioner shall convert a grant under subsection (4)(a) to a loan if the recipient of a grant:

24 (i) is not licensed in a licensure or endorsement area identified as most impacted by quality educator
25 shortages as provided in 20-4-503 within 5 years of receiving a grant; or

26 (ii) does not teach for 3 or more years in a school impacted by a quality educator shortage and in a
27 licensure or endorsement area identified as most impacted by quality educator shortages as provided in 20-4-503
28 within 10 years of receiving a grant.

29 (5) The legislature intends that grants made to school districts and postsecondary institutions pursuant
30 to subsections (2) and (3) are one-time startup grants that include:

1 (a) a matching component provided by the school district or postsecondary institution; and
2 (b) a plan by the school district or postsecondary institution to sustain programs beyond the term of the
3 grant.

4 (6) Pursuant to 5-11-210, the commissioner shall report annually to the education interim committee on
5 the status and impacts of the grant programs described in this section.

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7 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation.** (1) There is appropriated \$500,000 from the general fund
8 to the commissioner of higher education for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, for the purposes of [section 1].

9 (2) The legislature intends that the appropriation in this section be considered a part of the ongoing base
10 for the next legislative session.

11 (3) The commissioner of higher education may not spend more than \$50,000 of the appropriation in
12 subsection (1) on the creation and administration of the programs described in [section 1].

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14 **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Notification to tribal governments.** The secretary of state shall send a
15 copy of [this act] to each tribal government located on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell
16 Chippewa tribe.

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18 **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
19 integral part of Title 20, chapter 4, and the provisions of Title 20, chapter 4, apply to [section 1].

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21 **NEW SECTION. Section 5. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2019.

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