

SENATE BILL NO. 50

INTRODUCED BY E. MCCLAFFERTY

BY REQUEST OF THE EDUCATION INTERIM COMMITTEE

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT REVISING THE QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; REQUIRING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO ADMINISTER THE QUALITY EDUCATOR LOAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-4-501, 20-4-505, AND 20-4-506, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

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

**Section 1.** Section 20-4-501, MCA, is amended to read:

**"20-4-501. Quality educator loan assistance program -- purpose.** (1) There is a quality educator loan assistance program administered by the ~~board of regents through the office of the commissioner of higher education~~ superintendent of public instruction. The program must provide for the direct repayment of educational loans of eligible quality educators in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the ~~board of regents~~ superintendent of public instruction in accordance with this part.

(2) The purpose of this program is to aid quality educator recruitment and retention for those schools most impacted by critical quality educator shortages. The program must be implemented in a manner that maximizes recruitment and retention assistance to impacted schools."

**Section 2.** Section 20-4-505, MCA, is amended to read:

**"20-4-505. Loan repayment assistance documentation.** (1) A quality educator shall submit an application for loan repayment assistance to the ~~board of regents~~ office of public instruction in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the ~~board of regents~~ superintendent of public instruction. The application must include official verification or proof of the applicant's total unpaid accumulated educational loan debt and other documentation required by the ~~board of regents~~ superintendent of public instruction that is necessary for verification of the applicant's eligibility.

(2) The ~~board of regents~~ superintendent of public instruction may require a quality educator who is eligible for loan repayment assistance to provide documentation that the quality educator has exhausted

1 repayment assistance from other federal, state, or local loan forgiveness, discharge, or repayment incentive  
2 programs.

3 (3) A quality educator is eligible for loan repayment assistance for no more than 3 years, with the  
4 maximum annual loan repayment assistance not to exceed:

5 (a) \$3,000 after the first complete year of teaching in an impacted school;

6 (b) \$4,000 after the second complete year of teaching in the same impacted school or another impacted  
7 school within the same school district; and

8 (c) \$5,000 after the third complete year of teaching in the same impacted school or another impacted  
9 school within the same school district.

10 (4) The ~~board of regents~~ office of public instruction may remit payment of the loan on behalf of the quality  
11 educator in accordance with the requirements of this part and policies and procedures adopted by the ~~board of~~  
12 ~~regents~~ superintendent of public instruction."

13

14 **Section 3.** Section 20-4-506, MCA, is amended to read:

15 **"20-4-506. Funding -- priorities.** (1) If the funding for this part in any year is less than the total amount  
16 for which Montana quality educators qualify, the ~~board of regents~~ superintendent of public instruction shall provide  
17 preference in the award of loan repayment assistance to quality educators working in the specific licensure or  
18 endorsement areas that are most impacted by quality educator shortages identified as provided in 20-4-503.

19 (2) If the funding for this part in any year is greater than the total amount for which Montana quality  
20 educators qualify, the board of public education shall consider expanding the number of impacted schools  
21 included in subsequent reports pursuant to 20-4-503.

22 (3) This part may not be construed to require the provision of loan repayment assistance without an  
23 express appropriation for that purpose."

24

25 NEW SECTION. **Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2019.

26

- END -