

Senate Bill 4

Student Teacher Stipend Program

ARTICLE 1

Hughes, Aument Introduce Bill to Create Student Teacher Stipend Program

<https://www.pasenategop.com/news/hughes-aument-introduce-bill-to-create-student-teacher-stipend-program/>

May 22, 2023

HARRISBURG – To attract and retain high quality teachers to Pennsylvania classrooms, Sens. Vincent Hughes (D-7) and Ryan Aument (R-36) introduced Senate Bill 300 to create a student teacher stipend program, known as the Educator Pipeline Support Program, to be administered by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA).

The shortage of teachers in Pennsylvania affects the entire state, impacting both rural and urban districts:

- A February 2023 report published by a coalition of national and state education advocates found that the number of teachers being certified annually plummeted from 20,000 per year in 2010 to fewer than 7,000 in 2020.
- Additionally, the teacher shortage is projected to, at best, persist over time, according to a report published by Penn State University and the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.
- In 2022, only about 5,000 new teaching certificates were issued in Pennsylvania. Comparatively, over 17,000 certificates were issued in 2011, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, indicating a potential \$60M-\$70M need to rebuild the state's teacher pipeline to what it was ten years ago.

“It’s way past time Pennsylvania starts walking the talk when it comes to supporting and cultivating future teachers,” said Senator Hughes. “Our current system puts a financial burden on prospective teachers and in turn we’re seeing many individuals who would be great educators turn to other professions. We need to act now to reduce this financial burden for future teachers to improve the quality and diversity of our teacher pipeline. Further inaction will only harm the future of our students.”

Currently, student teachers are unpaid for their required student teaching that lasts 12 weeks, creating a severe financial strain for many aspiring educators. Traditionally, an individual participating in student teaching must quit his or her job or work an additional job after spending the entire day teaching.

“If we do nothing to get more teachers into Pennsylvania schools, our children will suffer consequences like overcrowded classrooms, impersonal instruction, and fewer course options,” said Aument. “Teachers will have less time to help our most vulnerable children, resulting in more students being left behind. We need to make it easier for skilled college graduates to pursue a career in teaching.”

Specifically, Senate Bill 300 would provide:

- A \$10,000 stipend for individuals enrolled in a teacher preparation program at an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth to complete their student teaching requirement.
- An additional \$5,000 stipend for students who complete their student teaching in schools that traditionally don't have student teachers and schools with high teacher vacancies – an acknowledgement that some schools are being hit harder than others.
- A \$1,000 stipend for cooperating teachers who agree to mentor student teachers.

The Senate Education Committee held a hearing today to discuss possible solutions to the educator workforce challenges in Pennsylvania. Sherri Smith, the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators, testified in support of Senate Bill 300, saying, “Individuals often have to quit their part-time or full-time jobs to be able to complete their student teaching obligations. This becomes a barrier for some as it is just not feasible for them to give up their paycheck to complete their student teaching obligations. That’s why looking for a way to provide stipends to our student teachers is a critical step to fixing our current impaired educator workforce pipeline.”

Colorado, Michigan, and Oklahoma have already enacted state administered programs offering stipends for student teachers. Several school districts in Nebraska have enacted locally administered programs as well.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Education Committee for consideration.

ARTICLE 2

These States Pay Student Teachers

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/news/these-states-pay-student-teachers/>

By: Margaret Attridge June 27, 2023

For years, most student teachers didn't get paid. Now, as states face teacher shortages, legislatures are passing bills funding stipends to qualifying student teachers.

- At least four states have student-teacher stipend programs.
- Maryland is the latest to pass legislation providing funds to support student teachers.
- Colorado and Michigan passed legislation last year to support student-teacher stipend programs, while Oklahoma's program is supported by pandemic relief funds.

As states grapple with teacher shortages, lawmakers in a handful of states are creating and funding programs investing in student teachers to support their education and encourage them to stay in-state as full-time educators once they've completed their degrees.

Maryland is the latest state to pass legislation creating a student-teacher stipend program. Eligible students would be awarded a \$20,000 annual stipend over a 10-month period.

The six-year pilot program is restricted to students who attend in-state institutions where at least 40% of the attendees are eligible to receive federal Pell Grants. Qualifying schools include, but aren't limited to, Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

To be eligible for the stipend, students must be enrolled in a teacher preparation program, participate in an internship at a public school or publicly funded prekindergarten program, and continue to make progress toward a degree to be eligible for the stipend.

Additionally, qualified students must pledge to teach in-state for two years after they complete their degree at a "high-needs school, grade level, or content area in which there is a shortage of teachers," according to the bill language.

Eligibility requirements vary between the states that have student-teacher stipend programs. Below, read about the other states that support student teachers through stipends and learn how students can qualify.

Colorado

Colorado started offering eligible students \$11,000 for a 16-week residency or \$22,000 for a 32-week residency student teaching for the 2022-2023 school year. To qualify, participants must meet certain income eligibility requirements, however, state lawmakers have already introduced legislation to expand eligibility.

Michigan

Michigan also started awarding student teachers \$9,600 stipends this academic year. Participants don't have to be Michigan residents but must be in approved educator preparation programs and enrolled full time in "required student teaching experience[s]" in order to qualify for the program.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma has provided student teachers with a stipend of up to \$3,250 since the 2021-2022 school year. The state's program is funded by federal COVID-19 relief dollars, so it is only expected to last through the 2023-2024 school year. Participants are awarded \$1,625 during their first week of teaching and then an additional \$1,625 from the school district if they are hired as full-time educators.