

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6341

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 2, 1994

Brief Description: Expanding the future teachers conditional scholarship program.

SPONSORS: Senators West, Bauer, Winsley and M. Rasmussen

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6341 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Prince, Sheldon and West.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Hearing Dates: January 31, 1994; February 2, 1994

BACKGROUND:

The Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship Program (FTCSP) was created in 1987 to provide a financial incentive to outstanding individuals to become teachers in Washington's public school system. The program is administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) and awards conditional scholarships to teacher candidates who have high scholastic achievement and the capability to be role models to students, including minority students. Recipients must be pursuing their initial teaching certificate or an additional endorsement. The term "conditional scholarship" means a loan that is "forgiven" in whole or in part if the recipient renders service as a teacher in Washington's public schools.

The FTSCP has assisted nearly 100 individuals who are now teaching in Washington's public schools. The program awards 30 new conditional scholarships per year and maintains approximately 60 renewals, for an annual total of nearly 90 scholarships.

The program has an annual budget of \$300,000, approximately \$21,000 of which is spent for program administration, the remainder (\$279,000) going to conditional scholarships. The FTCSP offers scholarships of up to \$3,000 per year for up to five years, for a maximum of \$15,000 per recipient. Students may use the scholarship to attend teacher training programs in either public or independent institutions of higher education.

According to statute, no conditional scholarships shall be granted after June 30, 1994, until the program is reviewed by the Legislative Budget Committee (LBC) and is reenacted by the Legislature. The LBC has completed its review and made two recommendations: (1) the FTCSP should be continued in order to

attract teacher candidates who demonstrate high scholastic achievement and potential to be role models to students, including minority students; and, (2) RCW 28B.102.010(5) be amended to recognize certificated teaching experience in predominantly publicly funded Head Start, the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, and contracted alternative school programs as eligible for the "forgiveness" benefit of the FTCSP.

SUMMARY:

The Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship Program is continued. The "forgiveness" benefit is expanded to include all recipients qualified to hold a teaching certificate who teach in an approved education program in the state of Washington. Approved education program is defined as an educational program for knowledge and skills generally learned in preschool through twelfth grade. Approved education programs may include but need not be limited to: (1) an elementary school, a middle school, a junior high school, or a high school within the public school system; (2) an approved school under Chapter 28A.195 RCW; (3) the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program or the federal Head Start Program; (4) a preschool that has received voluntary state accreditation; (5) a tribal school in Washington approved by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs; (6) an education center under Chapter 28A.205 RCW, and; (7) English As a Second Language programs and programs leading to high school graduation or the equivalency operated by community or technical colleges.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Forgiveness of the conditional scholarship is proportional to the number of years the scholarship is received. The student who receives five years of scholarship is obligated to ten years of teaching service. The student who receives one year of conditional scholarship is obligated to two years of teaching service.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested January 19, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR:

The Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship Program encourages the best and brightest to enter the teaching profession. Minority students who will be good role models are encouraged to become teachers. The program should be continued.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator James West; Barbara Theiss, HECB