

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

SENATE BILL 235

By: Pugh

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to teachers; defining term; establishing the Grow Your Own Educator Program to be maintained by the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability; providing purpose; providing for grant applications to be made on certain form; providing for contents of application; directing grants to be allocated on certain basis from certain fund; requiring grant recipients to submit certain report by certain date; providing for contents of report; directing the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability to submit certain report by certain date; providing for contents of report; providing for promulgation of rules; creating the Grow Your Own Educator Revolving Fund; specifying source of fund; providing for expenditures; providing purpose of fund; providing for codification; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 698.4 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. As used in this section, "eligible school district" means a public school district or public school district foundation in this state that has established a program to provide tuition or loan

1 repayment assistance to school district employees who pursue an
2 undergraduate degree from a teacher preparation program accredited
3 by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability leading
4 to a standard teaching certificate.

5 B. There is hereby created the Grow Your Own Educator Program
6 to provide matching fund grants to eligible school districts. The
7 program shall be established and maintained by the Office of
8 Educational Quality and Accountability.

9 C. An eligible school district seeking to participate in the
10 Grow Your Own Educator Program shall submit an application in the
11 manner and on a form prescribed by the Office of Educational Quality
12 and Accountability. The application shall include:

- 13 1. The amount of matching fund grants requested;
- 14 2. The position of the employee pursuing an undergraduate
15 degree from a teacher preparation program; and
- 16 3. The subject area in which the employee is pursuing an
17 undergraduate degree from a teacher preparation program.

18 D. Matching fund grants shall be awarded on a first-come,
19 first-served basis. Grants shall be provided without any limitation
20 other than the amount of funds available in the Grow Your Own
21 Educator Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this act
22 and the number of eligible school districts that apply.

23 E. By June 30, 2026, and each June 30 thereafter, an eligible
24 school district that receives a matching fund grant pursuant to this

1 section shall electronically submit a report to the Office of
2 Educational Quality and Accountability that includes:

3 1. A status update on the progress the employee receiving
4 tuition assistance is making in the teacher preparation program in
5 which he or she is enrolled; or

6 2. The employment status of the employee receiving loan
7 repayment assistance.

8 F. By December 31, 2026, and each December 31 thereafter, the
9 Office of Educational Quality and Accountability shall
10 electronically submit a report to the Governor, the President Pro
11 Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
12 Representatives that includes:

13 1. The school district matching fund grant recipients;

14 2. The amount of matching fund grants allocated to each
15 recipient;

16 3. The subject area in which the employee receiving tuition
17 assistance is pursuing an undergraduate degree, or the subject area
18 in which the employee receiving loan repayment assistance has
19 received an undergraduate degree; and

20 4. The information submitted pursuant to subsection E of this
21 section.

22 G. The Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability
23 shall promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this section.
24

1 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 698.5 of Title 70, unless there
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund
5 for the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability to be
6 designated the "Grow Your Own Educator Revolving Fund". The fund
7 shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations,
8 and shall consist of all monies received by the Commission for
9 Educational Quality and Accountability from legislative
10 appropriations provided for the purpose of implementing the Grow
11 Your Own Educator Program created in Section 1 of this act. All
12 monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated
13 and may be budgeted and expended by the Commission for the purpose
14 provided for in this section. Expenditures from the fund shall be
15 made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims
16 filed as prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of
17 Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

18 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

19 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
20 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
21 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
22 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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