



State of Wisconsin
2015 – 2016 LEGISLATURE

LRBs0385/1
ARG:emw

**ASSEMBLY SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT 1,
TO ASSEMBLY BILL 793**

February 17, 2016 – Offered by Representatives DANOU, HESSELBEIN, DOYLE,
CONSIDINE, OHNSTAD, SPREITZER, HEBL, POPE, BERCEAU and KAHL.

1 **AN ACT** *to create* 20.235 (1) (fr) and 39.387 of the statutes; **relating to:** creation
2 of a grant program for teachers employed by sparsely populated school districts
3 and granting rule-making authority.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) administers various financial assistance programs to assist teachers. Those programs include programs under which HEAB provides loans to college students and then forgives a certain amount of those loans after the loan recipient has been employed as a teacher in the Milwaukee Public Schools, as a teacher of visually impaired pupils or as an orientation and mobility instructor in this state, or as a teacher in a school district in this state in which minority students constitute at least 29 percent of the membership of the school district.

This substitute amendment creates a rural teacher grant program (grant program), to be administered by HEAB, to encourage eligible teachers, as defined in the substitute amendment, to teach in schools operated by eligible school districts, as defined in the substitute amendment. Under the substitute amendment, 1) an “eligible school district” is a school district whose membership in the school year preceding the school year for which a grant is awarded under the grant program divided by the school district’s area in square miles is less than ten; and 2) an “eligible teacher” is a teacher who teaches in a school operated by an eligible school district.

The substitute amendment requires HEAB to grant financial assistance to an eligible teacher who is nominated by his or her school district for participation in the grant program and who submits a claim for that financial assistance after each year in which the eligible teacher teaches in such a school. The claim must 1) include the signature of the eligible teacher and of a representative of the school district employing the eligible teacher certifying that during the period for which financial assistance is claimed the school district was an eligible school district and the eligible teacher taught in a school operated by that eligible school district; 2) include a commitment by the eligible teacher that he or she will use the financial assistance to repay student loans incurred to defray the cost of tuition, fees, and expenses for programs of study relating to the teaching profession; and 3) provide such other information as HEAB may require by rule to verify the claimant’s eligibility for financial assistance.

The maximum amount of financial assistance that an eligible teacher may receive under the grant program is \$1,000 for the first school year, \$2,000 for the second school year, \$2,000 for the third school year, \$2,000 for the fourth school year, and \$3,000 for the fifth school year in which the eligible teacher participates in the grant program. An eligible teacher may receive financial assistance under the grant program for no more than five school years. No more than four eligible teachers employed by a given eligible school district may participate in the grant program in a given school year.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 20.005 (3) (schedule) of the statutes: at the appropriate place, insert
2 the following amounts for the purposes indicated:

	2015-16	2016-17
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4 **20.235 Higher educational aids board**

5 (1) STUDENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

(fr) Rural teacher grant program	GPR	B	-0-	-0-
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7 **SECTION 2.** 20.235 (1) (fr) of the statutes is created to read:

8 20.235 (1) (fr) *Rural teacher grant program.* Biennially, the amounts in the
9 schedule for the rural teacher grant program under s. 39.387.

10 **SECTION 3.** 39.387 of the statutes is created to read:

1 **39.387 Rural teacher grant program. (1) DEFINITIONS.** In this section:

2 (a) “Eligible school district” means a school district whose membership in the
3 school year preceding the school year for which a grant is awarded to an eligible
4 teacher under sub. (4) divided by the school district’s area in square miles is less than
5 10.

6 (b) “Eligible teacher” means a teacher who meets the eligibility requirements
7 specified in sub. (3).

8 **(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.** There is established, to be administered by the
9 board, a rural teacher grant program to encourage eligible teachers to teach in
10 schools operated by eligible school districts by providing grants of financial
11 assistance to those eligible teachers as provided in sub. (4).

12 **(3) ELIGIBILITY.** A teacher is eligible for financial assistance as provided under
13 sub. (4) if the teacher meets all of the following requirements:

14 (a) He or she teaches in a school operated by an eligible school district.

15 (b) He or she does not appear on the statewide support lien docket under s.
16 49.854 (2) (b), unless the teacher provides to the board a payment agreement that has
17 been approved by the county child support agency under s. 59.53 (5) and that is
18 consistent with rules promulgated under s. 49.858 (2) (a).

19 **(4) FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.** (a) From the appropriation under s. 20.235 (1) (fr),
20 the board shall grant financial assistance to eligible teachers who are nominated by
21 their school districts for participation in the grant program as provided in par. (b) and
22 who submit claims for that financial assistance as provided in par. (c). The maximum
23 amount of financial assistance that an eligible teacher may receive under this
24 subsection is \$1,000 for the first school year, \$2,000 for the 2nd school year, \$2,000
25 for the 3rd school year, \$2,000 for the 4th school year, and \$3,000 for the 5th school

1 year in which the eligible teacher participates in the grant program. An eligible
2 teacher may receive financial assistance under this subsection for no more than 5
3 school years. An eligible teacher who receives financial assistance under this
4 subsection shall use that financial assistance only for the purpose of repaying
5 student loans incurred to defray the cost of tuition, fees, and expenses for programs
6 of study relating to the teaching profession. The board may provide financial
7 assistance on a prorated basis to an eligible teacher who is employed less than full
8 time.

9 (b) An eligible school district may nominate an eligible teacher for participation
10 in the grant program by submitting that nomination to the board in a form prescribed
11 by the board. No more than 4 eligible teachers employed by a given eligible school
12 district may participate in the grant program in a given school year. The nomination
13 shall include such information as the board may require to establish that the school
14 district employing the teacher is an eligible school district and that the teacher is an
15 eligible teacher and shall provide any other information the board may require by
16 rule promulgated under sub. (5).

17 (c) After each year in which an eligible teacher who has been accepted for
18 participation in the grant program teaches in a school operated by an eligible school
19 district, the eligible teacher may submit to the board a claim for financial assistance.
20 The claim shall include the signature of the eligible teacher and of a representative
21 of the school district employing the eligible teacher certifying that during the period
22 for which financial assistance is claimed the school district was an eligible school
23 district and the eligible teacher taught in a school operated by that eligible school
24 district, shall include a commitment by the eligible teacher that he or she will use
25 the financial assistance to repay student loans incurred to defray the cost of tuition,

1 fees, and expenses for programs of study relating to the teaching profession, and
2 shall provide such other information as the board may require by rule promulgated
3 under sub. (5) to verify the claimant's eligibility for financial assistance.

4 (d) If the board determines that a claimant under par. (c) is eligible to receive
5 financial assistance under this subsection, the board shall provide that assistance,
6 subject to the amounts available in the appropriation account under s. 20.235 (1) (fr).
7 If the amount of financial assistance claimed in a fiscal year exceeds the amounts
8 available in that appropriation account, the board shall prorate the financial
9 assistance paid in that fiscal year in the proportion that the amounts available bear
10 to the total amount of financial assistance payable in that fiscal year.

11 (5) RULES. The board shall promulgate rules to implement and administer this
12 section. Those rules shall include rules specifying the information a school district
13 must include in a nomination for participation in the grant program under sub. (4)
14 (b) and the information a teacher must include in a claim for financial assistance
15 under sub. (4) (c).

16 **SECTION 4. Initial applicability.**

17 (1) RURAL TEACHER GRANT PROGRAM. This act first applies to an eligible teacher,
18 as defined in section 39.387 (1) (b) of the statutes, as created by this act, who teaches
19 in a school operated by an eligible school district, as defined in section 39.387 (1) (a)
20 of the statutes, as created by this act, in the 2016–17 school year.

21 (END)