

By: Representative Boyd

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 154

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-35, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REVISE THE ASSISTANT TEACHER FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM TO
3 INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO TEACHER
4 ASSISTANTS TO EQUAL THE ACTUAL COST OF SIX THREE-HOUR COURSES PER
5 YEAR; TO REMOVE THE PROVISION LIMITING THE PURPOSE OF THE LOAN FOR
6 CRITICAL TEACHER SHORTAGE AREAS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-35, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
9 amended as follows:

10 37-106-35. (1) There is established the assistant teacher
11 forgivable loan program for the purpose of assisting eligible
12 assistant teachers to become certificated teachers through the
13 awarding of forgivable loans and to attract and retain qualified
14 teachers * * *. The forgivable loan program shall be implemented
15 and administered by the board and is subject to the availability
16 of funds appropriated specifically therefor by the Legislature.

17 (2) Under the assistant teacher forgivable loan program,
18 qualified assistant teachers may be awarded financial assistance
19 in an amount that is equal to the actual cost of * * * six (6)
20 three-hour academic courses per year. * * * An assistant teacher



21 forgivable loan shall not be based upon an applicant's financial
22 need, and the receipt of any other forgivable loan or financial
23 assistance shall not affect an assistant teacher's eligibility
24 under the program.

25 (3) In order to qualify for an assistant teacher, forgivable
26 loan, an applicant must satisfy the following requirements:

27 (a) The applicant must be employed full-time as an
28 assistant teacher with a local school district;

29 (b) The applicant must be accepted for enrollment at a
30 baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher learning in
31 the State of Mississippi that is regionally accredited and
32 approved by the board;

33 (c) The assistant teacher must maintain a minimum
34 cumulative grade point average of * * * 2.75 calculated on a 4.0
35 scale for all courses funded through the assistant teacher
36 forgivable loan program; and

37 (d) The assistant teacher must have expressed in
38 writing a present intention to teach in a critical teacher
39 shortage geographic or academic subject area.

40 (4) At the beginning of the school year next succeeding the
41 date on which a person who has received an assistant teacher
42 forgivable loan obtains a baccalaureate degree, that person shall
43 begin to render service as a certificated teacher in a school
44 district or academic subject area, or both, designated by the
45 State Board of Education. The board shall establish by rule and



46 regulation the duration of teaching service due for recipients of
47 forgivable loans based upon the number of academic hours funded
48 through the assistant teacher forgivable loan program. Repayment
49 and conversion terms shall be the same as those outlined in
50 Section 37-106-53.

51 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
52 and after July 1, 2018.

