A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS EDUCATOR SHORTAGES.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill amends and repeals, in part, the existing grow your own educator program to authorize local education providers, including school districts, charter schools, and boards of cooperative services, to establish local grow your own educator programs that give high school students the opportunity to participate in a teacher preparation pathway in which high school students can receive college credit for course work that leads to an education or related degree or credential at a 2- or 4-year institution of higher education. The department of education, in consultation with the...
department of higher education, shall create a framework for local grow your own educator programs, including the accumulation of transferable postsecondary credit.

As part of the grow your own educator program, the bill creates a grow your own educator scholarship to award $5,000 to students in higher education preparation programs who have completed not less than the final 24 credit hours required for an education or related degree or credential and agree to work as an educator in a Colorado public school upon completion of the degree or credential. In awarding scholarships, the state board shall prioritize students who participated in a local education provider's grow your own educator program while in high school and who complete their final field work in a school of the local education provider. Next, the state board shall prioritize scholarships to students who participated in a local education provider's grow your own educator program while in high school and who commit to teaching in a content shortage area or in a rural area.

The bill amends the teacher of record license to apply to students participating in a Colorado-approved program of preparation and who will be employed with a local education provider experiencing a critical teacher shortage, without the need to show that no other licensed applicant has applied. The bill removes references to the grow your own educator program that no longer apply.

The bill amends the teacher of record program to remove the requirement that a teacher participating in the program must fill a position for which no other licensed applicant has applied.

The bill directs the Colorado commission on higher education, in collaboration with the governing boards and the higher education council, to negotiate statewide degree transfer agreements so that statewide degree transfer agreements are in place no later than 2022 for educator preparation programs, including but not limited to elementary and secondary education; early childhood education; special education; speech and language pathology; occupational therapy; world languages; mathematics; science; and STEM, as defined in statute. Credits accumulated pursuant to a statewide degree transfer agreement apply to the transfer of course work, regardless of whether the course work was successfully completed at a 2-year or 4-year state institution of higher education and regardless of whether the credit is being transferred to a 2-year or 4-year state institution of higher education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

1 SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, repeal and reenact, with amendments, 22-60.5-208.5 as follows:

-2- HB20-1231
22-60.5-208.5. Grow your own educator programs - scholarships - duties - report - rules - legislative declaration - definitions. (1) (a) The general assembly finds that:

(I) Colorado is committed to ensuring that its public schools are the best in the world;

(II) Ensuring that each classroom has a qualified, well-trained educator is critical to guaranteeing that Colorado's public education system remains competitive both nationally and internationally; and

(III) A shortage of educators in public schools across the state jeopardizes Colorado's ability to maintain the highest standards in education delivery.

(b) Therefore, the general assembly declares that it is important to support local education providers in creating grow your own educator programs that develop pipelines for Colorado's educator workforce across the state by providing teacher preparation pathways with aligned course work and meaningful opportunities for students to become engaged in teaching careers while still in high school and to support students who go on to higher education to become educators with scholarships that incentivize returning to their home school districts to teach.

(2) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) "Local education provider" means a school district, a charter school authorized by a school district pursuant to part 1 of article 30.5 of this title 22, a charter school authorized by
THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE PURSUANT TO PART 5 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF THIS TITLE 22, OR A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED AND OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF THIS TITLE 22 THAT OPERATES A PUBLIC SCHOOL.

(b) "PROGRAM" MEANS A GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATOR PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(c) "SCHOLARSHIP" MEANS THE GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATOR SCHOLARSHIP CREATED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

(3) THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SHALL CREATE A FRAMEWORK FOR GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATOR PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS. GROW YOUR OWN EDUCATOR PROGRAMS MUST INCLUDE, AT A MINIMUM, THE OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A TEACHER PREPARATION PATHWAY IN WHICH A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT RECEIVES COLLEGE CREDIT FOR COURSES THAT LEAD TO AN EDUCATION OR RELATED DEGREE OR CREDENTIAL AT TWO- AND FOUR-YEAR STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION. PROGRAMS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED THROUGH CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS; DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS; EARLY COLLEGE; THE ASCENT PROGRAM; P-TECH HIGH SCHOOLS, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 22-35.3-102; OR OTHER PROGRAMS OR PATHWAYS ESTABLISHED OR AUTHORIZED IN LAW THAT FACILITATE A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT’S ACCUMULATION OF TRANSFERABLE CREDIT TOWARD AN EDUCATION OR RELATED DEGREE OR CREDENTIAL.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND TWO- AND FOUR-YEAR STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO FACILITATE THE DELIVERY
OF COLLEGE COURSES THAT RESULT IN TRANSFERABLE CREDIT TOWARD AN
EDUCATION OR RELATED DEGREE OR CREDENTIAL.

(5) The state board shall adopt rules as necessary to
establish a scholarship program to award five-thousand-dollar
scholarships to students who are enrolled in an approved
program of preparation and have completed not less than the
final twenty-four credit hours required for an education or
related degree or credential and agree to work as an educator
in a Colorado public school upon completion of the degree or
credential. In awarding Grow Your Own Educator Scholarships,
the state board shall:

(a) First, prioritize scholarship applicants who
participated in a Grow Your Own Educator Program through a
local education provider and accumulated at least six college
credit hours in the program toward an education or related
degree or credential, as certified by the local education
provider, and who complete or are completing required field
work in a school of the local education provider;

(b) Second, prioritize scholarships to applicants who
participated in a Grow Your Own Educator Program through a
local education provider and accumulated at least six college
credit hours in the program toward an education or related
degree or credential, as certified by the local education
provider, and who commit to teaching in a community that is
experiencing a teacher shortage in mathematics; world
languages; special education; early childhood education; speech
and language pathology; occupational therapy; science; and
(c) Third, prioritize scholarships to applicants who participated in a Grow Your Own Educator Program through a local education provider and accumulated at least six college credit hours in the program toward an education or related degree or credential, as certified by the local education provider, and who commit to teaching in a rural school district.

(6) The state board shall award scholarships from any unexpended and unencumbered money appropriated to the department in the 2019-20 state fiscal year for purposes of Grow Your Own Educator Programs pursuant to this section. The money is continuously appropriated for the award of scholarships for the 2020-21 state fiscal year and fiscal years thereafter until the appropriation is exhausted.

(7) (a) No later than September 30 in any year in which money is awarded pursuant to the program, the department shall report to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate, or any successor committees, information relating to the program, including, at a minimum, whether the applicant participated in a Grow Your Own Educator Program, the criteria the applicant satisfied for the award, and demographic information relating to students awarded scholarships to gauge the success of Grow Your Own Educator Programs in recruiting demographically underrepresented groups into the education profession.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), the department shall report the information described
IN SUBSECTION (7)(a) OF THIS SECTION IN EACH YEAR GRANTS ARE
AWARDED PURSUANT TO THE PROGRAM.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-60.5-201, amend
(1)(a.5)(I) as follows:

22-60.5-201. Types of teacher licenses issued - term - rules.
(1) The department is designated as the sole agency authorized to issue
the following teacher licenses to persons of good moral character:

(a.5) Teacher of record license. (I) The department shall issue
a teacher of record license to an applicant who:

(A) Is enrolled in an accepted institution of higher education
COLORADO-APPROVED PROGRAM OF PREPARATION and has successfully
completed all, or substantially all, of the course work requirements for
completion of a bachelor's degree but has not yet completed teaching field
work requirements;

(B) Is enrolled in a grow your own educator program pursuant to
section 22-60.5-208.5, or in a one- or two-year teacher of record program
pursuant to section 22-60.5-208.7; and

(C) The applicant Is or will be employed in a position for which
no other qualified, licensed teacher has applied by a local education
provider, as defined in section 22-60.5-208.7 (1), that determines that
there is a critical teacher shortage.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-60.5-208.7,
amend (2) and (3) as follows:

22-60.5-208.7. Teacher of record program - rules -
authorization - definition. (2) A local education provider is authorized
to implement a one- or two-year teacher of record program and may only
employ a teacher of record if the local education provider has determined
that there is a critical teacher shortage. and if there are no other qualified, licensed applicants for a vacant position. The state board of education shall establish rules and policies governing a teacher of record program established pursuant to this section.

(3) A student employed in a teacher of record program established pursuant to this section shall hold a teacher of record license issued pursuant to section 22-60.5-201 (1)(a.5). The teacher of record license is only valid in the jurisdiction governed by the local education provider implementing the teacher of record program in which the student is participating.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-1-108, add (7)(c)(III) as follows:

23-1-108. Duties and powers of the commission with regard to systemwide planning - reporting - definitions. (7) (c) (III) (A) Beginning July 1, 2020, the commission, in collaboration with the governing boards and the council convened pursuant to section 23-1-108.5 (3)(a), shall negotiate statewide degree transfer agreements and shall ensure that statewide degree transfer agreements are in place no later than July 1, 2022, for educator preparation programs, including but not limited to elementary and secondary education; early childhood education; special education; speech and language pathology; occupational therapy; world languages; mathematics; science; and STEM, as defined in section 22-7-1009.3.

(B) The statewide transfer agreements established pursuant to subsection (7)(c)(III)(A) of this section apply to the
TRANSFER OF ALL COURSE WORK SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED TOWARD THE
DEGREE THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE STATEWIDE TRANSFER AGREEMENT,
REGardless OF WHETHER THE COURSE WORK WAS SUCCESSFULLY
COMPLETED AT A TWO-YEAR OR FOUR-YEAR STATE INSTITUTION OF
HIGHER EDUCATION AND REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE CREDIT IS BEING
TRANSFERRED TO A TWO-YEAR OR FOUR-YEAR STATE INSTITUTION OF
HIGHER EDUCATION.

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-18-202, repeal
(2)(b)(III) as follows:

23-18-202. College opportunity fund - appropriations -
payment of stipends - reimbursement - report. (2) (b) (III) If the
student is enrolled in a grow your own educator program pursuant to
section 22-60.5-208.5, and the school district or charter school receives
a grant pursuant to section 22-60.5-208.5 (6), the school district or charter
school that employs the student as a teacher of record as described in
section 22-60.5-201 (1)(a.5) during the teaching portion of the grow your
own educator program is responsible for paying the student's share of
total in-state tuition, not to exceed thirty-six credit hours, less any amount
received in federal and state financial aid.

SECTION 6. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-34-104, repeal
(24)(a)(IX) as follows:

24-34-104. General assembly review of regulatory agencies
and functions for repeal, continuation, or reestablishment - legislative
declaration - repeal. (24) (a) The following agencies, functions, or both,
are scheduled for repeal on September 1, 2023:

(IX) The grow your own educator program, authorized pursuant
to section 22-60.5-208.5;
SECTION 7. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act
takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
5, 2020, if adjournment sine die is on May 6, 2020); except that, if a
referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the
state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect
unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.