

SENATE BILL NO. 567

June 24, 2021, Introduced by Senators POLEHANKI, CHANG, WOJNO, SANTANA, GEISS, MCMORROW, MCCANN, BAYER, BIZON and BULLOCK and referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

A bill to establish a financial aid program for certain individuals working as educational paraprofessionals in K-12 education programs who seek postsecondary degrees in teaching-related fields; to provide for the administration of the financial aid program; and to prescribe certain powers and duties of certain state officers, agencies, and departments.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "paraprofessional to teacher pathways grant act".

3 Sec. 2. As used in this act:

1 (a) "Community college" means a community college established
2 under the community college act of 1966, 1966 PA 331, MCL 389.1 to
3 389.195, or under part 25 of the revised school code, 1976 PA 451,
4 MCL 380.1601 to 380.1607.

5 (b) "Department" means the department of education.

6 (c) "Educational paraprofessional" means a teacher aid
7 employed in a K-12 education program or other individual employed
8 in and having responsibility for assisting with student instruction
9 in a K-12 education program.

10 (d) "Full-time" means at least 30 hours per week.

11 (e) "Part-time" means at least 15 hours per week.

12 (f) "Public university" means a state university described in
13 section 4, 5, or 6 of article VIII of the state constitution of
14 1963.

15 Sec. 3. The paraprofessional to teacher pathways grant program
16 is created in the department for the purpose of providing grants
17 under this act to individuals eligible for those grants under
18 sections 4 and 5. The department shall do all of the following:

19 (a) Develop and administer the program as a dual-pathway
20 program that awards grants as follows:

21 (i) Pathway I grants to individuals seeking associate degrees
22 in education-related fields who are eligible under section 4.

23 (ii) Pathway II grants to individuals seeking baccalaureate
24 degrees in education-related fields who are eligible under section
25 5.

26 (b) Develop and administer an annual application process for
27 new and continuing Pathway I and Pathway II grant applicants.

28 (c) Develop the grant-repayment agreements described in
29 sections 4(a)(v) and 5(a)(v).

1 (d) Conduct audits of grant recipients under this act to
2 enforce the grant-repayment agreements described in sections 4(a) (v)
3 and 5(a) (v) .

4 (e) Promulgate rules to implement this act pursuant to the
5 administrative procedures act of 1969, 1969 PA 306, MCL 24.201 to
6 24.328.

7 Sec. 4. All of the following apply to the award of a Pathway I
8 grant:

9 (a) The department shall award a Pathway I grant under this
10 section to an individual only if he or she meets all of the
11 following:

12 (i) Has graduated from high school with a diploma or
13 certificate of completion or achieved a high school equivalency
14 certificate. As used in this subparagraph, "high school equivalency
15 certificate" means that term as defined in section 4 of the school
16 aid act of 1979, 1979 PA 94, MCL 388.1604.

17 (ii) Has not previously earned an associate or baccalaureate
18 degree.

19 (iii) As of the date he or she first applies for a Pathway I
20 grant, had been continuously employed as an educational
21 paraprofessional full-time for the immediately preceding 3 years or
22 part-time for the immediately preceding 5 years.

23 (iv) Is enrolled in or has been accepted for enrollment in a
24 program at a community college leading to an associate degree in an
25 education-related field, as determined by the department.

26 (v) Has entered into a written grant-repayment agreement with
27 the department in which he or she agrees to repay all Pathway I
28 grant money received under this act if either of the following
29 applies:

1 (A) He or she does not complete the associate degree program
2 described in subparagraph (iv) within 2 years of the average program
3 completion time by a full-time student after the date he or she
4 first received a Pathway I grant.

5 (B) He or she does not maintain continuous full-time
6 employment for at least 3 years in an education-related position
7 requiring the associate degree described in subparagraph (iv)
8 beginning within 1 month before the start of the school year
9 following his or her degree completion or 1 year after his or her
10 degree completion, whichever is later.

11 (b) Subject to appropriation, an individual eligible for a
12 Pathway I grant under this section may receive a grant in an amount
13 not to exceed the lesser of the following:

14 (i) The tuition rate actually charged by the community college
15 for the associate degree program described in subdivision (a) (iv).

16 (ii) The average tuition rate charged to in-district students
17 attending associate degree programs at community colleges in this
18 state that are the same as or similar to the associate degree
19 program described in subdivision (a) (iv), as determined by the
20 department.

21 (c) An individual is eligible for a Pathway I grant under this
22 section until the occurrence of either of the following:

23 (i) The time frame described in subdivision (a) (v) (A) has
24 passed.

25 (ii) The individual has obtained an associate degree.

26 Sec. 5. All of the following apply to the award of a Pathway
27 II grant:

28 (a) The department shall award a Pathway II grant under this
29 section to an individual only if he or she meets all of the

1 following:

2 (i) Has earned an associate degree in, or at least 2 years of
3 college credit counting toward a baccalaureate degree in, an
4 education-related field, as determined by the department.

5 (ii) Has not previously earned a baccalaureate degree.

6 (iii) As of the date he or she first applies for a Pathway II
7 grant, had been continuously employed as an educational
8 paraprofessional for 1 of the following:

9 (A) Full-time for the immediately preceding 3 years.

10 (B) Part-time for the immediately preceding 5 years.

11 (C) Part-time for the immediately preceding 3 years if the
12 individual has completed an associate degree program supported by
13 Pathway I grants under section 4 not more than 36 months before the
14 date he or she first applies for a Pathway II grant.

15 (iv) Is enrolled in or has been accepted for enrollment in a
16 program at a public university leading to a baccalaureate degree in
17 an education-related field necessary for a teaching certificate, as
18 determined by the department.

19 (v) Has entered into a written grant-repayment agreement with
20 the department in which he or she agrees to repay all Pathway II
21 grant money received under this act if either of the following
22 applies:

23 (A) He or she does not complete the baccalaureate degree
24 program described in subparagraph (iv) within 2 years of the average
25 program completion time by a full-time student after the date he or
26 she first received a Pathway II grant.

27 (B) He or she does not maintain continuous full-time
28 employment for at least 5 years in an education-related position
29 requiring the teaching certificate described in subparagraph (iv)

beginning within 1 month before the start of the school year following his or her certification or 6 months after his or her certification, whichever is later.

(vi) Has a letter of endorsement from a local school district guaranteeing employment of the individual as a teacher upon certification.

(b) Subject to appropriation, an individual eligible for a Pathway II grant under this section may receive a grant in an amount not to exceed the lesser of the following:

(i) The tuition rate actually charged by the public university for the baccalaureate degree program described in subdivision

(a) (iv) .

(ii) The average tuition rate charged to in-state students attending baccalaureate degree programs at public universities in this state that are the same as or similar to the baccalaureate degree program described in subdivision (a) (iv), as determined by the department.

(c) An individual is eligible for a Pathway II grant under this section until the occurrence of either of the following:

(i) The time frame described in subdivision (a) (v) (A) has passed.

(ii) The individual has obtained a baccalaureate degree.

Sec. 6. Money required to implement the paraprofessional to teacher pathways grant program created under this act is to be appropriated from the paraprofessional to teacher pathways grant fund created in section 3 of the paraprofessional to teacher pathways grant fund act and any other source the legislature considers necessary to implement this act.

Enacting section 1. This act does not take effect unless

1 Senate Bill No. 568 of the 101st Legislature is enacted into
2 law.