

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL 618

Short Title: TAs to Teachers.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator McInnis (Primary Sponsor).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

April 6, 2023

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO CREATE A TEACHER ASSISTANT TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM TO ASSIST TEACHER ASSISTANTS IN COMPLETING AN EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.** Article 23 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 115C-345. Teacher Assistant Tuition Reimbursement Program.**

(a) Purpose. – There is established the Teacher Assistant Tuition Reimbursement Program (Program) to provide tuition assistance to part-time or full-time teacher assistants working in local school administrative units to pursue a college degree that will result in teacher licensure. Tuition assistance awards granted under the Program may be provided for part-time or full-time coursework. A local board of education may grant a teacher assistant academic leave to pursue coursework that may only be taken during working hours. A teacher assistant receiving an award under the program shall fulfill the student teaching requirements of an educator preparation program by working in the teacher assistant's employing local school administrative unit.

(b) Selection of Applicants. – To the extent funds are made available for this Program, each local board of education may select up to five teacher assistants to receive an award of up to four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500) per academic year for a period of up to four years to be used toward the cost of tuition and fees for a teacher assistant to attend an educator preparation program at an institution of higher education. Priority for awards shall be given to a teacher assistant who received a tuition assistance award for the previous academic year and who is making satisfactory academic progress toward achieving teacher licensure. The local board of education shall set criteria for the application and selection of teacher assistants to receive tuition assistance awards that includes at least the following:

- (1) The teacher assistant shall be employed by the local board of education in the local school administrative unit.
- (2) The teacher assistant shall be enrolled or provide a statement of intent to enroll in an accredited institution of higher education in North Carolina with an educator preparation program approved by the State Board of Education to pursue teacher licensure.
- (3) The teacher assistant shall be a resident of North Carolina. For purposes of this subdivision, residency shall be determined by the same standard as residency for tuition purposes pursuant to G.S. 116-143.1.



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1       (c)   Endorsement of Tuition Assistance Awards for Recipients. – Each local board of  
2 education participating in the Program shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the  
3 institution of higher education in which a recipient of a tuition assistance award under this  
4 program is enrolled that includes procedures for at least the following:

5           (1)   Remittance of the award from the local board of education to the institution  
6 of higher education.

7           (2)   Endorsement of the funds awarded to the recipient to the institution of higher  
8 education for deposit into the account of the institution.

9           (3)   Return of a pro rata share of funds to the local board of education in the event  
10 a recipient (i) withdraws from the institution of higher education prior to the  
11 end of a term or (ii) the recipient's employment with the local board of  
12 education is terminated. The return of funds shall be consistent with  
13 procedures used by the institution under federal Title IV programs.

14       (d)   Local boards of education participating in the Program shall report to the Department  
15 of Public Instruction on at least the following:

16           (1)   The number and amount of funds in tuition assistance awards provided to  
17 teacher assistants.

18           (2)   The number of teacher assistant recipients who achieved teacher licensure,  
19 including the period of time from the issue of an initial tuition assistance  
20 award to the time of achieving licensure.

21           (3)   The number of recipients who remained employed in the local school  
22 administrative unit after achieving teacher licensure.

23       The Department shall then report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by  
24 September 1 of each year on the results of the program, including at least the consolidation of  
25 the information provided to the Department by the local boards of education."

26       **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of  
27 Public Instruction the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000) in recurring  
28 funds to provide awards for the Teacher Assistant Tuition Reimbursement Program.

29       **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2023.