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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS
54th Legislature, 1st Session, 2019

Bill Number	<u>HB20/aHAFC/aSEC</u>	Sponsor	<u>Garratt/Padilla/Trujillo, C./Lara</u>
Tracking Number	<u>.212470.2</u>	Committee Referrals	<u>HEC/HAFC; SEC</u>
Short Title	<u>Grow Your Own Teachers Act</u>		
Analyst	<u>Sena</u>	Original Date	<u>2/6/19</u>
		Last Updated	<u>3/15/19</u>

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis of SEC Amendment

The Senate Education Committee Amendment to HB20 (HB20/aHAFC/aSEC) would effectively create a scholarship program for educational assistants (EAs) who want to become teachers. The amendment strikes all references to a loan-for-service program for EAs, while maintaining language that creates a fund and provides professional leave for EAs who are students in a teacher preparation program.

Synopsis of HAFC Amendment

The House Appropriations and Finance Committee Amendment to HB20 (HB20/aHAFC) strikes a \$2.5 million appropriation to the Higher Education Department (HED) from the original bill. The House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for HB2 includes a \$25 million appropriation to the teacher loan repayment fund contingent on enactment of the House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for HB275 (HB275/HAFCS), which would provide financial aid to students who want to become teachers.

Synopsis of Original Bill

House Bill 20 (HB20) would establish the Grow Your Own Teachers Act, which would create a loan-for-service program for educational assistants (EAs) who want to become teachers, and amend the School Personnel Act to grant professional leave to educational assistants who are recipients of a loan for the purposes of attending college classes, examinations or practice teaching.

FISCAL IMPACT

HB20/aHAFC/aSEC does not contain an appropriation. The House Appropriations and Finance Committee Substitute for HB2 as amended by the Senate Finance Committee (HB2/HAFCS/aSFC) appropriate \$20 million to the Higher Education Department for teacher loan repayment.

SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

According to New Mexico State University’s Southwest Outreach Academic Research Lab, there were 740 teacher vacancies in New Mexico at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year, half of which were in hard-to-staff positions in special education, math, and science. That number represented a nearly 70 percent increase from the 2017-2018 school year, when there were 443 vacancies. HB20/aHAFC/aSEC creates a loan-for-service program to address New Mexico’s teacher shortage providing EAs working in New Mexico school districts with the resources to complete their post-secondary teacher preparation education.

Qualifications. In order to qualify for a scholarship, an EA must not already have a teaching license, must demonstrate financial need based on a formula calculated according to income reported on the free application for federal student aid, and on the number of students enrolled in each Public Education Department-approved teacher preparation program.

Scholarship Terms. Eligible students could receive up to \$6,000 per year for no more than five years, as long as they are enrolled at least half time in a preparation program. The scholarship could be used to pay for tuition, fees, books, and course supplies.

Professional Leave. The bill would grant EAs in a teacher preparation program professional leave for college classes, examinations, and practice teaching, as needed. HB20/aHAFC/aSEC would also require a public school to allow EAs to use distance education resources if the recipient “does not live within a reasonable distance” of the post-secondary institution’s campus. The bill does not define “reasonable distance.”

Reporting. HB20/aHAFC/aSEC would require HED to consult with PED to convene or survey a geographically representative sample of EAs who want to pursue higher education and teachers who began their careers as EAs to learn about their challenges and concerns in pursuing higher education. HED would be required to take those findings into account when issuing rules for the Grow Your Own Teachers Act. PED would report the findings to all EAs in school districts, charter schools, constitutional special schools, state institutions and state agencies that employ EAs.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

HED would administer the scholarship program. HED and PED would be responsible for developing surveys for or convening EAs or teachers who began their careers as EAs.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

RELATED BILLS

HB275/HAFCS, College of Education Affordability,

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- LESC Files

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