

S.F. No. 267 – Increase Teachers of Color Act in Higher Education Strengthening

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Section 1 (136A.1791, subdivision 2) amends the teacher shortage loan repayment program by modifying the administration of the program. New paragraph (b) requires the commissioner to establish an application deadline and give equal consideration to all applicants regardless of when the application was received. New paragraph (c) prioritizes applicants in the event funds are insufficient to make full awards to eligible applicants. New paragraph (d) requires the commissioner to ensure an equitable distribution of funds to teachers across economic regions. New paragraph (e) requires the commissioner to reserve funds, based on a formula in this paragraph, for teachers of color and American Indian teachers when the aggregate percentage of teachers of color and American Indian teachers is lower than the aggregate percentage of students of color and American Indian students in grades K-12. Funds reserved under this paragraph are separate from the prioritization of awards under paragraph (c).

Section 2 (136A.1791, subdivision 5) modifies the teacher shortage loan repayment amount under the teacher shortage loan repayment program. The maximum annual award for an applicant who meets only one of the three eligibility criteria is \$2,000. The maximum for an applicant meeting two or more of the three edibility criteria is \$4,000. The award under current law is \$1,000 for a teacher who meets one of the eligibility criteria, which are (1) belonging to a racial or ethnic group underrepresented in the Minnesota workforce, (2) teaching in a rural school district, or (3) teaching in a license shortage area.

Section 3 makes the Aspiring Minnesota Teachers of Color Scholarship pilot program permanent, clarifies program components, adds technical modifications, and makes substantive changes. **Subdivision 2** increases the scholarship award cap from \$25,000 to \$30,000. States that an applicant may apply for a scholarship under this program and the underrepresented student teacher grant but cannot receive an award from both programs during the same semester unless there are sufficient funds to support all eligible applicants. **Subdivision 3** adds that the commissioner must give equal consideration to all applicants regardless of the institution the applicant is attending. For eligible applicants enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate degree program, the maximum award is \$10,000 per year. For applicants enrolled full-time in an associate degree

program, the maximum award is \$6,000 per year. Under current law, the maximum award for all eligible applicants is \$10,000. New language clarifies that if the applicant is enrolled for only one term, the applicant may receive no more than half of the annual maximum. New **subdivision 4a** establishes an account in the special revenue fund for the program. Money deposited in the account does not cancel and is continuously available for scholarship awards. Technical amendment throughout this section changes “expected family contribution” to “Student Aid Index” to comply with changes on the federal level.

Section 4 subdivision 1 appropriates \$18,500,000 per year for the Aspiring Minnesota Teachers of Color Scholarship program under **Section 3** and requires that any funds remaining from the pilot program appropriation be transferred to the special revenue fund. The commissioner may use no more than \$200,000 to administer the program. **Subdivision 2** appropriates \$2,500,000 per year for the underrepresented student teacher grant program. The commissioner may use no more than three percent to administer the program. **Subdivision 3** appropriates \$8,250,000 per year for transfer to the teacher shortage loan repayment account in the special revenue fund. The commissioner may use no more than \$250,000 to administer the program.

Section 5 is a revisor instruction to codify the Aspiring Minnesota Teachers of Color Scholarship program in chapter 136A.