

Second Regular Session  
Seventieth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 16-0657.01 Jane Ritter x4342

SENATE BILL 16-104

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SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Todd, Garcia, Johnston, Kerr, Merrifield, Newell

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Becker J., Rankin

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Senate Committees  
Education

House Committees

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING INCENTIVES TO BECOME A TEACHER IN A RURAL SCHOOL  
102 DISTRICT OF COLORADO.

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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://www.leg.state.co.us/bills/summaries>.)*

The bill creates several methods to address the problem of recruitment and retention of teachers in rural school districts of Colorado (rural districts). This includes:

- ! Establishing one or more rural education centers housed in institutions of higher education in rural districts;
- ! Providing stipends to offset tuition costs to student teachers

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*



1 DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT ON GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF THE STATE THAT  
2 ARE CLASSIFIED AS "RURAL", LEAVING CHILDREN IN THOSE AREAS MORE  
3 LIKELY TO BE TAUGHT BY FEWER TEACHERS WHO MUST COVER AN  
4 INCREASINGLY LARGER NUMBER OF SUBJECTS.

5 (2) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER FINDS AND DECLARES THAT,  
6 FOR PURPOSES OF SECTION 17 OF ARTICLE IX OF THE STATE CONSTITUTION,  
7 IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES DESIGNED TO IMPROVE TEACHER  
8 QUALITY, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION IN THE RURAL AREAS OF  
9 COLORADO THROUGH THIS ARTICLE IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT OF  
10 ACCOUNTABLE EDUCATION REFORM, ACCOUNTABLE PROGRAMS TO MEET  
11 STATE ACADEMIC STANDARDS, AND PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES FOR  
12 TEACHERS AND, THEREFORE, MAY RECEIVE FUNDING FROM THE STATE  
13 EDUCATION FUND CREATED IN SECTION 17 (4) OF ARTICLE IX OF THE  
14 STATE CONSTITUTION.

15 **23-75-102. Definitions.** AS USED IN THIS ARTICLE, UNLESS THE  
16 CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

17 (1) "COMMISSION" MEANS THE COLORADO COMMISSION ON  
18 HIGHER EDUCATION CREATED IN SECTION 23-1-102.

19 (2) "EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM" MEANS AN EDUCATOR  
20 PREPARATION PROGRAM APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION PURSUANT TO  
21 SECTION 23-1-121 AND THAT UPON COMPLETION LEADS TO A  
22 RECOMMENDATION FOR LICENSURE BY AN ACCEPTED INSTITUTION OF  
23 HIGHER EDUCATION IN COLORADO.

24 (3) "INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" MEANS A PUBLIC,  
25 PRIVATE, OR PROPRIETARY POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION AUTHORIZED BY  
26 THE COMMISSION TO OFFER EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS.

27 (4) "RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT" MEANS A SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT

1 THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HAS DETERMINED TO BE RURAL.

2 **23-75-103. Rural education centers - request for proposals -**

3 **reporting requirements.** (1) (a) ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2017, THE

4 DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH FOUR RURAL

5 EDUCATION CENTERS TO REPRESENT FOUR RURAL REGIONS OF THE STATE.

6 THE RURAL EDUCATION CENTERS MUST BE BASED IN AN INSTITUTION OF

7 HIGHER EDUCATION LOCATED IN THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA TO BE SERVED.

8 THE PURPOSE OF THE RURAL EDUCATION CENTERS IS TO:

9 (I) PROVIDE AN EMPHASIS ON ACCESS TO TEACHER PREPARATION

10 PROGRAMS THAT FOCUS ON RURAL EDUCATION;

11 (II) INCREASE RURAL TEACHER RECRUITMENT;

12 (III) DEVELOP AN EDUCATOR PIPELINE TO RURAL DISTRICTS; AND

13 (IV) PROVIDE SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR RURAL DISTRICTS,

14 BOARDS OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES, AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATOR

15 PREPARATION PROVIDERS.

16 (b) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2016, THE DEPARTMENT OF

17 HIGHER EDUCATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF

18 EDUCATION, THE COMMISSION, AND INTERESTED REPRESENTATIVES FROM

19 THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY AND RURAL AREAS OF COLORADO, SHALL

20 DEVELOP AND RELEASE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO FUND ONE OR MORE

21 RURAL EDUCATION CENTERS. THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS MUST

22 INCLUDE CRITERIA FOR SELECTION, TIMELINES, DATA COLLECTION

23 REQUIREMENTS, AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

24 (c) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2017, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER

25 EDUCATION SHALL SELECT ONE OR MORE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER

26 EDUCATION TO HOUSE A RURAL EDUCATION CENTER FOR FIVE YEARS,

27 BASED ON AVAILABLE APPROPRIATIONS. AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER

1 EDUCATION THAT HAS AN EXISTING RURAL EDUCATION CENTER IS ELIGIBLE  
2 TO BE SELECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR  
3 FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION.

4 (2) A SELECTED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL  
5 COLLECT DATA ON THE RURAL EDUCATION CENTER, AS REQUIRED PER THE  
6 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS, AND PROVIDE A WRITTEN SUMMARY REPORT  
7 ANNUALLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION. PRIOR TO THE  
8 COMPLETION OF THE FIVE-YEAR FUNDING PERIOD, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
9 HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL  
10 EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ANY FUNDED RURAL EDUCATION  
11 CENTER AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUED FUNDING.

12 **23-75-104. Student teachers in rural areas - financial**  
13 **incentives.** BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2017, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER  
14 EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE FINANCIAL STIPENDS TO OFFSET TUITION FOR  
15 INDIVIDUALS IN APPROVED EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS WHO  
16 AGREE TO STUDENT TEACH IN IDENTIFIED RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS.  
17 MONEY FOR THE STIPENDS MUST BE ALLOCATED FROM THE DEPARTMENT  
18 OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO THE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO BE  
19 CREDITED TO THE STUDENT'S ACCOUNT.

20 **23-75-105. Teacher cadet program.** ON OR BEFORE JULY 1, 2017,  
21 THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH TEACHER  
22 CADET PROGRAMS IN IDENTIFIED RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS. MONEY MAY  
23 BE PROVIDED TO LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS OR BOARDS OF COOPERATIVE  
24 SERVICES TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ARE  
25 INTERESTED IN PURSUING TEACHING CAREERS IN RURAL COLORADO. THE  
26 DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF  
27 EDUCATION SHALL EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TEACHER CADET

1 PROGRAM EVERY FIVE YEARS.

2           **23-75-106. National board certified teacher stipends -**  
3 **concurrent enrollment stipends.** THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER  
4 EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE STIPENDS TO OFFSET APPLICATION FEES AND  
5 EVALUATION COSTS FOR TEACHERS IN IDENTIFIED RURAL SCHOOL  
6 DISTRICTS TO ASSIST THOSE TEACHERS IN COMPLETING THEIR  
7 CERTIFICATION AS A NATIONALLY BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHER. THE  
8 DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL ALSO PROVIDE STIPENDS TO  
9 OFFSET TUITION COSTS FOR TEACHERS IN IDENTIFIED RURAL SCHOOL  
10 DISTRICTS TO BECOME QUALIFIED AS CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT  
11 TEACHERS WITHIN THE RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT.

12           **SECTION 2. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,  
13 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate  
14 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.