

CHAPTER 40

(HB 312)

AN ACT relating to student financial assistance.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

➔Section 1. KRS 164.7531 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) For purposes of this section, the terms "Best in Class for Teachers," "Best in Care for Nurses," and "Best in Law for Public Service Attorneys" mean the loan forgiveness programs established by the Higher Education Assistance Authority under its authority in KRS 164.744(2) and 164.748(7). The term "eligible program participant" means an individual who has an outstanding loan balance on a loan related to these loan forgiveness programs that were issued prior to June 30, 2008.
- (2) In the event that there are insufficient funds available from any source that can be used by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority to provide loan forgiveness for an eligible program participant, the authority shall negotiate an extended repayment schedule upon request by an eligible participant. The negotiated schedule shall be in compliance with federal loan requirements. Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, an eligible program participant in this repayment schedule shall not forfeit eligibility for other loans or scholarships that become available.
- (3) ***The Best in Class for Teachers, Best in Care for Nurses, and Best in Law for Public Service Attorneys programs shall end by June 30, 2018. Borrowers with remaining balances shall be advised of federal loan forgiveness and alternative repayment plan options.***

➔Section 2. KRS 164.769 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish a teacher scholarship program to assist highly qualified individuals to become certified Kentucky teachers and render teaching service in Kentucky schools.
- (2) For purposes of this section, the terms listed below shall have the following meanings:
 - (a) "Critical shortage area" means an understaffing of teachers in particular subject matters at the secondary level, in grade levels, or in geographic locations at the elementary and secondary level, as determined by the commissioner of education in consultation with the authority. The commissioner and the authority may use any source considered reliable including, but not limited to, local education agencies to identify the critical shortage areas.
 - (b) ***"Dual credit" has the same meaning as in KRS 158.007;***
 - (c) "Eligible program of study" means an undergraduate or graduate program of study which is preparatory to ~~initial~~ teacher certification.
 - ~~(d)~~~~(e)~~ "Expected family contribution" means the amount that a student and his family are expected to contribute toward the cost of the student's education determined by applying methodology set forth in 20 U.S.C. sec. 1087 kk to 1087 vv.
 - ~~(e)~~~~(d)~~ "Participating institution" means an institution of higher education located in Kentucky which offers an eligible program of study and has in force an agreement with the authority providing for administration of this program.
 - ~~(f)~~~~(e)~~ "Qualified teaching service" means teaching the major portion of each school day for at least seventy (70) days each semester in a public school of the Commonwealth or a private school certified pursuant to KRS 156.160(3), except that an individual having a disability defined by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. secs. 12131 et seq.) ***or serious and extended illness***, whose disability ***or illness***, certified by a licensed physician, prevents that individual from teaching a major portion of each school day, shall be deemed to perform qualified teaching service by teaching the maximum time permitted by the attending physician.
 - ~~(g)~~~~(f)~~ "Semester" means a period of about eighteen (18) weeks, which usually makes up one-half (1/2) of a school year or one-half (1/2) of a participating institution's academic year.

~~(h)(g)~~ "Summer term" means an academic period consisting of one (1) or more sessions of instruction between a spring and a fall semester.

- (3) The authority may, to the extent of appropriations and other funds available to it pursuant to subsection (9) of this section, award teacher scholarships to persons eligible under subsection (4) of this section, who initially demonstrate financial need in accordance with standards and criteria established by the authority or received teacher scholarships pursuant to this section prior to July 1, 1996. Each teacher scholarship shall be evidenced by a promissory note that requires repayment or cancellation pursuant to subsection (6) of this section.
- (4) Kentucky residents who are United States citizens and enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible program of study ~~on a full-time basis~~ at a participating institution shall be eligible to apply for and be awarded teacher scholarships. Teacher scholarships shall first be awarded to highly qualified eligible students who meet standards and requirements established by the Education Professional Standards Board pursuant to KRS 161.028 for admission to a teacher education program at a participating institution *in pursuit of initial teacher certification* ~~or who received teacher scholarships pursuant to this section prior to July 1, 1996~~. If funds are not depleted after awarding teacher scholarships to students who meet the preceding criteria, then awards shall be made to any otherwise eligible students ~~seeking admission to a teacher education program~~.
- (5) The authority shall establish, by administrative regulation, the maximum amount of scholarship to be awarded for each semester and summer term under this section, and shall prorate the amount awarded to any student enrolled less than full-time in accordance with paragraph (6)(a) of this section. The aggregate amount of scholarships awarded to an individual shall not exceed twelve thousand five hundred dollars (\$12,500) for undergraduate students and seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) for postbaccalaureate students, except that the aggregate amount of scholarships awarded to an individual who received teacher scholarships pursuant to this section prior to July 1, 1996, including any amount received pursuant to KRS 156.611, 156.613, 164.768, or 164.770, shall not exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)~~, and~~ The amount of each scholarship to be awarded shall not exceed the applicant's total cost of education minus other financial assistance received or expected to be received by the applicant during the academic period.
- (6)
 - (a) The authority shall disburse teacher scholarships to eligible students who agree to render qualified teaching service as certified teachers, and are unconditionally admitted and enrolled in an eligible program of study ~~on a full-time basis, except that disbursements may be made to otherwise eligible students enrolled less than full-time in the semester or summer term in which the eligible program of study will be completed or otherwise eligible students having a disability defined by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. secs. 12131 et seq.), who have been certified by a licensed physician to be unable to attend the eligible program of study full-time because of the disability. Teacher scholarships shall be disbursed to eligible students who received teacher scholarships pursuant to this section for recertification in a critical shortage area prior to July 1, 1996, who are enrolled in and continuing toward completion of their program of study, and who agree to render qualified teaching service as certified teachers~~.
 - (b) A teacher scholarship shall not be awarded or a promissory note cancellation shall not be granted to any person who is in default on any obligation to the authority under any program administered by the authority pursuant to KRS 164.740 to 164.785 until financial obligations to the authority are satisfied, except that ineligibility for this reason may be waived by the authority for cause.
 - (c) Recipients shall render one (1) semester of qualified teaching service for each semester or summer term of scholarship received, except that recipients who teach in a critical shortage area designated by the authority *or teach dual credit coursework in a certified Kentucky high school* shall render one (1) semester of qualified teaching service as repayment for two (2) semesters or summer terms of scholarships received. Upon completion of each semester of qualified teacher service, the authority shall cancel the appropriate number of promissory notes.
 - (d) If the recipient of a teacher scholarship fails to complete an eligible program of study at a participating institution or fails to render qualified teaching service in any semester following certification or recertification, unless the failure is temporarily waived for cause by the authority, the recipient shall immediately become liable to the authority for repayment of the sum of all outstanding promissory notes and accrued interest. Persons liable for repayment of scholarships under this paragraph shall be liable for interest accruing from the dates on which the teacher scholarships were disbursed.
 - (e) Recipients who have outstanding loans or scholarships under KRS 156.611, 156.613, 164.768, or 164.770 respectively, and who render qualified teaching service, shall have their notes canceled in accordance with subsection (6)(c) of this section.

- (f) The authority shall establish, by administrative regulation, the terms and conditions for the award, cancellation, and repayment of teacher scholarships including, but not limited to, the selection criteria, eligibility for renewal awards, amount of scholarship payments, deferments, the rate of repayment, and the interest rate thereon.
 - (g) Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, the maximum interest rate applicable to repayment of a promissory note under this section shall be twelve percent (12%) per annum, except that if a judgment is rendered to recover payment, the judgment shall bear interest at the rate of five percent (5%) greater than the rate actually charged on the promissory note.
- (7) A repayment obligation imposed by this section shall not be voidable by reason of the age of the recipient at the time of receiving the teacher scholarship.
 - (8) Failure to meet repayment obligations imposed by this section shall be cause for the revocation of a person's teaching certificate, subject to the procedures set forth in KRS 161.120.
 - (9) All moneys repaid to the authority under this section shall be added to the appropriations made for purposes of this section, and the funds and unobligated appropriations shall not lapse.
 - (10) The authority may execute appropriate contracts and promissory notes for administering this section.
 - (11) Notwithstanding any other statute to the contrary, if available funds are insufficient for all requested scholarships for eligible applicants during any fiscal year, the authority shall give priority consideration to eligible applicants who previously received teacher scholarships and, *until June 30, 2018*, to loan forgiveness for teachers who have outstanding loan balance eligibility for Best in Class loans issued prior to June 30, 2008. If funds are insufficient to make all requested renewal scholarships to eligible applicants, the authority shall reduce all scholarship awards to the extent necessary to provide scholarships to all qualified renewal applicants. If, after awarding all eligible renewal applicants, funds are not depleted, initial applications shall be ranked according to regulatory selection criteria, which may include expected family contribution and application date, and awards shall be made to highly qualified applicants until funds are depleted.

Signed by Governor March 20, 2017.