

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 1053

91ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR BENTLEY.

Read 1st time January 29, 2002, and 1,000 copies ordered printed.

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

3949S.03I

AN ACT

To amend chapter 160, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to early childhood education incentives.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 160, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 160.277, to read as follows:

160.277. 1. Subject to appropriations, the WIN project as established in subsection 2 of this section shall be a pilot project administered through the opportunities in professional education network initiative (OPEN) with funding from the department of elementary and secondary education and conducted in four separate rural counties in the state for a period of four years. The teacher education and compensation helps project (TEACH) shall be a pilot project administered through the Missouri child care resource and referral network (MOCCRRN) with funding from the department of elementary and secondary education and conducted in four separate rural counties in the state for a period of four years.

2. Within the limits of amounts appropriated therefore, the department of elementary and secondary education shall award funding to the OPEN initiative to implement a workforce incentive program for early childhood education professionals to be known as the "WIN Project". The incentives provided through the WIN project shall encourage retention and career development for early childhood education professionals. The incentive payments shall be made available to professionals based on their level of education if they:

(1) Work in a licensed early childhood program serving children birth through age eight in a pilot area;

(2) Enroll in the OPEN teacher database professional achievement and

recognition system;

(3) Work at least thirty hours per week, nine months per year;

(4) Remain employed by the same early childhood program, as verified every six months; and

(5) Meet income eligibility requirements.

The incentive payments shall follow the incentive structure developed by OPEN for the WIN project that ranges from five hundred dollar annual payments for professionals with a high school diploma and who are pursuing an ongoing education requirement to two thousand five hundred dollar annual payments for professionals with a masters degree.

3. For purposes of this section, the term "early childhood education professional" shall mean individuals providing early childhood education as teachers or administrators for children birth through age eight in the following licensed settings: center-based, home-based, school-based and Head Start.

4. Subject to appropriations, the department of elementary and secondary education shall award funding to MOCCRRN to administer the TEACH project. The TEACH project provides scholarships and supports retention in early childhood programs. This project shall award scholarships to early childhood professionals who:

(1) Work in a licensed early childhood setting in a pilot area;

(2) Possess a high school diploma or GED;

(3) Work thirty hours per week, twelve months per year;

(4) Meet income eligibility requirements; and

(5) Commit to two years of service in the same early childhood setting for each contract year.

Such scholarships shall pay up to ninety percent of tuition and books per contract year, travel stipends, release time, reimbursement and educational bonus. The scholarship is renewable after completion of the contract year to assist professionals in completion of formal degrees and maintain retention in early childhood programs.

5. By December 31, 2006, the department shall report to the general assembly on the effectiveness of the pilot projects and include recommendations for continuing, expanding or modifying the WIN and TEACH projects.