

122A.63 GRANTS TO PREPARE INDIAN TEACHERS.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** (a) A grant program is established to assist American Indian people to become teachers and to provide additional education for American Indian teachers. The commissioner may award a joint grant to each of the following:

- (1) the Duluth campus of the University of Minnesota and Independent School District No. 709, Duluth;
 - (2) Bemidji State University and Independent School District No. 38, Red Lake;
 - (3) Moorhead State University and one of the school districts located within the White Earth Reservation;
- and
- (4) Augsburg College, Independent School District No. 625, St. Paul, and Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis.

(b) If additional funds are available, the commissioner may award additional joint grants to other postsecondary institutions and school districts.

Subd. 2. **Application.** To obtain a joint grant, a joint application must be submitted to the commissioner of education. The application must be developed with the participation of the parent advisory committee, established according to section 124D.78, and the Indian advisory committee at the postsecondary institution. The joint application shall set forth:

- (1) the in-kind, coordination, and mentorship services to be provided by the postsecondary institution;
- and
- (2) the coordination and mentorship services to be provided by the school district.

Subd. 3. **Review and comment.** The commissioner must submit the joint application to the American Indian Education Committee for review and comment.

Subd. 4. **Grant amount.** The commissioner may award a joint grant in the amount it determines to be appropriate. The grant shall include money for the postsecondary institution, school district, student scholarships, and student loans.

Subd. 5. **Information to student applicants.** At the time a student applies for a scholarship and loan, the student shall be provided information about the fields of licensure needed by school districts in the part of the state within which the district receiving the joint grant is located. The information shall be acquired and periodically updated by the recipients of the joint grant. Information provided to students shall clearly state that scholarship and loan decisions are not based upon the field of licensure selected by the student.

Subd. 6. **Eligibility for scholarships and loans.** The following Indian people are eligible for scholarships:

- (1) a student, including a teacher aide employed by a district receiving a joint grant, who intends to become a teacher and who is enrolled in a postsecondary institution receiving a joint grant;
- (2) a licensed employee of a district receiving a joint grant, who is enrolled in a master of education program; and
- (3) a student who, after applying for federal and state financial aid and an Indian scholarship according to section 136A.126, has financial needs that remain unmet. Financial need shall be determined according to the congressional methodology for needs determination or as otherwise set in federal law.

A person who has actual living expenses in addition to those addressed by the congressional methodology for needs determination, or as otherwise set in federal law, may receive a loan according to criteria established by the commissioner. A contract shall be executed between the state and the student for the amount and terms of the loan.

Subd. 7. **Loan forgiveness.** The loan may be forgiven if the recipient is employed as a teacher, as defined in section 122A.40 or 122A.41, in an eligible school or program in Minnesota. One-fourth of the principal of the outstanding loan amount shall be forgiven for each year of eligible employment, or a pro rata amount for eligible employment during part of a school year, part-time employment as a substitute teacher, or other eligible part-time teaching. Loans for \$2,500 or less may be forgiven at the rate of up to \$1,250 per year. The following schools and programs are eligible for the purposes of loan forgiveness:

- (1) a school or program operated by a school district;
- (2) a tribal contract school eligible to receive aid according to section 124D.83;
- (3) a Head Start program;
- (4) an early childhood family education program;
- (5) a program providing educational services to children who have not entered kindergarten; or
- (6) a program providing educational enrichment services to American Indian students in grades kindergarten through 12.

If a person has an outstanding loan obtained through this program, the duty to make payments of principal and interest may be deferred during any time period the person is enrolled at least one-half time in an advanced degree program in a field that leads to employment by a school district. To defer loan obligations, the person shall provide written notification to the commissioner of education and the recipients of the joint grant that originally authorized the loan. Upon approval by the commissioner and the joint grant recipients, payments shall be deferred.

The Minnesota Office of Higher Education shall approve the loan forgiveness program, loan deferral, and procedures to administer the program.

Subd. 8. **Revolving fund.** The Indian teacher preparation loan repayment revolving account is established in the state treasury. Any amounts repaid or contributed by a teacher who received a scholarship or loan under this program shall be deposited in the account. All money in the account is annually appropriated to the commissioner of education and shall be used to enable Indian students to participate in the program.

History: 1991 c 265 art 3 s 17; 1992 c 499 art 3 s 11; 1995 c 212 art 3 s 59; 1Sp1995 c 3 art 3 s 7,8; 1998 c 397 art 8 s 87-89,101; art 11 s 3; 1998 c 398 art 5 s 55; 2003 c 130 s 12; 1Sp2003 c 9 art 2 s 11; 2005 c 107 art 2 s 60; 2007 c 146 art 2 s 47; 2016 c 189 art 24 s 17