

An Act

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 2045

By: Stanley of the Senate

and

Lowe of the House

An Act relating to schools; amending Section 1, Chapter 493, O.S.L. 2025 (70 O.S. Supp. 2025, Section 698.4), which relates to the Grow Your Own Educator Program; modifying definition of eligible school district; eliminating references to matching funds; providing option for eligible schools to receive program grants for employees taking an approved alternative certification pathway; updating district and Department reporting dates; allowing tuition and fee reimbursement for employees enrolled in approved alternative certification coursework; providing examples of eligible coursework; requiring the State Board of Education to promulgate rules; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Schools

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 1, Chapter 493, O.S.L. 2025 (70 O.S. Supp. 2025, Section 698.4), is amended to read as follows:

Section 698.4. A. As used in this section, "eligible school district" means a public school district or public school district foundation in this state that has established a program to provide

tuition or loan repayment assistance to school district employees who ~~pursue~~:

1. Pursue an undergraduate degree from a teacher preparation program accredited by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability leading to a standard teaching certificate; or

2. Are enrolled in nondegree-seeking coursework required for completion of an approved alternative certification pathway from a teacher preparation program accredited by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability leading to a standard teaching certificate.

B. There is hereby created the Grow Your Own Educator Program to provide ~~matching~~ fund grants to eligible school districts. The program shall be established and maintained by the State Department of Education.

C. An eligible school district seeking to participate in the Grow Your Own Educator Program shall submit an application in the manner and on a form prescribed by the State Department of Education. The application shall include:

1. The amount of ~~matching~~ fund grants requested;

2. The position of the employee pursuing an undergraduate degree or alternate certification coursework from a teacher preparation program; and

3. The subject area in which the employee is pursuing an undergraduate degree or alternate certification from a teacher preparation program.

D. ~~Matching fund~~ Fund grants shall be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Grants shall be provided without any limitation other than the amount of funds available in the Grow Your Own Educator Revolving Fund created pursuant to Section 2 of this act and the number of eligible school districts that apply.

E. By June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027, and each June 30 thereafter, an eligible school district that receives a ~~matching~~ fund grant

pursuant to this section shall electronically submit a report to the State Department of Education that includes:

1. A status update on the progress the employee receiving tuition assistance is making in the teacher preparation program in which he or she is enrolled; or

2. The employment status of the employee receiving loan repayment assistance.

F. By December 31, ~~2026~~ 2027, and each December 31 thereafter, the State Department of Education shall electronically submit a report to the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives that includes:

1. The school district ~~matching~~ fund grant recipients;

2. The amount of ~~matching~~ fund grants allocated to each recipient;

3. The subject area in which the employee receiving tuition assistance is pursuing an undergraduate degree, or the subject area in which the employee receiving loan repayment assistance has received an undergraduate degree; and

4. The information submitted pursuant to subsection E of this section.

G. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this section.

H. 1. Employees enrolled in an approved alternative certification pathway as described in subsection A of this section shall be eligible for tuition or course fee reimbursement through the Grow Your Own Educator Program.

2. Eligible coursework for alternative certification may include, but is not limited to, classes in classroom management, pedagogy, student assessment, special education, and instructional methodology, as determined by the State Department of Education.

3. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules to identify and approve eligible nondegree-seeking courses and alternative certification programs that qualify under this section.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the Senate the 5th day of May, 2026.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the 4th day of May, 2026.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____