



AN ACT INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF PROFESSIONAL STIPENDS PAID TO TEACHERS HOLDING NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS CERTIFICATION AND PROVIDING A MECHANISM FOR ANNUAL INFLATIONARY ADJUSTMENT TO THE STIPENDS; AMENDING SECTION 20-4-134, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 20-4-134, MCA, is amended to read:

"20-4-134. Professional stipends for teachers certified by national board for professional teaching standards. (1) Pursuant to subsection (5), an annual stipend of up to \$1,500-an amount equivalent to 50% of the quality educator payment amount provided in 20-9-306 for the applicable year must be provided to each teacher who holds a current certificate from the national board for professional teaching standards if the teacher is:

(a) a full-time classroom teacher, librarian, or other full-time employee serving in an assignment covered by national board certification assessment;

(b) certified to teach in Montana under the provisions of 20-4-103; and

(c) a full-time employee of:

(i) a Montana public school district, as defined in 20-6-101;

(ii) an education cooperative, as described in 20-7-451;

(iii) the Montana school for the deaf and blind, as described in 20-8-101; or

(iv) a correctional facility, as defined in 41-5-103.

(2) An annual stipend of up to \$2,500-an amount equivalent to 85% of the quality educator payment amount provided in 20-9-306 for the applicable year must be provided to each teacher who meets the criteria for the stipend in subsection (1) and who has an instructional assignment in a school identified as:

(a) a school in a high-poverty area eligible to participate in the community eligibility provision under Public Law 111-296; or

(b) an impacted school as defined in 20-4-502.

(3) A teacher becomes eligible for the stipend in subsection (1) in the school year beginning July 1 after the teacher obtains certification or recertification from the national board for professional teaching standards.

(4) By March 1, the superintendent of public instruction shall distribute stipend payments to any entity listed in subsections (1)(c)(i) through (1)(c)(iv) that employs an eligible teacher.

(5) The obligation for funding a portion of the professional stipends is an obligation of the state. This section may not be construed to require a school district to provide its matching portion of a stipend to a qualifying teacher without a payment from the state to the district. If the money appropriated for the stipends is not enough to provide the full amount for each eligible teacher, the superintendent of public instruction shall request the state budget director to submit a request for a supplemental appropriation in the second year of the biennium that is sufficient to complete the funding of the stipends.

(6) (a) For a stipend under subsection (1), the state shall pay ~~\$500~~ 50% of the maximum stipend amount under subsection (1) and another ~~\$1~~ 1% of the amount for each ~~\$1~~ 1% of the amount contributed by the teacher's school district, up to a maximum state contribution of ~~\$1,000~~ 75% of the amount.

(b) For a stipend under subsection (2), the state shall pay ~~\$1,000~~ 55% of the maximum stipend amount under subsection (2) and another ~~\$2~~ 2% of the amount for each ~~\$1~~ 1% of the amount contributed by the teacher's school district, up to a maximum state contribution of ~~\$2,000~~ 85% of the amount."

Section 2. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2025.

Section 3. Applicability. [This act] applies to stipends paid for school years beginning on or after July 1, 2025.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 260, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2025.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2025.

HOUSE BILL NO. 260

INTRODUCED BY L. MUSZKIEWICZ, S. NOVAK, E. TILLEMAN, M. BERTOGLIO, B. BARKER, C. KEOGH, E.
KERR-CARPENTER, M. THANE

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