

**Second Regular Session
Seventy-fourth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

PREAMENDED

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 24-1052.01 Michael Dohr x4347

HOUSE BILL 24-1376

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Marvin and Kipp,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Zenzinger,

House Committees

Education
Appropriations

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING MEASURES TO INCREASE TEACHER MENTORSHIPS IN**
102 **PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN**
103 **APPROPRIATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

Under current law, the teacher mentor grant program (grant program) provides funding to partnerships between local education providers and educator preparation programs to provide training and stipends for experienced teachers who mentor teacher candidates in clinical practice.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

The bill expands the grant program to include mentorship of novice teachers who have fewer than 3 years of teaching experience.

The bill requires the general assembly to appropriate \$500,000 dollars to the department of higher education for the grant program for the 2024-25 state fiscal year. Any appropriation remaining at the end of the 2024-25 state fiscal year may be used for the grant program in subsequent fiscal years.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds that:

4 (a) In 2019, the general assembly created the teacher mentor grant
5 program to provide funding to partnering local education providers and
6 educator preparation programs to provide training and stipends for
7 teachers who serve as mentors for teacher candidates participating in
8 clinical practice;

9 (b) In 2023, the department of higher education surveyed over 100
10 mentors who participated in the program from 2021 to 2023. The survey
11 results indicated that:

12 (I) As a result of completing the approved mentor endorsement
13 training program, mentors reported high levels of confidence and skill
14 across all five competency areas identified in the Colorado standards for
15 mentor teachers and were most confident in their expertise around best
16 practices that maximize student achievement;

17 (II) Mentors reported that their preparation encouraged them to
18 carefully reflect on their own profession and practice while encouraging
19 them to implement new evidence-based teaching practices; and

20 (III) Nearly all mentors reported that their preparation experience
21 enhanced their own professional identity, encouraging them to think of
22 themselves as teacher leaders and confirmed their commitment to and

1 satisfaction with the profession. From 2021 to 2023, a total of 177 mentor
2 teachers participated in the program, receiving training from four
3 educator preparation programs that serve urban and rural school districts
4 across the state.

5 (c) In 2023 and 2024, an additional educator preparation program
6 was included in the program and several other preparation programs are
7 interested in seeking approval to offer the mentor endorsement training
8 program, which will greatly expand access to high-quality mentor
9 preparation across Colorado.

10 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that the demonstrated
11 success of the teacher mentor grant program warrants continued and
12 increased support of the grant program.

13 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-78-102, **amend**
14 (1)(d), [REDACTED] and (2); and **add** (1)(f) and (1)(g) as follows:

15 **23-78-102. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
16 finds that:

17 (d) Research suggests that an effective teacher preparation
18 program should include opportunities for teacher candidates to spend time
19 in the classroom beginning in the first year of the program and continuing
20 and increasing throughout the program, culminating in a full year of
21 clinical practice using a classroom residency model in the final year of the
22 program; ~~and~~

23 [REDACTED]

24 (f) EXPANDING MENTORSHIP TO NOVICE TEACHERS NOT ONLY
25 CREATES VALUABLE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR ADDITIONAL MEMBERS
26 OF THE EDUCATION WORKFORCE, BUT ALSO ULTIMATELY INCREASES THE
27 NUMBER OF CAPABLE, HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS, PROMOTES JOB

1 SATISFACTION, DECREASES TEACHER TURNOVER, OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES
2 FOR EXPERIENCED TEACHERS TO FURTHER THEIR CAREERS, AND LIKELY
3 IMPROVES STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT; AND

4 (g) SUFFICIENTLY EXPANDING MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR
5 NOVICE TEACHERS REQUIRES A MULTI-FACETED APPROACH THAT ALSO
6 CREATES AND BUILDS FUTURE CAPACITY FOR SCHOOL- AND
7 DISTRICT-LEVEL SUPPORTS, INCLUDING LOCAL INDUCTION AND
8 MENTORING.

9 (2) The general assembly finds, therefore, that it is appropriate to
10 direct the department of education and the department of higher education
11 to collaborate with local education providers, approved educator
12 preparation programs, alternative teacher programs, and other interested
13 parties to identify best practices in providing comprehensive, rigorous,
14 and effective teacher preparation and guidelines for implementing these
15 best practices. The general assembly further finds that it is in the best
16 interests of the state to establish a grant program to provide funding for
17 training and reimbursements for mentor teachers who provide guidance
18 and oversight for teacher candidates while they participate in clinical
19 practice OR FOR NOVICE TEACHERS.

20 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-78-103, **add** (9.5)
21 as follows:

22 **23-78-103. Definitions.** As used in this part 1, unless the context
23 otherwise requires:

24 (9.5) "NOVICE TEACHER" MEANS A TEACHER WHO HAS FEWER
25 THAN THREE YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE.

26 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-78-105, **amend**
27 (1), (2) introductory portion, (2)(c), (2)(d), and (5); and **repeal** (2)(e) as

1 follows:

2 **23-78-105. Teacher mentor grant program - created -**
3 **standards - appropriation - report - rules.** (1) ~~There is created in the~~
4 ~~department of higher education~~ The teacher mentor grant program IS
5 CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION to provide money
6 to partnering local education providers and educator preparation programs
7 to provide training and stipends for teachers who serve as mentors for
8 teacher candidates participating in clinical practice OR FOR NOVICE
9 TEACHERS. Subject to available appropriations and qualifying
10 applications, the department of higher education shall award grants
11 beginning in the 2019-20 budget year. The department shall establish the
12 duration of each grant as a period of up to three budget years, subject to
13 annual review and renewal.

14 (2) A partnership consisting of at least one local education
15 provider and at least one educator preparation program may submit an
16 application for a grant to the department of higher education in
17 accordance with guidelines adopted by the department. The department
18 shall establish the application requirements ~~which~~ THAT must include a
19 plan by which the applicant intends to sustain the teacher mentor program
20 after the grant period ends. In selecting grant recipients, the department
21 shall ensure, to the extent practicable, that the grant recipients include
22 applicants of varying size from rural, urban, and suburban areas across
23 the state. The department may award grants only to those applicants that
24 commit to implementing a teacher mentor program that:

25 (c) Ensures that the employing local education provider ~~provides~~
26 ALLOWS time within the mentor teacher's schedule to provide oversight
27 and support for the teacher candidate OR NOVICE TEACHER; AND

1 (d) Pays each mentor teacher a stipend of at least two thousand
2 dollars per school year or at least two thousand five hundred dollars per
3 school year if the mentor teacher holds a master certificate or is
4 national-board certified. THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION MAY
5 PROMULGATE RULES TO CREATE A GRADUATED SCALE FOR THE STIPENDS
6 BASED ON INFLATION, YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A MENTOR, NATIONAL
7 CERTIFICATION, AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS AS LONG AS
8 THE STIPEND AMOUNTS ARE AT LEAST THE AMOUNTS IDENTIFIED IN THIS
9 SUBSECTION (2)(d). THE DEPARTMENT MAY USE ANY AVAILABLE FUNDS
10 TO PAY FOR THE STIPENDS DESCRIBED IN THIS SUBSECTION (2)(d).

11 ~~(e) In addition to mentoring teacher candidates, provides~~
12 ~~mentoring for newly employed teachers through an induction program for~~
13 ~~at least two school years after employment; and~~

14 (5) (a) The general assembly shall annually appropriate money to
15 the department of higher education to implement the teacher mentor grant
16 program, including an amount to pay the direct administrative costs
17 incurred in implementing the teacher mentor grant program.

18 (b) FOR THE 2024-25 STATE FISCAL YEAR, AND FOR EACH STATE
19 FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE
20 ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER
21 EDUCATION FOR THE TEACHER MENTOR GRANT PROGRAM TO FUND DIRECT
22 ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS INCURRED BY THE DEPARTMENT, GRANT AWARDS,
23 AND DIRECT ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS INCURRED BY GRANT RECIPIENTS TO
24 IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM. THIS APPROPRIATION MUST SUPPLEMENT AND
25 NOT SUPPLANT CURRENT FUNDING FOR THE TEACHER MENTOR GRANT
26 PROGRAM. ANY UNEXPENDED MONEY REMAINING FROM THE
27 APPROPRIATION IN THIS SUBSECTION (5)(b) AT THE END OF THE 2024-25

1 STATE FISCAL YEAR OR A SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEAR:

2 (I) DOES NOT REVERT TO THE GENERAL FUND OR ANY OTHER FUND;

3 AND

4 (II) MAY BE USED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
5 SOLELY FOR THE TEACHER MENTOR GRANT PROGRAM IN SUBSEQUENT
6 STATE FISCAL YEARS WITHOUT FURTHER APPROPRIATION.

7 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-60.5-106, **amend**
8 (3) as follows:

9 **22-60.5-106. Endorsement of license - effect - rules.** (3) The
10 department of education shall collaborate with the department of higher
11 education to create a mentor teacher endorsement for teachers who
12 provide mentoring and oversight for teacher candidates OR NOVICE
13 TEACHERS in accordance with the standards adopted by the department of
14 higher education pursuant to section 23-78-105 (3). The state board of
15 education by rule shall establish the criteria for the endorsement, which
16 must, at a minimum, include successfully completing training provided
17 by an educator preparation program, as defined in section 23-78-103, and
18 at least one full school year of successful experience serving as a mentor
19 teacher for a teacher candidate who is participating in clinical practice OR
20 FOR A NOVICE TEACHER, as defined in section 23-78-103.

21 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-60.5-110, **amend**
22 (3)(b) introductory portion as follows:

23 **22-60.5-110. Renewal of licenses.** (3) (b) A professional licensee
24 shall complete the ongoing professional development within the period
25 of time for which the professional license is valid. The professional
26 development may include, but need not be limited to, in-service education
27 programs, including training in preventing, identifying, and responding

1 to child sexual abuse and assault; behavioral health training that is
2 culturally responsive and trauma- and evidence-informed; and laws and
3 practices relating to the education of students with disabilities in the
4 classroom, including, but not limited to, child find and inclusive learning
5 environments; college or university credit from an accepted institution of
6 higher education or a community, technical, or local district college;
7 educational travel that meets the requirements specified in subsection
8 (3)(d) of this section; involvement in school reform; service as a mentor
9 teacher for teacher candidates participating in clinical practice OR FOR
10 NOVICE TEACHERS, as defined in section 23-78-103; internships; ongoing
11 professional development training and experiences; and teacher
12 externships pursuant to section 8-83-602.5. The state board of education,
13 by rule, may establish minimum criteria for professional development;
14 except that the criteria shall MUST not:

15 **SECTION 7. Appropriation.** For the 2024-25 state fiscal year,
16 \$100,000 is appropriated to the department of higher education for use by
17 the Colorado commission on higher education and higher education
18 special purpose programs. This appropriation is from the general fund.
19 To implement this act, the department may use this appropriation for
20 growing great teachers - teacher mentor grants.

21 **SECTION 8. Safety clause.** The general assembly finds,
22 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
23 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for
24 the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state
25 institutions.