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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 178

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO YEAR-LONG TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAMS.

1 WHEREAS, teacher residencies have been successful in Delaware since 2013 through partnership of school
2 districts and charter schools with educator preparation programs; and

3 WHEREAS, the Department of Education administers a program to support these partnerships, awarding funding
4 appropriated in the state budget through a competitive process; and

5 WHEREAS, teacher residencies provide teaching experience to pre-service teachers who work in a classroom with
6 an expert teacher while engaging in coursework at a college or university; and

7 WHEREAS, year-long teacher residencies are seen as the “gold-standard” for teacher preparation because of the
8 in-depth, immersive experience they provide candidates; and

9 WHEREAS, research shows residencies can improve teacher recruitment, retention, and diversity of the teaching
10 profession nationally and in Delaware because they provide stronger preparation, support, mentoring, and financial
11 stipends; and

12 WHEREAS, teacher residencies provide a consistent pipeline of better-prepared new teachers, reduce turnover, fill
13 chronic shortage areas, and prepare teachers who are more likely to teach in high-need schools.

14 NOW, THEREFORE:

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

16 Section 1. Amend Subchapter VIII, Chapter 12 of Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by
17 strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

18 § 1281. Year-Long Residency Programs

19 (a) There is established a year-long residency program, the purpose of which is to increase retention and diversity
20 of quality educators in Delaware public schools.

(b) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Resident” means a student enrolled in an education preparation program who is selected for participation in a year-long residency program authorized under this section.

(2) “Year-long residency program” means a partnership between a district or charter school and an educator preparation program to provide residents a year-long, practice-based learning experience working directly with students, in a manner that mirrors the experience of teachers in that school.

(c)(1) Subject to appropriations, the Department shall develop a competitive grant process to support districts and charters in developing and supporting year-long residency programs.

(2) Annual appropriations for the year-long residency programs do not revert to the General Fund at the end of the fiscal year, but shall remain available to the Department for disbursement pursuant to this section.

(3) The Department shall award successful applicants funding on at least a 15-month basis, July 1 through September 30 of the following year.

(4) Awards for the upcoming fiscal year or multiple fiscal years shall be declared by the January prior.

(5) Funds awarded under this section to provide a stipend for residents may be used by a resident for any purpose.

(6) Applicants for the award may apply for a program of support for residents—including stipends for residents, benefits, substitutes, cooperating teacher stipends, and professional development.

(d) Applications for funding under this section must include a description of all of the following:

(1) A shared vision and partnership between the applicant and an educator preparation program to provide a high-quality experience for residents.

(2) A process for recruiting residents with demonstrated cultural competency and residents from diverse backgrounds.

(3) A selection process for cooperating teachers who will coach residents, including a job description and a support system for mentors.

(4) A plan to collect and provide all data required by the Department to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

(5) A plan beyond the grant award to sustain the partnership.

(e) In evaluating applications, the Department shall give additional weight to applicants that commit to any of the following:

(1) Selecting residents who are pursuing credentials in a critical needs area.

51 (2) Placing residents in a school that serves a student population with a significant number of low-income or
52 English learner students.

53 (f) The Department shall convene stakeholders representing districts and charter schools, teacher preparation
54 programs, teachers, and nonprofit organizations to design a fair, robust evaluation rubric for evaluation of grant
55 applications.

56 (g) Residents must commit to work in a qualifying Delaware school for at least 3 years after receiving their
57 teaching credentials.

58 (h) The Department shall adopt rules and regulations to implement this section.

SYNOPSIS

Year-long teacher residency programs are a partnership between an educator preparation program and a Delaware school district or charter school to provide a year-long immersive experience for teacher candidates, allowing them a full and supported, on the ground experience of teaching in a Delaware school. The teacher resident also receives a stipend while participating in the program, which may be used to defray education and living expenses. These programs are the gold standard for teacher preparation and they assist in attracting and retaining quality, diverse educators. For the last several years, the General Assembly has appropriated funds in the annual budget to support and sustain these programs. This bill codifies the program and establishes guidelines for how and when the funds will be awarded and what they may be used for. The Department of Education continues to be charged with administration of the funds.