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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO TEACHERS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that it has been a  
2 continuous struggle for the department of education to place  
3 teachers in schools having high turnover rates or determined as  
4 hard-to-fill. As the department works to find long-term  
5 solutions for teacher retention, one option to consider would be  
6 to assist current educational assistants achieve the necessary  
7 certification to be classified as teachers. A major barrier for  
8 educational assistants to overcome in achieving teacher  
9 licensure is the cost to enroll in certification programs.

10           The purpose of this Act is to:

11           (1) Establish the educational assistant certification  
12           incentive program to enable educational assistants who  
13           have been working in hard-to-fill schools to attain  
14           teacher certification and then commit to return to  
15           their communities and hard-to-fill schools as teachers  
16           for a certain period of time; and



1           (2) Make an appropriation for alternate teacher route  
 2           contracts for teachers whose bachelor's degrees are  
 3           not in the field of education.

4           SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
 5 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
 6 and to read as follows:

7           "§302A- Educational assistant certification incentive  
 8 program. (a) There is established within the department the  
 9 educational assistant certification incentive program to assist  
 10 educational assistants employed in the department to achieve  
 11 necessary teacher certification. The educational assistant  
 12 certification incentive program shall provide reimbursement for  
 13 tuition for accredited teacher certification programs.

14           (b) To be eligible for the educational assistant  
 15 certification incentive program, an educational assistant shall:

16           (1) Have been employed for a minimum of two years as an  
 17 educational assistant in a public school determined as  
 18 hard-to-fill by the department;

19           (2) Hold an associate's degree or higher from an  
 20 accredited educational institution;



- 1       (3) Have a letter of recommendation from the principal of  
2       a public school determined as hard-to-fill by the  
3       department, under whom the educational assistant has  
4       worked;
- 5       (4) Be continuously enrolled in an accredited teacher  
6       certification program and maintain a cumulative grade  
7       point average of       ; and
- 8       (5) Have completed an accredited teacher certification  
9       program within two years of being accepted into the  
10       program.
- 11       (c) Upon completion of the accredited teacher  
12       certification program, individuals accepted into the educational  
13       assistant certification incentive program shall commit to three  
14       consecutive years of teaching at a school determined as hard-to-  
15       fill by the department. Teachers who are returning to public  
16       schools determined as hard-to-fill by the department at which  
17       they were originally employed shall receive preference in  
18       placement at those schools.
- 19       (d) The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter  
20       91 to implement this section."



1 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
 2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much  
 3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for the  
 4 educational assistant certification incentive program.

5 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
 6 education for the purposes of this Act.

7 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
 8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$870,000 or so much  
 9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for  
 10 alternate teacher route contracts.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
 12 education for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

14 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2016.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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# H.B. NO. 2525

**Report Title:**

Educational Assistant Certification Incentive Program; Alternate Teacher Route Contract; Appropriation

**Description:**

Creates an incentive program for current educational assistants in hard-to-fill schools to attain teacher licensure if they commit to teaching for three years in a hard-to-fill school. Appropriates funds for the program and alternate teacher route contracts.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

