AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:7.6, relative to education; to establish a program for the purpose of
awarding scholarships to students in certain teacher preparation programs; to provide
for program administration; to create a fund for the purpose of funding the program;
to require rules relative to the program and the fund; and to provide for related
matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:7.6 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§7.6. Geaux Teach Program and Geaux Teach Fund

A. The Geaux Teach Program is hereby established for the purpose of
awarding scholarships to students in teacher preparation programs at postsecondary
education institutions that are approved by the State Board of Elementary and
Secondary Education. The program shall be administered by the Board of Regents
through the office of student financial assistance. The administering agency may
retain up to three percent of the funding available for the program for costs
associated with administering the program.
B.(1) The Geaux Teach Fund, referred to in this Section as the "fund", is hereby created within the state treasury for the purpose of providing funding for the Geaux Teach Program.

(2) Monies in the fund shall be subject to appropriation by the legislature and shall be available exclusively for use by the Board of Regents through the office of student financial assistance for purposes of the Geaux Teach Program.

(3) All unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund and be available for appropriation the next fiscal year. The monies shall be invested by the treasurer in the same manner as monies in the state general fund, and all interest earned shall be credited to the fund following compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana, relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund.

C. The Board of Regents through the office of student financial assistance shall adopt rules and regulations for the implementation of this Section.

D. Up to twenty percent of the annual appropriation to the Geaux Teach Fund may be used to award scholarships to students enrolled in certified alternative teacher certification program approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

E. A student shall be initially eligible for the program if the student meets all of the following criteria:

(1) Is a United States citizen who is registered with Selective Service, if required.

(2) Is a Louisiana resident for at least two years prior to July 1 of the scholarship award year.

(3) Has completed and submitted documentary evidence required by the Board of Regents through the office of student financial assistance.

(4) Is enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student in a teacher education program approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education with the intent of becoming a certified teacher.

(5) Have at least a 2.50 cumulative college grade point average.
F. To maintain eligibility for an award a student shall meet all of the following criteria:

(1) Have received the scholarship for not more than four academic years.

(2) Maintain full-time undergraduate status.

(3) Achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 at the end of each academic year.

(4) Maintain continuous enrollment as a full-time student in an approved teacher education program, unless granted an exception by the administering agency.

G. Scholarship awards shall be applicable only to the cost of tuition, required fees, and textbooks and instructional materials required for the course of study. The award shall be used only after all other state or institutional financial aid and awards are applied and only for any remaining balance due for tuition, required fees, and textbooks and instructional materials required for the course of study.

Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.