

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 736

BY REPRESENTATIVE BEAULLIEU

EDUCATION/PERSONNEL: Establishes the Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program in the Dept. of Education and provides for administration, qualification, and implementation of the various components of the program

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 31 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised  
3 of R.S. 17:3721 through 3726, relative to increasing the number of certified athletic  
4 trainers in rural areas; to establish the Athletic Trainer Professional Development  
5 Program; to provide with respect to the powers and duties of the state Department  
6 of Education; to provide funding for the program; to provide qualifications and  
7 restrictions for the program; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for  
8 related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. Chapter 31 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,  
11 comprised of R.S. 17:3721 through 3726, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 CHAPTER 31. ATHLETIC TRAINER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

13 §3721. Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program

14 The Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program is hereby created  
15 in the state Department of Education. The program is established to meet the  
16 projected shortage of certified athletic trainers employed at high schools in rural  
17 areas of the state by increasing the number of certified athletic trainers through a  
18 loan repayment program.

1        §3722. Definitions

2                For the purpose of this Chapter, the following terms have the following  
3        meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

4                (1) "Athletic trainer" means an individual possessing a master's degree in  
5        athletic training from an institution accredited by the Commission on Accreditation  
6        of Athletic Training Education.

7                (2) "Department" means the Department of Education.

8                (3) "Rural area" means a parish with a population of fewer than one hundred  
9        ten thousand persons according to the latest federal decennial census.

10               (4) "Superintendent" means the state superintendent of education.

11        §3723. Retention and recruitment

12               A. The department shall develop and administer a plan for recruitment and  
13        retention of athletic trainers at high schools in rural areas. The plan shall provide for  
14        identification of shortage areas, prioritization of long-term and short-term goals,  
15        strategies for recruiting athletic trainers to rural areas, and public input.

16               B. The department shall implement the retention and recruitment plan,  
17        directly or through contract. Implementation may include advertising and  
18        promotion, professional recruitment services, travel, and all other necessary tasks.

19        Total implementation costs shall not exceed seventy-five thousand dollars.

20        §3724. Loan repayment program

21               A. The department shall administer a loan repayment program.

22               B. To be eligible for the loan repayment program, an applicant must be an  
23        athletic trainer, be willing to work for a high school in a rural area, and meet any  
24        other requirements which may be established by the department.

25               C. Educational loans obtained by an eligible applicant for attending an  
26        accredited athletic trainer program shall be repaid retroactively after each term of  
27        service employed at a high school in a rural area for up to five years depending upon  
28        the applicant's length of service. Loans shall be repaid pursuant to the provisions of  
29        this Section at the following rates:

1           (1) Six thousand dollars per year of service if the applicant obtained his  
2           degree from a school or program in Louisiana.

3           (2) Four thousand dollars per year of service if the applicant obtained his  
4           degree from a school or program outside of Louisiana.

5           D. No later than January 1, 2023, the department shall establish an  
6           implementation schedule for loan repayments.

7           §3725. Rules

8           The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall promulgate  
9           rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act as  
10          necessary to carry out the provisions of this Chapter.

11          §3726. Athletic Trainer Professional Development Fund

12          There is hereby created as a special fund in the state treasury the Athletic  
13          Trainer Professional Development Fund, referred to in this Section as the "fund".  
14          The treasurer is hereby authorized to transfer and deposit one and one-half million  
15          dollars of state general fund monies into the fund after compliance with the  
16          requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana relative  
17          to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund. Monies in the fund shall be used for the  
18          programs established in this Chapter. Monies in the fund shall be invested by the  
19          treasurer in the same manner as monies in the state general fund and all interest  
20          earned shall be deposited in and credited to the fund. All unexpended or  
21          unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the  
22          fund.

23          Section 2. The provisions of Section 1 of this Act shall become effective when an  
24          Act of the Louisiana Legislature containing a specific appropriation of monies for the  
25          implementation of the provisions of this Act becomes effective.

26          Section 3. The provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of this Act shall become effective  
27          upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time  
28          for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section  
29          18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved

1 by the legislature, the provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of this Act shall become effective on  
2 the day following such approval.

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 736 Reengrossed

2022 Regular Session

Beaulieu

**Abstract:** Establishes the Athletic Trainer Professional Development Program in the Dept. of Education ("department") and provides for funding and administration of the program and qualifications and restrictions for program offerings.

Proposed law seeks to increase the number of certified athletic trainers at high schools in rural areas of the state by establishing a loan repayment program for qualifying individuals. Defines "athletic trainer" to mean an individual possessing a masters degree in athletic training from an institution accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. Defines "rural area" to mean a parish with a population of fewer than 110,000 persons as of the most recent federal decennial census.

Proposed law requires the department to develop and administer a plan for recruitment and retention of athletic trainers at high schools in rural areas. Requires the plan to provide for identification of shortage areas, prioritize long-term and short-term goals and strategies, and provide for public input. Authorizes the department to contract out for implementation of the plan. Prohibits implementation costs from exceeding \$75,000.

Proposed law also establishes a loan repayment program for athletic trainers willing to work for a high school in a rural area and meet other requirements established by the department. Applies only to loans obtained to attend an accredited athletic trainer program. Authorizes retroactive repayment of these loans after each term of service employed at a high school in a rural area, for up to five years. Establishes the following rates for loan repayments pursuant to proposed law:

- (1) Up to \$6,000 per year of service if the individual obtained his degree from a school or program in La.
- (2) Up to \$4,000 per year of service if the individual obtained his degree from a school or program outside of La.

Requires the department to provide an implementation schedule for loan repayments by Jan. 1, 2023.

Proposed law requires the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out proposed law.

Proposed law establishes the Athletic Trainer Professional Development Fund in the treasury and authorizes the state treasurer to transfer \$1,500,000 into the fund. Prohibits use of the monies in the fund for purposes outside of proposed law. Provides for interest to be credited to the fund and for unexpended or unencumbered monies to remain in the fund at the end of the fiscal year.

Effective upon appropriation of funds by the legislature.

(Adds R.S. 17:3721-3726)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Appropriations to the engrossed bill:

1. Deletes requirement that the superintendent of education promulgate rules necessary to carry out proposed law. Instead requires BESE to promulgate such rules.
2. Make effectiveness of proposed law subject to appropriation of funds by the legislature.
3. Make technical changes.