WYOMING TEACHER SHORTAGE LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

21 7 601. Wyoming teacher shortage loan repayment program; eligibility criteria; procedures; program reporting.

(a) The Wyoming teacher shortage loan repayment program is created to be administered by the Wyoming community college commission established under W.S. 21 18 201. Applicants shall have a Wyoming residence, as defined in W.S. 22 1 102(a)(xxx), or shall be graduates of a Wyoming high school and may apply for loans from the program in accordance with this section.

(b) To qualify for a loan under this section, the applicant shall first:

(i) Be enrolled in good standing in a teacher education program at the University of Wyoming leading to:

(A) Certification as a special education, math, science or foreign language teacher; or

(B) Eligibility for an additional endorsement to teach reading or English as a second language.

(ii) If in a program leading to certification under subparagraph (i)(A) under this subsection, have class standing of at least a junior for the first semester for which application for a loan under this program is made;

(iii) If in a program leading to certification under subparagraph (i)(A) of this subsection, apply for federal financial assistance.

(c) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this program, loans under this section may be granted to qualified applicants to pay:

(i) The unmet financial need, as determined by the Wyoming community college commission, of attendance at the teacher education program specified under subparagraph (b)(i)(A) of this section; or

(ii) The cost of attendance at the teacher education program specified under subparagraph (b)(i)(B) of this section.

(d) Except for a loan for teacher education programs specified under subparagraph (b)(i)(B) of this section, a loan provided under this section shall not exceed the cost of attendance for the approved program, reduced by the amount of any Pell or other federal grant and any employer based financial assistance received by the applicant.

(e) A recipient of a loan under this section may repay the loan without cash payment by teaching at least fifty percent (50%) of his working hours as a teacher in special education, math, science, foreign language, reading or English as a second language as a certified teacher in a Wyoming public school as provided in subsection (f) of this section. To qualify as repayment under this subsection, work shall be performed within the minimum amount of time necessary to repay the loan, plus two (2) years, which
shall begin with the calendar month following the month in which the student completed the academic program.

(f) Qualified work under subsection (e) of this section shall be credited such that the student's loan balance is reduced on the basis of one (1) year of full-time employment repaying the loan balance for one (1) academic year of full-time enrollment. Qualified work shall be credited on a proportional basis to the loan balance.

(g) Any recipient of a loan under this section who fails:

(i) To complete the academic program for which the loan was provided shall commence cash repayment of the loan no later than forty-five (45) days after the recipient leaves the academic program;

(ii) To obtain employment in the targeted occupation for which the person received the education within two hundred forty (240) days after successfully obtaining the appropriate certification, shall commence cash repayment of the loan within two hundred eighty-five (285) days after successfully obtaining the appropriate certification;

(iii) To obtain the appropriate certification within one hundred eighty (180) days after completion of the program shall commence cash repayment of the loan.

(h) Loan repayment options under this section may be deferred for a period not to exceed five (5) years while a loan recipient is serving on full-time active duty with any branch of the military services of the United States.

(i) The Wyoming community college commission shall have the powers and duties specified under W.S. 21 18 202(c) to implement this section and shall establish terms and conditions of loans issued under this section, including:

(i) Interest rates and loan terms;

(ii) The form and process for loan application, review and award;

(iii) Criteria under which students may be relieved from having to repay loans and interest thereon, in whole or in part, where the requirement to repay would cause undue hardship;

(iv) Criteria for determining the cost of attendance as used in establishing the loan amount for teacher education programs specified under paragraph (b)(i)(B) of this section, based upon each semester or summer school session of full or part-time program attendance.

(k) Funding of the loan program established under this section shall be by appropriation of the legislature. The community college commission shall transfer approved loan amounts to the University of Wyoming.

(m) Cash repayment of loans and interest thereon shall be credited to the school foundation program account.
(n) The community college commission shall annually review the loan program established under this section and report to the governor and the legislature in accordance with W.S. 9 2 1014, regarding program results, funds received and loans issued during the preceding academic year, together with the status of all outstanding loan commitments and repayments under the program. The report required under this subsection shall include information submitted by the professional teaching standards board regarding the impact of the program on identified teacher shortage areas and recommendations for modifications to the program, including funding levels, to address other identified teacher shortage areas.

(o) This program created by this section shall expire effective June 30, 2016.

(p) Notwithstanding subsection (o) of this section:

(i) Any person who receives a loan under this section shall continue to receive funding for the program as the person remains eligible as required by this section;

(ii) Repayment of loans provided under this section shall continue as specified by this section until all loan obligations have been satisfied.