

**TITLE 610. STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
CHAPTER 25. STUDENT FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS
SUBCHAPTER 41. OKLAHOMA FUTURE TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT
INCENTIVE PROGRAM (“INSPIRED TO TEACH”)**

RULE IMPACT STATEMENT

A. Brief description of the purpose of the proposed rule.

The proposed rules change the name and modify eligibility requirements for the Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program (“Inspired to Teach”), which was created in 2022 with the passage of HB 3564. The purpose of the program is to address the teacher shortage in the state of Oklahoma and provide a pipeline of quality and effective teachers for the public schools of this state. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education was charged with administering and maintaining this scholarship and incentive program to encourage the preparation of public school teachers (Pre-K through 12th grade) at all accredited state public and private higher education institutions.

These proposed rules are necessary to comply with the changes to 70 O.S. § 698.1 made by HB 2559 which become effective November 1, 2023. The proposed rules implement the following:

- Change the official program name from "Oklahoma Future Teacher Scholarship and Employment Incentive Program" to "Inspired to Teach,"
- Allow students who are enrolled in fewer than twelve hours during their last year in college to maintain eligibility under certain conditions,
- Expand program eligibility to home school graduates and GED earners,
- Expand program eligibility to students who graduate high school outside of Oklahoma, and
- Expand program access to students enrolled in pre-education programs at two-year Oklahoma colleges.

B. Description of the classes of persons who most likely will be affected by the proposed rule, including classes that will bear the costs of the proposed rule, and any information on cost impacts received by the agency from any private or public entities.

The proposed rule changes will affect the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, the public institutions comprising the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, accredited private higher education institutions, students who pursue teacher education degree pathways within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education or at accredited private higher education institutions, Oklahoma public school teachers who participate in the program, Oklahoma public school districts and Oklahoma public schools. No information on cost impacts has been received from any private or public entities.

C. Description of the classes of persons who will benefit from the proposed rule.

The proposed rule changes will benefit the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, the public institutions comprising the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, accredited private higher education institutions, Oklahoma public school districts, Oklahoma public schools and newly eligible students who will benefit through the receipt of scholarships and employment incentives.

D. Description of the probable economic impact of the proposed rule upon affected classes of persons or political subdivisions, including a listing of all fee changes and, whenever possible, a separate justification for each fee change.

The proposed rule changes should have positive economic impacts on the public institutions comprising the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education, accredited private higher education institutions and participating students. Public institutions comprising the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education and accredited private higher education institutions should benefit from increased enrollment from newly eligible students interested in the teaching profession. Newly eligible students should benefit through the receipt of scholarship awards and employment incentives. There are no fee changes involved.

E. Probable costs and benefits to the agency and to any other agency of the implementation and enforcement of the proposed rule, the source of revenue to be used for implementation and enforcement of the proposed rule, and any anticipated effect on state revenues, including a projected net loss or gain in such revenues if it can be projected by the agency.

Oklahoma public school districts and Oklahoma public schools should benefit from an increase in teacher education degree program graduates. The Oklahoma Legislature appropriates funds to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to cover the costs of the scholarships, employment incentive payments, and the administration necessary to implement this program.

F. Determination of whether implementation of the proposed rule will have an economic impact on any political subdivisions or require their cooperation in implementing or enforcing the rule.

Oklahoma public school district budgets could be affected if this program produces more teachers employed by Oklahoma public school districts. Implementing or enforcing the rule will require cooperation with Oklahoma public school districts and their employees. Oklahoma public school districts will have to issue employment incentive disbursements of program benefits provided by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Oklahoma public school officials will have to complete Employment Compliance Forms.

G. Determination of whether implementation of the proposed rule will have an adverse economic effect on small business as provided by the Oklahoma Small Business Regulatory Flexibility Act.

After consideration with reference to Section 303(A)(4) and 303(B)(6) of Title 75, it is believed that the proposed rules will have no adverse impact upon Small Business.

H. Explanation of the measures the agency has taken to minimize compliance costs and a determination of whether there are less costly or non-regulatory methods or less intrusive methods for achieving the purpose of the proposed rule.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education continue to work with higher education institutions to minimize the administrative burden for awarding the scholarships. An existing employment incentive payment system already provides an effective model for implementing employment incentive benefits.

I. Determination of the effect of the proposed rule on the public health, safety and environment and, if the proposed rule is designed to reduce significant risks to the public health, safety and environment, an explanation of the nature of the risk and to what extent the proposed rule will reduce the risk.

The proposed rules will have no effect on the public health, safety, and environment.

J. Determination of any detrimental effect on the public health, safety and environment if the proposed rule is not implemented.

No effect on the public health, safety, or the environment will result if the proposed rules are not implemented.

K. Date the rule impact statement was prepared and if modified, the date modified.

August 21, 2023.