

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019**

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SENATE BILL 382

Short Title: Sch. Psychologist Compensation & Recruitment. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Ballard, D. Davis, and Edwards (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 28, 2019

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO INCREASE COMPENSATION FOR SCHOOL
3 PSYCHOLOGISTS AND TO ESTABLISH THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST
4 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROGRAM.

5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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7 **PART I. INCREASE COMPENSATION FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

8 **SECTION 1.(a)** In addition to the salary provided in accordance with the "A" salary
9 schedule, school psychologists shall receive one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per month.

10 **SECTION 1.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
11 Public Instruction for the 2019-2020 fiscal year the sum of seven million five hundred thousand
12 dollars (\$7,500,000) in recurring funds to provide compensation increases for school
13 psychologists pursuant to this section.

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15 **PART II. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**
16 **PROGRAM**

17 **SECTION 2.(a)** Program; Purpose. – The State Board of Education shall establish
18 the School Psychologists Recruitment and Retention Program (Program). The purpose of the
19 Program is to recruit high-quality school psychologists to public school units and retain
20 high-quality school psychologists in public school units by providing signing and retention
21 bonuses to select school psychologists.

22 **SECTION 2.(b)** Definitions. – For purposes of this section, the following definitions
23 shall apply:

- 24 (1) Public school unit. – Any of the following:
- 25 a. A local school administrative unit.
 - 26 b. A charter school.
 - 27 c. A regional school.
 - 28 d. A school providing elementary or secondary instruction operated by
29 one of the following:
 - 30 1. The State Board of Education, including schools operated
31 under Article 7A and Article 9C of this Chapter.
 - 32 2. The University of North Carolina, including schools operated
33 under Articles 4, 29, and 29A of Chapter 116 of the General
34 Statutes.
 - 35 3. The Department of Health and Human Services.



- 1 4. The Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice of the
2 Department of Public Safety.
3 (2) Recruitment and retention coordinator. – The person at the Department of
4 Public Instruction, under the direct supervision of the Superintendent of Public
5 Instruction, who is responsible for administering the Program.

6 **SECTION 2.(c)** Implementation. – The recruitment and retention coordinator shall
7 coordinate with public school units to allocate funds appropriated for the Program by this act,
8 subject to the following requirements:

- 9 (1) Bonuses shall be conditioned on the existence of an agreement between the
10 public school unit and the school psychologist that is (i) approved by the
11 recruitment and retention coordinator and (ii) at a minimum, includes the
12 following provisions:
13 a. The school psychologist agrees to remain employed in the public
14 school unit as a school psychologist for three to five years, as
15 negotiated by the parties.
16 b. The school psychologist agrees to return bonus funds to the
17 Department of Public Instruction on a prorated basis if all of the
18 following criteria are met:
19 1. The school psychologist does not remain employed in the
20 public school unit as a school psychologist for the agreed upon
21 period of time.
22 2. The school psychologist has not been terminated due to death,
23 a reduction in force, or disability that prohibits him or her from
24 carrying out the essential functions of the job.
25 (2) No individual bonus shall be greater than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).
26 (3) In determining how to allocate funds for the Program, the recruitment and
27 retention coordinator shall consider the unique factors of each public school
28 unit, including all of the following:
29 a. The level of resources available to the public school unit that would
30 receive the funds.
31 b. The overall impact on student mental health in the public school unit
32 if the funds are provided.
33 c. The history of difficulty in recruiting or retaining school psychologists
34 at the public school unit.
35 d. The likelihood of success in recruiting or retaining school
36 psychologists at the public school unit without a bonus.
37 (4) The recruitment and retention coordinator shall not provide any funds to a
38 public school unit unless the unit agrees that the funds will be used to
39 supplement, and not supplant, local funds for school psychologists.
40 (5) Except as provided in this section, the recruitment and retention coordinator
41 shall have discretion over the allocation of funds.

42 **SECTION 2.(d)** Report. – By September 30, 2019, and every subsequent three
43 months in which funds are awarded, the recruitment and retention coordinator shall report to the
44 President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Joint
45 Legislative Education Oversight Committee, and the Fiscal Research Division on the identity of
46 the public school units receiving funds, the amount of funds received by each public school unit,
47 and the purposes for which the funds were used.

48 **SECTION 2.(e)** Appropriation; Administrative Costs. – There is appropriated from
49 the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2019-2020 fiscal year the sum
50 of seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) in recurring funds to establish and implement
51 the Program. The Department shall use up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) of these

1 funds to establish one new, full-time equivalent recruitment and retention coordinator position at
2 the Department to administer the Program.

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4 **PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

5 **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2019.