

**HB124 ENROLLED**



1 HB124  
2 TBSCH91-2  
3 By Representative Collins  
4 RFD: Education Policy  
5 First Read: 13-Jan-26  
6 PFD: 07-Jan-26



## HB124 Enrolled

1 Enrolled, An Act,

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3           Relating to the Alabama Math and Science Teacher  
4 Education Program (AMSTEP); to change the name of the program  
5 to the Loan Assistance in Support of Educators in Alabama  
6 (LASEA) Program; to amend Sections 16-5-50, 16-5-51, 16-5-52,  
7 16-5-53, 16-5-54, 16-5-54.1, 16-5-55, and 16-5-56, Code of  
8 Alabama 1975; to allow educators who complete a program  
9 identified as having a shortage of certified educators and who  
10 obtain certification in those identified programs to qualify  
11 for the loan assistance program; to offer a supplemental  
12 payment from the loan assistance program to eligible  
13 applicants who are also employed in public K-12 schools or  
14 school systems with a shortage of certified educators as  
15 determined by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education in  
16 consultation with the State Department of Education; to add  
17 Sections 16-5-53.1 and 16-5-53.2 to the Code of Alabama 1975,  
18 to require the commission, in consultation with the Alabama  
19 Commission on the Evaluation of Services, to develop an  
20 accountability and evaluation plan for the program and to  
21 provide further for the eligibility of certain applicants who  
22 have been continuously employed with a qualifying school; and  
23 to repeal Section 16-5-54.2, Code of Alabama 1975, which  
24 provides for the reimbursement of individuals who have  
25 completed certain alternative certification programs.

26 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

27           Section 1. Sections 16-5-50, 16-5-51, 16-5-52, 16-5-53,  
28 16-5-54, 16-5-54.1, 16-5-55, and 16-5-56 of the Code of



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29 Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

30 "§16-5-50

31 The Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Program  
32 ~~is~~ created pursuant to this article is renamed the Loan  
33 Assistance in Support of Educators in Alabama (LASEA)  
34 Program."

35 "§16-5-51

36 The purpose of the ~~Alabama Math and Science Teacher~~  
37 ~~Education Program~~ Loan Assistance in Support of Educators in  
38 Alabama Program ~~is twofold~~ as follows:

39 (1) To encourage individuals to enroll in and complete  
40 educator programs leading to identified as having acute  
41 educator shortages and obtain Alabama certification in  
42 mathematics, science, or computer science those programs.

43 (2) To improve the educational system in Alabama by  
44 encouraging those who complete the program and obtain  
45 certification in acute educator shortage programs to accept  
46 math, science, or computer science teaching educator positions  
47 in Alabama public K-12 schools, preferably in public or school  
48 systems, including charter schools, ~~where the shortage of~~  
49 ~~math, science, or computer science teachers, or any~~  
50 ~~combination of the three, is most acute, or in a school that~~  
51 ~~has been designated as a failing school, or any other term~~  
52 ~~adopted to identify an underperforming school, by the State~~  
53 ~~Board of Education or the Legislature~~ that have been  
54 identified as acute educator shortage locations."

55 "§16-5-52

56 For the purposes of this article, the following terms



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57 shall have the following meanings:

58 (1) ACUTE EDUCATOR SHORTAGE. A shortage of certified  
59 educators in identified educator programs as determined by the  
60 Alabama Commission on Higher Education in consultation with  
61 the State Department of Education and the Alabama Commission  
62 on the Evaluation of Services.

63 (2) ACUTE EDUCATOR SHORTAGE LOCATION. A public K-12  
64 school or school system that has been identified as having an  
65 acute educator shortage.

66 ~~(1)~~ (3) APPROVED INSTITUTION. A state-supported  
67 institution of higher education or a private nonprofit  
68 institution of higher education that satisfies all of the  
69 following:

70 a. Is accredited by the Southern Association of  
71 Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

72 b. Is approved by the State Board of Education to  
73 ~~prepare teachers of middle level or secondary math, science,~~  
74 ~~or computer science~~ educators in programs identified as having  
75 an acute educator shortage.

76 c. Is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid  
77 program funds.

78 ~~d. Maintains its primary headquarters in Alabama.~~

79 (4) BASE SUPPORT. Loan assistance in support of  
80 educators who are certified in a program identified as having  
81 an acute educator shortage pursuant to Section 16-5-54.

82 ~~(2)~~ (5) CHARTER SCHOOL. A form of public K-12 school. A  
83 ~~teacher~~ established pursuant to Chapter 6F. An educator  
84 employed by a charter school accredited by the Southern



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85 Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is  
86 ~~eligible to participate in the program. A teacher~~ for the base  
87 support provided in this article. An educator employed by a  
88 charter school is not eligible for the ~~acute shortage area~~  
89 ~~supplement~~ supplemental support provided in this article.

90 ~~(3)~~ (6) COMMISSION. The Alabama Commission on Higher  
91 Education.

92 (7) EDUCATOR. A full-time employee of a public K-12  
93 school or school system whose function is to work with  
94 students in support of their efforts to learn and obtain an  
95 education.

96 ~~(4)~~ (8) ELIGIBLE APPLICANT. ~~A person~~ An individual who  
97 satisfies the criteria set out in this article and is eligible  
98 under rules adopted by the commission.

99 ~~(5)~~ (9) PROGRAM. ~~The Alabama Math and Science Teacher~~  
100 ~~Education Program~~ Loan Assistance in Support of Educators in  
101 Alabama Program created by this article and administered by  
102 the commission that provides ~~loan repayments~~ assistance to ~~a~~  
103 ~~teacher~~ an educator with a valid Alabama professional educator  
104 certificate who is endorsed in ~~math, science, or computer~~  
105 ~~science who teaches math, science, or computer science courses~~  
106 ~~for which the teacher is properly certified for three-fourths~~  
107 ~~of the full-time teaching load in the Alabama public school~~  
108 ~~system~~ a program identified as having an acute educator  
109 shortage.

110 ~~(6)~~ SCIENCE. ~~Biology, chemistry, physics, and general~~  
111 ~~science.~~

112 (10) SUPPLEMENTAL SUPPORT. Loan assistance in support



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113 of educators who qualify for base support pursuant to Section  
114 16-5-54 and are employed in an acute educator shortage  
115 location.

116 ~~(7)(11) YEAR. A school year that shall be divided into~~  
117 ~~The fall and spring semesters. The term does not mean~~  
118 ~~calendar, fiscal, or scholastic year~~ of an academic year of a  
119 public K-12 school or school system."

120 "§16-5-53

121 ~~(a) The Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education~~  
122 ~~Program~~ program shall be administered by the commission, which  
123 may adopt ~~any~~ rules necessary for the administration of the  
124 program.

125 (b) A percentage of any annual appropriations received  
126 by the program, not to exceed 10 percent, may be expended for  
127 its operation and maintenance. Any funds appropriated to the  
128 program shall be non-reverting at the end of each fiscal year.

129 (c) The determination of acute educator shortages and  
130 acute educator shortage locations shall be made at least once  
131 every academic year."

132 "§16-5-54

133 (a) The program shall provide two levels of payment for  
134 loan assistance: (i) base support in the amount of seven  
135 thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) per year worked or  
136 three thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$3,750) per  
137 semester, for a maximum of four consecutive years, and (ii)  
138 supplemental support in the amount of three thousand dollars  
139 (\$3,000) per year worked or one thousand five hundred dollars  
140 (\$1,500) per semester worked, for a maximum of four



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141 consecutive years. Depending on eligibility, an eligible  
142 applicant may receive the base support or both the base  
143 support and supplemental support.

144 (b) To be eligible for the base program of three  
145 thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$3,750) per semester for  
146 math and science teachers and one thousand five hundred  
147 dollars (\$1,500) per semester for computer science teachers,  
148 an support an eligible applicant shall satisfy all of the  
149 following:

150 (1) Is a citizen or a lawful permanent resident of the  
151 United States.

152 (2) Is a resident of Alabama. The commission shall  
153 accept any one of the following as proof of residency:

154 a. A current valid Alabama driver license.

155 b. A current valid Alabama vehicle registration.

156 c. A current valid Alabama voter registration card.

157 ~~(1) Be~~ (3) Is a graduate of ~~a State Board of Education~~  
158 an approved program in math, science, or computer science, at  
159 the baccalaureate or master's level after the 2018 spring  
160 semester term from an approved Alabama institution and hold an  
161 initial middle level or secondary professional educator  
162 certificate endorsed in math, science, or computer science  
163 that was has been issued an Alabama educator certificate based  
164 upon completion of the approved program in math, science, or  
165 computer science. A teacher identified as having an acute  
166 educator shortage. An educator who only earns a passing score  
167 on the Praxis test ~~in math, science, or computer science~~ to  
168 add a certificate endorsement for ~~math, science, or computer~~



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169 ~~science, an approved program and ~~who~~ has not completed ~~an~~~~  
170 ~~entire the approved program, does not satisfy this~~  
171 ~~requirement.~~

172 ~~(2) Holds a valid Alabama professional educator~~  
173 ~~certificate endorsed in middle level or secondary math,~~  
174 ~~science, or computer science, or any combination of the three.~~

175 ~~(3) Teaches~~

176 ~~(4) Is employed by a public K-12 school or school~~  
177 ~~system.~~

178 ~~(5) Maintains a schedule in which at least~~  
179 ~~three-fourths of the full-time ~~teaching load is comprised of~~~~  
180 ~~math, science, or computer science in an Alabama public school~~  
181 ~~system workload addresses an acute educator shortage.~~

182 ~~(4) Is a citizen or a lawful permanent resident of the~~  
183 ~~United States.~~

184 ~~(5) Is a resident of Alabama and provides documentation~~  
185 ~~proving a permanent connection to the State of Alabama. The~~  
186 ~~commission shall accept any one of the following as proof of~~  
187 ~~residency:~~

188 ~~a. A current valid Alabama driver license.~~

189 ~~b. A current valid Alabama vehicle registration.~~

190 ~~c. A current valid Alabama voter registration card.~~

191 ~~(6) Has outstanding federal student loans, subsidized~~  
192 ~~or unsubsidized.~~

193 ~~(7) Satisfies additional continuing eligibility~~  
194 ~~criteria established by the commission.~~

195 ~~(b) In order to receive an additional supplement~~  
196 ~~pursuant to this article, in addition to the criteria listed~~



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197 ~~in subsection (a), a recipient shall also teach math, science,~~  
198 ~~or computer science, or any combination of the three, in a~~  
199 ~~public school system within the state with an acute teacher~~  
200 ~~shortage in math, science, or computer science, or any~~  
201 ~~combination of the three, for which the teacher is properly~~  
202 ~~certified, as identified by the commission in consultation~~  
203 ~~with the Alabama State Department of Education or in a school~~  
204 ~~that has been designated as a failing school, or any other~~  
205 ~~term adopted to identify an underperforming school, by the~~  
206 ~~Alabama State Board of Education or the Legislature.~~ (c) To be  
207 eligible for the supplemental support an eligible applicant  
208 must meet the criteria listed in subsection (b) and also be  
209 employed in an acute educator shortage location."

210 "§16-5-54.1

211 ~~(a)~~ Beginning in the fall semester of 2021, the  
212 benefits outlined in ~~subsection (a) of Section 16-5-54(a) and~~  
213 the criteria outlined in Section 16-5-54(b) and (c) shall also  
214 apply to the following eligible individuals, pending  
215 authorization to teach who are authorized to be educators in  
216 Alabama and subsequent employment are subsequently employed in  
217 an Alabama public K-12 school or school system, who graduated  
218 from a regionally accredited college or university in another  
219 state at the baccalaureate or master's level after the 2021  
220 spring semester term, and who may or may not reside within  
221 Alabama, exempting Section 16-5-54(b) (2).

222 ~~(1) An individual who graduated from a regionally~~  
223 ~~accredited college or university in Alabama or in another~~  
224 ~~state who is certified to teach math, science, or computer~~



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225 ~~science in another state, and who may or may not reside within~~  
226 ~~Alabama.~~

227 ~~(2) An individual who resides in another state and is a~~  
228 ~~graduate of a State Board of Education approved program in~~  
229 ~~math, science, or computer science, at the baccalaureate or~~  
230 ~~master's level after the 2021 spring semester term from an~~  
231 ~~approved Alabama institution and who holds an initial~~  
232 ~~middle-level or secondary professional educator certificate~~  
233 ~~endorsed in math, science, or computer science that was issued~~  
234 ~~based upon completion of the approved program in math,~~  
235 ~~science, or computer science. A teacher who only earns a~~  
236 ~~passing score on the Praxis test in math, science, or computer~~  
237 ~~science to add a certificate endorsement for math, science, or~~  
238 ~~computer science and who has not completed an entire approved~~  
239 ~~program, does not satisfy this requirement.~~

240 ~~(b) The individuals listed in subsection (a) shall also~~  
241 ~~satisfy all of the following criteria:~~

242 ~~(1) Hold a valid Alabama professional educator~~  
243 ~~certificate endorsed in middle-level or secondary math,~~  
244 ~~science, or computer science, or any combination of the three.~~

245 ~~(2) Teach a schedule in which at least three-fourths of~~  
246 ~~the full-time teaching load is comprised of math, science, or~~  
247 ~~computer science courses for which the teacher is properly~~  
248 ~~certified in an Alabama public school system.~~

249 ~~(3) Be citizens or lawful permanent residents of the~~  
250 ~~United States.~~

251 ~~(4) Have outstanding federal student loans, subsidized~~  
252 ~~or unsubsidized.~~



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253 ~~(5) Satisfy additional continuing eligibility criteria~~  
254 ~~established by the commission.~~

255 ~~(c) In order to receive an additional supplement~~  
256 ~~pursuant to this article, in addition to the criteria listed~~  
257 ~~in subsections (a) and (b), a recipient shall also teach math,~~  
258 ~~science, or computer science courses, or any combination of~~  
259 ~~the three, for which he or she is properly certified, in a~~  
260 ~~school system within the state with an acute teacher shortage~~  
261 ~~in math, science, or computer science, or any combination of~~  
262 ~~the three, as identified by the commission in consultation~~  
263 ~~with the State Department of Education or in a school that has~~  
264 ~~been designated as a failing school, or any other term~~  
265 ~~subsequently adopted to identify underperforming schools, by~~  
266 ~~the State Board of Education or the Legislature."~~

267 "§16-5-55

268 ~~(a) The program shall be used to provide a loan~~  
269 ~~repayment for federal student loans in the following amounts:~~

270 ~~(1)a. Prior to the 2022 fall semester, five thousand~~  
271 ~~dollars (\$5,000) per year, or two thousand five hundred~~  
272 ~~dollars (\$2,500) per semester worked, for a maximum of four~~  
273 ~~consecutive years for a teacher with a valid Alabama~~  
274 ~~professional educator certificate endorsed in middle level or~~  
275 ~~secondary math or science who graduated from a teacher~~  
276 ~~education program at an approved institution after the 2018~~  
277 ~~spring semester term and is teaching in an Alabama public~~  
278 ~~school.~~

279 ~~b. Three thousand dollars (\$3,000) per year, or one~~  
280 ~~thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) per semester worked,~~



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281 ~~for a maximum of four consecutive years for a teacher with a~~  
282 ~~valid Alabama professional educator certificate endorsed in~~  
283 ~~computer science who graduated from a teacher education~~  
284 ~~program at an approved institution after the 2021 spring~~  
285 ~~semester term and is teaching in an Alabama public school.~~

286 ~~c. Beginning after the 2022 spring semester, seven~~  
287 ~~thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) per year, or three~~  
288 ~~thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$3,750) per semester~~  
289 ~~worked, for a maximum of four consecutive years for a teacher~~  
290 ~~with a valid Alabama professional educator certificate~~  
291 ~~endorsed in middle level or secondary math or science who~~  
292 ~~graduated from a teacher education program at an approved~~  
293 ~~institution after the 2018 spring semester term and is~~  
294 ~~teaching in an Alabama public school. Payments made under this~~  
295 ~~paragraph may only be made to eligible teachers who fulfilled~~  
296 ~~the per semester requirements for the 2022 fall semester and~~  
297 ~~forward.~~

298 ~~(2)a. An additional two thousand five hundred dollars~~  
299 ~~(\$2,500) per year, or one thousand two hundred fifty dollars~~  
300 ~~(\$1,250) per semester worked, for a maximum of four~~  
301 ~~consecutive years for a teacher who satisfies all criteria~~  
302 ~~listed in Sections 16-5-54, 16-5-54.1, and 16-5-54.2, and who~~  
303 ~~also is teaching math or science in a public school in a~~  
304 ~~school system within the state with an acute teacher shortage~~  
305 ~~in math or science, or both, as identified by the commission~~  
306 ~~in consultation with the Alabama State Department of Education~~  
307 ~~or in a school that has been designated as a failing school,~~  
308 ~~or any other term adopted to identify an underperforming~~



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309 ~~school by the Alabama State Board of Education or the~~  
310 ~~Legislature.~~

311 ~~b. An additional one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per~~  
312 ~~year, or five hundred dollars (\$500) per semester worked, for~~  
313 ~~a maximum of four consecutive years for a teacher who~~  
314 ~~satisfies all criteria listed in Sections 16-5-54, 16-5-54.1,~~  
315 ~~and 16-5-54.2, and who also is teaching computer science in a~~  
316 ~~public school in a school system within the state with an~~  
317 ~~acute teacher shortage in computer science as identified by~~  
318 ~~the commission in consultation with the Alabama State~~  
319 ~~Department of Education or in a school that has been~~  
320 ~~designated as a failing school, or any other term adopted to~~  
321 ~~identify an underperforming school, by the Alabama State Board~~  
322 ~~of Education or the Legislature.~~

323 ~~(b) Loan repayment award recipients shall reapply for~~  
324 ~~the program annually.~~

325 (a) Program funds shall be awarded and distributed by  
326 the commission in the following manner:

327 ~~(c)(1) Loan repayment assistance awards shall be~~  
328 ~~distributed directly to the recipient teacher eligible~~  
329 ~~applicants in two disbursements during the applicable year:~~  
330 ~~One disbursement shall be made after January 1 and the second~~  
331 ~~disbursement shall be made after June 1. Each recipient~~  
332 ~~eligible applicant shall provide documentation from the~~  
333 ~~employing public K-12 school or school system as proof that he~~  
334 ~~or she has taught for a of employment for the requested~~  
335 ~~semester. If the award amount is larger than exceeds the~~  
336 ~~outstanding loan balance, the award amount shall be reduced to~~



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337 ~~the amount of match the loan balance.~~

338 ~~(d) The requirements of this article are contingent~~  
339 ~~upon available funding for the program.~~

340 ~~(e)(2) The commission shall determine the necessary~~  
341 ~~procedures for awarding loan repayments assistance if the~~  
342 ~~number of total awards made to eligible applicants ~~and~~~~  
343 ~~recipients exceeds available funding.~~

344 ~~(f)(3) The recipient eligible applicant shall notify~~  
345 ~~the commission in writing of any change in status within 30~~  
346 ~~days after the change. Failure to notify the commission of a~~  
347 ~~change in status shall affect future eligibility. All of the~~  
348 ~~following constitute a change in status:~~

349 ~~(1)a. A change in name.~~

350 ~~(2)b. A change in residence.~~

351 ~~(3)c. A change in employment status.~~

352 ~~(g)(4) To receive a loan repayment check assistance~~  
353 ~~pursuant to this article, ~~a teacher~~ an eligible applicant~~  
354 ~~shall register online with the ~~state~~ Comptroller.~~

355 ~~(b) The requirements of this article are contingent~~  
356 ~~upon available funding for the program.~~

357 ~~(h)(c) A loan repayment check assistance award is~~  
358 ~~considered income by the Internal Revenue Service, and~~  
359 ~~recipients eligible applicants shall be made aware of that~~  
360 ~~fact.~~

361 ~~(i) Any funds appropriated to the program shall be~~  
362 ~~nonreverting.~~

363 ~~(j) Additional funds shall be made available to~~  
364 ~~teachers who also teach math, science, or computer science in~~



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365 ~~school systems of the state where the shortages of math,~~  
366 ~~science, or computer science teachers, or any combination of~~  
367 ~~the three, are most severe. The commission, in consultation~~  
368 ~~with the Alabama State Department of Education, shall~~  
369 ~~determine which school systems in the state have the greatest~~  
370 ~~shortage areas.~~

371 ~~(k) A recipient who receives a loan repayment award and~~  
372 ~~continues to satisfy employment criteria shall continue to~~  
373 ~~receive an award for the four-year limit regardless of whether~~  
374 ~~the employing school system retains its acute shortage~~  
375 ~~designation or the employing school is removed from the~~  
376 ~~failing school list. If a recipient leaves an acute shortage~~  
377 ~~system or a failing school and accepts employment in a school~~  
378 ~~system or school that does not hold an acute shortage system~~  
379 ~~or failing school designation, the recipient shall no longer~~  
380 ~~qualify to receive supplemental funds.~~

381 (d) An eligible applicant who receives the base support  
382 and continues to satisfy employment criteria shall continue to  
383 receive an award for the four-year limit.

384 (e) An eligible applicant who receives the supplemental  
385 support and continues to satisfy employment criteria shall  
386 continue to receive an award for the four-year limit."

387 "§16-5-56

388 ~~Any person individual or institution aggrieved by not~~  
389 ~~satisfied with the actions of the commission in its~~  
390 ~~administration of the program, by may submit a written~~  
391 ~~petition filed with to the commission within 30 days after~~  
392 ~~notice of the action complained of, may request a rehearing by~~



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393 ~~the commission.~~ If not satisfied with the response of the  
394 commission to the written petition, the individual or  
395 institution may request a rehearing within 20 days after the  
396 response of the commission is made. The commission shall  
397 schedule the ~~requested~~ rehearing ~~not less than 20, nor more~~  
398 ~~than 30,~~ within 20 days after receipt of the ~~petition~~  
399 rehearing request. The ~~aggrieved party~~ individual or  
400 institution may present written and oral evidence supporting  
401 ~~its~~ the petition and may be represented by counsel. The  
402 decision of the commission following the rehearing ~~shall be~~ is  
403 final."

404 Section 2. Sections 16-5-53.1 and 16-5-53.2 are added to  
405 the Code of Alabama 1975, to read as follows:

406 §16-5-53.1

407 (a) The commission shall develop an accountability and  
408 evaluation plan for the program that does all of the  
409 following:

410 (1) Identifies the goals, objectives, and expected  
411 outputs and outcomes of the program.

412 (2) Describes the specific activities of the program  
413 and how those activities will achieve expected outcomes.

414 (3) Defines what the expected metrics of success shall  
415 be and provides a monitoring plan to regularly assess  
416 performance.

417 (4) Provides an evaluation plan to assess the impact of  
418 expected outcomes.

419 (b) The commission shall consult with the Alabama  
420 Commission on the Evaluation of Services on the development of



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421 the accountability and evaluation plan.

422 §16-5-53.2

423 Any eligible applicant who met the requirements of the  
424 program and received a loan repayment prior to August 1, 2026,  
425 shall remain eligible for loan repayments pursuant to the  
426 requirements of the program as long as they remain  
427 continuously employed with a qualifying school.

428 Section 3. Section 16-5-54.2, Code of Alabama 1975,  
429 relating to documentation required from educators who received  
430 their certifications pursuant to an alternative certification  
431 program to receive loan repayments under AMSTEP, is repealed.

432 Section 4. This act shall become effective on August 1,  
433 2026.

