SB101

181791-3

By Senators Orr and Reed

RFD: Finance and Taxation Education

First Read: 09-JAN-18
ENROLLED, An Act,

Relating to education; to provide findings of the Legislature relating to public education; to authorize the State Department of Education, pending available funds, to offer certain grants to public schools for the purpose of developing new advanced educational and specialized programs for gifted or talented children; to require the department to adopt rules providing for the evaluation of applications for grants; to provide public access to applicant scoring; and to require local boards of education to match awarded grant funds.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(1) It is vital that Alabama's public schools challenge and encourage students who are capable of completing accelerated academic work.

(2) Programs to encourage accelerated students can often be maintained by schools, after an initial start cost, with funding roughly equivalent to what they currently receive.
(3) This state should encourage schools to develop and implement gifted and talented student programs to provide options for students capable of doing advanced class work.

Section 2. (a) The State Department of Education shall award available grants to public schools for the purpose of initiating new programs or continuing existing programs to offer advanced and specialized educational services to gifted or talented children. The number of schools receiving grants under this section shall be determined based upon funds available to the department during a fiscal year.

(1) A grant shall be made for a single year, with the rebuttable presumption that the grant will be renewed for a single additional year contingent upon available funding.

(2) Grants shall be awarded upon consideration of all of the following criteria:

a. Grants should be awarded to programs that offer educational services specifically targeted at gifted or talented children.

b. The quality of the proposed curriculum, qualifications of persons acting as instructors, and integration with the infrastructure of the school must be a primary consideration.

c. Preference must be given to programs that are offered during the traditional school day or, alternatively, to programs that provide after-school transportation.
d. Preference must be given to programs that explicitly provide for the encouragement of participation by students from traditionally underserved populations.

e. All programs awarded grants pursuant to this act must provide a means for assessing the impact of the program on participating students' academic growth.

(b) The department shall adopt rules providing an explicit formula for evaluating proposals for grants awarded under this section. The scoring of grant applications shall be considered public information.

(c) For the purposes of this section, "gifted or talented children" shall mean children who are age four through the age of 19 or children who receive a regular high school diploma, whichever occurs first, who, by virtue of certain outstanding abilities, are capable of a high level of performance in an identified field. The term includes children identified by professionally qualified persons who may require differentiated educational programs or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize those children's full contribution to self and society. The term also includes children who have demonstrated achievement or potential ability in any of the following areas, singularly or in combination:

(1) General intellectual ability.

(2) Specific academic aptitude.
(3) Creative or productive thinking.
(4) Leadership ability.
(5) Visual and performing arts ability.
(6) Psychomotor ability.
(d) In the implementation and administration of this act, the State Department of Education shall comply with the guidelines and innovative practices set forth in Chapter 39, Title 16, Code of Alabama 1975.
(e) Any funds designated for grants under this section may not affect other funding by the Legislature from any source for programs earmarked for the benefit of gifted or talented children.
(f) The appropriate local board of education shall match up to five percent of any grant funds awarded by the department under this act.
Section 3. This act shall become effective on the first day of the third month following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.
President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

SB101
Senate 30-JAN-18
I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and passed the Senate, as amended.

Patrick Harris,
Secretary.

House of Representatives
Passed: 21-MAR-18

By: Senator Orr