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HOUSE BILL NO. 613**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**

(Proposed by the House Committee on Appropriations
on February 13, 2026)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Cohen)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 6 of Title 22.1 a section numbered 22.1-70.4, relating to Department of Education; division superintendents; Teacher Recruitment and Retention Mentorship Pilot Program established; administration; report.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 6 of Title 22.1 a section numbered 22.1-70.4 as follows:

§ 22.1-70.4. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Mentorship Pilot Program established; administration; report.

A. The Department, in coordination with the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, shall establish the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Mentorship Pilot Program (the Program) for the purpose of supporting division superintendents of school divisions with high teacher vacancy rates in improving teacher recruitment and retention by coordinating mentorships whereby a division superintendent of a low vacancy rate school division is connected with a division superintendent of a high vacancy rate school division to provide mentorship in developing and implementing plans, strategies, and best practices for improving teacher vacancy rates in the high vacancy rate school division.

B. The Program shall be administered by the Department in coordination with the Virginia Association of School Superintendents. In administering the Program, the Department and the Virginia Association of School Superintendents shall establish and implement policies and procedures for the administration of the Program, including policies and procedures:

1. To coordinate the connection of division superintendents of low vacancy rate school divisions with division superintendents of high vacancy rate school divisions;

2. Designed to support and maximize the efficacy and success of such mentorships under the program, including policies and procedures on the recommended frequency, number of meetings or discussions, and duration of mentorships between the division superintendents;

3. Designed to encourage and incentivize participation of division superintendents in the Program; and

4. For Program oversight and monitoring the activities and success of each division superintendent mentorship under the Program.

C. Each division superintendent mentorship coordinated through the Program shall annually submit to the Department a report on their activities for the preceding school year that shall include (i) a summary of the mentorship-related activities between the two division superintendents that year; (ii) the plans, strategies, and best practices for improving teacher recruitment and retention discussed by the applicable division superintendents; (iii) a summary of the outcomes of the plans, strategies, and best practices implemented by the division superintendent of the high vacancy rate school division under the mentorship, including data on any change in teacher recruitment and retention rates in the school division during the preceding school year; and (iv) any recommendations for improving the effectiveness of mentorships under the Program and, if applicable, on additional supports or resources needed to address any additional barriers to improving teacher recruitment and retention rates in the high vacancy rate school division.

D. The Department shall submit to the Governor and the Chairs of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health by November 1 of each year a report on the activities of the Program for the preceding school year that shall include (i) data on the number of division superintendent mentorships coordinated through the Program; (ii) a summary of the information contained in the reports submitted by each division superintendent mentorship pursuant to subsection C; (iii) an analysis of the relative success and effectiveness of the mentorships coordinated through the Program in addressing and improving teacher recruitment and retention rates in high vacancy rate school divisions, including data for each high vacancy rate school division the superintendent of which participated in the mentorship program the preceding year on the change, if any, in teacher recruitment and retention rates for such school division; and (iv) any recommendations for the improvement and expansion of the Program.

2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on July 1, 2029.

HOUSE SUBSTITUTE

HB613H1