**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑20‑50, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER SALARIES, SO AS TO INCREASE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER SALARIES TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OVER A FIVE‑YEAR PERIOD BEGINNING WITH THE 2014‑2015 FISCAL YEAR.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 59‑20‑50(4)(b) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(b) The state minimum salary schedule must be based on the state minimum salary schedule index in effect as of July 1, 1984. In Fiscal Year 1985, the 1.000 figure in the index is $14,172. (This figure is based on a 10.27% increase pursuant to the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984.) ~~Beginning with Fiscal Year 1986, the 1.000 figure in the index must be adjusted on a schedule to stay at the southeastern average as projected by the Division of Research and Statistical Services and provided to the Budget and Control Board and General Assembly during their deliberations on the annual appropriations bill. The southeastern average teacher salary is the average of the average teachers’ salaries of the southeastern states.~~ Beginning with Fiscal Year 2014‑2015, the 1.000 figure in the index must be adjusted over a five‑year period on a schedule to stay at the national average as projected by the Office of Research and Statistics and provided to the State Budget and Control Board and General Assembly during their deliberations on the annual appropriations bill; provided, however, that this adjustment to the national average may be accomplished in fewer than five years if funding permits. The national average teacher salary is the average of the average teachers’ salaries of the fifty states and the District of Columbia. In projecting the national average, the division shall include in the South Carolina base teacher salary all local teacher supplements and all incentive pay. For Fiscal Year 2014‑2015, the 1.000 figure in the index must be adjusted to provide an average salary not less than five thousand dollars below the national average, and then increasing by an increment of at least one thousand dollars in Fiscal Year 2015‑2016, one thousand dollars in Fiscal Year 2016‑2017, one thousand dollars in Fiscal Year 2017‑2018, and by an amount in Fiscal Year 2018‑2019 to adjust the 1.000 index figure to at least equal the projected national average for that fiscal year. In projecting the ~~southeastern~~ national average, the division shall include in the South Carolina base teacher salary all local teacher supplements and all incentive pay. Under this schedule, school districts are required to maintain local salary supplements per teacher no less than their prior fiscal level. ~~In Fiscal Year 1986 and thereafter~~ Teacher pay raises through adjustments in the state’s minimum salary schedule may be provided only to teachers who demonstrate minimum knowledge proficiency by meeting one of the following criteria:

(1) holding a valid professional certificate;

(2) having a score of 425 or greater on the Commons Examination of the National Teachers Examinations;

(3) meeting the minimum qualifying score on the appropriate area teaching examination; or

(4) meeting the minimum standards on the basic skills examinations as prescribed by the State Board of Education provided in Section 59‑26‑20.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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