**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑20‑50, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO VARIOUS FUNDING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE EDUCATION FINANCE ACT, INCLUDING CERTIFIED TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR SALARY REQUIREMENTS, SO AS TO REVISE THESE SALARY REQUIREMENTS TO ENSURE THAT, AT A MINIMUM, CERTIFIED TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS ARE ALWAYS PAID AT THE SOUTHEASTERN AVERAGE, AND TO PROVIDE FOR RELATED PROVISIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS REQUIREMENT.

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

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

“(4)(a)(i) Each school district shall pay each certified teacher or administrator an annual salary at least equal to the salary stated in the statewide minimum salary schedule for the person’s experience and class, which at a minimum must equal the southeast region’s average salary for certified teachers or administrators. No teacher or administrator employed in the same position, over the same time period, shall receive less total salary, including any normal incremental increase, than that teacher or administrator ~~received for the fiscal year before the implementation of this article~~ is required to receive under this subsubitem.

(ii) The General Assembly by joint resolution of a temporary duration or by proviso in an annual general appropriations act may not permit school districts to reduce local salary supplements below a level which, when combined with state EFA and other funding, would reduce certified teachers’ or administrators’ salaries below the required state minimum salary schedule, except by a two‑thirds vote of the membership of each house in an enactment separate from the joint resolution or general appropriations act.

(b) The state minimum salary schedule must be based on the state minimum salary schedule index in effect as of July 1, ~~1984~~ 2017, provided that the 2017 state minimum salary schedule must be adjusted to meet the requirements of subitem (a). The funding for the increase in the state minimum salary schedule as required above, as determined by the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, must be provided by the General Assembly from state funds and not from local salary supplement funds. ~~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~~ 2017, the ~~1.000 figure in the~~ index must be adjusted on a schedule to ~~stay~~ continue at the southeastern average as projected by the Office of Research and Statistics of the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office and provided to the 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. In projecting the southeastern 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~~ that required to meet the requirements of subitem (a) when combined with all other state funding provided. ~~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 July 1, 2017.

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