

which prevents the recipient from fulfilling the teaching obligation required under § 18-1403 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

18-1405.

(a) The State Superintendent of Schools shall project annually the number of vacancies for employment expected in each of the subsequent 5 years in areas of critical shortage and the number of students expected to graduate from programs qualifying them to teach in these fields during the same period. The State Superintendent of Schools shall certify annually to the State Scholarship--Board ADMINISTRATION those programs that continue to be areas of critical shortage as evidenced by projected employment vacancies substantially exceeding projected qualified graduates.

(b) In any year in which a program area is determined by the State Superintendent of Schools no longer to be an area of critical shortage, the State-Scholarship--{Board}--ADMINISTRATION COMMISSION shall discontinue making new awards in that program.

(c) Deletion of any academic field as an area of critical shortage shall not:

(1) Terminate the right of existing recipients to renew awards under § 18-1403(e) OF THIS SUBTITLE; or

(2) If the recipient continues to teach in a public school in this State in that academic field, invoke the provisions of § 18-1404(a) OF THIS SUBTITLE or disqualify the recipient under the provisions of § 18-1404(b) OF THIS SUBTITLE.

18-1406.

(a) "Area of extraordinary shortage" means a geographic area of the State identified by the State Board of Education as less able than others in the State to satisfy the need for public school teachers in an academic field identified for at least 3 years as an area of critical shortage.

(b) The State Board of Education shall identify areas of extraordinary shortage by a procedure substantially similar to that set forth in § 18-1405 of this subtitle.

(c) The repayment of the tuition assistance award of a recipient who is not yet required by the provisions of § 18-1404 OF THIS SUBTITLE to begin repayment of the award and who accepts employment as a public school teacher in an area identified as an area of extraordinary shortage in the recipient's academic field, whether or not the area remains so identified, shall be forgiven, for the purposes of § 18-1404 OF THIS SUBTITLE, at the rate of 1