

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 770

By: Roberts of the Senate
and
Begley of the House

An Act relating to schools; amending Section 3, Chapter 181, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-204.2), which relates to the Education Leadership Oklahoma Act; modifying purposes of Education Leadership Oklahoma program; providing technical assistance and mentors to certain teachers; clarifying statutory references; providing certain reimbursement to certain teachers who achieve National Board certification; providing certain recognition for National Board certified teachers; specifying membership of certain applicant review committee; increasing number of scholarship recipients; specifying scholarship amount; stating legislative intent that the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation contract with Southeastern Oklahoma State University to establish certain training program; requiring the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation to promulgate certain rules; requiring school districts to provide teachers seeking National Board certification certain professional days; stating amount of certain bonus; requiring issuance of certain bonus by certain date; prohibiting consideration of certain bonus for certain purposes; requiring the State Board of Education to promulgate rules verifying eligibility

for certain bonus; stating legislative intent that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education incorporate National Board certification portfolio development into certain degree programs; amending 70 O.S. 1991, Section 1-109, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 324, O.S.L. 1992 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 1-109), which relates to the length of the school year; providing for certain professional days for teachers; amending Section 5, Chapter 181, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-204.4), which relates to the Oklahoma National Board Certification Revolving Fund; requiring State Board of Education to transfer certain funds to Education Leadership Oklahoma Revolving Fund by certain date; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 3, Chapter 181, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-204.2), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-204.2 A. Subject to the availability of funds, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation and the State Board of Education are hereby authorized to establish the Education Leadership Oklahoma program.

B. The purposes of the Education Leadership Oklahoma program are:

1. Provide teachers throughout the state information about National Board certification and the Education Leadership Oklahoma program scholarships and services;

2. Provide technical assistance and National Board certified mentors to all teachers seeking National Board certification upon request;

3. Provide scholarships, pursuant to Section 6-204 et seq. of this title and Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation rules, for teachers seeking National Board certification; and

4. Provide a bonus to teachers who achieve National Board certification pursuant to Section 6-204 et seq. of this title and State Board of Education rules;

5. Reward teachers who achieve National Board certification without the financial support of the Education Leadership Oklahoma program by awarding them the application fee and the amount of the scholarship given to Education Leadership Oklahoma participants pursuant to this section and commission rules; and

6. Provide recognition to National Board certified teachers.

C. To fulfill the objectives of Section 6-204 et seq. of this title, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall:

1. Inform teachers of the Education Leadership Oklahoma program and the scholarships and services it provides to teachers seeking National Board certification;

2. Collect and review applications to the scholarship program from interested teachers;

3. Establish an applicant review committee for the purpose of identifying scholarship recipients pursuant to Section 6-204 et seq. of this title for the Education Leadership Oklahoma program; and

4. Ensure that all scholarship recipients, alternates, and teachers seeking National Board certification independently receive adequate information regarding the level of commitment required to acquire National Board certification.

D. The applicant review committee shall:

1. Consist of:

a. five classroom teachers appointed by the State Board of Education, at least one of whom shall be a National Board certified teacher, if available,

b. five classroom teachers appointed by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation, at least one of whom shall be a National Board certified teacher, if available,

c. three classroom teachers appointed by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, at least one of whom shall be a National Board certified teacher, if available, and

d. a chair to be designated by the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation from among the appointed members; and

2. Select up to two hundred teachers for the 1998-99 class, up to four hundred teachers beginning with the 1999-2000 class and every year thereafter, and the appropriate number of alternates, who:

a. have demonstrated a commitment to excellence in teaching,

b. meet all eligibility requirements for potential certification as established by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards,

c. are employed in an Oklahoma public school, and

d. meet other requirements of the Commission.

E. Subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the Legislature for the purposes of this subsection, the application fee for National Board certification shall be paid for scholarship recipients by the Commission, and scholarship recipients shall be provided a scholarship in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to cover other expenses associated with obtaining National Board certification.

F. It is the intent of the Legislature that the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation contract with Southeastern Oklahoma State University to establish Education Leadership Oklahoma program training in higher education teacher preparation programs in the state to assist teachers in meeting the requirements to obtain National Board certification.

G. All teachers seeking National Board certification shall be eligible to participate in Education Leadership Oklahoma program training to assist them in meeting the requirements of the National Board certification process, free of charge.

H. The Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall promulgate rules for the selection of scholarship recipients, the selection and utilization of alternates, the payment and reimbursement of application fees, and the issuance of scholarships.

I. Subject to district board of education policy, teachers who have submitted an application for National Board certification shall either be allowed to utilize two (2) of their five (5) professional days for National Board certification portfolio development or be provided an additional two (2) professional days during which a substitute teacher shall be provided by the school district at no cost to the teacher.

J. The State Board of Education shall provide all teachers who attain National Board certification a bonus in the amount of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) annually no later than January 31 for as long as they maintain their National Board certification and are teaching in the classroom full-time in an Oklahoma public school. No school or school district shall be liable for payment of bonuses pursuant to this section.

K. The bonus shall not be included in the calculation of the teacher's salary for purposes of meeting the district or statutory minimum salary schedule or for purposes of compensating Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System contributions or benefits.

L. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules for the provision of the bonus pursuant to this section to include, but not be limited to, a process by which a National Board certified teacher will verify that:

1. The National Board certification has not lapsed; and
2. The teacher is still a full-time classroom teacher.

M. It is the intent of the Legislature that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education incorporate the National Board certification portfolio development into all programs in education leading to a master's level degree.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 1991, Section 1-109, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 324, O.S.L. 1992 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 1-109), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1-109. A. A school year for all public schools in Oklahoma shall consist of at least ten (10) months of four (4) weeks each, during which time school shall actually be in session and instruction offered for not less than one hundred eighty (180) days. Five (5) days may be used for attendance of professional meetings and teachers may be paid for a length of term in excess thereof, under conditions hereinafter outlined. Subject to district board of education policy, teachers who have submitted an application for National Board certification shall either be allowed to utilize two (2) of their five (5) professional days for National Board certification portfolio development or be provided an additional two (2) professional days during which a substitute teacher shall be provided by the school district at no cost to the teacher. A school district may authorize parent-teacher conferences to be held during a regular school day. Following such authorization by the school district, these conferences shall be counted towards a school day, as defined in Section 1-111 of this title, and included as part of the one hundred seventy-five (175) days of classroom instruction. A school district may maintain school for less than a full term only when conditions beyond the control of school authorities make the maintenance of the term impossible and the State Board of Education has been apprised and has expressed concurrence in writing.

B. The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for an extended day schedule. The criteria shall:

1. Prescribe a lengthened school day within limits determined not to be detrimental to quality instruction; and

2. Ensure that the schedule is equivalent in annual hours of instruction to the one-hundred-eighty-day school year specified in subsection A of this section; and

3. Be consistent with the provisions of this section and Sections 1-110 through 1-112 of this title, but may result in fewer annual days of instruction.

The State Board of Education may authorize school districts to implement an extended day schedule for instruction pursuant to the criteria developed. The State Board of Education shall require the participating school districts to prepare a report of the impact of the extended day schedule.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY Section 5, Chapter 181, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-204.4), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-204.4 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the State Board of Education to be designated the "Oklahoma National Board Certification Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies appropriated or transferred to the fund by the Legislature. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the State Board of Education to provide an annual bonus for those teachers possessing National Board certification. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of State Finance for approval and payment. The State Board of Education shall transfer all funds deposited into the Oklahoma National Board Certification Revolving Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1998, to the Education Leadership Oklahoma Revolving Fund, created in Section 6-204.3 of this title, less expenditures and encumbrances as adjusted by transfer on July 1, 1998.

SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.