

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 46th Legislature (1998)

HOUSE BILL NO. 2678

By: Turner

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to schools; amending Section 3, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-182), which relates to definitions in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act; deleting professional education from the competency examination; amending Section 6, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as amended by Section 3, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-185), which relates to teacher preparation; prohibiting skill in a language other than English for certain teacher candidates; stating legislative intent; amending Section 8, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-187), which relates to teacher competency examinations; deleting professional education from the examination; amending Section 5, Chapter 308, O.S.L. 1992, as amended by Section 9, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, and as renumbered by Section 34, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-188), which relates to teacher competency examinations; prohibiting assessment of competency in

professional education; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 3, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-182), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-182. As used in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act:

1. "Board" means the State Board of Education;
2. "Commission" means the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation;
3. "State Regents" means the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education;
4. "Licensed teacher" means any person who holds a valid license to teach, issued by the Board in accordance with the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act and the rules of the Board;
5. "Professional development program" means the program mandated by the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act for the continuous improvement and enrichment of the certified and licensed teachers of this state;
6. "Teacher education professional development committee" means the committee created in Section 6-186 of this title for the continuous improvement and enrichment of higher education faculty in teacher education programs in institutions of higher education;
7. "Department" means the State Department of Education;
8. "Residency committee" means a committee in a local school district for the purpose of reviewing the teaching performance of a resident teacher and making recommendations to the Board and the preparing institution of higher education regarding certification of the resident teacher. A residency committee shall consist of a

mentor teacher, the principal or an assistant principal of the employing school or an administrator designated by the local board and a teacher educator in a college or school of education of an institution of higher education, or an educator in a department or school outside the institution's teacher education unit. Provided that, if available, qualified mentor teachers shall have expertise in the teaching field of the resident teacher and, if possible, the higher education members of the residency committee shall have expertise and experience in the teaching field of the resident teacher. However, in all cases, at least one member of the residency committee shall have expertise and experience in the teaching field of the resident teacher;

9. "Teacher" means a person defined as a teacher in Section 1-116 of this title;

10. "Resident teacher" means any licensed teacher who is employed in an accredited school to serve as a teacher under the guidance and assistance of a mentor teacher and residency committee. Any such person shall have completed the program of the college or school of education of the accredited institution of higher education from which the person has been graduated, and shall have successfully completed the competency examination in areas of approval in which the resident teacher seeks certification;

11. "Certified teacher" means any teacher who has been issued a certificate by the Board in accordance with the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act and the rules of the Board;

12. "Mentor teacher" means any teacher holding a standard certificate who is employed in a school district to serve as a teacher and who has been appointed to provide guidance and assistance to a resident teacher employed by the school district. A mentor teacher shall be a classroom teacher and have a minimum of two (2) years of classroom teaching experience as a certified teacher.

A mentor teacher shall be selected by the principal from a list submitted by the bargaining unit where one exists. In the absence of a bargaining agent, the teachers shall elect the names to be submitted. No teacher may serve as a mentor teacher for more than one resident teacher at a time;

13. "Higher education faculty" means any individual who is employed in a teaching capacity in an institution of higher education, approved or accredited by the Commission for the preparation of education personnel; and

14. "Competency examination" means the assessment required in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act for licensure and certification as a teacher and shall consist of tests over general education, ~~professional education~~ and subject areas as defined by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY Section 6, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as amended by Section 3, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-185), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-185. A. The following competencies and methods shall be incorporated into the programs approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation for the competency-based teacher preparation system provided for the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act:

1. The teacher preparation system shall include, but not be limited to, the following competencies:

- a. excellence in the arts and sciences,
- b. an in-depth knowledge of the subject matter to be taught,
- c. the ability to identify and cultivate talent and potential in students,
- d. an understanding of child and human development,
- e. teaching skills developed through a variety of learning experiences,

- f. the ability to interact effectively with all students,
- g. skills necessary for working with parents, guardians and custodians of students in the education process,
- h. skills necessary to involve the community in education,
- i. skills to foster teamwork within and among schools, and
- j. for administrators, skills necessary to be an effective leader of a school or school district.

Provided, no skill in any language other than English shall be required of teacher candidates for successful completion of a teacher education program unless the candidate seeks licensure and certification to teach a foreign language;

2. The preservice program shall include the following methods to achieve the competencies listed in paragraph 1 of this subsection:

- a. require teacher candidates to study arts and sciences at the undergraduate level,
- b. require secondary and elementary/secondary teacher candidates to have undergraduate majors, or their equivalents, in a subject area, and require teacher candidates in early childhood, elementary, and special education to have subject area concentrations which allow qualification as a generalist,
- c. require teacher candidates to study the individuality of students, the capacity of students to learn and the process of learning,
- d. integrate curriculum from other disciplines with the education curriculum,
- e. require teacher candidates to have training experiences and personal contact with parents, guardians or custodians of school-age children,

- f. require teacher candidates to have community involvement experience, and
- g. structure courses so as to require teamwork activities;

3. Prior to July 1, 1997, the State Board of Education, and on and after July 1, 1997, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall not require more than a four-year program of one hundred twenty-four (124) semester hours to complete a teacher education degree. Provided, any program approved by the State Board of Education prior to July 1, 1995, which requires more hours may continue to require such hours. Any program approved prior to July 1, 1995, which requires more than one hundred twenty-four (124) semester hours for a teacher education degree shall implement requirements for this program without additional hours.

B. It is the intent of the Legislature that institutions of higher education which offer teacher education programs hold such programs accountable for meeting the licensure and certification competencies approved by the State Board of Education. It is the intent of the Legislature that the teacher education programs incorporate a curriculum to achieve the competency-based system and include integration of the teacher preparation curricula with the arts and sciences departments curricula; provided, unless a teacher candidate is seeking licensure and certification to teach a foreign language, it is the intent of the Legislature that skill in any language other than English not be a requirement for successful completion of a teacher education program. Each institution of higher education which seeks accreditation or approval for its teacher education program shall develop an institution plan which follows the State Board of Education competencies for licensure and certification. In developing such institution plans, the higher education institution shall establish a process which seeks information and input from teacher preparation faculty, faculty from

arts and sciences and other programs and disciplines which are appropriate, students within the teacher education program, teachers, administrators, parents, guardians or custodians of students and business and community leaders. Each institution shall hold an annual public forum subject to the provisions of the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act regarding the content of the institution plan at which public comment on either the institution's teacher preparation plan or program is solicited. The institution's plan shall be accessible to any interested party under the Oklahoma Open Records Act. No institution of higher education's teacher education program shall be approved by the Commission unless the institution plan has been approved by that institution's governing board. Initial institution plans shall be filed with the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation by January 1, 1997, and as required by the Commission thereafter. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may facilitate the development of institution plans to assist institutions of higher education.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY Section 8, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 344, O.S.L. 1997 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-187. A. A competency examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation for the general education, ~~professional education~~ and various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or teacher in the subject area the person is seeking licensure or certification to teach which shall also include licensure or certification as an administrator, as prescribed by the State Board of Education.

The Commission, consistent with the purposes of this section, shall promulgate rules and procedures to guarantee the confidentiality of examinations.

B. Following completion of the junior year or after having completed ninety (90) college credit hours, each teacher candidate shall be eligible to take the examination. No teacher candidate shall be eligible for licensing until successfully completing the competency examination. Certification shall be limited to areas of approval in which the licensed or certified teacher has successfully completed the examination. Testing for certification for subjects in which a teacher candidate or teacher is seeking a minor teaching assignment or an endorsement to teach shall be limited to the specific subject area test.

A teacher candidate or teacher may take the general education, ~~professional education~~ or subject area portions of the examination subject to any limit imposed by the Commission.

C. A teacher may be certified in as many areas as the teacher meets the necessary requirements provided by law and has successfully completed the subject area portion of the examination.

D. The Commission shall offer the first competency examination beginning July 1, 1997, but no later than October 1, 1997. Thereafter, the examination shall be offered at least four times per calendar year on dates to be established by the Commission.

E. Nothing in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall restrict the right of the State Board of Education to issue an emergency or provisional certificate, as needed. Provided, however, prior to the issuance of an emergency certificate, the local district shall document substantial efforts to employ a teacher who holds a provisional or standard certificate or who is licensed in the teaching profession. In the event a district is unable to hire an individual meeting this criteria, the district shall document efforts to employ an individual with a provisional or standard certificate or with a license in another curricular area with academic preparation in the field of need. Only after these alternatives have been exhausted shall the district be allowed to

employ an individual meeting minimum standards as established by the State Board of Education for the issuance of emergency certificates.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY Section 5, Chapter 308, O.S.L. 1992, as amended by Section 9, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, and as renumbered by Section 34, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995 (70 O.S. Supp. 1997, Section 6-188), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-188. The curriculum examination which was required by Section 6-156 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall be restructured into a competency examination by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation with the assistance of the State Board of Education, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education in accordance with the provisions of Section ~~5~~ 6-184 of this ~~act~~ title concurrently with the development of the new teacher preparation system. The competency-based teacher examination shall replace the current teacher curriculum examination which was established in Sections 6-150 through 6-158 and 6-162 through 6-170 of this title. The new teacher competency examination shall be ready for implementation and administered by the Commission beginning July 1, 1997. Provided, beginning July 1, 1998, assessment of a teaching candidate's professional education competency shall no longer be a part of the teacher competency examination. The competency examination shall serve as a threshold for entry into the profession.

By September 1, 1995, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall develop and release a request for proposals for the state teacher competency examination which assesses candidates for licensure and certification for demonstrated competency in subject matter, professional education, and state core knowledge and skills assessment, which includes critical thinking, communication and computation. The Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall accept bids in an open, competitive bidding process until

January 1, 1996. The Commission shall review all bids and proposals and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by March 1, 1996. In evaluating the bids and proposals the Commission shall take into consideration the cost of developing, administering and scoring the competency examination, the cost to each individual tested and to the state, and shall factor in the cost of periodically updating the state competency examination. The curriculum examination as was required by Section 6-156 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes and in effect July 1, 1994, shall continue to be offered by the State Board of Education until July 1, 1997. Beginning July 1, 1997, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall have authority to continue to offer that examination as needed and to determine whether a student should take that test in lieu of the competency examination.

SECTION 5. This act shall become effective July 1, 1998.

SECTION 6. 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.

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