

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 48th Legislature (2001)

SENATE BILL 730

By: Coffee

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. 2000, Section 6-182), which relates to the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act; modifying selection procedure for mentor teachers; amending Section 15, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 289, O.S.L. 2000 (70 O.S. Supp. 2000, Section 6-194), which relates to local professional development programs; modifying selection procedure for teacher members of local professional development committee; providing for construction; and providing an effective date.

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. 2000, 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~~ qualified applicants. Administrators shall post mentoring positions so that any interested teacher who meets the qualifications may apply. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent any association or group from recommending or supporting qualified applicants. 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 15, Chapter 322, O.S.L. 1995, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 289, O.S.L. 2000 (70 O.S. Supp. 2000, Section 6-194), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-194. A. The local boards of education of this state shall establish professional development programs for the certified and licensed teachers and administrators of the district. Programs shall be adopted by each local board of education based upon recommendations of a professional development committee appointed by the board of education for the district. The State Board of Education shall disseminate to each local professional development committee a copy of the in-service professional development competencies included in the Report on Educator Preparation and Professional Development issued in December 1994 by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation for review and consideration and, if approved by the local professional development committee, to be included in part or in whole in the local professional development plan of the school district. The professional development centers funded through the State Board of Education shall provide technical assistance to any local school district which desires to incorporate any such competencies into its local professional development plan.

B. Each local professional development committee shall include classroom teachers, administrators and parents, guardians or custodians of children in the local school district and shall consult with a higher education faculty. A majority of the members of the professional development committee shall be composed of classroom teachers. The teacher members shall be selected by the district board of education from applications ~~a list of names submitted by the bargaining agent, where one exists~~ teachers within the school district for consideration. ~~In the absence of a bargaining agent, the teachers will elect a list of names to be submitted to the local board of education. At a minimum, once every four (4) years the committee shall include at least one school counselor in its membership~~ Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent an organization or group from submitting recommendations of candidates.

C. The professional development programs adopted may include, but not be limited to:

1. In-service training programs;
2. Higher education courses; and
3. Professional development programs approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation.

Programs shall emphasize development of competencies in the core curriculum areas. Each program shall include a component on outreach to parents, guardians or custodians of students and multicultural education, which all personnel defined as teachers in Section 1-116 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall be required to complete on a periodic basis. Each adopted program shall allow school counselors to receive at least one-third (1/3) of the hours or credit required each year through programs or courses specifically designed for school counselors. Programs shall be submitted for approval to the Board. No school district shall receive state funds for professional development until the program adopted by the local board of education has been approved by the Board.

D. Teachers and administrators who have completed professional development courses in their field of instruction or in courses related to obtaining additional professional qualifications and who complete such courses and receive a grade which is equivalent to at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 grading scale may be reimbursed by the school district for one-half (1/2) of the general enrollment fees incurred at any institution within The Oklahoma State System ~~for~~ of Higher Education. If the teacher or administrator incurs costs pursuant to this section at a private institution of higher education, the person may be reimbursed by the school district for an amount equal to one-half (1/2) of the general enrollment fees incurred at an institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education of comparable type.

E. If funds are made available specifically for such purpose, teachers who have completed professional development programs approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall receive a stipend based on the amount of funds allocated. No school district shall receive state funds for teacher stipends until such time as proof of the teacher's attendance and completion of the program has been determined by the State Department of Education.

F. Each licensed or certified teacher in this state shall be required by the local board of education to meet the professional development requirements established by the board, or established through the negotiation process. Failure of any teacher to meet local board of education professional development requirements may be grounds for nonrenewal of such teacher's contract by the local board of education. Such failure may also be grounds for nonconsideration of salary increments affecting the teacher.

G. The professional development plan shall be submitted to the State Board of Education as provided in Section 3-104.2 et seq. of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2001.

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