

1 **SENATE FLOOR VERSION**

2 March 24, 2014

3 ENGROSSED HOUSE
4 BILL NO. 2548

By: Nelson, McDaniel (Jeannie),
Coody, Walker and Henke of
the House

5 and

6 Crain of the Senate
7

8
9 An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2011,
10 Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 3, Chapter
336, O.S.L. 2013 (70 O.S. Supp. 2013, Section 6-187),
11 which relates to teacher competency examinations;
12 requiring certain subject area competency
13 examinations to be offered in the native language of
14 the teacher under certain circumstances; requiring
15 additional examinations to be taken in English under
16 certain circumstances; directing the State Board of
17 Education to issue a restricted license or
18 certificate; providing an effective date; and
19 declaring an emergency.
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

22 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as
23 last amended by Section 3, Chapter 336, O.S.L. 2013 (70 O.S. Supp.
24 2013, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-187. A. Prior to July 1, 2014, a competency
examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher
Preparation and beginning July 1, 2014, a competency examination
shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and

1 Accountability for the general education, professional education and
2 various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring
3 academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or
4 teacher in the subject area the person is seeking licensure or
5 certification to teach which shall also include licensure or
6 certification as an administrator, as prescribed by the State Board
7 of Education.

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

11 B. No teacher candidate shall be eligible for licensing until
12 successfully completing the competency examination except those
13 candidates who make application to the State Board and meet the
14 criteria for the alternative placement program pursuant to Section
15 6-122.3 of this title. Certification shall be limited to areas of
16 approval in which the licensed or certified teacher has successfully
17 completed the examination. Subject to the provisions of subsection
18 C of this section, testing for certification for subjects in which a
19 teacher candidate or teacher is seeking a minor teaching assignment
20 or an endorsement to teach shall be limited to the specific subject
21 area test.

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

1 C. 1. Except as otherwise provided for in this subsection, a
2 teacher may be certified in as many areas as the teacher meets the
3 necessary requirements provided by law and has successfully
4 completed the subject area portion of the examination.

5 2. Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph,
6 certification in early childhood, elementary, or special education
7 shall require completion of an appropriate teacher education program
8 approved by the Commission.

9 Any teacher who is certified to teach elementary education may
10 be certified in early childhood education upon meeting the
11 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the
12 appropriate subject area portion of the examination. Any teacher
13 who is certified to teach early childhood education may be certified
14 in elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in
15 law and successful completion of the appropriate subject area
16 portion of the examination. Any special education teacher who
17 becomes certified to teach through completion of an accredited
18 teacher preparation program may be certified in early childhood or
19 elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in law
20 and successful completion of the appropriate subject portion of the
21 examination. Any teacher who becomes certified to teach through
22 completion of an accredited teacher preparation program or becomes
23 alternatively certified to teach through the Troops to Teachers
24 program may be certified in special education upon meeting the

1 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the
2 appropriate subject area portion of the examination.

3 D. The Commission shall offer the competency examination at
4 least four times per calendar year on dates to be established by the
5 Commission.

6 E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English
7 speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency
8 examination in the native language of the teacher candidate or
9 teacher only if the teacher candidate or teacher is employed or has
10 been offered employment by a school district as a teacher in a
11 foreign language immersion program offered by the school district.
12 If a non-native-English speaker who has received certification in a
13 subject area after taking the subject area competency examination in
14 the native language of the speaker seeks to add a certification area
15 in the future and that person is no longer employed as a teacher in
16 a foreign language immersion program, the examination for the
17 additional certification area shall be taken in English. The State
18 Board of Education shall issue a restricted license or certificate
19 to any teacher who has completed a subject area competency
20 examination in the native language of the teacher as provided for in
21 this subsection restricting the teacher to teaching only in a
22 foreign language immersion program.

23 F. Nothing in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall
24 restrict the right of the State Board of Education to issue an

1 emergency or provisional certificate, as needed. Provided, however,
2 prior to the issuance of an emergency certificate, the district
3 shall document substantial efforts to employ a teacher who holds a
4 provisional or standard certificate or who is licensed in the
5 teaching profession. In the event a district is unable to hire an
6 individual meeting this criteria, the district shall document
7 efforts to employ an individual with a provisional or standard
8 certificate or with a license in another curricular area with
9 academic preparation in the field of need. Only after these
10 alternatives have been exhausted shall the district be allowed to
11 employ an individual meeting minimum standards as established by the
12 State Board of Education for the issuance of emergency certificates.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2014.

14 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
15 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
16 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
17 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

18 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
19 March 24, 2014 - DO PASS
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