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April 10, 2017

ENGROSSED HOUSE
BILL NO. 1206

By: Casey and Newton of the
House

and

Pemberton of the Senate

An Act relating to education; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 31, Chapter 54, O.S.L. 2015 (70 O.S. Supp. 2016, Section 6-187), which relates to competency examinations; providing for additional certification of special education teachers in certain instances; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 31, Chapter 54, O.S.L. 2015 (70 O.S. Supp. 2016, 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 Accountability for the general education, professional education and various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring

1 academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or
2 teacher in the subject area the person is seeking certification to
3 teach which shall also include certification as an administrator, as
4 prescribed by the State Board of Education.

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

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

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

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

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

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

education teacher who has not completed a Commission-approved
teacher education program in elementary education or early childhood
education but who has successfully completed the subject area
portion of the examination may be certified in elementary education
or early childhood education for the purpose of providing direct
instruction and serving as the teacher of record for grading
purposes in special education settings only.

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

E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency examination in the native language of the teacher candidate or teacher only if the teacher candidate or teacher is employed or has been offered employment by a school district as a teacher in a foreign language immersion program offered by the school district. If a non-native-English speaker who has received certification in a subject area after taking the subject area competency examination in the native language of the speaker seeks to add a certification area in the future and that person is no longer employed as a teacher in a foreign language immersion program, the examination for the additional certification area shall be taken in English. The State Board of Education shall issue a restricted license or certificate to any teacher who has completed a subject area competency

1 examination in the native language of the teacher as provided for in
2 this subsection restricting the teacher to teaching only in a
3 foreign language immersion program.

4 F. Nothing in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall
5 restrict the right of the State Board of Education to issue an
6 emergency or provisional certificate, as needed. Provided, however,
7 prior to the issuance of an emergency certificate, the district
8 shall document substantial efforts to employ a teacher who holds a
9 provisional or standard certificate. In the event a district is
10 unable to hire an individual meeting this criteria, the district
11 shall document efforts to employ an individual with a provisional or
12 standard certificate in another curricular area with academic
13 preparation in the field of need. Only after these alternatives
14 have been exhausted shall the district be allowed to employ an
15 individual meeting minimum standards as established by the State
16 Board of Education for the issuance of emergency certificates.

17 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2017.

18 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
19 April 10, 2017 - DO PASS
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