

1 ENGROSSED SENATE  
2 BILL NO. 1115

By: Sharp of the Senate

3 and

4 Sterling of the House  
5

6 An Act relating to teacher certification; amending 70  
7 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section  
8 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp. 2019,  
9 Section 6-187), which relates to competency  
10 examinations for teacher certification; allowing the  
11 State Board of Education to renew an emergency or  
12 provisional certificate if certain criteria are met;  
13 clarifying that individuals with an emergency or  
14 provisional certificate are not entitled to  
15 protections of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990;  
16 amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as last  
17 amended by Section 2, Chapter 165, O.S.L. 2018 (70  
18 O.S. Supp. 2019, Section 6-122.3), which relates to  
19 alternative placement teaching certificates; allowing  
20 the State Board of Education, in certain  
21 consultation, to grant an exception to certain  
22 subject area examination requirement in certain field  
23 if candidate has certain advanced degree; and  
24 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 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp.  
2019, 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

1 shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and  
2 Accountability for the general education, professional education and  
3 various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring  
4 academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or  
5 teacher in the subject area the person is seeking certification to  
6 teach which shall also include certification as an administrator, as  
7 prescribed by the State Board 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 certification  
12 until successfully completing the competency examination except  
13 those candidates who make application to the State Board and meet  
14 the criteria for the alternative placement program pursuant to  
15 Section 6-122.3 of this title. Certification shall be limited to  
16 areas of approval in which the 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. Any special  
3 education teacher who has not completed a Commission-approved  
4 teacher education program in elementary education or early childhood  
5 education but who has successfully completed the subject area  
6 portion of the examination may be certified in elementary education  
7 or early childhood education for the purpose of providing direct  
8 instruction and serving as the teacher of record for grading  
9 purposes in special education settings only.

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

13 E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English  
14 speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency  
15 examination in the native language of the teacher candidate or  
16 teacher only if the teacher candidate or teacher is employed or has  
17 been offered employment by a school district as a teacher in a  
18 foreign language immersion program offered by the school district.  
19 If a non-native-English speaker who has received certification in a  
20 subject area after taking the subject area competency examination in  
21 the native language of the speaker seeks to add a certification area  
22 in the future and that person is no longer employed as a teacher in  
23 a foreign language immersion program, the examination for the  
24 additional certification area shall be taken in English. The State

1 Board of Education shall issue a restricted license or certificate  
2 to any teacher who has completed a subject area competency  
3 examination in the native language of the teacher as provided for in  
4 this subsection restricting the teacher to teaching only in a  
5 foreign language immersion program.

6 F. 1. Nothing in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall  
7 restrict the right of the State Board of Education to issue an  
8 emergency or provisional certificate, as needed. Provided, however,  
9 prior to the issuance of an emergency certificate, the district  
10 shall document substantial efforts to employ a teacher who holds a  
11 provisional or standard certificate. In the event a district is  
12 unable to hire an individual meeting this criteria, the district  
13 shall document efforts to employ an individual with a provisional or  
14 standard certificate in another curricular area with academic  
15 preparation in the field of need. Only after these alternatives  
16 have been exhausted shall the district be allowed to employ an  
17 individual meeting minimum standards as established by the State  
18 Board of Education for the issuance of emergency certificates.

19 2. The State Board of Education may renew the emergency or  
20 provisional certificate of an individual who has been employed by a  
21 school district board of education for at least two (2) years if the  
22 following criteria are met:  
23  
24

- 1        a. the individual has been granted an emergency or  
2        provisional certificate pursuant to paragraph 1 of  
3        this subsection for two (2) years,  
4        b. the individual has not successfully completed the  
5        competency examinations required by this section,  
6        c. the individual submits a portfolio of his or her work  
7        to the State Board of Education, which shall include  
8        evidence of progress toward standard certification,  
9        d. the employing school district board of education  
10       agrees to renew the individual's contract to teach for  
11       the ensuing fiscal year, and  
12       e. the superintendent of the employing school district  
13       submits to the State Board of Education the reason the  
14       emergency or provisional certificate should be renewed  
15       and provides evidence of the district's inability to  
16       hire a teacher who holds a standard certificate.

17       3. Individuals employed by a school district under an emergency  
18       or provisional certificate shall not be considered career teachers  
19       and therefore not entitled to the protections of the Teacher Due  
20       Process Act of 1990.

21       SECTION 2.       AMENDATORY       70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as  
22       last amended by Section 2, Chapter 165, O.S.L. 2018 (70 O.S. Supp.  
23       2019, Section 6-122.3), is amended to read as follows:  
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1       Section 6-122.3. A. The State Board of Education shall grant  
2 an alternative placement teaching certificate to a person who makes  
3 application to the Board and meets the following criteria:

4       1. a. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an  
5 institution whose accreditation is recognized by the  
6 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has  
7 attained a retention grade point average of not less  
8 than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, or

9       b. has successfully completed a terminal degree, such as  
10 a doctorate of philosophy, a doctorate in education,  
11 professional doctorates, a master of fine arts degree  
12 or a master of library science degree, from an  
13 institution accredited by a national or regional  
14 accrediting agency which is recognized by the  
15 Secretary of the United States Department of  
16 Education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher  
17 Education shall be consulted to verify other terminal  
18 degrees, or

19       c. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an  
20 institution whose accreditation is recognized by the  
21 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has  
22 qualified work experience in a field that corresponds  
23 to an area of certification as determined by the State  
24 Board of Education, and

1           d.    in addition to the requirements of subparagraphs a, b  
2                   and c of this paragraph, has demonstrated competency  
3                   or completed a major in a field that corresponds to an  
4                   area of specialization for an Elementary-Secondary  
5                   Certificate or a Secondary Certificate as determined  
6                   by the State Board of Education or a vocational-  
7                   technical certificate as recommended by the Oklahoma  
8                   Department of Career and Technology Education;

9           2.   Declares the intention to earn standard certification by  
10           means of an alternative placement program in not more than three (3)  
11           years. The State Board of Education shall determine the subject  
12           matter and the number of clock or semester hours required for the  
13           professional education component for each person making application  
14           for an alternative placement teaching certificate based on the  
15           criteria of paragraph 1 of this subsection.

16           The State Board of Education shall establish a core minimum of  
17           six (6) semester hours or ninety (90) clock hours and a maximum of  
18           eighteen (18) semester hours or two hundred seventy (270) clock  
19           hours for the professional education component.

20           The requirements set forth in this subsection shall exclude all  
21           student teaching requirements pursuant to the provisions of  
22           subsection E of this section;

23           3.   Has passed the general education and subject area portions  
24           of the competency examination required in Section 6-187 of this



1 title in the area of specialization for which certification is  
2 sought; and

3 4. Either presents a document from an accredited public school  
4 district in this state offering employment in the area of  
5 specialization for which certification is sought on condition that  
6 the person enroll in an alternative placement program approved by  
7 the State Board of Education or declares the intention to seek  
8 employment as a teacher at an accredited public school district in  
9 this state. The certificate granted pursuant to this subsection  
10 shall be considered a "valid certificate of qualification" for the  
11 purposes of Sections 6-107 and 6-108 of this title, and the holder  
12 of the certificate shall be considered an inductee for the purposes  
13 of Section 6-195 of this title.

14 B. An alternative placement teaching certificate shall be  
15 renewed for not more than a maximum of three (3) years upon  
16 presentation of a document from an accredited public school district  
17 in this state offering renewed employment in the same area of  
18 specialization and a document from a teacher education institution  
19 verifying satisfactory progress in an appropriate alternative  
20 placement program.

21 C. Persons enrolled in an alternative placement program shall:

22 1. Have never been denied admittance to a teacher education  
23 program approved by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education,  
24 the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and by the

Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation to offer teacher education programs, nor have enrolled in and subsequently failed courses necessary to successfully meet the minimum requirements of the program, except those persons who hold a certificate;

2. Have on file with the director of teacher education at an Oklahoma institution of higher education a plan for meeting standard certification requirements within three (3) years; and

3. Participate in an induction program as required in Section 6-195 of this title and have the same duties and responsibilities as other inductees.

D. The State Board of Education may grant an exception to the requirements for certification and, upon demonstration by an individual of specific competency in the subject area of specialization, may grant a certificate to the individual. The State Board may establish other requirements necessary to grant exceptions.

E. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability, may grant an exception to the requirement to complete a subject area examination for initial certification in a field which does not require an advanced degree pursuant to this section if the candidate has an advanced degree in a subject that is substantially comparable to the content assessed on a subject area examination. The degree shall be from an institution accredited by a national or regional accrediting

1 agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department  
2 of Education. The Commission shall provide the Board with the  
3 necessary information to determine comparability.

4 F. Student teaching and a prestudent teaching field experience  
5 shall not be required of alternative placement program participants  
6 for standard certification.

7 ~~F.~~ G. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules  
8 authorizing adjunct teachers who shall be persons with distinguished  
9 qualifications in their field. Adjunct teachers shall not be  
10 required to meet standard certification. Adjunct teachers shall be  
11 limited to two hundred seventy (270) clock hours of classroom  
12 teaching per semester.

13 ~~G.~~ H. Each teacher education institution shall provide the  
14 Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation an annual report of  
15 information as specified by the Commission regarding participation  
16 in the alternative placement programs offered by the institution.

17 ~~H.~~ I. The Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall not  
18 accredit, renew the accreditation of, or otherwise approve any  
19 teacher education program of any institution of higher education in  
20 this state that has not implemented alternative placement programs  
21 in at least four areas of specialization, including mathematics,  
22 science and a foreign language. Each institution shall allow  
23 individuals who meet the criteria of subsections A and C of this  
24 section to be:

1. Admitted to an alternative placement program without further qualification; and

2. Offered the opportunity to complete the requirements for standard certification set forth in subsection A of this section during the summer preceding and the summer following the first year of teaching with an alternative placement teaching certificate. Any person seeking standard certification through an alternative placement program shall be permitted to take necessary courses during regular semesters if offered.

~~4.~~ J. The criteria specified in subsection ~~4~~ I of this section can be met through a cooperative arrangement entered into by two or more institutions of higher education.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2020.

Passed the Senate the 10th day of March, 2020.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
2020.

Presiding Officer of the House  
of Representatives