

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 57th Legislature (2019)

SENATE BILL NO. 776

By: Hicks

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to teacher certification; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 165, O.S.L. 2018 (70 O.S. Supp. 2018, Section 6-122.3), which relates to alternative placement teaching certificates; removing requirement to pass the general education portions of the competency examination for an alternative placement certificate; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp. 2018, Section 6-187), which relates to competency examinations for teachers; removing requirement for general education and professional education examinations; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 165, O.S.L. 2018 (70 O.S. Supp. 2018, Section 6-122.3), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-122.3. A. The State Board of Education shall grant an alternative placement teaching certificate to a person who makes application to the Board and meets the following criteria:

1. a. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution whose accreditation is recognized by the

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has attained a retention grade point average of not less than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, or

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

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

d. in addition to the requirements of subparagraphs a, b and c of this paragraph, has demonstrated competency or completed a major in a field that corresponds to an area of specialization for an Elementary-Secondary Certificate or a Secondary Certificate as determined

1 by the State Board of Education or a vocational-
2 technical certificate as recommended by the Oklahoma
3 Department of Career and Technology Education;

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

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

15 The requirements set forth in this subsection shall exclude all
16 student teaching requirements pursuant to the provisions of
17 subsection E of this section;

18 3. Has passed the ~~general education~~ and subject area portions
19 of the competency examination required in Section 6-187 of this
20 title in the area of specialization for which certification is
21 sought; and

22 4. Either presents a document from an accredited public school
23 district in this state offering employment in the area of
24 specialization for which certification is sought on condition that

1 the person enroll in an alternative placement program approved by
2 the State Board of Education or declares the intention to seek
3 employment as a teacher at an accredited public school district in
4 this state. The certificate granted pursuant to this subsection
5 shall be considered a "valid certificate of qualification" for the
6 purposes of Sections 6-107 and 6-108 of this title, and the holder
7 of the certificate shall be considered an inductee for the purposes
8 of Section 6-195 of this title.

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

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

17 1. Have never been denied admittance to a teacher education
18 program approved by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education,
19 the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and by the
20 Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation to offer teacher
21 education programs, nor have enrolled in and subsequently failed
22 courses necessary to successfully meet the minimum requirements of
23 the program, except those persons who hold a certificate;
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1 2. Have on file with the director of teacher education at an
2 Oklahoma institution of higher education a plan for meeting standard
3 certification requirements within three (3) years; and

4 3. Participate in an induction program as required in Section
5 6-195 of this title and have the same duties and responsibilities as
6 other inductees.

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

13 E. Student teaching and a prestudent teaching field experience
14 shall not be required of alternative placement program participants
15 for standard certification.

16 F. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules
17 authorizing adjunct teachers who shall be persons with distinguished
18 qualifications in their field. Adjunct teachers shall not be
19 required to meet standard certification. Adjunct teachers shall be
20 limited to two hundred seventy (270) clock hours of classroom
21 teaching per semester.

22 G. Each teacher education institution shall provide the
23 Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation an annual report of
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1 information as specified by the Commission regarding participation
2 in the alternative placement programs offered by the institution.

3 H. The Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall not
4 accredit, renew the accreditation of, or otherwise approve any
5 teacher education program of any institution of higher education in
6 this state that has not implemented alternative placement programs
7 in at least four areas of specialization, including mathematics,
8 science and a foreign language. Each institution shall allow
9 individuals who meet the criteria of subsections A and C of this
10 section to be:

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

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

20 I. The criteria specified in subsection H of this section can
21 be met through a cooperative arrangement entered into by two or more
22 institutions of higher education.

1 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as
2 last amended by Section 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp.
3 2018, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

4 Section 6-187. A. Prior to July 1, 2014, a competency
5 examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher
6 Preparation and beginning July 1, 2014, a competency examination
7 shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and
8 Accountability for the ~~general education, professional education and~~
9 various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring
10 academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or
11 teacher in the subject area the person is seeking certification to
12 teach which shall also include certification as an administrator, as
13 prescribed by the State Board of Education.

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

17 B. No teacher candidate shall be eligible for certification
18 until successfully completing the competency examination except
19 those candidates who make application to the State Board and meet
20 the criteria for the alternative placement program pursuant to
21 Section 6-122.3 of this title. Certification shall be limited to
22 areas of approval in which the certified teacher has successfully
23 completed the examination. Subject to the provisions of subsection
24 C of this section, testing for certification for subjects in which a

1 teacher candidate or teacher is seeking a minor teaching assignment
2 or an endorsement to teach shall be limited to the specific subject
3 area test.

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

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

11 2. Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph,
12 certification in early childhood, elementary, or special education
13 shall require completion of an appropriate teacher education program
14 approved by the Commission.

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

1 elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in law
2 and successful completion of the appropriate subject portion of the
3 examination. Any teacher who becomes certified to teach through
4 completion of an accredited teacher preparation program or becomes
5 alternatively certified to teach through the Troops to Teachers
6 program may be certified in special education upon meeting the
7 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the
8 appropriate subject area portion of the examination. Any special
9 education teacher who has not completed a Commission-approved
10 teacher education program in elementary education or early childhood
11 education but who has successfully completed the subject area
12 portion of the examination may be certified in elementary education
13 or early childhood education for the purpose of providing direct
14 instruction and serving as the teacher of record for grading
15 purposes in special education settings only.

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

19 E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English
20 speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency
21 examination in the native language of the teacher candidate or
22 teacher only if the teacher candidate or teacher is employed or has
23 been offered employment by a school district as a teacher in a
24 foreign language immersion program offered by the school district.

1 If a non-native-English speaker who has received certification in a
2 subject area after taking the subject area competency examination in
3 the native language of the speaker seeks to add a certification area
4 in the future and that person is no longer employed as a teacher in
5 a foreign language immersion program, the examination for the
6 additional certification area shall be taken in English. The State
7 Board of Education shall issue a restricted license or certificate
8 to any teacher who has completed a subject area competency
9 examination in the native language of the teacher as provided for in
10 this subsection restricting the teacher to teaching only in a
11 foreign language immersion program.

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

1 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2019.

2 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
3 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
4 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
5 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.
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