

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 2nd Session of the 57th Legislature (2020)

3 HOUSE BILL 3723

By: Waldron and Provenzano

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6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2011,  
8 Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter  
9 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp. 2019, Section 6-187),  
10 which relates to competency examinations; exempting  
11 certain teacher candidates from fee or payment for  
12 competency examinations under certain circumstances;  
and providing an effective date.

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

14 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as  
15 last amended by Section 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp.  
16 2019, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

17 Section 6-187. A. Prior to July 1, 2014, a competency  
18 examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher  
19 Preparation and beginning July 1, 2014, a competency examination  
20 shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and  
21 Accountability for the general education, professional education and  
22 various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring  
23 academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or  
24 teacher in the subject area the person is seeking certification to

1 teach which shall also include certification as an administrator, as  
2 prescribed by the State Board of Education.

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

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

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

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

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

5        Any teacher who is certified to teach elementary education may  
6 be certified in early childhood education upon meeting the  
7 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the  
8 appropriate subject area portion of the examination. Any teacher  
9 who is certified to teach early childhood education may be certified  
10 in elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in  
11 law and successful completion of the appropriate subject area  
12 portion of the examination. Any special education teacher who  
13 becomes certified to teach through completion of an accredited  
14 teacher preparation program may be certified in early childhood or  
15 elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in law  
16 and successful completion of the appropriate subject portion of the  
17 examination. Any teacher who becomes certified to teach through  
18 completion of an accredited teacher preparation program or becomes  
19 alternatively certified to teach through the Troops to Teachers  
20 program may be certified in special education upon meeting the  
21 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the  
22 appropriate subject area portion of the examination. Any special  
23 education teacher who has not completed a Commission-approved  
24 teacher education program in elementary education or early childhood

1 education but who has successfully completed the subject area  
2 portion of the examination may be certified in elementary education  
3 or early childhood education for the purpose of providing direct  
4 instruction and serving as the teacher of record for grading  
5 purposes in special education settings only.

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

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

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

16 G. Contingent upon the availability of funding, any teacher who  
17 is assigned to teach at a Title I school that graduated from an  
18 Oklahoma institution of higher education program whose accreditation  
19 is recognized by the Commission for Educational Quality and  
20 Accountability after the effective date of this act shall be  
21 reimbursed for any testing fee or payment for a competency  
22 examination required by this section upon passage of the  
23 examination. The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability  
24 shall promulgate any rules necessary to implement this subsection.

1 As used in this subsection, "Title I school" means a public school  
2 that receives funds pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act of  
3 2015, 20 U.S.C., Section 6301 et seq., and is obligated to comply  
4 with the provisions of that federal law.

5 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2020.

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