

1 **SENATE FLOOR VERSION**

2 February 23, 2021

3 SENATE BILL NO. 51

By: Hicks of the Senate

4 and

5 Sterling of the House

6
7
8 An Act relating to teacher certification; amending 70
9 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by
10 Section 2, Chapter 139, O.S.L. 2020 (70 O.S. Supp.
11 2020, Section 6-122.3), which relates to alternative
12 placement teaching certificates; removing requirement
13 to pass the general education portions of the
14 competency examination for an alternative placement
15 certificate; updating references; amending 70 O.S.
16 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 1,
17 Chapter 139, O.S.L. 2020 (70 O.S. Supp. 2020, Section
18 6-187), which relates to competency examinations for
19 teachers; removing requirement for general education
20 examinations; providing an effective date; and
21 declaring an emergency.

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

23 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as
24 last amended by Section 2, Chapter 139, O.S.L. 2020 (70 O.S. Supp.
2020, Section 6-122.3), is amended to read as follows:

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

- 1 1. a. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an
2 institution whose accreditation is recognized by the
3 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has
4 attained a retention grade point average of not less
5 than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, or
6 b. has successfully completed a terminal degree, such as
7 a doctorate of philosophy, a doctorate in education,
8 professional doctorates, a master of fine arts degree
9 or a master of library science degree, from an
10 institution accredited by a national or regional
11 accrediting agency which is recognized by the
12 Secretary of the United States Department of
13 Education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
14 Education shall be consulted to verify other terminal
15 degrees, or
16 c. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an
17 institution whose accreditation is recognized by the
18 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has
19 qualified work experience in a field that corresponds
20 to an area of certification as determined by the State
21 Board of Education, and
22 d. in addition to the requirements of subparagraphs a, b
23 and c of this paragraph, has demonstrated competency
24 or completed a major in a field that corresponds to an

1 area of specialization for an Elementary-Secondary
2 Certificate or a Secondary Certificate as determined
3 by the State Board of Education or a vocational-
4 technical certificate as recommended by the Oklahoma
5 Department of Career and Technology Education;

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

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

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

20 3. Has passed the ~~general education and~~ subject area portions
21 of the competency examination required in Section 6-187 of this
22 title in the area of specialization for which certification is
23 sought; and
24

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

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

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

20 1. Have never been denied admittance to a teacher education
21 program approved by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education,
22 the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and by the
23 ~~Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation~~ Educational Quality and
24 Accountability to offer teacher education programs, nor have

1 enrolled in and subsequently failed courses necessary to
2 successfully meet the minimum requirements of the program, except
3 those persons who hold a certificate;

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

7 3. Participate in an induction program as required in Section
8 6-195 of this title and have the same duties and responsibilities as
9 other inductees.

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

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

1 of Education. The Commission shall provide the Board with the
2 necessary information to determine comparability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

13 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as
14 last amended by Section 1, Chapter 139, O.S.L. 2020 (70 O.S. Supp.
15 2020, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

16 Section 6-187. A. Prior to July 1, 2014, a competency
17 examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher
18 Preparation and beginning July 1, 2014, a competency examination
19 shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and
20 Accountability for the ~~general education~~, professional education and
21 various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring
22 academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or
23 teacher in the subject area the person is seeking certification to
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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. 1. 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 2. The State Board of Education may renew the emergency or
17 provisional certificate of an individual who has been employed by a
18 school district board of education for at least two (2) years if the
19 following criteria are met:

- 20 a. the individual has been granted an emergency or
21 provisional certificate pursuant to paragraph 1 of
22 this subsection for two (2) years,
23 b. the individual has not successfully completed the
24 competency examinations required by this section,

- 1 c. the individual submits a portfolio of his or her work
2 to the State Board of Education, which shall include
3 evidence of progress toward standard certification,
4 d. the employing school district board of education
5 agrees to renew the individual's contract to teach for
6 the ensuing fiscal year, and
7 e. the superintendent of the employing school district
8 submits to the State Board of Education the reason the
9 emergency or provisional certificate should be renewed
10 and provides evidence of the district's inability to
11 hire a teacher who holds a standard certificate.

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

16 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2021.

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

21 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
22 February 23, 2021 - DO PASS
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