

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

HOUSE BILL 1452

By: Provenzano

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to teachers; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101, which relates to teacher contracts; requiring teacher contract length to be duration of the current fiscal year; mandating teacher contract length for ensuing year to be duration of the ensuing year; establishing contract length for teachers who are not certified; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101. A. Except as provided in subsection E of this section, no person shall be permitted to teach in any school district of the state without a written contract, for the duration of the current fiscal year, except as provided herein for substitute teachers and except teachers of classes in adult education. Except as provided in subsection J of this section, the board of education of each school district, wherein school is expected to be conducted for the ensuing year, shall employ and contract in writing, for the duration of the current fiscal year, with qualified teachers for and

1 in the name of the district. One copy of the contract shall be  
2 filed with the clerk of the board of education and one copy shall be  
3 retained by the teacher.

4 B. Except as otherwise provided by subsections J and K of this  
5 section and any other law, no board of education shall have  
6 authority to enter into any written contract with a teacher who does  
7 not hold an Oklahoma criminal history record check as required by  
8 Section 6-190 of this title and who does not hold a valid  
9 certificate issued or recognized by the State Board of Education  
10 authorizing the teacher to teach the grades or subject matter for  
11 which the teacher is employed. Any board of education paying or  
12 authorizing the payment of the salary of any teacher not holding a  
13 certificate, as required herein, shall be adjudged to be guilty of a  
14 fraudulent expenditure of public funds and members voting for such  
15 payment shall be held jointly responsible for the return of the  
16 amount of any public monies thus expended, upon suit brought by the  
17 district attorney or by any interested citizen in the district where  
18 such funds have been expended.

19 C. It shall be the duty of the superintendent of schools under  
20 whose supervision teachers have been contracted to teach to certify  
21 to the treasurer of the contracting district the names of the  
22 teachers holding valid certificates and student teachers with whom  
23 contracts have been made and the names of substitute teachers  
24 employed in accordance with law. The treasurer shall not register

1 any warrant issued in payment of salary to any teacher whose name is  
2 not included in such list and shall be liable on the official bond  
3 for the treasurer for the amount of any warrant registered in  
4 violation of the provisions of this section.

5 D. Whenever any person shall enter into a contract with any  
6 school district in Oklahoma to teach in such school district the  
7 contract shall be binding on the teacher and on the board of  
8 education until the teacher legally has been discharged from the  
9 teaching position or released by the board of education from the  
10 contract. Except as provided in Section 5-106A of this title, until  
11 such teacher has been thus discharged or released, the teacher shall  
12 not have authority to enter into a contract with any other board of  
13 education in Oklahoma for the same time covered by the original  
14 contract. If upon written complaint by the board of education in a  
15 district any teacher is reported to have failed to obey the terms of  
16 the contract previously made and to have entered into a contract  
17 with another board of education without having been released from  
18 the former contract except as provided in Section 5-106A of this  
19 title, the teacher, upon being found guilty of such charge at a  
20 hearing held before the State Board of Education, shall have such  
21 teacher's certificate suspended for the remainder of the term for  
22 which the contract was made.

23 E. A board of education shall have authority to enter into  
24 written contracts with teachers for the ensuing fiscal year prior to

1 the beginning of such year. The contract length for an ensuing  
2 fiscal year shall be for the duration of the ensuing fiscal year.

3 If, prior to the first Monday in June, a board of education has not  
4 entered into a written contract with a regularly employed teacher or  
5 notified the teacher in writing by registered or certified mail that  
6 a recommendation has been made not to reemploy the teacher for the  
7 ensuing fiscal year, and if, by fifteen (15) days after the first  
8 Monday in June, such teacher has not notified the board of education  
9 in writing by registered or certified mail that such teacher does  
10 not desire to be reemployed in such school district for the ensuing  
11 year, such teacher shall be considered as employed on a continuing  
12 contract basis and on the same salary schedule used for other  
13 teachers in the school district for the ensuing fiscal year, and  
14 such employment and continuing contract shall be binding on the  
15 teacher and on the school district.

16 F. Whenever a school district is engaged in contract  
17 negotiations with teachers employed by that school district after  
18 the school year has begun and the teachers are employed on a  
19 continuing contract basis, the school district shall, beginning at  
20 the first of the school year, pay the teachers any state-mandated  
21 salary increases and salary schedule increases to which each teacher  
22 is otherwise entitled.

23 G. No school district or any member of the board of education  
24 of a district shall be liable for the payment of compensation to a

1 teacher or administrator under the provisions of any contract for  
2 the ensuing year, if it becomes necessary to close the school  
3 because of insufficient attendance, disorganization, annexation,  
4 consolidation, or by dispensing with the school according to law,  
5 provided, such cause is known or action is taken prior to July 1 of  
6 such ensuing year.

7 H. No school district or any member of a board of education  
8 shall be liable for the payment of compensation to any teacher or  
9 administrator for the unexpired term of any contract if the school  
10 building to which the teacher or administrator has been assigned is  
11 destroyed by accident, storm, fire, or otherwise and it becomes  
12 necessary to close the school because of inability to secure a  
13 suitable building or buildings for continuation of school. Teachers  
14 and administrators shall be entitled to pay for any time lost when  
15 school is closed on account of epidemics or otherwise when an order  
16 for such closing has been issued by a health officer authorized by  
17 law to issue the order.

18 I. A teacher may contract with more than one school district  
19 for the same school year as provided in Section 5-106A of this  
20 title.

21 J. A board of education shall have authority to enter into  
22 written contracts for the ensuing fiscal year prior to the beginning  
23 of the year with persons who are not certified to teach by the State  
24 Board of Education as long as the person is actively in the process

1 of securing certification. The contract length for an ensuing  
2 fiscal year shall be for the duration of the ensuing fiscal year.

3 The person shall not be allowed to teach in a classroom until the  
4 person has met or completed all of the requirements for  
5 certification as provided for in Section 6-190 of this title. If  
6 the person has not obtained valid certification by the first day of  
7 the ensuing school year, the contract shall be terminated.

8 K. A board of education of a school district shall have the  
9 authority to enter into written contracts for employment for the  
10 ensuing fiscal year with persons who are student teachers as defined  
11 in Section 1-116 of this title while such persons are still student  
12 teachers. A student teacher shall not be allowed to teach in a  
13 classroom during the ensuing fiscal year until meeting or completing  
14 all of the requirements for certification as provided for in Section  
15 6-190 of this title. If the student teacher has not obtained valid  
16 certification by the first day of the ensuing school year, the  
17 contract shall be terminated. A board of education of a school  
18 district shall have the authority to commit to payment of a stipend  
19 or signing bonus to a student teacher as defined in Section 1-116 of  
20 this title while that person is still a student teacher, if that  
21 person has entered into a written contract for employment for the  
22 ensuing fiscal year. A board of education shall make any such  
23 student teacher stipend or signing bonus conditional on such person  
24 fulfilling the first year of his or her contract for the ensuing

1 fiscal year. Any stipend or signing bonus paid under the terms of  
2 this subsection shall not be considered compensation for purposes of  
3 teacher retirement or the minimum salary schedule.

4 L. A teacher whose certificate was suspended by the State Board  
5 of Education pursuant to Section 3-104 of this title and Sections  
6 314 and 314.1 of Title 75 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall be placed  
7 on suspension pursuant to the provisions of Section 6-101.29 of this  
8 title while proceedings for revocation or other action are pending  
9 before the State Board of Education. The provisions of this  
10 subsection shall not preclude the initiation of due process  
11 procedures in accordance with Section 6-101.20 et. seq of this  
12 title.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

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