

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

4 ENGROSSED SENATE
5 BILL NO. 841

By: Pugh of the Senate

and

Hasenbeck of the House

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9 An Act relating to the Strong Readers Act; amending
10 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-187, as last amended by
11 Section 164, Chapter 452, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp.
12 2024, Section 6-187), which relates to teacher
13 certification; requiring individuals seeking
14 certification in early childhood, elementary, or
15 special education to successfully complete certain
16 assessment beginning on certain date; amending 70
17 O.S. 2021, Section 1210.508C, as amended by Section
18 5, Chapter 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp. 2024,
19 Section 1210.508C), which relates to reading
20 assessments; modifying purpose for administration of
21 certain screening instruments; amending 70 O.S. 2021,
22 Section 1210.508F, as amended by Section 8, Chapter
23 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section
24 1210.508F), which relates to reading competencies for
certain teachers; removing requirement that certain
teacher candidates pass certain assessment prior to
graduation; requiring persons seeking certification
in certain areas to successfully complete certain
assessment as a condition for certification; removing
certain reporting requirements; amending Section 1,
Chapter 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section
1210.508I), which relates to the Statewide Literacy
Revolving Fund; modifying use of the fund; modifying
requirement for teacher preparation program students
to complete certain training; providing an effective
date; and declaring an emergency.

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

2 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-187, as
3 last amended by Section 164, Chapter 452, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp.
4 2024, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

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

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

18 B. No teacher candidate shall be eligible for certification
19 until successfully completing the competency examination except
20 those candidates who make application to the ~~State~~ Board and meet
21 the criteria for the alternative placement program pursuant to
22 Section 6-122.3 of this title. Certification shall be limited to
23 areas of approval in which the certified teacher has successfully
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1 completed the examination. Subject to the provisions of subsection
2 C of this section, testing for certification for subjects in which a
3 teacher candidate or teacher is seeking a minor teaching assignment
4 or an endorsement to teach shall be limited to the specific subject
5 area test.

6 A teacher candidate or teacher may take the professional
7 education or subject area portions of the examination subject to any
8 limit imposed by the Commission.

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

13 2. Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph,
14 certification in early childhood, elementary, or special education
15 shall require completion of an appropriate teacher education program
16 approved by the Commission and effective July 1, 2025, successful
17 completion of a comprehensive reading instruction assessment as
18 provided for in Section 1210.508F of this title.

19 Any teacher who is certified to teach elementary education may
20 be certified in early childhood education upon meeting the
21 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the
22 appropriate subject area portion of the examination. Any teacher
23 who is certified to teach early childhood education may be certified
24 in elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in

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

20 D. The Commission shall offer the competency examination at
21 least four times per calendar year on dates to be established by the
22 Commission.

23 E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English
24 speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency

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

16 F. 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 if the candidate has an advanced degree in a subject
21 that is substantially comparable to the content assessed on a
22 subject area examination. The advanced degree shall be from an
23 institution accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency
24 which is recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department

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

3 G. 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 H. The State Board of Education may grant an exception to the
17 requirements for all certification examinations for teacher
18 candidates who are "deaf", which for the purposes of this section
19 shall mean having a hearing loss so severe that the person cannot
20 process auditory linguistic information with or without
21 accommodation and whose primary language and teaching environment is
22 American Sign Language. The Board may grant an exception upon:

- 1 1. Verification by a licensed audiologist of a hearing loss so
- 2 severe that the teacher candidate cannot process auditory linguistic
- 3 information with or without accommodation;
- 4 2. Demonstration of fluency in American Sign Language;
- 5 3. Demonstration of competency in the subject area of
- 6 specialization as approved by the Board in lieu of certification
- 7 examinations; and
- 8 4. Sponsorship by a certified deaf education teacher for a
- 9 mentorship program.

10 The Board may promulgate rules and other requirements as
11 necessary to grant the exceptions described in this subsection.
12 Applicable teaching environments may include American Sign Language
13 immersion programs, the Oklahoma School for the Deaf, programs for
14 the deaf, or other classroom settings in which American Sign
15 Language is the language of instruction.

16 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 1210.508C,
17 as amended by Section 5, Chapter 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp.
18 2024, Section 1210.508C), is amended to read as follows:

19 Section 1210.508C. A. To identify students who have ~~a reading~~
20 ~~deficiency including identifying students with~~ characteristics of
21 dyslexia that lead to or cause reading difficulty, each student
22 enrolled in kindergarten and first, second, and third grade in a
23 public school in this state shall be screened at the beginning,
24 middle, and end of each school year for reading skills including,

1 but not limited to, phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,
2 vocabulary, and comprehension. A screening instrument approved by
3 the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commission
4 for Educational Quality and Accountability and the Secretary of
5 Education, shall be utilized for the purposes of this section. In
6 determining which screening instrument to approve, the State Board
7 of Education, the Commission for Educational Quality and
8 Accountability, and the Secretary of Education shall take into
9 consideration at a minimum the following factors:

10 1. The time required to conduct the screening instrument with
11 the intention of minimizing the impact on instructional time;

12 2. The timeliness in reporting screening instrument results to
13 teachers, administrators, and parents and legal guardians of
14 students; and

15 3. The integration of the screening instrument into reading
16 curriculum.

17 B. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, the State Board of
18 Education shall approve no fewer than three ~~(3)~~ screening
19 instruments for use at the beginning, middle, and end of the school
20 year for monitoring of progress and for measurement of reading
21 skills as required in subsection A of this section. The screening
22 instruments shall meet the following criteria:

23 1. Assess for phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,
24 vocabulary, and comprehension;

2. Document the validity and reliability of each assessment;

3. Can be used for identifying students who are at risk for reading deficiency and progress monitoring throughout the school year;

4. Can be used to assess students with disabilities and English language learners; and

5. Accompanied by a data management system that provides profiles of ~~students~~ each student, class, grade level, and school building. The profiles shall identify each student's instructional point of need and reading achievement level. The State Board shall also determine other comparable reading assessments for diagnostic purposes to be used for students at risk of reading failure.

C. 1. Exemptions to the screening requirements of this section may be provided to students who have documented evidence that they meet at least one of the following criteria as related to the provision of classroom instruction:

a. the student participates in the Oklahoma Alternate Assessment Program (OAAP) and is taught using alternate methods,

b. the student's primary expressive or receptive communication is sign language,

c. the student's primary form of written or read text is Braille, or

d. the student's primary expressive or receptive language is not English, the student is identified as an English learner using a state-approved identification assessment, and the student has had less than one (1) school year of instruction in an English-learner program.

2. A public school that grants an exemption pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection shall provide ongoing evidence of student progression toward English language acquisition with the same frequency as administration of screening assessments. Evidence may include, but not be limited to, student progression toward OAAP reading essential elements, proficiency in sign language and reading comprehension, and proficiency in Braille and reading comprehension.

D. 1. Students who are administered a screening instrument pursuant to subsection A of this section and are found not to be meeting grade-level targets shall be provided a program of reading instruction designed to enable students to acquire the appropriate grade-level reading skills. The program of reading instruction shall be based on scientific reading research and align with the subject matter standards adopted by the State Board of Education. A program of reading instruction shall include:

a. sufficient additional in-school instructional time for the acquisition of phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension,

- b. if necessary and if funding is available, tutorial instruction after regular school hours, on Saturdays, and during summer; however, such instruction may not be counted toward the one-hundred-eighty-day or one-thousand-eighty-hour school year required in Section 1-109 of this title,
- c. assessments identified for diagnostic purposes and periodic monitoring to measure the acquisition of reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, as identified in the student's program of reading instruction,
- d. high-quality instructional materials grounded in scientifically based reading research, and
- e. a means of providing every family of a student in prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first, second, and third grade access to free online evidence-based literacy instruction resources to support the student's literacy development at home.

2. A student enrolled in kindergarten or first, second, or third grade who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time based on the screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this section shall receive an individual reading intervention plan no later than thirty (30) days after the identification of the

1 deficiency in reading. The reading intervention plan shall be
2 provided in addition to core reading instruction that is provided to
3 all students. The reading intervention plan shall:

- 4 a. describe the research-based reading intervention
5 services the student will receive to remedy the
6 deficiency in reading,
- 7 b. provide explicit and systematic instruction in
8 phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary,
9 and comprehension, as applicable,
- 10 c. monitor the reading progress of each student's reading
11 skills throughout the school year and adjust
12 instruction according to the student's needs, and
- 13 d. continue until the student is determined to be meeting
14 grade-level targets in reading based on screening
15 instruments administered pursuant to subsection A of
16 this section or assessments identified for diagnostic
17 purposes and periodic monitoring pursuant to
18 subparagraph c of paragraph 1 of this subsection.

19 3. The reading intervention plan for each student identified
20 with a deficiency in reading shall be developed by a Student Reading
21 Proficiency Team and shall include supplemental instructional
22 services and supports. Each team shall be composed of:

- 23 a. the parent or legal guardian of the student,

- b. the teacher assigned to the student who had responsibility for reading instruction in that academic year,
- c. a teacher who is responsible for reading instruction and is assigned to teach in the next grade level of the student, and
- d. a certified reading specialist or an individual with advanced training or specialization in literacy instruction, if one is available.

4. A school district shall notify the parent or legal guardian of any student in kindergarten or first, second, or third grade who exhibits a deficiency in reading at any time based on the screening instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of this section. The notification shall occur no later than thirty (30) days after the identification of the deficiency in reading.

E. 1. Every school district shall adopt and implement a district strong readers plan which has had input from school administrators, teachers, and parents and legal guardians and if possible a reading specialist, and which shall be submitted electronically to and approved by the State Board of Education. The plan shall be updated annually. School districts shall not be required to electronically submit the annual updates to the Board if the last plan submitted to the Board was approved and expenditures for the program include only expenses relating to individual and

1 small group tutoring, purchase of and training in the use of
2 screening and assessment measures, summer school programs, and
3 Saturday school programs. If any expenditure for the program is
4 deleted or changed or any other type of expenditure for the program
5 is implemented, the school district shall be required to submit the
6 latest annual update to the Board for approval. The district strong
7 readers plan shall include a plan for each site which includes an
8 analysis of the data provided by the Oklahoma School Testing Program
9 and other reading assessments utilized as required in this section,
10 and which outlines how each school site will comply with the
11 provisions of the Strong Readers Act.

12 2. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for the
13 implementation and evaluation of the provisions of the Strong
14 Readers Act. The evaluation shall include, but not be limited to,
15 an analysis of the data required in subsection L of this section.

16 F. 1. Any first-grade, second-grade, or third-grade student
17 who demonstrates proficiency in reading through a grade-level
18 appropriate screening instrument approved pursuant to subsection B
19 of this section shall not require a program of reading instruction
20 or an individual reading intervention plan. After a student has
21 demonstrated proficiency through a screening instrument, the
22 district shall provide notification to the parent or legal guardian
23 of the student that he or she has satisfied the requirements of the
24 Strong Readers Act. The district shall continue to monitor the

1 student in the next successive grade level to ensure he or she
2 maintains proficiency.

3 2. Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, if a third-grade
4 student is identified at any point of the academic year as having a
5 significant reading deficiency, which shall be defined as not
6 meeting grade-level targets on a screening instrument administered
7 pursuant to subsection A of this section, the district shall provide
8 the student with intensive intervention services for the appropriate
9 amount of the instructional day consistent with the individual
10 reading intervention plan developed pursuant to paragraph 2 of
11 subsection D of this section and as determined by the Student
12 Reading Proficiency Team. Intensive intervention services shall
13 continue until the student demonstrates proficiency at his or her
14 grade level based on a screening instrument administered pursuant to
15 subsection A of this section.

16 G. Each school district shall annually report in an electronic
17 format to the State Department of Education, the Office of
18 Educational Quality and Accountability, and the Secretary of
19 Education the number of students in kindergarten through third grade
20 per grade level who exhibit grade-level reading proficiency, the
21 number of students per grade level who received intensive
22 intervention services pursuant to paragraph 2 of subsection F of
23 this section, the number of students per grade level who attended a
24 summer academy as provided for in Section 1210.508E of this title,

1 the number of students per grade level who exhibited improved
2 reading proficiency after completion of intensive intervention
3 services, and the number of students per grade level who are still
4 in need of intensive intervention services. The State Department of
5 Education shall publicly report the aggregate and district-specific
6 numbers submitted pursuant to this subsection on its website and
7 shall provide electronic copies of the report to the Governor,
8 Secretary of Education, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, Speaker
9 of the House of Representatives, and to the respective chairs of the
10 committees with responsibility for common education policy in each
11 legislative chamber.

12 H. The parent of any student who is found to have a reading
13 deficiency and is not meeting grade-level reading targets and has
14 been provided a program of reading instruction as provided for in
15 paragraph 1 of subsection D of this section shall be notified in
16 writing of the following:

17 1. That the student has been identified as having a substantial
18 deficiency in reading;

19 2. A description of the current services that are provided to
20 the student pursuant to subsection D of this section;

21 3. A description of the proposed intensive intervention
22 services and supports that will be provided to the student that are
23 designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency as
24 provided for in paragraph 2 of subsection F of this section;

1 4. That a student who is promoted to the fourth grade shall
2 receive supplemental intensive intervention services;

3 5. Strategies for parents to use in helping their child succeed
4 in reading proficiency; and

5 6. The grade-level performance scores of the student.

6 I. No student may be assigned to a grade level based solely on
7 age or other factors that constitute social promotion.

8 J. 1. Each school district board of education shall annually
9 publish on the school website and report electronically to the State
10 Department of Education, the Office of Educational Quality and
11 Accountability, and the Secretary of Education by September 1 of
12 each year the following information on the prior school year:

13 a. the policies and procedures adopted by the school
14 district board of education to implement the
15 provisions of this section. The information submitted
16 shall include expenditures related to implementing the
17 provisions of this section, the number of staff
18 implementing the provisions of this section, and
19 average daily classroom time devoted to implementing
20 the provisions of this section,

21 b. by grade, the number and percentage of all students in
22 kindergarten through third grade who did not meet
23 grade-level targets based on a screening instrument
24 administered pursuant to subsection A of this section,

- 1 c. by grade, the number and percentage of all students in
2 kindergarten through third grade who have been
3 enrolled in the district for fewer than two (2) years,
4 d. by grade, the number and percentage of students in
5 kindergarten through third grade who demonstrated
6 grade-level proficiency based on a screening
7 instrument administered pursuant to subsection A of
8 this section, and
9 e. by grade, the number and percentage of students in
10 kindergarten through third grade who are on an
11 individualized education program (IEP) in accordance
12 with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
13 (IDEA) and who demonstrated grade-level proficiency
14 based on a screening instrument administered pursuant
15 to subsection A of this section or an alternative
16 assessment prescribed by the student's IEP.

17 2. The State Department of Education shall establish a uniform
18 format for school districts to report the information required in
19 this subsection. The format shall be developed with input from
20 school districts and shall be provided not later than ninety (90)
21 days prior to the annual due date. The Department shall annually
22 compile the information required, along with state-level summary
23 information, and electronically report the information to the
24 public, the Governor, the Secretary of Education, the President Pro

1 Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
2 Representatives.

3 K. The State Department of Education shall provide technical
4 assistance as needed to aid school districts in administering the
5 provisions of the Strong Readers Act.

6 L. On or before January 31 of each year, the State Department
7 of Education shall electronically submit to the Governor, the
8 President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
9 Representatives, and members of the committees with responsibility
10 over common education in both houses of the Legislature a Strong
11 Readers Report which shall include, but is not limited to, trend
12 data detailing three (3) years of data, disaggregated by student
13 subgroups to include economically disadvantaged, major racial or
14 ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English language
15 learners, as appropriate for the following:

16 1. The statewide aggregate number and percentage of students in
17 kindergarten through third grade determined to be at risk for
18 reading difficulties compared to the total number of students
19 enrolled in each grade;

20 2. The statewide aggregate number and percentage of students in
21 kindergarten who continue to be at risk for reading difficulties as
22 determined by the year-end administration of the screening
23 instrument required in subsection A of this section;

24

1 3. The statewide aggregate number and percentage of students in
2 kindergarten through third grade who have successfully completed
3 their program of reading instruction and are reading on grade level
4 as determined by the results of screening instruments administered
5 pursuant to subsection A of this section;

6 4. The statewide aggregate and district-specific number and
7 percentage of students that meet or do not meet grade-level targets
8 for reading based on screening instruments administered pursuant to
9 subsection A of this section;

10 5. The amount of funds received by each district for
11 implementation of the Strong Readers Act;

12 6. An evaluation and narrative interpretation of the report
13 data analyzing the impact of the Strong Readers Act on students'
14 ability to read at grade level;

15 7. The type of reading instruction practices and methods
16 currently being used by school districts in the state;

17 8. Socioeconomic information, access to reading resources
18 outside of school, and screening for and identification of learning
19 disabilities for students not reading at the appropriate grade level
20 in kindergarten and first through third grade;

21 9. By grade level, the types of intensive intervention efforts
22 being conducted by school districts for students who are not on an
23 IEP and who are not reading at the appropriate grade level and for
24

1 students who are on an IEP and who are not reading at the
2 appropriate grade level; and

3 10. Any recommendations for improvements or amendments to the
4 Strong Readers Act.

5 The State Department of Education may contract with an
6 independent entity for the reporting and analysis requirements of
7 this subsection.

8 M. Copies of the results of the screening instruments
9 administered pursuant to subsection A of this section shall be made
10 a part of the permanent record of each student.

11 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 1210.508F,
12 as amended by Section 8, Chapter 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp.
13 2024, Section 1210.508F), is amended to read as follows:

14 Section 1210.508F. A. The Commission for Educational Quality
15 and Accountability shall ensure that the reading competencies for
16 elementary teachers are included in the competencies for special
17 education teachers.

18 B. The Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability in
19 collaboration with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
20 shall ensure that all teachers of early childhood education,
21 elementary education, and special education are provided quality
22 training in intervention, instruction, and remediation strategies in
23 the science of reading to provide explicit and systematic
24 instruction in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency,

1 vocabulary, and comprehension and implement reading strategies that
2 research has shown to be successful in improving reading among
3 students with reading difficulties. In addition, quality education
4 for prospective teachers shall be provided in research-based
5 instructional strategies for instruction, assessment, and
6 intervention for literacy development for all students including
7 advanced readers, typically developing readers, and struggling
8 readers who are coping with a range of challenges including, but not
9 limited to, English learners and learners with handicapping
10 conditions and learning disabilities, including dyslexia. Quality
11 training shall include guidance from professional resources such as
12 the Report of the National Reading Panel, Response to Intervention
13 guidelines, and professional organizations such as the Council for
14 Exceptional Children, International Dyslexia Association,
15 International Literacy Association, National Council of Teachers of
16 English, and National Association for the Education of Young
17 Children.

18 C. All institutions within The Oklahoma State System of Higher
19 Education that offer elementary, early childhood education, or
20 special education programs approved by the Commission for
21 Educational Quality and Accountability shall incorporate into those
22 programs the requirement that teacher candidates study the five
23 elements of reading instruction which are phonological awareness,
24 decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teacher

1 candidates shall study strategies including, but not limited to,
2 instruction that is explicitly taught, sequenced, multimodal
3 (reading, writing, speaking, listening, hands-on, etc.),
4 multidisciplinary, and reflective to adapt for individual learners.

5 D. Effective July 1, 2025, ~~teacher candidates enrolled in an~~
6 ~~institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education~~ any
7 person seeking initial certification in a special education, early
8 childhood education, or elementary education program in this state
9 shall be required to successfully complete a comprehensive reading
10 instruction assessment approved by the Commission for Educational
11 Quality and Accountability ~~shall pass, prior to graduation, a~~
12 ~~comprehensive assessment to measure their teaching skills in the~~
13 ~~area of reading instruction~~ as a condition for certification. The
14 assessment shall ~~be developed and administered by the Commission for~~
15 ~~Educational Quality and Accountability. The assessment shall~~
16 ~~measure~~ evaluate the certification applicant's knowledge and
17 understanding of the ~~teacher candidate in the teaching of the five~~
18 elements of reading instruction which are phonological awareness,
19 decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. ~~The results of~~
20 ~~the assessment shall be included in the Commission's required annual~~
21 ~~report for each institution. The Commission shall include the data~~
22 ~~in the annual report to the Legislature as required pursuant to~~
23 ~~Section 6-186 of this title. It is the intent of the Legislature to~~
24 ~~ensure that teachers graduating from institutions within The~~

~~Oklahoma State System of Higher Education have the knowledge and skills to effectively teach reading to all children.~~

E. Candidates applying for an alternative placement teaching certificate or an emergency teaching certificate in elementary education shall complete instruction in the science of reading as determined by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability and the State Board of Education.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY Section 1, Chapter 411, O.S.L. 2024 (70 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 1210.508I), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1210.508I. A. There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to be designated the "Statewide Literacy Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies received by the State Regents from state appropriations provided for the purpose of implementing the provisions of subsection B of this section. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the State Regents for the purpose provided for in this subsection. Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

1 B. Subject to the availability of funding, the Oklahoma State
2 Regents for Higher Education shall utilize the Statewide Literacy
3 Revolving Fund created in subsection A of this section to:

4 1. Implement training in the science of reading in early
5 childhood education, elementary education, and special education
6 teacher preparation programs accredited by the Commission for
7 Educational Quality and Accountability. For the purposes of this
8 section, training in the science of reading includes providing
9 explicit and systematic instruction in phonological awareness,
10 decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and implementing
11 reading strategies that research has shown to be successful in
12 improving reading among students with reading difficulties.
13 Beginning with students entering ~~a~~ an early childhood education,
14 elementary education, or special education teacher preparation
15 program accredited by the Commission for Educational Quality and
16 Accountability in the 2025-2026 academic year, completion of
17 training required by this paragraph shall lead to a micro-credential
18 in the science of reading which shall be reflected on teaching
19 certificates awarded to such individuals; and

20 2. Support teacher preparation programs accredited by the
21 Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability in developing
22 and implementing a micro-credential in the science of reading for
23 certified teachers employed by school districts and charter schools
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1 in this state. A micro-credential awarded pursuant to this
2 paragraph shall be reflected on a teacher's certificate to teach.

3 SECTION 5. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

4 SECTION 6. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
5 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
6 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
7 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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9 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, dated 04/16/2025 - DO
10 PASS.

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