An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 1274

By: Virgin, Cannaday and Walker of the House

and

Stanislawski of the Senate

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 4, Chapter 61, O.S.L. 2010 (70 O.S. Supp. 2010, Section 6-187), which relates to the Oklahoma teacher preparation system; removing certain date restrictions; allowing certain teachers to become certified in certain areas, subject to certain requirements; allowing teachers certified through accredited program to be certified in special education, subject to certain requirements; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Oklahoma teacher preparation system

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 4, Chapter 61, O.S.L. 2010 (70 O.S. Supp. 2010, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-187. A. A competency examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation for the general education, professional education and various subject areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring academic achievement and competency of each teacher candidate or teacher in the subject area the person is seeking licensure or certification to teach which shall also include licensure or certification as an administrator, as prescribed by the State Board of Education.

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

B. No teacher candidate shall be eligible for licensing until successfully completing the competency examination except those candidates who make application to the State Board and meet the criteria for the Alternative Placement Program pursuant to Section 6-122.3 of this title. Certification shall be limited to areas of approval in which the licensed or certified teacher has successfully completed the examination. Subject to the provisions of subsection C of this section, testing for certification for subjects in which a teacher candidate or teacher is seeking a minor teaching assignment or an endorsement to teach shall be limited to the specific subject area test.

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

C. 1. Except as otherwise provided for in this subsection, a teacher may be certified in as many areas as the teacher meets the necessary requirements provided by law and has successfully completed the subject area portion of the examination. Certification in early childhood, elementary, or special education shall require completion of an appropriate teacher education program approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation.

2. Any teacher who ~~became~~ is certified to teach elementary education ~~prior to July 1, 2010,~~ may be certified in early childhood education upon meeting the requirements provided in law and successful completion of the appropriate subject area portion of the examination by July 1, 2012. Any teacher who ~~became~~ is certified to teach early childhood education ~~prior to July 1, 2010,~~ may be certified in elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in law and successful completion of the appropriate subject area portion of the examination by July 1, 2012. Any special education teacher who becomes certified to teach through completion of an accredited teacher preparation program may be certified in early childhood or elementary education upon meeting the requirements provided in law and successful completion of the appropriate subject portion of the examination prior to July 1, 2012. Any teacher who becomes certified to teach through completion of an accredited teacher preparation program or becomes alternatively certified to teach through the Troops to Teachers

program ~~prior to July 1, 2010,~~ may be certified in special education upon meeting the requirements provided in law and successful completion of the appropriate subject area portion of the examination by July 1, 2012.

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

E. Nothing in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall restrict the right of the State Board of Education to issue an emergency or provisional certificate, as needed. Provided, however, prior to the issuance of an emergency certificate, the district shall document substantial efforts to employ a teacher who holds a provisional or standard certificate or who is licensed in the teaching profession. In the event a district is unable to hire an individual meeting this criteria, the district shall document efforts to employ an individual with a provisional or standard certificate or with a license in another curricular area with academic preparation in the field of need. Only after these alternatives have been exhausted shall the district be allowed to employ an individual meeting minimum standards as established by the State Board of Education for the issuance of emergency certificates.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2011.

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

Passed the House of Representatives the 1st day of March, 2011.

Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 13th day of April, 2011.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Governor this 14th **day of** April, **20** 11, **at** ~~April 14th~~ 10:53 **o'clock** A. **M.**

By: Jessica R. Rogers

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma the 20th **day of** April, **20** 11, **at** 12:27 **o'clock** P**M.**

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Secretary of State this 20th **day of** April, **20** 11, **at** 3:43 **o'clock** P **M.**

By: Michelle R. Day