An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 2967

By: Nelson and Lepak of the House

and

Holt and Pittman of the Senate

An Act relating to schools; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-101, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 124, O.S.L. 2014 (70 O.S. Supp. 2015, Section 6-101), which relates to teacher contracts; authorizing school district boards of education to enter into contracts with student teachers; prohibiting a student teacher from teaching until completing certification requirements; providing for termination of contract; authorizing school district boards of education to commit to pay a stipend or signing bonus to certain student teachers; prohibiting certain stipend or signing bonus from being considered compensation for certain purpose; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Teacher contracts

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-101, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 124, O.S.L. 2014 (70 O.S. Supp. 2015, 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, 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 with qualified teachers for and in the name of the district. One copy of the contract shall be filed with the clerk of the board of education and one copy shall be retained by the teacher.

B. Except as otherwise provided by ~~subsection~~ subsections J and K of this section and any other law, no board of education shall have authority to enter into any written contract with a teacher who does not hold a valid certificate issued or recognized by the State Board of Education authorizing said teacher to teach the grades or subject matter for which the teacher is employed. Any board of education paying or authorizing the payment of the salary of any teacher not holding a certificate, as required herein, shall be adjudged to be guilty of a fraudulent expenditure of public funds and members voting for such payment shall be held jointly responsible for the return of the amount of any public monies thus expended, upon suit brought by the district attorney or by any interested citizen in the district where such funds have been expended.

C. It shall be the duty of the superintendent of schools under whose supervision teachers have been contracted to teach to certify to the treasurer of the contracting district the names of the teachers holding valid certificates and student teachers with whom contracts have been made and the names of substitute teachers employed in accordance with law. The treasurer shall not register any warrant issued in payment of salary to any teacher whose name is not included in such list and shall be liable on the official bond for the treasurer for the amount of any warrant registered in violation of the provisions of this section.

D. Whenever any person shall enter into a contract with any school district in Oklahoma to teach in such school district the contract shall be binding on the teacher and on the board of education until the teacher legally has been discharged from the teaching position or released by the board of education from the contract. Except as provided in Section 5-106A of this title, until such teacher has been thus discharged or released, the teacher shall not have authority to enter into a contract with any other board of education in Oklahoma for the same time covered by the original contract. If upon written complaint by the board of education in a district any teacher is reported to have failed to obey the terms of the contract previously made and to have entered into a contract

with another board of education without having been released from the former contract except as provided in Section 5-106A of this title, the teacher, upon being found guilty of such charge at a hearing held before the State Board of Education, shall have such teacher's certificate suspended for the remainder of the term for which the contract was made.

E. A board of education shall have authority to enter into written contracts with teachers for the ensuing fiscal year prior to the beginning of such year. If, prior to the first Monday in June, a board of education has not entered into a written contract with a regularly employed teacher or notified the teacher in writing by registered or certified mail that a recommendation has been made not to reemploy the teacher for the ensuing fiscal year, and if, by fifteen (15) days after the first Monday in June, such teacher has not notified the board of education in writing by registered or certified mail that such teacher does not desire to be reemployed in such school district for the ensuing year, such teacher shall be considered as employed on a continuing contract basis and on the same salary schedule used for other teachers in the school district for the ensuing fiscal year, and such employment and continuing contract shall be binding on the teacher and on the school district.

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

G. No school district or any member of the board of education of a district shall be liable for the payment of compensation to a teacher or administrator under the provisions of any contract for the ensuing year, if it becomes necessary to close the school because of insufficient attendance, disorganization, annexation, consolidation, or by dispensing with the school according to law, provided, such cause is known or action is taken prior to July 1 of such ensuing year.

H. No school district or any member of a board of education shall be liable for the payment of compensation to any teacher or administrator for the unexpired term of any contract if the school building to which the teacher or administrator has been assigned is destroyed by accident, storm, fire, or otherwise and it becomes

necessary to close the school because of inability to secure a suitable building or buildings for continuation of school. Teachers and administrators shall be entitled to pay for any time lost when school is closed on account of epidemics or otherwise when an order for such closing has been issued by a health officer authorized by law to issue the order.

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

J. A board of education shall have authority to enter into written contracts for the ensuing fiscal year prior to the beginning of the year with persons who are not certified to teach by the State Board of Education as long as the person is actively in the process of securing certification. The person shall not be allowed to teach in a classroom until the person has met or completed all of the requirements for certification as provided for in Section 6-190 of this title. If the person has not obtained valid certification by the first day of the ensuing school year, the contract shall be terminated.

K. A board of education of a school district shall have the authority to enter into written contracts for employment for the ensuing fiscal year with persons who are student teachers as defined in Section 1-116 of this title while such persons are still student teachers. A student teacher shall not be allowed to teach in a classroom during the ensuing fiscal year until meeting or completing all of the requirements for certification as provided for in Section 6-190 of this title. If the student teacher has not obtained valid certification by the first day of the ensuing school year, the contract shall be terminated. A board of education of a school district shall have the authority to commit to payment of a stipend or signing bonus to a student teacher as defined in Section 1-116 of this title while that person is still a student teacher, if that person has entered into a written contract for employment for the ensuing fiscal year. A board of education shall make any such student teacher stipend or signing bonus conditional on such person fulfilling the first year of their contract for the ensuing fiscal year. Any stipend or signing bonus paid under the terms of this subsection shall not be considered compensation for purposes of teacher retirement or the minimum salary schedule.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2016.

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 17th day of May, 2016.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 14th day of April, 2016.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this 20th

day of May, 20 16, at 1:39 o'clock P M.

By: Audrey Rockwell

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this 24

day of May, 20 16, at 1:06 o'clock P M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this 24th

day of May, 20 16, at 2:29 o'clock P. M.

By: Chris Benge