

An Act

ENROLLED SENATE
BILL NO. 1115

By: Sharp and Bergstrom of the
Senate

and

Sterling of the House

An Act relating to teacher certification; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp. 2019, Section 6-187), which relates to competency examinations for teacher certification; allowing the State Board of Education to renew an emergency or provisional certificate if certain criteria are met; clarifying that individuals with an emergency or provisional certificate are not entitled to protections of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990; amending 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 165, O.S.L. 2018 (70 O.S. Supp. 2019, Section 6-122.3), which relates to alternative placement teaching certificates; allowing the State Board of Education, in certain consultation, to grant an exception to certain subject area examination requirement in certain field if candidate has certain advanced degree; and providing an effective date.

SUBJECT: Teacher certification

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 50, O.S.L. 2017 (70 O.S. Supp. 2019, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-187. A. Prior to July 1, 2014, a competency examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation and beginning July 1, 2014, a competency examination shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability 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 certification to teach which shall also include 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 certification 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 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.

2. Except as otherwise provided for in this paragraph, certification in early childhood, elementary, or special education shall require completion of an appropriate teacher education program approved by the Commission.

Any teacher who is certified to teach elementary education 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. Any teacher who is certified to teach early childhood education 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. 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. 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 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. Any special education teacher who has not completed a Commission-approved teacher education program in elementary education or early childhood education but who has successfully completed the subject area portion of the examination may be certified in elementary education or early childhood education for the purpose of providing direct instruction and serving as the teacher of record for grading purposes in special education settings only.

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

E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency examination in the native language of the teacher candidate or teacher only if the teacher candidate or teacher is employed or has been offered employment by a school district as a teacher in a foreign language immersion program offered by the school district. If a non-native-English speaker who has received certification in a subject area after taking the subject area competency examination in the native language of the speaker seeks to add a certification area in the future and that person is no longer employed as a teacher in a foreign language immersion program, the examination for the additional certification area shall be taken in English. The State

Board of Education shall issue a restricted license or certificate to any teacher who has completed a subject area competency examination in the native language of the teacher as provided for in this subsection restricting the teacher to teaching only in a foreign language immersion program.

F. 1. 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. 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 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.

2. The State Board of Education may renew the emergency or provisional certificate of an individual who has been employed by a school district board of education for at least two (2) years if the following criteria are met:

- a. the individual has been granted an emergency or provisional certificate pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection for two (2) years,
- b. the individual has not successfully completed the competency examinations required by this section,
- c. the individual submits a portfolio of his or her work to the State Board of Education, which shall include evidence of progress toward standard certification,
- d. the employing school district board of education agrees to renew the individual's contract to teach for the ensuing fiscal year, and
- e. the superintendent of the employing school district submits to the State Board of Education the reason the

emergency or provisional certificate should be renewed and provides evidence of the district's inability to hire a teacher who holds a standard certificate.

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

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2011, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by Section 2, Chapter 165, O.S.L. 2018 (70 O.S. Supp. 2019, Section 6-122.3), is amended to read as follows:

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

1. a. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution whose accreditation is recognized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has attained a retention grade point average of not less than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, or
- b. has successfully completed a terminal degree, such as a doctorate of philosophy, a doctorate in education, professional doctorates, a master of fine arts degree or a master of library science degree, from an institution accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall be consulted to verify other terminal degrees, or
- c. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution whose accreditation is recognized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has qualified work experience in a field that corresponds to an area of certification as determined by the State Board of Education, and

- d. in addition to the requirements of subparagraphs a, b and c of this paragraph, has demonstrated competency or completed a major in a field that corresponds to an area of specialization for an Elementary-Secondary Certificate or a Secondary Certificate as determined by the State Board of Education or a vocational-technical certificate as recommended by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education;

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

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

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

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

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

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

C. Persons enrolled in an alternative placement program shall:

1. Have never been denied admittance to a teacher education program approved by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation to offer teacher education programs, nor have enrolled in and subsequently failed courses necessary to successfully meet the minimum requirements of the program, except those persons who hold a certificate;
2. Have on file with the director of teacher education at an Oklahoma institution of higher education a plan for meeting standard certification requirements within three (3) years; and
3. Participate in an induction program as required in Section 6-195 of this title and have the same duties and responsibilities as other inductees.

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

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

agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. The Commission shall provide the Board with the necessary information to determine comparability.

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

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

~~G.~~ H. Each teacher education institution shall provide the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation an annual report of information as specified by the Commission regarding participation in the alternative placement programs offered by the institution.

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

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

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

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

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2020.

Passed the Senate the 10th day of March, 2020.

Stephanail Brice
Presiding Officer of the Senate

Passed the House of Representatives the 15th day of May, 2020.

[Signature]
Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this 16th

day of May, 20 20, at 1:56 o'clock ca. M.

By: Sumer Curry

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this 21st

day of May, 20 20, at 8:53 o'clock ca. M.

[Signature]
Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this 21st

day of May, 20 20, at 1:41 o'clock P. M.

By: Michael Byers