

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 SENATE BILL 969

By: Jett

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5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to teacher certification; amending 70
8 O.S. 2021, Section 6-122.11, as amended by Section 2,
9 Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022, Section
10 6-122.11), which relates to alternative teacher
11 certificates; updating reference to certain subject
12 area competency examination; removing requirement to
13 pass the professional knowledge portion of a
14 competency examination; amending 70 O.S. 2021,
15 Section 6-182, as amended by Section 3, Chapter 220,
16 O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022, Section 6-182),
17 which relates to definitions under the Oklahoma
18 Teacher Preparation Act; removing certain definition;
19 modifying certain definition; amending 70 O.S. 2021,
20 Section 6-187, as last amended by Section 4, Chapter
21 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022, Section 6-187),
22 which relates to competency examinations for
23 certification; removing requirement to adopt certain
24 professional education examination; updating
25 reference to certain examination; amending 70 O.S.
26 2021, Section 6-189.2, as amended by Section 5,
27 Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022, Section
28 6-189.2), which relates to school psychologist or
29 psychometrist certification; removing exemption from
30 certain examination; updating reference to certain
31 examination; updating reference to certain
32 commission; providing an effective date; and
33 declaring an emergency.

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

1 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-122.11, as
2 amended by Section 2, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022,
3 Section 6-122.11), is amended to read as follows:

4 Section 6-122.11. Notwithstanding any other provision of the
5 law, the State Board of Education shall issue a one-year alternative
6 teacher certificate, renewable for up to three (3) years, to teach
7 early childhood education or elementary education to any qualified
8 candidate who:

- 9 1. a. has successfully completed a terminal degree, such as
10 a doctorate of philosophy, a doctorate in education,
11 professional doctorates, a master of fine arts degree,
12 or a master of library science degree, from an
13 institution accredited by a national or regional
14 accrediting agency which is recognized by the
15 Secretary of the United States Department of
16 Education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
17 Education shall be consulted to verify other terminal
18 degrees, or
- 19 b. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an
20 institution whose accreditation is recognized by the
21 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has
22 two (2) years post-degree-completion qualified work
23 experience in a field that corresponds to early
24 childhood education or elementary education; and

1 2. Declares the intention to earn standard certification by
2 means of the early childhood and elementary education alternative
3 certification program in not more than three (3) years and has:

4 a. within the first year satisfactorily completed six (6)
5 credit hours in classroom management and reading
6 instruction from an educator preparation program
7 approved and accredited by the Commission for
8 Educational Quality and Accountability, completed the
9 required State Department of Education approved
10 training on cognitive science of how students learn to
11 read, and participated in a yearlong mentorship or
12 instructional coaching in reading and classroom
13 management provided by the employing school district
14 prior to the renewal of the provisional certificate
15 for a second year,

16 b. within the second year satisfactorily completed six
17 (6) credit hours in child development and math
18 instruction from an educator preparation program
19 approved and accredited by the Commission for
20 Educational Quality and Accountability, participated
21 in an additional yearlong mentorship and/or
22 instructional coaching in child development and math
23 instruction provided by the employing school district
24 prior to the renewal of the provisional certificate

1 for a third year, and successfully completed the
2 subject area ~~portion of the~~ competency ~~examination~~
3 examination(s) required in Section 6-187 of this title
4 in the area of specialization for which certification
5 is sought, and

6 c. within the third year satisfactorily completed six (6)
7 additional credit hours of professional education
8 coursework from an educator preparation program
9 approved and accredited by the Commission for
10 Educational Quality and Accountability, and
11 participated in an additional yearlong mentorship
12 and/or instructional coaching provided by the
13 employing school district, ~~and successfully passed the~~
14 ~~professional knowledge portions of the competency~~
15 ~~examination required in Section 6-187 of this title in~~
16 ~~the area of specialization for which certification is~~
17 ~~sought.~~

18 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-182, as
19 amended by Section 3, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022,
20 Section 6-182), is amended to read as follows:

21 Section 6-182. As used in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act:

22 1. "Board" means the State Board of Education;

23 2. "Commission" means the Commission for Educational Quality

24 and Accountability;

1 3. "State Regents" means the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
2 Education;

3 4. "Professional development program" means the program
4 mandated by the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act for the continuous
5 improvement and enrichment of the certified and licensed teachers of
6 this state;

7 ~~5. "Teacher education professional development committee" means~~
8 ~~the committee created in Section 6-186 of this title for the~~
9 ~~continuous improvement and enrichment of higher education faculty in~~
10 ~~teacher education programs in institutions of higher education;~~

11 ~~6.~~ "Department" means the State Department of Education;

12 ~~7.~~ 6. "Induction" means a program that provides support,
13 mentorship, and coaching to educators at the beginning of their
14 careers or as they transition to new roles within a school or
15 district. Induction programs work with inductees to assist in all
16 matters concerning classroom management and professional development
17 for that teacher. Induction programs may involve a committee of one
18 or more mentor teachers, the principal or an assistant principal of
19 the employing school, one or more administrators designated by the
20 school district board of education, a teacher educator in a college
21 or school of education of an institution of higher education, or an
22 educator in a department or school outside the institution's teacher
23 education unit;

1 ~~8.~~ 7. "Teacher" means a person defined as a teacher in Section
2 1-116 of this title;

3 ~~9.~~ 8. "Inductee" means any certified teacher who is employed in
4 an accredited school to serve as a teacher and the school district
5 has elected to place under the guidance and assistance of a mentor
6 teacher or induction committee. Inductees shall include those
7 individuals having completed the program of the college or school of
8 education of the accredited institution of higher education from
9 which the person has been graduated, and shall have successfully
10 completed the competency examination in areas of approval in which
11 the inductee seeks certification, those individuals eligible for the
12 alternative placement teaching certificate according to Section 6-
13 122.3 of this title, and those individuals issued an emergency or
14 provisional certificate according to Section 6-187 of this title.
15 All teachers working in a new role, including classroom teachers
16 transitioning to a new role, shall be considered inductees for
17 purposes of induction programs;

18 ~~10.~~ 9. "Certified teacher" means any teacher who has been
19 issued a certificate by the Board in accordance with the Oklahoma
20 Teacher Preparation Act and the rules of the Board;

21 ~~11.~~ 10. "Mentor teacher" means any teacher who has been
22 appointed to provide guidance, support, coaching, and assistance to
23 an inductee employed by the school district. A mentor teacher shall
24

1 be a current or former classroom teacher and have a minimum of two
2 (2) years of classroom teaching experience as a certified teacher.

3 When possible, a mentor teacher shall have participated in
4 mentor teacher professional development and have expertise in the
5 teaching field of the inductee;

6 ~~12.~~ 11. "Higher education faculty" means any individual who is
7 employed in a teaching capacity in an institution of higher
8 education, approved or accredited by the Commission for the
9 preparation of education personnel; and

10 ~~13.~~ 12. "Competency examination" means the assessment required
11 in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act for certification as a
12 teacher and shall consist of ~~tests~~ test(s) over ~~professional~~
13 ~~education and~~ subject areas as defined by the Commission for
14 Educational Quality and Accountability.

15 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-187, as
16 last amended by Section 4, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp.
17 2022, Section 6-187), is amended to read as follows:

18 Section 6-187. A. Prior to July 1, 2014, a competency
19 examination shall be adopted by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher
20 Preparation and beginning July 1, 2014, a competency examination
21 shall be adopted by the Commission for Educational Quality and
22 Accountability for the ~~professional education and~~ various subject
23 areas and grade levels for purposes of ensuring academic achievement
24 and competency of each teacher candidate or teacher in the subject

1 area the person is seeking certification to teach which shall also
2 include certification as an administrator, as prescribed by the
3 State Board of Education.

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

7 B. No teacher candidate shall be eligible for certification
8 until successfully completing the competency examination except
9 those candidates who make application to the State Board of
10 Education and meet the criteria for the alternative placement
11 program pursuant to Section 6-122.3 of this title. Certification
12 shall be limited to areas of approval in which the certified teacher
13 has successfully completed the examination. Subject to the
14 provisions of subsection C of this section, testing for
15 certification for subjects in which a teacher candidate or teacher
16 is seeking a minor teaching assignment or an endorsement to teach
17 shall be limited to the specific subject area test.

18 A teacher candidate or teacher may take the ~~professional~~
19 ~~education or subject area portions of the examination~~ examination(s)
20 subject to any limit imposed by the Commission.

21 C. 1. Except as otherwise provided for in this subsection, a
22 teacher may be certified in as many areas as the teacher meets the
23 necessary requirements provided by law and has successfully
24

1 completed the subject area ~~portion of the examination~~
2 examination(s).

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

7 Any teacher who is certified to teach elementary education may
8 be certified in early childhood education upon meeting the
9 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the
10 appropriate subject area ~~portion of the examination~~ examination(s).

11 Any teacher who is certified to teach early childhood education may
12 be certified in elementary education upon meeting the requirements
13 provided in law and successful completion of the appropriate subject
14 area ~~portion of the examination~~ examination(s). Any special

15 education teacher who becomes certified to teach through completion
16 of an accredited teacher preparation program may be certified in
17 early childhood or elementary education upon meeting the
18 requirements provided in law and successful completion of the
19 appropriate subject ~~portion of the examination~~ area examination(s).

20 Any teacher who becomes certified to teach through completion of an
21 accredited teacher preparation program or becomes alternatively
22 certified to teach through the Troops to Teachers program may be
23 certified in special education upon meeting the requirements
24 provided in law and successful completion of the appropriate subject

1 area ~~portion of the examination~~ examination(s). Any special
2 education teacher who has not completed a Commission-approved
3 teacher education program in elementary education or early childhood
4 education but who has successfully completed the subject area
5 ~~portion of the examination~~ examination(s) may be certified in
6 elementary education or early childhood education for the purpose of
7 providing direct instruction and serving as the teacher of record
8 for grading purposes in special education settings only.

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

12 E. If a teacher candidate or teacher is a non-native-English
13 speaker, the Commission shall offer the subject area competency
14 examination in the native language of the teacher candidate or
15 teacher only if the teacher candidate or teacher is employed or has
16 been offered employment by a school district as a teacher in a
17 foreign language immersion program offered by the school district.
18 If a non-native-English speaker who has received certification in a
19 subject area after taking the subject area competency examination in
20 the native language of the speaker seeks to add a certification area
21 in the future and that person is no longer employed as a teacher in
22 a foreign language immersion program, the examination for the
23 additional certification area shall be taken in English. The State
24 Board of Education shall issue a restricted license or certificate

1 to any teacher who has completed a subject area competency
2 examination in the native language of the teacher as provided for in
3 this subsection restricting the teacher to teaching only in a
4 foreign language immersion program.

5 F. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the
6 Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability, may grant an
7 exception to the requirement to complete a subject area examination
8 for initial certification in a field which does not require an
9 advanced degree if the candidate has an advanced degree in a subject
10 that is substantially comparable to the content assessed on a
11 subject area examination. The advanced degree shall be from an
12 institution accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency
13 which is recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department
14 of Education. The Commission shall provide the Board with the
15 necessary information to determine comparability.

16 G. 1. Nothing in the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act shall
17 restrict the right of the State Board of Education to issue an
18 emergency or provisional certificate, as needed. Provided, however,
19 prior to the issuance of an emergency certificate, the district
20 shall document substantial efforts to employ a teacher who holds a
21 provisional or standard certificate. In the event a district is
22 unable to hire an individual meeting this criteria, the district
23 shall document efforts to employ an individual with a provisional or
24 standard certificate in another curricular area with academic

1 preparation in the field of need. Only after these alternatives
2 have been exhausted shall the district be allowed to employ an
3 individual meeting minimum standards as established by the State
4 Board of Education for the issuance of emergency certificates.

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

- 9 a. the individual has been granted an emergency or
10 provisional certificate pursuant to paragraph 1 of
11 this subsection for two (2) years,
- 12 b. the individual has not successfully completed the
13 competency ~~examinations~~ examination(s) required by
14 this section,
- 15 c. the individual submits a portfolio of his or her work
16 to the State Board of Education, which shall include
17 evidence of progress toward standard certification,
- 18 d. the employing school district board of education
19 agrees to renew the individual's contract to teach for
20 the ensuing fiscal year, and
- 21 e. the superintendent of the employing school district
22 submits to the State Board of Education the reason the
23 emergency or provisional certificate should be renewed

1 and provides evidence of the district's inability to
2 hire a teacher who holds a standard certificate.

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

7 SECTION 4. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-189.2, as
8 amended by Section 5, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022,
9 Section 6-189.2), is amended to read as follows:

10 Section 6-189.2. A. ~~Any person seeking certification as a~~
11 ~~school psychologist or school psychometrist shall be exempt from the~~
12 ~~requirement to successfully complete the professional education~~
13 ~~portion of the competency examination required pursuant to Sections~~
14 ~~6-187 and 6-190 of this title.~~

15 B. Any person certified as a school psychologist or school
16 psychometrist ~~pursuant to a substitution or exemption as provided in~~
17 ~~this section~~ shall be required to complete all portions of the
18 competency examination as required pursuant to Sections 6-187 and 6-
19 190 of this title if such person seeks to add certification in
20 another subject in the future.

21 ~~C.~~ B. The ~~Oklahoma~~ Commission for ~~Teacher Preparation~~
22 Educational Quality and Accountability shall adopt rules to
23 implement the provisions of this section.

24 SECTION 5. This act shall become effective July 1, 2023.

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

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