

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

SENATE BILL 285

By: Kirt

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to teacher certification; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 121, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022, Section 6-122.3), which relates to alternative teacher certification; updating statutory language; allowing the State Board of Education to grant certain exception to licensed mental health professionals; providing eligibility for exception; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-122.3, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 121, O.S.L. 2022 (70 O.S. Supp. 2022, 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

1 attained a retention grade point average of not less
2 than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, or

3 b. has successfully completed a terminal degree, such as
4 a doctorate of philosophy, a doctorate in education,
5 professional doctorates, a master of fine arts degree,
6 or a master of library science degree, from an
7 institution accredited by a national or regional
8 accrediting agency which is recognized by the
9 Secretary of the United States Department of
10 Education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
11 Education shall be consulted to verify other terminal
12 degrees, or

13 c. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an
14 institution whose accreditation is recognized by the
15 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has
16 qualified work experience in a field that corresponds
17 to an area of certification as determined by the State
18 Board of Education, and

19 d. in addition to the requirements of subparagraphs a, b,
20 and c of this paragraph, has demonstrated competency
21 or completed a major in a field that corresponds to an
22 area of specialization for an ~~Elementary-Secondary~~
23 ~~Certificate~~ elementary-secondary certificate or a
24 ~~Secondary Certificate~~ secondary certificate as

1 determined by the State Board of Education or a
2 vocational-technical certificate as recommended by the
3 Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology
4 Education;

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

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

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

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

23 4. Either presents a document from an accredited public school
24 district in this state offering employment in the area of

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

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

17 C. Persons enrolled in an alternative placement program shall:

18 1. Have never been denied admittance to a teacher education
19 program approved by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education,
20 the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and by the
21 ~~Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation~~ Commission for
22 Educational Quality and Accountability to offer teacher education
23 programs, nor have enrolled in and subsequently failed courses
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1 necessary to successfully meet the minimum requirements of the
2 program, except those persons who hold a certificate;

3 2. Have on file with the director of teacher education at an
4 Oklahoma institution of higher education a plan for meeting standard
5 certification requirements within three (3) years; and

6 3. Participate in an induction program as required in Section
7 6-195 of this title and have the same duties and responsibilities as
8 other inductees.

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

15 E. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the
16 Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability, may grant an
17 exception to the requirement to complete a subject area examination
18 for initial certification in a field which does not require an
19 advanced degree pursuant to this section if the candidate has an
20 advanced degree in a subject that is substantially comparable to the
21 content assessed on a subject area examination. The degree shall be
22 from an institution accredited by a national or regional accrediting
23 agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department
24

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

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

6 G. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules
7 authorizing adjunct teachers who shall be persons with distinguished
8 qualifications in their field. Adjunct teachers shall not be
9 required to meet standard certification. A person employed as an
10 adjunct teacher pursuant to this subsection who does not hold a
11 valid certificate to teach shall not be considered a teacher as
12 defined by Section 1-116 of this title.

13 H. Each teacher education institution shall provide the
14 ~~Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation~~ Commission for
15 Educational Quality and Accountability an annual report of
16 information as specified by the Commission regarding participation
17 in the alternative placement programs offered by the institution.

18 I. The ~~Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation~~ Commission
19 shall not accredit, renew the accreditation of, or otherwise approve
20 any teacher education program of any institution of higher education
21 in this state that has not implemented alternative placement
22 programs in at least four areas of specialization including
23 mathematics, science, and a foreign language. Each institution
24

1 shall allow individuals who meet the criteria of subsections A and C
2 of this section to be:

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

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

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

15 K. 1. The State Board of Education may grant an exception to
16 the requirements for certification as a licensed school counselor to
17 a person who is a licensed mental health professional, as defined by
18 Section 1-103 of Title 43A of the Oklahoma Statutes, provided the
19 person has completed a training course identified by the State
20 Department of Education or six (6) semester hours related to school
21 counseling from an institution accredited by a national or regional
22 accrediting agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the
23 United States Department of Education.

1 2. Any person seeking certification as a school counselor and
2 who has met the provisions of this subsection shall be exempt from
3 the professional education portion of the competency examination
4 required pursuant to Sections 6-187 and 6-190 of this title.

5 3. The State Board may establish other requirements necessary
6 to grant exceptions.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2023.

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

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