AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 17:7(6)(b), (c), and (e), 7.1(A)(3)(b) and (B)(1), to enact R.S. 17:7.1(A)(1) and 7.2(A)(7), and to repeal R.S. 17:7.1(A)(7) and 7.2(A)(4), relative to the certification of teachers; to provide relative to the responsibilities of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; to provide for teaching certification qualifications and requirements; to provide eligibility criteria; to provide for the granting of teaching certifications; to provide relative to approved teacher education programs; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:7(6)(b), (c), and (e), 7.1(A)(3)(b) and (B)(1) are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:7.1(A)(1) and 7.2(A)(7) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§7. Duties, functions, and responsibilities of board

In addition to the authorities granted by R.S. 17:6 and any powers, duties, and responsibilities vested by any other applicable laws, the board shall:

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(6) * * *

(b)(i)(m) A person applying for initial certification as a teacher in a public
school shall have passed satisfactorily an examination, which shall include English
proficiency; pedagogical knowledge; and knowledge in his area of specialization, as
a prerequisite to the granting of such certificate. However, a person who is employed
as a foreign language teacher in a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program
pursuant to R.S. 17:273.2, and who is not otherwise eligible to receive state
authorization to teach through participation in the Foreign Associate Teacher
Program, shall not be required to pass the examination required by this Subitem, but
shall at least have a baccalaureate degree and shall be subject to all provisions of
state law relative to background checks and criminal history review applicable to the
employment of public school personnel.

(bb) On and after September 15, 1981, any person certified to teach
in another state who applies for certification to teach in the public schools of
Louisiana shall be required to pass satisfactorily the examination which is
administered in accordance with the provisions of this Paragraph as a prerequisite
to the granting of such certification. However, a teacher certified in another state
who meets all other requirements for a Louisiana certificate granted to out-of-state
graduates except for the provisions of this Item the satisfactory passage of the
examination shall be granted a three-year nonrenewable provisional certificate to
be used while said teacher completes the requirements set forth in this Paragraph.

(cc)(ii) Any teacher who holds a valid out-of-state teaching certificate, and
has at least three years of successful teaching experience in another state as
determined by the board, and has completed one year of employment as a teacher in
the Louisiana public school system or as a teacher in a Louisiana nonpublic school
approved by the board as provided by law shall not be required to take the
examination administered in accordance with the provisions of this Paragraph or to
submit any examination scores from any examination previously taken in another
state as a prerequisite to the granting of certification in Louisiana. Upon application
and verification of successful teaching experience in another state by the board,
the teacher shall be granted a valid standard Louisiana teaching certificate
provided that all of the following conditions are met:

   (aaa) The teacher meets all other requirements for background checks and criminal history reviews as Louisiana certificate as may be required by law and board policy.

   (bbb) The local superintendent or his designee of the public school system employing the teacher, the local superintendent of the school system operating the nonpublic school employing the teacher, if applicable, or, if not applicable, the principal of the approved nonpublic school employing the teacher has recommended the teacher for employment for the following school year subject to the receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate.

   (ccc) The local superintendent or his designee of the public school system employing the teacher, the local superintendent of the school system operating the nonpublic school employing the teacher, if applicable, or, if not applicable, the principal of the approved nonpublic school employing the teacher has requested, on behalf of the teacher, that the teacher be granted a valid Louisiana teaching certificate.

   (dd)(iii) The examination shall be administered to each student in a teacher education program at a public college or university in Louisiana prior to graduation and shall be administered to other applicants teachers certified in other states at any time such examination is offered. The board shall prescribe other qualifications and requirements and shall consider other factors.

   (dd)(iv) The state superintendent of education shall administer the aforementioned policy of the board. In such administration of administering the policy, the superintendent shall choose the appropriate testing instrument, shall conduct all necessary research to validate the applicability of the instrument to teacher education programs within the state of Louisiana, and shall conduct all necessary research to determine the level at which the examination is satisfactorily completed. During the conduct of the research and in the preparation of the testing instrument, the superintendent shall meet with and consider the suggestions of
individual classroom teachers, representatives of teacher organizations, deans of education of the public colleges and universities of the state, and representatives of each of the governing boards for higher education.

(iii) Any applicant seeking certification may apply for and take any required test or tests without limitation as to the frequency of applications or testing.

(vi) The state superintendent of education shall annually submit a report to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education relative to the examination administered pursuant to this Paragraph. Such report shall include but not be limited to the following: the number of persons to whom the examination was administered; the educational background and teaching experience of such persons; the number of persons successfully completing the examination; the effectiveness of the examination; and any suggestions for improving the examination.

(c) Any person who fails holds at least a masters degree in the subject area in which he is seeking employment or any person who meets all other certification requirements except he failed to successfully pass the original examination required by Subparagraph (b) of this Paragraph, but who meets all other certification requirements and but who scored within ten percent of the score required for passage on the original examination selected by the state superintendent of education, may be employed as a teacher for a period not to exceed one year five years in the following manner:

(i) The state superintendent of education, upon receipt of a signed affidavit by the president and superintendent of the school board to which such person has applied for employment that there is no other applicant available for employment for a specific teaching position who has met the requirements of this Section and who has agreed to participate in a mentorship program offered by the school board, may issue an emergency teaching permit to such person. Such permit shall be in effect for not more than one year five years but may be renewed twice. Such renewal of the permit shall be accomplished in the same manner as the granting of the
original permit. The granting of such emergency teaching permit shall in no way affect, reduce, or waive the requirement that the person successfully complete the aforementioned examination. Each teacher issued an emergency teaching permit who has not completed an approved teacher education program shall be required to complete a preservice training session offered by the school board prior to the teacher's first day of teaching students.

(ii) At any time the person who failed to pass the exam successfully passes the examination, he or she shall be certified and may be employed on a permanent basis.

(iii) After five years of effective teaching evaluations pursuant to R.S. 17:3902 and upon a signed affidavit of a superintendent of a school system recommending to employ the person for the following school year subject to the receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, the person shall be granted a valid standard professional level teaching certificate by the state superintendent of education, subject only to passing all provisions of law relative to background checks and criminal history review.

(iv) The period herein provided for the employment of during which a teacher is working with an emergency teaching permit granted under the provisions of this Paragraph shall not count toward tenure.

(e) The board shall not adopt any policy, rule, regulation, or other measure that limits or restricts the number of times a temporary employment permit may be issued to any teacher who meets all other requirements of current board policy, has applied for employment for a specific teaching position for which position there is no other applicant available for employment who has met the requirements of this Paragraph, has the recommendation of the superintendent of the school system employing such teacher, and has had a successful local evaluation for the previous four years prior to such issuance. Any such policy, rule, regulation, or other measure in effect on July 1, 1993 shall be null and void.

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Coding: Words which are struck through are deletions from existing law; words in boldface type and underscored are additions.
§7.1. Certification of teachers; certification of principals and superintendents; certification of school psychologists

A. In carrying out its responsibility to prescribe the qualifications and provide for the certification of teachers under authority of R.S. 17:7(6), the qualifications and requirements established by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for certification of any applicant for certification who completes an approved teacher education program in Louisiana shall include but not be limited to the following:

(1) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, that each approved teacher education program shall not require more than one hundred and twenty semester hours of college credit for degree completion, inclusive of any classroom observation time or mentorship requirements. Programs designated by the Board of Regents as dual degrees or dual certifications shall be permitted to exceed the one hundred twenty semester hour credit limit.

(3) An applicant who has passed all requisite examinations covering pre-professional skills and content knowledge but who does not meet the requirement of Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph may be certified if he completes a post-baccalaureate program as provided in this Paragraph, or he may be employed as a teacher for a period not to exceed five years in the following manner:

(i) The state superintendent of education, upon receipt of a signed affidavit by the president and superintendent of the school board to which such person has applied for employment that there is no other applicant available for employment for a specific teaching position who has met the requirements of this Section, may issue an emergency teaching permit to such person. Such permit shall be in effect for not more than five years.

(ii) After five years of effective teaching evaluations pursuant to R.S. 17:3902 and upon a signed affidavit of a superintendent of a school system recommending to employ the person for the following school year subject to the
receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, the person shall be granted a
valid standard professional level teaching certificate by the state superintendent
of education, subject only to passing all provisions of law relative to background
checks and criminal history review.

(i) Such an applicant for admission to a post-baccalaureate program may be
granted conditional admission following a satisfactory personal interview by the
program’s admissions officer.

(ii) If the program awards credit hours, the applicant shall achieve a grade
point average of 3.00 or higher in post-baccalaureate program courses by the end of
his first twelve credit hours and successfully complete the program.

(iii) If the program does not award credit hours, the applicant shall
demonstrate mastery of competencies as required by the program administrator and
by the school system in which the applicant completes required clinical practice, and
satisfactorily completes all program requirements as set forth by the state board,
including any requirements for clinical practice, at graduation.

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B.(1) After August 15, 1986, except as otherwise provided in Paragraph (2)
of this Subsection, any Any persons applying for initial certification as a principal
or vice, assistant, or deputy principal, hereafter referred to as a principal, in addition
to any other requirements of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary
Education, shall have passed the administrative portion of the National Teachers
Examination produced by the Educational Testing Service educational leadership
test adopted by and at a level determined by the State Board of Elementary and
Secondary Education not later than August 1, 1986, which determination shall be
based on a validation study to be completed by the board no later than July 31, 1986.
The validation study shall be submitted to the Joint Committee on Education for its
review prior to adoption of a passage score.

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§7.2. Approved teacher education programs
A. In carrying out its responsibility to prescribe the qualifications and provide for the certification of teachers under authority of R.S. 17:7(6), the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, subject to the constitutional power and authority of the Board of Regents, the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System, the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, and the Board of Supervisors of Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, shall establish qualifications and requirements for the approval of teacher education programs from which graduates may be certified. The qualifications and requirements established by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for an approved teacher education program shall include but not be limited to the following:

* * *

(7) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, that an approved teacher education program shall be no more than one hundred and twenty semester hours of college credit for degree completion, inclusive of any classroom observation time or mentorship requirements. Programs designated by the Board of Regents as dual degrees or dual certifications shall be permitted to exceed the one hundred twenty semester hour credit limit.

* * *

Section 2. R.S. 17:7.1(A)(7) and 7.2(A)(4) are hereby repealed.

Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cheryl Serrett.

DIGEST
SB 377 Reengrossed 2022 Regular Session Peacock

Present law (R.S. 17:7(6)) provides relative to the duties, functions, and responsibilities of

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the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) which includes prescribing the qualifications of teachers and providing for the certification of teachers.

Proposed law retains present law. Proposed law removes outdated provisions, and updates terminology in present law.

Present law requires a person applying for certification to pass an examination which includes English proficiency, pedagogy knowledge, and content knowledge.

Proposed law removes the English proficiency requirement.

Proposed law provides that a teacher who holds a valid-out-of-state teaching license, who has at least three years of successful teaching experience in another state, and who has completed one year of teaching in Louisiana is not required to take an exam to be certified in Louisiana if certain conditions are met.

Proposed law provides that such a teacher does not have to be employed in Louisiana for one year prior to certification once their successful teaching experience is verified.

Present law provides for exceptions to allow certain persons who do not meet all certification requirements to be allowed to teach on an emergency teaching permit, including those who scored within ten percent of the score required for passage. Also, provides that the permit may be renewed twice and provides guidelines on how a teacher can be employed permanently.

Proposed law expands to allow the emergency permit to someone who holds a masters degree in the subject area in which he is seeking employment. Further requires persons on an emergency teaching permit to participate in a mentorship program and complete a preservice training program prior to the first day of teaching.

Proposed law provides that after five years of effective evaluations and upon a signed affidavit of the superintendent of a school system recommending to employ the person the following school year subject to receiving certification, that the person must be granted a teaching certificate subject to background checks and a criminal history review.

Present law (R.S. 17:7.1) provides certain qualifications and requirements that BESE must require of an applicant seeking teaching certification, a leadership certification, and school psychologist certification.

Proposed law provides that an approved teacher education program cannot require more than 120 hours of college credit for degree completion, including classroom observation time or mentorship requirements. Allows programs designated by the Board of Regents as dual degrees or dual certifications to exceed 120 hours.

Present law provides that an applicant for certification who failed to achieve a 2.5 g.p.a. in an approved teaching program, but who has passed all exams required for certification could be certified if he completes a postbaccalaureate program and meets certain requirements while pursuing that program.

Proposed law repeals provisions requiring students to pass an exam before enrolling in an approved teacher education program.

Present law (R.S. 17:7.2) provides relative to approved teacher education programs at public postsecondary institutions.

Proposed law removes student evaluation and counseling requirements for students entering a teacher education program.
Proposed law provides that an approved teacher education program cannot require more than 120 hours of college credit for degree completion, including classroom observation time or mentorship requirements. Allows programs designated by the Board of Regents as dual degrees or dual certifications to exceed 120 hours.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 17:7(6)(b), (c), and (e), 7.1(A)(3)(b) and (B)(1); adds R.S. 17:7.1(A)(1) and 7.2(A)(7); repeals R.S. 17:7.1(A)(7) and 7.2(A)(4)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Education to the original bill
1. Amends requirements relative to certification of teachers and approved teacher education programs.

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill
2. Requires preservice training sessions of certain teachers.
3. Provides for certain dual degree or dual certification programs to exceed the 120 hour credit limit.