

2022 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 377

BY SENATORS PEACOCK, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUDREAUX, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CLOUD, CONNICK, CORTEZ, FESI, FIELDS, HEWITT, JACKSON, LAMBERT, MCMATH, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MIZELL, POPE, PRICE, REESE, SMITH, STINE, TALBOT, TARVER AND WOMACK

TEACHERS. Provides relative to teacher certification requirements. (gov sig)

1 AN ACT

2 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.  
3 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  
4 to the certification of teachers; to provide relative to the responsibilities of the State  
5 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; to provide for teaching certification  
6 qualifications and requirements; to provide eligibility criteria; to provide for the  
7 granting of teaching certifications; to provide relative to approved teacher education  
8 programs; and to provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

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

12 §7. Duties, functions, and responsibilities of board

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

15 \* \* \*

16 (6) \* \* \*

17 (b)(i)~~(aa)~~ A person applying for initial certification as a teacher in a public

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

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

20 ~~(ee)~~**(ii)** Any teacher who holds a valid out-of-state teaching certificate; **and**  
21 has at least three years of successful teaching experience in another state as  
22 determined by the board; ~~and has completed one year of employment as a teacher in~~  
23 ~~the Louisiana public school system or as a teacher in a Louisiana nonpublic school~~  
24 ~~approved by the board as provided by law~~ shall not be required to take the  
25 examination ~~administered in accordance with the provisions of this Paragraph~~ or to  
26 submit any examination scores from any examination previously taken in another  
27 state as a prerequisite to the granting of certification in Louisiana; **Upon application**  
28 **and verification of successful teaching experience in another state by the board,**  
29 **the teacher shall be granted a valid standard Louisiana teaching certificate**

1 provided that all of the following conditions are met:

2 (aaa) ~~The~~ the teacher meets all other requirements for **background checks**  
3 **and criminal history reviews** a Louisiana certificate as may be required by law and  
4 board policy.

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

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

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

22 (ii) ~~(iv)~~ (iv) The state superintendent of education shall administer the  
23 ~~forementioned~~ policy of the board. In ~~such administration of~~ **administering** the  
24 policy, the superintendent shall choose the appropriate testing instrument, shall  
25 conduct all necessary research to validate the applicability of the instrument to  
26 teacher education programs within the state of Louisiana, and shall conduct all  
27 necessary research to determine the level at which the examination is satisfactorily  
28 completed. During the conduct of the research and in the preparation of the testing  
29 instrument, the superintendent shall meet with and consider the suggestions of

1 individual classroom teachers, representatives of teacher organizations, deans of  
 2 education of the public colleges and universities of the state, and representatives of  
 3 each of the governing boards for higher education.

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

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

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

22 (i) The state superintendent of education, upon receipt of a signed affidavit  
 23 by the president and superintendent of the school board to which such person has  
 24 applied for employment that there is no other applicant available for employment for  
 25 a specific teaching position who has met the requirements of this Section **and who**  
 26 **has agreed to participate in a mentorship program offered by the school board,**  
 27 may issue an emergency teaching permit to such person. Such permit shall be in  
 28 effect for not more than ~~one year~~ **five years** ~~but may be renewed twice.~~ Such renewal  
 29 ~~of the permit shall be accomplished in the same manner as the granting of the~~

1 original permit. The granting of such emergency teaching permit shall in no way  
 2 affect, reduce, or waive the requirement that the person successfully complete the  
 3 aforementioned examination. Each teacher issued an emergency teaching permit  
 4 who has not completed an approved teacher education program shall be  
 5 required to complete a preservice training session offered by the school board  
 6 prior to the teacher's first day of teaching students.

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

9 (iii) After five years of effective teaching evaluations pursuant to R.S.  
 10 17:3902 and upon a signed affidavit of a superintendent of a school system  
 11 recommending to employ the person for the following school year subject to the  
 12 receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, the person shall be granted a  
 13 valid standard professional level teaching certificate by the state superintendent  
 14 of education, subject only to passing all provisions of law relative to background  
 15 checks and criminal history review.

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

19 \* \* \*

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

29 \* \* \*

1 §7.1. Certification of teachers; certification of principals and superintendents;  
2 certification of school psychologists

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

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

14 \* \* \*

15 (3) \* \* \*

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

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

27 **(ii) After five years of effective teaching evaluations pursuant to R.S.**  
28 **17:3902 and upon a signed affidavit of a superintendent of a school system**  
29 **recommending to employ the person for the following school year subject to the**

1 receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, the person shall be granted a  
 2 valid standard professional level teaching certificate by the state superintendent  
 3 of education, subject only to passing all provisions of law relative to background  
 4 checks and criminal history review.

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

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

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

16 \* \* \*

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

28 \* \* \*

29 §7.2. Approved teacher education programs





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

1. Makes technical corrections.
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.