

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 AND REPRESENTATIVES AMEDEE, DEVILLIER, EDMONDS, HARRIS, MCFARLAND, CHARLES OWEN, SCHAMERHORN, THOMPSON AND WHITE

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)(~~f~~)(~~aa~~) A person applying for initial certification as a teacher in a public
18 school shall have passed satisfactorily an examination, which shall include ~~English~~
19 ~~proficiency~~, pedagogical knowledge; and knowledge in his area of specialization, as
20 a prerequisite to the granting of such certificate. However, a person who is employed
21 as a foreign language teacher in a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program
22 pursuant to R.S. 17:273.2, and who is not otherwise eligible to receive state

1 authorization to teach through participation in the Foreign Associate Teacher
 2 Program, shall not be required to pass the examination required by this Subitem, but
 3 shall at least have a baccalaureate degree and shall be subject to all provisions of
 4 state law relative to background checks and criminal history review applicable to the
 5 employment of public school personnel.

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

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

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

29 ~~(bbb) The local superintendent or his designee of the public school system~~
 30 ~~employing the teacher, the local superintendent of the school system operating the~~

1 ~~nonpublic school employing the teacher, if applicable, or, if not applicable, the~~
 2 ~~principal of the approved nonpublic school employing the teacher has recommended~~
 3 ~~the teacher for employment for the following school year subject to the receipt of a~~
 4 ~~valid Louisiana teaching certificate.~~

5 ~~(ccc) 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 requested, on~~
 9 ~~behalf of the teacher, that the teacher be granted a valid Louisiana teaching~~
 10 ~~certificate.~~

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

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

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

29 ~~(iv)~~(vi) The state superintendent of education shall annually submit a report
 30 to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education

1 relative to the examination administered pursuant to this Paragraph. Such report shall
 2 include but not be limited to the following: the number of persons to whom the
 3 examination was administered; the educational background and teaching experience
 4 of such persons; the number of persons successfully completing the examination; the
 5 effectiveness of the examination; and any suggestions for improving the
 6 examination.

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

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

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

1 (iii) After five years of effective teaching evaluations pursuant to R.S.
 2 17:3902 and upon a signed affidavit of a superintendent of a school system
 3 recommending to employ the person for the following school year subject to the
 4 receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, the person shall be granted a
 5 valid standard professional level teaching certificate by the state superintendent
 6 of education, subject only to passing all provisions of law relative to background
 7 checks and criminal history review.

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

11 * * *

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

21 * * *

22 §7.1. Certification of teachers; certification of principals and superintendents;
 23 certification of school psychologists

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

29 (1) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, that each approved
 30 teacher education program shall not require more than one hundred twenty

1 semester hours of college credit for degree completion, inclusive of any
 2 classroom observation time or mentorship requirements. Programs designated
 3 by the Board of Regents as dual degrees or dual certifications shall be permitted
 4 to exceed the one hundred twenty semester hour credit limit.

5 * * *

6 (3) * * *

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

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

18 (ii) After five years of effective teaching evaluations pursuant to R.S.
 19 17:3902 and upon a signed affidavit of a superintendent of a school system
 20 recommending to employ the person for the following school year subject to the
 21 receipt of a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, the person shall be granted a
 22 valid standard professional level teaching certificate by the state superintendent
 23 of education, subject only to passing all provisions of law relative to background
 24 checks and criminal history review.

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

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

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(7) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, that an approved teacher education program shall be no more than one hundred 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.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____