

# An Act

ENROLLED SENATE  
BILL NO. 1119

By: Garvin of the Senate

and

Hilbert of the House

An Act relating to teachers; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-122.3, which relates to alternative teaching certificates; removing clock-hour limitation for adjunct teachers; providing for inapplicability of certain definition; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 17-101, which relates to Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma definitions; modifying certain definition; updating statutory reference; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

SUBJECT: Teachers

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, 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 attained a retention grade point average of not less than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale, or
- b. has successfully completed a terminal degree, such as a doctorate of philosophy, a doctorate in education, professional doctorates, a master of fine arts degree

or a master of library science degree, from an institution accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency which is recognized by the Secretary of the United States Department of Education. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall be consulted to verify other terminal degrees, or

- c. holds at least a baccalaureate degree from an institution whose accreditation is recognized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and has qualified work experience in a field that corresponds to an area of certification as determined by the State Board of Education, and
- d. in addition to the requirements of subparagraphs a, b and c of this paragraph, has demonstrated competency or completed a major in a field that corresponds to an area of specialization for an Elementary-Secondary Certificate or a Secondary Certificate as determined by the State Board of Education or a vocational-technical certificate as recommended by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education;

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

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

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

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

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

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

C. Persons enrolled in an alternative placement program shall:

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

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

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

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

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

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

G. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules authorizing adjunct teachers who shall be persons with distinguished qualifications in their field. Adjunct teachers shall not be required to meet standard certification. ~~Adjunct teachers shall be limited to two hundred seventy (270) clock hours of classroom teaching per semester~~ A person employed as an adjunct teacher pursuant to this subsection who does not hold a valid certificate to teach shall not be considered a teacher as defined by Section 1-116 of this title.

H. Each teacher education institution shall provide the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation an annual report of information as specified by the Commission regarding participation in the alternative placement programs offered by the institution.

I. The Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation shall not accredit, renew the accreditation of, or otherwise approve any teacher education program of any institution of higher education in

this state that has not implemented alternative placement programs in at least four areas of specialization, including mathematics, science and a foreign language. Each institution shall allow individuals who meet the criteria of subsections A and C of this section to be:

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

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

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

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 17-101, is amended to read as follows:

Section 17-101. The following words and phrases as used in ~~this act~~ Section 17-101 et seq. of this title, unless a different meaning is clearly required by the context, shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Retirement system" shall mean the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma, as defined in Section 17-102 of this title.

(2) "Public school" shall mean a school district, a state college or university, the State Board of Education, the State Board of Career and Technology Education, and any other state educational entity conducted within the state supported wholly or partly by public funds and operating under the authority and supervision of a legally constituted board or agency having authority and responsibility for any function of public education. ~~"Public school"~~ Public school shall also mean a tuition free, nonprofit alternative school of choice that provides education, therapeutic

counseling, and outreach programs which is aligned with a school district and which receives grant funds from governmental sources.

(3) "Classified personnel" shall mean any teacher, principal, superintendent, supervisor, administrator, librarian, certified or registered nurse, college professor, or college president whose salary is paid wholly or in part from public funds. An employee of any state department, board, board of regents, or board of trustees, who is in a supervisory or an administrative position, the function of which is primarily devoted to public education, shall be considered classified personnel under the meaning of ~~this act~~ Section 17-101 et seq. of this title, at the discretion of the Board of Trustees of the Teachers' Retirement System. The term "teacher" shall also include instructors and counselors employed by the Department of Corrections and holding valid teaching certificates issued by the State Department of Education. Provided, that a person employed by the Department of Corrections as an instructor or counselor shall have been actively engaged in the teaching profession for a period of not less than three (3) years prior to employment to be eligible to participate in the ~~Oklahoma~~ Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma. The Department of Corrections shall contribute the employer's share to the ~~Oklahoma~~ Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma.

(4) "Nonclassified optional personnel" shall include persons hired as adjunct teachers pursuant to subsection G of Section 6-122.3 of this title, cooks, janitors, maintenance personnel not in a supervisory capacity, bus drivers, noncertified or nonregistered nurses, noncertified librarians, and clerical employees of the public schools, state colleges, universities, or any state department, board, board of regents, or board of trustees, the functions of which are primarily devoted to public education and whose salaries are paid wholly or in part from public funds.

(5) "Employer" shall mean the state and any of its designated agents or agencies with responsibility and authority for public education, such as boards of education of elementary and independent school districts, boards of regents, boards of control, or any other agency of and within the state by which a person may be employed for service in public education. ~~"Employer"~~ Employer shall also mean the board of directors of a tuition free, nonprofit alternative school of choice that provides education, therapeutic counseling,

and outreach programs which is aligned with a school district and which receives grant funds from governmental sources.

(6) "Member" shall mean any teacher or other employee included in the membership of the system as provided in Section 17-103 of this title.

(7) "Board of Trustees" shall mean the board provided for in Section 17-106 of this title to administer the retirement system.

(8) "Service" shall mean service as a classified or nonclassified optional employee in the public school system, or any other service devoted primarily to public education in the state.

(9) "Prior service" shall mean service rendered prior to July 1, 1943.

(10) "Membership service" shall mean service as a member of the classified or nonclassified personnel as defined in paragraphs (3) and (4) of this section.

(11) "Creditable service" shall mean membership service plus any prior service authorized under this title.

(12) "Annuitant" shall mean any person in receipt of a retirement allowance as provided in this title.

(13) "Accumulated contributions" shall mean the sum of all amounts deducted from the compensation of a member and credited to his individual account in the ~~Teacher~~ Teachers' Savings Fund, together with interest as of June 30, 1968.

(14) "Earnable compensation" shall mean the full rate of the compensation that would be payable to a member if he worked the full normal working time.

(15) "Average salary":

- (a) for those members who joined the System prior to July 1, 1992, shall mean the average of the salaries for the three (3) years on which the highest contributions to the Teachers' Retirement System was paid not to

exceed the maximum contribution level specified in Section 17-116.2 of this title or the maximum compensation level specified in subsection (28) of this section. Provided, no member shall retire with an average salary in excess of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) unless the member has made the required election and paid the required contributions on such salary in excess of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00), or unless an eligible member fulfills the requirements of Section 17-116.2C of this title in order to have pre-cap removal service included in the retirement benefit computation of the member using the regular annual compensation of the member for any pre-cap removal year of service so included subject to the maximum average salary amount, and

- (b) for those members who join the System after June 30, 1992, shall mean the average of the salaries for five (5) consecutive years on which the highest contribution to the Teachers' Retirement System was paid. Only salary on which required contributions have been made may be used in computing average salary.

(16) "Annuity" shall mean payments for life derived from the "accumulated contributions" of a member. All annuities shall be payable in equal monthly installments.

(17) "Pension" shall mean payments for life derived from money provided by the employer. All pensions shall be payable in equal monthly installments.

(18) "Monthly retirement allowance" is one-twelfth (1/12) of the annual retirement allowance which shall be payable monthly.

(19) "Retirement Benefit Fund" shall mean the fund from which all retirement benefits shall be paid based on such mortality tables as shall be adopted by the Board of Trustees.



(20) "Actuary" shall mean a person especially skilled through training and experience in financial calculation respecting the expectancy and duration of life.

(21) "Actuarial equivalent" shall mean a benefit of equal value when computed upon the basis of such mortality and other tables as shall be adopted by the Board of Trustees.

(22) The masculine pronoun, whenever used, shall include the feminine.

(23) "Actuarially determined cost" shall mean the single sum which is actuarially equivalent in value to a specified pension amount as determined on the basis of mortality and interest assumptions adopted by the Board of Trustees.

(24) "Normal retirement age" means the earliest date upon which:

- (a) a member reaches the age sixty-two (62) with respect to a member whose first creditable service occurs prior to November 1, 2011, unless the member reaches a normal retirement date pursuant to subparagraph (c) or subparagraph (d) of this paragraph, ~~or~~
- (b) a member reaches the age of sixty-five (65) with respect to a member whose first creditable service occurs on or after November 1, 2011, or with respect to a member whose first creditable service occurs on or after November 1, 2011, reaches a normal retirement date pursuant to subparagraph (d) of this paragraph having attained a minimum age of sixty (60) years, ~~or~~
- (c) the age at which the sum of a member's age and number of years of creditable service total eighty (80), with respect to a member whose first creditable service occurred prior to July 1, 1992, and who does not reach a normal retirement age pursuant to subparagraph (a) of this paragraph, or
- (d) the age at which the sum of a member's age and number of years of creditable service total ninety (90), with

respect to a member whose first creditable service occurred on or after July 1, 1992, but prior to November 1, 2011, if the member does not reach a normal retirement age pursuant to subparagraph (a) of this paragraph.

(25) "Regular annual compensation" means salary plus fringe benefits, excluding the flexible benefit allowance pursuant to Section 26-105 of this title and for purposes pursuant to Section 17-101 et seq. of this title. For purposes of this definition, regular annual compensation shall include:

- (a) salary which accrues on a regular basis in proportion to the service performed, including payments for staff development,
- (b) amounts that would otherwise qualify as salary under paragraph (a) of this subsection but are not received directly by the member pursuant to a good faith, voluntary written salary reduction agreement in order to finance payments to a deferred compensation or tax-sheltered annuity program or to finance benefit options under a cafeteria plan qualifying under the United States Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C., Section 101 et seq.,
- (c) group health and disability insurance, group term life insurance, annuities, and pension plans, provided on a periodic basis to all qualified employees of the employer, which qualify as fringe benefits under the United States Internal Revenue Code, and
- (d) excluded from regular annual compensation are:
  - 1. expense reimbursement payments,
  - 2. office, vehicle, housing, or other maintenance allowances,
  - 3. the flexible benefit allowance provided pursuant to Section 26-105 of this title,

