

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.
Act 416 of the Regular Session

State of Arkansas
91st General Assembly
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As Engrossed: H2/24/17
A Bill

SENATE BILL 328

By: Senators A. Clark, J. English, Hester
By: Representatives C. Douglas, Gates, Cozart

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO REQUIRE A PERSON *WHO APPLIES* FOR AN
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION K-6 TEACHING LICENSE OR A
SPECIAL EDUCATION K-12 TEACHING LICENSE TO
SUCCESSFULLY PASS A STAND-ALONE READING TEST AND A
MULTI-SUBJECT TEST AS A CONDITION OF LICENSURE; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE A PERSON *WHO APPLIES* FOR A K-6
TEACHING LICENSE OR A SPECIAL EDUCATION
K-12 TEACHING LICENSE TO SUCCESSFULLY
PASS A STAND-ALONE READING TEST AND A
MULTI-SUBJECT TEST AS A CONDITION OF
LICENSURE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code §§ 6-17-402 and 6-17-403 are amended to read
as follows:

6-17-402. Rules ~~and regulations~~.

(a) The State Board of Education shall issue the license of a
classroom teacher, an administrator, a guidance counselor, or a library media
specialist.

(b)(1) The ~~State Board of Education~~ state board shall promulgate rules
~~and regulations~~ for the issuance, licensure, relicensure, and continuance of
licensure of teachers in the public schools of this state.



(2)(A) In addition to other requirements, ~~any~~:

(i) A person applying for ~~initial~~ first-time licensure as a secondary level teacher or as an administrator in the public schools or a licensed secondary level teacher, a licensed elementary general education teacher, or an administrator applying for a license in an additional area shall take and complete a test ~~recognized by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education~~ and approved by the State Board of Education and submit the scores to the Department of Education; and

(ii)(a) A person applying for first-time licensure for an elementary education (K-6) license or a special education (K-12) license shall take and pass a:

(1) Subject matter content assessment;

(2) Pedagogy assessment; and

(3) Stand-alone assessment that examines the acquisition of knowledge of essential components of beginning reading instruction based on the science of reading.

(b) The requirements under subdivision (b)(2)(A)(ii)(a) of this section shall apply to a person who:

(1) Enters a teacher preparation program beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year or thereafter for a first-time elementary level K-6 license or special education K-12 license or endorsement; and

(2) Upon adoption of the stand-alone reading assessment under subdivision (b)(2)(A)(ii)(a)(3) of this section, is seeking to add the elementary education (K-6) license level by testing out.

(c) A person who enters an alternative educator preparation program beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year and receives an elementary education (K-6) provisional license or a special education (K-12) provisional license shall take and pass the stand-alone reading assessment under subdivision (b)(2)(A)(ii)(a)(3) of this section in order to receive a standard license.

(d)(1) The recommendation for the adoption of a stand-alone reading assessment shall be made by a diverse group of stakeholders.

(2) The stakeholders shall recommend a testing company for the stand-alone reading assessment that provides an

extensive practice test that enables prospective teachers to practice the kinds of skills taught in their teacher preparation programs so they can learn how to teach reading skills and diagnose reading problems.

(e) The stand-alone reading assessment adopted by the state board shall:

(1) Include an adequate number of assessment items to ensure instructional knowledge of reading that is based on evidence-based practices related to the science of reading;

(2) Ensure that at least fifty percent (50%) of the items assess instructional knowledge for beginning reading and are based on evidence-based practices related to the science of reading;

(3) Include at least one (1) open-response question so that test takers can indicate how well they can demonstrate in writing their diagnostic interpretation of student reading errors; and

(4) Include a clear distinction between reading elements in and skills needed for literary and formation texts in order to address the English language arts standards as determined by the state board.

(f) The state board shall determine the cut score for the stand-alone reading assessment with strong consideration based on the national mean if the national mean is not less than seventy percent (70%) correct answers on the stand-alone reading assessment.

(B) ~~No~~ An applicant for initial licensure or licensure in an additional area shall not receive a license after July 1, 2007, unless the applicant scores at or above the minimum level set by the State Board of Education that is consistent with the recommendations of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

(C) ~~All colleges and universities in this state~~ The teacher preparation programs for licensure in this state shall report the results of the examinations to the department upon request.

(c) The State Board of Education shall not delegate to ~~any~~ a college or university any of the State Board of Education's powers or duties pertaining to the issuance, licensure, relicensure, and continuance of licensure of teachers in public schools in this state.

(d)(1) The State Board of Education shall waive the examination

requirements under subsection (b) of this section for an individual applying for a first-time Arkansas license who has a valid out-of-state teaching license and three (3) years' documented teaching experience as required by the rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.

(2) A teacher who has fewer than three (3) years' documented teaching experience shall have up to three (3) years to pass the stand-alone reading assessment, during which the teacher may work under a provisional license.

6-17-403. Provisional licensure for teachers trained and licensed in other states.

(a) The State Board of Education may issue a one-year nonrenewable provisional license to any teacher who seeks Arkansas licensure and is trained in and licensed by a state other than Arkansas if the teacher has been in good standing during the most recent three (3) years of teaching in another state.

(b)(1) ~~Any~~ A person who has not successfully completed the licensure examination designated by the state board tests required under ~~§ 6-17-601 et seq.~~ § 6-17-402 and who has not previously held an Arkansas standard license but meets degree, course work, and experience requirements for a standard license and who otherwise qualifies to teach in the public schools of this state may receive a ~~one-year~~ three-year nonrenewable provisional license and be employed by any public school district in this state for a period not to exceed ~~one (1) year~~ three (3) years while completing the professional development, coursework, or training necessary to successfully pass the stand-alone reading assessment under § 6-17-402.

(2) A school district that hires a teacher who has not successfully completed the ~~examination~~ licensure tests required under § 6-17-402 shall not be penalized by the state board provided that the length of employment of the teacher while nonlicensed does not exceed one (1) year.

(c) The state board shall issue a standard five-year teaching license to an individual who furnishes to the Department of Education proof of the following:

(1) A valid, standard teaching license or its Arkansas equivalent that:

(A) Was issued in another state; and

(B) Has been in good standing during the most recent ~~two~~
~~(2)~~ three (3) years of the applicant's teaching experience;

(2) Successful completion of the criminal records checks and Child Maltreatment Central Registry check under § 6-17-410;

(3) Higher education transcripts evidencing the award of at least a baccalaureate degree;

(4) ~~Reports evidencing test scores required for licensing by the licensing state, unless the individual has three (3) years of documented teaching experience~~ Successful completion of the licensure tests required under § 6-17-402;

(5) Completion of a program for:

(A) Teacher education at a nationally or regionally accredited institution of higher education;

(B) Teacher education nationally accredited by an accrediting organization recognized by the United States Department of Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, or the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation; or

(C) Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; and

(6) Payment of applicable licensure fees.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-17-409(e)(2), concerning nontraditional teacher licensure, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

(C) Successfully completed the licensure tests required under § 6-17-402.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-17-603(a), concerning the reporting and confidentiality of test scores, is amended to read as follows:

(a)(1) Scores from the tests required under ~~the provisions of this subchapter~~ and § 6-17-402 shall not be disclosed but shall be retained by the Department of Education as confidential records not subject to the Freedom of Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq., or any other act ~~which~~ that would require the disclosure thereof.

(2) However, the department shall provide each licensee with that person's test score and the grader's analysis of the writing portion of

the test.

/s/A. Clark

APPROVED: 03/07/2017