

State of Arkansas  
94th General Assembly  
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As Engrossed: H3/8/23 H3/28/23

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1538

By: Representatives Vaught, Duke

## For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE  
REQUIRED FOR LICENSED SCHOOL PERSONNEL; TO AMEND THE  
DEFINITION OF A "BASIC CONTRACT" UNDER THE TEACHER  
COMPENSATION PROGRAM OF 2003 TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF  
ADDITIONAL DAYS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT A PUBLIC  
SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL REQUIRE; AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES.

## Subtitle

TO AMEND THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
SCHEDULE REQUIRED FOR LICENSED SCHOOL  
PERSONNEL; AND TO AMEND THE DEFINITION OF  
A "BASIC CONTRACT" UNDER THE TEACHER  
COMPENSATION PROGRAM OF 2003.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-17-709 is amended to read as follows:  
6-17-709. Professional development schedule.

(a) Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, a school district or an open-enrollment public charter school shall make available to the appropriate licensed personnel the following professional development:

(1) In the 2013-2014 school year and every ~~fourth~~ fifth school year thereafter, the professional development for mandated reporters and licensed elementary and secondary public school personnel required under § 6-61-133;

(2)(A) ~~In the 2014-2015~~ Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year



~~and every fourth school year thereafter, the family and community engagement professional development under § 6-15-1703 shall be taken by licensed personnel at least one (1) time.~~

(B) If the appropriate licensed personnel has completed the family and community engagement professional development required under subdivision (a)(2)(A) of this section at least one (1) time before the 2023-2024 school year, he or she shall not be required to complete the family and community engagement professional development again;

(3) In the 2023-2024 school year and every ~~fourth~~ fifth school year thereafter, the mental health awareness and teen suicide awareness and prevention professional development required under § 6-17-708; and

~~(4)(A) In the 2016-2017 Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year and every fourth school year thereafter, the Arkansas history professional development required under § 6-17-703 shall be taken by licensed personnel at least one (1) time.~~

(B) If the appropriate licensed personnel has completed the Arkansas history professional development required under subdivision (a)(4)(A) of this section at least one (1) time before the 2023-2024 school year, he or she shall not be required to complete the Arkansas history professional development again, except as may be required for the subject matter he or she teaches.

(b)(1) Two (2) hours of the professional development, or professional learning credit as determined by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, required by subsection (a) of this section shall be counted in one (1) school year toward the professional development required for licensed educators under the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Professional Development.

(2) If additional hours or professional learning credits are obtained by a licensed educator, the school district may count those hours or credits as part of the professional development required for licensed educators under the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Rules Governing Professional Development.

(c) Annually, the State Board of Education may require up to six (6) hours of integrated professional development, or professional learning credits determined by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, for licensed educators in educational technology.

(d) *The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall establish the curriculum under this section in collaboration with educational agencies and associations, including without limitation the:*

- (1) *Division of Higher Education;*
- (2) *Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators;*
- (3) *Arkansas Education Association;*
- (4) *Arkansas School Boards Association;*
- (5) *Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development;*
- (6) *Arkansas State Teachers Association; and*
- (7) *Arkansas Rural Ed Association.*

(e)(1) *The professional development under this subsection shall not be provided by a school district but shall be provided by:*

- (A) *The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education;*
- (B) *An institution of higher education; or*
- (C) *Providers approved by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.*

(2)(A) *Before a person receives a building level administrator's license, the person shall successfully complete the teacher evaluation professional development program.*

(B) *A person who receives an initial building level administrator's license shall complete the certification assessment for the teacher evaluation professional development program before or after receiving the initial building level administrator's license.*

(3)(A) *The Upon the issuance of an initial teaching license by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall not issue an initial teaching license until the applicant verifies that he or she has obtained the required professional development concerning, an applicant shall obtain training in the following areas within his or her first two (2) years of initial employment as a licensed teacher in this state:*

- (i) *Mandated ~~reporters~~ reporting under § 6-61-133;*
- (ii) *Family and community engagement under § 6-15-1703;*
- (iii) *Teen suicide awareness and prevention under § 6-17-708;*
- (iv) *Arkansas history under § 6-17-703; and*

(v) Human trafficking under § 6-17-710.

(B) However, an applicant who has obtained the training required under subdivision (e)(3)(A) of this section in a separate educator preparation program or in another state and who has provided the division with verification of the obtainment of the training shall not be subject to the additional training required under subdivision (e)(3)(A) of this section.

~~(B)(C)~~ For a teaching license issued under the state's reciprocity provisions to an out-of-state teacher, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall issue a provisional license until the licensee obtains the professional development identified in subdivision (e)(3)(A) of this section.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-17-2402(1)(A), concerning the definition of a "basic contract" under the Teacher Compensation Program of 2003, is amended to read as follows:

(1)(A)(i) "Basic contract" means a teacher employment contract for one hundred ninety (190) days that includes no less than six (6) days of professional development, except as provided under subdivision (1)(B) of this section for teachers employed in a Civilian Student Training Program or the Arkansas National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

(ii) A public school district shall not require more than four (4) days of professional development in addition to the six (6) days of professional development included in a basic contract under subdivision (1)(A)(i) of this section.

/s/Vaught

APPROVED: 4/11/23