

State of Arkansas
92nd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2019

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1456

By: Representative Richey

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING INDIVIDUALS LICENSED IN CONTIGUOUS STATES; TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ISSUE A TEACHING LICENSE TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS LICENSED IN A CONTIGUOUS STATE; TO REQUIRE THAT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ESTABLISH MINIMUM SCORES THAT ARE LOWER THAN THE LOWEST-ACCEPTED SCORES IN CONTIGUOUS STATES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ISSUE TEACHING LICENSES TO INDIVIDUALS LICENSED IN CONTIGUOUS STATES; AND TO REQUIRE THAT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION LOWER MINIMUM SCORES.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-17-401 is amended to read as follows:

6-17-401. Teacher's license requirement.

(a) Except as permitted under § 6-17-309 and § 6-17-2601 et seq., ~~no a~~ a teacher ~~shall be~~ who is employed in ~~any a~~ any a public school ~~of in~~ in the state ~~shall be who is not~~ licensed to teach in the State of:

(1) Arkansas by a license issued by the State Board of Education; or

(2) A contiguous state, as defined in § 6-17-430.

(b) ~~Any A~~ A person who ~~shall teach~~ teaches in a public school in this state shall ~~only~~ be entitled to receive ~~any~~ compensation from the school



funds ~~for such services~~ if the person has:

(1) A valid Arkansas license issued by the state board; ~~or~~

(2) Other documentation from the Office of Professional Licensure of the Department of Education authorizing employment as a teacher under the conditions ~~set forth~~ established by the Department of Education in the documentation; ~~or~~

(3) A valid license issued by one (1) or more contiguous states, as defined in § 6-17-430.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-17-402(c)(2)(B), concerning scores that an applicant must obtain for initial licensure or licensure in an additional area, is amended to read as follows:

(B)(i) 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 that is consistent with the recommendations of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

(ii) Scores set by the state board under subdivision (c)(2)(B)(i) of this section shall be at least one (1) point under the lowest-accepted scores for each certification area in each contiguous state, as defined in § 6-17-430.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-17-402(f)-(h), concerning additional requirements for individuals with out-of-state teaching licenses who are applying for teaching licenses in this state, are amended to read as follows:

(f) The state board shall promulgate rules for the licensure of individuals through reciprocity with other states under § 6-17-403 and for the licensure of individuals who have a teaching license issued by a contiguous state under § 6-17-430.

(g) The state board shall waive the examination requirements under subsection (c) of this section for an individual applying for a first-time Arkansas license who has a ~~valid~~:

(1) Valid out-of-state teaching license and three (3) years' documented teaching experience as required by the rules promulgated by the state board; or

(2) Valid teaching license issued by a contiguous state under §

6-17-430.

(h) A Except for those individuals who are applying for a first-time Arkansas license under subdivision (g)(2) of this section, 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.

SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-17-403(a) and (b), concerning provisional licensure and additional licensure requirements for teachers who are trained and licensed in other states, are amended to read as follows:

(a)(1) The Except as provided under subdivision (a)(2) of this section, the State Board of Education may issue a one-year nonrenewable provisional license to ~~any~~ a 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.

(2) However, the state board shall issue a standard five-year teaching license without the additional requirements under subdivision (a)(1) of this section to an individual whose teaching license was issued by a contiguous state under § 6-17-430.

(b)(1)(A) A Except as provided under subdivision (b)(1)(B) of this section, a person who has not successfully completed the licensure tests required under § 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 three-year nonrenewable provisional license and be employed by any public school district in this state for a period not to exceed three (3) years while completing the professional development, course work, or training necessary to successfully pass the stand-alone reading assessment under § 6-17-402.

(B) However, an individual whose teaching license was issued by a contiguous state under § 6-17-430 is not subject to the additional requirements for licensure under subdivision (b)(1)(A) of this section.

(2) A school district that hires a teacher who has not successfully completed the 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.

SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-17-403(c)(4), concerning completion of licensure tests for out-of-state teachers applying for a standard Arkansas teaching license, is amended to read as follows:

(4)(A) Successful completion of the licensure tests required under § 6-17-402~~+~~.

(B) An individual whose teaching license was issued by a contiguous state, as defined in § 6-17-430, is not required to successfully complete the licensure tests required under § 6-17-402;

SECTION 6. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 17, Subchapter 4, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-17-430. Contiguous state licensure.

(a) It is the intent of this section to assist the state with teacher shortages and license deficiencies that currently inhibit teachers in this state but not teachers in contiguous states.

(b) As used in this section, "contiguous state" means a state that shares a border with Arkansas.

(c) The State Board of Education shall issue an Arkansas teaching license to an individual in a contiguous state who holds a valid teaching license and is qualified to teach in any:

(1) Grade level; and

(2) Certification area.