

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1496

5 By: Representative Andrews
6 By: Senator J. Dotson
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE TO
10 ENSURE ARKANSAS STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT BY QUALIFIED
11 TEACHERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12
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Subtitle

15 TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
16 TO ENSURE ARKANSAS STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT
17 BY QUALIFIED TEACHERS.
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1004(b) and (c), concerning
22 requirements to renew a teaching license and licensure exceptions, are
23 amended to read as follows:

24 (b)(1) To renew a teaching license, a teacher shall participate in
25 continuing education and professional development:

26 (A) ~~Based on the teacher's evaluation and professional~~
27 ~~growth plan under the Teacher Excellence and Support System, § 6-17-2801 et~~
28 ~~seq.;~~

29 (B) As required under § 6-17-704 and other laws; and

30 (C)(B) As required by rule of the state board.

31 (2)(A) ~~For purposes of the requirement for continuing education~~
32 ~~and professional development under the Standards for Accreditation of~~
33 ~~Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts, five (5) hours of credit for~~
34 ~~professional development shall be given for each one (1) hour of college~~
35 ~~credit for a graduate level course if the college credit is:~~

36 (i) ~~Related to and enhances the teacher's knowledge~~



1 ~~of the subject area in which the teacher is currently teaching;~~

2 ~~(ii) Part of the requirements for the teacher to~~
 3 ~~obtain additional licensure in a subject matter that has been designated by~~
 4 ~~the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education as having a critical~~
 5 ~~shortage of teachers; or~~

6 ~~(iii) Otherwise approved by the Division of~~
 7 ~~Elementary and Secondary Education under subdivision (b)(2)(B) of this~~
 8 ~~section as a graduate level course eligible for professional development~~
 9 ~~credit.~~

10 ~~(B)(i) Credit for professional development obtained under~~
 11 ~~subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section may be allocated as follows:~~

12 ~~(a) Up to fifteen (15) hours may be credited~~
 13 ~~to the professional development requirements for licensure; and~~

14 ~~(b) Hours obtained in excess of fifteen (15)~~
 15 ~~may be credited to any remaining requirements for professional development~~
 16 ~~generally, if approved by the school district in a professional development~~
 17 ~~plan.~~

18 ~~(ii) The allocation of credit for professional~~
 19 ~~development claimed under subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section shall be~~
 20 ~~approved by the:~~

21 ~~(a) School district or open enrollment public~~
 22 ~~charter school employing the teacher; or~~

23 ~~(b) Division of Elementary and Secondary~~
 24 ~~Education, if the educator is not employed by a school district or an open-~~
 25 ~~enrollment public charter school.~~

26 ~~(C) For purposes of the requirement for continuing~~
 27 ~~education and professional development under this section, each hour of~~
 28 ~~training received by licensed personnel related to teaching an advanced~~
 29 ~~placement class for a subject covered by the College Board and Educational~~
 30 ~~Testing Service shall be counted as professional development up to a maximum~~
 31 ~~of thirty (30) hours.~~

32 ~~(3)(2) However, nothing Nothing in subdivision (b)(2) of this~~
 33 ~~section this subsection (b) shall prevent or restrict a school district from~~
 34 ~~requiring additional in-service training.~~

35 ~~(c)(1) A teacher shall ~~not~~ only be assigned to teach a grade level or~~
 36 ~~a subject for which he or she is ~~not fully or provisionally~~ licensed by the~~

1 ~~state unless he or she meets one (1) of the following licensure exceptions as~~
 2 ~~established by rules promulgated by the state board; or for which he or she~~
 3 ~~is on a licensure plan approved by the division.~~

4 ~~(1)(A) An emergency teaching permit granted to a school district~~
 5 ~~for a position filled by a nonlicensed teacher who meets the Arkansas~~
 6 ~~Qualified Teacher requirements promulgated by the state board.~~

7 ~~(B) An emergency teaching permit may be granted annually~~
 8 ~~for not more than two (2) consecutive school years;~~

9 ~~(2) An effective teacher licensure exception granted to a school~~
 10 ~~district for a position to be filled by an Arkansas licensed educator to~~
 11 ~~teach a content area related to the educator's current licensure content~~
 12 ~~area;~~

13 ~~(3) A technical permit issued in cooperation with the Division~~
 14 ~~of Career and Technical Education;~~

15 ~~(4) An Aspiring Teacher permit;~~

16 ~~(5) A licensure exception under:~~

17 ~~(A) The District of Innovation Program, § 6-15-2801 et~~
 18 ~~seq.;~~

19 ~~(B) The Arkansas Quality Charter Schools Act of 2013, § 6-~~
 20 ~~23-101 et seq.; or~~

21 ~~(C) Section 6-15-103;~~

22 ~~(6) A plan for adding an area to an existing Arkansas teaching~~
 23 ~~license while teaching in the content area to be added; or~~

24 ~~(7) A waiver for a long term substitute teacher granted under~~
 25 ~~subsection (d) of this section.~~

26 ~~(2)(A) At the request of a public school district, the division~~
 27 ~~may approve an individual's licensure plan under this section.~~

28 ~~(B) A licensure plan may be initially approved under this~~
 29 ~~section for a period not to exceed three (3) years.~~

30 ~~(C)(i) The division may grant, upon the request of an~~
 31 ~~individual on a licensure plan, an extension of a licensure plan for up to~~
 32 ~~two (2) additional years due to an extenuating circumstance.~~

33 ~~(ii) However, the division may grant an individual~~
 34 ~~an extension of his or her licensure plan only one (1) time.~~

35 ~~(D) The state board may promulgate rules governing~~
 36 ~~licensure plans granted under this section.~~

1 (E) The provisions of this subsection (c) shall not be
2 waived under § 6-15-103.

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4 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1004(d), concerning long-term
5 substitutes, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as follows:

6 (6) A public school district may request the use of a long-term
7 substitute under this subsection (d) for a specified period not to extend
8 beyond the school year for which the request is made.

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11 **APPROVED: 3/18/25**
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