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4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1425

5 By: Representatives Vaught, Barker, Cavanaugh, Sturch, G. Hodges
6

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE
9 LICENSURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND
10 ADMINISTRATORS AND LICENSURE EXCEPTIONS; TO AUTHORIZE
11 A TIERED LICENSURE SYSTEM; TO ALLOW SCHOOL DISTRICTS
12 TO BASE TEACHER COMPENSATION ON LICENSURE LEVELS
13 APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION; AND FOR
14 OTHER PURPOSES.
15

Subtitle

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18 CONCERNING THE LICENSURE OF TEACHERS AND
19 ADMINISTRATORS AND LICENSURE EXCEPTIONS;
20 TO AUTHORIZE A TIERED LICENSURE SYSTEM;
21 AND TO ALLOW DISTRICTS TO BASE
22 COMPENSATION ON LICENSURE LEVELS.
23

24
25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
26

27 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1004(a) and (b), concerning licensure
28 assessments for teachers, is amended to read as follows:

29 (a)(1) Arkansas teachers will demonstrate competency in subject matter
30 content on identified assessments appropriate to their teaching area in order
31 to be granted ~~an initial~~ a license to teach in the state under rules
32 promulgated by the State Board of Education.

33 (2) If there is no assessment available under subdivision (a)(1)
34 of this section for a new licensure area for subject matter content, the
35 Department of Education may request that the state board approve an
36 alternative method of demonstrating subject matter content competency.



1 (b) In order to obtain a teaching license, Arkansas teachers will
 2 demonstrate the ability to increase student academic achievement by
 3 demonstrating competency on ~~identified~~ assessments of teaching methods
 4 approved by the state board that result in increased student achievement.
 5

6 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1004(d)-(h), concerning unlicensed
 7 teachers in a classroom for more than thirty (30) days, is amended to read as
 8 follows:

9 (d) ~~Effective at the beginning of the 2006-2007 school year, no~~ A
 10 teacher shall not be assigned to teach a grade level or a subject for which
 11 he or she is not fully or provisionally licensed by the state unless he or
 12 she meets one (1) of the following licensure exceptions as established by
 13 rules promulgated by the state board:

14 (1)(A) An emergency teaching permit granted to a school district
 15 for a position filled by a nonlicensed teacher who meets the Arkansas
 16 Qualified Teacher Requirements promulgated by the State Board of Education.

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

19 (2) An effective teacher licensure exception granted to a school
 20 district for a position to be filled by an Arkansas licensed educator to
 21 teach a content area related to the educator's current licensure content
 22 area;

23 (3) A technical permit issued in cooperation with the Department
 24 of Career Education;

25 (4) A licensure exception under:

26 (A) The District of Innovation Program, § 6-15-2801 et
 27 seq.;

28 (B) The Arkansas Quality Charter Schools Act of 2013, § 6-
 29 23-101 et seq.; or

30 (C) Section 6-15-103;

31 (5) A plan for adding an area to an existing Arkansas teaching
 32 license while teaching in the content area to be added; or

33 (6) A waiver for a long-term substitute teacher granted under
 34 subsection (e) of this section.

35 (e)(1) For purposes of this section, "long-term substitute" means an
 36 individual who:

1 (A) Holds:

2 (i) A bachelor's degree from an accredited college
 3 or university; or

4 (ii) An Arkansas teaching license; and

5 (B) Is substituting for a teacher of record for thirty-one
 6 (31) or more consecutive school days in the same class during a school year.

7 (2) No class of students shall be under the instruction of a one
 8 (1) or more substitute teacher or teachers for more than thirty (30)
 9 consecutive school days in the same class during a school year unless the
 10 substitute teacher or teachers instructing the class have a bachelor's degree
 11 awarded by an accredited college or university or have been licensed to teach
 12 by the State of Arkansas school district has obtained a long-term substitute
 13 waiver.

14 ~~(2)(3)~~ A long-term substitute teacher or teachers ~~possessing a~~
 15 ~~bachelor's degree~~ shall continue to teach the class from at least the thirty-
 16 first consecutive day after the regular teacher is absent from the class
 17 until the return of the regular teacher to that class.

18 ~~(f)(4)~~ A person serving as a substitute teacher for thirty (30) days
 19 or fewer shall:

20 ~~(1)(A)~~ Be a high school graduate; or

21 ~~(2)(B)~~ Hold a graduate equivalent degree.

22 ~~(g) Subsections (e) and (f) of this section shall not apply to~~
 23 ~~substitutes for nondegreed vocational technical teachers.~~

24 ~~(h)(1) If subsections (e) and (f) of this section impose an undue~~
 25 ~~hardship on a school district, the school district may apply to the State~~
 26 ~~Board of Education for a waiver.~~

27 ~~(2)(5)~~ The state board shall develop rules and regulations for
 28 granting a long-term substitute waiver.

29 ~~(3)(6)~~ Any school district granted a long-term substitute waiver
 30 ~~from this requirement~~ shall be identified in the ~~department's~~ Department of
 31 Education's annual school district report card.

32
 33 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-17-402 is amended to read as follows:
 34 6-17-402. Rules and regulations.

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

1 specialist in the public schools of this state.

2 ~~(b)(1) The State Board of Education~~ state board shall promulgate rules
 3 ~~and regulations for the issuance,~~ licensure, relicensure, and continuance of
 4 licensure of public school teachers and administrators in the public schools
 5 ~~of this state that:~~

6 (1) Require at a minimum that each in-state applicant for teacher
 7 licensure:

8 (A) Completes an educator preparation program approved by
 9 the Department of Education, which shall include without limitation:

10 (i) Educator preparation programs at institutions of
 11 higher education leading to a bachelor's degree or higher; and

12 (ii) Alternative educator preparation programs under
 13 § 6-17-409; and

14 (B) Demonstrates:

15 (i) Licensure content area knowledge; and

16 (ii) Knowledge of teaching methods; and

17 (2) Require at a minimum that each in-state applicant for an
 18 administrator's license demonstrates knowledge of state-adopted competencies
 19 and standards for educational leaders.

20 (c) The state board may promulgate rules for a tiered system of
 21 licensure, which may include without limitation:

22 (1) An emergency teaching permit;

23 (2) A technical permit;

24 (3)(A) A provisional license.

25 (B) The state board rules may provide that a provisional
 26 license may be issued if the applicant:

27 (i) Meets the minimum qualifications under
 28 subdivision (b)(1)-(2) of this section as applicable to an applicant for a
 29 teaching or an administrator license; or

30 (ii) Partially meets full licensure requirements;

31 (4) A novice or first-time license;

32 (5) A standard license; and

33 (6)(A) A license with advanced requirements.

34 (B) The state board may authorize a teacher leader
 35 advanced license or a teacher leader endorsement to a license.

36 ~~(2)(A) In addition to other requirements, any person applying~~

1 ~~for initial licensure as a teacher or administrator in the public schools or~~
 2 ~~a licensed teacher or administrator applying for a license in an additional~~
 3 ~~area shall take and complete a test recognized by the National Council for~~
 4 ~~Accreditation of Teacher Education and approved by the State Board of~~
 5 ~~Education and submit the scores to the Department of Education.~~

6 ~~(B) No applicant for initial licensure or licensure in an~~
 7 ~~additional area shall receive a license after July 1, 2007, unless the~~
 8 ~~applicant scores at or above the minimum level set by the State Board of~~
 9 ~~Education that is consistent with the recommendations of the Professional~~
 10 ~~Licensure Standards Board.~~

11 ~~(G)(d)(1) The state board shall approve the methods required for~~
 12 ~~applicants to meet the requirements of this section.~~

13 ~~(2) All colleges, and universities, and other state-approved~~
 14 ~~programs that prepare teachers and administrators for licensure in this state~~
 15 ~~shall report the results of the examinations any assessments required for~~
 16 ~~licensure to the department upon request.~~

17 ~~(e)(e) The State Board of Education state board shall not delegate to~~
 18 ~~any college or university any of the State Board of Education's state board's~~
 19 ~~powers or duties pertaining to the ~~issuance,~~ licensure, relicensure, and~~
 20 ~~continuance of licensure of public school teachers and administrators in~~
 21 ~~public schools in this state.~~

22 ~~(d)(f)(1) The state board shall promulgate rules for the licensure of~~
 23 ~~individuals through reciprocity of licensure with other states under § 6-17-~~
 24 ~~403.~~

25 ~~(2) The State Board of Education state board rules shall waive~~
 26 ~~the examination requirements under ~~subsection (b) of~~ this section for an~~
 27 ~~individual applying for a first-time Arkansas license who has a valid out-of-~~
 28 ~~state teaching license and three (3) years' documented teaching experience ~~as~~~~
 29 ~~~~required by the rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.~~~~

30 ~~(g) The state board may establish by rule minimum qualified teacher~~
 31 ~~requirements for teachers employed where licensure has been waived pursuant~~
 32 ~~to law.~~

33 ~~(h) Rules of the state board shall identify the following as core~~
 34 ~~licensure content areas:~~

35 ~~(1) Early Childhood (K-6);~~

36 ~~(2) English language arts;~~

- 1 (3) Mathematics;
- 2 (4) Science;
- 3 (5) Social studies;
- 4 (6) Art;
- 5 (7) Music; and
- 6 (8) Foreign language.

8 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-17-409 is amended to read as follows:

9 6-17-409. ~~Nontraditional licensure~~ Alternative educator preparation
 10 programs.

11 (a) As used in this section, "alternative educator preparation
 12 program" means a program of study approved by the Department of Education for
 13 candidates holding a bachelor's degree who are preparing for licensure as
 14 teachers and leaders in public schools in this state.

15 **(b)(1)** The State Board of Education may offer and operate a
 16 ~~nontraditional licensure~~ an alternative educator preparation program.

17 ~~(b)(1)(2)(A)~~ The Department of Education ~~department~~ may provide
 18 grants of financial assistance to entities that train individuals seeking to
 19 obtain ~~nontraditional~~ licensure through ~~the nontraditional licensure process~~
 20 an alternative educator preparation program administered by the department.

21 ~~(2)(B)~~ The department shall pay the grants from funds
 22 appropriated by the General Assembly to the department for such purpose.

23 ~~(c)(1)(C)~~ The state board shall promulgate rules ~~and~~
 24 ~~regulations~~ to determine eligibility for and amount of awards of the grants
 25 concerning the operation of the ~~nontraditional licensure~~ alternative educator
 26 preparation program authorized by this section and for such other purposes as
 27 may be necessary in carrying out the intent of this section.

28 ~~(2)(3)~~ The department may refuse to admit for enrollment in the
 29 ~~nontraditional licensure~~ alternative educator preparation program
 30 administered by the department a person who has been dismissed from a teacher
 31 education program at an institution of higher education.

32 ~~(d)(4)~~ If the state board requires an applicant for
 33 ~~nontraditional~~ licensure through an alternative educator preparation program
 34 to complete one (1) or more additional college-level courses and the
 35 applicant has obtained a bachelor's degree, the required course or courses
 36 shall ~~meet one (1) or more of the following conditions:~~

1 ~~(1)(A) Each course shall be offered at every state supported,~~
 2 ~~two year institution of higher education.~~

3 ~~(B) If more than one (1) course is required, all courses~~
 4 ~~shall be offered in a one semester block; or~~

5 ~~(2) Each course shall be available as an online course, a~~
 6 ~~traditional face-to-face course, or a hybrid course that is part online~~
 7 ~~instruction and part face-to-face instruction, as approved by the department.~~

8 ~~(e)(1) As used in this subsection, "accelerated teaching program"~~
 9 ~~means a program intended for college graduates that provides intensive~~
 10 ~~training and support for a period of two (2) or more years for teaching and~~
 11 ~~leading in schools.~~

12 ~~(2) The state board shall issue a standard five year teaching~~
 13 ~~license to an applicant if the applicant has:~~

14 ~~(A) Either:~~

15 ~~(i) Successfully completed an accelerated teaching~~
 16 ~~program, including:~~

17 (c) The state board may promulgate rules for the requirements for
 18 educator licensure through other alternative educator preparation programs,
 19 including without limitation:

20 (1) A teacher or leader academy;

21 (2) A residency program at a public school, which may be in
 22 partnership with an educator preparation program at an institution of higher
 23 education;

24 ~~(a)(3) The Teach For America, Inc., program;~~

25 ~~(b)(4) The Arkansas Teacher Corps program offered by of the~~
 26 ~~University of Arkansas at Fayetteville;~~

27 ~~(e)(5) The American Board for the Certification of Teacher~~
 28 ~~Excellence program; or~~

29 ~~(d)(6) Another accelerated teaching alternative educator~~
 30 ~~preparation program approved by the department; or~~

31 ~~(ii)(7) Been awarded A program conferring a master's degree in~~
 32 ~~teaching from an accredited program at an institution of higher education;~~
 33 ~~and or~~

34 (8) An alternative educator preparation program or pathway for
 35 an applicant who has professional work experience in the content area in
 36 which the applicant desires to obtain a license.

1 ~~(B) Successfully completed the criminal records checks and~~
 2 ~~Child Maltreatment Central Registry check under § 6-17-410.~~

3 ~~(3)(A)(d)(1)~~ The state board shall issue to an applicant who is in an
 4 ~~accelerated teaching~~ alternative educator preparation program a provisional
 5 teaching license that is issued under the state board's rules governing
 6 provisional licensure ~~for nontraditional licensure applicants.~~

7 ~~(B)(2)~~ The provisional license is valid for the entire period
 8 that the applicant ~~is~~:

9 ~~(i)(A)~~ Participating ~~Is participating~~ in the ~~accelerated~~
 10 ~~teaching~~ alternative educator preparation program;

11 ~~(B)~~ Has not been determined to have an ethics violation
 12 under § 6-17-428; and

13 ~~(ii)(C)~~ Teaching ~~Is teaching~~ in an Arkansas public school.

14 ~~(4)(e)~~ The state board may require an applicant ~~who meets the criteria~~
 15 ~~of subdivision (e)(2) of~~ for licensure under this section to submit proof of
 16 the following academic eligibility:

17 ~~(A)(i)(1)(A)~~ Passing scores, as set by the state board, on
 18 state-required ~~basic skills,~~ pedagogical, and content-area assessments, or
 19 their substantial equivalents.

20 ~~(ii)(B)~~ As used in this subdivision ~~(e)(1),~~ “substantial
 21 equivalents” includes without limitation the assessments required by the
 22 American Board for the Certification of Teacher Excellence program and an
 23 alternative method of demonstrating subject matter content competency
 24 identified by the state board under § 6-15-1004;

25 ~~(2)~~ Successful completion of professional educator ethics
 26 training identified by rules of the state board; and

27 ~~(B)(i)(3)~~ If ~~As~~ required by state board rules for the grade
 28 level and content area for which the applicant seeks licensure, successful
 29 completion of courses in Arkansas history or reading and writing in content
 30 areas, or both.

31 ~~(ii)~~ ~~An applicant who has successfully completed an~~
 32 ~~accelerated teaching program is exempt from the requirement of courses in~~
 33 ~~reading and writing in content areas.~~

34 ~~(5)(f)~~ No academic or experience requirements for obtaining an
 35 Arkansas teaching license in addition to those identified in ~~this subsection~~
 36 ~~(e)~~ subsections (c)-(e) of this section shall be imposed on an applicant who

1 has completed one of the programs under subdivision (c)(3)-(5) and who
 2 otherwise meets the requirements of this ~~subsection (e)~~ section by:

3 (A) The state board;

4 (B) The department; or

5 (C) An Arkansas state-funded college or university.

6 ~~(f)(1) The state board shall issue a nonrenewable three year~~
 7 ~~provisional professional teaching license to an applicant who submits to the~~
 8 ~~department the following:~~

9 ~~(A) Higher education transcripts evidencing the award of~~
 10 ~~at least a baccalaureate degree;~~

11 ~~(B) Evidence of a minimum of three (3) years of employment~~
 12 ~~experience in the content area that the applicant seeks to teach;~~

13 ~~(C) Evidence of an offer of employment to teach classes~~
 14 ~~for credit in an Arkansas public school;~~

15 ~~(D) A statement of justification from the applicant~~
 16 ~~relating the applicant's experience to teaching in the content area in which~~
 17 ~~the applicant seeks to teach;~~

18 ~~(E) Two (2) professional letters of recommendation~~
 19 ~~submitted by the applicant's references;~~

20 ~~(F) Passing scores on the state required basic skills and~~
 21 ~~content knowledge tests for the content area in which the applicant seeks to~~
 22 ~~teach; and~~

23 ~~(G) Successful completion of the criminal background~~
 24 ~~checks and Child Maltreatment Central Registry check under § 6-17-410.~~

25 ~~(2)(A) An individual who receives a three year provisional~~
 26 ~~teaching license under this subsection shall have in the first year of~~
 27 ~~provisional licensure twenty four (24) hours of training in pedagogy as~~
 28 ~~determined by the Department of Education.~~

29 ~~(B) The twenty four (24) hours of training in pedagogy are~~
 30 ~~in addition to and not considered a part of the professional development~~
 31 ~~required for teachers by their employing school district or public school.~~

32 ~~(3) At the end of each year of provisional licensure, the~~
 33 ~~licensee shall undergo a summative evaluation as required by Arkansas law.~~

34 ~~(4) At the end of three (3) years of provisional licensure, the~~
 35 ~~state board shall issue a standard five year teaching license to the licensee~~
 36 ~~if the licensee.~~

1 ~~(A) Submits passing scores on the state required~~
 2 ~~pedagogical assessment or its substantial equivalent for the content area in~~
 3 ~~which the applicant seeks to teach;~~

4 ~~(B) Is identified by the employing school district as~~
 5 ~~proficient or above on a summative evaluation under § 6-17-2805 for the third~~
 6 ~~year of provisional licensure; and~~

7 ~~(C) Is recommended for full licensure by the~~
 8 ~~superintendent of the employing school district.~~

9 (g) Each applicant for a provisional license under this section shall
 10 successfully complete the criminal records checks and Child Maltreatment
 11 Central Registry check under § 6-17-410 before the department may issue the
 12 license.

13
 14 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-17-2403(a), concerning the minimum salary
 15 schedule required of school districts, is amended to read as follows:

16 (a)(1) The board of directors in each school district in the state
 17 shall pay classroom teachers upon a minimum salary schedule that provides:

18 ~~(1)(A)~~ Annual increments for education and experience;

19 ~~(2)(B)~~ A base salary; and

20 ~~(3)(C)~~ A minimum salary for a teacher with a master's
 21 degree and at least fifteen (15) years' experience.

22 (2)(A) A school district may differentiate in the salary levels
 23 of the minimum teacher compensation schedule to provide increased salaries
 24 based on a tiered licensure system established by the State Board of
 25 Education under § 6-17-402.

26 (B) The differentiated salary schedule shall not provide
 27 for a salary that is below the minimum set out in this section.

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