

By Senator Meek

36-1378-01

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to teacher certification;
3 amending s. 231.17, F.S.; allowing the
4 Department of Education, in specified
5 circumstances, to grant an extension of the
6 deadline for achieving passing scores on the
7 College Level Academic Skills Test or on other
8 basic skills examinations required by state
9 board rule to a person who has a documented
10 learning disability; allowing the department to
11 waive, in specified circumstances, the
12 requirement to achieve passing scores on the
13 College Level Academic Skills Test or on other
14 basic skills examinations required by state
15 board rule for a person who has a documented
16 learning disability; allowing the department,
17 in specified circumstances, to grant an
18 extension of the deadline for achieving passing
19 scores on the professional education competency
20 examination required by state board rule to a
21 teacher who has a documented learning
22 disability; allowing the department, in
23 specified circumstances, to waive the
24 requirement to achieve passing scores on the
25 professional education competency examination
26 for a teacher who has a documented learning
27 disability; allowing the department, in
28 specified circumstances, to grant to an
29 entry-level applicant for certification an
30 extension of time for attaining satisfactory
31 scores on an examination that tests the

1 applicant's mastery of general knowledge;
2 providing an effective date.

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4 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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6 Section 1. Subsections (3), (5), (7), and (8) of
7 section 231.17, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

8 231.17 Teacher certification requirements.--

9 (3) MASTERY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.--

10 (a) Before July 1, 2002, acceptable means of
11 demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

12 1. Achievement of passing scores on the College Level
13 Academic Skills Test or other basic skills examinations
14 required by state board rule. The department may grant an
15 indefinite extension of the deadline for achieving passing
16 scores on the College Level Academic Skills Test or on other
17 basic skills examinations required by state board rule to a
18 person who has documentation establishing that the person has
19 dyslexia or another learning disability if the person has
20 taken at least one part of the examination each year and his
21 or her employing school district requests the extension;

22 2. A waiver of the requirement to achieve passing
23 scores on the College Level Academic Skills Test or on other
24 basic skills examinations required by state board rule, which
25 the department may grant only to a person who has
26 documentation establishing that the person has dyslexia or
27 another learning disability, who has been employed as a
28 teacher for at least 5 years and has consistently received
29 satisfactory ratings from his or her employing school district
30 or districts throughout that time, and whose school district
31 requests the waiver;

1 ~~3.2.~~ Achievement of passing scores on another state's
2 general knowledge examinations;

3 ~~4.3.~~ A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
4 another state that requires an examination of mastery of
5 general knowledge;

6 ~~5.4.~~ A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
7 another state and valid certificate issued by the National
8 Board for Professional Teaching Standards; or

9 ~~6.5.~~ A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
10 another state and documentation of 2 years of continuous
11 successful full-time teaching or administrative experience
12 during the 5-year period immediately preceding the date of
13 application for certification.

14 (b) Beginning July 1, 2002, acceptable means of
15 demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

16 1. Achievement of passing scores on basic skills
17 examination required by state board rule;

18 2. Achievement of passing scores on the College Level
19 Academic Skills Test earned prior to July 1, 2002, or receipt
20 of a waiver granted under subparagraph (a)2. before that date;

21 3. A waiver of the requirement to achieve passing
22 scores on a basic skills examination required by state board
23 rule, which the department may grant only to a teacher who has
24 documentation establishing that the teacher has dyslexia or
25 another learning disability, who has been employed as a
26 teacher for at least 5 years and has consistently received
27 satisfactory ratings from his or her employing school district
28 or districts throughout that time, and whose school district
29 requests the waiver;

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1 ~~4.3.~~ A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
2 another state that requires an examination of mastery of
3 general knowledge;

4 ~~5.4.~~ A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
5 another state and valid certificate issued by the National
6 Board for Professional Teaching Standards; or

7 ~~6.5.~~ A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
8 another state and documentation of 2 years of continuous
9 successful full-time teaching or administrative experience
10 during the 5-year period immediately preceding the date of
11 application for certification.

12 (5) MASTERY OF PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND EDUCATION
13 COMPETENCE.--

14 (a) Before July 1, 2002, acceptable means of
15 demonstrating mastery of professional preparation and
16 education competence are:

17 1. Achievement of passing scores on the professional
18 education competency examination required by state board rule,
19 and documentation of one of the following:

20 a. Completion of an approved teacher preparation
21 program at a postsecondary institution within this state;

22 b. Successful completion of an approved alternative
23 preparation program, pursuant to paragraph (7)(b); or

24 c. Completion of professional preparation college
25 courses as specified in state board rule and successful
26 completion of a district professional education competence
27 program pursuant to paragraph (7)(c).

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29 The department may grant an indefinite extension of the
30 deadline for achieving passing scores on the professional
31 education competency examination required by state board rule

1 to a teacher who has documentation establishing that the
2 teacher has dyslexia or another learning disability if the
3 teacher has taken the examination each year and his or her
4 employing school district requests the extension. Furthermore,
5 the department may grant a waiver of the requirement to
6 achieve passing scores on the professional education
7 competency examination to a teacher who has documentation
8 establishing that the teacher has dyslexia or another learning
9 disability, who has been employed as a teacher for at least 5
10 years and has consistently received satisfactory ratings from
11 his or her employing school district or districts throughout
12 that time, and whose school district requests the waiver.

13 2. A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
14 another state and valid certificate issued by the National
15 Board for Professional Teaching Standards; or

16 3. A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
17 another state and documentation of 2 years of continuous
18 successful full-time teaching or administrative experience in
19 another state during the 5-year period immediately preceding
20 the date of application for certification.

21 (b) Beginning July 1, 2002, acceptable means of
22 demonstrating mastery of professional preparation and
23 education competence are:

24 1. Completion of an approved teacher preparation
25 program at a postsecondary institution within this state;

26 2. Completion of a teacher preparation program at a
27 postsecondary institution outside Florida and achievement of
28 passing scores on the professional education competency
29 examination required by state board rule;

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1 3. A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
2 another state that requires an examination of mastery of
3 professional education competence;

4 4. A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
5 another state and valid certificate issued by the National
6 Board for Professional Teaching Standards;

7 5. A valid standard teaching certificate issued by
8 another state and documentation of 2 years of continuous
9 successful full-time teaching or administrative experience
10 during the 5-year period immediately preceding the date of
11 application for certification; or

12 6. Successful completion of the Department of
13 Education's professional preparation and education competency
14 program, outlined in paragraph (7)(a).

15 (7) PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND EDUCATION COMPETENCY
16 PROGRAM.--

17 (a) By July 1, 2002, the Department of Education shall
18 develop and each school district must provide a cohesive
19 competency-based preparation program by which members of a
20 school district's instructional staff may satisfy the mastery
21 of professional preparation and education competence
22 requirements specified in rules of the State Board of
23 Education. Participants must hold a state-issued temporary
24 certificate. The program shall include the following
25 components:

26 1. A minimum period of initial preparation prior to
27 assuming duties as the teacher of record.

28 2. An option for collaboration between school
29 districts and other supporting agencies for implementation.

30 3. Experienced peer mentors.

31 4. An assessment that provides for:

1 a. An initial evaluation of each educator's
2 competencies to determine an appropriate individualized
3 professional development plan.

4 b. A postevaluation to assure successful completion of
5 the program.

6 5. Content knowledge that includes, but is not limited
7 to, the following:

8 a. Requirements specified in state board rule for
9 professional preparation.

10 b. The educator-accomplished practices approved by the
11 state board.

12 c. A variety of data indicators for student progress.

13 d. Methodologies, including technology-based
14 methodologies, for teaching subject content that supports the
15 Sunshine State Standards for students.

16 e. Techniques for effective classroom management.

17 f. Techniques and strategies for operationalizing the
18 role of the teacher in assuring a safe learning environment
19 for students.

20 g. Methodologies for assuring the ability of all
21 students to read, write, and compute.

22 6. Required achievement of passing scores on the
23 professional education competency examination required by
24 state board rule.

25 (b) Until July 1, 2002, each school district may
26 develop and maintain an alternative certification program by
27 which members of the district's instructional staff may
28 satisfy the professional education course requirements
29 specified in rules of the state board for issuance of a
30 professional certificate. The state board must adopt, by rule,
31 standards and guidelines for the approval of alternative

1 certification programs. Each approved program must include
2 methods for identifying each applicant's entry-level teaching
3 competencies and must require each applicant to:

4 1. Have expertise in the subject and meet requirements
5 for specialization in a subject area for which a professional
6 certificate may be issued under this chapter and rules of the
7 state board.

8 2. Complete training in only those competency areas in
9 which deficiencies are identified.

10 3. Complete the program within 2 years after initial
11 employment as a member of the district's instructional staff.

12 4. Achieve passing scores on the professional
13 education competency examination required by state board rule
14 or receive a waiver of this requirement by having
15 documentation establishing dyslexia or another learning
16 disability.

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18 Each district school board may expend educational training
19 funds provided under ss. 231.600 and 236.081 to implement the
20 provisions of this paragraph. The department must approve
21 programs and systems developed to demonstrate professional
22 preparation and education competence authorized by this
23 paragraph.

24 (c) Until July 1, 2002, each school district must
25 develop and maintain a system by which members of the
26 district's instructional staff may demonstrate mastery of
27 professional education competence as required by law. Each
28 district's program must be based on classroom application and
29 instructional performance and must include a performance
30 evaluation plan for documenting the demonstration of required
31 professional education competence. Each individual employed as

1 a member of the district's instructional staff must
2 demonstrate such mastery within the first year after
3 employment, unless the individual:

- 4 1. Has completed an approved teacher preparation
5 program at a postsecondary institution within this state;
- 6 2. Has a valid teaching certificate issued by another
7 state and demonstrated at least 2 years of successful
8 full-time teaching experience in another state; or
- 9 3. Is participating in the district's alternate
10 certification program outlined in paragraph (b).

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12 Each district school board may expend educational training
13 funds provided under ss. 231.600 and 236.081 to implement the
14 provisions of this paragraph. The department must approve
15 programs and systems developed to demonstrate professional
16 education competence authorized by this paragraph.

17 (8) EXAMINATIONS.--

18 (a) The Commissioner of Education, with the approval
19 of the State Board of Education, may contract for developing,
20 printing, administering, scoring, and appropriate analysis of
21 the written examinations required.

22 (b) The state board shall, by rule, specify the
23 examination scores that are required for the issuance of a
24 professional certificate and temporary certificate. Such rules
25 must define generic subject area competencies and must
26 establish uniform evaluation guidelines. Individuals who apply
27 for their professional certificate before July 1, 2000, may
28 demonstrate mastery of general knowledge pursuant to the
29 alternative method specified by state board rule which must:

- 30 1. Apply only to an applicant who has successfully
31 completed all prerequisites for issuance of the professional

1 certificate, except passing one specific subtest of the
2 College Level Academic Skills Test, and who has taken and
3 failed to achieve a passing score on that subtest at least
4 four times.

5 2. Require notification from the superintendent of
6 schools of the employing school district, the governing
7 authority of the employing developmental research school, or
8 the governing authority of the employing state-supported
9 school or nonpublic school that the applicant has
10 satisfactorily demonstrated mastery of the subject area
11 covered by that specific subtest through successful experience
12 in the professional application of generic subject area
13 competencies and proficient academic performance in that
14 subject area. The decision of the superintendent of schools or
15 governing authority shall be based on a review of the
16 applicant's official academic transcript and notification from
17 the applicant's principal, a peer teacher, and a
18 district-level supervisor that the applicant has demonstrated
19 successful professional experience in that subject area.

20 (c) The state board shall designate the certification
21 areas for subject area examinations. However, until July 1,
22 2002, an applicant may satisfy the subject area and
23 professional education competence testing requirements by
24 attaining scores on corresponding examinations from the
25 National Teachers Examination series, or a successor to that
26 series, that meet standards established by the state board.
27 Until July 1, 2002, the College Level Academic Skills Test, a
28 similar examination approved by the state board, corresponding
29 examinations from the National Teachers Examination series, or
30 other acceptable means pursuant to subsection (3) must be used
31 to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge as required in

1 subsection (2). At the request of a school district that has
2 contracted to hire the applicant, the department may grant to
3 an applicant who has documentation establishing that the
4 applicant has dyslexia or another learning disability an
5 extension of time for attaining satisfactory scores on an
6 examination intended to demonstrate the applicant's mastery of
7 general knowledge. All required examinations may be taken
8 prior to graduation. An applicant who has passed the reading,
9 writing, and mathematics subtest of the former Florida Teacher
10 Certification Examination or has previously passed the College
11 Level Academic Skills Test is not required to take the College
12 Level Academic Skills Test.

13 (d) If an applicant takes an examination developed by
14 this state and does not achieve the score necessary for
15 certification, the applicant may review his or her completed
16 examination and bring to the attention of the department any
17 errors that would result in a passing score.

18 (e) For any examination developed by this state, the
19 department and the state board shall maintain confidentiality
20 of the examination, developmental materials, and workpapers,
21 which are exempt from s. 119.07(1).

22 (f) By July 1, 2002, the examinations used for
23 demonstration of mastery of general knowledge, professional
24 education competence, and subject area knowledge shall be
25 aligned with student standards approved by the state board.
26 The delivery system for these examinations shall provide for
27 overall efficiency, user-friendly application, reasonable
28 accessibility to prospective teachers, and prompt attainment
29 of examination results. The examination of competency for
30 demonstration of subject area knowledge shall be sufficiently
31 comprehensive to assess subject matter expertise for

1 individuals who have acquired subject knowledge either through
2 college credit or by other means.

3 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

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6 SENATE SUMMARY

7 Authorizes the Department of Education to grant to any
8 person who is applying for teacher certification who has
9 a documented learning disability an indefinite extension
10 of time for achieving passing scores on examinations that
11 test general knowledge and on examinations that test
12 professional competency if the person fulfills specified
13 requirements and if the school district that employs the
14 person requests the extension or waiver. Authorizes the
15 department, in specified circumstances, to grant an
16 extension of time to attain satisfactory scores on an
17 examination that tests general knowledge to an
18 entry-level applicant for teacher certification.
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