

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to educator certification; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; deleting obsolete provisions relating to acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of professional development; revising acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of subject area knowledge and professional preparation and education competence; revising components of a competency-based professional development certification program; requiring the Department of Education to use specified examination scores in its comparison of the performance of certificateholders; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.; revising certain requirements for the renewal or reinstatement of a professional certificate; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Subsections (3), (5), and (6), paragraph (a) of subsection (8), and subsection (17) of section 1012.56, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

(3) MASTERY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.—Acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

(a) Achievement of passing scores on basic skills examination required by state board rule;

27 ~~(b) Achievement of passing scores on the College Level~~
 28 ~~Academic Skills Test earned prior to July 1, 2002;~~

29 (b)~~(e)~~ A valid professional standard teaching certificate
 30 issued by another state;

31 (c)~~(d)~~ A valid certificate issued by the National Board
 32 for Professional Teaching Standards or a national educator
 33 credentialing board approved by the State Board of Education; or

34 (d)~~(e)~~ Documentation of two semesters of successful
 35 teaching in a Florida College System institution, state
 36 university, or private college or university that awards an
 37 associate or higher degree and is an accredited institution or
 38 an institution of higher education identified by the Department
 39 of Education as having a quality program.

40 (5) MASTERY OF SUBJECT AREA KNOWLEDGE.—Acceptable means of
 41 demonstrating mastery of subject area knowledge are:

42 (a) Achievement of passing scores on subject area
 43 examinations required by state board rule for subjects requiring
 44 no more than a bachelor's degree, ~~which may include, but need~~
 45 ~~not be limited to, world languages in Arabic, Chinese, Farsi,~~
 46 ~~French, German, Greek, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian,~~
 47 ~~Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish;~~

48 (b) Completion of a bachelor's degree or higher and
 49 verification of the attainment of a passing score, as specified
 50 by state board rule, on a subject area content knowledge
 51 examination ~~an oral proficiency interview score above the~~
 52 ~~intermediate level and a written proficiency score above the~~

53 ~~intermediate level on a test~~ administered by the American
54 Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages or a standardized
55 assessment approved by state board rule for a certification
56 subject for which there is no Florida-developed examination;

57 (c) Completion of the subject area specialization
58 requirements specified in state board rule and verification of
59 the attainment of the essential subject matter competencies by
60 the district school superintendent of the employing school
61 district or chief administrative officer of the employing state-
62 supported or private school for a subject area for which a
63 subject area examination has not been developed or a
64 standardized examination or assessment has not been approved and
65 ~~required~~ by state board rule;

66 (d) Completion of the subject area specialization
67 requirements specified in state board rule for a subject
68 coverage requiring a master's or higher degree and achievement
69 of a passing score on the subject area examination or a
70 standardized examination or assessment approved as specified in
71 state board rule;

72 (e) A valid professional standard teaching certificate
73 issued by another state; or

74 (f) A valid certificate issued by the National Board for
75 Professional Teaching Standards or a national educator
76 credentialing board approved by the State Board of Education.

77
78 School districts are encouraged to provide mechanisms for those

79 middle school teachers holding only a K-6 teaching certificate
80 to obtain a subject area coverage for middle grades through
81 postsecondary coursework or district add-on certification.

82 (6) MASTERY OF PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND EDUCATION
83 COMPETENCE.—Acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of
84 professional preparation and education competence are:

85 (a) Completion of an approved teacher preparation program
86 at a postsecondary educational institution within this state and
87 achievement of a passing score on the professional education
88 competency examination required by state board rule;

89 (b) Completion of a teacher preparation program at a
90 postsecondary educational institution outside Florida and
91 achievement of a passing score on the professional education
92 competency examination required by state board rule;

93 (c) A valid professional standard teaching certificate
94 issued by another state;

95 (d) A valid certificate issued by the National Board for
96 Professional Teaching Standards or a national educator
97 credentialing board approved by the State Board of Education;

98 (e) Documentation of two semesters of successful teaching
99 in a Florida College System institution, state university, or
100 private college or university that awards an associate or higher
101 degree and is an accredited institution or an institution of
102 higher education identified by the Department of Education as
103 having a quality program;

104 (f) Completion of professional preparation courses as

105 specified in state board rule, successful completion of a
 106 professional education competence demonstration program pursuant
 107 to paragraph (8) (b), and achievement of a passing score on the
 108 professional education competency examination required by state
 109 board rule;

110 (g) Successful completion of a professional development
 111 ~~preparation-alternative~~ certification and education competency
 112 program, outlined in paragraph (8) (a); ~~or~~

113 (h) Successful completion of a competency-based an
 114 ~~alternative~~ certification program pursuant to s. 1004.85 and
 115 achievement of a passing score on the professional education
 116 competency examination required by rule of the State Board of
 117 Education; or

118 (i) Documentation of a score of 155 or higher on the
 119 Verbal Reasoning section of the GRE General Test.

120 (8) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATION AND EDUCATION
 121 COMPETENCY PROGRAM.—

122 (a) The Department of Education shall develop and each
 123 school district may provide a cohesive competency-based
 124 professional development certification program by which members
 125 of a school district's instructional staff may satisfy the
 126 mastery of professional preparation and education competence
 127 requirements specified in this subsection and rules of the State
 128 Board of Education. Participants must hold a state-issued
 129 temporary certificate. A school district that implements the
 130 program shall provide a competency-based certification program

131 developed by the Department of Education or developed by the
132 district and approved by the Department of Education. The
133 program shall include the following components:

134 1. A minimum period of initial preparation before assuming
135 duties as the teacher of record.

136 2. An option for collaboration between school districts
137 and other supporting agencies or educational entities for
138 implementation.

139 3. Experienced peer mentors. Each individual selected by
140 the district as a peer mentor must hold a valid professional
141 certificate issued pursuant to this section, must have earned at
142 least 3 years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through
143 grade 12, and must have earned an effective or highly effective
144 rating on the prior year's performance evaluation under s.
145 1012.34 or be a peer evaluator under the district's evaluation
146 system approved under s. 1012.34.

147 4. An assessment of teaching performance aligned to the
148 district's system for personnel evaluation under s. 1012.34
149 which provides for:

150 a. An initial evaluation of each educator's competencies
151 to determine an appropriate individualized professional
152 development plan.

153 b. A summative evaluation to assure successful completion
154 of the program.

155 5. Professional education preparation content knowledge
156 that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

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157 | a. The state-adopted student content standards, including
158 | scientifically based reading instruction, content literacy, and
159 | mathematical practices, for each subject identified on the
160 | temporary certificate.

161 | b. The educator-accomplished practices approved by the
162 | state board.

163 | c. A variety of data indicators for monitoring student
164 | progress.

165 | d. Methodologies for teaching students with disabilities.

166 | e. Methodologies for teaching English language learners
167 | appropriate for each subject area identified on the temporary
168 | certificate.

169 | f. Techniques and strategies for operationalizing the role
170 | of the teacher in assuring a safe learning environment for
171 | students.

172 | 6. Required achievement of passing scores on the subject
173 | area and professional education competency examination required
174 | by State Board of Education rule. Mastery of general knowledge
175 | must be demonstrated as described in subsection (3).

176 | (17) COMPARISON OF ROUTES TO A PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE.—
177 | Beginning with the 2003-2004 school year, the Department of
178 | Education shall conduct a longitudinal study to compare
179 | performance of certificateholders who are employed in Florida
180 | school districts. The study shall compare a sampling of
181 | educators who have qualified for a professional certificate
182 | since July 1, 2002, based on the following:

183 (a) Graduation from a state-approved teacher preparation
 184 program.

185 (b) Completion of a state-approved professional
 186 preparation and education competency program.

187 (c) A valid standard teaching certificate issued by a
 188 state other than Florida.

189 (d) Documentation of a score of 155 or higher on the
 190 Verbal Reasoning section of the GRE General Test.

191
 192 The department comparisons shall be made to determine if there
 193 is any significant difference in the performance of these groups
 194 of teachers, as measured by their students' achievement levels
 195 and learning gains as measured by s. 1008.22.

196 Section 2. Subsections (3) and (5) of section 1012.585,
 197 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

198 1012.585 Process for renewal of professional
 199 certificates.—

200 (3) For the renewal of a professional certificate, the
 201 following requirements must be met:

202 (a) The applicant must earn a minimum of 6 college credits
 203 or 120 inservice points or a combination thereof. For each area
 204 of specialization to be retained on a certificate, the applicant
 205 must earn at least 3 of the required credit hours or equivalent
 206 inservice points in the specialization area. Education in
 207 "clinical educator" training pursuant to s. 1004.04(5)(b) and
 208 credits or points that provide training in the area of

209 scientifically researched, knowledge-based reading literacy and
210 computational skills acquisition, exceptional student education,
211 normal child development, and the disorders of development may
212 be applied toward any specialization area. Credits or points
213 that provide training in the areas of drug abuse, child abuse
214 and neglect, strategies in teaching students having limited
215 proficiency in English, or dropout prevention, or training in
216 areas identified in the educational goals and performance
217 standards adopted pursuant to ss. 1000.03(5) and 1008.345 may be
218 applied toward any specialization area. Credits or points earned
219 through approved summer institutes may be applied toward the
220 fulfillment of these requirements. Inservice points may also be
221 earned by participation in professional growth components
222 approved by the State Board of Education and specified pursuant
223 to s. 1012.98 in the district's approved master plan for
224 inservice educational training, including, but not limited to,
225 serving as a trainer in an approved teacher training activity,
226 serving on an instructional materials committee or a state board
227 or commission that deals with educational issues, or serving on
228 an advisory council created pursuant to s. 1001.452.

229 (b) In lieu of college course credit or inservice points,
230 the applicant may renew a specialization area by passage of a
231 state board approved subject area test or other state board
232 approved standardized examination or assessment.

233 (c) If an applicant wishes to retain more than two
234 specialization areas on the certificate, the applicant shall be

235 permitted two successive validity periods for renewal of all
236 specialization areas, but must earn no fewer than 6 college
237 course credit hours or the equivalent in any one validity
238 period.

239 (d) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for the
240 expanded use of training for renewal of the professional
241 certificate for educators who are required to complete training
242 in teaching students of limited English proficiency, training in
243 teaching students with disabilities, and training in the
244 teaching of reading as follows:

245 1. A teacher who holds a professional certificate may use
246 college credits or inservice points completed in English-for-
247 Speakers-of-Other-Languages training, training in teaching
248 students with disabilities, and training in the teaching of
249 reading in excess of 6 semester hours during one certificate-
250 validity period toward renewal of the professional certificate
251 during the subsequent validity periods.

252 2. A teacher who holds a temporary certificate may use
253 college credits or inservice points completed in English-for-
254 Speakers-of-Other-Languages training, training in teaching
255 students with disabilities, and training in the teaching of
256 reading toward renewal of the teacher's first professional
257 certificate. Such training must not have been included within
258 the degree program, and the teacher's temporary and professional
259 certificates must be issued for consecutive school years.

260 (e) Beginning July 1, 2014, an applicant for renewal of a

261 professional certificate must earn a minimum of one college
262 credit or the equivalent inservice points in the area of
263 instruction for teaching students with disabilities. The
264 requirement in this paragraph may not add to the total hours
265 required by the department for continuing education or inservice
266 training.

267 (5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
268 allow the reinstatement of expired professional certificates.
269 The department may reinstate an expired professional certificate
270 if the certificateholder:

271 (a) Submits an application for reinstatement of the
272 expired certificate.

273 (b) Documents completion of 6 college credits during the 5
274 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the expired
275 certificate, completion of 120 inservice points, or a
276 combination thereof, in an area specified in paragraph (3)(a) to
277 include the credit required under paragraph (3)(e).

278 (c) During the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement
279 of the certificate, achieves a passing score on the subject area
280 test for each subject to be shown on the reinstated certificate.

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282 The requirements of this subsection may not be satisfied by
283 subject area tests or college credits completed for issuance of
284 the certificate that has expired.

285 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.