

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 639

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR HENDERSON.

2524S.01H

KRISTINA MARTIN, Secretary

AN ACT

To repeal section 168.021, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to teacher certification.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 168.021, RSMo, is repealed and one new
2 section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 168.021,
3 to read as follows:

168.021. 1. Certificates of license to teach in the
2 public schools of the state shall be granted as follows:

3 (1) By the state board, under rules and regulations
4 prescribed by it:

5 (a) Upon the basis of college credit;

6 (b) Upon the basis of examination;

7 (2) By the state board, under rules and regulations
8 prescribed by the state board with advice from the advisory
9 council established by section 168.015 to any individual who
10 presents to the state board a valid doctoral degree from an
11 accredited institution of higher education accredited by a
12 regional accrediting association such as North Central
13 Association. Such certificate shall be limited to the major
14 area of postgraduate study of the holder, shall be issued
15 only after successful completion of the examination required
16 for graduation pursuant to rules adopted by the state board
17 of education, and shall be restricted to those certificates

18 established pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection 3 of
19 this section;

20 (3) By the state board, which shall issue the
21 professional certificate classification in both the general
22 and specialized areas most closely aligned with the current
23 areas of certification approved by the state board,
24 commensurate with the years of teaching experience of the
25 applicant, and based upon the following criteria:

26 (a) a. Recommendation of a state-approved
27 baccalaureate-level teacher preparation program;

28 b. The department of elementary and secondary
29 education shall develop and maintain an eighteen-hour (one
30 thousand eighty minutes) online teacher preparation program
31 related to subjects appropriate for elementary and secondary
32 education settings. Any charitable organization registered
33 in Missouri that is exempt from federal taxation under the
34 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, may submit a
35 teacher preparation program to the department of elementary
36 and secondary education for approval. Once approved, the
37 charitable organization shall be certified to develop and
38 maintain a teacher preparedness program. Approved teacher
39 preparedness programs created by a charitable organization
40 shall be made available by the department of elementary and
41 secondary education. An individual with a bachelor's degree
42 may complete an eighteen-hour online training program,
43 either created by the department or by a charitable
44 organization, and receive a teacher certificate. Such
45 certificate shall not be accepted by Missouri public
46 schools, and nonpublic schools shall not be required to
47 accept the certificate, but shall be accepted by private
48 schools and private school accrediting agencies;

49 (b) a. Successful attainment of the Missouri
50 qualifying score on the exit assessment for teachers or
51 administrators designated by the state board of education;

52 b. (i) Applicants who have not successfully achieved
53 a qualifying score on the designated examinations will be
54 issued a two-year nonrenewable provisional certificate;

55 (ii) During the two-year nonrenewable provisional
56 certification, an individual teacher may gain full
57 professional certification by:

58 i. Achieving a qualifying score on the designated
59 exam; or

60 ii. Successfully achieving an acceptable score on the
61 state-approved teacher evaluation system from seven walk-
62 through evaluations, two formative evaluations, and one
63 summative evaluation for each of the two probationary years
64 and being offered a third contract by the employing
65 district. For any applicant who has a change in job status
66 because of a reduction in the workforce or a change in life
67 circumstances, the scores required under this item may be
68 scores achieved in any school district during the two-year
69 nonrenewable provisional certification period; and

70 (iii) The employing school district shall recommend to
71 the department of elementary and secondary education that
72 the individual teacher be awarded a full professional
73 certification by the state board under rules prescribed by
74 the state board; and

75 (c) Upon completion of a background check as
76 prescribed in section 168.133 and possession of a valid
77 teaching certificate in the state from which the applicant's
78 teacher preparation program was completed;

79 (4) By the state board, under rules prescribed by it,
80 on the basis of a relevant bachelor's degree, or higher

81 degree, and a passing score for the designated exit
82 examination, for individuals whose academic degree and
83 professional experience are suitable to provide a basis for
84 instruction solely in the subject matter of banking or
85 financial responsibility, at the discretion of the state
86 board. Such certificate shall be limited to the major area
87 of study of the holder and shall be restricted to those
88 certificates established under subdivision (2) of subsection
89 3 of this section. Holders of certificates granted under
90 this subdivision shall be exempt from the teacher tenure act
91 under sections 168.102 to 168.130 and each school district
92 shall have the decision-making authority on whether to hire
93 the holders of such certificates;

94 (5) By the state board, under rules and regulations
95 prescribed by it, on the basis of certification by the
96 American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence
97 (ABCTE) **or Teachers of Tomorrow** and verification of ability
98 to work with children as demonstrated by sixty contact hours
99 in any one of the following areas as validated by the school
100 principal: sixty contact hours in the classroom, of which
101 at least forty-five must be teaching; sixty contact hours as
102 a substitute teacher, with at least thirty consecutive hours
103 in the same classroom; sixty contact hours of teaching in a
104 private school; or sixty contact hours of teaching as a
105 paraprofessional, for an initial four-year ABCTE **or Teachers**
106 **of Tomorrow** certificate of license to teach, except that
107 such certificate shall not be granted for the areas of early
108 childhood education, or special education. For
109 certification in the area of elementary education, ninety
110 contact hours in the classroom shall be required, of which
111 at least thirty shall be in an elementary classroom. Upon
112 the completion of the following requirements, an applicant

113 shall be eligible to apply for a career continuous
114 professional certificate under subdivision (3) of subsection
115 3 of this section:

116 (a) Completion of thirty contact hours of professional
117 development within four years, which may include hours spent
118 in class in an appropriate college curriculum;

119 (b) Validated completion of two years of the mentoring
120 program of the American Board for Certification of Teacher
121 Excellence or a district mentoring program approved by the
122 state board of education;

123 (c) Attainment of a successful performance-based
124 teacher evaluation; and

125 (d) Participation in a beginning teacher assistance
126 program;

127 (6) (a) By the state board, under rules and
128 regulations prescribed by the board, which shall issue an
129 initial visiting scholars certificate at the discretion of
130 the board, based on the following criteria:

131 a. Verification from the hiring school district that
132 the applicant will be employed as part of a business-
133 education partnership initiative designed to build career
134 pathways systems or employed as part of an initiative
135 designed to fill vacant positions in hard-to-staff public
136 schools or hard-to-fill subject areas for students in a
137 grade or grades not lower than the ninth grade for which the
138 applicant's academic degree or professional experience
139 qualifies the applicant;

140 b. Appropriate and relevant bachelor's degree or
141 higher, occupational license, or industry-recognized
142 credential;

143 c. Completion of the application for a one-year
144 visiting scholars certificate; and

145 d. Completion of a background check as prescribed
146 under section 168.133.

147 (b) The initial visiting scholars certificate shall
148 certify the holder of such certificate to teach for one
149 year. An applicant shall be eligible to renew an initial
150 visiting scholars certificate a maximum of two times, based
151 upon the completion of the requirements listed under
152 subparagraphs a., b., and d. of paragraph (a) of this
153 subdivision; completion of professional development required
154 by the school district and school; and attainment of a
155 satisfactory performance-based teacher evaluation; or

156 (7) By the state board, which shall issue an
157 additional professional subject-area certification for
158 specific content knowledge or for a specialty area to a
159 certificate holder who:

160 (a) Applies for an additional professional subject-
161 area certification;

162 (b) Successfully achieves an acceptable score on the
163 state-approved teacher evaluation system from seven walk-
164 through evaluations, two formative evaluations, and one
165 summative evaluation of the applicant teaching specific
166 content knowledge or the specialty area for which the
167 additional professional subject-area certification is sought;

168 (c) Receives a recommendation from the applicant's
169 employing school district that the applicant be awarded an
170 additional professional subject-area certification by the
171 state board under rules prescribed by the state board; and

172 (d) Completes a background check as prescribed in
173 section 168.133.

174 2. All valid teaching certificates issued pursuant to
175 law or state board policies and regulations prior to
176 September 1, 1988, shall be exempt from the professional

177 development requirements of this section and shall continue
178 in effect until they expire, are revoked or suspended, as
179 provided by law. When such certificates are required to be
180 renewed, the state board or its designee shall grant to each
181 holder of such a certificate the certificate most nearly
182 equivalent to the one so held. Anyone who holds, as of
183 August 28, 2003, a valid PC-I, PC-II, or continuous
184 professional certificate shall, upon expiration of such
185 person's current certificate, be issued the appropriate
186 level of certificate based upon the classification system
187 established pursuant to subsection 3 of this section.

188 3. (1) Certificates of license to teach in the public
189 schools of the state shall be based upon minimum
190 requirements prescribed by the state board of education
191 which shall include completion of a background check as
192 prescribed in section 168.133. The state board shall
193 provide for the following levels of professional
194 certification: an initial professional certificate and a
195 career continuous professional certificate.

196 (2) The initial professional certificate shall be
197 issued upon completion of requirements established by the
198 state board of education and shall be valid based upon
199 verification of actual teaching within a specified time
200 period established by the state board of education. The
201 state board shall require holders of the four-year initial
202 professional certificate to:

203 (a) Participate in a mentoring program approved and
204 provided by the district for a minimum of two years;

205 (b) Complete thirty contact hours of professional
206 development, which may include hours spent in class in an
207 appropriate college curriculum, or for holders of a
208 certificate under subdivision (4) of subsection 1 of this

209 section, an amount of professional development in proportion
210 to the certificate holder's hours in the classroom, if the
211 certificate holder is employed less than full time; and

212 (c) Participate in a beginning teacher assistance
213 program.

214 (3) (a) The career continuous professional
215 certificate shall be issued upon verification of completion
216 of four years of teaching under the initial professional
217 certificate and upon verification of the completion of the
218 requirements articulated in paragraphs (a) to (c) of
219 subdivision (2) of this subsection or paragraphs (a) to (d)
220 of subdivision (5) of subsection 1 of this section.

221 (b) The career continuous professional certificate
222 shall be continuous based upon verification of actual
223 employment in an educational position as provided for in
224 state board guidelines and completion of fifteen contact
225 hours of professional development per year which may include
226 hours spent in class in an appropriate college curriculum.
227 Should the possessor of a valid career continuous
228 professional certificate fail, in any given year, to meet
229 the fifteen-hour professional development requirement, the
230 possessor may, within two years, make up the missing hours.
231 In order to make up for missing hours, the possessor shall
232 first complete the fifteen-hour requirement for the current
233 year and then may count hours in excess of the current year
234 requirement as make-up hours. Should the possessor fail to
235 make up the missing hours within two years, the certificate
236 shall become inactive. In order to reactivate the
237 certificate, the possessor shall complete twenty-four
238 contact hours of professional development which may include
239 hours spent in the classroom in an appropriate college
240 curriculum within the six months prior to or after

241 reactivating the possessor's certificate. The requirements
242 of this paragraph shall be monitored and verified by the
243 local school district which employs the holder of the career
244 continuous professional certificate.

245 (c) A holder of a career continuous professional
246 certificate shall be exempt from the professional
247 development contact hour requirements of paragraph (b) of
248 this subdivision if such teacher has a local professional
249 development plan in place within such teacher's school
250 district and meets two of the three following criteria:

251 a. Has ten years of teaching experience as defined by
252 the state board of education;

253 b. Possesses a master's degree; or

254 c. Obtains a rigorous national certification as
255 approved by the state board of education.

256 4. Policies and procedures shall be established by
257 which a teacher who was not retained due to a reduction in
258 force may retain the current level of certification. There
259 shall also be established policies and procedures allowing a
260 teacher who has not been employed in an educational position
261 for three years or more to reactivate the teacher's last
262 level of certification by completing twenty-four contact
263 hours of professional development which may include hours
264 spent in the classroom in an appropriate college curriculum
265 within the six months prior to or after reactivating the
266 teacher's certificate.

267 5. The state board shall, upon completion of a
268 background check as prescribed in section 168.133, issue a
269 professional certificate classification in the areas most
270 closely aligned with an applicant's current areas of
271 certification, commensurate with the years of teaching
272 experience of the applicant, to any person who is hired to

273 teach in a public school in this state and who possesses a
274 valid teaching certificate from another state or
275 certification under subdivision (4) of subsection 1 of this
276 section, provided that the certificate holder shall annually
277 complete the state board's requirements for such level of
278 certification, and shall establish policies by which
279 residents of states other than the state of Missouri may be
280 assessed a fee for a certificate of license to teach in the
281 public schools of Missouri. Such fee shall be in an amount
282 sufficient to recover any or all costs associated with the
283 issuing of a certificate of license to teach. The board
284 shall promulgate rules to authorize the issuance of a
285 provisional certificate of license, which shall be valid for
286 three years and shall allow the holder to assume classroom
287 duties pending the completion of a criminal background check
288 under section 168.133, for any applicant who:

289 (1) Is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces
290 stationed in Missouri;

291 (2) Relocated from another state within one year of
292 the date of application;

293 (3) Underwent a criminal background check in order to
294 be issued a teaching certificate of license from another
295 state; and

296 (4) Otherwise qualifies under this section.

297 6. The state board may assess to holders of an initial
298 professional certificate a fee, to be deposited into the
299 excellence in education fund established pursuant to section
300 160.268, for the issuance of the career continuous
301 professional certificate. However, such fee shall not
302 exceed the combined costs of issuance and any criminal
303 background check required as a condition of issuance.
304 Applicants for the initial ABCTE certificate shall be

305 responsible for any fees associated with the program leading
306 to the issuance of the certificate, but nothing in this
307 section shall prohibit a district from developing a policy
308 that permits fee reimbursement.

309 7. Any member of the public school retirement system
310 of Missouri who entered covered employment with ten or more
311 years of educational experience in another state or states
312 and held a certificate issued by another state and
313 subsequently worked in a school district covered by the
314 public school retirement system of Missouri for ten or more
315 years who later became certificated in Missouri shall have
316 that certificate dated back to the member's original date of
317 employment in a Missouri public school.

318 8. Within thirty days of receiving an application from
319 a spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the
320 United States who has been transferred or is scheduled to be
321 transferred to the state of Missouri, or who has been
322 transferred or is scheduled to be transferred to an adjacent
323 state and is or will be domiciled in the state of Missouri,
324 or has moved to the state of Missouri on a permanent change-
325 of-station basis and has successfully completed the
326 background check described under subsection 5 of this
327 section and section 168.133, the state board shall issue to
328 such applicant a full certificate of license to teach,
329 provided that the applicant has paid all necessary fees and
330 has otherwise met all requirements to be issued such a
331 certificate.

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