

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

A N A C T

RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

Introduced By: Senators Paolino, Quezada, Pearson, DiPalma, and Gallo

Date Introduced: May 08, 2019

Referred To: Senate Education

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 16-11 of the General Laws entitled "Certification of Teachers [See
2 Title 16 Chapter 97 - The Rhode Island Board of Education Act]" is hereby amended by adding
3 thereto the following section:

4 **16-11-9. Teacher certification for specialty skills.**

5 (a) For the purposes of this section, the following words shall have the following
6 meanings:

7 (1) "Board" means the board of education.

8 (2) "Provisional educator" means a person who holds a provisional educator certificate.

9 (3) "Provisional educator with advanced standing" means a person who holds a
10 provisional educator certificate with advanced standing; said certificate shall be valid for five (5)
11 years of employment as an educator in the schools of the state of Rhode Island and may be
12 renewed for an additional five (5) years of employment in accordance with regulations adopted
13 by the board.

14 (4) "Provisional educator certificate" means a license to teach issued to a person who has
15 successfully met the preparation and eligibility requirements as established by the board. The
16 provisional educator's certificate shall be valid for five (5) years of employment as an educator in
17 the schools of the state.

18 (5) "Provisional educator certificate with advanced standing" means a license to teach
19 issued to a person who has successfully met the preparation and eligibility requirements as

1 established by the board for provisional certification and completed:

2 (1) A college program, graduate or undergraduate, which is approved by the board of
3 education for the preparation of teachers; or

4 (2) A college preparation program included in the National Association of State Directors
5 of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC); or

6 (3) An out of state teacher education program approved by the National Council for the
7 Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE); or

8 (4) Other program approved by the board.

9 (b) To be eligible for certification as a provisional educator, the candidate shall:

10 (1) Hold a bachelor's degree in arts or sciences from an accredited college or university
11 with a major course in the arts or sciences appropriate to the instructional field;

12 (2) Pass a test established by the board which shall consist of two (2) parts:

13 (i) A writing section which shall demonstrate the communication and literacy skills
14 necessary for effective instruction and improved communication between school and parents; and

15 (ii) The subject matter knowledge for the certificate; and

16 (3) Be of sound moral character.

17 Candidates who complete the requirements in this subsection shall be issued provisional
18 educator certificates, which will permit them to seek employment in teaching positions requiring
19 instructional certification in LEAs, which have an approved provisional educator preparation
20 program.

21 (c) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education shall establish standards
22 for the training, support, and supervision of provisional educators. During the period of
23 employment, a person holding a provisional teaching certificate pursuant to this section shall be
24 under the direct supervision of the principal or other appropriate supervisor, who shall regularly
25 observe and evaluate the performance of assigned duties by such holder of a provisional teaching
26 certificate. Such evaluation shall be according to relevant, nationally recognized, professional
27 standards for personnel evaluation.

28 (d) Each local education agency ("LEA") seeking to hire a provisional educator must
29 submit a provisional educator program plan to the department of education. No district shall be
30 authorized to employ a provisional educator unless it has submitted a plan for such a program and
31 received approval from the commissioner. Each plan shall describe the key elements of the
32 proposed provisional educator program in accordance with guidelines established and published
33 by the department. Such guidelines shall require that provisional educators in district-based
34 programs meet the equivalent standards that provisional educators with advanced standing meet

1 in approved college and university programs. Districts shall show either evidence of joint
2 sponsorship or collaboration of training programs with:

3 (1) Colleges or universities; or

4 (2) Other districts; or

5 (3) Other programs approved by the commissioner to provide such programs.

6 (f) The department shall issue standard LEA plans, which LEAs may implement in lieu
7 of developing original plans. The department shall coordinate the training efforts of LEAs, shall
8 insure that LEA programs meet fair, substantive, and comprehensive professional development
9 standards, and shall establish regional programs for provisional educators.

10 (g) To be eligible for certification as a provisional educator with advanced standing, the
11 candidate shall provide evidence that he or she:

12 (1) Holds a bachelor's degree in arts or sciences from an accredited college or university
13 with a major course in the arts or sciences appropriate to the instructional field, or the equivalent
14 baccalaureate degree;

15 (2) Has passed a test established by the board which shall consist of two (2) parts:

16 (i) A writing section which shall demonstrate the communication and literacy skills
17 necessary for effective instruction and improved communication between school and parents; and

18 (ii) The subject matter knowledge for the certificate;

19 (3) Has satisfactorily completed a board of education approved teacher preparation
20 program; and

21 (4) Is of sound moral character.

22 A candidate who completes the requirements of this subsection shall be issued a
23 provisional educator certificate with advanced standing, which will permit them to seek
24 employment in a teaching position requiring instructional certification.

25 (h) Each LEA seeking to hire a provisional educator with advanced standing must submit
26 a plan to the department of education, which details how the LEA will supervise and support such
27 provisional educators with advanced standing. No LEA shall be authorized to employ a
28 provisional educator with advanced standing unless it has submitted a plan for the support and
29 evaluation of such educator to the commissioner and received the approval of the commissioner.
30 The department of education shall issue standard plans for provisional educators with advanced
31 standing, which LEAs may implement in lieu of developing an original plan.

32 (i) In not less than one year after the issuance of a provisional educator certificate, the
33 commissioner, upon receipt of a proper application, shall issue a standard educator certificate to
34 such provisional certificate holder who has provided the commissioner with evidence, in such

1 manner and form as prescribed by the board, that he or she has met the preparation and eligibility
2 requirements set by the board through a master's degree program approved by the commissioner,
3 or through an equivalent district program for standard certification approved by the
4 commissioner, or other equivalent programs approved by the commissioner; and has met the
5 requirements set by the commissioner for demonstration of successful performance.

6 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS

- 1 This act would establish a procedure for the certification of provisional educators.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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