

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to creating a temporary educator certification for certain military service members and first responders.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 21, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 21.0444 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.0444. TEMPORARY CERTIFICATION FOR CERTAIN MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS. (a) In this section, "first responder" means a person elected, employed, or appointed as:

(1) a peace officer as defined by Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure;

(2) fire protection personnel as defined by Section 419.021, Government Code; or

(3) emergency medical services personnel as defined by Section 773.003, Health and Safety Code.

(b) This section applies to a person seeking certification who:

(1) has served in the armed forces of the United States and was honorably discharged, retired, or released from active duty; or

(2) has served as a first responder and, while in good standing and not because of pending or final disciplinary actions or a documented performance problem, retired, resigned, or separated from employment as a first responder.

1 (c) The board shall propose rules under this subchapter
2 providing for the issuance of a temporary certificate to a person
3 described by Subsection (b) who meets all other eligibility
4 requirements for certification, except that the person may
5 substitute for a requirement that the person hold:

6 (1) an associate degree from an accredited institution
7 of higher education, 48 months of active duty military service or
8 service as a first responder; or

9 (2) a bachelor's degree:

10 (A) the military service or service as a first
11 responder described by Subdivision (1); and

12 (B) 60 semester credit hours completed at a
13 public or private institution of higher education with a minimum
14 grade point average of at least 2.50 on a four-point scale.

15 (d) Rules proposed by the board for a temporary certificate
16 issued under this section must provide that the certificate is:

17 (1) valid for no more than five years;

18 (2) limited to a one-time issuance; and

19 (3) not subject to renewal.

20 (e) A person issued a temporary certificate under this
21 section may be issued a standard certificate if the person
22 completes all eligibility requirements required for that
23 certification.

24 SECTION 2. Section 21.458, Education Code, is amended by
25 amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (a-2) to read as
26 follows:

27 (a) Except as provided by Subsection (a-2), each ~~Each~~

1 school district may assign a mentor teacher to each classroom
2 teacher who has less than two years of teaching experience in the
3 subject or grade level to which the teacher is assigned. A teacher
4 assigned as a mentor must:

5 (1) to the extent practicable, teach in the same
6 school;

7 (2) to the extent practicable, teach the same subject
8 or grade level, as applicable; and

9 (3) meet the qualifications prescribed by
10 commissioner rules adopted under Subsection (b).

11 (a-2) A school district shall assign a mentor teacher to a
12 classroom teacher who has been issued a temporary certificate under
13 Section 21.0444 for at least two school years.

14 SECTION 3. As soon as practicable after the effective date
15 of this Act, the State Board for Educator Certification shall
16 propose rules relating to temporary educator certificates for
17 certain military service members and first responders as required
18 by Section 21.0444, Education Code, as added by this Act.

19 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.