

HOUSE BILL 156

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025

INTRODUCED BY

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This document may incorporate amendments proposed by a committee, but not yet adopted, as well as amendments that have been adopted during the current legislative session. The document is a tool to show amendments in context and cannot be used for the purpose of adding amendments to legislation.

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL; INCREASING THE MINIMUM SALARIES FOR TEACHERS, SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS **SFC→**;
REQUIRING THE SCIENCE OF READING TO BE TAUGHT IN PUBLIC POST-SECONDARY TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS SO THAT LEVEL ONE APPLICANTS WILL BE BETTER PREPARED TO TEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS←SFC .

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

.229401.1AIC March 18, 2025 (3:46pm)

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SFC→SECTION 1. A new section of Chapter 21 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS--TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO TEACH READING.--

A. As used in this section:

(1) "high-quality instructional materials" means instructional materials that are a comprehensive full course of study that is research-based, culturally and linguistically relevant and designed to support equitable learning for all students;

(2) "science of reading" means an interdisciplinary body of scientifically based research about reading and issues related to reading and writing;

(3) "scientifically based reading instruction" means instruction grounded in empirical research, including explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension and the science of reading; and

(4) "structured literacy" means an evidence-based approach to teaching oral and written language aligned with the science of reading that is based on the science of how children learn to read and is characterized by explicit, systematic, sequential, cumulative and diagnostic instruction in phonology, sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax and semantics.

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B. Structured literacy is the primary approach to teaching foundational literacy skills for all learners.

Literacy instruction for English language learners shall include evidence-based practices for bi-literacy, differentiation and culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. Public school students shall be taught to read using science of reading, structured literacy and scientifically based reading instruction.

C. Each teacher preparation program shall offer courses and student teaching sufficient for level one licensure that:

(1) includes science of reading, structured literacy and scientifically based reading instruction;

(2) for elementary teacher candidates, provides a minimum of one hundred hours of supervised field experience in public school classrooms implementing the science of reading, structured literacy and scientifically based reading instruction, including:

(a) planning and teaching reading lessons focused on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension; and

(b) observing and applying scientifically based reading instruction techniques under the supervision of a teacher trained in the science of reading; and

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(3) includes training and teaching teacher candidates to identify when students are not reading at grade level.

D. In collaboration with public post-secondary teacher preparation programs, the public education department shall develop specific teacher preparation standards related to the five components of the science of reading, including the knowledge and skills teachers need to support struggling readers and those with dyslexia as well as the knowledge and skills teachers need to support English language learners.

E. As part of its review process, the public education department shall monitor all teacher preparation programs, and programs that fail to adhere to the science of reading shall be required to submit corrective action plans and may face the loss of state approval.

F. As part of the state approval review process for teacher preparation programs, each program shall provide evidence of its alignment with New Mexico's statutory and regulatory requirements for structured and systematic science of reading instruction.

G. Initial approval and ongoing review shall include:

(1) evaluation of coursework and field experiences to ensure that teacher candidates are prepared to implement evidence-based reading instruction practices aligned

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with the science of reading;

(2) an assessment of faculty qualifications and professional development related to scientifically based reading instruction methodologies;

(3) documentation of how the program integrates state-adopted literacy standards, including explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency and comprehension;

(4) the collection of data demonstrating the effectiveness of graduates in applying science of reading practices during their first three years of teaching, as available through performance-based assessments or other state-approved measures; and

(5) evidence of partnerships with kindergarten through twelfth grade public schools to ensure high-quality student teaching and supervised field experiences that emphasize science of reading instructional practices and the use of high-quality instructional materials during student teaching and other supervised field experiences.

H. The public education department shall provide guidelines for evaluating compliance with science of reading instruction requirements during the review process. These guidelines shall include minimum performance thresholds for coursework, assessments and candidate outcomes.

I. Programs failing to meet the established science

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of reading instruction standards may be placed on a corrective action plan with specific requirements and time lines for achieving compliance. Noncompliance may result in probationary status or the loss of state approval.

J. As part of an annual accountability report, teacher preparation programs shall include:

(1) a summary of program changes made to enhance science of reading instruction aligned to the standards;

(2) data on teacher candidate performance in science of reading instruction-related coursework and clinical experiences; and

(3) graduate impact data on student literacy outcomes, where available.←SFC

SECTION SFC→1.←SFC SFC→2.←SFC Section 22-10A-7 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003, Chapter 153, Section 38, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-10A-7. LEVEL ONE LICENSURE.--

A. A level one license is a provisional five-year license for beginning teachers that requires as a condition of licensure that the licensee undergo a formal mentorship program for at least one full school year and an annual intensive performance evaluation by a school administrator for at least three full school years before applying for a level two license.

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B. Each school district, in accordance with department rules, shall provide for the mentorship and evaluation of level one teachers. At the end of each year and at the end of the license period, the level one teacher shall be evaluated for competency. If the teacher fails to demonstrate satisfactory progress and competence annually, the teacher may be terminated as provided in Section 22-10A-24 NMSA 1978. If the teacher has not demonstrated satisfactory progress and competence by the end of the five-year period, the teacher shall not be granted a level two license.

C. Except in exigent circumstances defined by department rule, a level one license shall not be extended beyond the initial period.

D. The department shall issue a standard level one license to an applicant who is at least eighteen years of age who:

- (1) holds a baccalaureate degree from an accredited educational institution;
- (2) has successfully completed a department-approved teacher preparation program from a nationally accredited or state-approved educational institution;
- (3) has passed the New Mexico teacher assessments examination, including for elementary licensure beginning January 1, 2013, a rigorous assessment of the candidate's knowledge of the science of teaching reading; and

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(4) meets other qualifications for level one licensure, including clearance of the required background check.

E. The department shall issue a standard level one vocational license to an applicant who meets the requirements of Subsection D of this section or to an applicant who is at least twenty-three years of age and who:

(1) has five or more years of professional experience in the vocational field in which the applicant will teach; and

(2) meets other qualifications for level one licensure, including clearance of a background check pursuant to Section 22-10A-5 NMSA 1978.

F. The department shall issue an alternative level one license to an applicant who meets the requirements of Section 22-10A-8 NMSA 1978.

G. The department shall establish competencies and qualifications for specific grade levels, types and subject areas of level one licensure, including early childhood, elementary, middle school, secondary, special and vocational education.

H. The minimum salary for a level one teacher, except for a teacher licensed pursuant to Subsection E of this section, is [~~fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000)~~] fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000) for a standard nine and one-half

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month contract; provided that teachers in an extended learning time program or K-5 plus program shall receive additional salary at the same rate as their base salary for that teaching time.

I. After the issuance of a license, a license holder shall not be required to meet changed requirements to maintain the license until such time as the license expires and the license holder seeks renewal of the license."

SECTION SFC→2.←SFC SFC→3.←SFC Section 22-10A-10 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003, Chapter 153, Section 41, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-10A-10. LEVEL TWO LICENSURE.--

A. A level two license is a nine-year license granted to a teacher who meets the qualifications for that level and who annually demonstrates essential competency to teach. If a level two teacher does not demonstrate essential competency in a given school year, the school district shall provide the teacher with additional professional development and peer intervention during the following school year. If by the end of that school year the teacher fails to demonstrate essential competency, a school district may choose not to contract with the teacher to teach in the classroom.

B. The department shall issue a level two license to an applicant who has successfully taught at least three, but no more than five, years as a level one teacher or an

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alternative level one teacher, or a combination of the two, or is granted reciprocity as provided by department rules. An applicant for a level two license shall:

(1) demonstrate essential competency required by the department as verified by the local superintendent through the highly objective uniform statewide standard of evaluation; and

(2) meet other qualifications as required by the department.

C. The department shall provide for qualifications for specific grade levels, types and subject areas of level two licensure, including early childhood, elementary, middle, secondary, special and vocational education.

D. The minimum salary for a level two teacher, except for those teachers with a vocational education license, is [~~sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000)~~] sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) for a standard nine and one-half month contract; provided that teachers in an extended learning time program or K-5 plus program shall receive additional salary at the same rate as their base salary for that teaching time."

SECTION SFC→~~3.~~←SFC SFC→~~4.~~←SFC Section 22-10A-11 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003, Chapter 153, Section 42, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-10A-11. LEVEL THREE LICENSURE--TRACKS FOR TEACHERS.--

A. A level three-A license is a nine-year license

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granted to a teacher who meets the qualifications for that level and who annually demonstrates instructional leader competencies. If a level three-A teacher does not demonstrate essential competency in a given school year, the school district shall provide the teacher with additional professional development and peer intervention during the following school year. If by the end of that school year the teacher fails to demonstrate essential competency, a school district may choose not to contract with the teacher to teach in the classroom.

B. The department shall grant a level three-A license to an applicant who has been a level two teacher for at least three years and holds a post-baccalaureate degree or national board for professional teaching standards certification; demonstrates instructional leader competence as required by the department and verified by the local superintendent through the highly objective uniform statewide standard of evaluation; and meets other qualifications for the license.

C. The department shall grant a level three-A license to an applicant seeking a level three-A vocational education license who does not meet the requirements of Subsection B of this section, but who otherwise is eligible for a level three-A license, provided that the applicant:

(1) has been a level two teacher for at least three years;

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(2) provides documentation from an accredited higher education institution of the applicant's eligibility to teach dual-credit courses at the post-secondary level in the field in which the applicant is teaching; or

(3) completes a department-approved career-technical education training certificate course of study that is a minimum of sixteen hours at an accredited higher education institution.

D. The minimum salary for a level three-A teacher, except teachers licensed pursuant to Subsection C of this section, is [~~seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000)~~] seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) for a standard nine and one-half month contract; provided that teachers in an extended learning time program or K-5 plus program shall receive additional salary at the same rate as their base salary for that teaching time.

E. The minimum salary for a counselor who holds a level three or three-A license as provided in the School Personnel Act and rules promulgated by the department shall be the same as provided for level three-A teachers pursuant to Subsection D of this section."

SECTION SFC→4.←SFC SFC→5.←SFC EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the provisions of this act is July 1, 2025.