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AN ACT

RELATING TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL; INCREASING THE MINIMUM SALARIES  
FOR TEACHERS, SCHOOL COUNSELORS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS;  
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.

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

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

"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

1 phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and  
2 comprehension and the science of reading; and

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

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

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

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

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

23 (2) for elementary teacher candidates,  
24 provides a minimum of one hundred hours of supervised field  
25 experience in public school classrooms implementing the

1 science of reading, structured literacy and scientifically  
2 based reading instruction, including:

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

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

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

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

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

25 F. As part of the state approval review process

1 for teacher preparation programs, each program shall provide  
2 evidence of its alignment with New Mexico's statutory and  
3 regulatory requirements for structured and systematic science  
4 of reading instruction.

5 G. Initial approval and ongoing review shall  
6 include:

7 (1) evaluation of coursework and field  
8 experiences to ensure that teacher candidates are prepared to  
9 implement evidence-based reading instruction practices  
10 aligned with the science of reading;

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

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

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

23 (5) evidence of partnerships with  
24 kindergarten through twelfth grade public schools to ensure  
25 high-quality student teaching and supervised field

1 experiences that emphasize science of reading instructional  
2 practices and the use of high-quality instructional materials  
3 during student teaching and other supervised field  
4 experiences.

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

10 I. Programs failing to meet the established  
11 science of reading instruction standards may be placed on a  
12 corrective action plan with specific requirements and time  
13 lines for achieving compliance. Noncompliance may result in  
14 probationary status or the loss of state approval.

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

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

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

23 (3) graduate impact data on student literacy  
24 outcomes, where available."

1 Chapter 153, Section 38, as amended) is amended to read:

2 "22-10A-7. LEVEL ONE LICENSURE.--

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

10 B. Each school district, in accordance with  
11 department rules, shall provide for the mentorship and  
12 evaluation of level one teachers. At the end of each year  
13 and at the end of the license period, the level one teacher  
14 shall be evaluated for competency. If the teacher fails to  
15 demonstrate satisfactory progress and competence annually,  
16 the teacher may be terminated as provided in Section  
17 22-10A-24 NMSA 1978. If the teacher has not demonstrated  
18 satisfactory progress and competence by the end of the five-  
19 year period, the teacher shall not be granted a level two  
20 license.

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

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

1 who:

2 (1) holds a baccalaureate degree from an  
3 accredited educational institution;

4 (2) has successfully completed a department-  
5 approved teacher preparation program from a nationally  
6 accredited or state-approved educational institution;

7 (3) has passed the New Mexico teacher  
8 assessments examination, including for elementary licensure  
9 beginning January 1, 2013, a rigorous assessment of the  
10 candidate's knowledge of the science of teaching reading; and

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

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

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

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

24 F. The department shall issue an alternative level  
25 one license to an applicant who meets the requirements of

1 Section 22-10A-8 NMSA 1978.

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

7 H. The minimum salary for a level one teacher,  
8 except for a teacher licensed pursuant to Subsection E of  
9 this section, is fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000) for a  
10 standard nine and one-half month contract; provided that  
11 teachers in an extended learning time program or K-5 plus  
12 program shall receive additional salary at the same rate as  
13 their base salary for that teaching time.

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

18 **SECTION 3.** Section 22-10A-10 NMSA 1978 (being Laws  
19 2003, Chapter 153, Section 41, as amended) is amended to  
20 read:

21 "22-10A-10. LEVEL TWO LICENSURE.--

22 A. A level two license is a nine-year license  
23 granted to a teacher who meets the qualifications for that  
24 level and who annually demonstrates essential competency to  
25 teach. If a level two teacher does not demonstrate essential



1 competency in a given school year, the school district shall  
2 provide the teacher with additional professional development  
3 and peer intervention during the following school year. If,  
4 by the end of that school year, the teacher fails to  
5 demonstrate essential competency, a school district may  
6 choose not to contract with the teacher to teach in the  
7 classroom.

8 B. The department shall issue a level two license  
9 to an applicant who has successfully taught at least three,  
10 but no more than five, years as a level one teacher or an  
11 alternative level one teacher, or a combination of the two,  
12 or is granted reciprocity as provided by department rules.

13 An applicant for a level two license shall:

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

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

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

24 D. The minimum salary for a level two teacher,  
25 except for those teachers with a vocational education

1 license, is sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) for a  
2 standard nine and one-half month contract; provided that  
3 teachers in an extended learning time program or K-5 plus  
4 program shall receive additional salary at the same rate as  
5 their base salary for that teaching time."

6 SECTION 4. Section 22-10A-11 NMSA 1978 (being Laws  
7 2003, Chapter 153, Section 42, as amended) is amended to  
8 read:

9 "22-10A-11. LEVEL THREE LICENSURE--TRACKS FOR  
10 TEACHERS.--

11 A. A level three-A license is a nine-year license  
12 granted to a teacher who meets the qualifications for that  
13 level and who annually demonstrates instructional leader  
14 competencies. If a level three-A teacher does not  
15 demonstrate essential competency in a given school year, the  
16 school district shall provide the teacher with additional  
17 professional development and peer intervention during the  
18 following school year. If, by the end of that school year,  
19 the teacher fails to demonstrate essential competency, a  
20 school district may choose not to contract with the teacher  
21 to teach in the classroom.

22 B. The department shall grant a level three-A  
23 license to an applicant who has been a level two teacher for  
24 at least three years and holds a post-baccalaureate degree or  
25 national board for professional teaching standards

1 certification; demonstrates instructional leader competence  
2 as required by the department and verified by the local  
3 superintendent through the highly objective uniform statewide  
4 standard of evaluation; and meets other qualifications for  
5 the license.

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

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

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

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

22 D. The minimum salary for a level three-A teacher,  
23 except teachers licensed pursuant to Subsection C of this  
24 section, is seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) for a  
25 standard nine and one-half month contract; provided that

1 teachers in an extended learning time program or K-5 plus  
2 program shall receive additional salary at the same rate as  
3 their base salary for that teaching time.

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

9 SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the  
10 provisions of this act is July 1, 2025. \_\_\_\_\_

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