

SENATE BILL NO. 81

BY SENATOR MCMATH AND REPRESENTATIVES KNOX AND GAROFALO

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

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AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:7.8, relative to the qualifications of public school teachers; to provide for the associate educator program; to provide for minimum requirements for individuals participating in the program; to provide relative to pay of program participants; to provide relative to rules for the program; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:7.8 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

**§7.8. Associate educator program; authority; rules; participant requirements**

**A.(1) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may provide for the associate educator program through which a governing authority of a public elementary or secondary school may authorize certain individuals with associate's degrees to serve as teachers.**

**(2) The state board shall promulgate rules and regulations in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act for the implementation and administration of this Section and may provide by rule for additional qualifications and requirements for the program that are not inconsistent with this Section.**

**(3) A governing authority may establish stricter participation requirements than those provided pursuant to this Section or by the rules promulgated by the state board.**

**B. An individual who serves as a teacher through the program authorized by this Section, referred to in this Section as a "participant", shall:**

**(1) Have an associate's degree from an accredited college or university.**

**(2) Be continuously enrolled in an undergraduate teacher education program at an accredited college or university for the purpose of obtaining a**

1 bachelor's degree.

2 (3) Be at least twenty-five years of age.

3 (4) Meet all other qualifications provided pursuant to this Section, board  
4 rules, or requirements of the governing authority.

5 C. An individual shall not participate in the program for more than five  
6 years.

7 D.(1) A participant shall be employed to teach only in the content area  
8 related to the participant's associate's degree.

9 (2) A participant shall not teach in a class for students with identified  
10 exceptionalities, unless the students are identified as gifted or talented.

11 E. For a participant enrolled in an approved teacher education program,  
12 the hours spent teaching as a participant shall count towards the student  
13 teaching hours required pursuant to R.S. 17:7.1.

14 F. No more than ten percent of the teaching staff of the governing  
15 authority shall be program participants.

16 G. The salary paid to a participant shall not exceed seventy-five percent  
17 of the average yearly classroom teacher salary of the employing school system.

18 H. Subject to the appropriation of funds for such purpose, the governing  
19 authority shall assign a mentor teacher to a participant for the purposes of  
20 providing on-site teacher training, demonstrating lessons, co-teaching,  
21 observation, and providing feedback for improving instruction.

22 I. Each participant shall participate in weekly teacher collaborations.

23 J. The governing authority shall conduct a criminal history record check  
24 in accordance with R.S. 17:15 and R.S. 15:587.1 prior to allowing a participant  
25 to work as a teacher.

26 K. The state board shall evaluate the effectiveness of the program and  
27 report its findings and conclusions to the legislature no later than December 29,  
28 2028. The report shall be submitted to the David R. Poynter Legislative  
29 Research Library as required by R.S. 24:771 and 772.

30 L. The provisions of this Section shall terminate on December 31, 2033.

1           Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not  
2 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature  
3 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If  
4 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become  
5 effective on the day following such approval.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_