

30 preparation institutes to guarantee the quality of
 31 graduates; requiring institutes to provide additional
 32 training to educators who fail to demonstrate certain
 33 essential skills at no cost to the educator or employer;
 34 amending s. 1012.32, F.S.; permitting background
 35 screenings of individuals participating in student
 36 teaching to be transferred among districts; amending s.
 37 1012.33, F.S., relating to contracts with instructional
 38 staff, supervisors, and school principals; revising the
 39 probationary period for persons newly employed as
 40 instructional staff; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; revising
 41 acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general
 42 knowledge for educator certification; providing an
 43 effective date.

44

45 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

46

47 Section 1. Lead teachers and master trainers.--

48 (1) Each school district shall require every public school
 49 in that district to designate a lead teacher in the subject areas
 50 of reading, mathematics, social studies, and science. Each lead
 51 teacher shall attend periodic training provided by the district
 52 master trainers on the latest research regarding effective
 53 teaching methodologies, techniques, and skills, including use of
 54 information technology; advancements in curricula; cross-
 55 curricula training strategies; and student motivation and
 56 management. Lead teachers shall train and mentor teachers at
 57 their respective schools in their respective subject areas.

58 (2) Each school district shall appoint master trainers who
 59 must be specialists in reading, mathematics, social studies, or
 60 science and in techniques for using information technology to
 61 teach the subject area. The master trainers must train the lead
 62 teachers and provide onsite training for schools needing
 63 additional assistance, particularly schools graded "D" or "F."

64 (3) The Department of Education shall offer a 3-day summer
 65 academy for master trainers. Training shall include information
 66 regarding the latest research on effective teaching
 67 methodologies, techniques, and skills, including use of
 68 information technology; advancements in curricula; cross-
 69 curricula training strategies; and student motivation and
 70 management.

71 (4) The Department of Education shall also make
 72 electronically available to master trainers and lead teachers the
 73 latest, updated information regarding their subject areas and
 74 teaching advancements.

75 Section 2. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the
 76 contrary, the State Board of Education shall adopt rules that:

77 (1) Allow the military occupational specialty designation
 78 for instruction to be used as verification of instructional
 79 experience for purposes of teacher certification.

80 (2) Count credit granted by the American Council for
 81 Education the same as college credit for purposes of teacher
 82 certification.

83 (3) Allow military personnel to use proof of completion of
 84 Defense Language Institute training to demonstrate subject area
 85 competence in the critical shortage area of foreign language.

86 Section 3. Notwithstanding any provision of law or rule to

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87 the contrary, the first priority for the use of the time required
88 of teachers who have achieved certification by the National Board
89 of Professional Teaching Standards for mentoring or related
90 services shall be to provide such services to beginning teachers,
91 teachers in need of improvement, and candidates enrolled in
92 teacher preparation programs, including educator preparation
93 institutes.

94 Section 4. School district insurance coverage
95 statement.--Each school district shall provide to all covered
96 instructional personnel a written statement explaining the
97 liability insurance coverage that the district provides such
98 personnel. The statement must be concise, written in lay
99 language, and distributed to covered instructional personnel
100 separate from any other information they may otherwise receive
101 from the district. This statement must include a clear
102 explanation of the scope of the coverage and a reference to and
103 discussion of the existing laws that protect teachers and
104 principals from liability. This statement must be provided to and
105 discussed with covered personnel at all annual orientations
106 provided by the school district as well as posted on the school
107 district's website.

108 Section 5. The Office of Program Policy Analysis and
109 Government Accountability (OPPAGA) shall conduct a study to
110 identify teacher preparation programs that are most effective at
111 producing new teachers who are employed in Florida public K-12
112 classrooms. The study must:

113 (1) Analyze the rates at which students complete teacher
114 preparation programs in order to examine the productivity of
115 these programs;

116 (2) Follow one or more cohorts of teacher preparation
117 program completers from universities, community colleges,
118 educator preparation institutes, and district alternative
119 certification programs to determine the proportion of graduates
120 who enter classroom teaching; and

121 (3) Follow one or more cohorts of newly employed Florida K-
122 12 classroom teachers to determine how long they remain in the
123 classroom and whether teachers who remain in the classroom are
124 more likely to be products of certain teacher preparation
125 programs.

126
127 The number of cohorts shall be determined by OPPAGA based on the
128 research needs of the project. A report shall be submitted to the
129 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
130 Representatives by February 1, 2008.

131 Section 6. Each institution that offers state-approved
132 teacher preparation programs shall make options available to
133 students to pursue a teacher preparation program comprised of 3
134 years of coursework followed by a 1-year paid residency or
135 internship with opportunities for students to participate in
136 classroom experiences each year of the program and specify such
137 options in a report to the President of the Senate and the
138 Speaker of the House of Representative. The report shall be
139 submitted annually no later than February 1 and may be used to
140 develop a performance funding model for approved teacher
141 education programs.

142 Section 7. Subsection (7) of section 1001.51, Florida
143 Statutes, is amended to read:

144 1001.51 Duties and responsibilities of district school
 145 superintendent.--The district school superintendent shall
 146 exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below and
 147 elsewhere in the law, provided that, in so doing, he or she shall
 148 advise and counsel with the district school board. The district
 149 school superintendent shall perform all tasks necessary to make
 150 sound recommendations, nominations, proposals, and reports
 151 required by law to be acted upon by the district school board.
 152 All such recommendations, nominations, proposals, and reports by
 153 the district school superintendent shall be either recorded in
 154 the minutes or shall be made in writing, noted in the minutes,
 155 and filed in the public records of the district school board. It
 156 shall be presumed that, in the absence of the record required in
 157 this section, the recommendations, nominations, and proposals
 158 required of the district school superintendent were not contrary
 159 to the action taken by the district school board in such matters.

160 (7) PERSONNEL.--Be responsible, as required herein, for
 161 directing the work of the personnel, subject to the requirements
 162 of chapter 1012. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to
 163 the contrary, a district school superintendent elected under s.
 164 5, Art. IX of the State Constitution may directly dismiss
 165 administrative personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(3)(a) and (b).

166 Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3), paragraph (b)
 167 of subsection (5), and paragraph (b) of subsection (6), of
 168 section 1004.04, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

169 1004.04 Public accountability and state approval for
 170 teacher preparation programs.--

171 (3) DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS.--A system
 172 developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with

173 postsecondary educational institutions shall assist departments
 174 and colleges of education in the restructuring of their programs
 175 in accordance with this section to meet the need for producing
 176 quality teachers now and in the future.

177 (c) State-approved teacher preparation programs must
 178 incorporate:

179 1. Appropriate English for Speakers of Other Languages
 180 instruction so that program graduates will have completed the
 181 requirements for teaching limited English proficient students in
 182 Florida public schools.

183 2. Scientifically researched, knowledge-based reading
 184 literacy and computational skills instruction so that program
 185 graduates will be able to provide the necessary academic
 186 foundations for their students at whatever grade levels they
 187 choose to teach.

188 3. Gifted and academically talented student identification
 189 and placement instruction so that program graduates will be able
 190 to identify gifted and academically talented students in the
 191 elementary grades and provide these students with accelerated
 192 learning opportunities throughout their academic careers that
 193 allow them to work at suitably challenging levels.

194 (5) CONTINUED PROGRAM APPROVAL.--Notwithstanding subsection
 195 (4), failure by a public or nonpublic teacher preparation program
 196 to meet the criteria for continued program approval shall result
 197 in loss of program approval. The Department of Education, in
 198 collaboration with the departments and colleges of education,
 199 shall develop procedures for continued program approval that
 200 document the continuous improvement of program processes and
 201 graduates' performance.

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202 (b) Additional criteria for continued program approval for
203 public institutions may be approved by the State Board of
204 Education. Such criteria must emphasize instruction in classroom
205 management and must provide for the evaluation of the teacher
206 candidates' performance in this area. The criteria shall also
207 require instruction in working with underachieving students.
208 Program evaluation procedures must include, but are not limited
209 to, program graduates' satisfaction with instruction and the
210 program's responsiveness to local school districts. Additional
211 criteria for continued program approval for nonpublic
212 institutions shall be developed in the same manner as for public
213 institutions; however, such criteria must be based upon
214 significant, objective, and quantifiable graduate performance
215 measures. Responsibility for collecting data on outcome measures
216 through survey instruments and other appropriate means shall be
217 shared by the postsecondary educational institutions and the
218 Department of Education. By January 1 of each year, the
219 Department of Education shall report this information for each
220 postsecondary educational institution that has state-approved
221 programs of teacher education to the Governor, the State Board of
222 Education, the Commissioner of Education, the President of the
223 Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, all Florida
224 postsecondary teacher preparation programs, and interested
225 members of the public. This report must analyze the data and make
226 recommendations for improving teacher preparation programs in the
227 state. By August 1, 2008, the Department of Education shall
228 establish an electronic reporting system by which all
229 institutions with programs approved under this section shall
230 report data required for continued approval. The system must be

231 linked to the Education Data Warehouse and provide institutions
232 with a means of reviewing and utilizing data for purposes of
233 continuous program improvement. The system must also align data
234 elements to allow for comparison of performance outcomes common
235 to programs approved under this section and other types of
236 approved teacher preparation programs in this state.

237 (6) PRESERVICE FIELD EXPERIENCE.--All postsecondary
238 instructors, school district personnel and instructional
239 personnel, and school sites preparing instructional personnel
240 through preservice field experience courses and internships shall
241 meet special requirements. District school boards are authorized
242 to pay student teachers during their internships.

243 (b) All school district personnel and instructional
244 personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation students
245 during field experience courses or internships must have evidence
246 of "clinical educator" training or eligibility for participation
247 as a mentor in the Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching Program
248 pursuant to s. 1012.72 and must successfully demonstrate
249 effective classroom management strategies that consistently
250 result in improved student performance. The State Board of
251 Education shall approve the training requirements.

252 Section 9. Subsections (4) through (7) of section 1004.85,
253 Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (5) through (8),
254 respectively, and a new subsection (4) is added to that section
255 to read:

256 1004.85 Postsecondary educator preparation institutes.--

257 (4) Each educator preparation institute shall guarantee the
258 high quality of its graduates during the first 2 years
259 immediately following graduation from the program or following

260 initial certification, whichever occurs first. Any educator in a
 261 Florida school who fails to demonstrate the essential skills
 262 specified in s. 1004.04(5)(e) shall be provided additional
 263 training by the educator preparation institute at no expense to
 264 the educator or the employer. Such training must consist of an
 265 individualized plan agreed upon by the school district and the
 266 educator preparation institute that includes specific learning
 267 outcomes. The educator preparation institute assumes no
 268 responsibility for the educator's employment contract with the
 269 employer. Employer satisfaction shall be determined by an
 270 annually administered survey instrument approved by the
 271 Department of Education that measures, at a minimum, employer
 272 satisfaction with the ability of graduates to demonstrate the
 273 essential skills specified in s. 1004.04(5)(e).

274 Section 10. Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) of section
 275 1012.32, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

276 1012.32 Qualifications of personnel.--

277 (2)

278 (d) Individuals ~~Student teachers, persons~~ participating in
 279 student teaching a field experience pursuant to s. 1004.04(6) or
 280 s. 1004.85, and persons participating in a short-term experience
 281 as a teacher assistant pursuant to s. 1004.04(10) in any district
 282 school system, lab school, or charter school shall, upon
 283 engagement to provide services, undergo background screening as
 284 required under s. 1012.56. Such screening may be transferred from
 285 one school district to another school district.

286
 287 Fingerprints shall be submitted to the Department of Law
 288 Enforcement for state processing and to the Federal Bureau of

289 Investigation for federal processing. Persons subject to this
 290 subsection found through fingerprint processing to have been
 291 convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude shall not be
 292 employed, engaged to provide services, or serve in any position
 293 requiring direct contact with students. Probationary persons
 294 subject to this subsection terminated because of their criminal
 295 record have the right to appeal such decisions. The cost of the
 296 background screening may be borne by the district school board,
 297 the charter school, the employee, the contractor, or a person
 298 subject to this subsection.

299 Section 11. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section
 300 1012.33, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

301 1012.33 Contracts with instructional staff, supervisors,
 302 and school principals.--

303 (3)(a) Each district school board shall provide a
 304 professional service contract as prescribed herein. Each member
 305 of the instructional staff who completed the following
 306 requirements prior to July 1, 1984, shall be entitled to and
 307 shall be issued a continuing contract in the form prescribed by
 308 rules of the state board pursuant to s. 231.36, Florida Statutes
 309 (1981). Each member of the instructional staff who completes the
 310 following requirements on or after July 1, 1984, shall be
 311 entitled to and shall be issued a professional service contract
 312 in the form prescribed by rules of the state board as provided
 313 herein:

314 1. The member must hold a professional certificate as
 315 prescribed by s. 1012.56 and rules of the State Board of
 316 Education.

317 2.a. The member must have completed 3 years of probationary
318 service in the district during a period not in excess of 5
319 successive years, except for leave duly authorized and granted.

320 b. For any person newly employed as a member of the
321 instructional staff after July 1, 2007, the member must have
322 completed 5 years of probationary service in the district during
323 a period not in excess of 7 successive years, except for leave
324 duly authorized and granted. During the first year of service, a
325 teacher shall be provided mentoring and induction to assist with
326 skills necessary for excellent teaching. Mentoring shall be
327 provided by a nationally board certified teacher, if available. A
328 principal may prescribe a second year of mentoring in order to
329 continue the skill building process. During the probationary
330 process, the district shall require the principal to maintain
331 records of assistance to the teacher, copies of teacher
332 appraisals, and reasons for teacher nonrenewal, if applicable. A
333 principal must submit annually a written report to the district,
334 on a form developed by the district, this record and other
335 relevant information on probationary teachers under the
336 principal's direct supervision.

337 3. The member must have been recommended by the district
338 school superintendent for such contract and reappointed by the
339 district school board based on successful performance of duties
340 and demonstration of professional competence.

341 4. For any person newly employed as a member of the
342 instructional staff after June 30, 1997, the initial annual
343 contract shall include a 97-day probationary period during which
344 time the employee's contract may be terminated without cause or
345 the employee may resign without breach of contract.

346 Section 12. Subsection (3) of section 1012.56, Florida
 347 Statutes, is amended to read:

348 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.--

349 (3) MASTERY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.--Acceptable means of
 350 demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

351 (a) Achievement of passing scores on basic skills
 352 examination required by state board rule for persons seeking
 353 initial certification before July 1, 2008;

354 (b) Achievement of passing scores on an examination that
 355 demonstrates mastery of a college-level general education
 356 curriculum required by state board rule for persons seeking
 357 initial certification on or after July 1, 2008 ~~the College Level~~
 358 ~~Academic Skills Test earned prior to July 1, 2002;~~

359 (c) A valid professional standard teaching certificate
 360 issued by another state;

361 (d) A valid certificate issued by the National Board for
 362 Professional Teaching Standards or a national educator
 363 credentialing board approved by the State Board of Education; or

364 (e) Documentation of two semesters of successful teaching
 365 in a community college, state university, or private college or
 366 university that awards an associate or higher degree and is an
 367 accredited institution or an institution of higher education
 368 identified by the Department of Education as having a quality
 369 program.

370 Section 13. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.