

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2019**

**SESSION LAW 2019-71
SENATE BILL 219**

AN ACT TO MODIFY TEACHER LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. MODIFICATIONS TO INITIAL PROFESSIONAL LICENSES

SECTION 1.1. G.S. 115C-270.15 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-270.15. Examination requirements for initial professional licenses.

(a) Examination Score Requirements. – The State Board of Education shall require an applicant for an initial professional license (IPL) to demonstrate the applicant's academic and professional preparation by achieving a prescribed minimum score on a standard examination appropriate and adequate for that purpose. Elementary education (K-6) and special education general curriculum teachers shall also achieve a prescribed minimum score on subtests or standard examinations specific to teaching reading and mathematics.

(b) Establishment of Minimum Scores. – The State Board shall adopt rules that establish the minimum scores for any required standard examinations and other measures necessary to assess the qualifications of professional educators as required under this section. For purposes of this section, the State Board shall not be subject to Article 2A of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes. At least 30 days prior to changing any rule adopted under this section, the State Board shall provide written notice to all recognized educator preparation programs and to all local boards of education. The written notice shall include the proposed revised rule. The State Board of Education shall make any required standard initial professional licensure exam rigorous and raise the prescribed minimum score as necessary to ensure that each applicant has received high-quality academic and professional preparation to teach effectively.

(c) Time Line for Completion of Examinations. – The State Board of Education shall permit an applicant to fulfill any such ~~testing examination~~ requirement before or during the ~~applicant's second year of teaching, third year of the IPL,~~ provided the applicant took the examination at least once during the first year of ~~teaching the license.~~

(d) Monitoring Compliance. – For teachers with an IPL, the State Board shall direct the Department of Public Instruction to monitor the teachers' compliance with this section throughout the duration of the IPL. In the event a teacher is not in compliance with any of the requirements of this section, the Department shall notify the teacher.

(e) Conversion to Continuing Professional License. – The State Board shall not convert an IPL to a continuing professional license for a teacher who has not fulfilled the examination requirements of this section."

SECTION 1.2. Elementary education (K-6) or special education general curriculum teachers with an initial professional license that is set to expire June 30, 2019, due to the failure to fulfill the licensure examination requirements pursuant to G.S. 115C-270.15, shall be granted an extension until June 30, 2020.

SECTION 1.3. The State Board shall comply with G.S. 115C-270.15(d), as enacted by this act, beginning with applicants for teacher licensure on or after July 1, 2019.

PART II. CREATION OF LIMITED LICENSES



SECTION 2.1. G.S. 115C-270.20(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(4a) Limited license. – A three-year nonrenewable license issued to an individual who meets the requirements of this subdivision. A limited license shall only be requested by the local board of education currently employing or seeking to employ the individual and shall be used for continued employment only in that local school administrative unit. The State Board shall not require individuals to demonstrate preparation through achieving a prescribed minimum score on a standardized examination for a limited license. To receive a limited license, one of the following shall be met:

a. IPL licensee. – Both of the following are met:

1. The individual was issued an IPL, but did not qualify for a CPL under G.S. 115C-270.15(e).
2. The local board of education submits to the State Board an affidavit stating that the teacher is currently employed by that local board, is an effective teacher, and will be encouraged to continue to pursue a CPL. The affidavit shall be signed by both the principal and superintendent for the school to which the teacher is currently assigned.

b. Out-of-state licensee. – Both of the following are met:

1. The individual holds current teacher licensure in another state that is in good standing.
2. The local board of education submits to the State Board an affidavit stating that the local board seeks to employ the teacher, that the teacher has been employed as a licensed teacher in another state for at least three years, and that the teacher will be encouraged to pursue an IPL or CPL, as appropriate for that teacher. The affidavit shall be signed by the superintendent for the local board of education seeking to employ the teacher."

SECTION 2.2. G.S. 115C-270.25 reads as rewritten:

"§ 115C-270.25. Out-of-state license applicants.

Initial applications for a continuing professional license from an individual with an out-of-state teacher's license shall require the applicant to provide evidence of that teacher's effectiveness, when available, as measured by the evaluation system used in that applicant's state of current licensure at the time of application, including any growth measures included in that evaluation system. ~~Applications that include the evidence of that educator's effectiveness shall be prioritized for review over initial applications from applicants with out-of-state licenses that do not include that information.~~ An individual who does not include evidence of that teacher's effectiveness with the initial application shall only be eligible for an ~~IPL~~ IPL or LL."

SECTION 2.3. G.S. 93B-15.1(i) reads as rewritten:

"(i) For the purposes of this section, the State Board of Education shall be considered an occupational licensing board when issuing teacher licenses under Article 17E of Subchapter V of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. In addition to the provisions for licensure provided by this section, a local board of education may request a three-year limited license for a military spouse who holds a current teaching license in another jurisdiction pursuant to G.S. 115C-270.20(a)(4a)."

PART III. PAY FOR NEWLY EMPLOYED TEACHERS WITH EXPERIENCE CREDIT

SECTION 3. G.S. 115C-302.1 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(b3) Pay for Newly Employed Teachers with Experience Credit. – Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a local board of education shall determine experience credit for a teacher in that teacher's first year of employment with the board for the purposes of paying the teacher with State-allotted funds in accordance with the State salary schedule. Notwithstanding subsection (f) of this section, the local board of education and the teacher shall not be responsible for the repayment of any overpayment of State funds due to misapplication of experience credit for the State salary schedule for the first year of employment when the determination of experience credit was done in good faith based on the teacher's verified prior employment record and the guidelines established by the State Board of Education for awarding experience credit. However, a local board of education that does not use due diligence to verify prior employment will be responsible for the repayment of any overpayment of State funds. A teacher paid in accordance with this subsection (i) shall not be entitled to the same pay on the State salary schedule for teachers for subsequent years of employment after the State Board determines the appropriate experience credit for that teacher and (ii) shall not be deemed to be demoted under Part 3 of Article 22 of this Chapter if the State Board's determination of experience credit results in a reduction in salary in subsequent years of employment."

PART IV. MODIFICATIONS TO LIFETIME TEACHING LICENSES

SECTION 4.1. G.S. 115C-270.20(a)(4) reads as rewritten:

"(4) Lifetime license. – A license issued to a teacher after ~~50~~30 or more years of teaching as a licensed teacher that requires no renewal. For the purposes of this subdivision, a teacher shall be determined to have completed 30 or more years of teaching as a licensed teacher when the teacher holds a current North Carolina teaching license and has completed 30 or more years of creditable service with the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System."

SECTION 4.2. G.S. 115C-270.20(a)(6) is repealed.

SECTION 4.3. G.S. 115C-270.30(b)(3) is repealed.

PART V. EMERGENCY RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY

SECTION 5. As soon as practicable, and no more than 10 calendar days from the effective date of this act, the State Board of Education shall adopt emergency rules for the implementation of this act in accordance with G.S. 150B-21.1A. This section does not require any rule making if not otherwise required by law.

PART VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 6. This act is effective when it becomes law and, except as otherwise provided in this act, applies beginning with applications for teacher licensure submitted on or after the eighteenth day following the effective date of this act.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 25th day of June, 2019.

s/ Daniel J. Forest
President of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Roy Cooper
Governor

Approved 5:16 p.m. this 1st day of July, 2019