

REFERENCE TITLE: K-5 teachers; literacy endorsement; requirements

State of Arizona  
Senate  
Fifty-sixth Legislature  
Second Regular Session  
2024

## **SB 1465**

Introduced by  
Senator Bennett

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-501.01, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO SCHOOL EMPLOYEES.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

2 Section 1. Section 15-501.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended  
3 to read:

4 15-501.01. Requirements for teachers; teaching certificates;  
5 rules; reciprocity; placement; posting

6 A. Notwithstanding any other law, all teachers who are certificated  
7 pursuant to this section must have a baccalaureate degree and a valid  
8 fingerprint clearance card.

9 B. The state board of education shall adopt rules for the issuance  
10 of the following types of certificates for teachers:

11 1. Standard teaching certificate.

12 2. Alternative teaching certificate for persons who obtain training  
13 pursuant to subsection C, paragraph 1 of this section.

14 3. Subject-matter expert standard teaching certificate for persons  
15 who obtain training pursuant to subsection C, paragraph 8 of this section.

16 4. Classroom-based standard teaching certificate for individuals  
17 who obtain training from a school district or charter school.

18 5. Career and technical education teaching certificate.

19 C. The state board of education shall adopt rules to carry out the  
20 purposes of this section. The rules:

21 1. Shall provide for a variety of alternative teacher and  
22 administrator preparation programs that allow for variations in program  
23 sequence and design to apply for program approval. The state board shall  
24 adopt rules pursuant to this paragraph designed to allow for a variety of  
25 formats and shall not require a prescribed answer or design from the  
26 program provider in order to obtain approval from the state board. Any  
27 rules adopted by the state board pursuant to this paragraph shall be  
28 substantially different from the rules adopted for the approval of  
29 traditional preparation programs and may not unnecessarily restrict a  
30 variety of alternative preparation programs from operating and providing  
31 instruction in this state. The state board shall evaluate each program  
32 provider based on the program's ability to prepare teachers and  
33 administrators and to recruit teachers and administrators with a variety  
34 of experiences and talents. The state board shall allow universities  
35 under the jurisdiction of the Arizona board of regents, community colleges  
36 in this state, private postsecondary institutions licensed by this state,  
37 school districts, charter schools, professional organizations, nonprofit  
38 organizations and private entities to apply for program approval and shall  
39 create application procedures and certification criteria that are  
40 substantially less restrictive than those for traditional preparation  
41 programs. At the completion of an alternative preparation program,  
42 graduates shall:

43 (a) Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited postsecondary  
44 education institution.

1 (b) If applicable, demonstrate professional knowledge and subject  
2 knowledge proficiency pursuant to section 15-533.

3 (c) Obtain a valid fingerprint clearance card pursuant to section  
4 15-534.

5 (d) If applicable, complete training in structured English  
6 immersion as prescribed by the state board pursuant to section 15-756.09.

7 (e) If applicable, complete training in research-based systematic  
8 phonics instruction as prescribed in paragraph 2 of this subsection.

9 (f) Demonstrate the required proficiency in the Constitutions of  
10 the United States and Arizona as prescribed in section 15-532.

11 2. Shall require that, within three years after a certificate for  
12 elementary education or early childhood education is issued, the  
13 certificate holder complete, from a public or private provider, at least  
14 forty-five classroom hours or three college-level credit hours, or the  
15 equivalent, in both research-based:

16 (a) Science of reading instruction, including systematic phonics  
17 instruction.

18 (b) Reading instruction, including training on assessments,  
19 instructional practices and interventions to improve student reading  
20 proficiency. Beginning July 1, 2021, instruction provided pursuant to  
21 this subdivision must meet the requirements for dyslexia training  
22 prescribed in section 15-219.

23 3. Beginning August 1, 2025, shall establish a **VOLUNTARY** literacy  
24 endorsement ~~as a requirement~~ for ~~all~~ certificated teachers who provide  
25 literacy instruction in kindergarten programs or in any of grades one  
26 through five as determined by the board. ~~The rules shall require that a~~  
27 ~~certificated teacher who receives a certificate after August 1, 2025 and~~  
28 ~~who provides literacy instruction in kindergarten programs or in any of~~  
29 ~~grades one through five must obtain a literacy endorsement within three~~  
30 ~~years after the teacher's certificate is issued. The rules shall require~~  
31 ~~that a certificated teacher who received a certificate before August 1,~~  
32 ~~2025 and who provides literacy instruction in kindergarten programs or in~~  
33 ~~any of grades one through five must obtain a literacy endorsement on or~~  
34 ~~before August 1, 2028.~~ The literacy endorsement shall require the teacher  
35 to complete evidence-based science of reading training or coursework as  
36 determined by the board and to pass a literacy instruction assessment to  
37 show that the teacher is capable of doing all of the following:

38 (a) Effectively teaching foundational reading skills, phonological  
39 awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

40 (b) Implementing reading instruction using high-quality  
41 instructional materials.

42 (c) Providing effective instruction and interventions for students  
43 with reading deficiencies, including students with characteristics of  
44 dyslexia.

1           4. ~~Beginning August 1, 2022,~~ Shall require all approved educator  
2 preparation programs in elementary education and early childhood education  
3 to require the courses that are necessary to obtain a literacy endorsement  
4 pursuant to paragraph 3 of this subsection.

5           5. Shall establish a process to allow a local education agency, at  
6 the request of a teacher, to verify to the department of education that  
7 the teacher possesses the instructional knowledge and skills prescribed in  
8 paragraph 3 of this subsection, demonstrated through classroom  
9 observations and student achievement data across subgroups using  
10 evidence-based measures. A certificated teacher who has had a local  
11 education agency verify the teacher's knowledge and skills in the science  
12 of reading pursuant to this paragraph is not required to complete the  
13 coursework, training or assessment requirements prescribed in paragraph 3  
14 of this subsection to obtain the literacy endorsement.

15           6. Shall not require a teacher to obtain a master's degree or to  
16 take any additional graduate courses as a condition of certification or  
17 recertification.

18           7. Shall allow but shall not require the superintendent of a school  
19 district to obtain certification from the state board of education.

20           8. Shall provide for the issuance of a subject-matter expert  
21 standard teaching certificate to persons who have expertise in a content  
22 area or a subject matter. Persons who are certified pursuant to this  
23 paragraph shall complete training, if applicable, in structured English  
24 immersion as prescribed by the state board pursuant to section 15-756.09.  
25 Persons who are certified pursuant to this paragraph are exempt from the  
26 subject knowledge proficiency requirements prescribed in section 15-533  
27 and from the proficiency requirements prescribed in section 15-532 on the  
28 Constitutions of the United States and Arizona. Persons who are subject  
29 to subdivision (a) of this paragraph are also exempt from the professional  
30 knowledge proficiency requirements pursuant to section 15-533. A person  
31 who obtains a subject-matter expert standard teaching certificate pursuant  
32 to this paragraph may provide instruction in the person's field of  
33 expertise in grades six through twelve at any public school in this state.  
34 Issuance of the subject-matter expert standard teaching certificate may  
35 not be conditioned on the person's employment with a local education  
36 agency. A person who meets the requirements of this paragraph shall be  
37 issued a subject-matter expert standard teaching certificate without  
38 having to demonstrate professional knowledge proficiency pursuant to  
39 section 15-533, except that the person shall have at least two years to  
40 demonstrate professional knowledge proficiency pursuant to section 15-533.  
41 School districts shall evaluate and provide support pursuant to section  
42 15-537 to teachers who are certified pursuant to this paragraph. If a  
43 person fails to meet the professional knowledge requirements of this  
44 section within two years, the department of education or state board of  
45 education may temporarily suspend the subject-matter expert standard

1 teaching certificate. A certificate that is temporarily suspended  
2 pursuant to this paragraph is not considered a disciplinary action, and a  
3 person shall be allowed to correct the deficiency within the remaining  
4 time of the subject-matter expert standard teaching certification. This  
5 paragraph does not require a person who has obtained another type of  
6 teaching certificate from the state board to obtain a subject-matter  
7 expert standard teaching certificate pursuant to this paragraph in order  
8 to provide instruction in grades six through twelve. Persons who are  
9 certificated pursuant to this paragraph shall review and attest to  
10 reviewing the best practices for social media and cellular telephone use  
11 between students and school personnel adopted by the state board of  
12 education pursuant to section 15-203, subsection A, paragraph 44 before  
13 receiving a certificate and, within two years after receiving a  
14 certificate, complete training in professionalism and ethics from a public  
15 or private provider approved by the state board of education, which may  
16 include a no-cost option to the person provided by the state board. A  
17 person is eligible for a subject-matter expert standard teaching  
18 certificate pursuant to this paragraph if the person has a baccalaureate  
19 degree and meets any of the following requirements:

20 (a) Has taught courses relevant to a content area or subject matter  
21 for the last two consecutive years and for a total of at least three years  
22 at one or more regionally or nationally accredited public or private  
23 postsecondary institutions. A person demonstrates compliance with this  
24 requirement by providing the state board with written proof of employment  
25 for specific durations from one or more qualifying postsecondary  
26 institutions.

27 (b) Has either a baccalaureate degree, a master's degree or a  
28 doctoral degree in a specific subject area that is relevant to a content  
29 area or subject matter taught in public schools.

30 (c) Demonstrates expertise through relevant work experience of at  
31 least five years in a field that is relevant to a content area or subject  
32 matter taught in public schools. A person demonstrates compliance with  
33 this requirement by providing the state board with written proof of  
34 employment.

35 9. Notwithstanding section 15-533, shall exempt persons applying  
36 for a secondary education certificate from the subject knowledge portion  
37 of the proficiency examination if the state board determines that the  
38 person has work experience in science, technology, engineering or  
39 mathematics and can demonstrate adequate knowledge of a particular subject  
40 through a postsecondary education degree or twenty-four credit hours of  
41 relevant coursework.

42 10. Shall allow for a certificate issued to a person pursuant to  
43 subsection B, paragraph 1, 3, 4 or 5 of this section or section 15-203 or  
44 15-782.01, as applicable, to be both issued and renewed for at least  
45 twelve years and may not require more than fifteen hours of continuing

1 education credits each year in order to renew that certificate pursuant to  
2 this paragraph.

3 11. Shall allow for a certificate issued to a person pursuant to  
4 subsection B of this section or section 15-132, 15-203 or 15-782.01, as  
5 applicable, and any endorsement or approved area related to that  
6 certificate, to be renewed at least two years but not more than ten years  
7 after that certificate expires without any other requirements adopted by  
8 the state board of education or the department of education if the person  
9 is in good standing and possesses a valid fingerprint clearance card  
10 issued pursuant to section 15-534. A certificate renewed pursuant to this  
11 paragraph shall be identical to the expired certificate.

12 D. The rules for certification reciprocity shall include a  
13 requirement that the applicant possess a comparable valid certification  
14 from another state and be in good standing with that other state. An  
15 applicant who possesses a valid certification from another state and a  
16 fingerprint clearance card pursuant to section 15-534 and who is in good  
17 standing with that other state shall be issued a comparable standard  
18 certificate or a comparable certificate issued pursuant to section 15-132,  
19 15-203 or 15-782.01, as applicable, without any other requirements from  
20 the state board of education or the department of education. A person who  
21 is issued a certificate pursuant to this subsection is not required to  
22 meet any requirement prescribed in section 15-533.

23 E. Placement decisions of teaching intern certificate holders  
24 issued pursuant to subsection C, paragraph 1 of this section and section  
25 15-552 shall be based on agreements between the teacher preparation  
26 provider, the provider's partner organizations and the local education  
27 agency. The practices of the department of education and the rules and  
28 policies of the state board of education may not restrict placement of  
29 teaching intern certification holders based on local education agency  
30 instructional models and may only consider the academic quality of the  
31 school, the effectiveness of the teaching intern certification holder's  
32 on-site mentor and the opportunity for a wide variety of schools and  
33 school models to access teaching intern certification holders.

34 F. Notwithstanding subsection A of this section, the following  
35 persons are not required to have a baccalaureate degree:

36 1. A teacher who is otherwise exempt by law from obtaining a  
37 baccalaureate degree and who provides instruction in STEM or career and  
38 technical education pursuant to section 15-782.01.

39 2. A person who obtains any of the following:

40 (a) A Native American language certificate.

41 (b) A student teaching intern certificate.

42 (c) A junior reserve officer training corps certificate.

43 (d) An athletic coaching certificate.

44 (e) An emergency substitute certificate.

- 1           G. On or before November 15 of each year, the department of  
2 education shall report and post on its website all of the following:
- 3           1. The total number of teaching certificates issued in the previous  
4 calendar year disaggregated by the type of teaching certificate and  
5 demographics.
  - 6           2. The total number of currently issued teaching certificates in  
7 this state disaggregated by the type of teaching certificate and  
8 demographics.
  - 9           3. Any other historical data or trends regarding certificated  
10 individuals in this state.