

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section 21-5b as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/21-5b)

Sec. 21-5b. Alternative certification. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board, shall establish and implement an alternative certification program under which persons who meet the requirements of and successfully complete the program established by this Section shall be issued an alternative teaching certificate for teaching in the schools. The program shall be limited to not more than 260 new participants during each year that the program is in effect. The State Board of Education, in cooperation with a partnership formed with a university that offers 4-year baccalaureate and masters degree programs and that is a recognized institution as defined in Section 21-21 and one or more not-for-profit organizations in the State which support excellence in teaching, shall within 30 days after submission by the partnership approve a course of study developed by the partnership that persons in the program must successfully complete in order to satisfy one criterion

for issuance of an alternative certificate under this Section. The Alternative Teacher Certification program course of study must include the current content and skills contained in the university's current courses for State certification which have been approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board, as the requirement for State teacher certification.

The alternative certification program established under this Section shall be known as the Alternative Teacher Certification program. The Alternative Teacher Certification Program shall be offered by the submitting partnership and may be offered in conjunction with one or more not-for-profit organizations in the State which support excellence in teaching. The program shall be comprised of the following 3 phases: (a) the first phase is the course of study offered on an intensive basis in education theory, instructional methods, and practice teaching; (b) the second phase is the person's assignment to a full-time teaching position for one school year; and (c) the third phase is a comprehensive assessment of the person's teaching performance by school officials and the partnership participants and a recommendation by the partner institution of higher education to the State Board of Education that the person be issued a standard alternative teaching certificate. Successful completion of the Alternative Teacher Certification program shall be deemed to satisfy any other practice or student teaching and subject matter requirements

established by law.

A provisional alternative teaching certificate, valid for one year of teaching in the common schools and not renewable, shall be issued under this Section 21-5b to persons who at the time of applying for the provisional alternative teaching certificate under this Section:

(1) have graduated from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree;

(2) have successfully completed the first phase of the Alternative Teacher Certification program as provided in this Section;

(3) have passed the tests of basic skills and subject matter knowledge required by Section 21-1a; and

(4) (i) have been employed for a period of at least 5 years in an area requiring application of the individual's education or (ii) have attained at least a cumulative grade average of a "B" if the individual is assigned either to a school district that has not met the annual measurable objective for highly qualified teachers required by the Illinois Revised Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT) Plan or to a school district whose data filed with the State Board of Education indicates that the district's poor and minority students are taught by teachers who are not highly qualified at a higher rate than other students; however, this item (4) requirement does not apply with respect to a provisional alternative teaching certificate for teaching

in schools situated in a school district that is located in a city having a population in excess of 500,000 inhabitants. Assignment may be made under clause (ii) of this item (4) only if the district superintendent and the exclusive bargaining representative of the district's teachers, if any, jointly agree to permit the assignment.

A person possessing a provisional alternative certificate under this Section shall be treated as a regularly certified teacher for purposes of compensation, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment afforded teachers in the school who are members of a bargaining unit represented by an exclusive bargaining representative, if any.

Until February 15, 2000, a standard alternative teaching certificate, valid for 4 years for teaching in the schools and renewable as provided in Section 21-14, shall be issued under this Section 21-5b to persons who first complete the requirements for the provisional alternative teaching certificate and who at the time of applying for a standard alternative teaching certificate under this Section have successfully completed the second and third phases of the Alternative Teacher Certification program as provided in this Section. Alternatively, beginning February 15, 2000, at the end of the 4-year validity period, persons who were issued a standard alternative teaching certificate shall be eligible, on the same basis as holders of an Initial Teaching Certificate issued under subsection (b) of Section 21-2 of this Code, to

apply for a Standard Teaching Certificate, provided they meet the requirements of subsection (c) of Section 21-2 of this Code and further provided that a person who does not apply for and receive a Standard Teaching Certificate shall be able to teach only in schools situated in a school district that is located in a city having a population in excess of 500,000 inhabitants.

Beginning February 15, 2000, persons who have completed the requirements for a standard alternative teaching certificate under this Section shall be issued an Initial Alternative Teaching Certificate valid for 4 years of teaching and not renewable. At the end of the 4-year validity period, these persons shall be eligible, on the same basis as holders of an Initial Teaching Certificate issued under subsection (b) of Section 21-2 of this Code, to apply for a Standard Teaching Certificate, provided they meet the requirements of subsection (c) of Section 21-2.

This alternative certification program shall be implemented so that the first provisional alternative teaching certificates issued under this Section are effective upon the commencement of the 1997-1998 academic year and the first standard alternative teaching certificates issued under this Section are effective upon the commencement of the 1998-1999 academic year.

The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the partnership establishing the Alternative Teacher Certification program, shall adopt rules and regulations that are consistent

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with this Section and that the State Board of Education deems necessary to establish and implement the program.

(Source: P.A. 91-609, eff. 1-1-00.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.