

CHAPTER 289

EDUCATION - PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HOUSE BILL 96-1249

BY REPRESENTATIVES Entz, Foster, Acquafresca, George, and Mace;
also SENATORS Wattenberg, R. Powers, Bishop, Feeley, Martinez, Meiklejohn, Mutzebaugh, Rizzuto, Tebedo, and Weddig.

AN ACT

CONCERNING QUALIFICATIONS OF EDUCATORS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. 22-60.5-106, Colorado Revised Statutes, 1995 Repl. Vol., is amended to read:

22-60.5-106. Endorsement of license - effect. (1) The department of education is authorized to cause a license to be endorsed. ~~except that the department of education shall endorse special services licenses.~~ ANY such endorsement identifies SHALL IDENTIFY the grade, AGE, OR DEVELOPMENTAL level or levels, subject matter area or areas, or other specialization appropriate to an applicant's preparation, training, or experience. Any endorsement made pursuant to this section shall be subject to review at the expiration of the license so endorsed. The state board of education may establish, by rule and regulation, APPROPRIATE ENDORSEMENTS AND THE criteria for such endorsements. ~~except that the state board of education shall establish, by rule and regulation, criteria for endorsements of special services licenses.~~

(2) NOTWITHSTANDING THE DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY GRANTED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL ISSUE A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER ENDORSEMENT TO AN APPLICANT WHO HAS COMPLETED A PROGRAM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION OFFERED BY AN ACCEPTED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, WHICH PROGRAM HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

SECTION 2. 22-60.5-201 (3), Colorado Revised Statutes, 1995 Repl. Vol., is amended to read:

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

22-60.5-201. Types of teacher licenses issued - term. (3) The department of education may, at its discretion, issue a provisional teacher license provided for in paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section to any applicant from another state or country whose qualifications meet or exceed the standards of the state board of education for the issuance of a provisional teacher license; EXCEPT THAT, IN AN AREA DEEMED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO BE A SHORTAGE AREA, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ESTABLISH REASONABLE CRITERIA, INCLUDING THE RECOGNITION OF EXPERIENCE AS A LICENSED TEACHER, FOR THE ISSUANCE OF A PROVISIONAL TEACHER LICENSE TO ANY APPLICANT FROM ANOTHER STATE OR COUNTRY.

SECTION 3. Article 1 of title 23, Colorado Revised Statutes, 1995 Repl. Vol., is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

23-1-121.5. Commission directive - education in special education. (1) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZES THE OBLIGATION OF THIS STATE TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ALL CHILDREN THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO LEAD FULFILLING AND PRODUCTIVE LIVES. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FURTHER RECOGNIZES THAT THE STATE IS EXPERIENCING A CRITICAL SHORTAGE IN THE NUMBER OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO TEACH EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN AND THAT THIS SHORTAGE IMPEDES THE ABILITY OF THE STATE TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HEREBY FINDS AND DECLARES THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THIS STATE TO OFFER PROGRAMS THAT ARE OF A REASONABLE DURATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF ENTRY-LEVEL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS.

(2) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 1996, THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT THE NECESSARY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO REQUIRE STATE-SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION OFFERING PROGRAMS APPROVED BY THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION, ON AND AFTER JULY 1, 1998, TO OFFER SUCH PROGRAMS REQUIRING THE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF PREPARATION NECESSARY TO PERFORM SERVICES AS AN ENTRY-LEVEL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER.

SECTION 4. No appropriation. The Colorado commission on higher education shall implement the provisions of this act within the single line item appropriations provided to each governing board for the operation of its campuses consistent with the distribution percentages developed by the commission in accordance with section 23-1-105 (3), Colorado Revised Statutes. Accordingly, no additional appropriation of state money is necessary to carry out the purposes of this act.

SECTION 5. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: June 3, 1996