

1 SB209  
2 217195-1  
3 By Senators Chesteen, Gudger, Givhan, Elliott, Melson and  
4 Allen  
5 RFD: Education Policy  
6 First Read: 10-FEB-22

8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the State Board of  
9 Education may establish and issue alternative  
10 teaching certificates to qualified individuals who  
11 may not have graduated from an approved teacher  
12 education program.

13 This bill would authorize the issuance of a  
14 professional educator certificate to qualified  
15 individuals who have held an alternative  
16 certificate for one year, instead of three years.

17 This bill would also authorize the State  
18 Board of Education to authorize the State  
19 Superintendent of Education to issue a professional  
20 educator certificate to a qualified individual who  
21 completes an alternative teacher preparation  
22 program offered by an approved alternative teacher  
23 education preparation organization.

24  
25 A BILL  
26 TO BE ENTITLED  
27 AN ACT

1  
2 To amend Section 16-23-3, Code of Alabama 1975, as  
3 amended by Act 2021-111, 2021 Regular Session, and to add  
4 Section 16-23-3.01 to the Code of Alabama 1975, relating to  
5 provisional teaching certificates; to authorize the issuance  
6 of a professional educator certificate to qualified  
7 individuals who have held an alternative certificate for one  
8 year, instead of three years; and to authorize the issuance of  
9 a professional educator certificate to a qualified individual  
10 who completes an alternative teacher preparation program  
11 offered by an approved alternative teacher education  
12 preparation organization.

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

14 Section 1. Section 16-23-3, Code of Alabama 1975, as  
15 amended by Act 2021-111, 2021 Regular Session, is amended to  
16 read as follows:

17 "§16-23-3.

18 "(a) It is the intent of the Legislature that the  
19 State of Alabama shall modify its policies relative to the  
20 certification of teachers to permit an expanded alternative  
21 certification program for prospective teachers ~~for grades six~~  
22 ~~through 12~~. In addition to certificates issued pursuant to  
23 this chapter to individuals graduating from approved teacher  
24 education programs, the State Board of Education shall adopt  
25 policies, procedures, rules, regulations, or standards  
26 authorizing an alternative certificate to be issued by the  
27 State Superintendent of Education to an individual, regardless

1 of whether the individual is a graduate of an approved teacher  
2 education program, where the applicant shall:

3 "(1) Hold an earned bachelor's or higher degree from  
4 a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

5 "(2) Submit the required application forms and fees  
6 and, when required, a separate fingerprint fee, along with  
7 fingerprints and release forms.

8 "(3) Be recommended for certification by the  
9 employing Alabama local school superintendent or private  
10 school administrator.

11 "(4) Be assigned a mentor by the employing  
12 superintendent or private school administrator.

13 "(5) Meet the requirements of the Alabama  
14 ~~Prospective Teacher Testing~~ Educator Certification Assessment  
15 Program as set forth by the State Board of Education.

16 "(6) Verify compliance with one of the following  
17 admission criteria:

18 "a. That at least 30 semester hours credit, 18 of  
19 which shall be upper division level, have been earned in the  
20 field for which certification is sought.

21 "b. An earned bachelor's or higher degree from a  
22 regionally accredited institution of higher education with a  
23 non-education major in the academic area for which  
24 certification is sought.

25 "c. A passing score on the appropriate Praxis  
26 content test of the Alabama Prospective Teacher Testing  
27 Program.

1                   ~~"(7) Request that an official transcript be sent~~  
2 ~~directly to the employing superintendent or private school~~  
3 ~~administrator.~~

4                   "d. Any other admission criteria established by the  
5 State Board of Education.

6                   "(b) The State Board of Education shall further  
7 adopt policies, procedures, rules, regulations, or standards  
8 authorizing an alternative certificate to be issued by the  
9 State Superintendent of Education to an individual, regardless  
10 of whether the individual is a graduate of an approved teacher  
11 education program, where the applicant shall:

12                   "(1) Hold a master's or higher degree from a  
13 regionally accredited institution of higher education.

14                   "(2) Be a retiree in good standing, or honorably  
15 discharged former member of the Armed Forces of the United  
16 States, with at least 10 years of service.

17                   "(3) Otherwise satisfy all other requirements of  
18 subsection (a), as they relate to a master's or higher degree,  
19 except for the requirement that he or she verify a passing  
20 score on the appropriate Praxis content test of the Alabama  
21 Prospective Teacher Testing Program as provided in paragraph  
22 c. of subdivision (6) of subsection (a).

23                   "(c) Any alternative certificate shall be valid for  
24 the period of time as shall be set by policies, procedures,  
25 rules, regulations, or standards which shall be adopted by the  
26 State Board of Education but in no event shall the period

1 extend beyond four years from the July 1 beginning date of the  
2 initial alternative certificate.

3 "(d) Where an individual has received an alternative  
4 certificate or certificates and has been employed for ~~three~~  
5 ~~full years by no more than two county or city school boards or~~  
6 ~~private schools~~ one full year as an educator while holding one  
7 or more alternative certificates, the individual may be  
8 granted a teaching certificate issued by the State  
9 Superintendent of Education pursuant to Section 16-23-1, when:

10 "(1) Approved by the State Superintendent of  
11 Education.

12 "(2) Approved according to policies, procedures,  
13 rules, regulations, or standards which shall be adopted by the  
14 State Board of Education. The policies, procedures, rules,  
15 regulations, or standards shall require that the recipient of  
16 an alternative certificate successfully complete no more than  
17 the equivalent of 12 semester hours of college course work in  
18 education related courses, as may be determined by the State  
19 Board of Education based upon factors such as the recipient's  
20 individual educational background, prior to the issuance of a  
21 teaching certificate pursuant to Section 16-23-1.

22 "(e) Any individual granted a teaching certificate  
23 issued by the State Superintendent of Education pursuant to  
24 Section 16-23-1, following the receipt of an alternative  
25 certificate, as herein provided, may be eligible to attain  
26 continuing service status pursuant to Chapter 24C, the  
27 Students First Act of 2011. Time served as a teacher pursuant

1 to an alternative certificate shall be counted in determining  
2 continuing service status pursuant to Section 16-24C-4.

3 "(f) The State Superintendent of Education, in cases  
4 of emergency when certified teachers, including teachers who  
5 may have received alternative certificates pursuant to this  
6 section, are not available, may grant emergency certificates  
7 of the different kinds and grades, but any such emergency  
8 certificate shall not be valid for a period to exceed two  
9 years but shall expire at the end of the scholastic year for  
10 which it is issued. An emergency certificate may be extended  
11 or renewed one time as provided by policies, procedures,  
12 rules, regulations, or standards adopted by the State Board of  
13 Education, for a maximum validity of four years. Time served  
14 as a teacher pursuant to an emergency certificate shall not be  
15 counted in determining continuing service status pursuant to  
16 Section 16-24C-4.

17 ~~"(g) Any alternative certificate issued pursuant to  
18 this section shall be limited to individuals teaching grades  
19 six through 12; provided, however, that an alternative  
20 certificate may be issued for individuals teaching grades  
21 kindergarten through eight if limited to the subject areas of  
22 the fine arts or foreign languages, or both."~~

23 Section 2. Section 16-23-3.01 is added to the Code  
24 of Alabama 1975, to read as follows:

25 §16-23-3.01.

26 (a) The State of Alabama shall modify its policies  
27 relative to the certification of teachers to permit the

1 issuance of a professional educator certificate to those  
2 qualified individuals who successfully complete an approved  
3 alternative teacher education preparation organization. In  
4 addition to any provisional certificates and professional  
5 certificates issued pursuant to this chapter to individuals  
6 graduating from approved teacher education programs, the State  
7 Board of Education shall authorize the issuance of a  
8 professional educator certificate by the State Superintendent  
9 of Education to a qualified individual who completes an  
10 approved alternative teacher education preparation  
11 organization.

12 (b) The State Superintendent of Education shall  
13 maintain a database of alternative teacher education  
14 preparation organizations, approved by the State Board of  
15 Education, as a means for screening, recruiting, and  
16 recommending for certification qualified individuals to teach  
17 in the public K-12 schools. An approved alternative teacher  
18 education preparation organization, at a minimum, shall  
19 require each applicant whom the approved organization  
20 recommends for initial licensure to satisfy all of the  
21 following:

22 (1) Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited  
23 institution of higher education.

24 (2) Successfully pass a criminal history background  
25 information check.

26 (3) Successfully complete an alternative teacher  
27 preparation program offered by the approved organization.

1           (c) In determining which alternative teacher  
2 education preparation organizations to approve, the State  
3 Board of Education, may consider prerequisites including, but  
4 not limited to, the following:

5           (1) Successful operation in at least five states.

6           (2) Successful operation of an alternative teacher  
7 preparation program for at least 10 years.

8           (3) Requirement that an applicant pass a subject  
9 area examination or professional teaching examination, or  
10 both.

11           (d) An individual who is granted a professional  
12 educator certificate pursuant to this section may teach in the  
13 subject areas and at the educational levels he or she has  
14 successfully completed through the alternative teacher  
15 preparation program offered by the approved alternative  
16 teacher education preparation organization.

17           (e) An individual who holds a professional educator  
18 certificate pursuant to this section may apply for a  
19 professional renewal license and shall in all other respects  
20 be treated in the same manner as an individual who holds a  
21 professional educator certificate granted upon successful  
22 completion of traditional, in-state teaching certification  
23 programs.

24           Section 3. This act shall become effective on the  
25 first day of the third month following its passage and  
26 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.