STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 2676

By: Baker

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to teachers; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 3-129.11, which relates to the School District Empowerment Program; deleting statutory reference; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.3, which relates to definitions; modifying definitions for certain types of teachers; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Sections 6-101.10, 6-101.11, and 6-101.16, which relate to teacher evaluations; deleting requirement for annual review of certain written policy; removing requirement for a focused and individualized program of professional development; deleting references to policy and program; striking provision providing for release of certain data; striking statutory reference; removing individualized program of professional development requirement; permitting school districts to submit a request to use an alternative evaluation system; clarifying frequency of certain evaluations; allowing certain evaluation schedule to be designated by local policy; limiting collection of certain information only for federal reporting requirements; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Sections 6-101.23 and 6-101.24, which relate to the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990; deleting reference to certain evaluation provisions; removing statutory citation; amending 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.31, which relates to teacher evaluation ratings; deleting statutory reference; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.
BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 3-129.11, is amended to read as follows:

Section 3-129.11  A. There is hereby established the School District Empowerment Program which shall be administered by the State Board of Education. The purpose of the program is to empower locally elected school board members to govern school districts and make decisions based on the needs of their students and circumstances.

B. 1. Subject to the provisions of this section, a school district shall be allowed to submit a request to the State Board of Education for an exemption from all statutory requirements and State Board of Education rules from which charter schools are exempt, as provided for in the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act. Any request for exemption shall include a plan which outlines the goals sought to be achieved at a minimum, including the educational and fiscal benefits and the anticipated impacts or outcomes the plan will have in the district.

2. Within ninety (90) days after receiving the request and plan, the State Board shall approve or disapprove the request. If the State Board does not approve the request, it shall provide to the school district a written explanation of the basis for its decision. The school district may resubmit an amended request at
any time after the denial. The request shall be approved by the
State Board before implementation by the school district. An
approved request and plan shall be for no longer than three (3)
years. Prior to the beginning of the third year, the school
district may apply for renewal of the approved request and plan.
The school district shall be required to submit an annual report and
the State Board shall annually assess the academic achievement and
fiscal status of the school district.

C. Nothing in this section shall prevent a school district
board of education from choosing to follow any or all state laws,
rules or regulations from which a charter school is exempt. A
school district which has been granted approval by the State Board
for an exemption as set forth in subsection B of this section shall
have the option to adopt policies to implement any requirement for
the school district that is consistent with any statutory
requirement or mandate or State Board rule, but a participating
school district shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Students who reside in the school district shall be entitled
to attend school in the district as set forth in Section 1-114 of
this title;

2. School districts shall comply with the requirements of the
minimum salary schedule for teachers as set forth in Section 18-
114.12 18-114.14 of this title;
3. Employees of school districts shall continue to participate as members of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma as set forth in Section 17-101 et seq. of this title;

4. School districts shall comply with the requirement to provide a health insurance plan for school district employees as set forth in Section 5-117.5 of this title and to establish or make available to school district employees a cafeteria plan as set forth in Section 26-104 of this title;

5. School districts shall require any person employed by the school district to file with the district board a current Oklahoma criminal history record check from the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation as well as a national criminal history record check as defined in Section 150.9 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes. Each district shall adopt a policy regarding criminal history record checks as set forth in Section 5-142 of this title;

6. School districts shall comply with the requirements to evaluate teachers and to train personnel designated to conduct personnel evaluations as set forth in Sections 6-101.10 and Section 6-101.11 of this title, the dismissal and due process procedures for administrators as set forth in Sections 6-101.13 through 6-101.15 of this title and the due process procedures for teachers as set forth in Sections 6-101.21 through 6-101.26 of this title;
7. School districts shall comply with the requirement to make payroll deductions for either or both professional organization dues and political contributions upon the request of an employee as set forth in Section 5-139 of this title;

8. School districts shall comply with the dismissal and due process procedures for education support employees as set forth in Sections 6-101.40 through 6-101.47 of this title;

9. School districts shall employ as teachers, counselors, librarians, school nurses, superintendents, principals, supervisors or any other instructional, supervisory or administrative employee only those persons who are certified by the State Board of Education in accordance with the Oklahoma Teacher Preparation Act, except for persons exempt from the certification requirements as otherwise provided by law;

10. School districts shall provide for negotiations between school employees and school districts as set forth in Sections 509.1 through 509.11 of this title;

11. School districts shall be required to offer and students enrolled in the school district shall be required to complete the curriculum requirements as set forth in Section 11-103.6 of this title;

12. Students enrolled in the school district shall be required to demonstrate mastery of the state academic content standards set forth in Section 1210.523 of this title; and
13. Members of the school district board of education shall be required to satisfy the instruction and continuing education requirements as set forth in Sections 5-110, 5-110.1 and 5-110.2 of this title.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.3, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101.3 As used in Section 6-101 et seq. of this title:

1. "Administrator" means a duly certified person who devotes a majority of time to service as a superintendent, elementary superintendent, principal, supervisor, vice principal or in any other administrative or supervisory capacity in the school district;

2. "Dismissal" means the discontinuance of the teaching service of an administrator or teacher during the term of a written contract, as provided by law;

3. "Nonreemployment" means the nonrenewal of the contract of an administrator or teacher upon expiration of the contract;

4. "Career teacher" means a teacher who:

   a. is employed by a school district prior to the 2017-2018 school year and has completed three (3) or more consecutive complete school years as a teacher in one school district under a written continuing or temporary teaching contract, or

   b. is employed for the first time by a school district under a written continuing or temporary teaching contract.
contract during the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter:

(1) has completed three (3) consecutive complete school years as a teacher in one school district under a written continuing or temporary teaching contract and has achieved a district evaluation rating of "superior" as measured pursuant to the TLE as set forth in Section 6-101.16 of this title for at least two (2) of the three (3) school years,

(2) has completed four (4) consecutive complete school years as a teacher in one school district under a written continuing or temporary teaching contract, has averaged a district evaluation rating of at least "effective" as measured pursuant to the TLE for the four-year period, and has received district evaluation ratings of at least "effective" for the last two (2) years of the four-year period, or

(3) has completed four (4) or more consecutive complete school years in one school district under a written continuing or temporary teaching contract and has not met the requirements of subparagraph a or b of this paragraph, only if
the principal of the school at which the teacher
is employed submits a petition to the
superintendent of the school district requesting
that the teacher be granted career status, the
superintendent agrees with the petition, and the
school district board of education approves the
petition. The principal shall specify in the
petition the underlying facts supporting the
granting of career status to the teacher;

5. "Teacher hearing" means the hearing before a school district
board of education after a recommendation for dismissal or
nonreemployment of a teacher has been made but before any final
action is taken on the recommendation, held for the purpose of
affording the teacher all rights guaranteed by the United States
Constitution and the Constitution of Oklahoma under circumstances
and for enabling the board to determine whether to approve or
disapprove the recommendation;

6. "Probationary teacher" means a teacher who:
   a. is employed by a school district prior to the 2017-
      2018 school year and has completed fewer than three
      (3) consecutive complete school years as a teacher in
      one school district under a written teaching contract
b. is employed for the first time by a school district under a written teaching contract during the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter and has not met the requirements for career teacher as provided in paragraph 4 of this section;

7. "Suspension" or "suspended" means the temporary discontinuance of the services of an administrator or teacher, as provided by law;

8. "Teacher" means a person defined as a teacher has the same meaning as provided in Section 1-116 of this title; and

9. "District evaluation rating" means the rating issued based on the components of the **TLE Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System (TLE)** as set forth in subsection B of Section 6-101.16 of this title.

SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.10, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101.10 A. Each school district board of education shall maintain and annually review, following consultation with or involvement of representatives selected by local teachers, a written policy of evaluation and corresponding professional development for all teachers and administrators. In those school districts in which there exists a professional negotiations agreement made in accordance with Section 509.1 et seq. of this title, the procedure for evaluating members of the negotiations unit and any standards of
performance and conduct proposed for adoption beyond those established by the State Board of Education shall be negotiable items. Nothing in this section shall be construed to annul, modify or to preclude the renewal or continuing of any existing agreement heretofore entered into between any school district and any organizational representative of its employees. Every policy of evaluation adopted by a board of education shall:

1. Be based upon a set of minimum criteria developed by the State Board of Education, which shall be revised and based upon the Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System (TLE) developed by the State Board of Education as provided in Section 6-101.16 of this title. The revisions to each policy of evaluation shall be phased in according to the following schedule:

a. for the 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, the evaluation rating of teachers and administrators shall be based on the qualitative component of the TLE. For the 2016-2017 school year, the State Department of Education shall work with school districts to develop individualized programs of professional development as described in subsection B of this section. However, nothing in this subparagraph shall preclude a school district with an average daily attendance of more than thirty-five thousand (35,000) from continuing to use quantitative
components which the district has incorporated at its own expense prior to the 2015-2016 school year into its evaluation system of teachers and administrators, as defined by the district's written policy.

b. for evaluations of teachers and administrators conducted during the 2017-2018 school year, and each school year thereafter, school districts shall incorporate and put into operation the qualitative component of the TLE as provided for in subsection B of Section 6-101.16 of this title into the evaluations used in all school sites within the district. For the 2017-2018 school year, and each school year thereafter, teachers and administrators shall receive a district evaluation rating based on the components of the TLE as set forth in subsection B of Section 6-101.16 of this title. For the 2017-2018 school year, school districts shall incorporate the individualized programs of professional development as described in subsection B of this section on a pilot program basis, and

e. for evaluations of teachers and administrators conducted during the 2018-2019 school year, and each school year thereafter, school districts shall fully incorporate and put into operation the individualized
programs of professional development as described in subsection B of this section;

2. Be prescribed in writing at the time of adoption and at all times when amendments to the policy are adopted. The original policy and all amendments to the policy shall be promptly made available to all persons subject to the policy;

3. Provide that all evaluations be made in writing and that evaluation documents and responses thereto be maintained in a personnel file for each evaluated person;

4. Provide that every probationary teacher receive formative feedback from the evaluation process at least two times per school year, once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester;

5. Provide that every teacher be evaluated once every year, except for career teachers receiving a district evaluation rating of "superior" or "highly effective" under the TLE who may be evaluated once every three (3) years; and

6. Provide that, except for superintendents of independent and elementary school districts and superintendents of area school districts who shall be evaluated by the school district board of education, all certified personnel shall be evaluated by a principal, assistant principal, designee of the principal, supervisor, content expert, department chair, peer committee or
other trained persons or groups of persons designated by the school district board of education.

B. 1. Every policy of professional development adopted by a school district board of education shall provide for the development of a focused and individualized program of professional development for the teacher or administrator that is consistent with the qualitative component of the TLE. The policy of professional development shall:

   a. establish an annual professional growth goal for the teacher or administrator that is developed by the teacher or administrator in collaboration with the evaluator,

   b. be tailored to address a specific area or criteria identified through the qualitative component of the TLE,

   c. allow the teacher or administrator to actively engage with learning practices that are evidence-based, researched practices that are correlated with increased student achievement, and

   d. be supported by resources that are easily available and supplied by the school district and the State Department of Education.

2. School districts shall monitor compliance with each individualized program of professional development implemented
pursuant to this subsection. All professional development completed pursuant to an individualized program of professional development shall count toward the total number of points a teacher or administrator is required to complete as established by a school district board of education pursuant to Section 6-194 of this title. The implementation of the individualized program of professional development required by this subsection shall not be construed as increasing the professional development points requirements.

3. Individualized programs of professional development required by this subsection may include but are not limited to the following learning practices:
   a. presenter-led workshops,
   b. individual or faculty studies of books, scholarly articles and video productions,
   c. peer observations,
   d. committee studies to address student achievement issues,
   e. work related to a specific subject area or areas associated with obtaining an advanced degree or professional certification,
   f. action research projects designed to improve student achievement, and
participation in local, regional or state initiatives
associated with the development or implementation of
curriculum standards.

C. All individuals designated by the school district board of
education to conduct the personnel evaluations shall be required to
participate in training conducted by the State Department of
Education or training provided by the school district using
guidelines and materials developed by the State Department of
Education prior to conducting evaluations.

D. The State Department of Education shall develop and
conduct workshops pursuant to statewide criteria which train
individuals in conducting evaluations.

E. The State Board of Education shall monitor compliance with
the provisions of this section by school districts.

F. The State Board of Education shall study continued
implementation of the TLE to produce a system that promotes
reflection and professional growth for teachers and leaders.

G. Refusal by a school district to comply with the provisions
of this section shall be grounds for withholding State Aid funds
until compliance occurs.

H. Data collected pursuant to this section shall not be subject
to the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act or the Oklahoma Open Records Act.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.11, is
amended to read as follows:
Section 6-101.11 Whenever any evaluation is made of a teacher or administrator, a true copy of the evaluation shall be presented to the person evaluated, who shall acknowledge the written evaluation by signing the original. Within two (2) weeks after the evaluation, the person evaluated may respond and said response shall be made part of the record. Except by order of a court of competent jurisdiction, evaluation documents and the responses thereto shall be available only to the evaluated person, the board of education, the administrative staff making the evaluation, the board and administrative staff of any school to which such evaluated person applies for employment and such other persons as are specified by the teacher in writing and shall be subject to disclosure at any hearing involving a teacher or administrator's dismissal or nonrenewal from employment. Data collected pursuant to Section 6-101.10 shall be available to authorized representatives of the State Department of Education and its contracting designees who must be contractually bound to the Department to maintain confidentiality of all information received from the Department when such evaluation data is used by the Department for data collection/analysis purposes under the Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System, and such other persons as are specified by the teacher in writing and shall be subject to disclosure at any hearing involving a teacher or administrator's dismissal or nonrenewal from employment.
SECTION 5. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.16, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101.16  A. By December 15, 2011, the State Board of Education shall adopt a new statewide system of evaluation to be known as the Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System (TLE). The Board shall work cooperatively with school districts to incorporate the components of the TLE in all school districts by the 2017-2018 school year as provided for in Section 6-101.10 of this title.

B. The TLE shall include the following components:

1. Annual evaluations that provide feedback to improve student learning and outcomes, except as provided for in subsection C of this section;

2. A five-tier district evaluation rating system as follows:
   a. superior,
   b. highly effective,
   c. effective,
   d. needs improvement, and
   e. ineffective;

3. An evidence-based qualitative assessment tool for the teacher qualitative portion of the TLE that will include observable and measurable characteristics of personnel and classroom practices that are correlated to student performance success, including, but not limited to:
a. organizational and classroom management skills,
b. ability to provide effective instruction,
c. focus on continuous improvement and professional growth,
d. interpersonal skills, and
e. leadership skills;

4. An evidence-based qualitative assessment tool for the leader qualitative portion of the TLE that will include observable and measurable characteristics of personnel and site management practices that are correlated to student performance success, including, but not limited to:
   a. organizational and school management, including retention and development of effective teachers and dismissal of ineffective teachers,
   b. instructional leadership,
   c. professional growth and responsibility,
   d. interpersonal skills,
   e. leadership skills, and
   f. stakeholder perceptions;

5. An individualized program of professional development for all teachers and administrators as adopted by the school district board of education as set forth in subsection B of Section 6-101.10 of this title.
6. For districts choosing to use, at their own expense, quantitative measures of teachers and leaders as part of the district evaluation rating, such measures shall include a minimum of one reliable, research-based measure as approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection 2 of this section; and

7. For all district evaluations, student performance, including performance on the statewide criterion-referenced tests if available, shall be discussed with the teacher and may be one of the considerations for the teacher's district evaluation rating.

C. Career School districts may submit a request to the State Board of Education to use an alternate evaluation system other than the system selected by the Board pursuant to subsection A of this section if the school district establishes the capacity to implement a research-based performance review evaluation system which meets the criteria of the TLE system.

D. All school district certified personnel shall be evaluated annually, except career teachers receiving a district evaluation rating of "superior" or "highly effective" under the TLE, who may be evaluated once every three (3) years as designated by local board of education policy.

D. By December 1, 2015, the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Commission shall recommend to the State Board of Education multiple reliable, research-based measures to provide a quantitative evaluation component for teachers. The State Board of Education
shall approve and publish a list of approved measures by February 1, 2016.

E. F. A school district with an average daily attendance of more than thirty-five thousand (35,000) which has incorporated quantitative components of the TLE into its evaluation system of teachers and administrators prior to the 2015-2016 school year may continue using its evaluation system, as defined by the school district's written policies, notwithstanding the provisions of this section and regardless of the State Board of Education's adoption of quantitative components pursuant to this section.

E. G. The State Department of Education shall provide to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Oklahoma Commission for Educational Quality and Accountability timely electronic data linked to teachers and leaders derived from the TLE for purposes of providing a basis for the development of accountability and quality improvements of the teacher preparation system. The data shall be provided in a manner and at such times as agreed upon between the Department, the State Regents and the Commission.

E. H. For purposes of this section, "leader" means a principal, assistant principal or any other school administrator who is responsible for supervising classroom teachers.

E. I. The State Department of Education may collect school district evaluation information only as is required for federal
reporting. The Department shall keep all data collected pursuant to the TLE and records of annual evaluations received pursuant to this section confidential. Records created pursuant to this section which identify, in any way, a current or former public employee shall not be subject to disclosure under the Oklahoma Open Records Act. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit disclosure otherwise required by this section; provided, however, any provisions requiring disclosure of TLE records shall be construed narrowly and all individually identifying information shall be removed from such records to the fullest extent possible.

SECTION 6. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.23, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101.23 A. The dismissal, suspension and nonreemployment provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990 shall not apply to:

1. Substitute teachers;
2. Adult education teachers; and
3. Teachers who are employed on temporary contracts.

B. The dismissal and suspension provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990 shall apply to teachers who are employed on temporary contracts for a complete school year and to teachers who are employed in positions fully funded by federal or private categorical grants, except that such teachers shall be employed only for the duration of the temporary contract or the grant.
C. The evaluation provisions in Sections 6-101.10 and 6-101.11 of this title and in the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990 shall apply to teachers who are employed on temporary contracts for a complete school year and to teachers who are employed in positions fully funded by federal or private categorical grants, except that such teachers shall be employed only for the duration of the temporary contract or the grant.

D. Teachers other than those specifically excepted in subsection A of this section who are employed on contracts shall be afforded all substantive and procedural rights set forth in the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990 including the dismissal, suspension, and nonreemployment provisions applicable to probationary or career teachers as defined in Section 6-101.3 of this title.

E. On and after the effective date of this act July 1, 2000, any teacher who has worked a complete school year under a temporary contract in a school district shall be granted a year of service credit toward career status in that district.

F. No teacher shall be hired on a temporary contract by a school district for more than four semesters or on multiple temporary contracts by a school district that together are for more than four semesters, except for a:

1. Teacher hired to replace a teacher who is on an approved leave of absence and who is expected to return to employment with the school district; or
2. Teacher who is a retired member of the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma.

G. F. No teacher shall be offered a temporary contract with a school district without a full written disclosure at the time a position is offered by the administration of the school district which sets forth the terms and conditions of the temporary contract. In the event the school district fails to provide such written disclosure, the teacher shall be considered as employed on a continuing contract basis.

H. G. On and after the effective date of this act July 1, 2000, no teacher who is employed on a continuing contract basis by a school district shall be reemployed on a temporary contract in that school district.

SECTION 7. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.24, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101.24  A. Upon full implementation of the Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System (TLE) as set forth in Section 6-101.10 of this title, when a teacher receives a rating as measured pursuant to the TLE as set forth in Section 6-101.16 of this title that may lead to a recommendation for the dismissal or nonreemployment of the teacher or when an administrator identifies poor performance or conduct that the administrator believes may lead to a recommendation for the dismissal or nonreemployment of the teacher, the administrator shall:
1. Admonish the teacher, in writing, and make a reasonable effort to assist the teacher in correcting the poor performance or conduct; and

2. Establish a reasonable time for improvement, not to exceed two (2) months, taking into consideration the rating on the evaluation or the nature and gravity of the performance or conduct.

B. If the teacher does not correct the poor performance or conduct cited in the admonition within the time specified, the administrator shall make a recommendation to the superintendent of the school district for the dismissal or nonreemployment of the teacher.

C. Whenever a member of the board of education, superintendent, or other administrator identifies poor performance or conduct that may lead to a recommendation for dismissal or nonreemployment of a teacher within the district, the administrator who has responsibility for evaluation of the teacher shall be informed, and that administrator shall comply with the procedures set forth in this section. If the administrator fails or refuses to admonish the teacher within ten (10) days after being so informed by the board, superintendent, or other administrator, such board, superintendent or other administrator shall admonish the teacher pursuant to the provisions of this section.

D. Repeated negligence in performance of duty, willful neglect of duty, incompetency, instructional ineffectiveness or
unsatisfactory teaching performance, for a career teacher, or any cause related to inadequate teaching performance for a probationary teacher, shall not be a basis for a recommendation to dismiss or not reemploy a teacher unless and until the provisions of this section have been complied with.

SECTION 8. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2021, Section 6-101.31, is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-101.31 Upon full implementation of the Oklahoma Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System (TLE) as set forth in Section 6-101.10 of this title, the primary basis used in determining the retention or reassignment of affected teachers and administrators when a school district implements a reduction-in-force plan shall be the ratings of the teachers and administrators as measured pursuant to the TLE as set forth in Section 6-101.16 of this title.

SECTION 9. This act shall become effective July 1, 2023.

SECTION 10. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.