



TSPC SB 216 (2019) Presentation

Chair Wagner, Vice Chair Thomsen, members of the Senate Committee on Education, thank you for hearing our testimony today. My name is Anthony Rosilez; I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC). Presenting with me is Elizabeth Keller, Director of Licensure for TSPC. We are here to testify on SB 216.

What the 90 day provision is;

Senate Bill 205 (2017) added a provision to ORS 342.125 to allow an educator to begin work prior to holding the appropriate license:

342.125. (1)(a) Teaching licenses shall be issue and renewed by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission by the authority of the State of Oregon, subject to ORS 342.120 to 342.430 and the rules of the commission.

(b) Notwithstanding any requirements prescribed for issuance of a teaching license, a person whose application for a teaching license is pending may teach in the public schools of this state for 90 calendar days after the date of submission of the application if:

(A) The person is not ineligible for a teaching license following background checks conducted by the commission, including a criminal records check as provided in ORS 181A.195 and a background check through an interstate clearinghouse of revoked and suspended licenses;

(B) The school district has completed the review of the employment history of the person as required by ORS 339.374; and

(C) The person and the school district have complied with any other requirements established by the commission by rule.

The history of the 90-day provision;

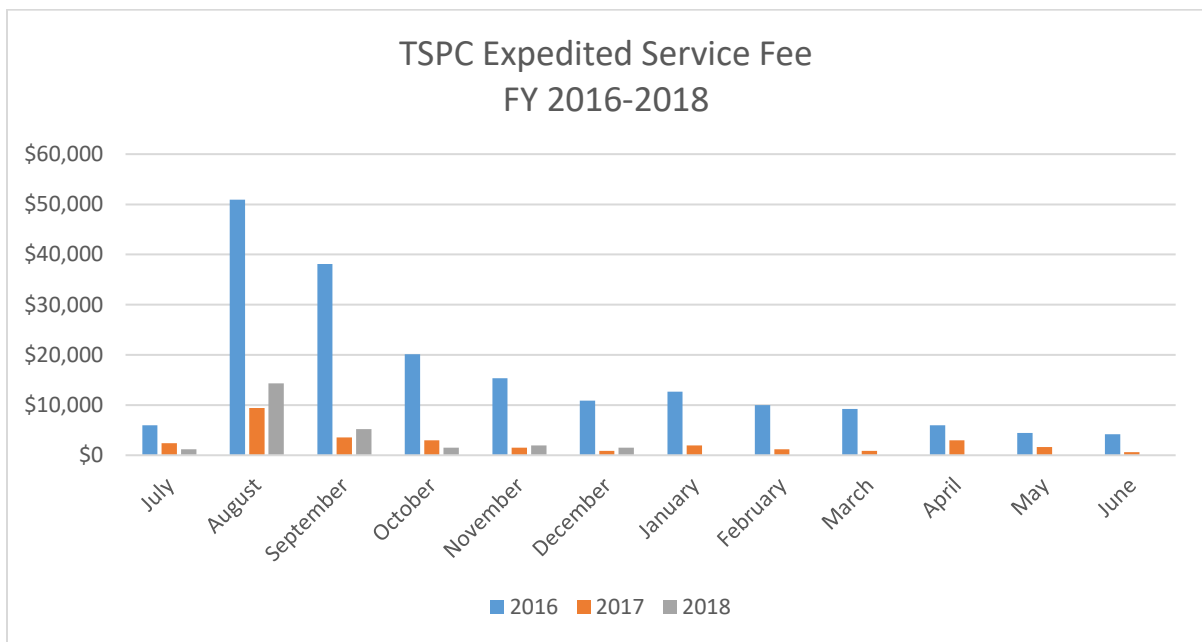
Prior to the passage of SB 205 (2017), teachers could not begin work in public schools without the license. Many factors made compliance with this requirement difficult for the teachers and their districts, including, late hires, lack of teachers' attention to submitting documents to TSPC, and TSPC processing time and backlog. These scenarios sometimes forced districts to hire a licensed Substitute to "cover" the classroom and allow the new hire to begin their assignment, creating a cost to districts and hardship in finding licensed Substitutes to cover these classrooms.

SB 1520 (2018) expanded the option from only "teachers" to "educators", allowing school administrators and personnel services staff (school counselors, school psychologists and school

social workers) to also begin their assignments prior to holding the license. This bill also renumbered the ORS section to set this provision apart.

How it is working now – is it a popular provision, are many districts using it, etc.:

When the new provision became effective in June of 2017, some districts were reluctant to allow an unlicensed educator to begin work. Districts gained confidence in the idea during the summer of 2018. TSPC staff fielded fewer frantic inquiries from those desperate to hold the license prior to the beginning of the school year. The agency also experienced a significant decrease in revenue received from those requesting expedited service, due in part to SB 205, but also to the agency’s significant gains in application turnaround time:



Note: Data from January through June of 2019 is not yet available.

Improvements in application processing times can be attributed to:

- Licensure Redesign (simplification of license types and endorsements)
- Improvements in the agency’s use of technology (implementation and leveraging of online application services); and
- Staffing appropriate to the volume of work.

Month/Year	Weeks from application date to “first look”
December 2018	4
October 2018	8
June 2018	7
March 2018	4
January 2018	7
November 2017	9

June 2017	5
April 2017	6
January 2017	10
November 2016	18
June 2016	12
April 2016	21
January 2016	18

Agency staff has not identified which districts are utilizing this provision, but from the drop in expedited requests and conversations with districts, most do allow educators to begin their assignment prior to licensure. TSPC does not have a mechanism to track when an applicant is employed and working, but staff has seen a few instances where an educator continued in the assignment after the 90 days had expired. Once discovered, districts have been diligent in assisting the educator to complete the licensure process, and the agency has not taken any punitive action against the educator or the hiring administrator in these instances.

The problem that SB 216 is proposing to solve.

As districts gained confidence with the provisions of SB 205 (2017) and began allowing educators to begin their assignments, staff uncovered some instances of an educator submitting and application a second and third time to receive an additional 90 days in their assignment. SB 2016 proposes allowing an educator to be employed in the same assignment for only one 90-day period within 12 months.