

DRAFT

SUMMARY

Digest: The Act would change the law in several ways to support substitute teachers in this state. (Flesch Readability Score: 74.2).

Directs the Department of Education to enter into a contract with a third party to develop and offer online professional development opportunities for substitute teachers in this state.

Directs the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission to establish by rule a substitute teaching license and a restricted substitute teaching license. Requires the commission to establish by rule an expedited process for persons with a restricted substitute teaching license to obtain a substitute teaching license.

Provides that certain substitute teachers are eligible to enroll in a health benefit plan offered by the Oregon Educators Benefit Board. Requires the substitute teacher to pay 10 percent of the premiums for the plan. Requires the substitute teacher's chosen home district to administer the plan for the substitute teacher and pay the remaining premiums, subject to reimbursement by the board.

Requires a district to maintain legacy health care benefits for substitute teachers who are not eligible to enroll in a health benefit plan offered by the board.

Establishes the Office of Substitute Teachers in the Department of Education to develop, communicate and coordinate best practices and supports for substitute teachers.

Declares an emergency, effective July 1, 2025.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to substitute teachers; creating new provisions; amending ORS 342.125; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

1 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Department of Education shall enter into a
2 contract with a training provider experienced in online educator
3 training to develop and offer annually online professional development
4 modules for all substitute teachers in Oregon. The modules must ad-
5 dress but need not be limited to:

- 6 (a) Technology and educational tools.
- 7 (b) Classroom and behavior management.
- 8 (c) Special education.
- 9 (d) Equity, diversity and inclusion.
- 10 (e) Trauma-informed practices.

11 (2) The modules must be designed to provide tailored professional
12 development for substitute teachers in Oregon with different levels of
13 experience, including but not limited to:

- 14 (a) Zero to three years of classroom experience.
- 15 (b) Four to eight years of classroom experience.
- 16 (c) Nine or more years of classroom experience.

17 (3) The department shall reimburse substitute teachers for the cost
18 of participating in any professional development module offered under
19 this section.

20 **SECTION 2.** (1) The Department of Education shall submit a report
21 on the successes and challenges of implementing section 1 of this 2025
22 Act in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and may include recom-
23 mendations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legisla-
24 tive Assembly related to education no later than September 15, 2026.

25 (2) The report must address but need not be limited to:

- 26 (a) The number of substitute teachers who have completed a pro-
27 fessional development module offered under section 1 of this 2025 Act.
- 28 (b) A quality assessment of the modules by substitute teachers who
29 have completed the modules.

1 **SECTION 3.** ORS 342.125 is amended to read:

2 342.125. (1) Teaching licenses shall be issued and renewed by the Teacher
3 Standards and Practices Commission by the authority of the State of Oregon,
4 subject to ORS 342.120 to 342.430 and the rules of the commission.

5 (2) Notwithstanding any requirements prescribed for issuance of a license,
6 a person whose application for a license is pending may be employed in the
7 public schools of this state for 90 calendar days after the date of submission
8 of the application if:

9 (a) The person is not ineligible for a license following background checks
10 conducted by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, including a
11 criminal records check as provided in ORS 181A.195 and a background check
12 through an interstate clearinghouse of revoked and suspended licenses;

13 (b) The school district has completed the review of the employment his-
14 tory of the person as required by ORS 339.374;

15 (c) The person had not been employed as provided by this subsection
16 during the previous 12 months with a pending application for the same li-
17 cense; and

18 (d) The person and the school district have complied with any other re-
19 quirements established by the commission by rule.

20 (3) Subject to ORS 342.130 and to subsection (4) of this section, licenses
21 shall be of the following types:

22 (a) Preliminary teaching license.

23 (b) Professional teaching license.

24 (c) Distinguished teacher leader license.

25 (d) Preliminary personnel service license.

26 (e) Professional personnel service license.

27 (f) Preliminary administrative license.

28 (g) Professional administrative license.

29 (h) Reciprocal license.

30 (i) Legacy license.

31 (4)(a) The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission may establish

1 other types of teaching licenses as the commission considers necessary for
2 operation of the public schools of the state and may prescribe the qualifica-
3 tions for the licenses. However, no license established under the authority
4 of this subsection is required for a regular classroom teaching position in the
5 public schools.

6 **(b) The commission shall by rule establish a substitute teaching li-**
7 **cence and a restricted substitute teaching license. The rules must**
8 **provide:**

9 **(A) Eligibility criteria, application procedures and other require-**
10 **ments for issuance of a substitute teaching license or a restricted**
11 **substitute teaching license.**

12 **(B) An expedited process for persons with a restricted substitute**
13 **teaching license to obtain a substitute teaching license, based upon**
14 **training, mentorship, classroom experience or other work experience.**

15 (5) Notwithstanding ORS 342.127, any person who has held a teaching li-
16 cense identified in subsection (3) of this section or established as provided
17 by subsection (4)(a) of this section may, within three years of retirement and
18 without payment of any fees or any other additional requirements, convert
19 the teaching license into a substitute teaching license.

20 (6)(a) The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission shall establish a
21 public charter school teacher and administrator registry. The commission
22 shall require the applicant and the public charter school to jointly submit
23 an application requesting registration as a public charter school teacher or
24 administrator. The application shall include:

25 (A) A description of the specific teaching or administrator position the
26 applicant will fill;

27 (B) A description of the background of the applicant that is relevant to
28 the teaching or administrator position, including any post-secondary educa-
29 tion or other experience; and

30 (C) Documentation as required by the commission for the purposes of
31 conducting a criminal records check as provided in ORS 181A.195 and a

1 background check through an interstate clearinghouse of revoked and sus-
2 pended licenses.

3 (b) Subject to the results of the criminal records check and background
4 check and to information received under ORS 342.143 (2), the commission
5 shall approve the application for registration. The commission may deny a
6 request for registration only on the basis of the criminal records check, the
7 background check through an interstate clearinghouse of revoked and sus-
8 pended licenses or the information received under ORS 342.143 (2). The reg-
9 istration is valid for a term established by the commission and, subject to
10 information received under ORS 342.143 (2), may be renewed upon joint ap-
11 plication from the teacher or administrator and the public charter school.

12 (c) A registration as a public charter school teacher qualifies its holder
13 to accept the teaching position described in the application in the public
14 charter school that submitted the application with the holder of the regis-
15 tration.

16 (d) A registration as a public charter school administrator qualifies its
17 holder to accept the administrator position described in the application in
18 the public charter school that submitted the application with the holder of
19 the registration.

20 (7)(a) The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission shall adopt an
21 expedited process for the issuance of any license established pursuant to this
22 section. The expedited process **adopted under this subsection** may require
23 the following:

24 (A) The showing of an urgent situation; and

25 (B) The joint request for the expedited process from the applicant for the
26 license and:

27 (i) The school district superintendent or school district board;

28 (ii) The public charter school governing body; or

29 (iii) The education service district superintendent or board of directors
30 of the education service district.

31 (b) Except as provided by paragraph (c) of this subsection, the commission

1 shall issue a license as provided by this subsection within two working days
2 after receiving a completed application.

3 (c) The commission may limit the number of applications the commission
4 will accept under this subsection from a school district or an education ser-
5 vice district to not more than 100 applications in a period of two working
6 days.

7 (d) For purposes of this subsection, the commission may not distinguish
8 between a school district or an education service district involved in a labor
9 dispute and any other school district or education service district.

10 **SECTION 4. The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, in**
11 **consultation with the Oregon Substitute Teachers Association, shall**
12 **submit a report on the implementation of the amendments to ORS**
13 **342.125 by section 3 of this 2025 Act in the manner provided by ORS**
14 **192.245, and may include recommendations for legislation, to the in-**
15 **terim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to education no**
16 **later than December 15, 2025.**

17

18 **HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

19

20 **SECTION 5. Sections 6 to 8 of this 2025 Act are added to and made**
21 **a part of ORS 243.860 to 243.886.**

22 **SECTION 6. (1)(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this sub-**
23 **section, a substitute teacher employed by a common school district,**
24 **union high school district or education service district is eligible to**
25 **enroll in a health benefit plan offered by the Oregon Educators Benefit**
26 **Board if the substitute teacher worked at least half-time at either a**
27 **single common school district, union high school district or education**
28 **service district, or in aggregate at multiple common school districts,**
29 **union high school districts and education service districts during the**
30 **previous school year.**

31 (b) The total cost of providing any health benefit plan offered by a

1 **district to a substitute teacher under this section may not increase**
2 **annually by more than the annual increase in premium amounts paid**
3 **for contracted health benefit plans that is permitted under ORS 243.866**
4 **(9)(b).**

5 **(2)(a) In order to enroll in a health benefit plan under this section,**
6 **a substitute teacher must select a home district for the duration of the**
7 **benefit year under a process established by each district. A home dis-**
8 **trict selected under this subsection:**

9 **(A) Must be one at which the substitute teacher worked as a sub-**
10 **stitute teacher at:**

11 **(i) The time of the application; or**

12 **(ii) Any time during the previous benefit year, if the substitute**
13 **teacher is not currently working at a district but otherwise is eligible**
14 **under this section; and**

15 **(B) Is responsible for:**

16 **(i) Determining whether the substitute teacher is eligible to enroll**
17 **in a health benefit plan under this section;**

18 **(ii) Determining, on an annual basis, whether a substitute teacher**
19 **who was found to be eligible to enroll in a health benefit plan under**
20 **sub-subparagraph (i) of this subparagraph continues to be eligible to**
21 **enroll in a health benefit plan under this section;**

22 **(iii) Collecting the premiums for health benefit plans that must be**
23 **paid by the substitute teacher under subsection (3) of this section;**

24 **(iv) Paying the full cost of the insurance premiums for providing**
25 **health benefit plans to the substitute teacher, subject to reimburse-**
26 **ment as described in subsection (4) of this section; and**

27 **(v) Administering and providing health benefit plans to the substi-**
28 **tute teacher in the manner described in this section.**

29 **(b) In order to enroll in a health benefit plan under this section, a**
30 **substitute teacher must provide the home district with all information**
31 **necessary for the district to determine the eligibility of the substitute**

1 **teacher to enroll in the health benefit plan under this section.**

2 **(c) No later than 30 days before the deadline to submit an applica-**
3 **tion to enroll in a health benefit plan under this section, each district**
4 **must notify all substitute teachers who have worked for the district**
5 **during the current academic year and the previous academic year of:**

6 **(A) The eligibility requirements to enroll in a health benefit plan**
7 **under this section;**

8 **(B) The health care benefits and associated costs available to eligi-**
9 **ble substitute teachers; and**

10 **(C) Instructions on how substitute teachers may apply to enroll in**
11 **a health benefit plan under this section.**

12 **(3)(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection, a**
13 **substitute teacher shall pay 10 percent of all insurance premiums for**
14 **health benefit plans.**

15 **(b) A district may provide by collective bargaining to pay for some**
16 **or all of the insurance premiums that must otherwise be paid by a**
17 **substitute teacher under paragraph (a) of this subsection. The district**
18 **may not be reimbursed under subsection (4) of this section for the**
19 **costs the district incurs to provide health benefit plans under this**
20 **paragraph.**

21 **(4)(a) Every three months a district may request reimbursement**
22 **from the board for the cost of paying insurance premiums for provid-**
23 **ing health benefit plans to each substitute teacher who has selected**
24 **the district as the substitute teacher's home district under subsection**
25 **(2) of this section.**

26 **(b) The board shall use moneys from the Substitute Teacher In-**
27 **surance Fund established under section 8 of this 2025 Act to fully re-**
28 **imburse each district for all documented costs requested by the**
29 **district under this subsection, except for any costs described in sub-**
30 **section (3) of this section.**

31 **(5) Unless otherwise provided for by collective bargaining, a substi-**

1 **tute teacher who is eligible to enroll in a health benefit plan under**
2 **subsection (1) of this section may receive health care benefits only in**
3 **the manner provided by this section.**

4 **(6) The board may adopt rules necessary to implement this section,**
5 **including but not limited to rules for:**

6 **(a) Determining a substitute teacher's eligibility to enroll in a**
7 **health benefit plan under this section;**

8 **(b) The aggregation of hours worked at multiple districts; and**

9 **(c) The payment of premiums when a substitute teacher works at**
10 **multiple districts.**

11 **SECTION 7. A common school district, union high school district**
12 **or education service district that, on the effective date of this 2025 Act,**
13 **provided health care benefits to substitute teachers who are not eligi-**
14 **ble for health care benefits under section 6 of this 2025 Act:**

15 **(1) May not increase the eligibility requirements that must be met**
16 **by a substitute teacher who is not eligible for health care benefits**
17 **under section 6 of this 2025 Act in order for the substitute teacher to**
18 **qualify for health care benefits from the district; and**

19 **(2) Must continue to provide comparable health care benefits to**
20 **substitute teachers who are not eligible for health care benefits under**
21 **section 6 of this 2025 Act.**

22 **SECTION 8. The Substitute Teacher Insurance Fund is established**
23 **in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund.**
24 **Interest earned by the Substitute Teacher Insurance Fund must be**
25 **credited to the fund. The fund consists of moneys appropriated, allo-**
26 **cated, deposited or transferred to the fund by the Legislative Assembly**
27 **or otherwise and interest earned on moneys in the fund. The moneys**
28 **in the fund are continuously appropriated to the Oregon Educators**
29 **Benefit Board for the purpose of reimbursing districts for the cost of**
30 **paying premiums for health benefit plans for substitute teachers under**
31 **section 6 of this 2025 Act.**

1 **SECTION 9.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropri-
2 ation, there is appropriated to the Oregon Educators Benefit Board,
3 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, out of the General Fund, the
4 amount of \$_____, for deposit in the Substitute Teacher Insurance
5 Fund established under section 8 of this 2025 Act, for the purposes
6 specified in section 6 of this 2025 Act.

7 **SECTION 10.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section,
8 section 6 of this 2025 Act applies to health benefit plans offered to
9 substitute teachers on or after October 1, 2025.

10 (2) To the extent that a conflict exists, the terms of collective bar-
11 gaining agreements and other contracts entered into before the effec-
12 tive date of this 2025 Act shall prevail over section 6 of this 2025 Act.

13
14 **OFFICE OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

15
16 **SECTION 11.** (1) The Office of Substitute Teachers is established in
17 the Department of Education.

18 (2) The office shall:

19 (a) Develop, communicate and coordinate best practices for the
20 recruitment, licensure, professional development and retention of
21 substitute teachers.

22 (b) Provide resources and support to school districts for the
23 recruitment, retention and engagement of substitute teachers.

24
25 **REPEALS**

26
27 **SECTION 12.** (1) Section 2 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January
28 2, 2027.

29 (2) Section 4 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2, 2026.

30
31 **CAPTIONS**

1 **SECTION 13.** The unit captions used in this 2025 Act are provided
2 only for the convenience of the reader and do not become part of the
3 statutory law of this state or express any legislative intent in the
4 enactment of this 2025 Act.

5

6

EFFECTIVE DATE

7

8 **SECTION 14.** This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate
9 preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is
10 declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect on July 1, 2025.

11
