**South Carolina General Assembly**

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**S. 79**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senator Hembree

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Currently residing in the Senate Committee on **Education**

Summary: Noncertified Teacher Pilot Program

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 12/11/2024 Senate Prefiled

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/11/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/79_20241211.docx)

A bill

TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59‑18‑1115 SO AS TO ESTABLISH A PILOT PROGRAM TO PERMIT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO HIRE NONCERTIFIED TEACHERS IN A RATIO UP TO TEN PERCENT OF ITS ENTIRE TEACHING STAFF, TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC, EVALUATION, AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS, TO FURTHER THE PROGRAM FOR ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORTING, AND TO PROVIDE NONCERTIFIED TEACHER REGISTRATION AND CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 18, Title 59 of the S.C. Code is amended by adding:

 Section 59‑18‑1115. (A) The Department of Education is directed to establish a pilot program by May 1, 2025, that will permit a school that has received an overall rating of “Excellent”, “Below Average”, or “Unsatisfactory” on its annual report card for at least two consecutive years, or is located in a critical geographic area as defined in Section 59‑26‑20(j), to hire noncertified teachers in a ratio of up to ten percent of its entire teaching staff. The State Board of Education, through the Department of Education, shall approve guidelines that at a minimum include the following:

 (1) the requirement that a noncertified teacher must possess a suitable baccalaureate or graduate degree for the position he is hired to teach and must have at least five years of relevant workplace experience;

 (2) procedures for requiring noncertified teachers to participate in the evaluation process pursuant to Section 59‑26‑30(B)(4) and (5);

 (3) initial and ongoing training and support requirements; and

 (4) the requirement that a noncertified teacher must demonstrate enrollment in an educator certification program within three years of employment, including any state‑approved alternative or traditional route program.

 (B) Participation in the pilot program is optional, and the decision to participate rests solely with the Department of Education and the school principal, upon approval of the district superintendent. Participating schools and districts are encouraged to collaborate on recruitment, training, and implementation of the pilot program and to assist the Department of Education with establishing best practices.

 (C) The Department of Education shall establish a separate code in the professional coding system to capture noncertified teachers and shall continue to report this information on school report cards.

 (D) Beginning November 1, 2026, the Department of Education shall submit an annual report that includes recommendations for improving, expanding, or continuing the pilot program to the General Assembly. At the end of the five‑year pilot program, the annual status report shall include a recommendation regarding continuance of the program.

 (E)(1) The Department of Education shall establish procedures for the registration and clearance of all noncertified teachers working in any public school pursuant to this section. Teachers shall submit the required documentation and fees to the Department of Education, which shall include, but are not limited to:

 (a) a completed registration form;

 (b) any associated fee;

 (c) transcripts, which shall be subject to review; and

 (d) FBI, South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification Clearinghouse checks.

 (2) An individual whose South Carolina educator certificate has been suspended or revoked shall not be employed as a noncertified teacher. If a noncertified teacher commits an offense covered by the Code of Conduct as promulgated by the State Board of Education, then the State Board of Education is authorized to revoke the non‑certified teacher’s registration.

SECTION 2. Nothing contained in this section may be construed to repeal, replace, or preclude application of any other statute.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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