**An Act To Provide Exemptions from Certain Teacher Certification Examination Requirements**

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

**Sec.** **1. 20-A MRSA §13013, sub-§2-B, ¶A,** as enacted by PL 2017, c. 235, §12 and affected by §41, is amended to read:

A. Has graduated from an educator preparation program and has passed a qualifying ~~exam~~ examination or has received a qualifying examination waiver pursuant to section 13032-A;

**Sec.** **2. 20-A MRSA §13032, first ¶,** as amended by PL 2017, c. 235, §30 and affected by §41, is further amended to read:

A professional teacher certificate may be issued only to those applicants who have taken and passed the applicable teacher qualifying examination. This limitation does not apply to applicants seeking a certificate under section 13013, subsection 2‑B, paragraph B, but such applicants must meet any ~~exam~~ examination requirement necessary for the endorsement being sought. This section does not apply to applicants who receive a qualifying examination waiver pursuant to section 13032-A.

**Sec.** **3. 20-A MRSA §13032-A** is enacted to read:

**§****13032-A.** **Qualifying examination waiver**

**1.** **Professional teacher certificate.** The commissioner shall waive the examination requirement under section 13032 for an applicant seeking a professional teacher certificate if the applicant has satisfactorily completed a bachelor's degree program from a regionally accredited college or university with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher, on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent.

**2.** **Endorsements.** The commissioner shall waive any examination requirement for an endorsement for an applicant seeking the endorsement who has satisfactorily completed a bachelor's degree program from a regionally accredited college or university with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher, on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent in the content area of the endorsement being sought.

**3.** **Professional teacher certificate; teaching experience under conditional** **certificate.** The commissioner shall waive the examination requirement for any pedagogical knowledge and skills assessment or its equivalent and any principles of learning and teaching assessment or its equivalent in department rule for any applicant seeking a professional teacher certificate who has successfully completed 2 full years of teaching under a conditional certificate. The waiver under this subsection does not apply to applicants who are enrolled in an educator preparation program and who have not yet completed the requirements for a bachelor's degree.

Rules adopted to implement this section are not subject to the provisions of section 13006-A, subsection 3.

**Sec.** **4. Rules.** By January 1, 2022, the State Board of Education shall amend the Department of Education's rule Chapter 115: the Credentialing of Education Personnel, and the Commissioner of Education shall amend the Department of Education's rule Chapter 13: Qualifying Examinations for Teachers, Educational Specialists, and Administrators, as necessary to be consistent with this Act.

**SUMMARY**

This bill provides waivers of the applicable qualifying examinations for the following applicants for professional teacher certificates or endorsements:

1. For applicants seeking a professional teacher certificate who have satisfactorily completed a bachelor's degree program from a regionally accredited college or university with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher, on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent;

2. For applicants seeking endorsements who have satisfactorily completed a bachelor's degree program from a regionally accredited college or university with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or higher, on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent in the content area of the endorsement being sought; and

3. For applicants seeking a professional teacher certificate who are required to take the pedagogical knowledge and skills assessment and principles of learning and teaching assessment by Department of Education rule but who have successfully completed 2 full years of teaching under a conditional certificate.

This bill also provides that rules adopted to implement the qualifying examination waivers are not subject to the law that provides that an amendment to the teacher certification rules that revises the qualifications for a credential for a professional teacher certificate does not apply to certain persons; this change ensures that the qualifying examination waivers are available to all eligible applicants.