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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *Lillian M. Lowery*
DATE: August 27, 2013
SUBJECT: Teacher Certification Assessments, Revisions
TEST Approval and the Establishment of Qualifying Scores

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to seek State Board approval of Educational Testing Service (ETS) PRAXIS II assessments and to share the established qualifying scores for these tests.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Since 1987, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has required state certification tests to assess basic skills, content knowledge and pedagogy. These tests provide validation that teacher candidates have entry level skills to begin their professional careers. With changing content, new and revised national standards, and the advent of the Common Core State Standards for K-12 students, ETS has implemented a five year test revision model, known as "regeneration". Regeneration is an 18-24 month process, which begins with a National Advisory Committee (for each test) that provides expert input into the test development, review of the recent research, examination of the latest standards in the field, including the Common Core State Standards, and the redesign of the overall structure of the test. A national job analysis in the specific field is also conducted by ETS, and a Test Development Committee is formed to write items and review them for clarity, content, and equity. The last step is for ETS to conduct a Multistate Standard Setting Study.

To support the decision-making process for state departments of education with regard to establishing a passing score, research staff from ETS designs and conducts two Multistate Standards Setting Studies for each test (25 educators on each team). The two, non-overlapping panels represent and provide a replication of the judgment process to strengthen the technical quality of the recommended passing score. The panelists, selected from states that will use the test, are recommended by state departments of education to participate as experts for the Multistate Standard Setting Studies. The panelists judge the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the content specifications are important for entry-level teachers. ETS also collects content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level teachers. The recommended cut scores from the two panels are averaged and then converted to a scale score with a range from 100 to 200. This becomes the recommended qualifying score of the study. Each state determines its own qualifying score, using the recommendations from the study. ETS and MSDE will track the results of the tests. When there are sufficient data nationally and on Maryland test takers, the scores will be revisited.

ETS guides states to adopt a score that does not exceed a plus or minus two standard errors of measurement from the recommended qualifying score. In this way, ETS is able to assure states that they have engaged in a process which insures legal defensibility of the score. All of these tests will be offered for the first time in the 2013-2014 academic school years. The schedule for the phase-in will be on the MSDE website and the Maryland page of the ETS website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In an effort to maintain currency in various content fields, ETS is revising most tests on a five year schedule. There are five tests that we currently use that will be replaced with revised models, requiring us to select a new qualifying score. All five tests are updated with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and will be first offered beginning in September 2013. Two tests are for 7-12 certification, *English Language Arts: Content and Analysis* and *Mathematics: Content Knowledge*; two tests are for middle school certification, *Middle School English Language Art* and, *Middle School Mathematics*; and one test is for early childhood, elementary or special education teachers to test out of the Maryland requirement for 12 semester hours of reading, *Teaching Reading: Elementary Education*.

To be certified in social studies in Maryland, candidates take a two hour generic social studies test that includes questions on United States History, World Government, Government/Civics, Economics, Geography and Behavioral Sciences. ETS has content specific tests for several of the social studies areas. I am proposing we adopt the following tests: *Economics (0911)*, *Government/Political Science (0931)*, *Geography (0921)*, and *World and United States History: Content Knowledge (0941)*. *World and United States History: Content Knowledge (0941)* will be the required test for those candidates graduating with a history major. There are no approved programs in Maryland in the other areas, so we are proposing to adopt them to be used as an endorsement to demonstrate content depth, such as for teaching Advance Placement classes, or for candidates coming from out of state with majors in any of these areas.

As part of ETS's effort to move all tests to computers by 2014, most of these new tests are offered only in a computer version. Paper versions remain available for students with documented disabilities.

ACTION:

I am requesting that the State Board approve the following qualifying scores for the revised PRAXIS II content assessments for certification in the related content areas:

<u>Test Code</u>	<u>Test Name</u>	<u>Qualifying Score</u>
5039	English Language Arts: Content and Analysis	168
5161	Mathematics: Content Knowledge	160
5047	Middle School English Language Arts	164
5169	Middle School Mathematics	165
5203	Teaching Reading: Elementary Education	162

Members of the State Board of Education
August 27, 2013
Page 3

I am requesting that the State Board approve the following Praxis II test for History majors.

<u>Test Code</u>	<u>Test Name</u>	<u>Qualifying Score</u>
0941	World and United States History: Content Knowledge	160

I am requesting that the State Board approve the following Praxis II tests and qualifying scores:

0911	Economics	150
0931	Government/Political Science	149
0921	Geography	168

LML:JES