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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. *Lowery*
DATE: August 26, 2014
SUBJECT: Teacher Certification Assessments, Revisions
TEST ADOPTION AND AFFIRMATION OF QUALIFYING SCORES

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is three-fold: 1. To adopt the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis CORE: Core Academic Skills for Educators as a replacement for the Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST) 2. To adopt a new Praxis II content assessment, Agriculture, and 3. To affirm qualifying scores for the new basic skills test and regenerated content assessments.

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 the implementation of College and Career Readiness Standards (CCR), ETS has developed the Praxis CORE: Core Academic Skills for Educators to replace the Pre-Professional Skills Tests (Praxis I). A broad based Work Group was convened earlier this year to discuss the adoption of this new assessment and recommended scores for the Praxis CORE.

To support the decision-making process for state departments of education with regards 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. ETS and MSDE will track the results of the tests. When there is sufficient national data and data 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. Some of these tests will be offered for the first time in the 2014-2015 academic school year. The schedule for the phase-in will be on the MSDE website and the Maryland page of the ETS website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

ETS has developed the Praxis CORE: Core Academic Skills for Educators, to replace the Pre-Professional Skills Tests (Praxis I) to align with the College and Career Readiness standards currently in use by many states. Effective September 1, 2014, the Praxis I will no longer be available.

In an effort to maintain currency in various content fields, ETS has revised most of its tests on a five year schedule. The following is a list of the assessments that require your approval for adoption and affirmation of the qualifying scores:

<u>Previous Test</u>	<u>New Test</u>	<u>Score</u>
0710 PPST Reading	5712 Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading	156
0720 PPST Writing	5722 Core Academic Skills for Educators: Writing	162
0730 PPST Mathematics	5732 Core Academic Skills for Educators: Mathematics	150
No test	5701 Agriculture	147
5015 Elementary Education: Instructional Practice & App.	5019 Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications	155
5121 Family & Consumer Sciences	5122 Family & Consumer Sciences	153
0439 Middle School: Science	5440 Middle School: Science	150
0401 School Psychologist	5402 School Psychologist	147

ACTION:

I am requesting that you adopt Praxis CORE and Agriculture and affirm the corresponding qualifying scores for all the aforementioned tests.

LML: jes