

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

January 16, 2003

TO: School Districts, Intermediate Units, Area Vocational
Technical Schools, Charter Schools

FROM: Frank Meehan
Director, Bureau of Teacher Certification and Preparation
Pennsylvania Department of Education

RE: TESTING /STATE BOARD RESOLUTION UPDATES

As a result of the recent State Board resolutions, testing changes and clarifications are presented within the following Professional Educator Testing Memorandum. These changes were effective on November 15, 2002, the date the State Board passed the resolutions. *This announcement contains modifications to page 2, Adding an Additional Content Area and on page 3 reference to the Fundamental Subjects Content Knowledge test.*

Professional Educator Testing Memorandum — 04

MIDDLE LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL AREA ADDITIONS:

As a result of state implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), certification requirements for individuals currently teaching in a middle school at grades 7 or 8 who hold only an elementary education certificate will change.

To comply with NCLB legislation, by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, all teaching staff in the 7th and 8th grades at the middle school level must have a middle level certificate in accordance with the content area they are teaching; middle level English, middle level math, middle level science or middle level social studies; or hold a secondary (7-12) certificate in that content area. Secondary teachers may teach their certificate subject area in a middle level school. For example: if a middle level school includes grades 5 to 8 then a teacher with a 7-12 certification may be assigned to grades 5 or 6 in their subject area.

To meet state NCLB requirements, it is hoped that many of these new certificates can be issued in Fall 2003 through Spring 2004.

The following is a list of current Praxis tests that will be used for middle level purposes. The tests can be scheduled through Educational Testing Service in New Jersey. Registration information can be gained through their website at www.ets.org/praxis.

1. To add or achieve the Middle Level **English** certificate —Required will be the Praxis Middle School English Language Arts Test #049. Diagnostic or prescription reading must be taught by a teacher holding a Reading Specialist (K-12) certification: Developmental Reading may be taught by Secondary certified English or Communications teachers, Middle level English certified teachers, or by a Reading Specialist.
2. To add or achieve the Middle Level **Mathematics** certificate —Required will be the Praxis Middle School Mathematics Test #069.
3. To add or achieve the Middle Level **Science** certificate—Required will be the Praxis Middle School Science Test #439
4. To add or achieve the Middle Level **Social Studies** certificate—Required will be the Praxis Middle School Social Studies Test #089
(Note: a Middle Level Citizenship Education test will be developed in 2003.)

Individuals may begin taking the middle level tests in January, 2003, however, no pass or fail indicator will be given since a cut score for these tests will not be derived until a standard setting group meets and recommends a cut score for Pennsylvania's use. The cut score for middle level tests is not expected to be final until September 2003.

Applicants wishing to add one or more of the middle level content areas to their existing Pennsylvania certificate may take the appropriate test, but may not submit an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) until after September 1, 2003. A pass score will be required but will not be determined prior to that date.

ADDING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONAL AREAS

As a further result of the recent Pennsylvania State Board resolutions, adding an additional instructional area to an existing Pennsylvania certificate now involves the following procedures. Note: These changes were effective as of January 1, 2003.

1. Additional Instructional areas can be added to an existing, valid Pa. Instructional certificate where:
 - a. Praxis tests are already in existence and used in Pa.,
 - b. the Praxis test assesses academic content, and
 - c. Pennsylvania has established cut scores, and
 - d. is a content area OTHER THAN the following areas: Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Health and Physical Education, Safety-Driver Education and all Special Education areas.
2. It should be noted that Pennsylvania cut scores have not yet been set for the following Instructional areas:
 - a. Environmental Education
 - b. Latin

Cut scores for these 2 areas are expected to be completed by May 2003.

To add foreign language areas other than French, German and Spanish, will require taking and passing a Praxis, or other professional test to be identified, which assesses Foreign Language Content. For example, a Latin certificate will require the Praxis test #560 in order to add Latin certification to an existing Instructional certificate. Pennsylvania will establish cut scores for these additional tests in the future.

Individuals may add another instructional area to an existing certificate without any processing of documentation or test scores through colleges or universities. Official test score information, the 338G form and \$15 payment should be sent directly to PDE.

IN-STATE DELETION OF PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING TEST AND REPLACEMENT ASSESSMENT

The State Board resolutions also addressed the deletion of the Principles of Learning and Teaching Test, though the continuation of a pedagogical skills assessment must still take place per Chapter 49 requirements.

All students in an initial, approved, teacher education program will continue to take the Praxis I series: PPST Reading, Writing and Math, (710-720 and 730) as well as the Fundamental Subjects Content Knowledge test (511), *except those in Secondary 7-12 subject areas*, and their respective academic content area test.

However, as of September 1, 2003, the Principles of Learning and Teaching Test, K-6 or 7-12, #522 or 524, will no longer be required for graduates of a Pennsylvania teacher education program, provided they have entered student teaching after September 1, 2003. Those individuals completing their student teaching program after September 1, 2003, will complete at least a twelve-week supervised student teaching experience involving the use of a statewide performance evaluation and inventory based on PDE student teaching guidelines requirements. The performance evaluation and inventory components are expected to be completed by the beginning of May.

Students, or candidates, who have taken and failed the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) Test in the past may continue to take the PLT test in the future in order to achieve a passing score or, after September 2003, may elect to repeat their student teaching experience in a Pennsylvania teacher education program and achieve a satisfactory rating through the use of the state student teaching guidelines.

Use and documentation of the student teaching performance evaluation will become a part of the college/university major program review process as of September 1, 2003.

Candidates prepared outside of Pennsylvania

Out-of-state candidates interested in gaining a Pa. certificate should be aware of 2 changes affecting their testing/review requirements:

1. Candidates who have achieved a satisfactory rating on their student teaching experience fulfilled outside of Pennsylvania will be viewed as having met the PLT assessment in Pennsylvania. Out-of-state candidates who do not have a student teaching experience on their transcripts must take the Principles of Learning and Teaching Test unless they can verify one year of teaching experience on a state-issued certificate equivalent to a Pennsylvania Instructional I or II.
2. Out of State teachers holding a valid and current instructional certificate issued by one of the states party to the Interstate Agreement with Pennsylvania may be eligible for Pennsylvania certification if they have taught satisfactorily on the out-of-state certificate for three of the past 7 years and have achieved a qualifying score on the appropriate Praxis II content test currently required by Pennsylvania. In these cases, no other Praxis tests would be required.

If any further questions, please contact Marjorie Blaze, Chief, Division of Teacher Education at 717-783-9252 or at mblaze@state.pa.us or your respective Division liaison.