December 15, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Ed Richardson
Interim State Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: Establishment of New Passing Scores for Praxis Content Knowledge Tests

On December 14, 2017, the Alabama State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted new passing scores for the Praxis content knowledge tests as a precondition for initial certification. By ensuring that Alabama’s new teachers have at least the same level of content knowledge as teachers in other states, members of the SBOE have taken the next major step to enhance the quality of education provided to our schoolchildren. The new scores reflect the multi-state scores that were adopted for several states. For any test for which no multi-state study was conducted, the average score of all states utilizing that test was used as the basis for setting Alabama’s new score.

In order to provide colleges and universities an opportunity to revise curricula materials to meet the more rigorous demands of the higher test scores without inadvertently disadvantaging prospective teachers in the pipeline, the Alabama State Department of Education is allowing four years from the date of unconditional program admission to educator preparation programs for individuals to complete the program and still utilize the passing score obtained on a test that was:

1. Appropriate for the area of certification for which the candidate has been unconditionally admitted.
2. Earned at the time the test and score were effective in Alabama.
3. In effect at the time of unconditional admission to a program.

As an example, if an individual was unconditionally admitted on April 20, 2017, to a Class B, Grades 6-12 program in mathematics, the individual would have until April 20, 2021, to be recommended for a Professional Educator Certification (PEC) based on having earned a passing score on the 5061 Mathematics: Content Knowledge test prior to September 1, 2018. If he/she is recommended for certification on or after April 21, 2021, the newly adopted passing scores on the 5161 Mathematics: Content Knowledge test would be required to receive the PEC.*

*Note: There is a three-year phase in period for secondary mathematics. A four-year window will be provided for this content area each time the score is altered.
Additionally, individuals who began an alternative approach prior to September 1, 2018, and had already met the previously adopted passing scores on Praxis tests could possibly complete the approach without having to meet the newly adopted Praxis scores. If an individual earned a passing score on a Praxis test on August 31, 2018, or previously, the passing score accepted as a basis for the first alternative approach certificate for individuals completing the Provisional Certification in the Teaching Field (PCTF) or Provisional Certificate in Career and Technical Education (PCCT) approach can be accepted for the PEC, provided the individual completes the approach and is recommended for the PEC in no more than four years.

For individuals enrolled in an Alternative Class A program, the four-year deadline will be tied to the unconditional admission date to the program. Such individuals will have four years from the date of unconditional program admission to be recommended for the PEC in order to utilize the passing scores earned at the time of unconditional admission. They will not be required to meet the new Praxis passing scores.

To summarize:

1. Anyone unconditionally admitted to an educator preparation program before September 1, 2018, has four years from the date of unconditional admission to utilize a Praxis content knowledge test score in place prior to the adoption of the scores in the December 14, 2017, resolution, in partial fulfillment of requirements to earn an Alabama educator certificate.

2. Anyone unconditionally admitted to an educator preparation program on September 1, 2018, or thereafter, must provide proof of earning Praxis content knowledge passing scores adopted by the SBOE on December 14, 2017.

Please remember that study materials and curriculum maps can be found on the Alabama Praxis Web site at www.ets.org/praxis/al. I strongly encourage higher education faculty and prospective educators to avail themselves of these resources. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Jayne A. Meyer by e-mail at jmeyer@alsde.edu or by telephone at (334) 242-9560, or Dr. Alethea F. Hampton by e-mail at shampton1@alsde.edu or by telephone at (334) 242-9983.

ER/JAM/AFH

cc: Deans of Education
    Headmasters of Private Schools

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