April 17, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents of Education

FROM: Eric G. Mackey, State Superintendent of Education

RE: Exceptions for Grade Point Average and Basic Skills Requirements

We reevaluate rules on a consistent basis to determine whether best practices are being implemented. Based on the latest review and the difficulty in recruiting potential teachers, I have decided to make the exceptions indicated below.

Item 1: Grade Point Average (GPA) requirement for unconditional admission to Alternative Class A State-approved programs.

Current Requirement: An individual who is eligible for unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program shall have earned a bachelor’s degree with a minimum overall GPA of 2.75 or a master’s or higher degree with a GPA of at least 3.0. The degree must have been from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned. The GPA must be the GPA that was used as the basis for granting the degree and posted on the official transcript of the degree-granting institution.

Exception: Effective the date of this memorandum, individuals who have earned a bachelor’s degree from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and do not meet the minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 2.75, but have at least a 2.0 overall undergraduate GPA, may seek unconditional admission to an Alternative Class A program if the alternate score on the Alabama prescribed Praxis subject-area test is obtained. The alternate scores can be found on the Alternate Score Requirements document at www.alsde.edu (Department Offices: Educator Assessment: Educator Assessment Policies). The ONLY tests and scores accepted are those listed on the Alternate Score Requirements document. All other requirements for unconditional admission must also be met.

Although the Alabama State Department of Education is providing this exception for individuals to be unconditionally admitted to an Alternative Class A state-approved program, please be aware that a college or university may require a higher GPA.

Item 2: GPA requirement for the Provisional Certificate in a Teaching Field (PCTF) and Provisional Certificate in a Career and Technical Teaching Field (PCCT) Approaches.

Current Requirement: Individuals who have less than the minimum overall GPA, may seek certification through the PCTF or PCCT approach if the degree was earned five or more years prior to submission of an application for the certificate AND the alternative score on the Alabama prescribed Praxis subject-area test is obtained.
Exception: Individuals who have earned a bachelor’s degree from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned and do not meet the minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 2.75, but have at least a 2.0 overall undergraduate GPA, may seek certification through the PCTF or PCCT approach if the alternate score on the Alabama prescribed Praxis subject-area test is obtained. The alternate scores can be found on the application forms Addendum to Supplement FTZ and Addendum to Supplement CPZ at www.alsde.edu/edcert (Provisional Certificates). The ONLY tests and scores accepted are those listed on the Addenda. In addition, the five-year recency requirement reflected in a previous memorandum, outlining when the degree must have been earned, will no longer be applicable. All other requirements of the approach must also be met. This exception may be applied to individuals seeking the first PCTF or PCCT approach for the 2019-2020 scholastic year and thereafter.

Item 3: Basic Skills Assessment Requirement of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program

Current Requirement: The Alabama Basic Skills Assessment is required for individuals applying for certification based on the following approaches:
- Career and Technical Certificate to a Professional Educator Certificate
- Degree Equivalent Health Science or Technical Education
- Early Childhood Development
- First Interim Employment Certificate through the Alternative Class A and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) options
- Foreign Credentials
- Provisional Certificate in a Teaching Field (PCTF) and the Provisional Certificate in a Career and Technical Teaching Field (PCCT)
- Speech-Language Pathology Assistant

The Alabama Basic Skills Assessment is also required for individuals seeking unconditional admission to a Class B or Alternative Class A state-approved program.

Exception: Effective the date of this memorandum, individuals who hold at least a bachelor’s degree from a senior institution that was regionally accredited at the time the degree was earned will not be required to meet the basic skills assessment requirement. The basic skills assessment will continue to be required for individuals seeking unconditional admission to a Class B educator preparation program unless a bachelor’s degree, as previously described, is held at the time of unconditional admission.

If a college or university has questions regarding program admission requirements, please contact the Educator Preparation advisor assigned to your institution of higher education. If there are questions regarding certification options, please contact the Educator Certification Specialist assigned to your local education agency.

EGM/JAM/SG

cc: Deans of Education
    Dr. Daniel Boyd
    Dr. Jayne A. Meyer
    Dr. Deans Peacock
    Mrs. Shavon H. Cummings

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