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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick 
DATE: May 24-25, 2011
SUBJECT: Revised PRAXIS II Assessments
TEST QUALIFYING SCORE AFFIRMATION – REVISED

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to seek State Board affirmation of Maryland qualifying scores for revised Educational Testing Service (ETS) PRAXIS II assessments that are used for teacher certification.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Since 1987, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has required state certification assessments to assess basic skills, content knowledge and pedagogy. These tests provide validation that each teacher candidate has entry level skills to begin his/her professional career. With rapidly changing content in today's world and new and/or revised national standards in many content areas, 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) which provides expert input into the test development, review of the recent research, examination of the latest standards in the field, including the national Common Core 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 multi-state 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 multi-state standard-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 are recommended by state departments of education to participate as experts for the multi-standard setting studies. Panelists judge the extent to which the knowledge and/or skills reflected by the content specifications are important for entry-level teachers. The studies also collect 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; however, 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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

ETS has developed four generic pedagogy tests at four grade bands, all called Principles of Learning and Teaching. ETS recommends these newer tests in place of the content specific pedagogy tests we have used in the past. MSDE reviewed these pedagogy tests and decided to replace the older tests with the four Principles of Learning and Teaching. In addition, MSDE is recommending adopting the appropriate level of the Principles of Learning and Teaching for seven content tests that had no pedagogy test in the past. They include: Family and Consumer Sciences; Latin; Middle School areas of English Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science; and Theatre.

I am recommending six revised PRAXIS II content tests and four generic PLT pedagogy tests (at four different grade levels) for score affirmation. Since all the tests below are new and there is no data on how candidates score, MSDE is recommending we accept the multi-state standard setting panel's scores as the Maryland qualifying scores. ETS and MSDE track the results of the tests. When there is sufficient data nationally and in Maryland on test taker results, the scores will be revisited.

ACTION:

I am requesting that the State Board affirm the following scores on PRAXIS II certification tests:

<u>Test Name and Test Code</u>	<u>Qualifying Score</u>
Art: Content and Analysis (0135)	161
Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications (0015)	161
English Language, Literature and Compositions: Content and Analysis (0044)	166
Physical Education: Content and Design (0095)	169
Social Studies: Content and Interpretation (0086)	153
Technology Education (0051)	159
Principles of Learning and Teaching: Early Childhood (0621)	157
Principles of Learning and Teaching: K-6 (0622)	160
Principles of Learning and Teaching: 5-9 (0623)	160
Principles of Learning and Teaching: 7-12 (0624)	157

The paper-based tests listed above will be offered for the first time in September 2011. ETS will continue to phase in computer-based tests. Each test, paper-based and computer-based, is identical in content. The schedule for the phase-in will be on the MSDE website and the Maryland page of the ETS website.

NSG:jes