

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section 21B-30 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/21B-30)

Sec. 21B-30. Educator testing.

(a) This Section applies beginning on July 1, 2012.

(b) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, shall design and implement a system of examinations, which shall be required prior to the issuance of educator licenses. These examinations and indicators must be based on national and State professional teaching standards, as determined by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board. The State Board of Education may adopt such rules as may be necessary to implement and administer this Section. No score on a test required under this Section, other than a test of basic skills, shall be more than 5 years old at the time that an individual makes application for an educator license or endorsement.

(c) Applicants seeking a Professional Educator License or an Educator License with Stipulations shall be required to pass

a test of basic skills before the license is issued, unless the endorsement the individual is seeking does not require passage of the test. All applicants completing Illinois-approved, teacher education or school service personnel preparation programs shall be required to pass the State Board of Education's recognized test of basic skills prior to starting their student teaching or starting the final semester of their internship, unless required earlier at the discretion of the recognized, Illinois institution in which they are completing their approved program. ~~No candidate may be fully admitted into an educator preparation program at a recognized Illinois institution until he or she has passed a test of basic skills.~~ An individual who passes a test of basic skills does not need to do so again for subsequent endorsements or other educator licenses.

(d) All applicants seeking a State license shall be required to pass a test of content area knowledge for each area of endorsement for which there is an applicable test. There shall be no exception to this requirement. No candidate shall be allowed to student teach, serve as the teacher of record, or begin an internship or residency required for licensure until he or she has passed the applicable content area test.

(e) All applicants seeking a State license endorsed in a teaching field shall pass the assessment of professional teaching (APT). Passage of the APT is required for completion of an approved Illinois educator preparation program.

(f) Beginning on September 1, 2015, all candidates completing teacher preparation programs in this State are required to pass an evidence-based assessment of teacher effectiveness approved by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board. All recognized institutions offering approved teacher preparation programs must begin phasing in the approved teacher performance assessment no later than July 1, 2013.

(g) Tests of basic skills and content area knowledge and the assessment of professional teaching shall be the tests that from time to time are designated by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board, and may be tests prepared by an educational testing organization or tests designed by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board. The areas to be covered by a test of basic skills shall include reading, language arts, and mathematics. The test of content area knowledge shall assess content knowledge in a specific subject field. The tests must be designed to be racially neutral to ensure that no person taking the tests is discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, or other factors unrelated to the person's ability to perform as a licensed employee. The score required to pass the tests shall be fixed by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board. The tests shall be administered not fewer

than 3 times a year at such time and place as may be designated by the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board.

The State Board shall implement a test or tests to assess the speaking, reading, writing, and grammar skills of applicants for an endorsement or a license issued under subdivision (G) of paragraph (2) of Section 21B-20 of this Code in the English language and in the language of the transitional bilingual education program requested by the applicant.

(h) Except as provided in Section 34-6 of this Code, the provisions of this Section shall apply equally in any school district subject to Article 34 of this Code.

(i) The rules developed to implement and enforce the testing requirements under this Section shall include provisions governing test selection, test validation and determination of a passing score, administration of the tests, frequency of administration, applicant fees, frequency of applicants taking the tests, the years for which a score is valid, and appropriate special accommodations. The State Board of Education shall develop such rules as may be needed to ensure uniformity from year to year in the level of difficulty for each form of an assessment.

(Source: P.A. 97-607, eff. 8-26-11.)