TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHAPTER 23 - REGULATIONS FOR THE BASIC SKILLS COMPETENCY TESTING OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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001 General Information

001.01 Statutory Authority. This chapter is adopted pursuant to the power and authority vested in the State Board of Education in Nebraska Revised Statutes (R.R.S) Sections 79-807, 79-808, 79-809 and 79-318.

001.02 Scope, Application, and Delineations of this Chapter. This chapter provides procedures for the administration of a basic skills competency examination for individuals seeking an entry-level Nebraska teacher or administrator certificate after July 31, 1989.

001.03 Institutional Responsibility. Each standard institution of higher education is required to annually notify applicants of the requirement for taking the basic skills competency examination and of the scheduled opportunity to take the examination.

001.04 Related Chapters. Throughout this chapter reference is made to other Department of Education rules relating to teachers and administrators. For a more detailed explanation of the procedures for the issuance of certificates to teach, counsel, or supervise in Nebraska schools refer to 92 NAC 21 (Rule 21). Title 92 NAC 20 (Rule 20) covers the approval of teacher education programs in Nebraska. Copies of these rules are available from the Department of Education.

002 Definition of Terms

As used in this chapter, the terms listed below shall be defined as follows:

002.01 Basic Skills Competency shall mean either (a) proficiency in (i) the written use of the English language, (ii) reading, comprehending, and interpreting professional writing and other written materials, and (iii) working with fundamental mathematical computations as demonstrated by successful completion of an examination designated by the board and taken by teacher education students at a standard institution of higher education; or (b) successful employment experiences of two (2) or more consecutive years in an approved, accredited, or otherwise legally operated school while (i) holding or qualifying to hold a regular certificate issued by another state on the basis of completion of an approved teacher education program at a standard institution of higher education; or (ii) holding current credentials from a credentialing organization approved pursuant to 92 NAC 22 (Master Teacher Program) as referenced in 92 NAC 21 (Issuance of Certificates and Permits to Teach,

Provide Special Services, and Administer in Nebraska Schools). Basic skills competency examinations shall be those which meet section (a) in this definition and are approved by the State Board of Education, pursuant to this chapter.

002.02 Board shall mean the State Board of Education.

002.03 Commissioner shall mean the State Commissioner of Education.

002.04 Core Skills Test shall mean the paper or computerized reading, writing and mathematics portions of the Core Academic Skills for Educators Test published by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey.

002.05 Department shall mean the State Department of Education which is comprised of the Board and the Commissioner.

002.06 Entry level certificate shall mean the first regular certificate acquired in Nebraska by an applicant.

002.07 PPST shall mean the paper or computerized reading, writing, and mathematics portions of the Pre-Professional Skills Test published by the Educational Testing Service of Princeton, New Jersey.

002.08 Regular certificate shall mean an initial, standard, or professional certificate, or a comparable and equivalent certificate.

002.09 Passing scores shall mean scaled scores in math, reading and writing individually reported on an original score report as set forth in Sections 003.02 and 003.03 of this chapter, or a determination by the Commissioner under Section 008 of this chapter, or a score submitted under the provisions of Section 009 of this chapter.

002.10 Standard institution of higher education shall mean any college or university whose teacher education program is fully approved by the Board, or by a comparable agency in any other state or country.

003 General Provisions

003.01 Requirements of Basic Skills Competency Examination for Program Admission or Initial Certification. Prior to September 1, 2014 applicants taking a basic skills

competency examination to seek admission to a teacher education program or an applicant for an entry level Nebraska teacher or administrative certificate will be required to complete the reading, mathematics, and writing portions of the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST). As described in Section 003.03 of this chapter, passing scores on the PPST obtained prior to September 1, 2014 will meet the basic skills competency examination requirement. Effective September 1, 2014, applicants taking a basic skills competency examination to seek admission to a teacher education program will be required to complete the Core Skills Test. After September 1, 2014, applicants for an entry level Nebraska certificate can use previously obtained passing scores on the PPST or the Core Skills Test to meet the basic skills competency examination requirement. Section 008 of this chapter contains accommodation provisions for the basic skills competency examination and Section 009 of this chapter deals with competency determinations based on equivalency.

003.02 Passing Scores. Core Skills Test. Passing scores shall be the scaled scores as shown on an original score report from the Educational Testing Service consisting of the following:

003.02A One hundred fifty-six (156) or above on the reading portion of the Core Skills Test; and

003.02B One hundred fifty (150) or above on the mathematics portion of the Core Skills Test; and

003.02C One hundred sixty-two (162) or above on the writing portion of the Core Skills Test; or

003.02D ~~A composite score of 468 on all three portions of the Core Skills Test, with no single test score being more than one point below the score required in Section 003.02A, 003.02B, or 003.02C of this chapter, and upon the recommendation of a standard institution of higher education.~~
The sum of the scores equal 468 or above on all three portions of the CORE Skills Test, and upon the recommendation of a standard institution of higher education.

003.03 Passing Scores. PPST. Applicants will meet the basic skills competency examination requirement by taking the PPST prior to September 1, 2014. Applicants may use passing scores on the PPST as identified in Sections 003.03A through 003.03D of this chapter for program admission after September 1, 2014 with institutional approval.

003.03A One hundred seventy (170) or above on the reading portion of the PPST; and

003.03B One hundred seventy-one (171) or above on the mathematics portion of the PPST; and

003.03C One hundred seventy-two (172) or above on the writing portion of the PPST; or

003.03D ~~A composite score of 513 on all three portions of the PPST, with no single test score being more than one point below the score required in Section 003.03A, 003.03B, or 003.03C of this chapter, and upon the recommendation of a standard institution of higher education.~~
The sum of the scores equal 513 or above on all three portions of the PPST, and upon the recommendation of a standard institution of higher education.

003.04 Applications for Renewal and for Second Certificates. No portion of this chapter shall be construed as having any application to the renewal of a Nebraska teaching or administrative certificate or to the application for a second Nebraska teaching or administrative certificate.

003.05 Number of Times Tests May Be Taken. There shall be no limitation by the Department on the number of times an applicant may take the basic skills competency examination in meeting the requirements of this chapter.

003.06 Score Reports. Only original score reports sent from the Educational Testing Service or score reports sent by a Nebraska standard institution of higher education and to which the applicant shall not have had access shall be accepted by the Department for the purpose of meeting the requirements of this chapter and 92 NAC 21.

004 Basic Skills Competency Examination Requirements for Applicants for Administrative or Teaching Certificates

Except as provided in Section 008 and Section 009 of this chapter, each applicant for an entry-level administrative or teaching certificate shall:

004.01 Take the basic skills competency examination at a Nebraska location designated by the institution or at any other location where the examination is given; and

004.02 Receive passing scores on the basic skills competency examination as designated by Section 003.02 or 003.03 of this chapter; and

004.03 Require that his or her original score report be sent directly to the designated Nebraska standard institution of higher education or to the Department.

005 Basic Skills Competency Examination Requirements for Nebraska Standard Institutions of Higher Education

Each Nebraska standard institution of higher education shall:

005.01 Annually notify applicants of the requirement for taking the basic skills competency examination and of the scheduled opportunities to take the examination.

005.02 Require that all persons entering the teacher education program of such institution receive passing scores on a designated basic skills competency examination prior to being admitted to such program pursuant to 92 NAC 20; and

005.03 Explain to each applicant who seeks admission to the teacher education program of such institution the Nebraska basic skills competency examination requirement and the consequences of failing to receive a passing score, as required by 92 NAC 20;

005.03A Evidence of compliance with Section 005.03 of this chapter shall be a statement signed by each applicant in the Nebraska teacher education program and maintained in the applicant's file which states the limitations posed for the applicant who does not achieve passing scores on the basic skills competency examination. The date of the applicant's signature thereon shall also be included on the statement; and

005.04 Forward the original score report of each person who has had his or her score report sent directly to such institution as part of that person's application for certification to the Department at the request of such person.

005.04A No person shall be required to satisfy the score reporting requirement more than once. Thus, if the institution determines that a score report for passing scores is on file in the Department, and the Department issues a statement to that effect, the institution shall not require the submission of a score report from that applicant, either for admission to the program or for an institutional recommendation for certification purpose.

006 Basic Skills Competency Examination Duties of the Department

The Department shall:

006.01 Provide to any person upon request current information on Nebraska dates and testing locations for the basic skills competency examination.

007 Provisions for Hearing

007.01 When a person is denied any Nebraska teaching or administrative certificate for which he or she has applied because of the provisions of this chapter, he or she shall be entitled to request a review and hearing pursuant to 92 NAC 21.

008 Accommodations

008.01 Individuals whose primary language is sign language or for whom English is a second language shall be required to take the same basic skills competency examinations as other individuals. However, if they fail to obtain the minimum passing scores as specified in Section 003.02 or 003.03 of this chapter, they may apply to the Commissioner for a review of their past education, employment, and standardized testing experience.

008.02 If, upon examination, the Commissioner determines that the applicant has provided evidence of the possession of basic skills competency equivalent to that designated in Section 003.02 or 003.03 of this chapter, the Commissioner shall issue a determination that the applicant has demonstrated satisfactory scores for purposes of this chapter and 92 NAC, Chapters 20 and 21.

009 Determination Based on Equivalency

009.01 An individual who has taught or administered for two (2) consecutive years in an approved, accredited, or otherwise legally operated school in another state shall meet this requirement by submitting an employment verification form (a recommended form may be found on the Department's Teacher Certification website); or

009.02 A person who has been certificated by another state following the successful completion of a basic skills competency examination with separate passing scores individually reported for math, reading and writing required by that state, shall meet the basic skills competency requirement. The applicant shall submit an original score report pursuant to this chapter or 92 NAC 21.