

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Action Item

May 19, 2009

SUBJECT: Approval of Amendment to Rule 6A-4.0021, Florida Teacher Certification Examinations

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Sections 1012.56(9), 1012.59(1), Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1012.56(9), Florida Statutes, requires the State Board of Education to specify, by rule, the examination scores required for the issuance of a professional certificate and temporary certificate. Such rules must define examination competencies and establish uniform evaluation guidelines.

State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC, fulfills the above requirement by providing a description, by reference, of the competencies and skills to be assessed. These competencies and skills are included in the document *Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida*. As changes to general knowledge, professional education, and subject area competencies are made, a new edition of this document must be developed and incorporated by reference in the rule. Also incorporated by reference is the examination registration form, which is updated periodically to reflect changes in the testing program. In addition, this rule provides the current fee structure for the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) program.

The fourteenth edition will update the competencies and skills for twelve of the subject area examinations: Biology 6-12, Chemistry 6-12, Earth-Space Science 6-12, Educational Media Specialist PK-12, Elementary Education K-6, Exceptional Student Education K-12, Middle Grades General Science 5-9, Middle Grades Integrated Curriculum 5-9, Middle Grades Social Science 5-9, Physics 6-12, Pre-Kindergarten/Primary PK-3, and Social Science 6-12. A description of the processes used to make these updates follows.

- **FTCE Elementary Education K-6.** Beginning in January 2008, committee members consisting of university professors, district-level administrators, and teachers began to evaluate and revise the competencies and skills for the Elementary Education K-6 subject area examination as guided by State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC. Elementary Education K-6 committee members represented all regions of the state, various school districts, educator preparation programs, and instructional philosophies. Committee members were selected through a statewide recruiting effort and via recommendations from the Florida Department of Education's (the Department's) Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction. The Elementary Education K-6 committee recommended changes to the competencies and skills for this subject area. With the changes recommended, the Department conducted a statewide survey of Florida educators covering the

proposed changes to the competencies and skills.

In addition, the Department convened a standard-setting meeting for the purpose of exploring the establishment of a new cut score for the Elementary Education K-6 examination. The committee members were selected based upon their expertise and knowledge in the field of elementary education. They represented Florida's college and university programs of education, district-level curriculum coordinators, and school-based educators. Additionally, the members were representative of the main ethnic groups of Florida. These members are recognized as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in their fields and were selected based upon recommendations from the Department's Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction, deans of colleges of education, and district/school leaders. The standard-setting committee recommended an increase in the examination's cut score as well as the desire to explore a requirement of examinees to correctly answer a minimum number of items by section.

The paperless memorandum issued from the Commissioner of Education on October 31, 2008, notified school district superintendents, state college and university presidents, and presidents of the independent colleges and universities of Florida of the recommended changes to the competencies and skills. This memorandum also detailed the Department's efforts in setting a new cut score for the Elementary Education K-6 examination as well as exploring a splitting of the examination which would require a minimum passage of items for the various sections within the examination.

Additionally, the Department published the Elementary Education K-6 draft competencies and skills on the Department's Web site in September 2008 at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/ftce/ftcecomp.asp#fourteenth>. The publishing of these draft competencies and skills was intended to provide Florida colleges of education and educator preparation institutes time to apply the changes needed to prepare students for the revised examination.

- **FTCE Middle Grades Integrated Curriculum 5-9 (MGIC).** Beginning in January 2008, committee members consisting of university professors, district-level administrators, and teachers began to evaluate and revise the competencies and skills for the MGIC subject area examination as guided by State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC. MGIC committee members represented all regions of the state, various school districts, educator preparation programs, and instructional philosophies. MGIC committee members were selected through a statewide recruiting effort and via recommendations from the Department's Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction. The committee recommended changes to the competencies and skills for this area. With the changes recommended, the Department conducted a statewide survey of Florida educators covering the proposed changes to the competencies and skills.

In addition, the Department convened a standard-setting meeting for the purpose of exploring the establishment of a new cut score for the MGIC examination. The committee members were selected based upon their expertise and knowledge in the field of middle grades education. They represented Florida's college and university programs of education, district-level curriculum coordinators, and school-based educators. Additionally, the members were representative of the main ethnic groups

of Florida. These members are recognized as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in their fields and were selected based upon recommendations from the Department's Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction, deans of colleges of education, and district/school leaders. The standard-setting committee recommended an increase in the examination's cut score as well as the desire to explore a requirement of examinees to correctly answer a minimum number of items by section.

The paperless memorandum issued from the Commissioner of Education on October 31, 2008, notified school district superintendents, state college and university presidents, and presidents of the independent colleges and universities of Florida of the recommended changes to the competencies and skills. This memorandum also detailed the Department's efforts in setting a new cut score for the MGIC examination as well as exploring a splitting of the examination which would require a minimum passage of items for the various subject areas within the examination.

Additionally, the Department published the draft MGIC competencies and skills on the Department's Web site in September 2008 at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/ftce/ftcecomp.asp#fourteenth>. The publishing of these draft competencies and skills was intended to provide Florida colleges of education and educator preparation institutes time to apply the changes needed to prepare students for the revised examination.

- **FTCE Biology 6-12, Chemistry 6-12, Earth-Space Science 6-12, Educational Media Specialist PK-12, Exceptional Student Education K-12, Middle Grades General Science 5-9, Middle Grades Social Science 5-9, Physics 6-12, Pre-Kindergarten/Primary PK-3, and Social Science 6-12.** Beginning in January 2008, committee members consisting of university professors, district-level administrators, and teachers began to evaluate and revise the competencies and skills for these subject area examinations as guided by State Board of Education Rule 6A-4.0021, FAC. Committee members represented all regions of the state, various school districts, educator preparation programs, and instructional philosophies. Committee members were selected through a statewide recruiting effort and via recommendations from the Department's Bureau of Curriculum and Instruction. The Biology 6-12, Chemistry 6-12, Earth-Space Science 6-12, Exceptional Student Education K-12, Middle Grades General Science 5-9, and Physics 6-12 committees recommended significant changes to the competencies and skills for these areas. As a result, the Department conducted a statewide survey of Florida educators in 2008 for these fields. Thousands of educator surveys were distributed to educators for the purpose of providing feedback and direction to the Department.

Committees for Educational Media Specialist PK-12, Middle Grades Social Science 5-9, Pre-Kindergarten/Primary PK-3, and Social Science 6-12 recommended minimal changes to the competencies and skills for these areas. With these changes, the Department did not conduct a statewide survey of Florida educators, as these had been previously validated using a survey process.

The paperless memorandum issued from the Commissioner of Education on October 31, 2008, notified school district superintendents, state college and university presidents, and presidents of the independent colleges and universities of

Florida of the recommended changes to the competencies and skills.

Additionally, the Department published the draft Biology 6-12, Chemistry 6-12, Earth-Space Science 6-12, Educational Media Specialist PK-12, Exceptional Student Education K-12, Middle Grades General Science 5-9, Middle Grades Social Science 5-9, Physics 6-12, Pre-Kindergarten/Primary PK-3, and Social Science 6-12 competencies and skills on the Department's Web site in September 2008 at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/ftce/ftcecomp.asp>. The publishing of these draft competencies and skills was intended to provide Florida colleges of education and educator preparation institutes time to apply the changes needed to prepare students for the revised examination.

Section 1012.56, F.S., requires teacher certification applicants to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge, subject area knowledge, and professional preparation and education competence by passing three separate examinations. The fees for these FTCE examinations are established by the State Board of Education within the limits established by Section 1012.59, Florida Statutes, as follows: "Each examination fee shall be sufficient to cover the actual cost of developing and administering the examination, but shall not exceed \$100 for an examination."

While fees increased on January 1, 2009, up from \$25 per exam, the Department is recommending increasing examination fees to reduce the state's contribution toward the cost of the program, as is the intent of Section 1012.59, Florida Statutes. Currently, teacher certification applicants pay a \$50 fee for each of the three required tests, for a total of \$150. The actual cost to develop and administer the examination program is greater than the current fees. The proposed rule amendments increase the fees to \$100 for all test takers (regular and retake administrations), bringing the total cost for each of the three required tests to \$300. The proposed FTCE fees will generate about \$8.9 million in revenue per year. The amount of annual revenue needed to support the FTCE and FELE program is approximately \$16.5 million dollars. To generate this level of revenue, an application fee of \$55 also would be needed. Additionally, an examination fee of \$50 would be required for each general knowledge test (Essay, English Language Skills, Reading, Mathematics) administered and \$100 for each FELE test (Instructional Leadership, Operational Leadership, School Leadership) administered.

At this time, Section 1012.59, Florida Statutes, does not authorize the State Board of Education to adopt a higher fee structure that would allow the certification examination program to be solely funded through the revenue generated by fees.

Rule amendments are requested to adopt the fourteenth edition of the document, *Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida*, effective October 1, 2009, as well as a new fee structure effective September 1, 2009.

Supporting Documentation Included: Proposed Rule 6A-4.0021, Florida Teacher Certification Examinations, Form CG-20-04, and *Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida* (available upon request)

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