TO: Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
       Respicio Vazquez, General Counsel
       Lee Patton, Interim Director

Agenda Topic: Action Item: Rules for Adoption – Part 25 (Certification)

Materials: Recommended Amendments

Staff Contact(s): Lee Patton
                 Nancy Patton
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Purpose of Agenda Item

To present the proposed amendments for adoption.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

The Board’s adoption of the proposed amendments to Part 25.

Background Information

The main group of changes in this set of amendments pertains to procedural matters connected with accreditation reviews leading to the approval of programs that prepare educators. These are found throughout Subpart C of the rules. Chief among them are incorporation of the 2002 version of the NCATE standards; a change in the role of the State Board staff member who serves with each review panel; and a change from “Fifth-Year Review” to “Accreditation Review” to accommodate the potential for a different review cycle in future.

The remaining proposed changes involve necessary updating.

- Section 25.67 is being changed to reflect the statute’s permission for an alternative program to convey knowledge and skills contained in an approved program offered by another institution (i.e., the alternative programs authorized under Section 21-5c of the School Code may be offered through institutions that do not have “regular” approved programs in the same area). The other revisions to Section 25.67 reflect a change in the name of subject matter knowledge tests
(to “content-area tests”) and a corrected cross-reference to the program approval requirements.

- The changes to Section 25.313 involve updating the cross-reference to Subpart C and changing the reference from “Fifth-Year Review to “Accreditation Review”.

- Section 25.442 (Illinois Teacher Corps Programs) is being amended to state the requirement for passage of the relevant assessment of professional teaching (APT) and to provide for receipt of a standard certificate rather than an initial certificate pursuant to P.A. 92-560.

- In Section 25.710, the discussion of “passing raw score” is being amended to accommodate scoring for constructed-response items. In addition, the list of tests that will make up the Illinois Certification Testing System beginning next year is being added.

- Section 25.728 (Use of Test Results by Institutions of Higher Education) is being revised to permit the use of the APT as a requirement for program completion.

- Finally, Appendix D is being amplified to reflect the availability of an additional certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

These amendments were presented for the Board's initial review at the March 2003 meeting and were subsequently published in the Illinois Register to elicit public comment. One response was received. Please see the Summary and Analysis of Public Comment below for a discussion of the issues raised.

**Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications**

Policy Implications: The principal policy implication of this rulemaking is that it continues the practice of conforming the agency’s institutional review procedures to those of NCATE to the greatest degree possible.

Budget Implications: None.

Legislative Action: None needed.

Communication: Please see “Next Steps” below.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

Adopt the following motion:

The State Board of Education hereby adopts the proposed rulemaking for:
Certification (23 Illinois Administrative Code 25).

Further, the Board authorizes the State Superintendent of Education to make such technical or nonsubstantive changes as the State Superintendent may deem necessary in response to suggestions or objections of the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.

**Next Steps**

Notice of the adopted rules will be submitted to the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules to initiate JCAR’s review. When that process is complete, the adopted rules will be filed with the Secretary of State and disseminated as appropriate.

**Summary and Analysis of Public Comment**

**Certification (23 Ill. Adm. Code 25)**

**Comment**
The use of the new term “content-area test” and the current term “subject matter knowledge test” in Section 25.710 was noted. The correspondent suggested that the rule be consistent in referring to this type of test.

**Analysis**
The intent of the rule’s proposed wording is to differentiate between the existing tests (which have been called “tests of subject matter knowledge” or “subject matter knowledge tests”) and the new standards-based examinations that will be implemented in the near future. These will be termed “content-area tests”. We have reviewed the references throughout this rule and found several places where the language should be updated.

**Recommendation**
Changes in response to this comment should be made in the definition of “Subarea score” and in the introductory statement to the definition of “Test” or “Tests” (Section 25.710), as well as in Section 25.728(c).

**Comment**
The commenter noted that the test currently referred to as the “elementary test” actually covers grades K-9, as will also be the case with the new standards-based examination. It was suggested that the name of both these tests should be revised to “Elementary/Middle Grades (K-9)

**Analysis**
We agree that this is an appropriate point of clarification that will help interested persons understand the scope of the current test of subject matter knowledge as well as the new content-area test.
Recommendation
Both lists of tests in Section 25.710 should be revised to refer to the “Elementary/Middles Grades (K-9)” test in response to this comment.