



PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

DATE:
07/01/2024

NUMBER:
24-07

SUBJECT: BACHELOR'S DEGREE AS DEMONSTRATION OF BASIC SKILLS REQUIREMENT

Summary:

On June 29, 2024, Governor Newsom signed [Senate Bill 153](#) (Chap. 38, Stats 2024). This budget trailer bill addresses multiple topics related to education. Included in this new law, among other provisions, is the allowance of a candidate's bachelor's degree to meet the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR) for most credentials. Because this is a budget bill, its provisions take effect immediately.

Key Provisions:

These new provisions in state law allow for the candidate's bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education to serve as demonstration of basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. In an effort to address the teacher shortage and eliminate barriers to the education profession, candidates in most credential programs will no longer need to provide additional evidence of competence in basic skills if they hold a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. If the candidate holds a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, educator preparation programs will no longer need to verify that a candidate has demonstrated competence in basic skills through one of the eight other options for doing so, including passing the California Basic Skills Examination for Teachers (CBEST) examination or performing a transcript review of the reading, writing, and mathematics requirements. This change in state educator preparation policy represents a major shift that will benefit the vast majority of prospective educators in California.

At this time, the following four credentials/permits issued by the Commission still require demonstration of Basic Skills Requirement through one of the allowable options as these provisions in the budget trailer bill do not apply to these areas: Exchange Certificated Employee

Credential, the Sojourn Certificated Employee Credential, Designated Subjects Supervision and Coordination Credential, and Emergency Substitute Permit for Prospective Teachers.

The Commission will be updating all related webpages, leaflets, preconditions, etc., to reflect these changes, and will work to make sure all materials are updated as soon as possible. Regulations will be revised in accordance with the new provisions. Programs must also immediately update all program materials affected by this change and work expeditiously to inform candidates and program staff that this change will take effect immediately.

Commission staff is working with the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson (ES) regarding messaging to potential examinees who may not have heard about this legislative change and who intend to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST). The landing page for the CBEST at [California Educator Credentialing Examinations \(nesinc.com\)](https://www.nesinc.com) will include information about the changes to the requirement to demonstrate basic skills. If a potential examinee registers for the CBEST, the examinee can get a refund provided their appointment is cancelled and their registration is withdrawn ***BEFORE*** the appointment date. *Examinees will get a full refund when they withdraw following the [policy guidelines](#).*

The online recommendation process will remain unchanged.

Important Dates:

June 29, 2024 – Senate Bill 153 signed into law and takes effect immediately.

Background:

California Education Code and Title 5 Regulations specified that, in most cases, applicants for a credential, certificate, or permit to serve in the public schools of California must verify basic skills proficiency before the credential, certificate, or permit would be issued. For Preliminary Teaching Credential candidates, the Basic Skills Requirement had to be met prior to being recommended for an intern teaching credential or a preliminary teaching credential.

California Education Code also prohibited the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) from issuing an initial credential, permit, certificate, or renewal of an emergency credential to a person to serve in the public schools unless the person had demonstrated proficiency in basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills in the English language by passing the state basic skills proficiency test, except for those persons who are exempt from the basic skills proficiency test requirement. The law also prohibited the governing board of a school district from initially hiring on a permanent, temporary, or substitute basis a certificated person seeking employment in the capacity designated in the certificated person's credential unless that person has demonstrated basic skills proficiency or is exempt from the basic skills requirement.

The new budget trailer bill law for fiscal year 2024-25 eliminates this requirement for most credentials.

Sources:

[SB 153](#)

References:

Education Code Sections 44252.5, 44252.7, 44259, 44260.2, 44270.3, 44274.2, 44275.4, 44300, 44830

Contact Information:

Contact Information for the Professional Services Division is available at the [Professional Services Contact webpage](#).