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# 2B

## Action

*Professional Services Committee*

### **Recommended Passing Score Standard for the Revised Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) Examination**

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## **AGENDA INSERT**

**Executive Summary:** This report provides the Commission with recommendations relevant to the determination of the passing score standards for the revised RICA Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment.

**Recommended Action:** That the Commission adopt the recommended passing score standards for the revised RICA Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment.

**Presenters:** Yvonne Novelli, Consultant, and Phyllis Jacobson, Administrator, Professional Services Division

#### **Strategic Plan Goal: 1**

#### **Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators**

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs



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# Recommended Passing Score Standard for the Revised Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) Examination

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## **Introduction**

This agenda item insert presents standard setting results for the revised Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment, including staff-recommended passing score standards for each examination based on the recommendations from the RICA Standard Setting Panel.

## **Background**

The purpose of the standard setting studies is to provide the Commission with recommendations based on the informed judgments of California educators and relevant to the determination of the initial passing standards for the revised RICA Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment.

As with the standard setting method used for all other Commission examinations, the process employed for both RICA examinations was consistent with recognized psychometric principles and procedures. The standard setting study for the RICA Video Performance Assessment was conducted with the Commission's RICA Standard Setting Panel on August 24-25, 2009. For consistency between testing formats, the same panel participated in the September 10, 2009, standard setting study for the RICA Written Examination.

## **RICA Standard Setting Panel Results**

During the RICA Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment standard setting studies, panel members were asked to consider a hypothetical candidate who is *just* at the level of knowledge and skills important for effective job performance as a beginning teacher providing reading instruction in California public schools. The performance of this just acceptable candidate reflects the panel-recommended minimum passing standards.

### *RICA Written Examination Panel Results*

The Standards Setting Panel followed the procedure outline in the main agenda item to determine a recommendation for the RICA Writing Examination. Following the study, NCS Pearson, Inc. (Pearson) calculated the median panel-recommended weighted score based on the individual member's recommendation. Table 1, which follows, provides a summary of the Written Examination, including the number of scorable items by item type, the total possible weighted scores by item type, and the median panel-recommended weighted raw score total.

**Table 1: Panel-Recommended Passing Standard for the RICA Written Examination**

RICA Format	Item Type <sup>1</sup>	Total Scorable Items	Total Possible Raw Score Points <sup>2</sup>	Total Possible Weighted Score Points	Median Panel-Recommended Total Score
Written Examination	MC	60	60	60	88 out of the total possible weighted score points of 120
	Domain 2 CR	1	6	12	
	Domain 3 CR	1	6	6	
	Domain 4 CR	1	6	6	
	Domain 5 CR	1	6	12	
	Case Study	1	8	24	

1 MC = multiple-choice, CR = constructed-response (focused educational problems and instructional tasks)

2 Each constructed response is scored independently by two scorers, and the scores are totaled for the final raw score. The score range is from “1” (limited or no understanding) to “3” (thorough understanding). The case study is scored similarly with the score range from “1” (little or no understanding) to “4” (thorough understanding). The total possible raw score points are then multiplied by a factor to reflect the weightings.

RICA Video Performance Assessment Panel Results

Following the RICA Video Performance Assessment standard setting study, Pearson calculated the median score based on each individual member’s recommendation, representing the combined score for the three video packets. Table 2 provides a summary of the assessment, including the number of scorable items, the total possible raw score an examinee may achieve, and the median panel-recommended raw score total.

**Table 2: Panel-Recommended Passing Standard for the RICA Video Performance Assessment**

RICA Format	Item Type	Total Scorable Items	Total Possible Raw Score Points <sup>1</sup>	Median Panel-Recommended Total Score
Video Performance Assessment	Video Packets	3	24	17

1 Each video packet is scored independently by two scorers, and the six scores are totaled for the final raw score. The score ranges from “1” (little or no understanding) to “4” (thorough understanding).

**Staff-Recommended Initial Passing Standards**

In accordance with established Commission procedure for its testing programs, staff considered adjustments to the panel-recommended passing standard to address standard errors of measurement (SEM), as noted in Appendix A. It is an historical practice of the Commission to adopt an initial passing score standard that incorporates the -1 SEM particularly for new

examinations. This practice was most recently followed for the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET) examinations.

*RICA Written Examination: Staff Recommendation*

For the RICA Written Examination, staff recommends that the Commission adopt the median of the panel's recommended score adjusted by a SEM of -1, resulting in a minimum weighted passing score total of 80. If the Commission adopts the staff recommendation, the passing rate for the August administration of the revised RICA would be 68%.

*RICA Video Performance Assessment: Staff Recommendation*

For the RICA Video Performance Assessment, staff recommends that the Commission adopt the median of the panel's recommended raw score of 17 without factoring in an SEM. Because examinees have the opportunity to choose the lesson represented in their video packets, study related material, and then review and revise their video packets before submitting them for scoring, their final product should accurately reflect their "true" knowledge.

**Following Adoption**

After the Commission adopts the passing standards for the RICA Written Examination and RICA Video Performance Assessment, notification will be posted on the RICA website and distributed to the field as soon as possible. In addition, the August examinees' scores will be tabulated based on the adopted passing standard and, as discussed in the main agenda item, scaled to a range of 100 to 300, with 220 representing the adopted passing standard. The individual examinee's score reports will then be distributed.

## Appendix A

### STANDARD SETTING CONSIDERATIONS

As described in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education, 1999), the standard setting process is a key piece of validity evidence supporting a testing program.

*Defining the minimum level of knowledge and skill required for licensure or certification is one of the most important and difficult tasks facing those responsible for credentialing. Verifying the appropriateness of the cut score or scores on the tests is a critical element in validity. The validity of the inference drawn from the test depends on whether the standard for passing makes a valid distinction between adequate and inadequate performance. Often, panels of experts are used to specify the level of performance that should be required. Standards must be high enough to protect the public, as well as the practitioner, but not so high as to be unreasonably limiting. Verifying the appropriateness of the cut score or scores on a test used for licensure or certification is a critical element of the validity of test results (p.157).*

In making recommendations to the Commission regarding passing standards, staff considered the following factors and options that affect the standard setting process in determining a staff-recommendation.

#### **Professional Judgments**

The recommended passing standards for the RICA are based upon the professional judgments provided by the members of the Standard Setting Panel. Since the panel recommendations are criterion-referenced—based on expert judgment of the minimum required knowledge and skills for beginning teachers—examinee performance data provides supplemental, though not necessary, information. Performance data is provided to inform those judgments when there are at least 20 examinees. For the Video Performance Assessment, performance data was not provided to the panel due to the small number of examinees. For the Written Examination, performance data was provided on the 538 first-time test takers at the August 8, 2009, administration.

#### **Standard Error of Measurement**

Each time an examinee takes a test, there is a random chance that the score will be slightly different, and applying the standard error of measurement (SEM) is one way to take this into account. The standard error allows educational analysts to determine a range of scores an examinee would receive if tested repeatedly without studying or contemplating the answers between tests. By applying this technical adjustment, a given examinee's score may be more representative of "true" knowledge because the variation in scores is taken into account, and it provides a safeguard against placing undue emphasis on a single test score.