

CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING

1900 Capitol Avenue
Sacramento, California 95814-4213

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

(916) 445-0814

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DATE: May 10, 1999

TO: All Individuals and Groups Interested in Activities of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing

FROM: Sam W. Swofford, Ed.D
Executive Director

**SUBJECT: Subject Matter Examination Passing Score Changes:
Single Subject Teaching Credentials**

In accordance with the Ryan Act of 1970, candidates for California teaching credentials must verify their subject matter competence by either (1) completing a Commission-approved subject matter program, or (2) passing a subject matter examination adopted by the Commission. The Commission, with the help of teachers and college and university faculty, recently reviewed the passing standards on a number of adopted subject matter examinations.

In April 1999, the Commission adopted new examination passing scores for Praxis Series and Single Subject Assessments for Teaching (SSAT) examinations in **art, English, French, mathematics, music, physical education, the sciences, social science, and Spanish**. The new passing scores in art, English, mathematics, and physical education will be effective beginning with Praxis Series and SSAT administrations after April 15, 1999. The new passing scores in French, music, science, social science, and Spanish will go into effect beginning September 1, 1999. All of the changes to Single Subject Teaching Credential area examination passing scores and the effective dates are presented in the attached table. Candidates who have passed the examinations in these subject areas prior to the effective dates of new passing scores may continue to apply for credentials based on their previous passing scores for a period of five years from the date when the score was earned.

Changes to Examination Score Models

In addition to changes in passing scores, the Commission adopted new score models in some of the subject areas in which candidates must pass two Praxis Series or two SSAT exams. Changes to score models will go into effect at the same time changes to passing scores become effective in each subject area.

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In art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science, the previous partially-compensatory score models (with minimum scores required) will be replaced with fully-compensatory score models (without minimum scores required).

With the (old) partially-compensatory score model, passing scores were based on the combined scores of two same-subject exams in the same examination program (i.e., two Praxis Series exams or two SSAT exams). For each pair of Praxis or SSAT exams, there was a "minimum score" for each exam, a "passing score" for each exam, and an overall "passing score" for the two exams combined. For example, to satisfy the Praxis examination requirement in art, candidates could either (a) earn at least the passing score on each Praxis exam or (b) earn at least the minimum score on each Praxis exam and at least the overall passing score for the two exams combined. (Candidates also had to pass separately the SSAT art exam.) With this passing score model, a high score on one exam in a pair could compensate for a lower score on the other exam, as long as neither score was below the minimum score. Examinees could combine passing and minimum scores from different administrations of the exams in a subject area.

The new fully-compensatory passing score model for the Praxis Series art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science exams is similar to the partially-compensatory passing score model with a significant exception. As in the former model, passing scores in the fully-compensatory model are based on the combined scores of two same subject exams in the same examination program (i.e., two Praxis Series exams or two SSAT exams). Unlike the partially-compensatory passing score model, however, the fully-compensatory model has no minimum scores or passing scores for individual exams. There is simply a single overall passing score for the two exams combined. With the fully-compensatory passing score model, a high score on one exam in a pair can compensate fully (i.e., without regard to minimum scores) for a lower score on the other exam. Essentially, the two exams are treated as one, with two equally-weighted parts.

Candidates for science credentials (biological science, chemistry, geosciences, and physics) will no longer be able to combine general science and science emphasis area SSAT and Praxis Series exam scores. Beginning in September 1999, science credential candidates must pass each examination separately. In Spanish and French, candidates will continue to be required to pass each of the required exams separately.

The Commission also decided that candidates would be allowed to combine previously-earned minimum or higher scores with exam scores earned after the effective date of the score changes to meet the new passing scores. This allowance will be in effect through June 30, 2000. **Beginning in July 2000: (1) candidates will be required to register for and take both of the Praxis exams in art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science at the same test administration, and (2)**

candidates will only be allowed to add together scores from exams taken at the same Praxis administration. The two exams in these subject areas will be treated more like one exam with two parts. The Commission is working with ETS to change registration procedures for the Praxis Series exams in art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science by July 2000 so that candidates will register for one exam code for both exams and pay one fee.

Candidates may not, however use only previously-earned scores to meet the new passing scores. For example, a candidate taking the Praxis art examinations in January 1999 who received a score of 163 on *Art Making* and 150 on *Art: Content, Traditions, Criticism, and Aesthetics*, for a total combined score of 313 would *not* pass the Praxis exams when the new scores go into effect. This candidate could, however, use one of the two scores received in January 1999 in combination with a new score received in June 1999 to meet the new passing score of 313. In mathematics, a candidate who in October 1998 received a passing score of 178 on *Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 1*, and a score of 151 on *Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 2* would *not* pass the Praxis exams when the new scores go into effect. That individual could, however, retake *Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 2* in June 1999 and add the new score with the previous 178 on *Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 1* to achieve the overall passing score of 329.

Changes to SSAT Passing Scores

The passing requirements will change for the SSAT exams as well as for Praxis exams. The changes for the SSAT exams, however, will be invisible to candidates and others who receive score reports. Scores on all SSAT exams are scaled (transformed) so that 220 is the passing score. As a result of the new passing requirements adopted by the Commission, the number of raw points on each exam form needed to achieve a passing scaled score of 220 has changed.

Even though the changes in SSAT passing requirements will not change the passing scores, the Commission expects that the changes will be reflected in the number of candidates who pass these exams. The following expectations are based on the assumption that similar candidates will continue to take the SSAT exams as have taken them in the last three years. As a result of the new SSAT passing requirements, proportionately more candidates should pass the art, general science, chemistry, English, geoscience, and music SSAT exams. A smaller percentage of candidates should pass the biology, social science, and Spanish SSAT exams. Approximately the same proportion of candidates should pass the French, mathematics, physical education, and physics SSAT exams.

Praxis Series and SSAT Score Reporting

As a result of changes in passing scores, score reports to individuals and institutions will not indicate passing status for the next few administrations of the Praxis Series exams. Educational Testing Services (ETS) is making changes to its score reporting procedures to reflect the new passing scores and score models. At least until the September 1999 administration of the Praxis Series exams, candidates will need to refer to information from the Commission regarding the new passing scores to determine passing status. This information will be mailed to candidates with their examinee score reports. A sample of this insert is attached.

SSAT score reports will continue to accurately reflect examinee passing status.

The attached table includes passing score and score model changes and effective dates. If you have questions about the subject matter requirements, please call the Commission's Information Services Office at (916) 445-7254 (weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.). You can also access Commission examination information on the Internet at: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>.

(Sample Insert for Praxis Series Score Reports)

Praxis Series Passing Score Changes

In April 1999, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing adopted new passing scores for the Praxis examinations in **art**, **English**, **mathematics** and **physical education**. Beginning with exams administered after April 15, candidates for Single Subject Teaching Credentials in these subject areas will have to obtain the new passing scores listed below. In **art**, **mathematics**, and **physical education**, candidates must meet a total combined passing score for both Praxis exams, but there are no longer minimum scores or passing scores that must be met on each separate exam. A previously-earned score (from test administrations before April 15, 1999) can be combined with a new score (from test administrations after April 15, 1999) to achieve the overall passing score in art, mathematics, and/or physical education if the previously-earned score meets or exceeds the previous minimum score. Previously-earned scores may not be used by themselves to meet new passing standards.

| Exam Name and Test Code | Passing Score (Effective 4/16/99) | Previous Minimum Score |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Praxis Art Making (#20131) | -- | 163 |
| Praxis Art: Content, Traditions, Criticism, & Aesthetics (#20132) | -- | 150 |
| Praxis Art Combined | 313 | |
| Praxis English: Language, Literature, and Composition: Essays (#20042) | 155 | |
| Praxis Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 1 (#20063) | -- | 165 |
| Praxis Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 2 (#20064) | -- | 152 |
| Praxis Mathematics Combined | 329 | |
| Praxis PE: Movement Forms - Analysis & Design (#30092) | -- | 152 |
| Praxis PE: Movement Forms - Video Evaluation (#20093) | -- | 160 |
| Praxis Physical Education Combined | 328 | |

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State of California
CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING
 Box 944270 (1812 9th Street)
 Sacramento, CA 94244-2700
 (916) 445-7254
 Web site: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>
 E-mail: credentials@ctc.ca.gov

Single Subject Teaching Credential Examinations -- Old and New Passing Standards

| Credential Subject | Exam Title and Test Code | 1995-1999 | | 1999 | |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| | | Min. Score | Passing Score | Passing Score | Effect. Date |
| Art | SSAT Art (#12) | | 220 | 220 | 4/16/99 |
| | Praxis Art Making (#20131) | 163 | 171 | -- | |
| | Praxis Art: Content, Traditions, Criticism & Aesthetics (#20132) | 150 | 160 | -- | |
| | <i>Praxis Art Combined</i> | | 331 | 313 | |
| English | SSAT Literature and English Language (#01) | | 220 | 220 | 4/16/99 |
| | Praxis English: Language, Literature, and Composition: Essays (#20042) | | 160 | 155 | |
| French | SSAT French (#11) | | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | Praxis French: Productive Language Skills (#20171) | | 172 | 173 | |
| | Praxis French: Linguistic, Literary, & Cultural Analysis (#30172) | | 171 | 171 | |
| Math | SSAT Mathematics (#02) | | 220 | 220 | 4/16/99 |
| | Praxis Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 1 (#20063) | 165 | 170 | -- | |
| | Praxis Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part 2 (#30064) | 152 | 159 | -- | |
| | <i>Praxis Mathematics Combined</i> | | 329 | 329 | |
| Music | SSAT Music (#13) | | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | Praxis Music: Concepts & Processes (#30111) | 155 | 165 | -- | |
| | Praxis Music: Analysis (#20112) | 164 | 169 | -- | |
| | <i>Praxis Music Combined</i> | | 334 | 339 | |
| Physical Education | SSAT Physical Education (#09) | | 220 | 220 | 4/16/99 |
| | Praxis PE: Movement Forms - Analysis & Design (#30092) | 152 | 158 | -- | |
| | Praxis PE: Movement Forms - Video Evaluation (#20093) | 160 | 170 | -- | |
| | <i>Praxis PE Combined</i> | | 328 | 328 | |
| Science: Biological Sciences | SSAT Biology (#05) | 208 | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | SSAT General Science (#04) | 208 | 220 | 220 | |
| | <i>SSAT Biology Combined</i> | | 440 | -- | |
| | Praxis Biology: Content Essays (#30233) | 150 | 157 | 161 | |
| | Praxis General Science: Content Essays (#30433) | 140 | 150 | 135 | |
| | <i>Praxis Biology Combined</i> | | 307 | -- | |

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Single Subject Teaching Credential Examinations -- Old and New Passing Standards

| Credential Subject | Exam Title and Number | 1995-1999 | | 1999 | |
|--|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | | Min. Score | Passing Score | Passing Score | Effect. Date |
| Science: Chemistry | SSAT Chemistry (#06) | 208 | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | SSAT General Science (#04) | 208 | 220 | 220 | |
| | <i>SSAT Chemistry Combined</i> | | 440 | -- | |
| | Praxis Chemistry: Content Essays (#30242) | 145 | 155 | 150 | |
| | Praxis General Science: Content Essays (#30433) <i>Praxis Chemistry Combined</i> | 140 | 150 307 | 135 -- | |
| Science: Geo-sciences | SSAT Geoscience (#07) | 208 | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | SSAT General Science (#04) <i>SSAT Geosciences Combined</i> | 208 | 220 440 | 220 -- | |
| | Praxis General Science: Content Essays (#30433) | | 150 | 135 | |
| Science: Physics | SSAT Physics (#08) | 208 | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | SSAT General Science (#04) <i>SSAT Physics Combined</i> | 208 | 220 440 | 220 -- | |
| | Praxis Physics: Content Essays (#30262) | 150 | 160 | 160 | |
| | Praxis General Science: Content Essays (#30433) <i>Praxis Physics Combined</i> | 140 | 150 310 | 135 -- | |
| | Social Science | SSAT Social Science (#03) | | 220 | |
| Praxis Social Studies: Analytical Essays (#20082) | | 150 | 160 | -- | |
| Praxis Social Studies: Interpretation of Materials (#20083) <i>Praxis Social Science Combined</i> | | 161 | 169 | -- | |
| | | | 329 | 333 | |
| Spanish | SSAT Spanish (#10) | | 220 | 220 | 9/01/99 |
| | Praxis Spanish: Productive Language Skills (#20192) | | 172 | 181 | |
| | Praxis Spanish: Linguistic, Literary, & Cultural Analysis (#30193) | | 171 | 184 | |

Notes: In April 1999, the Commission adopted new examination passing scores for Praxis Series and Single Subject Assessments for Teaching (SSAT) examinations in art, English, French, mathematics, music, physical education, the sciences, social science, and Spanish. In art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science, candidates must meet a total passing score for both Praxis exams, but there are no longer minimum scores that must be met on each separate exam. A previously-earned score (from test administrations before the effect date) can be combined with a new score (from test administrations after the effect date) to achieve the overall passing score in art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science, if the previously-earned score meets or exceeds the previous minimum score. Previously-earned scores may not be used by themselves to meet new passing standards. Beginning in July 2000: (1) candidates will be required to register for and take both of the Praxis exams in art, mathematics, music, physical education, and social science at the same test administration, and (2) candidates will only be allowed to add together scores from exams taken at the same Praxis administration.