



CODED CORRESPONDENCE

DATE:

June 29, 2024

NUMBER:

24-05

TO:

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

FROM:

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Executive Director
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 153 (Chap.38, Stats 2024): Changes to the California Basic Skills Requirement

Summary

Senate Bill 153 (Chap. 38, Stats 2024), effective June 29, 2024, makes two changes to the California Basic Skills Requirement (BSR). Specifically, the bill adds a provision that allows possession of a bachelor's (or higher) degree earned at a regionally accredited college or university to meet the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR). The bill also removes the BSR as a requirement for earning any credential or permit where the applicant must hold a bachelor's degree.

Key Provisions

In an effort to reduce barriers and streamline the licensure process for educators in California, the Governor's 2024-25 Budget Trailer Bill includes amendments to the California Basic Skills Requirement that remove the BSR as a condition for licensure for most credentials and permits. For those credentials and permits where the BSR remains, the amendments also allow any credential candidate to satisfy the California Basic Skills Requirement outlined in Education Code section 44252 through the possession of a bachelor's (or higher) degree earned at a regionally accredited college or university. This provision, authorized through Senate Bill (SB) 153, is effective June 29, 2024. Therefore, the requirement to meet the BSR applies only to the following four credentials and permits:

- [Designated Subjects Supervision and Coordination Credential](#)
- [Exchange Certificated Employee Credential](#)

- [Sojourn Certificated Employee Credential](#)
- [Emergency Substitute Teaching Permit for Prospective Teachers](#)

Impact on Applicants

This new option will allow applicants for any credential or permit that requires a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution to satisfy the BSR by submitting official transcripts showing conferral of a qualifying degree. Applicants will no longer be required to provide any supporting basic skills materials (such as exam scores, course descriptions or coursework evaluation forms) when the applicant has verified conferral of a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution. As of June 29, 2024, all applicants may use this option to satisfy the BSR even if their application has already been submitted and is currently pending evaluation at the Commission.

Impact on Current Credential Holders

Educators who hold a preliminary California credential based on out-of-state or out-of-country preparation may currently have the BSR listed as a renewal requirement on their credential, represented by the "RC" renewal requirement code. Since a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college is a requirement for the initial issuance of the teaching credential itself, these educators have now met BSR via this new option. For such educators, the "RC" BSR renewal requirement code will remain listed on their preliminary credential record. However, the requirement may now be disregarded as a renewal requirement, and no further action is required from the educator or employer concerning the BSR.

In the event that the "RC" code is the *only* renewal requirement code listed on an individual's preliminary credential, the educator will qualify for a clear credential and should submit an application directly to the Commission to upgrade to the clear credential.

Impact on Local Educational Agencies

Due to this new option, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) may see an increase in the number of qualified applicants for permits and credentials, and credential analysts may experience a reduction in evaluation times for credentials and permits requiring the BSR. Furthermore, employing agencies are no longer required to cease employment for out-of-state prepared teachers who have not yet met the BSR after one year from the issuance date of their credential. Statute requires that any credential that lists the "RC" renewal code be invalid for employment purposes after one year if the BSR has not been met. This provision allows educators prepared out-of-state and outside the United States to continue employment for the full duration of their preliminary credential, as a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution is a requirement for the initial issuance of all out-of-state prepared credentials and therefore satisfies the BSR.

Impact on Program Sponsors

When evaluating credential candidate requirements, credential analysts at Commission-approved programs can now accept the bachelor's degree to meet both the degree requirement and the BSR. Previously, Induction programs were required to verify passage of BSR for preliminary credential holders who received their document with the "RC" renewal requirement code. However, this requirement is considered complete and Induction program

sponsors will not be required to submit an attachment, form or any other correspondence with the clear credential recommendation to verify that the BSR has been met. Commission staff will note that a bachelor's degree had been earned prior to the issuance of the preliminary credential, and no further verification is necessary.

For Commission-approved preliminary credential programs, admissions offices should begin to update their candidate resources to inform future teacher candidates that they do not need to meet the BSR through any other options if they hold a qualifying bachelor's or higher degree. The Commission encourages teacher preparation programs to update their resources expediently to ensure that candidates do not take examinations or coursework unnecessarily.

Degrees Earned Outside of the United States

A bachelor's degree (or higher) earned outside the United States must be deemed equivalent to a degree earned at a regionally accredited college or university in the United States to meet licensure requirements and satisfy the BSR. Educators that earned their degrees from outside of the United States must obtain an evaluation of their transcripts through a Commission-approved Foreign Transcript Evaluating Agency. See Leaflet [CL-635](#) for more information.

Background

California Education Code and Title 5 Regulations specify that, in most cases, applicants for a credential, certificate, or permit to serve in California public schools must demonstrate basic skills proficiency before the credential, certificate, or permit will be issued. For Multiple and Single Subject teaching credential candidates, the basic skills requirement must be met prior to being assigned daily responsibility for whole class instruction in student teaching or serving as an intern. However, institutions may require the basic skills requirement be met prior to program enrollment.

For many years the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST), first implemented in 1983, was the only option to satisfy the BSR. Over time it became apparent that having an exam as the single-point screening mechanism in place was creating unnecessary barriers for prospective educators. In recent years additional options to meet the BSR have been expanded no less than 5 times, offering 10 options to effectively alleviate the exam roadblock for potential California educators. In further accordance with the Governor's goal of continuing to lessen credential barriers, this bill represents a significant step forward in streamlining the teacher credentialing process for all candidates.

Options for meeting the basic skills requirement prior to SB 153 include:

- Complete qualifying college coursework in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST).
- Pass the CSET: Multiple Subjects plus the CSET: Writing Skills Examination.
- Demonstrate proficiency on the California State University (CSU) Early Assessment Program.
- Demonstrate proficiency on the California State University (CSU) Placement Examinations.
- Pass a basic skills examination from another state.
- Achieve the minimum acceptable scores on the College Board SAT examination.

- Achieve the minimum acceptable scores on the ACT examination.
- Achieve the minimum acceptable scores on selected College Board Advanced Placement (AP) examinations.

As of June 29, 2024 the following additional option for meeting the basic skills requirement is approved:

- Possession of a bachelor's degree (or higher) earned at a regionally accredited college or university.

Important Dates

The effective date of this measure is June 29, 2024

Resources

[Senate Bill 153- Education Finance: Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill](#)

Education Code § 44252, 44252.5, 44259

References

Basic Skills Requirement Information Leaflet: [https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/basic-skills-requirement-\(cl-667\)](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/basic-skills-requirement-(cl-667))

Foreign Transcript Evaluation Leaflet:

[https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/foreign-transcript-evaluation-\(cl-635\)](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/foreign-transcript-evaluation-(cl-635))

Application Form 41-4: Application For Credential Authorizing Public School Service:

<https://educatortools.ctc.ca.gov/CredentialApplication/Create>

Contact Information

Questions regarding credential requirements and application submissions may be directed to the Commission's Certification Division by email at credentials@ctc.ca.gov.