



PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

DATE:
October 8, 2024

NUMBER:
PSA 24-10

SUBJECT: FOUNDATIONS OF READING EXAMINATION OPTION, BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025

Summary:

This Program Sponsor Alert provides information on the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) approval of the Foundations of Reading examination as an option for certain examinees beginning July 1, 2025, after the Reading Instruction Competence Instruction (RICA) is retired on June 30, 2025.

Key Provisions:

At its August 2024 meeting, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) approved the [Foundations of Reading](#) examination effective July 1, 2025 for:

- Teachers who hold a Preliminary credential with a RICA renewal code.
- Multiple Subject, Education Specialist, and PK-3 ECE Specialist candidates who by June 30, 2025, complete all other credential requirements except for the RICA.
- Single Subject credential holders who want to add a Multiple Subject credential.
- Private school teachers seeking a Multiple Subject credential.
- Teachers who are prepared in another country.
- Teachers who are prepared via Peace Corps Experience.

As a result of Commission action, staff will plan for and conduct a standard setting study for the Foundations of Reading examination in early 2025 to establish a minimum passing standard for credential candidates to be applied to scores obtained after July 1, 2025.

Background:

[Education Code section 44283.3](#) gives the Commission authority to review and adopt reading/literacy instruction assessments required by other states as an option for individuals who need to demonstrate competence in reading and literacy instruction if the RICA is no longer available. [Program Sponsor Alert 23-03](#) notified the field that Senate Bill 488 (Chap. 678.

Stats. 2021) requires the Commission to transition to an approved literacy performance assessment for all Preliminary Multiple Subject, Education Specialist, and PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction candidates and retire the RICA as of July 1, 2025.

Staff researched reading instruction exams used by other states and found that the [Foundations of Reading](#) examination, which is currently required in thirteen states, meets the following requirements in [Education Code section 44259\(b\)\(4\)\(A\)](#):

- i. The study of organized, systematic, explicit skills including phonemic awareness, direct, systematic, explicit phonics, and decoding skills
- ii. A strong literature, language, and comprehension component with a balance of oral and written language
- iii. Ongoing diagnostic techniques that inform teaching and assessment
- iv. Early intervention techniques

Education Code Section 44259(b)(4)(A)(v) requires “Guided practice in a clinical setting,” which cannot be directly measured by a written examination but is required to be completed within the preparation program.

The [Foundations of Reading](#) examination meets the definition of “direct, systematic, explicit phonics” in paragraph B of California [Education Code Section 44259\(b\)\(4\)](#) and assesses integrated methods of teaching language arts as required in paragraph C of that same section of Education Code.

The [Foundations of Reading](#) examination is part of the series of examinations hosted by the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson, the Commission’s vendor for all other exams and assessment. Because of this, examinees would be able to use the same user identifications and platform to register for and take this examination as they do for other Commission exams. In addition, preparation programs will be able to use the same data and information system (Results Analyzer) to review their candidates’ results as they currently use for other Commission exams.

Sources:

[Options to Support Teachers and Candidates During the Transition from the RICA to the Literacy Performance Assessment](#)

[PSA 23-03 Transition Plan for the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment \(RICA\)](#)

References:

[Education Code section 44283.3](#)

[Education Code section 44259](#)

[Senate Bill \(SB\) 488 \(Chap. 678, Stats. 2021\)](#)

Contact Information:

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