



# PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

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**DATE:**  
July 1, 2025

**NUMBER:**  
PSA 25-07

**SUBJECT: 2025-26 STATE BUDGET ACT PROVIDES FINAL FLEXIBILITIES FOR MEETING RICA REQUIREMENT AND COVID-ERA PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT DEFERRALS**

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**Summary:**

As passed, [Assembly Bill 121 \(Chap. 8, Stats. 2025\)](#) allows three final opportunities for credential candidates to complete the requirement to pass the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) if it is required for the credential they seek, and an extension of one flexibility for individuals with a teaching performance assessment renewal code. This Program Sponsor Alert provides information on the options.

**Key Provisions:**

AB 121 (Chap. 8, Stats. 2025) does all of the following:

- Extends the sunset date for RICA to October 31, 2025, giving credential candidates who have completed **all** program requirements, including passage of a teaching performance assessment, and preliminary credential holders with RICA renewal codes additional opportunities to take and pass the reading instruction competence assessment.
- Extends the sunset date from June 30, 2025 to June 30, 2026 for credential candidates who, pursuant to [Executive Order N-66-20](#), were recommended for a preliminary credential with a teaching performance assessment renewal code to clear their credential by completing a Commission-approved induction program or two years of satisfactory service on the preliminary credential.
- Provides credential candidates who, pursuant to [Executive Order N-66-20](#), were recommended for a preliminary credential with a RICA renewal code the option to clear their credential by completing a Commission-approved induction program or two years of satisfactory service on the preliminary credential by June 30, 2026.
- Enables the Commission to apply the new minimum passing standard adopted at its [October 2024](#) meeting to candidates for preliminary multiple subject or education

specialist credentials who received a score of 198 on any version of RICA since July 1, 2015.

**Background:**

During the COVID pandemic, the Governor signed [Executive Order N-66-20](#) allowing candidates to be recommended for a preliminary multiple subject or education specialist credential, as specified, without successfully completing a performance assessment and/or passing the RICA but requiring these candidates to complete either or both the performance assessment or RICA to earn their clear credentials. These candidates were issued preliminary credentials with renewal codes specifying completion of either a performance assessment or RICA or both. The Governor subsequently signed [Senate Bill 114 \(Chap. 48, Stats. 2023\)](#) in summer 2023 thereby allowing these COVID-era candidates with performance assessment renewal codes on their preliminary credentials to waive the performance assessment requirement through either successful completion of a two-year induction program or by demonstrating two years of successful service on their preliminary credential by June 30, 2025. [PSA 23-05](#) provides details on those provisions. AB 121 (Chap. 8, Stats. 2025) extends the June 30, 2025 deadline by one year to June 30, 2026 and adds individuals with RICA renewal codes on their preliminary credentials.

[Senate Bill 488 \(Chap. 678, Stats. 2022\)](#) implemented changes to the preparation of California educators to teach literacy. Among its provisions was the requirement that the Commission ensure by July 1, 2025, that an approved teaching performance assessment assess all candidates, including intern candidates, for preliminary multiple subject credential or education specialist credentials for competence in instruction in literacy, including, but not limited to, evidence-based methods of teaching foundational reading skills, as specified. This led to the Commission's development and adoption of Program Standard 7, Teaching Performance Expectation 7, and a Literacy Performance Assessment, and the sunseting of the RICA. As the July 1, 2025 deadline has approached, the Commission has taken all possible action to assist candidates in meeting the RICA requirement prior to its sunseting.

AB 121 also provides candidates who have completed *all* program requirements-including passage of a teaching performance assessment, or preliminary credential holders with RICA renewal codes until October 31, 2025, to take and pass the reading instruction competence assessment. On October 31, 2025, the Commission's contract with the RICA examination vendor will expire, and the exam will no longer be available. After that time, candidates will have to pass either the newly adopted Foundations of Reading examination or a literacy performance assessment offered by one of the Commission's approved model sponsors (CalTPA, edTPA, or FAST).

Finally, AB 121 enables the Commission to apply the new minimum passing standard adopted at its October 2024 meeting to candidates for preliminary multiple subject or education specialist credentials who received a score of 198 on any version of RICA since July 1, 2015.

**Important Dates:**

October 31, 2025 – Final date by which a candidate may attempt the RICA. Score reports for these attempts may be received after the October 31 date but may be applied toward an appropriate credential if the candidate passed prior to October 31, 2025.

July 1, 2015 – Candidates who received a score of 198 on the RICA on or after this date may apply it toward an appropriate credential.

**Sources:**

[Assembly Bill 121 \(Chap. 8, Stats. 2025\)](#)

[October 2024 Commission meeting](#)

[Senate Bill 488 \(Chap. 678, Stats. 2022\)](#)

[Executive Order N-66-20](#)

[Senate Bill 114 \(Chap. 48, Stats. 2023\)](#)

**Contact Information:**

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