



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Series: 2013-2014  
Circular Letter: C-3

**TO:** Superintendents of Schools  
Directors of Endowed and Incorporated Academies  
Directors of Regional Educational Service Centers  
Directors of Public Charter and Magnet Schools  
Personnel and Human Resource Directors  
Directors of Approved Private Special Education Facilities

**FROM:** Stefan Pryor, Commissioner of Education 

**DATE:** August 20, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Public Act 13-245 Requirement for Survey or Testing on Reading Instruction

As you may know, Public Act 12-116, An Act Concerning Education Reform, passed in June 2012, included new testing requirements in reading instruction for in-service elementary and early childhood teachers who are teaching in grades K-3, special education teachers and remedial reading teachers.

Subsequent to the passage of the legislation, the Department of Education identified issues regarding the requirements of the new statute. Department staff met with legislators in the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and the leadership of both statewide teachers unions, which likewise raised concerns regarding the legislation, to discuss ways to make the policy workable for the state's teachers. The primary topics of discussion were the provisions requiring that all currently certified K-3 teachers complete a practice test every year and that all currently certified special education teachers and remedial reading teachers successfully pass the Foundations of Reading exam. The provision requiring that the results be publicly reported was also addressed. The Black and Puerto Rican Caucus and unions worked with the department to make the changes that are now included in PA 13-245, passed on June 4, 2013. This new law amends the previous requirements in PA 12-116 for testing in reading instruction. The amended statute requires all currently certified K-3 teachers to complete a biennial reading "survey," as opposed to a "test," exempts the survey results from release under the Freedom of Information Act, and provides that the results of the survey not be included as part of summative ratings in educator evaluation. Additionally, the new statutory language requires only pre-service special education and remedial reading teachers and language arts consultants to complete the Foundations of Reading exam instead of all such currently certified personnel. This new legislation may be accessed at: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/FC/2013SB-01097-R000544-FC.htm>

The following is a summary of the new legislation:

**A. Required Survey based upon the Foundations of Reading Test for All Active Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2 and 3 Teachers** (Section 13 of PA 13-245)

Effective July 1, 2014, and biennially thereafter, each local or regional board of education shall require that all certified employees who are actively teaching in grades K-3 under the following elementary or early childhood endorsements (#113, 001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 008 and 013) complete a *survey* to assess knowledge of best practice in reading instruction based upon the Foundations of Reading Test.

- Teachers who have already taken and passed the Foundations of Reading test for certification eligibility are **not** exempt from completing this survey on reading instruction.
- State funds will cover the costs of development and administration; therefore, the individual teacher will not bear the cost of completing the biennial survey.
- The results of the survey shall identify strengths and weaknesses in knowledge of reading instruction based on the reading objectives surveyed, and will provide disaggregated and aggregate data at the individual educator, school and district level. The results shall be used to develop student learning objectives (SLOs) and teacher practice goals and will inform professional learning as required under Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-148b.
- The results will not be subject to release under the Freedom of Information Act, nor be included as part of summative ratings in educator evaluations.

The Department is working with the Evaluation Systems Group of Pearson, Inc., which administers the Foundations of Reading Test to develop a reading instruction survey that will be made available no later than July 1, 2014. If desired, teachers and pre-service candidates for certification may access the current practice test and information that is currently available online at: <http://www.ct.nesinc.com>.

**B. Foundations of Reading Test –Special Education Teachers, Remedial Reading and Language Arts Teachers and Reading Consultants** (Section 15 and 16 of PA 13-245)

Effective September 1, 2013, any applicant for an endorsement in one of the three areas below will be required to take the Foundations of Reading Test or a comparable test as adopted by the State Board of Education:

- Comprehensive Special Education (endorsement #165);
- Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts (endorsement #102); or
- Reading and Language Arts Consultant (endorsement #097).

This would apply to anyone seeking a first time endorsement (pre-service teachers), those seeking a cross-endorsement, educators with a lapsed certificate with these endorsements, and those educators from out-of-state who are seeking certification in Connecticut.

**Currently certified teachers holding an active certificate are not required to take the Foundations of Reading test or a comparable test with respect to any of the above three endorsements they obtained before September 1, 2013. Any teacher desiring to add a new endorsement after September 1, 2013 from the list above will be required to take the Foundations of Reading test or a comparable test.**

Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAPs) are also affected by this legislation. The following information is provided for districts regarding DSAP holders and applicants for new DSAPs:

1. Current DSAP Holders:
  - a. Do NOT need to take and pass the Foundations of Reading test to receive a renewal of their DSAP;
  - b. Must take and pass the Foundations of Reading test prior to being eligible to receive the endorsement or new certificate in any of the three identified endorsement areas, unless they apply for the initial or cross-endorsement before September 1, 2013.
2. New DSAPs Applied for after September 1, 2013:
  - a. All new DSAP applications received on or after September 1, 2013, will require that the new DSAP applicant pass the Foundations of Reading test PRIOR to being issued the DSAP.

Please share this information with the teachers and administrators in your school district to whom these requirements apply so they are fully informed of the new requirements in a timely manner.

If you have questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact the Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification through the dedicated superintendent's telephone line or by email at: [teacher.cert@ct.gov](mailto:teacher.cert@ct.gov).

Thank you.

SF:npg

cc: Sarah J. Barzee, Ph.D., Interim Chief Talent Officer  
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