
Literacy and Specialty Area Standards for Educator Preparation Policy 5.505

The Background:

All Educator preparation providers (EPP) and the specialty area programs (SAP) that lead to licensure shall be approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). All licensure programs must ensure that candidates have opportunities to attain the knowledge and skills specified by the SBE, have clinical experience in accordance with guidelines established by the SBE, and meet other standards, procedures, and guidelines established by the SBE.

Following passage of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act (Chapter 2 of the Public Acts of 2021, 1st Extraordinary Session), this recommendation includes significant revisions to the EPP Literacy Standards and the inclusion of additional standards that emphasize foundational skills in literacy for Early Childhood, Elementary, Special Education, and Instructional Leader licensure. These standards are reflective of the knowledge and skills educators must have to provide high-quality literacy instruction. In addition, and as required by the Act, there is an emphasis on training on the identification and use of high-quality instructional materials and training in trauma-informed instruction.

Additionally, this item includes minor edits for clarity in the following areas:

- Required majors in specified endorsement areas
- Specialty area proposals for early childhood endorsements
- EPP-offered additional endorsement options for 6-10 Mathematics
- Updates to Specialty Area Standards references and dual/additional endorsement program permissions
- English as a Second Language (ESL) program design permissions
- Slight clerical revisions to existing literacy standards

Between first and final reading, the Department gathered feedback from the Educator Preparation Working Group (EPWG) and EPP literacy experts on the foundational literacy skills standards. Feedback from the Tennessee Education Association (TEA) and SCORE were also incorporated to the standards for final reading. Revisions include clarifying key terms such as “intellectual preparation” and “internalization of high-quality instructional materials” and various clerical changes throughout the policy.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department prepare a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA.

Policy Justification:

T.C.A. § 4-5-230 requires that justification for adopting an item as a policy instead of a rule be submitted to the chair of the Government Operations Committee. This item is proposed to be adopted as a policy because it defines or explains the meaning of a statute or rule and/or concerns only the internal management of state government that does not affect private rights or privileges.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends approval of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.