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**Literacy and Specialty Area Standards for Educator Preparation Policy 5.505**

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**The Background:**

Tennessee State Board of Education Literacy and Specialty Area Standards for Educator Preparation Policy 5.505 outlines the literacy and specialty area standards for all approved programs that lead to licensure.

This item proposes the ability for approved programs in integrated early childhood education to recommend candidates for licensure in integrated, general education, or special education early childhood pursuant to assessments taken by candidates with qualifying scores.

The proposed change mitigates potential challenges with reciprocity for Out-of-State Licensure candidates in obtaining a Tennessee teaching license and for candidates with expired Tennessee Educator licenses to renew a Tennessee teaching license that retiring the Early Childhood endorsement would cause amidst a challenging labor market.

Allowing State Board-approved candidates to be recommended for licensure on the basis of assessments taken ensures consistent requirements across all candidate types and ensures consistent mechanisms for licensure recommendation and processing.

Between first and final reading, the requirement for educator preparation programs (EPPs) to verify candidate achievement of specific proficiency levels on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) was removed. This change provides EPPs with greater discretion in determining valid and reliable methods for assessing candidates' language proficiency and content knowledge. Removing prescriptive OPI score requirements is in alignment with the Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy 5.105.

**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.

**Connection to the [Master Plan](#):**

This item supports the State Board's strategic focus on Literacy and Teachers and Leaders outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring pre-service teachers and teachers pursuing additional endorsements and degrees are equipped with the necessary knowledge base regarding literacy development, instruction, and intervention to support all learners within the classroom setting.

**The Recommendation:**

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