

### **Licensure Assessment Test Changes**

There are currently no anticipated changes for Licensure Assessments in September 2017. The [ETS website](#) is the most up to date source to ensure the correct Praxis tests are being used.

### **Commissioner's Memos**

The ADE issues regulatory guidance and informational notifications to school districts in the form of a Commissioner's Memo. These memos are posted [online](#) as soon as they are approved for release.

[Subscribe](#) to receive notifications on the latest published Commissioner's Memos.

Commissioner memos issued for Licensure/Educator Preparation since the December newsletter include:

<a href="#">LIC-17-016 Licensure Exception Corrections</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-017 Long-Term Substitute Teacher Request</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-018 Beginning Administrators and Experienced Administrators Leadership Forum January 23, 2017</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-019 2017 Newly Certified National Board Certified Teachers</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-020 National Board Certified Teachers: Complete Your Profile by February 10, 2017</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-021 Office of Educator Preparation Grant Proposal for 2017-2018 for the Arkansas Professional Pathway to Educator Licensure (APPEL) Program</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-023 Background Checks - Consent Form and Other Changes</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-024 2017-2018 Critical Academic Shortage Areas</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-025 2017-2018 Applications for the Master Principal Program</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-026 2017 Educator Career Fair</a>
<a href="#">LIC-17-027 National Board Certified Teachers Regional Orientation Sessions for 2017</a>

### **Key Points**

Key Points is a monthly video produced by the Arkansas Department of Education to inform the public of key points in the progress of K-12 education. Visit the [Key Points Website](#) for current and past videos. Be sure to share with your educator candidates, as these videos are a great way to keep up with education news in Arkansas.

### **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

Be sure to check out the latest on [ESSA](#). The ADE is continuing to draft our state plan and submit to the US Department of Education by September 2017.

### **State Board of Education (SBE) Information**

Information regarding the State Board of Education can be found at <http://bit.ly/2hU9qvs> . Agendas for upcoming meetings and documentation from previous meetings can provide valuable information for all involved in educator preparation. Live streaming is also available on meeting days. The next scheduled meeting is April 13-14, 2017.

### **Educator Preparation Program Approval**

The Office of Educator Preparation is accepting proposals from IHEs for new programs or any revised programs of study. Proposals from public IHEs must first be submitted to the Arkansas Department of

Higher Education ([lillian.williams@adhe.edu](mailto:lillian.williams@adhe.edu)) for new degree or certificate programs or changes to degrees or certificates. An [inventory of AHECB approved degree programs](#) at all public IHEs is available on the ADHE website. Proposals to revise programs and all proposals from independent IHEs should be sent directly to [Sharlee.Crowson@arkansas.gov](mailto:Sharlee.Crowson@arkansas.gov) at the ADE. [Information and forms for proposals](#) to be submitted directly to the ADE can be found on the ADE website.

### **Spring Educator Career Fair**

The 2017 ADE Spring Educator Career Fair is scheduled for Saturday, April 22 from 10am to 2pm at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in North Little Rock. Representatives from school districts, educator preparation providers, and the ADE will be present. The event is free for attendees and no registration is required. More information for attendees is available on [our event information page](#). The purpose of the event is to

- Network with school district representatives
- Learn more about current job openings
- Get information about how to enter the teaching profession
- Add areas of licensure
- Renew a teaching license
- Learn more about earning advanced degrees
- Find out how to achieve National Board Certification

If you are interested in having a booth at the career fair complete the [registration form](#).

### **Updates to Federal Legislation – Teacher Preparation Program Accountability**

[The Teacher Preparation Program Rules](#) were repealed when the President signed a Congressional Review Act on March 27, 2017. These rules would have required the state to rate the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs.

### **Background Check Changes**

Be sure to review the [commissioner's memo LIC-17-023](#) regarding changes to background checks. The background check consent form has been replaced with an online form. The paper form will no longer be accepted. Also, an update list of [Live Scan locations](#) has been posted. This should be useful information for Educator Preparation candidates.

### **Updates to State Legislation**

The following is a list of legislation related to educator preparation that has passed this session. The new laws are effective 90 days after the final, official day of session unless a specific date is specified. Rules will be promulgated once the law is in effect. We will continue to update throughout the rules process, which may take several months to complete. Some of the new legislation that directly affects educator preparation include the following:

[Act 294](#) has several revisions to educator licensure and educator preparation programs. The revisions allow for the ADE to create a tiered licensure system that promotes the education profession while providing flexibility for schools to hire quality teacher and school leader candidates and strengthen the educator

workforce. Other revisions include the renaming of “nontraditional programs” to “alternative educator licensure programs” and streamlining their requirements.

[Act 295](#) has several revisions to TESS. TESS has been substantially changed for greater school and district flexibility while maintaining the essential framework for professional support, growth, and evaluations. Act 295 accounts for ESSA flexibility and enhanced accountability to ensure that all students have access to effective teachers. As this Act becomes effective, many of the prescriptive requirements for TESS will change; however, the feedback and support components remain firmly in place.

[Act 416](#) requires candidates applying for an elementary education (K-6) license or a special education (K-12) license to pass a stand-alone reading test.

[Act 564](#) amends several provisions in the Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB) legislation. Fingerprints will be allowed to be taken by any method approved by the Arkansas State Police. The amendments also will allow for the opportunity for the state to participate in the state and federal rap back programs. The audits of Educator Preparation Programs will no longer be conducted every seven years. Instead the PLSB will establish an annual review of EPP quality based on an approved set of criteria.

Other Legislation that will indirectly affect educator preparation:

[Act 746](#) - Background checks for public school educators and employees

[Act 160](#) - Teacher Opportunity Grant

[Act 588](#) - Lifetime Teaching License

[Act 709](#) - Loan Forgiveness Program for Critical Shortage Areas

### **Upcoming Meetings**

April 6-7 - Arkansas Association of Colleges for Teacher Preparation (ArACTE) [Annual Conference](#)

April 10 - Review of Reading Test for Licensure Part One

April 22 – ADE Spring Career Fair at Wyndham North Little Rock

April 27 - Review of Reading Test for Licensure Part Two