Algebra I Employment Standards, Policy & Rule

The Background:

T.C.A. §49-6-6006 requires teachers who teach courses in which an end of course exam is required for students to satisfy graduation requirements to pass a criterion referenced test or standardized test if their license does not carry a subject specific endorsement for the subject area of the course. This statutory requirement has impacted a large number of middle school and special education teachers who teach Algebra I, but do not carry a secondary mathematics endorsement.

The Employment Standard in SBE Rule 0520-01-02.03(3) allows a teacher with a professional license pursuant to State Board Rule 0520-02-04-.01 (2)(c), an endorsement to teach through at least grade eight (8), a passing score on the middle school math Praxis, and attendance at state-approved training to teach Algebra I at any grade level.

The department wants to ensure that all teachers meet the intent of the law and SBE rule and have the appropriate level of content knowledge to teach the Algebra I course. Currently, in order to fulfill the law and meet the employment standard, teachers must pass the middle school math Praxis (now 5169) and attend a state-approved training. Attending a training focused on the Algebra I content is one way for teachers to demonstrate that they meet this expectation. The department is working to support teachers by expanding the number of certified trainings that are being offered.

In order to continue high expectations and provide teachers another way to demonstrate mastery of the Algebra I content, the department proposes revising the current Algebra I employment standard rule to include two additional options for teachers to meet the employment standard:

1. Receive a passing score on a supplemental test in the content area approved for this purpose by the department. This test will fulfill the requirement established in statute and allow teachers with a license up to grade eight (8) to teach Algebra I at any level; or
2. Have a one year, two year, or three year TVAAS score of Level 5 in Algebra I in the 2011-12, 2012-13, or 2013-14 school year, will have met the Employment Standards requirement pursuant to this part to teach Algebra 1 at any grade level.

This change would allow teachers to meet the employment standard by passing Praxis 5169 and meeting one of the following:

1. Attending a state-approved training; or

2. Receiving a passing score on a supplemental test (in addition to Praxis 5169) in the content area approved for this purpose by the department; or
3. Receiving a one year, two year, or three year TVAAS score of Level 5 in Algebra I in the 2011-12, 2012-13, or 2013-14 school years.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends adoption of the standard on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

Proposed Changes to Board Policy 2.103, Elements of School-Wide Reform

f. In order to meet the demand for mathematics teachers, Algebra I and any math course in grades 6-8 may be taught by a licensed teacher with the appropriate 7-12 math endorsement OR by a teacher with a professional license pursuant to State Board Rule 0520-2-4-.01(1)(c), an endorsement to teach through at least grade 8, a passing score on the middle school math PRAXIS, and a) successful completion of a state-approved training, b) a passing score on a supplemental test in the content area approved for this purpose by the department, or c) a one year, two year, or three year TVAAS score of Level 5 in Algebra I in the 2011-12, 2012-13, or 2013-14 school years. All courses above Algebra I including Core Math II must be taught by a teacher in endorsed in mathematics 7-12.

Proposed Changes to Board Rule 0520-01-02-.03, Employment Standards

0520-01-02-.03 EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS.

(3) A classroom teacher with an endorsement in elementary education or early childhood education is eligible to teach any subject, including art, music, and physical education, in the grades covered by the endorsement as part of the teacher's regular classroom assignment. However, a teacher with a professional license pursuant to State Board Rule 0520-02-04-.01 (2)(c), may teach Algebra I at any grade level if they have: 1) an endorsement to teach through at least grade eight (8), 2) a passing score on the middle school math PRAXIS, and a) successful completion of a state-approved training, b) a passing score on a supplemental test in the content area approved for this purpose by the department, or c) a one year, two year, or three year TVAAS score of Level 5 in Algebra I in the 2011-12, 2012-13, or 2013-14 school years.