

1 AN ACT regarding education.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing
5 Section 21-1a as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/21-1a) (from Ch. 122, par. 21-1a)

7 Sec. 21-1a. Tests required for certification and teacher
8 preparation.

9 (a) After July 1, 1988, in addition to all other
10 requirements, early childhood, elementary, special, high
11 school, school service personnel, or, except as provided in
12 Section 34-6, administrative certificates shall be issued to
13 persons who have satisfactorily passed a test of basic skills
14 and subject matter knowledge. The tests of basic skills and
15 subject matter knowledge shall be the tests which from time
16 to time are designated by the State Board of Education in
17 consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board and
18 may be tests prepared by an educational testing organization
19 or tests designed by the State Board of Education in
20 consultation with the State Teacher Certification Board. The
21 areas to be covered by the test of basic skills shall include
22 the basic skills of reading, writing, grammar and
23 mathematics. The test of subject matter knowledge shall
24 assess content knowledge in the specific subject field. The
25 tests shall be designed to be racially neutral to assure that
26 no person in taking the tests is thereby discriminated
27 against on the basis of race, color, national origin or other
28 factors unrelated to the person's ability to perform as a
29 certificated employee. The score required to pass the tests
30 of basic skills and subject matter knowledge shall be fixed
31 by the State Board of Education in consultation with the

1 State Teacher Certification Board. The tests shall be held
2 not fewer than 3 times a year at such time and place as may
3 be designated by the State Board of Education in consultation
4 with the State Teacher Certification Board.

5 (b) Except as provided in Section 34-6, the provisions
6 of subsection (a) of this Section shall apply equally in any
7 school district subject to Article 34, provided that the
8 State Board of Education shall determine which certificates
9 issued under Sections 34-8.1 and 34-83 prior to July 1, 1988
10 are comparable to any early childhood certificate, elementary
11 school certificate, special certificate, high school
12 certificate, school service personnel certificate or
13 administrative certificate issued under this Article as of
14 July 1, 1988.

15 (c) A person who holds an early childhood, elementary,
16 special, high school or school service personnel certificate
17 issued under this Article on or at any time before July 1,
18 1988, including a person who has been issued any such
19 certificate pursuant to Section 21-11.1 or in exchange for a
20 comparable certificate theretofore issued under Section
21 34-8.1 or Section 34-83, shall not be required to take or
22 pass the tests in order to thereafter have such certificate
23 renewed.

24 (d) The State Board of Education in consultation with
25 the State Teacher Certification Board shall conduct a pilot
26 administration of the tests by administering the test to
27 students completing teacher education programs in the 1986-87
28 school year for the purpose of determining the effect and
29 impact of testing candidates for certification.

30 Beginning with the 2002-2003 academic year, a student may
31 not enroll in a teacher preparation program at a recognized
32 teacher training institution until he or she has passed the
33 basic skills test.

34 (e) The rules and regulations developed to implement the

1 required test of basic skills and subject matter knowledge
2 shall include the requirements of subsections (a), (b), and
3 (c) and shall include specific regulations to govern test
4 selection; test validation and determination of a passing
5 score; administration of the tests; frequency of
6 administration; applicant fees; frequency of applicants'
7 taking the tests; the years for which a score is valid; and,
8 waiving certain additional tests for additional certificates
9 to individuals who have satisfactorily passed the test of
10 basic skills and subject matter knowledge as required in
11 subsection (a). The State Board of Education shall provide,
12 by rule, specific policies that assure uniformity in the
13 difficulty level of each form of the basic skills test and
14 each subject matter knowledge test from test-to-test and
15 year-to-year. The State Board of Education shall also set a
16 passing score for the tests.

17 (f) The State Teacher Certification Board may issue a
18 nonrenewable temporary certificate between July 1, 1988 and
19 August 31, 1988 to individuals who have taken the tests of
20 basic skills and subject matter knowledge prescribed by this
21 Section but have not received such test scores by August 31,
22 1988. Such temporary certificates shall expire on December
23 31, 1988.

24 (g) Beginning February 15, 2000, the State Board of
25 Education, in consultation with the State Teacher
26 Certification Board, shall implement and administer a new
27 system of certification for teachers in the State of
28 Illinois. The State Board of Education, in consultation with
29 the State Teacher Certification Board, shall design and
30 implement a system of examinations and various other criteria
31 which shall be required prior to the issuance of Initial
32 Teaching Certificates and Standard Teaching Certificates.
33 These examinations and indicators shall be based on national
34 and State professional teaching standards, as determined by

1 the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State
2 Teacher Certification Board. The State Board of Education may
3 adopt any and all regulations necessary to implement and
4 administer this Section.

5 (h) The State Board of Education shall report to the
6 Illinois General Assembly and the Governor with
7 recommendations for further changes and improvements to the
8 teacher certification system no later than July 1, 1999 and
9 on an annual basis until July 1, 2001.

10 (Source: P.A. 90-548, eff. 1-1-98; 90-811, eff. 1-26-99;
11 91-102, eff. 7-12-99.)

12 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect on
13 June 30, 2002.