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# 4C

## Information/Action

### *Educator Preparation Committee*

### **Options to Support Teachers and Candidates During the Transition from the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment to the New Literacy Performance Assessment**

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item discusses the transition from the Reading Competence Instruction Assessment (RICA) to the new Literacy Performance Assessment (LPA) that will occur over the course of the 2024-25 academic year and presents options to provide support for candidates during the transition.

**Recommended Action:** Staff recommends that the Commission discuss the proposed options to support teachers and candidates and adopt option(s) the Commission finds most appropriate.

**Presenter:** Mike Taylor, Consultant, Professional Services Division

### **Strategic Plan Goal**

#### ***Educator Preparation and Advancement***

- **Goal 1:** Educator preparation programs hold candidates to high standards and adequately prepare them to support all students by using culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining practices in equitable, inclusive, and safe environments.
  - B. Develop educator performance assessments that are embedded in clinical preparation to ensure readiness to begin professional practice

#### ***Continuous Improvement***

- **Goal 7:** The Commission's work is grounded in research, informed by the voices of practitioners and communities of interests, and supports continuous improvement in educator preparation and licensure.
  - O. Strengthen the Commission's capacity to collect and analyze survey and assessment data related to quality in preparation of the education workforce



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# Options to Support Teachers and Candidates During the Transition from the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment to the New Literacy Performance Assessment

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## Introduction

This agenda item discusses the transition from the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) to the Literacy Performance Assessment (LPA) that will occur in the 2024-25 academic year and presents options for the Commission to consider related to current educators and candidates who have yet to meet the RICA requirement.

## Background

At its June 2023 meeting, the Commission adopted a [transition plan](#) from the Reading Competence Instruction Assessment (RICA) to the new Literacy Performance Assessment (LPA) that is being field tested this academic year. These two assessments represent different methodologies for meeting the reading instruction competency requirement. There are two different versions of the RICA. Candidates can choose to take the RICA: Written or the RICA: Video Performance Assessment to meet the RICA requirement. Candidates overwhelmingly choose to take the RICA: Written. The RICA: Written is a multiple choice and short constructed response examination of a candidate's ability to teach reading and literacy. The RICA: Video Performance Assessment is a performance assessment in which examinees plan and record themselves delivering reading instruction. The LPA is a performance assessment of a candidate's ability to demonstrate with students in a classroom that they can effectively teach reading and literacy. As part of the transition plan from the RICA to the LPA, staff provided [notice](#) to program sponsors and candidates that, consistent with the provisions of the applicable statute, both the RICA: Written and the RICA: Video Performance Assessment would be retired as of June 30, 2025.

***Examinee groups affected by the transition time frame:*** Two candidate groups will be particularly affected by the time frame for transitioning to the new LPA as of June 30, 2025, which is now less than one year away:

- A. Teachers who earned a Preliminary Multiple Subject or Education Specialist credential during the pandemic who were given a deferral for the RICA requirement because testing centers were closed or had limited capacity. Staff estimate that there may be more than 6,800 current teachers who hold a preliminary credential with a RICA renewal code who may not have yet cleared their credential by meeting the RICA requirement. Teachers have five years to clear their preliminary credentials.
- B. Currently enrolled Multiple Subject and Education Specialist candidates who will have completed all other credential requirements except for passing the RICA or the LPA pilot by June 30, 2025. The Commission does not have data on the number of current candidates enrolled in teacher preparation programs in the current academic year who are required to pass RICA this year. These candidates will have a limited amount of time compared with previous candidate cohorts to attempt and pass the RICA before it is retired. Most



currently enrolled candidates are not participating in a Literacy Performance Assessment pilot, so their studies have been focused on passing the RICA.

These two groups of candidates need a way to meet the reading instruction competency requirement prior to the ending date of the RICA. In addition, several thousand individuals registered by June 30, 2024 to take one or more RICA subtests while there was a fee waiver in place. These candidates have up to one year to take the examination for which they registered and take advantage of the fee waiver as payment. Although it is impossible to identify how many individuals need to pass RICA before it is retired, staff estimate that there are at least 10,000 registrations across the three subtests to take the RICA.

### **Current Options for Individuals Who Need to Satisfy Reading Instruction Competence After June 30, 2025**

The Commission took action at the [August 2024](#) meeting to adopt the [Foundations of Reading](#) examination as an assessment individuals could use to meet the RICA requirement after RICA is retired in June 2025. With Commission approval of the Foundations of Reading examination (see below), previously enrolled individuals who have yet to pass the RICA beginning July 1, 2025, will have two options to satisfy the reading instruction competency requirement: passing the Literacy Performance Assessment (LPA) or passing the Foundations of Reading examination.

The Foundations of Reading examination, which is currently required in thirteen states, meets the requirements in [Education Code section 44259\(b\)\(4\)\(A\)](#) except for item v below, Guided clinical practice in a clinical setting, which cannot be directly measured by a written examination but is required to be completed within the preparation program.

- i. The study of organized, systematic, explicit skills including phonemic awareness, direct, systematic, explicit phonics, and decoding skills,
- ii. A strong literature, language, and comprehension component with a balance of oral and written language,
- iii. Ongoing diagnostic techniques that inform teaching and assessment,
- iv. Early intervention techniques, and
- v. Guided practice in a clinical setting.

In addition, this examination meets the definition of “direct, systematic, explicit phonics” in paragraph B of California [Education Code Section 44259\(b\)\(4\)](#) and assesses integrated methods of teaching language arts as required in paragraph C of the Education Code.

### **Potential Additional Options to Help Current and Former Examinees Meet the RICA Requirement**

The current version of RICA was developed in 2009 and a formal standard setting study to recommend a minimum passing standard to the Commission was conducted at that time, but that standard has not been reviewed by the Commission since then.

Since the standard setting workshop for RICA was conducted, there have been two significant updates to California’s reading standards for public school students. Because of this, the potential for divergence between what is being taught in reading methods courses and what the RICA measures has increased over time.



RICA was re-arranged into a three-subtest model beginning in 2021 to allow candidates the opportunity to retake only the portions of the assessment they did not originally pass. At this time, individual minimum passing scores for each subtest were determined mathematically based on the minimum passing standard that the Commission adopted for RICA in 2009. It may be time for the Commission to revisit this minimum passing standard for appropriateness.

### **Potential Option 1: Apply a Standard Error of Measurement Adjustment to the RICA Minimum Passing Standard**

One way the Commission could revisit the adopted minimum passing standard for RICA would be to consider the application of a standard error of measurement (SEM) adjustment to the current minimum passing standard. SEM is an indicator often considered by the Commission when discussing minimum passing standards for examinations and performance assessments. When the Commission elects to apply an SEM adjustment to existing or recommended minimum passing standards it is with the understanding that measurement error is real, and not all examinees are always able to demonstrate their true content knowledge in a standardized testing environment. Standard error of measurement is a calculated value for each examination that represents the difference between examinees' "observed" scores, the scores they received when they took the exam, and their "true" scores, which are the scores they would likely receive if conditions were perfect for allowing them to fully demonstrate their actual content knowledge. The Commission often adjusts the minimum passing standard for an exam by the negative value of an examination's SEM to account for possible measurement error. The Commission most commonly adopts this -1 SEM adjustment to be applied to minimum passing standards for examinations.

This kind of adjustment to the current RICA minimum passing standards would allow examinees the benefit of the doubt when it comes to assessing their ability to demonstrate knowledge of reading instruction. Using an SEM adjustment to create a new minimum passing standard for RICA would potentially eliminate the effects of possible measurement error for many examinees who are close to passing RICA, but who were unable to pass for reasons that may be unrelated to their actual knowledge, skill and ability.

The Commission has not previously discussed the potential application of an SEM adjustment to the minimum passing standard for the current three-subtest version of RICA. The application of a standard error of measurement adjustment to the current minimum standards would create new minimum passing standards for both the RICA: Written and the RICA: Video Performance Assessment.

Information about how the application of a -1 SEM adjustment might affect RICA passing rates can be found in [Appendix A](#).

### **Potential Option 2: Apply a Standard Error of Measurement Adjustment Retroactively (10 years) to All Valid RICA Scores**

Once the Commission determines whether to apply a standard error of measurement adjustment to the current RICA examinations, the Commission could also consider extending the new minimum passing standards to any candidates who may have taken any version of the RICA in the past 10 years (the period of validity of examination scores) and not passed but whose scores were within -1 SEM of passing.



For all candidate groups eligible to take advantage of a potential new minimum passing standard for RICA, the Commission's examinations contractor, Evaluation Systems group of Pearson, would identify RICA examinees from the last ten years who meet the new minimum passing standard and inform them of their passing status.

[Appendix A](#) provides information about the individuals who took either the original one subtest version of the RICA: Written, the current 3 subtest version of the RICA: Written, and the RICA: Video Performance Assessment during the past ten years who would pass RICA as the result of a new minimum passing standard with a -1 SEM adjustment.

### **Potential Option 3: Pursue Potential Legislative Changes to Keep RICA Available Beyond June 30, 2025 for Currently Enrolled Candidates**

The Commission could direct staff to seek potential legislative changes that would allow the RICA to continue to be administered past June 30, 2025. This option, if successful, could potentially help current candidates enrolled this academic year who will not have had as much time as previous cohorts have had to take and pass each of the three RICA: Written subtests, or the RICA: Video Performance Assessment prior to June 30, 2025, when they are scheduled to end.

Although the RICA will sunset in June 2025, the Commission's current examinations contract for the RICA does not expire until October 2025. If the Commission directed staff to seek these changes, staff would work with the Commission's examinations contractor to continue to offer RICA after July 1, 2025 for candidates who have not passed by June 30, 2025. If it were to be allowed by legislative changes, the Commission could consider an extension of the RICA administrations until October 2025 (the end of the current examinations contract). This would allow currently enrolled candidates four additional months to complete the RICA.

### **Staff Recommendations**

Staff recommends that the Commission discuss the options described above and determine whether to approve any of the following options:

- Option 1: Apply a -1 SEM adjustment to the current minimum passing standards for the RICA: Written and the RICA: Video Performance Assessment to create new minimum passing standards.
- Option 2: Apply the new minimum passing standards described above retroactively to all valid RICA results from the past ten years.
- Option 3: Direct staff to pursue legislative changes to keep RICA available past June 30, 2025, until October 2025, for currently enrolled candidates.

### **Next Steps**

If the Commission approves any or all of the above recommendations, staff will, as appropriate to the options approved, notify the field and provide guidance regarding implementation of these options, and/or work with the Commission's examinations contractor to notify examinees who might be affected, and/or work with lawmakers to seek potential legislative changes.



## Appendix A

### Potential Impact of a -1 SEM Adjustment Applied to the Minimum Passing Standard for the RICA

**Table 1: RICA: Written Prior One Subtest Version Overall Pass Rate and the Number of Examinees Who Scored Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2014 to 7/31/2021)**

<b>RICA Version</b>	<b>N Attempted</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
2009 Version	53,024	46,440	88%	3,790	95%

**Table 2: Pass Rates by Ethnicity for RICA: Written Prior One Subtest Version and the Number of Examinees Who Scored Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2014 to 7/31/2021) \***

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>N Attempted</b>	<b>N Passing at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Not provided	4,052	3,694	91%	220	97%
Black	1,741	1,379	79%	195	90%
Asian	2,546	2,315	91%	147	97%
Southeast Asian	2,042	1,765	86%	146	94%
Pacific Islander	201	160	80%	21	90%
Hispanic	13,980	11,428	82%	1,369	92%
Native American	317	273	86%	24	94%
White	25,616	23,282	91%	1,453	97%
Other	2,529	2,144	85%	215	93%

\* Note: All ethnicity data are voluntarily self-reported by candidates



**Table 3: Pass Rates by Gender for RICA: Written Prior One Subtest Version and the Number of Examinees Who Score Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2014 to 7/31/2021) \***

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N Attempted</b>	<b>N Passing at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passing at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Not provided	524	474	90%	33	97%
Male	8,568	7,015	82%	850	92%
Female	43,924	38,946	89%	2,906	95%
Nonbinary	8	NA**	NA	NA	75%

\*Note: All gender data are voluntarily self-reported by candidates. \*\*Pass rates are not available for groups with fewer than ten examinees.

**Table 4: RICA: Written Current Three Subtest Version Overall Pass Rate and the Number of Examinees Who Scored Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 7/1/2021 through 7/21/2024)**

	<b>N Attempted</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM of the current passing standard but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Candidates who took all 3 subtests	33,103	27,624	83%	3,025	93%
Subtest I	35,512	29,706	84%	3,620	94%
Subtest II	34,113	30,168	88%	2,717	96%
Subtest III	33,355	30,206	91%	1,557	95%



**Table 5: Pass Rates by Ethnicity for Current RICA: Written 3 Subtest Version and the Number of Examinees Who Score Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2021 through 7/31/2024) \***

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>N Attempted all 3 Subtests</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Not provided	851	729	86%	76	95%
Black	1,461	1,061	73%	197	86%
Asian	1,501	1,303	87%	114	94%
Southeast Asian	1,480	1,222	83%	135	92%
Pacific Islander	136	115	85%	17	97%
Hispanic	13,933	11,097	80%	1,499	90%
Native American	213	178	84%	20	93%
White	11,884	10,568	89%	814	96%
Other	1,644	1,351	82%	153	91%

\*Note: All ethnicity data are voluntarily self-reported by candidates

**Table 6: Pass Rates by Gender for Current RICA: Written 3 Subtest Version and the Number of Examinees Who Score Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2021 through 7/31/2024) \***

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N Attempted All 3 Subtests</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Not provided	446	382	86%	43	95%
Male	4,949	3,882	78%	562	90%
Female	27,634	23,293	84%	2,413	93%
Nonbinary	74	67	91%	7	100%

\*Note: All gender data are voluntarily self-reported by candidates



**Table 7: RICA: Video Performance Assessment Overall Pass Rate and the Number of Examinees Who Score Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2014 through 7/21/2024)**

<b>N Attempted</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM of the current passing standard but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
1,956	1,082	55%	253	68%

**Table 8: Pass Rates by Ethnicity for RICA: Video Performance Assessment and the Number of Examinees Who Score Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2014 through 7/31/2024) \***

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>N Attempted all 3 Subtests</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Not provided	72	38	53%	12	69%
Black	130	62	48%	15	59%
Asian	58	27	47%	8	60%
Southeast Asian	78	40	51%	8	62%
Pacific Islander	13	4	31%	6	77%
Hispanic	750	434	58%	98	71%
Native American	18	10	56%	1	61%
White	701	395	56%	96	70%
Other	136	72	53%	9	60%

\*Note: All ethnicity data are voluntarily self-reported by candidates



**Table 9: Pass Rates by Gender for RICA: Video Performance Assessment and the Number of Examinees Who Score Within -1 SEM of Passing (Data from 8/1/2014 through 7/31/2024) \***

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N Attempted All 3 Subtests</b>	<b>N Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>% Passed at Current Minimum Passing Standard</b>	<b>N of Examinees who scored within -1 SEM but who did not pass</b>	<b>% Passing after potential -1 SEM Adjustment</b>
Not provided	9	NA**	NA	NA	67%
Male	415	207	50%	55	63%
Female	1,531	871	57%	195	70%
Nonbinary	1	NA	NA	NA	100%

\*Note: All gender data are voluntarily self-reported by candidates. \*\*Pass rates are not available for groups with fewer than ten examinees.