

1 AN ACT concerning 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 Section  
5 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. A person who holds a valid and  
15 comparable out-of-state certificate, however, is not required  
16 to take a test of basic skills and is not required to take a  
17 test of subject matter knowledge, provided that the person has  
18 successfully passed a test of subject matter knowledge in  
19 another state or territory of the United States that is  
20 directly related in content to the specific subject area of  
21 certification. The tests of basic skills and subject matter  
22 knowledge shall be the tests which from time to time are  
23 designated by the State Board of Education in consultation with  
24 the State Teacher Certification Board and may be tests prepared  
25 by an educational testing organization or tests designed by the  
26 State Board of Education in consultation with the State Teacher  
27 Certification Board. The areas to be covered by the test of  
28 basic skills shall include the basic skills of reading,  
29 writing, grammar and mathematics. The test of subject matter  
30 knowledge shall assess content knowledge in the specific  
31 subject field. The tests shall be designed to be racially  
32 neutral to assure that no person in taking the tests is thereby

1 discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national  
2 origin or other factors unrelated to the person's ability to  
3 perform as a certificated employee. The score required to pass  
4 the tests of basic skills and subject matter knowledge shall be  
5 fixed by the State Board of Education in consultation with the  
6 State Teacher Certification Board. The tests shall be held not  
7 fewer than 3 times a year at such time and place as may be  
8 designated by the State Board of Education in consultation with  
9 the State Teacher Certification Board.

10 (b) Except as provided in Section 34-6, the provisions of  
11 subsection (a) of this Section shall apply equally in any  
12 school district subject to Article 34, provided that the State  
13 Board of Education shall determine which certificates issued  
14 under Sections 34-8.1 and 34-83 prior to July 1, 1988 are  
15 comparable to any early childhood certificate, elementary  
16 school certificate, special certificate, high school  
17 certificate, school service personnel certificate or  
18 administrative certificate issued under this Article as of July  
19 1, 1988.

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

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

34 Beginning with the 2002-2003 academic year, a student may  
35 not enroll in a teacher preparation program at a recognized  
36 teacher training institution until he or she has passed the

1 basic skills test.

2 Beginning on the effective date of this amendatory Act of  
3 the 94th General Assembly, prior to completing an approved  
4 teacher preparation program, a preservice education candidate  
5 must satisfactorily pass the test of subject matter knowledge  
6 in the discipline in which he or she will be certified to  
7 teach. The teacher preparation program may require passage of  
8 the test of subject matter knowledge at any time during the  
9 program, including prior to student teaching. ~~Beginning with~~  
10 ~~the 2004-2005 academic year, a preservice education teacher may~~  
11 ~~not student teach until he or she has passed the subject matter~~  
12 ~~test in the discipline in which he or she will student teach.~~

13 (e) The rules and regulations developed to implement the  
14 required test of basic skills and subject matter knowledge  
15 shall include the requirements of subsections (a), (b), and (c)  
16 and shall include specific regulations to govern test  
17 selection; test validation and determination of a passing  
18 score; administration of the tests; frequency of  
19 administration; applicant fees; frequency of applicants'  
20 taking the tests; the years for which a score is valid; and,  
21 waiving certain additional tests for additional certificates  
22 to individuals who have satisfactorily passed the test of basic  
23 skills and subject matter knowledge as required in subsection  
24 (a). The State Board of Education shall provide, by rule,  
25 specific policies that assure uniformity in the difficulty  
26 level of each form of the basic skills test and each subject  
27 matter knowledge test from test-to-test and year-to-year. The  
28 State Board of Education shall also set a passing score for the  
29 tests.

30 (f) The State Teacher Certification Board may issue a  
31 nonrenewable temporary certificate between July 1, 1988 and  
32 August 31, 1988 to individuals who have taken the tests of  
33 basic skills and subject matter knowledge prescribed by this  
34 Section but have not received such test scores by August 31,  
35 1988. Such temporary certificates shall expire on December 31,  
36 1988.

1           (g) Beginning February 15, 2000, the State Board of  
2 Education, in consultation with the State Teacher  
3 Certification Board, shall implement and administer a new  
4 system of certification for teachers in the State of Illinois.  
5 The State Board of Education, in consultation with the State  
6 Teacher Certification Board, shall design and implement a  
7 system of examinations and various other criteria which shall  
8 be required prior to the issuance of Initial Teaching  
9 Certificates and Standard Teaching Certificates. These  
10 examinations and indicators shall be based on national and  
11 State professional teaching standards, as determined by the  
12 State Board of Education, in consultation with the State  
13 Teacher Certification Board. The State Board of Education may  
14 adopt any and all regulations necessary to implement and  
15 administer this Section.

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

21           (Source: P.A. 92-734, eff. 7-25-02; 93-679, eff. 6-30-04.)

22           Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
23 becoming law.