

Greetings to you! As always, we find ourselves extremely busy people with a lot of information coming at us from a variety of places. For the purposes of this particular article, I want to share a few important pieces of information that have recently come from PDE. Hopefully, you are already familiar with this information...but if not, now is a great time to know what is going on in our state! I am fortunate to be on the email list for important PDE updates and I wanted to share a few recent happenings with you:

Certification Testing Information

The Pre-Service Academic Performance Assessment (PAPA) and the PECT PreK–4 tests are undergoing structural changes effective March 3, 2014. The changes involve an increase of 15 minutes for one module in each test as described below and 15 minute breaks between modules. PDE is making these changes to improve the testing experience for the test taker. There will be an increase in fees due to the increased time. There will be no changes to the PECT Special Education tests.

The fee increase became effective on January 14, 2014. This is necessary due to the nature of the registration process. Candidates who wish to take the PAPA before March 3, 2014, should register for the test before January 14, 2014. The restructured tests will be administered with an effective start date of March 3, 2014. Please see the table(s) below for detailed information regarding these changes.

PAPA Full Length Computer-Based Practice Test Is Now Available

Pearson has released a new full-length computer based PAPA practice test for each of the three modules. The practice tests contain the same type and number of questions as can be found on an actual test, as well as any applicable reference materials (e.g., math formulas page). These practice tests contain test directions similar to what candidates will see on the day of the test. The fee based Pre-service Academic Performance Assessment practice test will continue to be available on the Pearson website. You can access the new test at: http://www.pa.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=HTML_FRAG/GENRB_PrepPracticeTest.html

Certification Testing (effective 11/13)

Starting September 2013, PA teacher candidates can demonstrate their acquisition of basic skills (22 PA Code 49.18) in the following ways:

- Passing the PAPA pre-service tests in Reading, Writing, and Math
- Earning a score of no less than 1550 on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) with no score in an individual section (Critical Reading, Writing, Mathematics) less than 500. A student who presents SAT scores as noted above will be deemed to have met the basic skills requirement and be exempt from taking the PAPA assessment.
- Earning a composite score of 23 on the American College Test Plus Writing accompanied by a combined English/ Writing score of 22 and a Math score of 21 will also exempt a student from taking the PAPA.

Option I (for students who did not take PPSTs prior to 4/12) PAPA (Pre-service Academic Performance Assessment) (Reading, Writing, Math) or alternate

<http://www.pa.nesinc.com> AND Praxis content test (no change); K-12 must also take Fundamental Subjects test (0511)

Praxis test information through ETS can be found at <http://www.ets.org/praxis>

Option II (for students who have already taken some Praxis exams as of 4/12) PPSTs (Reading, Writing, Math) or alternate AND Praxis content test (no change); K-12 must also take Fundamental Subjects test (0511).

The scores can be from different test administrations or “sittings.”

The SAT and ACT scores are acceptable indefinitely just as the PRAXIS I and PAPA scores are. PDE is still investigating the most efficient and acceptable way to receive the scores from candidates. They will announce the process as soon as the logistics are determined.

New Endorsements

Two new endorsements are going to be available for certified educators who desire additional in-depth training in areas for which no current certifications exist. The

first, a Mathematics Coach Endorsement, has been approved by PDE. The guidelines for developing this new program can be found at on the website at: <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=506706&mode=2>.

The second, an endorsement for Online Instruction, is in the draft stage. A special pre-conference session of the PETE & C, held in February 2014, will introduce the draft to the educational technology stakeholders for the purpose of vetting the current plans and eliciting additional ideas. After that session, the final guidelines will be approved and published in the spring of 2014.

Final Thoughts:

I attended the PMEA Advocacy of Music Education workshop in Harrisburg in January and enjoyed listening to PMEA colleagues discuss advocacy issues at the local, district, statewide, and national level. Two specific comments stuck out to me...and I wanted to share them with you as well:

- How can music education move away from reactive advocacy and toward more proactive advocacy?
- How does our profession remove apathy from discussion of advocacy?

In addition, there were conversation moments revolving around the role of higher education faculty and preservice music educators in advocacy efforts – conversations that I think have a great deal of merit to them. Specifically, I wonder how many of us become involved in our local community educational decisions and/or how many of our other music faculty colleagues see themselves as “music educators” and realize the impact that our voice/vote/attendance at a school board meeting has on the role of music education in our own backyards. In addition, I wonder how many of us are purposefully incorporating our students in local/district/state/national advocacy issues and initiatives? Are we, like (perhaps) many others in music education thinking “I don’t have time to worry about this, too!!” and hoping someone else will handle the advocacy efforts for us? Or, are we willing and able to help yet unsure of where we are most needed?

If advocacy efforts are of interest to you, I urge you to check out the following resources:

- The Education Policy and Leadership Center at <http://www.eplc.org/>
- Music Advocacy Groundswell <http://advocacy.nafme.org/>

- PMEA Advocacy Website <http://www.pmea.net/specialty-areas/advocacy/>
- Beyond the Bubbles: A NAFME advocacy project that was launched in February 2014

In addition, Rich Victor (rvictor@pds4me.com) and Chuck Neidhardt (pmea.neidhardt@yahoo.com) have graciously agreed to come to universities across the state to speak to music education majors about the importance of advocacy. They are a great resource so please contact them!

I hope that the remainder of your semester is enjoyable! As always, please let me know if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or ideas that will support music teacher education in PA.

Best to you,
Kim



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