

## INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE TESTING

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed the new Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) P.L. 107-110. A memo from Delaine Eastin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, alerted district superintendents of new staffing requirements. The new requirements in *Title I, Part A, Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged* portion of the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, relates to staff qualifications and are found in Section 1119 of the Act. The entire text of the act can be accessed at [www.cde.ca.gov/govaffairs/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/govaffairs/).

### Paraprofessionals in programs supported by Title I:

Paraprofessionals who assist in classroom instruction and are hired using Title I funds after the enactment of the law (January 8, 2002) must meet the following requirements:

- Complete two years of higher education study, OR
- Obtain an Associate's or higher degree, OR
- Pass a formal state or local academic assessment that demonstrates knowledge of and the ability to assist in teaching reading, writing, and mathematics or reading, writing, and mathematics readiness.

Paraprofessionals who assist in the classroom and are hired using Title I funds before the enactment of the law will have until January 8, 2006, to complete the above requirements.

As with all new legislation, there are a multitude of questions. Unfortunately, none of the individuals contacted can provide definitive answers yet.

**What is "a formal state or local academic assessment?"**

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### *February Training*

On **February 15**, Riverside County Office of Education will host a meeting from 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon. A map is located at [www.codesp.com](http://www.codesp.com).

The topic of the presentation will be **Selection Planning** and CODESP staff will provide participants with valuable information on developing employee selection plans from job analysis to designing test components. Bring your questions and concerns and let us help you design a plan that will benefit your district.

### *March Training*

**March 1**, Newport-Mesa USD will be hosting a training meeting from 10:00 a.m. - 12 noon at their district office in Costa Mesa. Due to a scheduling conflict, the original speaker had to cancel. Instead the new topics will be, **Instructional Aide Tests, What Should They Include and How Can We Increase the Pass Rate?, Fingerprinting Volunteers and Cut Off Scores**. Please bring your current Instructional Aide tests, comments and concerns. Newport-Mesa will also be sharing their Fingerprinting Volunteer's procedure. Finally, Steve Williams from Escondido ESD will be discussing cut-off score fundamentals.

**March 8**, Grant Joint UHSD will host a meeting in Sacramento. The topic will be **A More Accommodating Workplace: Disability Accommodation**. The speaker will be John Adkisson, an attorney for Hanson Bridgett.

**March 22**, Santa Clara COE will be the site of a meeting regarding **Current Issues in School District Employment**, presented by Patti White, an attorney with Littler Mendelson.

Network with fellow HR professionals by attending a CODESP training meeting in your area.

# INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE TESTING

The U.S. Department of Education posted a summary of the **No Child Left Behind Act of 2001** on their website. In regards to Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals, the Act:

- Strengthens paraprofessional requirements to include two years of postsecondary education or, for an applicant with a high school diploma, the demonstration of necessary skills on a “formal State or local assessment.” All new hires must meet these requirements, and existing paraprofessionals have 4 years to comply with them.
- Specifies permitted paraprofessional duties and emphasizes that paraprofessionals “may not provide any instructional services” except under the direct supervision of a teacher.
- Requires principals to “attest annually in writing” that their schools are in compliance with the teacher and paraprofessional qualification requirements in Section 1119.

California school districts have been operating under the Instructional Aide Proficiency Testing requirements stated in the **Education Code 45344.5** since March 1, 1982, which states:

- No person shall be initially assigned to assist in instruction as an instructional aide unless the person has demonstrated proficiency in basic reading, writing and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required by the employing district for high school seniors under Section 51216 (*pupil proficiency in basic skills*) if the employing district educates high school students. If the employing district is an elementary school district, the aide shall demonstrate proficiency in basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required for high school seniors under Section 51216 in the high school district which includes all or the largest portion of the elementary district.

Unfortunately, we are not sure what should be included on the test, how the current Education Code regulations fit into the new requirements, and how districts will prepare current employees to meet the standards by 2006.

The California Department of Education administers both the GED (General Educational Development) test and the California High School Exit Exam (CHSEE). Most districts still base their Instructional Aide tests on an outdated high school proficiency exam. Both the CHSEE and the GED contain more difficult math problems than what were previously included on the old proficiency exams (see page 4). The tests include algebra, which is currently required in eighth grade, and basic measurement and geometry. This means that even elementary districts will probably also need to increase the type of math questions included on their current exams.

At CODESP we have developed sample Instructional Aide test materials based on a combination of the state tests. We have developed new items, updated old ones, and currently have pre-algebra, algebra, and geometry questions available. A district can increase or decrease the difficulty level of the test by requesting more items from our item bank to review. A writing exercise is always sent with our sample test as we believe this is essential. It has been an element of the old high school proficiency exams, the GED and the new Exit Exam. We also always include questions relating to working with students to help fulfill the “ability to assist in teaching...” requirement.

We are not positive that our sample test, the CHSEE, the GED, or even CBEST, will be considered a “formal State or local academic assessment.” Several inquiries have been made to the California Department of Education and although they consider this a priority matter, they can not provide specific answers yet. They are working on standards with the Federal Government so that they can instruct districts as to the requirements soon.

If you cannot hold off testing Title I Instructional Aides, our suggestion would be to at least update your test and have it approved by your local high school curriculum department, thus showing an attempt to fulfill the “formal.... local academic assessment” requirement. I have also been told that the testing requirements will increase and the “ability to assist in teaching.....” requirement may come with its own testing standards.

If higher level math questions are added to update your district’s test there will probably be a decline in scores. Most adults have forgotten algebra and geometry. We suggest that training materials be distributed with applications for Instructional Aide positions which advises them of the type of questions on the test. An example is on our website at [www.codesp.com](http://www.codesp.com) under the Member’s Only Area/Presentations.

We will pass on any updated information as it is gathered and we will continue to research the subject. To receive the sample test complete a C-CIB Request Form. Please provide us with feedback on our test materials.

# UPCOMING TRAINING

March 1, Newport-Mesa USD, Costa Mesa  
March 8, Grant JUHSD, Sacramento  
March 22, Santa Clara COE, San Jose  
April 19\*, Lemon Grove SD, San Diego area  
May 3, Hacienda-La Puente USD, City of Industry  
May 3, Berkeley USD, Berkeley  
May 17, San Juan USD, Carmichael (Sacramento)

\*Note change of date for Lemon Grove meeting.

## SCPMA

The Southern California Personnel Management Association (SCPMA) will be holding their annual conference March 21 - 22 at the Renaissance Hotel (\$119/night) in Long Beach. The theme for this year is *Human Resources in a Changing America*. It will include speakers on current legal issues such as military call up, current legislation and court cases, changes in human resources, organizational change, and workforce planning. During each of the concurrent sessions there will be basic training in the areas of classification, testing and discipline.

Registration is \$150 for members and \$180 for nonmembers, which includes the membership fee for 2002-2003.

For questions email Victoria Wintering at [vwintering@hlpusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:vwintering@hlpusd.k12.ca.us), or check out their website at: [personnelcommission.com/scpma/scpma\\_tra](http://personnelcommission.com/scpma/scpma_tra)

## WRIPAC

WRIPAC's spring conference will be held in Napa on April 25 - 26 at the Napa Valley Marriott. Preconference workshops will include Job Analysis (\$250 for members) on April 23-24 and Functioning as an Internal Consultant (\$100 for members) on the 24th.

There is no cost for WRIPAC membership and no registration fees for the conference. Attendance at two of the three yearly conferences and participation on a committee are required for membership. To register for the workshops email: [sstocks@co.tulare.ca.us](mailto:sstocks@co.tulare.ca.us). To make reservations call 800-228-9290. The room rate is \$129/night.

WRIPAC is an organization of public jurisdictions which have joined together to develop and share personnel selection procedures. [www.wripac.com](http://www.wripac.com)

## NEW MEMBERS

**WELCOME TO CODESP!**

**Antelope Valley Community  
College District**

## C-CIB

New questions have been added in the following computerized test item banks:

Data Processing, Electronic Technician, Grounds Safety/Definitions, Maintenance, Mechanic, Mgt. - Supervision, Safety, Math and Science.

Also a new Entry Level Custodial Sample Exam is available.

To receive CODESP test materials complete a **C-CIB Request Form**.

## Western IPMA

The Western Region IPMA conference will be held April 17 - 19 at the Hyatt Islandia (800-233-1234) in San Diego. The theme of the conference is *Reality HR*. Early registration is \$245. For more information visit [www.ipma-hr.org](http://www.ipma-hr.org) (link to Western Region).

## Nor Cal Training

If you've been to a recent training session in Northern California (39 participants attended the last one in Hayward), hopefully you have met our new part-time contract employee Rod Deiter. Due to the large number of members in Nor Cal we hope providing additional manpower will allow us to expand our services in the area.

Rod has a Masters in Psychology and several years of experience in testing. He is available for district visits in the area. You can contact him at [RodCODESP@aol.com](mailto:RodCODESP@aol.com).

# TESTING IN CALIFORNIA

There has been extensive discussion about "formal state or local academic assessments." This has caused us to examine the current tests used by the California Department of Education. One of the newest tests is the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). All students, including students receiving special education services (may be given accommodations) and English learners (may receive up to a 24 month delay from enrollment in the CA public schools) must take the CAHSEE to receive a high school diploma, beginning with the class of 2004.

The new exam has been field tested and based on Delaine Eastin's recommendation, the State Board of Education ruled in June that high school students must score at least 60 percent on the English-language arts section and 55 percent on the mathematics section to receive a high school diploma.

The exam addresses state content standards in English-language arts and mathematics. The English-language arts part of the exam addresses content standards through grade 10. The mathematics part addresses content standards through Algebra I. Questions for both parts of the test are in multiple-choice format, except for two required written essays.

The GED (General Educational Development) test was designed to measure the academic outcomes of students normally acquired by completing a typical high school program of study. In addition to 5 multiple choice tests, a GED candidate must satisfactorily complete a timed essay.

As the requirements for high school graduates increase, Instructional Aide qualifications will also increase. Does your district's current test reflect the changes made in the requirements for high school graduates? If not, your district should update the exam.

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