



Mississippi Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators

October 14, 2017

Dr. Cindy Melton, Mississippi Educator Licensure Commission Chair  
cc: Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent, Mississippi Department of Education  
P.O. Box 771  
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dear Dr. Melton and Educator Licensure Commission:

The Mississippi Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (MAMTE) is an organization comprised of community college, college, and university faculty who teach the mathematics content and pedagogy courses for pre-service teachers. Our mission is to support mathematics teacher educators in providing high-quality teacher preparation in Mississippi through professional development and research. Since 2007, the membership has met at our Annual MAMTE Symposium to work through issues facing mathematics education in our state. As a result of our diligence and collective voice, we have been asked to serve on a variety of committees and sub-committees within the Mississippi Department of Education. Since 2015, there have been discussions about concerns with the current Praxis II Math 5161 passing score. Many noted that there has been a low percentage of students passing with the current passing score of 160. A committee was established in October 2016 to investigate other states' pass scores, the current national average, and Mississippi's average as well. This conversation continued at our May 2017 Symposium, and at the October 2017 MAMTE Business Meeting this letter was approved by the MAMTE membership.

The MAMTE membership is very interested in maintaining high expectations for Mississippi's teachers and students and are most interested in the new Praxis II Math 5161 pass score. Currently, the national mean score for test takers is approximately 153 (N=8458), and the Mississippi mean score for test takers is approximately 142 (N=493). By comparison, six states currently have lower pass scores than Mississippi (Alabama: 145; Colorado: 152; Iowa: 134; Kansas: 152; Nebraska: 146; and South Carolina: 150).

After much discussion, the MAMTE membership is recommending a new passing score of 153. Keeping in mind the dire need for mathematics teachers, a score of 153 is still well above the Mississippi average score of test takers of 142, and is aligned with the national mean. In combination with the newly implemented mathematics programs for secondary educators in Mississippi, a new pass rate of 153 still maintains a desired rigor for well-prepared mathematics teachers.

If a new passing score is adopted, another question was raised concerning making the new score retroactive. The MAMTE membership is recommending that if our recommended new pass rate for the Praxis II Math 5161 is enacted, that it be retroactive to when it was initially required, September 1, 2013. We commend your efforts and hope that you will accept our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Ivy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "I".

Dr. Jessica Ivy  
President, MAMTE

Officers:

Jessica Ivy, President, Mississippi State University  
Liza Cope, President-Elect, Delta State University  
Dana Franz, Secretary, Mississippi State University  
Alice Steimle, Treasurer, University of Mississippi