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August 5, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Career and Technical Education Directors
Technical Center Directors
Community College Occupational Deans

FROM: Lucy Hadi 

SUBJECT: Basic Skills Examination

In light of recent inquiries related to the use of the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) for Career and Technical Education programs, we wanted to provide information on current statute and rule. Section 1004.91, Florida Statute, states that students who enroll in a program offered for technical credit of 450 hours or more shall complete an entry-level examination within the first six (6) weeks of admission in the program and State Board of Education rule 6A-10.040 states "Students who are enrolled in a postsecondary program offered for career education credit of 450 hours or more shall complete an entry-level basic skills examination within the first six (6) weeks after admission into the program."

The U. S. Office of Civil Rights also states that the TABE may not be used as a sole determinant for entry into a vocational program. (<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/vocre.html>)

The Department of Education wants to ensure equal access and opportunities for all students; therefore, it is important that we observe the rules and regulations of the State of Florida and of the Federal government. State Board of Education rule 6A-10.040(4), Florida Administrative code, states "...Adult students with disabilities, as defined in Section 1004.02(7), Florida Statutes, may be exempted from meeting the career basic skills grade levels required for completion of the career program as described in subsection (2) of this rule. Each school district and community college must adopt a policy addressing procedures for exempting eligible students with disabilities from the basic skills exit requirements as permitted in

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Section 1004.91(3), Florida Statutes.” This allows for completion by students with disabilities even if they cannot meet the requirements of the basic skills examination.

Also, “Students who possess a college degree at the associate of applied science level or higher; who have completed or are exempt from the college-level communications and computations skills examination (CLAST) pursuant to Section 1008.29, Florida Statutes; who are exempt from the college entry-level examination pursuant to Section 1008.29, Florida Statutes; or who have passed a state, national, or industry licensure exam are exempt from this rule.”

Recent legislation signed by the governor will exempt an adult student who is enrolled in an apprenticeship program that is registered with the Department of Education in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 446.

We appreciate your continued dedication to excellence in Career and Technical Education in Florida. If you should have any questions, please contact Jane Silveria, State Supervisor for Special Populations, Equity and Career Technical Education Assessment at (850) 245-9022 or via e-mail at Jane.Silveria@fldoe.org .

LDH/jsj