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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
JASON E. GLASS, DIRECTOR

DATE: December 21, 2012

TO: Education Stakeholders, Institutes of Higher Education

FROM: Jason E. Glass, Director – Iowa Department of Education

SUBJECT: Content Assessment for Teachers of Japanese Language

On September 18, 2012, I sent out a memorandum describing new Praxis II testing requirements Iowa will have in place as of January 1, 2013. These testing requirements are in both pedagogy and content and are a new condition of completion of a practitioner preparation program in the state and the result of education reform legislation passed in the 2012 legislative session.

One clear goal we put in place at the Department was to make the testing system for teacher candidates as simple as possible and to limit the number of assessments to one in pedagogy and one in content for each candidate. We also adhere to the goal of assuring a fair and effective assessment for each teacher candidate.

At the time we established the passing scores described in the September 18, 2012 memo, we did not identify a content test for teachers of Japanese language. The two national providers of teacher candidate content tests have not produced a test for teachers of Japanese language. We have researched possibilities and requirements in other states to determine a test and passing requirement.

Candidates who are working toward initial license for teaching Japanese language (Iowa endorsement 121, Foreign Language; Japanese), will be required to take the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) test in Japanese. Candidates are required to take the Oral Proficiency Interview (either by computer or phone) and earn a level of ADVANCED LOW.

Please note that the candidate is also required to take the appropriate grade level pedagogy test (Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching) and achieve the required passing score (see the Iowa Department of Education website: Practitioner Preparation for required pedagogy tests and scores.)

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We appreciate the opportunity to be of service in offering this flexibility and believe that it meets the intent of the statute while also honoring plans and work that have already been in place.

On behalf of the Iowa Department of Education, thank you for your dedication and service to Iowa's students and schools.