



September 18, 2019

Tara K. McDaniel  
Director of Teacher Education  
Division of Teacher Education and Licensure  
Virginia Department of Education  
P.O. Box 2120  
Richmond VA 23218-2120

Dear Ms. McDaniel,

For the previously submitted 2015-2017 biennial report, James Madison University's Reading Specialist M.Ed. program had 9 completers. At the time we completed that report, 2 of those students had taken the RVE and passed, and 7 had completed the program but did not choose to take the RVE exam because JMU does not require the assessment for graduation. Further research, in tandem with you and Ms. Patty Pitts (VDoE), showed that in fact 5 of the 9 completers had taken and passed the RVE. The pass rate for the 2015-2017 biennium is thus 56%.

Because there were fewer than 10 students in the 2015-17 biennium, those 9 students were rolled into the recently submitted 2017-2019 report and were added to the 15 completers from the most recent reporting period (5 took and passed the RVE exam and 10 did not choose to take the RVE because, again, it is not required by JMU to graduate from the Reading Specialist M.Ed. program). The pass rate is 33% for 2017-2019.

In summary, the Reading Specialist M.Ed. program has a 100% pass rate on the RVE *among its graduates who have attempted the assessment*. However, given the method used to calculate a "pass rate," our 10 passers out of 24 completers results in a pass rate of 42%, well below the 80% required by the state.

At this point, JMU's Reading Specialist M.Ed. program is approved with stipulations based on regulation 8VAC20-543-50:

*Institutions with education endorsements programs that fall below the 80% biennial requirement shall submit to the Board of Education for approval an improvement plan to address the areas of stipulation, including measurable goals and timelines.*

To fulfill regulation 8VAC20-543-50:

*Semiannual reports must be submitted to the Director of Teacher Education to document the progress in addressing the goals toward elimination of the stipulation until the next biennial review period. The biennial passing rates that fall below the 80% requirement for program completers and noncompleters shall result in the education endorsement program receiving a rating of "approved with stipulations." The passing rate for program completers and*

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*noncompleters must meet the 80% passing rate requirement by the end of the next biennial period for the program to be approved; if the 80% pass rate is not achieved, the program will be denied. However, if the education endorsement program has less than 10 program completers and noncompleters, the institution must submit an annual report attesting to continued progress in meeting the requirements.*

We ask you to please consider our plan, below, which aims to address the low pass rate by the next biennial report and eliminate the stipulation.

The current group of 17 students, who will graduate in May of 2020, entered the program with the understanding that they did not have to take the exam to graduate. The program director, Dr. Joy Myers, will encourage as many of the cohort to take the exam as are able to do so. We will strive for a pass rate of 80% or higher among those who elect to take the exam. These data will be reflected in the 2019-2021 biennial report.

The next group of students, scheduled to begin the M.Ed. Reading Specialist program in summer 2020, will be notified prior to matriculation that they will be required to take the RVE for Reading Specialists as part of the culminating experience at JMU. The pass rate goal is 80% or higher. These students' performances will be reflected in the 2019-2021 biennial measures report (if taken earlier in the program) and 2021-2023 biennial measures reports (for those taking the RVE later in the program, as expected).

Thank you,

  
Dr. Mark L'Esperance

Professor and Dean

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Measurable Goals for James Madison University Reading Specialist M.Ed.

**2019-2020**

Current group of students:

1. Program Director Dr. Joy Myers to encourage completion of the RVE, emphasizing the professional benefits of doing so (e.g. fulfills testing for licensure).
2. Goal: 80% of those who elect to take the exam will pass. (According to Patty Pitts the "non takers" will not count towards the pass rate in future report, but will be categorized as exiters, a scenario we wish to avoid).
3. On 2019-2021 biennial measures report, pass rate percentage (number of test takers passing exam divided by total number of test takers) will be at least 80% for Reading Specialist M.Ed.

**2020-2021**

1. For cohort entering Reading Specialist M.Ed. in Summer 2020, program information will include requirement to take RVE prior to graduation.
2. 80% or more of those taking test prior to 2021 biennial report will pass exam. (The remaining students' RVE passing status data will be included on the 2023 biennial measures report, and will also reflect the goal of an 80% pass rate.)
3. Additional entering cohorts will be required to take the RVE prior to graduation; the importance of passing scores for program approval will be imparted to all members of the learning community.