The exam preparation strategies in this document will provide some helpful strategies and reminders for taking a certification exam. Please read through this document after watching the College of Education Certification Exam Preparation Webinar.

Mental Preparation Strategies:

- Candidates achieve success on certification examinations when they take the time to organize preparation material, create a study plan that includes proven memorization techniques.
- Preparing for a lengthy exam requires tremendous personal motivation.
- Candidates who utilize effective study skills are able to achieve the knowledge levels required for confidence on test day.
- This calm confidence of thorough preparation can lead candidates to achieve passing scores on the exams.

Certification Exam Distinctions:

- Timed
- Scheduled
- Multiple choice and short answer
- Computer based or paper and pencil
- Scores immediately returned for feedback, electronically posted later, or mailed to you

Exam Instruction Clarification:

- Is the time you take to complete the test divided?
- If so, is there a clock you can access for your time?
- Must you answer the questions in sequence?
- Is there a “review” feature that lets you check your work, or check for unanswered questions?

Multiple Choice Strategies:

- Look for one or more key words. The key word carries the weight of the question and determines how you will choose your answer.
- Read the question before you look at the answers.
• Come up with the answer in your head before looking at the possible answers. The choices given on the test won't throw you off or trick you.
• Eliminate answers you know aren't right.
• Read all the choices before choosing your answer.
• If there is no guessing penalty, always take an educated guess and select an answer.
• Don't keep on changing your answer. Usually your first choice is the right one, unless you misread the question.

Essay Question Strategies:
• Read the directions carefully. Pay close attention to whether you are supposed to answer all the essays or only a specified amount.
• Budget your time. Do not spend the entire test time on one essay.
• If you have an hour to write 3 essays, spend no more than 20 minutes on each essay. Then if you have time left over at the end, go back and finish.
• Make an outline before writing your essay. This way your essay will be more organized and fluid.
• Make sure that you write down everything that is asked of you and more.
• When writing your essay, write in a clear and concise manner. Papers with clear grammar and sentence structure receive higher points.
• Don't write long introductions and conclusions. The bulk of your time should be spent on answering the question(s) asked.
• Focus on one main idea per paragraph.
• If the question is asking for facts, do not give your personal opinion
• If you have time left at the end, proofread your work and correct any errors.

Reduce Test Anxiety:
• Engage in deep breathing
• Close your eyes and concentrate on the air going in and out of your lungs.
• Tense and relax different muscle groups.
• Engage in guided imagery for a few minutes.
  • Pick a scene that you find peaceful and natural.
  • Think about what you see, what you hear, what you feel and what you smell while in this scene.
Morning of the Test:

- Get up early so you can get ready and arrive early to sit where you are most comfortable
- Know where you are going, print directions or enter the address into an electronic navigation tool
- Dress comfortably so you will not fidget with your clothing during the exam
- Bring layers in case you are cold or hot in the room
- Bring a snack if you have a break between sections
- Avoid people who are anxious and might cause you to doubt your knowledge
- Go to the restroom and take any personal breaks before walking into the exam room
- Give yourself a pep talk