

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
MARCH 8, 2023
9:00 AM**

Office	Address	City	Meeting
Department of Education	2080 E. Flamingo Rd.	Las Vegas	Room 114
Department of Education	700 E. Fifth St.	Carson City	Board Room
Department of Education	Livestream	n/a	<u>Link</u>

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

President Amy Rozar
Vice President Jennifer Davis
Commissioner Kenny Belknap
Commissioner Joseph Morgan
Commissioner Jordan Wenger

In Carson City:

Commissioner Jamie Hawkins

Virtually:

Commissioner Christina Tucker

COMMISSION MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Commissioner Meredith Freeman
Commissioner Keith Lewis
Commissioner Sherry Mitchell

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Rick Derry, Administrative Assistant II, EDLiFE
Geri Mendiola, Administrative Assistant III, EDLiFE

In Carson City:

Jeff Briske, Director, Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement, EDLiFE

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT:

Senior Deputy Attorney General David Gardner (Virtually)

PRESENTERS IN ATTENDANCE

Virtually:

Heather Mattson, Senior Research Associate, WestEd

Mel Wylen, Program Associate, WestEd

Jason Dietrich, Director, Education Partnerships, Educational Testing Service (ETS)

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE

In Las Vegas:

Maria Ortiz, Teacher, Oran K. Gragson Elementary School

Nora G. Potter, Special Education Teacher

Grant Hanevold, Chief Education Officer, Public Education Foundation

Carson City:

None

Members of the public could view the meeting live via live streaming.

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Rozar called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. Roll call attendance was taken as reflected above and a quorum was established. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Kenny Belknap.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT #1

1. Dr. Kimberly Thaggard, Western Director for iteach provided public comment regarding agenda item #7, Praxis Core. (A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A)
2. Grant Hanevold, Chief Education Officer, Public Education Foundation provided public comment regarding agenda item #7, Praxis Core. (A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A)
3. Maria Ortiz, Elementary School Teacher, Oran K. Gragson Elementary School provided public comment regarding agenda item #7, Praxis Core. (A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A)

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Rozar acknowledged International Women's Day and acknowledged all Department of Education Teachers, Advisors and volunteers working in Reno, Nevada today assisting students at the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) competition.

4. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jeff Briske reported to the Commission that the Praxis Core workgroup has concluded their charge culminating in a final report and presentation to be presented to the Commission today for consideration.

Director Briske thanked Mr. Rick Derry for his work and support for the Commission for the past seven months and assured the Commission that Mr. Derry will continue to support the EDLiFE office in his role with other commissions and councils. Director Briske introduced and welcomed Ms. Geri Mendiola

as EDLiFE's new Administrative Assistant who will be supporting the work of the Commission. President Rozar thanked Director Briske for his report.

5. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 18, 2023, MINUTES (Information/Discussion/For possible action)

President Rozar asked the Commission if they would like to discuss the January 18, 2023 minutes. No discussion was made regarding the January 18, 2023 minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Morgan moved to approve the January 18, 2023 meeting minutes. Commissioner Belknap seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

6. EXECUTIVE ORDER AND REGULATIONS FOR ELIMINATION. (Information/Discussion/For possible action)

President Rozar introduced Executive Order 2023-003 which freezes the issuance of new regulations and requiring a review of existing regulations by all Executive Branch Agencies, Departments, Boards and Commissions and Executive Order 2023-004 which directs all Nevada Occupational and Professional Licensing Boards to suspend the issuance of any new regulations, show cause for all Occupational Licensing Requirements and to provide a recommended pathway for facilitating licensure reciprocity, to the Commission.

Director Briske informed the Commission he met with staff from the Governor's office on February 24th to request an exemption on the Department of Education's pending regulations. The regulations that were approved to move forward are:

- R120-22 School Counseling and Psychologists (Exams & License Renewal)
- R121-22 School Audiologists, Nurses, and Social Workers (Exams & Renewal)
- R123-22 School Occupational and Physical Therapists (Exams & Renewal) as well as OT & PT Assistants (creation of licenses)
- R125-22 School Speech Language Pathologists (Exams, Renewals & Elimination of the bachelor's pathway)
- R128-22 Student Teacher Resident (creation of license)
- R129-22 SB352 (Paraprofessional & Psychologist Assistant Pathway to licensure)
- R166-22 B&I and ACT/SAT (Allowing B&I educators to add additional endorsements, accepting ACT/SAT in lieu of Praxis Core and allow 10 years of exam acceptance)

The seven regulations listed above have been forwarded to the Legislative Commission to be placed on the agenda for their next meeting.

Director Briske also reported that the Commission has been given permission to move forward with the following temporary regulations:

- T008-22 Tiered Provisions (coursework, exams, and PIFE will be 3-year provisions)
- T009-22 Visiting International Teachers (creates a 5-year non-renewable license)

The above temporary regulations will have a Public Hearing scheduled for the April 19th meeting.

The Commission was also given permission to move forward with:

- R118-22 ARL Exams (moving Praxis Core requirement to the end of the license)

- R124-22 School Psychology Assistants (creating a license)

These regulations are at the Legislative Council Bureau for rewrite due to not meeting the intent of the workshop. The rewrites are not expected until after the Legislative session at which time a public hearing will be scheduled.

The two regulations that were not approved to move forward are:

- R127-22 Mentorship Endorsement
- R167-22 Model Code of Ethics

The Governor's office stated that they do not have any concerns with the two regulations but will keep them paused at this time.

Director Briske continued to report that the other parts of executive order 3 are for each agency, board, and commission to undertake a comprehensive review of regulations and to submit a report by May 1, 2023 regarding how regulations can be streamlined, clarified, reduced, or otherwise improved to ensure regulations provide for the general welfare of the State without unnecessarily inhibiting economic growth and to generate a list of not less than 10 regulations recommended for removal. Prior to May 1 a public hearing must be held to solicit public comments to be included in the report. At this time, the Department, as an agency, intends to hold one public hearing for regulations under the prevue of the State Board, Commission on Professional Standards in Education, and Commission on School Funding.

Regarding Executive Order 4: This executive order requires all Nevada occupational and professional licensing boards to prepare a report by April 1, 2023, to include all pertinent regulations, fees, exams and any other requirements that restrict entry into any occupation or profession regulated by a board as well as the justification for these regulations, fees, exams and requirements. The report must have an analysis of other jurisdictions and identify reciprocity and compacts. Director Briske along with other members of the Department will compile this report on behalf of this Commission.

7. PRAXIS CORE (Information/Discussion/For possible action)

Jeff Briske, Director, Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE) and Heather Mattson, Senior Research Associate, WestEd presented a PowerPoint presentation from the Praxis Core workgroup to the Commission regarding recommendations to change the current Praxis Core Exam. [Praxis Core Workgroup COPS Presentation](#)

Director Briske explained the report will cover the workgroup charge, members, and tasks of the workgroup, current regulations, and suggestions that require and do not require regulation changes. The workgroup's charge was not to only address Assembly Bill 225, from the 2021 session but to also consider alternative means of demonstrating competencies for all educators. To ensure the workgroup was comprehensive and deliberate in their tasks, EDLiFE contracted with its colleagues at WestEd to facilitate the important work of the Praxis Core workgroup. The scope of the work included convening, planning, and facilitating three workgroup sessions, reviewing other jurisdiction approaches to teacher certification in lieu of exams and summarizing the research on options regarding exams.

Ms. Mattson described the workgroup tasks to include examination and discussion regarding practices in other states and research around testing requirements for teacher licensure, consultation with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to review detailed disaggregated data of Nevada's Praxis Core Examination results (compared to national results), crafted recommendations for adjustments to current

licensing requirements in Nevada, and considered possible impacts of each recommendation on number of teachers licensed in Nevada.

Ms. Mattson described the workgroup's suggestions that do not require regulation change would be to change the acceptable passing score by one standard error of measurement (SEM) or to accept a composite score which is a combined reading, writing, and math subtest scores, with a minimum for each subtest. Ms. Mattson explained that changing the acceptable passing score by -1 SEM maintains the validity and integrity of the Praxis Core Exam and would allow more candidates to pass the exam. This change would not require a regulation change. The suggestion to "Accept a Composite Score" consists of a combined Reading, Writing, and Math subtest scores. This suggestion would require EDLiFE staff to manually calculate composite scores and confirm acceptable scores for each subtest.

The workgroup's suggestions that require a regulation change are, accept measures other than the Praxis Core – obtaining a master's degree or acceptable passing score on the ACT or SAT, Accept a Praxis score within a -2 SEM, after first attempt on the Praxis Core, accept coursework approved by the Department of Education with a 3.0 GPA, and allow for a clear out-of-state license to satisfy Nevada coursework and exam provisions.

President Rozar opened up the floor for any questions from the Commission regarding the Praxis Core Workgroup's recommendations to change the requirements for the Praxis Core Exam. Commissioner Morgan asked what was the basal on the subtest scores for composite score data? Was the -1 SEM or -2 SEM used on the subtest scores from North Carolina, North Dakota, and Washington, D.C. to get the Composite scores for each state in the presentation? Ms. Mel Wylene, Key Researcher, WestEd stated that WestEd was not able to obtain the information from the states; subtests information from the states were gathered from each state's public facing licensure websites. Commissioner Wenger asked if the Commission would elect to implement both a -1 SEM and "Accept a Composite Score". President Rozar stated that it's the Commission's intent is to elect one of the suggestions. Director Briske noted that it was up to the Commission to decide which recommendation would be best for the State of Nevada. President Rozar expressed concern over the Praxis Core Workgroup's recommendation to Accept a Composite Score due to its complexity and interest in time with getting teachers licensed. She is in favor of the -1 SEM. Commissioner Morgan asked if the Commission could move forward with the -1 SEM Praxis Core recommendations and keep the composite score on the radar with time to further explore. Commissioner Wenger expressed that she is in support of adopting the -1 SEM but would like to keep the composite score. Vice President Davis expressed her support for the Commission to adopt the -1 SEM permanently to allow for more teachers in the classroom. Commissioner Belknap stated that he is also in support of the Commission adopting the -1 SEM. However, he is very cautious and apprehensive about the composite score due to the staff time required to complete the composite score process. President Rozar stated she would like to move forward with entertaining a motion for the -1 SEM recommendation with the consideration for the composite scores in the future. Commissioner Morgan asked if the Commission could adopt the -1 SEM retroactively that state tests taken in the past would be considered for the new change. Director Briske noted that type of motion would not be necessary due to a regulation in place that allows to accept exam scores up to five years from the date that the applicant submits the application or submits the provision removal. Director Briske explained if the Commission moved to accept a different passing score today, the applicant would submit a provision removal through the Online Portal for Applications and Licensure (OPAL) system at no cost. The exam scores that the applicant took within the past 5 years from the time they submitted the provision removal would be reviewed and if the scores meet the passing score adopted

by the Commission today, the applicant would have their exam provision removed. Commissioner Wenger asked if ETS could calculate a composite score for states. Director Briske stated that ETS cannot calculate a composite score on a report showing pass/fail. President Rozar entertained a motion to adopt the change the acceptable passing score to a -1 SEM and consider research on using the composite score in the near future.

Motion: Commissioner Wenger moved to approve to adopt changing the acceptable passing score of the Praxis Core Exam to a -1 Standard of Measurement (SEM) and consideration to research using the Composite Score. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Morgan asked for items that require a regulation change, once the regulation is lifted would the Commission bring these items back for discussion. Director Briske confirmed that once the executive order is lifted, we can then move forward with a public workshop and public hearing. Commissioner Belknap asked when would the -1 SEM be in effect. Director Briske confirmed that the -1 SEM is in effect at the time when the Commission approved to adopt the measure. Director Dietrich from ETS also confirmed that updating the ETS system and the NDE website to reflect the -1 SEM will take five to seven days.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (*Information/Discussion*)

President Rozar announced public hearings for Temporary Regulations 008-22 – Tiered Provisions and 009-22 – Visiting International Teaching License, and public hearing to solicit Public Comments for elimination of State Board and Commission regulations. President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any questions for Director Briske or any comments. There were no questions or comments noted.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT #2

There were no public comments in Carson City.

Public Comments in Las Vegas:

1. Nora Potter, Special Education Teacher, Clark County School District provided public comment regarding the Praxis Core Exam. (A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A)
2. Maria Ortiz, Teacher, Oran K. Gragson Elementary School provided public comment regarding the Praxis Core Exam. (A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A)

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Morgan moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Belknap seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:16 A.M.

APPENDIX A: STATEMENTS GIVEN DURING PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Dr. Kimberly Thaggard, Director Western Region, iteach provided public comment regarding Item #7, Praxis Core. *(A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A1)*
2. Grant Hanevold, Chief Education Officer, Public Education Foundation provided public comment regarding Item #7, Praxis Core. *(A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A2)*
3. Maria Ortiz, Elementary School Teacher, Oran K. Gragson Elementary School provided public comment regarding Item #7, Praxis Core. *(A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A3 and A5)*
4. Nora Potter, Special Education Teacher, Clark County School District provided public comment regarding Item #7, Praxis Core. *(A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A4)*

ITEM A1: DR. KIMBERLY THAGGARD

Summary of Public Comment:

Provided Public comment regarding Praxis Core

Good morning, President West-Gullien, Members of the Commission and Nevada Educational Leaders,

For the last two years the Nevada teacher pipeline has consumed the majority of my working days. As the Western Director for the EPP iteachNEVADA, teacher vacancies are our business. As a former teacher and principal this pipeline is my mission.

*I spend an extensive amount of time talking to teachers, principals and HR directors across Nevada every day to determine the greatest barriers to licensing talented, willing individuals---many who are already serving as paraprofessionals, aides, and substitutes in Nevada's schools. Our data shows that the largest barrier by far, is cost...which is why many candidates choose iteach. The **second** largest barrier is passing the required CORE exam.*

This year, our founder Dr. Diann Huber and I served on a statewide commission to explore the CORE. We, and the other members of the committee, many of them speaking today, specifically dove deep into the purpose of the exam. In addition, we shared stories, both personal and experiential.....stories like that of Firoozeh "Fay" Faiz.

Dr. Faiz graduated from medical school in Tehran and served as a chief oncologist at a medical center there before moving to Las Vegas. She is still a licensed medical doctor. Iteach enrolled her after clearing her foreign transcripts, where she earned a 3.6 GPA. We expected great things for her in a high school biology classroom in CCSD.

Sadly, this past week Dr. Faiz called me and told me she could no longer continue with the iteach program. I pulled up her file to see her progress and I was perplexed. She had met all of the admissions requirements, made all necessary payments, and had passed all iteach pre-hire coursework. When I asked her why she wanted to leave, Dr. Faiz admitted that after 3 attempts on the Praxis CORE Writing exam, she could not bring herself to take it again...on her third attempt she failed the writing by just 2 points.

Dr. Faiz's story is just one of many iteach candidates who already hold masters and/or terminal degrees in a specific field who cannot pass a portion of the CORE. Further, the candidates we find face the greatest challenges with CORE are those who speak English as a second language. Again, Dr. Faiz is just one example.

Career changers with years of experience in their field lament about the fact they have not sat before a standardized test in over twenty years. Bilingual candidates will call, elated they passed the reading and mathematics portion of the test, but will need to make a third attempt at writing. At iteach, we can give our candidates free test preparation,

but this is not a luxury all potential candidates enjoy. Apprehension, fear, and doubt are all emotions expressed to me regarding the CORE. For some candidates it turns them away from the teaching profession altogether.

One of the best proposals we entertained in our committee work was averaging the 3 CORE tests to create a combined score, similar to the CBEST. The average, especially for candidates like Dr. Faiz who will teach in a content area heavy in math and science, highlights the areas of their expertise without sacrificing their competency in reading and writing.

For good candidates, no GREAT candidates, such as the Latina paras who have worked as aides in Kindergarten classrooms for years building curriculum and lessons, or the substitutes that stuck with us and taught through the ups and downs and challenges of COVID, and for candidates like Dr. Faiz who are prepared to bring real-world experience into the classroom, let's consider averaging the CORE scores from all three tests, like the CBEST to ensure that Nevada can continue to put the most high effective teachers in their classrooms without unnecessary barriers.

Highest regards and thanks,

Dr. Kimberly Thaggard, Western Director for iteach

ITEM A2: GRANT HANEVOLD

Summary of Public Comment:

Provided Public comment regarding Praxis Core

Good morning, President Rozar and Members of the Commission,

My name is Grant Hanevold. I am the Chief Education Officer with the Public Education Foundation, prior to this role I served for 30 years in the Clark County School District as a Teacher, Principal, and Central Office Administrator. I am here today to talk about Item #7 on the agenda. I want you to know that I was honored to be part of the working group committee with WestEd to come up with the recommendations for this particular item on the agenda and I want you to know that I support both of the recommendations that do not require a regulation change. I think they are spelled out fairly well in the report that you will be reviewing and WestEd will be presenting. I think the idea of adjusting the cut score by a -1 Standard Error of Measurement will literally create a pathway for hundreds of additional teachers while not sacrificing teacher quality in any way, shape, form based on the data you will see from WestEd. Additionally, I hope that you will consider the composite score as an option. I know that we are on a regulation pause right now but I also know there are regulations in the works to utilize the ACT and SAT as a competency exam. Both of those are composite scores that would be accepted so if a candidate scored a 20 in math and a 20 in writing but a 24 in reading a composite score of 21+ would enable them to waive that restriction. Much to that precedent I feel we could do the same thing with the Praxis Core. At least three other states are utilizing the Praxis Composite Score and although I know this adds potentially some work because there are some manually calculations that will need to be done by the Department of Education and we don't have enough data to really know how many people this will impact, my gut tells me if its twenty teachers we need to find a way to make it happen it its a hundred and twenty teachers we need to find a way to make it happen. So, I just think with over a thousand vacancies and spring break looming if we haven't figured out that this is a crisis, then the time is now. I know we can't act on any of the recommendations that require a regulation change but I know those will be presented today as well. I want you to know that I fully support those recommendations also. I want to thank the members of the working group and WestEd, I was honored with the opportunity to provide input and I thank you all for your time.

ITEM A3: MARIA ORTIZ

Summary of Public Comment:

Provided Public comment regarding Praxis Core

Good morning, Everyone again,

I want to say thank you to all the people who are part of the Praxis Core group. The people who have a master's degree in lieu to do the Praxis Core. I haven't taken the California Basic Educational Skill Test (CBEST) because it's a cheaper exam and harder. I have attended fifteen times and spent more than \$2,000 and I still have two points to pass. I had a master's degree in Early Childhood, I had a bachelor's degree in accounting, and I will be out of school because my license is going to expire. I work in kindergarten, I love what I do. My students are progressing, my violations are good, I built relationships with my students and parents, I make it a good team. I am here to support the idea of a master's degree. I think that if we teach our students to look beyond the score. So please it's on the agenda, just consider the choice because let us handle the people who have a master's degree. My friend had a master's degree and she lost her license and so I don't want to be the next. Thank you.

ITEM A4: NORA POTTER

Summary of Public Comment:

Provided Public comment regarding Praxis Core

For the record my name is Nora Garcia Potter,

I am a Special Education Teacher; I teach at the pre-kindergarten level. I lost my license last January, and I'm here to support these suggestions, new regulations. I passed all my provisions except for the Praxis Core. I earned a master's degree in Lake Tahoe with a 3.95 GPA. I have excellent relations, my kids progress, and my families are all very excited. My biggest concern is why I am here to support these suggestions because I won't be able to teach after May 22, 2023 and I'm worried for my kids because as you know special education kids need to have consistency and some kind of routine. I did not hear anything about the suggestion about the master's degree; it's not going to be solved today? Okay correct me if I misunderstand, the Governor said there are not more regulations? So, I as well as other teachers are going to be out of the classrooms and it's very sad for our students. I am very fortunate to have other options. The most important thing now is the kids, we are here for the kids and we do not have the support. I believe in my own opinion Praxis Core does not define how efficient I am in my the classroom; and because of that test, I will be out. So it's disappointing; I was here to support the suggestion but that doesn't solve the real problem. I have an aid, I have two aids but one of them is very passionate about teaching she will be a great teacher, but with this regulations she can't get her license and its not because she's not capable she can perform the duties in the classroom but many of the teachers are right now in the process. Thank you.

ITEM A5: MARIA ORTIZ

Summary of Public Comment:

Provided Public comment regarding Praxis Core

I have a question because we had a meeting last week and we pushed on the suggestion about the master's degree, how about that. I am here for that. I had a question, I'm here for the master's degree was one of the suggestions and now you said no that we are not going to discuss this in this meeting.

I'm sorry for these tears but I'm feeling overwhelmed. Do you know how the feeling like a teacher? Going every month to do the test and then they say no pass. I cannot pass reading by two points. This makes me feel frustrated and defeated now; I can't go anymore honestly, I can't. I have a family, but this is disturbing my peace. I'm sorry but that's how I'm feeling now. It's not only me, its most of the teachers I have met before. One of my friends had nineteen years working at CCS, nineteen years. Eight years ago, she decided to be a teacher and she lost her license and now she is driving Uber. Uber, working nineteen years in CCS, eight years as a teacher and now she is driving Uber, that is not fair, that is not fair for us. We have a passion to work with the students. My

students are growing; my principal told me that I am doing great; what can she do for me? I say you can do nothing, nothing you can do for me. But believe me this is the seventeenth time that I tried to pass the test. It's not because I don't want to pass, I tried. I spent more than \$2,000 and I can't pass, I don't know why I can't pass. I just need two points. I passed all my Praxis two but that's how I'm feeling, I'm feeling I can't go anymore. I came here with all the hopes that they would approve and decide yes to the master degree but no. I give it a step back.