

Praxis Core Workgroup COPS Presentation

March 8, 2023

**Using Multiple Measures of Demonstrating Competency for Teacher Licensure
Recommendations for the Commission on Professional Standards in Education**

**Nevada Department of Education | Office of Educator Development,
Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE)**

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WestEd

Stakeholders



Agenda

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- Workgroup Charge, Members, and Tasks
 - Current Nevada Regulation
 - Suggestions NOT Requiring Regulation Changes
 - Suggestions Requiring Regulation Changes

Workgroup Charge

Address Assembly Bill 225 from the 2021 Legislative Session

NRS 391.021 requires the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to adopt regulations governing examinations for the initial licensing of teachers and other educational personnel. **Assembly Bill 225 amending NRS 391.021 was adopted during the 2021 legislative session stated in part:**

When adopting regulations pursuant to subsection 1, the Commission shall **consider including any alternative means of demonstrating competency for persons with a disability or health-related need** that the Commission determines are necessary and appropriate

Contract with WestEd

The Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE) contracted with WestEd to

- convene, plan, and facilitate three workgroup sessions,
- conduct a scan of other states' approaches to teacher certification in lieu of teacher exams, and
- summarize existing research on certification options in lieu of teacher exams.

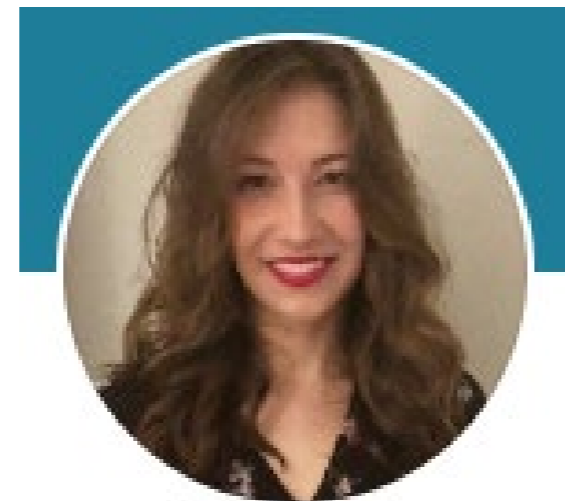
WestEd Team



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Workgroup Members

The workgroup included educators from

Carson City School District, Clark County School District, Nye County School District, Washoe County School District, Nevada State College, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, iteach, as well as a State Assembly Member, representatives from the Commission on Professional Standards, the Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP), and the Public Education Foundation

Workgroup Tasks

Over the course of three meetings, the workgroup

- examined and discussed practices in other states as well as research around testing requirements for teacher licensure,
- consulted with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Director of Educational Partnerships 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

Current Nevada Regulation

- 1. Praxis Core exam with a passing score** determined by COPS:
 - Reading – 156
 - Writing – 162
 - Math – 150
- 2. A test of basic skills** that is determined by the Department to be **equivalent to the Praxis Core exam**, such as the California Basic Skills Test (CBEST)
- 3. Earned master's degree and passing the Graduate Record Exam (GRE)** with an average score at the time the exam was taken

COPS usually sets passing scores as recommended by the multistate review team.

All scores must be from exams taken within five years preceding the licensure application.

Workgroup Recommendations: Regulation Changes NOT Required

Workgroup Suggestions That Do NOT Require Regulation Change

- Change the acceptable passing score by one standard error of measurement.
- Accept a composite score (combined reading, writing, and math subtest scores) with a minimum for each subtest.

Change the Acceptable Cut Score by One Standard Error of Measurement

- The standard error of measurement (SEM) represents how well the test score reflects “true ability” and is used to create confidence intervals around a cut score.
- Changing the acceptable passing score by -1 SEM maintains the validity and integrity of the exam.
- Kentucky is currently operating a 1-year pilot accepting -1 SEM as its passing score. The pilot will most likely be extended another year.
- In Missouri, test takers can score within the -1 SEM range of the established qualifying score on all initial Missouri teacher certification exams, except the elementary education exam for which the Board set a -2 SEM qualifying score in April 2022.

Potential Impact of Changing the Passing Score by One Standard Error of Measurement

Overall Impact on Nevada Pass Rates

Praxis Core Subtest	Current Pass Rate	-1 SEM Pass Rate
Reading	89.59	92.08
Writing	69.86	82.82
Math	84.97	88.14

Select Impact on Nevada Pass Rates for Candidates of Color

Candidates	Praxis Core Subtest	Current Pass Rate	-1 SEM Pass Rate
Black	Reading	81.01	88.61
Native American	Writing	33.33	55.56
Hispanic	Math	81.25	84.58



Accept a Composite Score (Combined Reading, Writing, and Math Subtest Scores) With a Minimum for Each Subtest

- The ACT and SAT exams are reported as composite scores. A composite score could be considered for passing the Praxis Core with safeguards in place to ensure an acceptable minimum for each of the subtests.
- This option would require EDLiFE staff to manually calculate composite scores and confirm minimum acceptable scores on each subtest, which will slow down application review and processing of licenses.

North Carolina, North Dakota, and Washington D.C. Have a Praxis Core Composite Score Option

State	Composite	Reading	Writing	Math
North Carolina	468	156	162	150
North Dakota	466	149	153	143
Washington, D.C.	517	168	165	169

State	Composite	Reading	Writing	Math
Nevada Current	None	156	162	150
Nevada -1 SEM	None	150	156	144

Workgroup Recommendations: Regulation Changes **REQUIRED**

Workgroup Suggestions That Require Regulation Change

- Accept measures other than the Praxis Core: obtaining a master's degree or acceptable passing score on ACT or SAT.
- Accept a Praxis Core score within -2 SEM of passing AND one additional measure.
- After the first Praxis attempt, accept coursework approved by the Department with a 3.0 GPA.
- Allow for the clear out-of-state license to satisfy Nevada coursework and exam provisions.

Accept the Following as Alternatives to Passing the Praxis Core: Obtaining a Master's Degree or Acceptable Passing Score on ACT or SAT

Passing score on the Praxis Core OR:

- ACT with a passing score of 21 (currently pending in Regulation 118-22)
- SAT with a passing score of 1100 (currently pending in Regulation 118-22)
- Master's degree without GRE requirement

Accept a Praxis Core Score Within -2 SEM of Passing **AND** One Additional Measure

Score ***within -2 SEM*** of passing on the Praxis Core **AND** one of the following:

- Specified coursework approved by the Department with 3.0 GPA
- Microcredentials approved by the Department to demonstrate competency
- Bachelor's degree with a GPA of 3.0

After First Praxis Core Attempt, Accept Coursework Approved by the Department

This will require time to work with educator preparation providers to determine appropriate coursework.

Allow for the Clear Out-of-state License to Satisfy Nevada Coursework and Exam Provisions

Current Nevada regulation does not allow for the reciprocity pathway if the teacher already has Nevada provisions on their Nevada license.

Appendices

Resources

- **NDE Praxis Core Workgroup Preliminary Recommendations Report**
- **WestEd Scan of Other State Policies on Measures of Demonstrating Basic Skills Competency for Initial Teacher Licensure**
- **WestEd Annotated Bibliography of Initial Teacher Licensure Basic Skills Competency Exam Correlation with Student Outcomes**

Scan of Other States' Policies

- **Exams and/or GPA and/or Portfolio: Maine, Montana, New Mexico, Colorado**
- **Exams and/or Coursework and/or GPA: California, West Virginia, Massachusetts, New Jersey**
- **Score Flexibility and/or GPA: Alabama, Missouri, Mississippi**
- **Pilot Programs Being Studied: Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey**
- **Removed Exam Requirement: Iowa, Oklahoma**

Overall Licensure Test Predictivity Findings

National Council on Teacher Quality's (NCQT) 2021 Driven by Data literature review on licensure test predictive validity located 11 studies that found significant positive relationships between teachers' test scores and future effectiveness in the classroom, generally measured by students' gains on standardized tests in English language arts and math.

Licensure Test Predictivity Detailed Findings

- Failing Florida's licensure test at least once was associated with significantly lower student test scores.
- Massachusetts found that the MTEL scores are positive and statistically significant predictors of teachers' in-service performance ratings and contributions to student test scores (i.e., value added) once they enter the workforce.
- In Arkansas, a study found that raising the required cut-scores on licensure exams would improve the quality of the workforce, as measured by value-added student achievement.
- A meta-analysis of 41 studies found a positive relationship between teacher test scores (not always licensure tests) and student outcomes in 37% of the studies, while 10% of the studies found a negative relationship. The study concluded that "of all the explicit measures that lend themselves to tabulation, stronger teacher test scores are most consistently related to higher student achievement."
- A study of New York City teachers found a significant relationship between teachers' math SAT scores and 4th and 5th grade student achievement in math in New York City schools.

Licensure Tests as Barriers Findings

- In many states, less than half of teacher candidates pass on their first attempt, with even lower pass rates for candidates of color.
- Black and Hispanic teacher candidates are substantially less likely to pass licensure exams. Evidence from commonly used tests shows the gap in first time passing rates is 30–40 percentage points between Black and White teacher candidates and 15–25 percentage points between Hispanic and White teacher candidates.
- Tests are a potentially costly barrier to entering the teaching profession and only modestly correlated with in-service teacher performance measures.

National Praxis Core Implementation

22 jurisdictions offer alternative exams or do not require exams

29 jurisdictions require a reading score of 156

28 jurisdictions require a writing score of 162

1 state, South Carolina, requires a writing score of 158

27 jurisdictions require a math score of 150

1 state, Mississippi, requires a math score of 130

1 state, Vermont, requires a math score of 146

References

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Thank you!

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