

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
JANUARY 15, 2025
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	Silver Ore Room
Department of Education	YouTube Live Stream w/captions	n/a	Link

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

President Amy Rozar
Vice President Shartriya Collier
Commissioner Meredith Freeman
Commissioner Joseph Morgan

In Carson City:

Commissioner Blinco
Commissioner Michele Haugen
Commissioner Jamie Hawkins

Virtually:

Commissioner Christina Tucker
Commissioner Jordan Wenger

COMMISSION MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Commissioner Kenny Belknap
Commissioner Jason Ginoza
Commissioner Derild Parsons

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Jeff Briske, Director, Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE)
Geri Mendiola, Administrative Assistant III, EDLiFE

In Carson City:

Jackie Nygaard, Educations Programs Professional, EDLiFE
David Monachino, IT Professional, Information Technology

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT:

Senior Deputy Attorney General David M. Gardner (Virtually)

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE

In Las Vegas:

None

Carson City:

None

Presenters:

Dr. Katherine Dockweiler, School Psychology at Nevada State University, Assistant Professor

Dr. Mark Kirkemier, Educational Testing Service, Director of Educational Partnerships

Dr. James Kozinski, Western Governors University, Senior Lead School Compliance Advisor

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

President Rozar called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Roll call attendance was taken as reflected above and a quorum was established. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Rozar.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT #1

There were no public comments in Carson City or Las Vegas.

3. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Rozar welcomed everyone in attendance to the Commission on Professional Standards in Education meeting. President Rozar acknowledged and expressed the Commission was happy to celebrate School Board Appreciation Month and is grateful and appreciative for all those who serve and help guide the school districts and support statewide learning in Nevada. President Rozar highlighted that it is also National Braille Literacy Month as well as, National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, this January.

4. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Jeff Briske Director, Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE) introduced Jackie Nygaard, Education Programs Professional, Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE). Director Briske extended the opportunity for Jackie Nygaard to introduce himself. Jackie Nygaard briefly spoke about his previous teaching experience as a math professor at Brigham Young University (BYU) in Idaho and his administrator experience, as Associate Dean for teacher preparation programs to ensure university accreditation. Prior to BYU, Jackie was a math and technology specialist for ten years and an assistant principal for three years in a middle school.

He concluded by expressing his contentment to be working in Carson City. Director Briske stated his appreciation for him and his future efforts with accreditation and program approvals.

5. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 20, 2024, MINUTES (*Information/Discussion/For possible action*)

President Rozar asked the Commission if they would like to discuss the November 20, 2024, minutes. No discussion was made regarding the November 20, 2024, minutes. President Rozar entertained a motion to approve the November 20th meeting minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Morgan moved to approve the November 20, 2024, meeting minutes. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

6. PUBLIC WORKSHOP FOR T005-24 TO SOLICIT COMMENTS ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO NAC CHAPTER 391.XXX - ENDORSEMENT FOR A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST ASSISTANT AND NAC 391.319 – ENDORSEMENT TO SERVE AS A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST: INTERNSHIP IN PSYCHOLOGY. (*Information/Discussion/For possible action*)

President Rozar announced public workshop for T005-24 at 9:07 A.M. to solicit comments on proposed amendments to NAC Chapter 391.XXX, 391.319 and R124-22. She went on to elaborate that the proposed regulation would define the length of time for a school psychologist assistant license. She added that this would also allow the applicant to obtain a provisional license as a school psychologist assistant without the advanced degree requirement. The Commission may approve or not approve this temporary regulation to be moved to a Public Hearing.

Director Briske explained to the Commission that the intent of updating the proposed regulation is to address the missing length of time specification. He clarified that the proposed regulation includes a validity for the school psychologist assistant license to last for five years and is renewable.

Director Briske noted an additional update from the proposed regulation and enables applicants for a school psychologist to obtain the provisional license without an advanced degree. He went on to explain that this exemption was under the conditions that the applicant meets coursework requirements, are enrolled in a preparation program while earning their advanced degree and completing their internship hours. He also clarified that the candidates need to complete their advanced degree to convert from a provisional license to a standard license. He concluded by stating that both regulation updates were excluded previously due to human omission and would like to include them as needed.

President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any questions or discussions on this temporary regulation. Commissioner Wenger asked for specification on the three-year timeline for the school psychologist provisional license. Director Briske stated that the purpose of three years was to be in conformance with all other provisional license timelines, which are three years. President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any remaining questions or further discussion on this temporary regulation. President Rozar entertained a motion to move temporary regulation T005-24 to a public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Wenger moved to approve temporary regulation T005-24 to be moved to a Public Hearing. Commissioner Freeman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. APPROVAL OF NEVADA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM.
(Information/Discussion/For possible action)**

The Commission heard and considered the approval of Nevada State University's (NSU) School Psychology Program. The Commission may approve or not approve the NSU program.

Director Briske explained that pursuant to NAC 391.461, when a provider submits an application for program approval to the Commission, a review team must be assembled to provide recommendations to the Commission for approval. Director Briske identified the members of the review team which included President Rozar, Commissioner Wenger, Director Briske as Licensure Director, Education Program Professionals and Licensing Analysts of the Department. Director Briske then concluded that it was the review team's recommendation to approve NSU's School Psychology Program. Director Briske also added that Dr. Dockweiler was present for any questions about the program.

President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any questions or discussion regarding the approval of the NSU School Psychology Program and thanked Dr. Dockweiler for her attendance. Vice President Collier personally testified to Dr. Dockweiler and her team's efforts. She commended the team in securing extensive scholarships for students, the launch of a clinic for hands-on learning, and in creating a pipeline for high school students to become school psychologists. President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any other questions or further discussion regarding the approval of the program. President Rozar entertained a motion to approve NSU's School Psychology Program.

Motion: Commissioner Wenger moved to approve the NSU School Psychology Program. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**8. PRAXIS BRIDGE – EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE (ETS).
(Information/Discussion/For possible action)**

The Commission heard a presentation from Educational Testing Service (ETS) regarding their Praxis Bridge option for Praxis II competency exams. The Commission may adopt or not adopt the available exams that have the Praxis Bridge options.

Director Briske explained that per NRS 391.021, the Commission must consider and adopt any competency exams for educational endorsements. Director Briske invited Dr. Mark Kirkemier, Director of Educational Partnerships at ETS to provide an overview presentation of the Praxis Bridge options.

Director Briske provided brief context of the new option being piloted in three states. He explained that a candidate for licensure must take a Praxis II competency exam. If the candidate does not meet the minimum score, as recommended by the multi-state test review and as adopted by the Commission, they must retake and pay for the exam each time until they pass and meet the minimum score. The minimum score indicates that a candidate is qualified.

Director Briske further noted that the Praxis Bridge option would allow a candidate to demonstrate competence in the area or areas of the exam that they did not pass. ETS has designed learning modules that the candidate can complete in lieu of taking the entire exam over again. Director Briske introduced Dr. Mark Kirkemier, Director of Educational Partnerships at ETS, to explain in detail the Praxis Bridge option.

Dr. Kirkemier explained that the Praxis Bridge option is for candidates who are eligible for the bridge process. Candidates who fail their Praxis test within 1 Standard Error of Measure (SEM) from the state's passing score are eligible for the Praxis Bridge option. These candidates would have the option to complete a learning module that matches the area that was the most difficult instead of paying for and retaking the exam again.

Dr. Kirkemier described the three program objectives of the Praxis Bridge to provide an accelerated path to certification. This Praxis Bridge objective provides an alternative pathway, reduced costs and classroom time. The Praxis Bridge is also a data-driven approach, by identifying skill deficiencies from the assessment, that are then targeted with learning modules and knowledge checks. The last objective is the ease of implementation, with integration, seamless reporting mechanisms and alignment with existing certification frameworks.

Dr. Kirkemier reviewed the Praxis Bridge Flow chart portraying the flow of the Praxis Bridge pathway, in comparison to the original test and retest option. He described the continuous flow of the Praxis Bridge starting with the initial scoring within 1 SEM of passing. He then described a content overview of the deficient skills, then onto practice items, and followed by knowledge checks. He introduced the eligibility and costs of Praxis Bridge, for Praxis Elementary Education 5001/7001 series for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. The eligibility consists of candidates who scored within 1 SEM of passing, and the price set at \$50 per module.

Dr. Kirkemier continued to brief on the process specifications. He mentioned that candidates will be notified when they receive their initial Praxis exam scores. Candidates will also have six months from date of purchase to complete the module. The asynchronous module can be completed at the candidate's convenience (approximate completion at 45 minutes). Upon completion they will receive a certificate and will then be issued an updated Praxis Score Report within five business days showing an alternative pass on those subject areas. He then displayed a schedule for upcoming exams that will include Praxis Bridge options and their corresponding deployment dates starting in Summer of 2025 and the last arriving in Spring of 2026. He outlined an overview of modules and all the content for each subject for the elementary series, as well as accommodation for digital accessibility, screen-reading capability and closed captioning for audios and videos.

Dr. Kirkemier provided a descriptive overview of the learning modules. As mentioned previously, the content overview portion of the module is to give a tutorial from select content of test specifications. Next would be a practice items portion designed to show sample items, feedback, hints and an "I don't know" response to scaffold learning. Lastly, the candidate will undergo a knowledge check and serve as a final check for understanding and requiring a minimum 75-80% passing score. He also mentioned that previous years' test administration data indicated that 27 candidates from 2024-2025 and 32 from 2023-2024 would have been eligible for Praxis Bridge and could have avoided going through the entire

process again. Dr. Kirkemier concluded by asking if there were any questions and restated the purpose of providing alternate pathways to licensure for teachers.

President Rozar added some remarks on the importance of the support aspect for adult learning and future teachers.

President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any questions or discussions regarding the approval of Praxis Bridge exam options for the Elementary Multiple-Subject 5001 series. Commissioner Morgan asked if there were any plans to enable this program as a competency indication for candidates with testing accommodations or to remove barriers that the current exams pose. Dr. Kirkemier responded with a preview of plans for module-arising assessments, meaning that as a student completes program requirements, they can accomplish the corresponding modules and avoid a singular final exam. He also expressed the goals were to develop the best teachers and to give more opportunities to demonstrate competency. Commissioner Morgan continued to advocate for alternate demonstrations for competency and argued that these initial exams pose barriers for candidates and ended with the proposition to explore competency-based indicators from the beginning of the process.

Vice President Shartriya Collier voiced that she was proud that Nevada was one of the piloting states for this program.

Commissioner Haugen asked about the pricing of the modules if the \$50 charge was per component under a subject or if it was an overall charge. Dr. Kirkemier clarified that it would be the overall charge, but in addition to that he also clarified that the candidate's initial test score must be within 1 SEM of passing to qualify for the Praxis Bridge option.

Commissioner Tucker personally expressed that as a secondary-language teacher, she has seen candidates where English is their secondary language struggle with the Praxis exams. She added that this program will be beneficial to getting qualified individuals past the struggles of the exams and thanked the presenter.

Commissioner Wenger wanted to ask if there was a foreign language Praxis Bridge option for an existing candidate. Dr. Kirkemier assured that the direction and overall goal is to have Praxis Bridge options for all exams, but for now the program is addressing the Elementary series because of the overwhelming volume of elementary teacher candidates.

Commissioner Haugen asked about the Para-Edge exam. Dr. Kirkemier referred to the schedule and indicated that it would be deployed in Spring of 2026. Commissioner Haugen commented on the fact that candidates who perform well in the classroom are affected by the difficulty of the exam and the costs with retaking it. She also expressed her appreciation for this program. Dr. Kirkemier also added that preparatory study materials could be provided in the meantime.

President Rozar asked the Commission if there were any questions or discussions regarding the approval of Praxis Bridge exam options for the Elementary Multiple-Subject 5001 series. President Rozar entertained a motion to approve the Praxis Bridge exam options for the Elementary Multiple-Subject 5001 series.

Motion: Commissioner Collier moved to adopt the Praxis Bridge exam options for the Elementary Multiple-Subject 5001 Series. Commissioner Tucker seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**9. COMPETENCY BASED LEARNING - WESTERN GOVERNORS UNIVERSITY.
(Information/Discussion)**

President Rozar announced that the Commission would hear a presentation from Western Governors University (WGU) on how competency-based learning is incorporated into their educator preparation programs.

Director Briske explained that with their Portrait of a Nevada Learner moving forward with Pre-K through 12 competency-based learning, the Department wanted the Commission to hear from WGU on how they incorporate competency-based learning in the Department's educator preparation programs. He introduced and welcomed Dr. James Kozinski, Senior Lead School Compliance Advisor from WGU as the first of several universities to present on competency-based learning. Director Briske noted the purpose of the presentation was for the Commission to hear more about competency-based learning as an option when reviewing regulations for educator preparation as it relates to practicum and clinical field experience.

Dr. Kozinski gave a brief overview of what was presented to the Commission to include the history of WGU and its competency-based model, the basics of competency-based education, specialized faculty roles, how competency-based education benefits students and institutions, myths related to competency-based education and provided advice for institutions that might be looking into competency-based education.

Dr. Kozinski noted that WGU was founded in 1997, and the university always had a competency-based model. He explained that WGU is an accredited non-profit institution and used an innovation competency-based education model that provides a student-centered approach with a Community of Care that provides a full suite of wrap around support services that ties well to Nevada's Portrait of a Learner. Dr. Kozinski emphasized that WGU's common professional core within educator preparation programs provides empowering, connecting, impacting and thriving aspects of that Portrait of a Learner in WGU's composite based education model.

Dr. Kozinski shared that WGU sees competency-based education working by how its structured in relation to personalized content-based learning and how the learning is measured in the personalized approach and not time. He continued by describing how WGU does not roll out a traditional semester approach of sixteen-week semesters but instead rolling out six-month terms. This provides the learner with time to learn within the six-month period. WGU also provides a subscription-based model. How ever many courses the learner can demonstrate competency within the six-month term; the learner would pay the same amount of tuition regardless of how fast or slow the learner achieves in six months. If the learner can demonstrate mastery in both knowledge and skills related to competency within the programs, it is then that WGU would move the learner forward. If there is more time required, then this is when the flexibility of WGU's programs would come into play.

Dr. Kozinski went on to name several beneficial characteristics of the Western Governors University (WGU). He expanded on the aspect of flexible timeframes but assured that the programs were not self-paced and that students had to adhere to certain expectations to demonstrate regular progress, along with competency. He also elaborated on the integration of courses and assessments, both being based on real-world standards and experience.

Dr. Kozinski then provided some examples of performance assessments in various subjects. He went into further detail on the “Learner Development and the Science of Learning” course, and how students would demonstrate competency as it relates to analyzing literacy and instructional practices at different levels of education.

Dr. Kozinski underlined the importance of rigorous psychometrics and ensuring mastery in the assessment and evaluation components. He then portrayed a specialized faculty model that outlined five components as being disaggregated and centered around the student. He emphasized that compared to a traditional faculty model, each faculty component can then specialize in their role. He went on to list the five faculty components divided into curriculum, assessment, evaluation, instruction and mentoring. He then focused on the mentoring component, comprised of program mentors that guide and offer personalized support to students from registration to graduation.

Dr. Kozinski presented the beneficial aspects of their programs being the flexibility of their programs, the flat rate tuition, community of support staff, and the ability to demonstrate prior knowledge, all to enable personalized learning for students. He also indicated that the average completion time for their teacher preparation programs is 13 months.

Dr. Kozinski claimed that other institutions would benefit from several unique aspects of the competency-based education. He continued to discuss the education being available to more populations, the low-cost at scale, student retention data, graduation rates, and the overall agility of the programs being personalized to students. He also suggested that this data availability could be utilized for feedback and adjustments could be made accordingly. He referenced the median age of students being 36 years old, and that student populations consisted of working individuals. He expounded that the programs agility has pivoted towards a new influx of younger students.

Dr. Kozinski then brought up multiple myths and preconceived notions pertaining to competency-based education. He delineated on the idea that competency-based education limits education to only demonstratable skills. He argued that with the right curriculum design, competency can be obtained through both knowledge and skills. He introduced another misconception of competency-based education, in that there are no courses or faculty available. He refuted this generalization by stating that the course content is extensive and that the faculty-to-student ratio is 1:1. Additionally, he acknowledged another common myth, that the faculty in competency-based education models are less credentialed than those of more traditional institutions. However, he mentioned most of Western Governors University’s faculty have not only terminal degrees from traditional universities but have migrated to a competency-based education to explore, invest and continuously improve it.

Lastly, he mentioned specifically that a common myth is that their teacher preparation programs are not effective due to the program being fully online. In addressing this misunderstanding, Dr. Kozinski

assured that their programs include simulations as well as local classroom clinicals. He stated that they coordinate with over 5,000 districts nationwide, to ensure in-classroom competencies are met.

Dr. Kozinski then closed his presentation by providing some advice for future competency-based education programs and reiterated the all-around benefits of such programs that affect students, institutions as well as the graduates' future employers. He offered to answer any questions and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to present to the Commission.

President Rozar thanked Dr. Kozinski for his presentation and commented that the quality of the competency-based education model will lie in the integrity of the people and the system of the university. She added that if that integrity was sufficient then competency-education could be greatly effective in the timely placement of students into their prospective careers.

Commissioner Wenger posed a question asking about when the Praxis Bridge options would be initiated and if there were any additional steps.

Director Briske responded and stated that now that the Praxis Bridge option was adopted by the Commission, there would be some additional paperwork to be forwarded to ETS. Following that, there would be the official release and availability for candidates (expected in early February 2025).

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

- Competency Based Learning for Educator Preparation Programs
- Nevada Registered Apprenticeship Programs
- Praxis II Study Report from West Ed

11. PUBLIC COMMENT #2

1. Cherlynn Thomas provided public comment regarding Spanish World Language Praxis.
(A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A)

There were no public comments in Carson City.

12. ADJOURNMENT

President Rozar entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Wenger moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Morgan seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 A.M.

APPENDIX A: STATEMENT GIVEN DURING PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Cherlynn Thomas provided public comment regarding Spanish World Language Praxis Requirement.
(A summary of the statement is available in Appendix A1)

ITEM A1: CHERLYNN THOMAS

Summary of Public Comment:

Provided public comment regarding Spanish World Language Praxis Requirement.

I have been a substitute teaching Spanish at Foothill High School, Manion Middle School, Green Valley High School for several years. I graduated with a master's in elementary education in June of 2024 from Western Governor's University, I have an MBA in international finance from New York University, and I worked on Wall Street for 13 years. I have a minor in Spanish, and I love teaching Spanish. I am fluent in Spanish, but I am not a native speaker. With that said I have taken the Spanish Praxis in 2024 four times, and I'm scheduled to take it again in February 2025. If I don't pass this time, I am not going to take it again. I am intelligent enough to pass an exam, but for some reason I haven't passed this exam. It is the only exam in my lifetime that I have had to take multiple times. I passed all of the Praxis Core exams on the first attempt. I passed the CBEST in California. I passed my Wall Street Securities license exams in two attempts. I have always been a straight-A student including my Spanish language courses. We are in desperate need of teachers, and I don't want to have to give up my teaching position because of this Spanish practice exam. The pass rate of the bar exam is 78%, but the pass rate of the Spanish practice is 50%. Clearly, there is a problem that needs to be addressed so that we have enough Spanish teachers in the state including myself.