Nevada's Content and Pedagogy Teacher Licensure Exams: Praxis II Review, Alternatives, and Policy Recommendations



- Presentation to Nevada's Commission on Professional Standards in Education
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Assembly Bill 428

requires the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to

- conduct a study during the 2023 2024 interim concerning the Praxis II and pedagogy examinations;
- present its recommendations to the Senate and Assembly Standing Committees on Education; and
- adopt regulations pursuant to NRS 391.019,319.023 as deemed necessary and appropriate based on its findings and recommendations relating to the Praxis II and pedagogy examinations

(Praxis II content and pedagogy exams currently required in NAC 391.036)



The Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE) contracted with WestEd to support addressing Assembly Bill 428 from the 2023 Legislative Session, which



Contract with WestEd to Support AB 428

- convene, plan, and facilitate a workgroup session,
- conduct a scan of other states' alternative approaches to content and pedagogy exams, and
- summarize existing research on teacher content and pedagogy exams.

| Workgroup Members | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| iTeach | Min |
| Nevada State University | Wa |
| University of Nevada Las Vegas | Nye |
| Truckee Meadows Community College | Put |
| Clark County SD | Nev |



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Research on Content and Pedagogy Teaching Candidate Assessments

Two Studies From Connecticut



Impact of Praxis II on Teacher Certification & Performance in Connecticut

- Most candidates eventually pass Praxis II, but first-attempt pass rates show disparities, especially among candidates of color.
- Failing Praxis II on the first attempt reduces the likelihood of certification by 8.4% overall and 15.4% in STEM and special education.
- Candidates with higher value-added scores (potentially more effective teachers) are less likely to enter teaching if they fail Praxis II.
- One of the studies suggests exploring alternative pathways to demonstrate content mastery while maintaining high standards, as current policies may unintentionally screen out strong candidates.







National Use of Praxis II, Content-Area Tests, and Alternative Measures



Scan of Other States' Policies (1)

- West Virginia)
- gaps. (Massachusetts)



Praxis Bridge: The Praxis Bridge is a module-based pathway for teacher candidates to demonstrate competency without retaking the full Praxis II test. Candidates who score within -1 standard error of measure (SEM) can engage in a specialized competency-based professional learning module. This module is tailored to strengthen their content understanding in areas where their test performance was weaker. Successful completion of the module will lead to certification. (Connecticut, Kansas,

Flex Test: Flex tests are targeted assessments for candidates 1 SEM below passing on licensure exams, including focused content areas, adaptable formats, and remediation to address knowledge





Scan of Other States' Policies (2)

- Attestation Process: Educator preparation programs (EPPs) validate a teaching candidate's subject matter expertise based on academic and educational achievements: this can include evaluation of coursework, fieldwork, and overall educational performance. Despite the use of attestation processes in multiple states, there is currently no universally agreed upon method for demonstrating content knowledge through attestation. (California, Massachusetts, Oregon, Washington)
- **Reduced Cut Scores:** Reduced cut scores lower the minimum passing marks for licensure exams: this adjustment modifies the threshold candidates must meet to demonstrate readiness for certification. (Arkansas, Kentucky, New Jersey)
- **Combination of Approaches:** Some states employ a combination of the strategies discussed • above, integrating multiple approaches and, in some cases, additional techniques to address licensure requirements. (New Jersey, Massachusetts)









Workgroup Recommendations



Adopted Alternative: Praxis Bridge (No Regulation Change Required)

- Candidates who missed passing Praxis II by 1 SEM are eligible to use the Praxis Bridge, a targeted professional learning module designed for individuals who struggle with specific portions of the exam.
- This option allows candidates to address their knowledge gaps without retaking Praxis II. Candidates gain access to the professional learning module for a one-time \$50 fee (instead of the full retake cost) for 6 months.
- Connecticut, Kansas, and West Virginia have piloted the Praxis Bridge for candidates who failed parts of the Elementary Subtest of Praxis II.
- ETS manages the administration of the Praxis Bridge program.

more tests as ETS develops the corresponding modules.



*The Nevada Committee on Professional Standards unanimously approved this alternative on January 15, 2025. In February 2025, Nevada will begin offering Praxis Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects 5001 series test and add





Proposed Alternative: Attestation of Content Knowledge by EPP (Regulation Change Required)

- In an attestation process, Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) confirm a teaching candidate's proficiency in their subject by reviewing their academic and educational accomplishments, encompassing an assessment of their coursework, practical field experiences, and general educational performance.
- This approach may allow candidates who have significant content knowledge, as evidenced by nearly passing the Praxis II, an alternative method for demonstrating competency.
- California, Massachusetts, Oregon, and Washington currently offer EPP attestation as an option to fulfill the competency assessment requirements for licensure.
- Despite the use of attestation processes in multiple states, there is currently no universally agreed upon method for demonstrating content knowledge through attestation.
- general funds to develop and maintain this option.



This option will require foundational and ongoing work from the NDE and EPPs to determine what will satisfy this requirement and how to document it. NDE has determined this will require a full-time staff person using



Potential Impact of Alternatives for NV Teacher Candidates

| | Ν | 2023–24 | | CS-1 SEM | | | |
|---|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|--|
| | | % Passing | # Passing | % Passing | # Passing | # Increase in Passing | |
| Elem Ed: MS Mathematics Subtest (5003) | 218 | 73.4% | 160 | 85.8% | 187 | 27 | |
| Elem Ed: MS Reading & Language Arts Subtest (5002) | 226 | 84.5% | 191 | 90.3% | 204 | 13 | |
| Elem Ed: MS Science Subtest (5005) | 214 | 68.7% | 147 | 83.6% | 179 | 32 | |
| Elem Ed: MS Social Studies Subtest (5004) | 209 | 68.9% | 144 | 80.4% | 168 | 24 | |
| Principles of Learn & Teaching: Grades K-6 (5622) | 53 | 94.3% | 50 | 96.2% | 51 | 1 | |
| Principles of Learn & Teaching: Grades 7-12 (5624) | 197 | 93.9% | 185 | 97.5% | 192 | 7 | |
| Special Ed: Core Knowledge & Applications (5354) | 58 | 96.6% | 56 | 98.3% | 57 | 1 | |





Questions or Comments





Appendices



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