



Public Schools of North Carolina  
State Board of Education  
Department of Public Instruction

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# Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

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## Review of Praxis Testing Requirements

*SL 2003-284, Section 7.20 (d)*  
*(HB 397, the 2003 Budget Bill)*

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DPI Chronological Schedule

## **Review of Praxis Testing Requirements**

**Prepared by the  
Department of Public Instruction  
Leadership Development and Special Services Area  
Division of Human Resource Management**

**April 2004**

## Review of Praxis Testing Requirements

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### Legislative Requirement

Session Law 2003-284 Section 7.20 (d) requires the State Board of Education to review the requirements for initial certification as a teacher to determine whether the prescribed minimum score on the PRAXIS examination is appropriate to demonstrate an applicant's academic and professional preparation for teaching.

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### Background on the Adoption of Praxis II Test Requirements

In the early 1990s, the Educational Testing Service (ETS) introduced a new series of tests, the Praxis II exams, to replace the National Teacher Examinations (NTE) Specialty Area Tests. The NTE Specialty Area tests were two-hour multiple-choice exams. There was generally one test for each specialty area. The new Praxis II exams were one-hour or two-hours in length; some exams were multiple-choice; some exams were constructed response (essay); there were multiple exams for each specialty area.

North Carolina, like other states moving to the new exams, worked with ETS and convened panels of educators to review the new exams and recommend which combination of exams should be adopted for each specialty area. North Carolina adopted two or three exams for each area (e.g., there were three exams for English and Social Studies; there were two exams for Mathematics and Physical Education). Within each specialty area at least one of the adopted exams was a constructed response test. It should be noted that each state decided independently which test or tests to require and there is much variety between states in Praxis II testing requirements. Appendix A provides information on the tests and pass scores that have been adopted by states for sample Praxis II exams.

As new exams were identified, North Carolina also worked with ETS to conduct standard setting studies. Groups of inservice teachers and some teacher educators, identified by the Department of Public Instruction using guidelines established by ETS, reviewed the proposed new tests and went through a statistically accepted process to generate proposed "cut" scores (passing scores) for each individual test. The data analysis of the standard setting studies provided to the Department by ETS included a validated study score for each test as well as scores that would be one and two standard deviations above and below the study score.

In adopting the first new Praxis II tests in 1994, North Carolina adopted a **compensatory scoring model**. This model required individuals to earn a minimum score on each test and a composite score across the tests that was greater than the sum of the minimum scores required on each test. The composite scores were based on the validated study scores for each test. The minimum scores were set at one or two standard deviations below the validated study scores. The compensatory scoring model allows individuals who might do better on multiple-choice tests versus constructed response tests (or vice versa) to offset their performance on one type of test with their performance on the other. Pass rates of test-takers are higher using the compensatory model than they would be using an independent scoring model (which would require individuals to earn the validated score on each test).

The compensatory scoring model used by the State resulted in situations in which individuals had met the required minimum score on each test, but did not pass the tests because they did not have the required composite score across the tests. This situation resulted in confusion and frustration, particularly on the part of students, their parents, and the individuals in the field who had to try and explain the scoring model to students and their parents. Effective July 1, 2000, the state modified the compensatory scoring model being used and eliminated the minimum score requirement on the individual tests. The **modified compensatory scoring model** currently being used requires prospective teachers to earn a combined score across required tests. The combined score is based on the validated score for each of the individual tests.

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## **Chronology of Praxis II Examination Changes**

Appendix B contains the current North Carolina Praxis II test requirements. The following provides a chronology of the changes that have resulted in the current requirements.

- Effective July 1, 1994 new PRAXIS II tests were adopted for the following areas: Middle Grades Language Arts, Middle Grades Math, Middle Grades Science, Middle Grades Social Studies, Secondary Biology, Secondary Chemistry, Secondary English, Secondary Math, Secondary Science (Comprehensive), Social Studies (Comprehensive), K-12 Spanish, and K-12 Physical Education. These tests replaced the NTE exams. Two-three tests were adopted for each license area. For each area the new requirements included at least one test with multiple choice questions and one test with constructed response (essay) questions.
- In adopting the new requirements, North Carolina also adopted a compensatory scoring model. This model required individuals to earn a minimum score on each test as well as a composite score across tests.
- Effective February 1997 the total score requirements for all the new PRAXIS II tests except for Middle Grades Language Arts were lowered. This was based on the performance of program graduates on the exams during the preceding two years.
- Effective July 1997 PRAXIS II tests were adopted for the following areas: Elementary Education, K-12 French, K-12 Art and K-12 Music.
- Effective January 1998 the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) was adopted for Principal Licensure.
- Effective July 1998 the Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) was adopted in place of the Professional Knowledge exam.
- In January 1999 the State Board adopted an Alternative Entry License based on legislation. The license allowed teachers with valid out-of-state licenses and one year of teaching experience to be exempted from Praxis II testing requirements based on one year of teaching in North Carolina and satisfactory evaluations by the employing NC LEA. The evaluation was to include assessment of the achievement of the students taught by the teacher. The policy and legislation required LEAs to report to the Board on a semi-annual basis the number of teachers employed on alternative entry licenses. The licenses were to be limited to those areas LEAs identified as or anticipated to be shortage areas.

- Effective July 1999 newer PRAXIS II tests were adopted to replace tests for Middle Grades Language Arts, Middle Grades Math, and Middle Grades Social Studies (these all only have one test per area). New tests were also adopted for Behaviorally/Emotionally Disabled, Cross Categorical, Mentally Disabled, Severely/Profoundly Mentally Disabled, and Learning Disabled (these are all two tests per area with individual scores [independent scoring model] per test).
  - Effective January 2000 a newer PRAXIS II test was adopted for Middle Grades Science (a single test).
  - Effective July 2000 North Carolina adopted the current modified compensatory scoring model. This eliminated the minimum score requirement on each test. The following changes were also made:
    - Elementary Education -- total score was increased
    - 9-12 Biology -- reduced from three tests to two tests with new total score
    - 9-12 Chemistry -- reduced from three tests to two tests with new total score
    - 9-12 English -- reduced from three tests to two tests with new total score
    - K-12 French -- total score increased
    - 9-12 Math -- total score reduced
    - 9-12 Science -- reduced from three tests to two tests but adopted new tests with option for individuals who have major academic training in Chemistry or Biology
    - 9-12 Social Studies -- reduced from three tests to two tests - kept one test and changed one test
    - K-12 Art -- reduced from three tests to two tests
    - K-12 Music -- reduced from three tests to two tests
    - Physical Education -- reduced from two tests to one test
    - The Principles of Learning and Teaching Exam was eliminated for those individuals required to complete the Performance-Based Licensure Program (PBL).
  - Effective January 1, 2001, the State Board adopted a policy exempting teachers with valid out-of-state teaching licenses and four or more years of out-of-state teaching experience from Praxis testing requirements provided they were recommended for re-employment by the NC LEA.
  - Effective May 2001, the General Assembly extended the time teachers had to satisfy Praxis testing requirements from one year to two years, provided the teacher at least took the test during the first year of employment.
  - Effective July 1, 2003 new Praxis II tests were adopted for Exceptional Children (to align with the new license areas), German, and Earth Science.
  - In August 2003, the State Board of Education approved a one-year extension (for the 2003-04 school year) for individuals who had not satisfied Praxis II testing requirements within the two-year time limit while Praxis II testing requirements were being reviewed.
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## **Recommendations from the Select Committee on Teacher Reciprocity**

In response to Section 7.21 of the Special Provisions in the 2003 Budget Bill, the State Board of Education formed a Select Committee on Teacher Reciprocity Issues. The Committee was charged with reviewing policies and procedures for issuing North Carolina licenses to highly qualified teachers from other states, identifying barriers, and recommending changes that will facilitate the licensing of teachers from other states. The Committee was also to consider ways of aligning state licensing requirements with the No Child Left Behind Act.

The Committee was co-chaired by Dr. William Harrison, Superintendent of the Cumberland County Schools, and Dr. Jane Norwood, Vice Chairman of the State Board. Other Committee members were:

Michael Dougherty, Dean, College of Education and Allied Professions, WCU  
Ed Dunlap, Executive Director, NC School Boards Association  
Lucy Edwards, Principal, Northampton Schools  
Angela Farthing, Director of the Center for Teaching, NCAE  
The Honorable John Garwood, Senator, NC General Assembly  
Susan Harrison, Senior Project Administrator, Wake County Public Schools  
Brenda Jones, Assistant Superintendent, Pitt County Schools  
Ann McArthur, Teacher Advisor, Office of the Governor  
Jo Ann Norris, Associate Director, NC Public School Forum  
Allison Ormond, North Carolina Teacher of the Year  
Donna Simmons, Dean, School of Education, Gardner-Webb University  
Marion Yates, Principal, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools  
The Honorable Doug Yongue, Representative, NC General Assembly

In December 2003 the Committee's recommendations were presented to the State Board of Education for discussion. In January 2004 the State Board of Education approved the recommendations of the Committee with minor edits for greater clarity. The Committee recommended that teachers who have been fully licensed and designated highly qualified in other states be fully licensed and designated highly qualified in North Carolina. Additionally, the Committee made four recommendations (below) related to Praxis II testing requirements. Note: The original numbering of the recommendations from the Committee report has been preserved. The edits approved by the State Board of Education have been incorporated into the recommendations.

4. That to be issued a Standard Professional license, individuals must have completed an approved teacher education program or alternative route program and must meet the NCLB definition of highly qualified. To be designated highly qualified, new elementary and exceptional children\* teachers must pass a rigorous state test. Middle school, secondary, special subject area, and career-technical teachers must pass a rigorous state test or have an academic major or the equivalent in the content area or have a graduate degree in the content area.
5. That the current compensatory scoring model used for Praxis II requirements (Tests 00011 and 00012) be replaced with an independent scoring model, and in using the independent scoring model, that North Carolina adopt a new rigorous test for elementary teacher candidates that reflects current theory

and best professional practices and the academic content of the elementary curriculum.

6. That during the 2004-05 school year, elementary teacher candidates be required to take the newly adopted rigorous state test to be issued a Standard Professional License 1. Final validation of the cut score will occur prior to July 1, 2005.

In order to implement Recommendation 4, a revision in §115C-296(a) will be required. The proposed revision would be:

§ 115C-296. Board sets certification requirements.

- (a) The State Board of Education shall have entire control of certifying all applicants for teaching positions in all public elementary and high schools of North Carolina; and it shall prescribe the rules and regulations for the renewal and extension of all certificates and shall determine and fix the salary for each grade and type of certificate which it authorizes: Provided, that the State Board of Education ~~shall~~ may require each applicant for an initial bachelors degree certificate or graduate degree certificate to demonstrate the applicant's academic and professional preparation by achieving a prescribed minimum score on a standard examination appropriate and adequate for that purpose. . .

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### **Select Committee on Lateral Entry**

A Select Committee on Lateral Entry began work in November. It is anticipated that the recommendations from that Committee will address Praxis II testing requirements for lateral entry teachers.

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### **Recommendation Related to Praxis Scores**

It is recommended that if the recommendations of the Select Committee on Teacher Reciprocity, which were adopted by the State Board of Education in January 2004, are not implemented that additional review of Praxis testing requirements be conducted. If the recommendations are implemented, further review will not be required.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Sample Praxis II Testing Requirements Adopted by States**



### Test Codes Used in the Table

PPST-R	Preprofessional Skills Test in Reading
PPST-W	Preprofessional Skills Test in Writing
PPST-M	Preprofessional Skills Test in Mathematics
0011	Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
0012	Elementary Education: Content Area Exercises
0014	Elementary Education: Content Knowledge
0016	Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment (K-5)
0041	English Language, Literature, and Composition: Content Knowledge
0042	English Language, Literature, and Composition: Essays
0043	English Language, Literature, and Composition: Pedagogy
0061	Mathematics: Content Knowledge
0063	Mathematics: Proofs, Models, and Problems, Part I
0065	Mathematics: Pedagogy
0081	Social Studies: Content Knowledge
0082	Social Studies: Analytical Essays
0083	Social Studies: Interpretation of Materials
0084	Social Studies: Pedagogy
0091	Physical Education: Content Knowledge
0092	Physical Education: Movement Forms—Analysis and Design
0093	Physical Education: Movement Forms—Video Evaluation

### Comparison of Praxis Testing Requirements in Selected Areas

	Entrance Exams			Elementary			
	PPST-R	PPST-W	PPST-M	0011	0012	0014	0016
Alabama							
Alaska	175	174	173				
Arizona							
Arkansas	172	173	171				
California							
Colorado							
Connecticut	172	171	171	163	148		
Delaware	175	173	174				
DC	172	171	174	146	148		
Florida							
Georgia	176	174	176		137		154
Hawaii				164	135		
Idaho							
Illinois							
Indiana	176	172	175	165			
Iowa							
Kansas							
Kentucky	173	172	173	163			
Louisiana	172	171	170			147	
Maine							
Maryland					150	142	
Massachusetts							
Michigan							
Minnesota	173	172	171			140	
Mississippi	170	172	169			153	135
Missouri				164			
Montana	170	170	170				
Nebraska	170	172	171				
Nevada	174	172	172	158	135		
New Hampshire	174	172	172				
New Jersey						133	
New Mexico							
New York							
<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>145</b>		
North Dakota	173		170				
Ohio	173	172	172	162			
Oklahoma	173	172	171				
Oregon	174	171	175				
Pennsylvania	172	173	173	168		TBD	
Rhode Island							
South Carolina	175	173	172	164	145		
South Dakota							
Tennessee	174	173	173	159		140	
Texas				164		151	
Utah							
Vermont	177	174	175			148	
Virginia	178	176	178			143	
Washington							
West Virginia	174	172	172	155			
Wisconsin	175	174	173				
Wyoming							

**Comparison of Praxis Testing Requirements in Selected Areas**

	Middle Grades				English		
	L. Arts	Math	Sci.	SS	0041	0042	0043
Alabama							
Alaska					158	160	
Arizona							
Arkansas					159	150	145
California							
Colorado							
Connecticut	164	158	162	160	172	160	
Delaware							
DC					142		150
Florida							
Georgia	144	139	141	138	168	155	
Hawaii					164		150
Idaho							
Illinois							
Indiana					153		
Iowa							
Kansas							
Kentucky	153	143	139	144	160	155	
Louisiana					160		130
Maine							
Maryland					164		155
Massachusetts							
Michigan							
Minnesota					148		
Mississippi					157		
Missouri	163	158	149	154	158		
Montana							
Nebraska							
Nevada					150		140
New Hampshire		151			164	155	
New Jersey					155		
New Mexico							
New York							
<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>166</b>		<b>155</b>
North Dakota							
Ohio	156	143		151	167		
Oklahoma							
Oregon		163			164	145	
Pennsylvania					160		
Rhode Island							
South Carolina					162	150	
South Dakota							
Tennessee					157		145
Texas			151				
Utah							
Vermont					172	160	
Virginia					172		
Washington							
West Virginia	147	148	151	151	155		
Wisconsin							
Wyoming							

### Comparison of Praxis Testing Requirements in Selected Areas

	Mathematics 9-12			Social Studies 9-12			
	0061	0063	0065	0081	0082	0083	0084
Alabama							
Alaska	146	171					
Arizona							
Arkansas	116	144	135	155	140		
California							
Colorado							
Connecticut	137			162			
Delaware							
DC	141	154	135	145			169
Florida							
Georgia	136	159		151		167	
Hawaii	136		135	154			144
Idaho							
Illinois							
Indiana	136			147			
Iowa							
Kansas							
Kentucky	125	141		151		155	
Louisiana				149		152	
Maine							
Maryland	141		145	154			164
Massachusetts							
Michigan							
Minnesota	124			145			
Mississippi	123			143			
Missouri	137			152			
Montana							
Nebraska							
Nevada			135	152			
New Hampshire	127	140		155	145		
New Jersey	130			153			
New Mexico							
New York							
<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>141</b>		<b>140</b>	<b>162</b>			<b>158</b>
North Dakota							
Ohio	139			157			
Oklahoma							
Oregon	147	144	140	158			
Pennsylvania	136			157			
Rhode Island							
South Carolina	131	137		158		160	
South Dakota							
Tennessee	136		125				
Texas							
Utah							
Vermont	141	154		162		165	
Virginia	147			161			
Washington							
West Virginia	133			148			
Wisconsin							
Wyoming							

# Comparison of Praxis Testing Requirements in Selected Areas

	Physical Education		
	0091	0092	0093
Alabama			
Alaska			
Arizona			
Arkansas	141	150	
California			
Colorado			
Connecticut	154	154	
Delaware			
DC			
Florida			
Georgia		148	
Hawaii	160	145	
Idaho			
Illinois			
Indiana	150		
Iowa			
Kansas			
Kentucky	147	151	
Louisiana			
Maine			
Maryland	153		155
Massachusetts			
Michigan			
Minnesota	141		
Mississippi	150		
Missouri	153		
Montana			
Nebraska			
Nevada	154	149	
New Hampshire			
New Jersey	139		
New Mexico			
New York			
North Carolina	158		
North Dakota			
Ohio	153		
Oklahoma			
Oregon	160	141	145
Pennsylvania			
Rhode Island			
South Carolina	146		160
South Dakota			
Tennessee	152	148	
Texas			
Utah			
Vermont			
Virginia			
Washington			
West Virginia	150		
Wisconsin			
Wyoming			

## **Appendix B**

### **Current North Carolina Praxis II Testing Requirements**

AREA OF LICENSURE	REQUIRED TESTS	REQUIRED SCORE ON SUBJECT ASSESSMENT	PASS RATE OF INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING APPROVED NC TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS (1)	PASS RATE OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS (2)
<b>Preschool/Elementary</b>				
Birth through Kindergarten	none			
Elementary (K-6)	0011 and 0012	313 (total score)	96%	91%
Preschool Add-on	none			
<b>Middle Grades</b>				
Language Arts	0049	145	100%	95%
Mathematics	0069	141	100%	91%
Science	0439	134	100%	90%
Social Studies	0089	149	100%	86%
Agriculture	none			
Business	none			
Health Occupations	none			
Family & Consumer Sciences	none			
Marketing	none			
Technology	none			
<b>Secondary</b>				
Anthropology	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)		
Bible	none			
Biology	0235 & 0234	302 (total score)	94%	100%
Business Education	0100	580		
Chemistry	0245 & 0483	307 (total score)		
Earth Science	0571	136		
Economics	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)		
English	0041 & 0043	321 (total score)	91%	84%

AREA OF LICENSURE	REQUIRED TESTS	REQUIRED SCORE ON SUBJECT ASSESSMENT	PASS RATE OF INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING APPROVED NC TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS (1)	PASS RATE OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS (2)
French	0171 & 0173	335 (total score)		
Geography	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)		
German	0181	153		
History	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)		
Latin	none			
Mathematics	0061 & 0065	281 (total score)	94%	70%
Physics	0260	510		
Political Science	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)		
Russian	none			
Science (comprehensive)	0435 & either 0483 or 0234	0437 & 0483 - 305 0435 & 0234 - 303 (total score)	100%	81%
Social Studies (comprehensive)	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)	96%	90%
Sociology	0081 & 0084	320 (total score)		
Spanish	0191 & 0192	327 (total score)		
<b>Special Subjects</b>				
Art	0131 & 0133	322 (total score)	90%	83%
Dance	none			
English as a Second Language	0360	520	100%	94%
French	0171 & 0173	335 (total score)		
German	0180	540		
Health Specialist	0550	640	100%	86%
Junior ROTC	none			
Music	0111 & 0113	299 (total score)	95%	86%
Physical Education	0091	158	83%	72%
Reading (bachelor's level)	0200	540		



AREA OF LICENSURE	REQUIRED TESTS	REQUIRED SCORE ON SUBJECT ASSESSMENT	PASS RATE OF INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING APPROVED NC TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS (1)	PASS RATE OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS (2)
Reading (graduate level)	0300	570		
Safety and Driver Education	none			
Spanish	0191 & 0192	327 (total score)	84%	77%
Speech Communication	0220	560		
Theater Arts	none			
<b>Exceptional Children</b>				
Academically Gifted	none			
Special Education: Adapted Curriculum	0353 and 0544	287		
Special Education: General Curriculum	0353 and 0542	302		
Behaviorally/Emotionally Disabled	0351 and 0371	0351 - 143; 0371 - 147	100%	82%
Cross Categorical	0351 and 0352	0351 - 143; 0352 - 136	100%	88%
Hearing Impaired	none			
Mentally Disabled	0351 and 0321	0351 - 143; 0321 - 144	93%	80%
Severely Profoundly Mentally Disabled	0351 and 0321	0351 - 143; 0321 - 144		
Specific Learning Disabled	0351 and 0381	0351 - 143; 0381 - 139	100%	92%
Visually Impaired	0280	550		
<b>Career-Technical Education</b>				
Agricultural Education	none			
Business Education	0100	580	100%	90%
Career Development Coordinator	none			
Handicapped/Disadvantaged	none			

<b>AREA OF LICENSURE</b>	<b>REQUIRED TESTS</b>	<b>REQUIRED SCORE ON SUBJECT ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>PASS RATE OF INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING APPROVED NC TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS (1)</b>	<b>PASS RATE OF OTHER INDIVIDUALS (2)</b>
Health Occupations Education	none			
Family & Consumer Sciences	0120	540	100%	92%
Marketing Education	0560	690	33%	75%
Technology Education	0050	580	100%	89%
Trade and Industrial Education	none			

1 = Based on the 2001-02 cohort of student teachers reported in the 2003 IHE Performance Report.

2 = Based on others taking the test during the same time as the 2001-02 cohort of student teachers.