



COLORADO
Department of Education

201 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203-1799

MEMO

To: State Board of Education
From: Colleen O'Neil, Executive Director for the Office of Educator Preparation, Licensure & Effectiveness
Date: May 21, 2015
Re: Content Exams for Demonstration of Content Knowledge/Competency for Educator Preparation and Licensure Endorsements

Following the adoption of revised State Board's rules related to the Educator Licensing Act of 1991, the Office of Educator Preparation, Licensure & Effectiveness embarked on the second phase of this work: reviewing present exams approved for the demonstration of endorsement content knowledge and reviewing other options that may better measure the competency of Colorado educators.

The Educator Preparation and Licensing Content Assessment Review Committee consisted of co-chairs representing higher education/Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) and K-12 human resources, two higher education/EPPs, one alternative licensure program, one assistant superintendent, one K-12 human resources director and four CDE content experts. Select staff from CDE licensure attended all meetings to observe and provide clarification to the committee upon request.

In fall 2014 CDE's Office of Educator Preparation, Licensure and Effectiveness held stakeholder meetings across Colorado and posted a survey to garner feedback about both the rules and assessment options. Two vendors/test series were recommended repeatedly: Pearson/National Evaluation Series (NES) exam series and Educational Testing Services (ETS)/PRAXIS series. Each was sent a Request for Information to solicit written documentation and was invited to prepare for a two-day presentation/QA session. At the conclusion of each presentation, the Committee prepared a list of advantages and disadvantages of the vendor/test series. The committee then met again to prepare a formal recommendation for presentation to the state board. The committee assessed both companies' presentations to identify exam options that are:

- Valid and reliable, aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards and for which there are study guides and practice materials.
- Easily accessible and available on a flexible schedule.
- Offered online and provide official score reports in a reasonable timeframe.
- Reasonably priced.
- Portable, meaning the extent to which educators and their licensure test scores would be recognized in Colorado and other states (50% of Colorado teachers are hired from out of state).

Based on these criteria, deep analysis of both vendors and their respective test offerings and the committee's assessment of which vendor/exam series is most suitable for Colorado, the Committee's co-chairs will present to the board a recommendation for immediate adoption of the Praxis exam series to provide a streamlined testing system of high-quality, aligned content exams for candidates and Colorado educators, which will help districts to more easily recruit and attract teachers to Colorado.

Action needed at board meeting:

- A vote for approval.

