



COLORADO
Department of Education

Educator Preparation, Licensing, and Effectiveness: Content Assessment Alignment Project

State Board of Education: June 2016

Content Assessment Review Committee Recommendation

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June 2016

Reminders about the work

Goals: Big Picture

Improve the success of Colorado's educator effectiveness initiatives by aligning content assessments and rules with the Colorado Academic Standards and the educator quality standards.

Increase effectiveness of new educators by ensuring the highest quality content assessments are used.

Increase teacher quality for every single student in the state of Colorado in order to ensure their success throughout life.



Reminders: Rule Alignment Project

Rule
Alignment
Project

- Fall 2014 –Spring 2015: Internal reviews of related regulations and statute, online survey and portal for online feedback and stakeholder focus groups across Colorado. Updates regularly communicated to the Board.

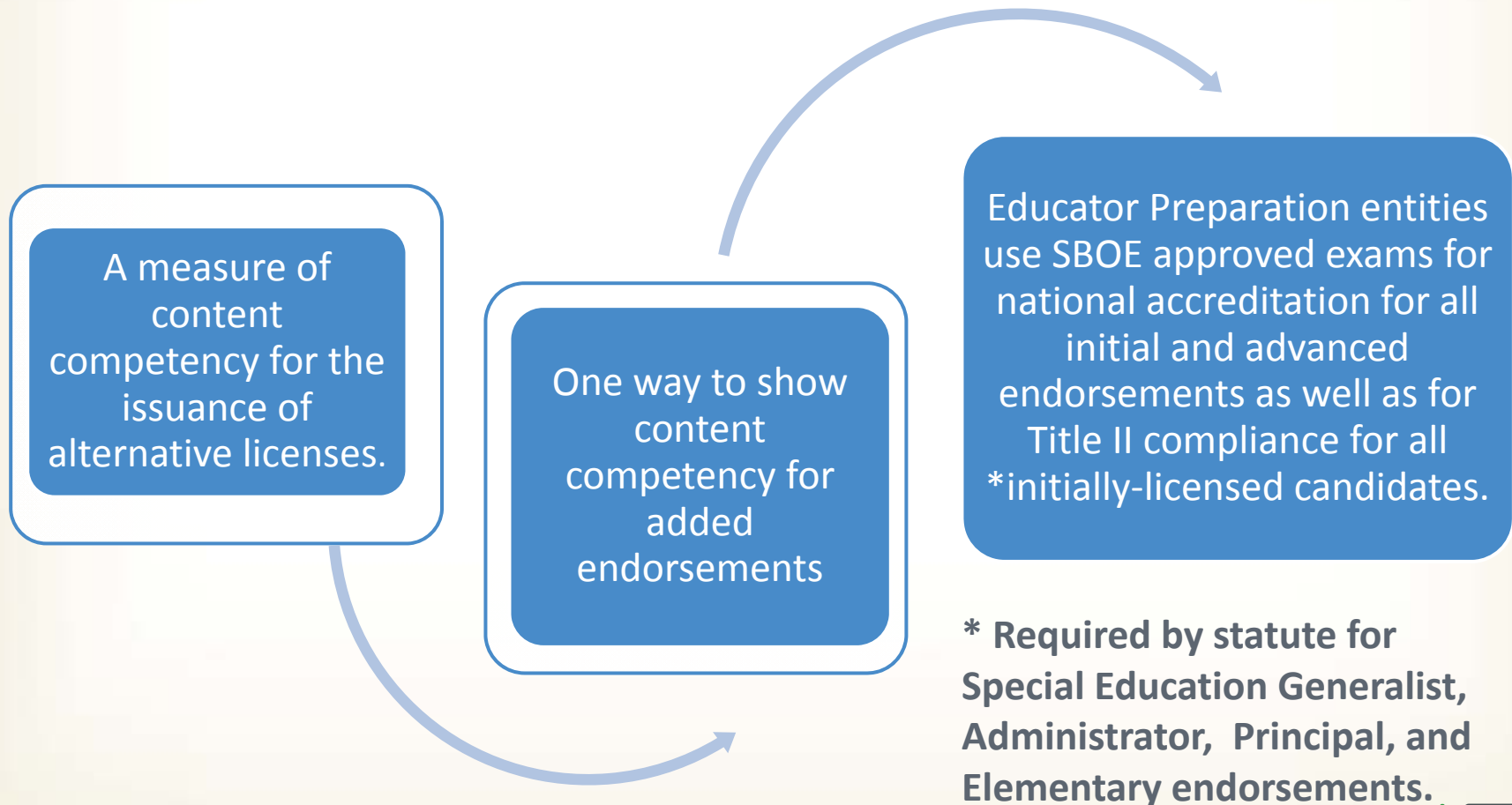
Rule
Making
Process

- Spring 2015- Fall 2015: Informational sessions held. Draft rules presented to the board and posted online for public comment. Staff incorporated feedback in accordance with statute. Presented new draft to the Board.

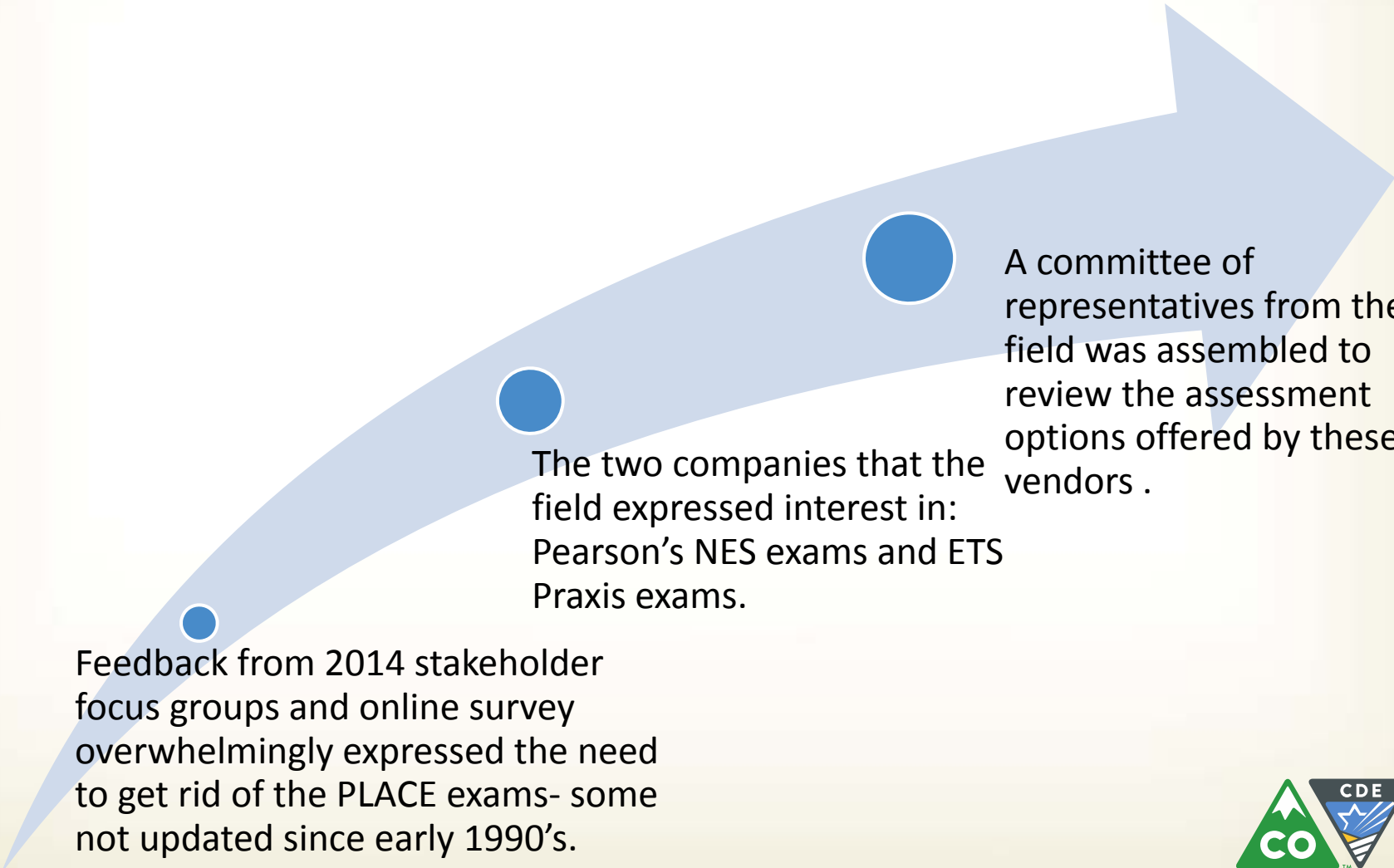
Rule
Adoption

- February 2016: State board voted to approve the newly aligned rules, sparking the next step in the project: aligning Colorado's content assessments.

What are content assessments used for in Colorado?



Context: How did we get here?



Feedback from 2014 stakeholder focus groups and online survey overwhelmingly expressed the need to get rid of the PLACE exams- some not updated since early 1990's.

The two companies that the field expressed interest in: Pearson's NES exams and ETS Praxis exams.

A committee of representatives from the field was assembled to review the assessment options offered by these vendors .

Content Assessment Review Committee

Committee Members

- Representatives from higher education including a rural rep., K-12 human resources, CASPA representation, an assistant superintendent, and internal CDE content experts.

Process

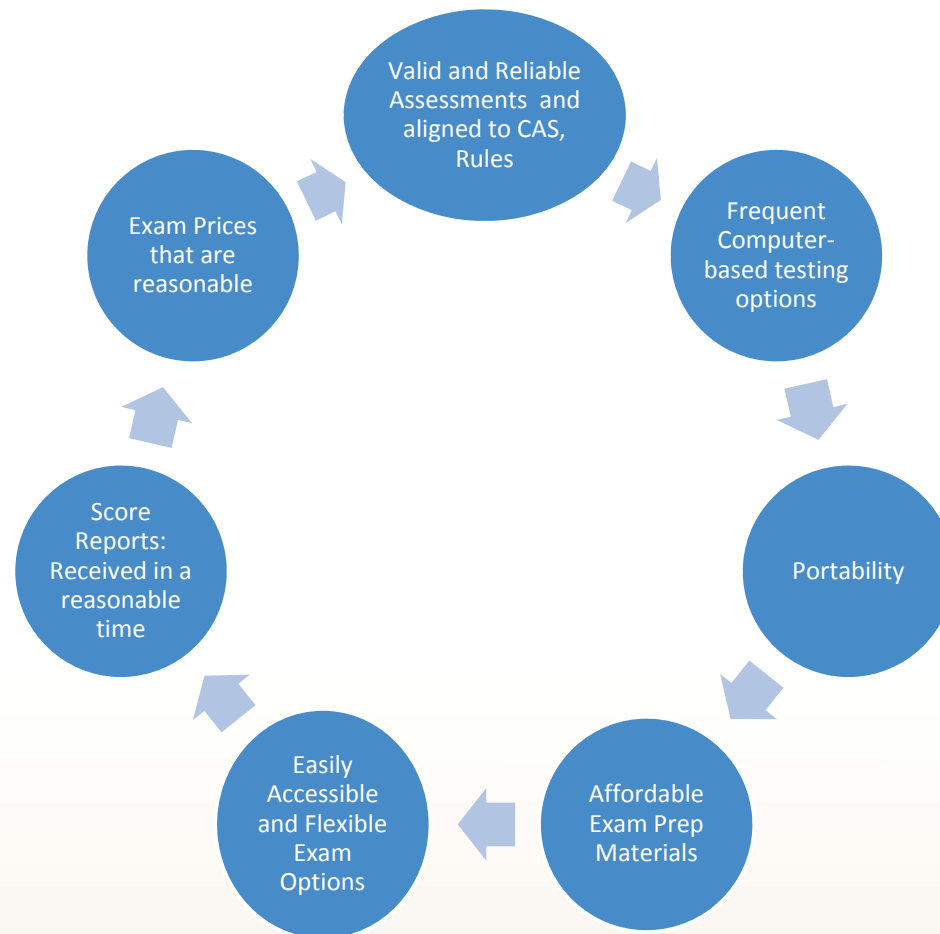
- ETS: Praxis (Educational Testing Service) and Pearson: NES (National Evaluation Series) were sent an RFI.
- Each vendor provided responses & prepared for a two-day presentation/Q&A session.

Committee Meetings

- Committee analyzed each vendor's 2-day presentation and asked questions.
- The committee met for an additional day and informally to make a formal recommendation to go to the board.



Criteria for Content Assessments



Valid and Reliable Assessments

Criteria	ETS – Praxis	Pearson -- NES	Advantage
Currently available valid and reliable assessments that are aligned with the Colorado landscape (e.g., State Board approved Educator Preparation and Licensing Rules, Teacher Quality Standards, Principal Quality Standards, and Colorado Academic Standards)	<p>Validity and reliability follows generally accepted test development & maintenance practices.</p> <p>ETS has an available and aligned Praxis test to measure 47/50 (94%) of CO endorsement areas (except Dance, Japanese & Russian).</p> <p>CO already uses 9 ETS Praxis exams.</p>	<p>Validity and reliability follows generally accepted test development & maintenance practices.</p> <p>Pearson has available and aligned NES tests to measure 27/50 (54%) of CO endorsement areas.</p> <p>CO has and continues to use 37 Pearson PLACE exams (as initially developed in the early 1990s; not fully aligned with current CO and professional standards) and 1 Pearson NES exam (Mandarin).</p>	ETS (Praxis)

Frequent computer-based testing options

Criteria	ETS – Praxis	Pearson -- NES	Advantage
Frequent computer-based testing options	Available online now. For high volume content areas, windows are available 2 weeks each month throughout the year. 80% of all exams will be continuously available by 2017. Nearly 100% continuously available by 2019.	Online continuous testing is available for NES tests. Additional tests developed in the future to cover the other 13 endorsement areas would be developed to be taken online. Development estimated timeline 16-18 months per test, although multiple tests could be developed simultaneously.	ETS (Praxis)

Portability

Criteria	ETS – Praxis	Pearson -- NES	Advantage
Portability, meaning the extent to which educators and their licensure test scores would be recognized in Colorado and other states	Numerous states and territories are using exams that would be taken in CO (e.g., 38 using mathematics, 31 using either elementary multiple subjects or elementary content, 30 using general science, 29 using social studies, 26 using special ed. generalist, etc.).	Limited number of states using NES; a maximum of 5 states using any test, and only 3 states use the majority of NES tests.	ETS overwhelming advantage.

Affordable Exam Prep Materials

Criteria	ETS – Praxis	Pearson -- NES	Advantage
Availability and affordability of preparation materials	<p>Many free online test prep materials, including study guides. Sample online test \$20 for 10 attempts.</p> <p>EPP 20% bulk purchase discount available for practice tests.</p> <p>Individual financial hardship waivers are available (Quarterly allotment of \$55,000 for annual total of \$220,000).</p>	<p>Many free online test prep materials, including study guides. Expanded student guides are fee-based (\$22.50-35) as are full-length practice tests (\$17.50-29.95).</p> <p>There are no EPP bulk purchase discounts available.</p> <p>Individual financial hardship waivers are available (annual allotment equal to 2% of tests taken in CO)</p>	ETS (Praxis)

Easily Accessible and Flexible Exam Options

Criteria	ETS – Praxis	Pearson -- NES	Advantage
Easily accessible and flexible exam options	9 testing locations in CO; proposes creating additional locations in CO and can set them up in cooperation with local entities as quickly as 4 months; testing centers nationwide	10 testing locations in CO; proposes creating additional locations in CO and can set them up in cooperation with local entities 3 months (commercial training centers) and typically within 6 months for universities; testing centers nationwide.	No advantage.

Score Reports: Receive in a reasonable time

Criteria	ETS: Praxis	Pearson: NES	Advantage
Ability to receive scores in a reasonable time	<p>Unofficial scores immediately available for online tests with multiple-choice items (40/47), and official scores available within two weeks after administration or after window closes.</p> <p>Tests with constructed-response items (7/47) results are provided up to 16 days after close of test window.</p>	<p>Unofficial results provided upon completion and official reports provided within two weeks for multiple-choice only (23/27 currently available NES exams).</p> <p>For tests with constructed-response items (4/27), official results provided within 4 weeks.</p>	No advantage

Exam prices that are reasonable

Criteria	ETS – Praxis	Pearson -- NES	Advantage
Exam prices that are reasonable	<p>Many tests are multiple-choice only at a cost of \$120. Tests with constructed-response range from \$146-170.</p> <p>Retest for Elementary requires testing only in sub-content area failed.</p>	<p>Many tests are multiple-choice only at a cost of \$95. Tests with constructed-response range from \$99-155.</p> <p>Retest for Elementary requires testing only in sub-content area failed.</p>	<p>Pearson (NES) exams are less expensive individually, but do not offer exams for 13 of CO's current endorsements.</p>

Cut Score Recommendation Process

- **Multistate Standard Setting**
- **Current Colorado Cut Score**
 - Where necessary adjusted based on passing rate – Math

Committee Recommendation: Review cut scores annually for necessary adjustment

Committee's Recommendation

- The above criteria have led the Committee to recommend the **Praxis series** of exams for adoption in Colorado to immediately provide high-quality, aligned content exams.
- The Committee recommends that the SBE adopt the list of 44 **Praxis exams** and the **recommended cut-scores** provided to the board.

This recommendation provides a streamlined testing system with ease of understanding for candidates and allows Colorado to more easily recruit and attract teachers to Colorado.

Follow- Up Recommendations

- The Committee recommends that the SBE direct CDE staff to investigate impact on licensed educators coming to Colorado from other states and comparability of other exams for purposes of Colorado licensure in these cases.
- The Committee recommends that the SBE direct CDE to continue to investigate additional or alternative math endorsements options, including but not limited to elementary math and middle school math endorsements.
- In light of the expectations regarding the teaching of reading in Colorado (including and especially the Read Act), the committee recommends the SBE direct CDE to create a specific taskforce to examine whether the State Board needs to adopt possible content and pedagogy exam(s) for elementary teachers that specifically focus on measuring teachers' knowledge and skills with regards to the teaching of reading upon completion of their initial licensure preparation program.