
Educator Licensure, Praxis Changes, Policy

The Background:

In compliance with T.C.A. § 49-5-5605 Tennessee has required newly licensed teachers to demonstrate subject-area content knowledge by means of a licensure exam. This is done to ensure that teachers have entry-level competency in the content area, and to validate the mastery of licensure standards that were covered within the preparation program. The State Board of Education prescribes which tests are taken in the various subject areas and approves the passing scores for each of the licensure examinations.

Praxis Licensure testing requirements and passing scores are found in State Board Policy number 5.105.

This year the Educational Testing Service (ETS) has conducted a number of test revisions to update assessed content knowledge. Adjustments to these exams result in new code numbers and, in some cases, new titles. The new exams under consideration to take effect on September 1, 2014 include:

- 5701 – Agriculture
- 5024 – Education of Young Children
- 5018 – Elementary Education: Content Knowledge
- 5017 – Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
- 5122 – Family and Consumer Sciences
- 5358 – Gifted Education
- 5440 – Middle School Science
- 5402 – School Psychologist
- 5952 – Sociology
- 5331 – Speech-Language Pathology

To support the decision-making process for State Departments of Education with regards to establishing passing scores [i.e. cut scores] for these Praxis assessments, research staff from ETS designed and conducted two multi-state standard setting studies for each exam. The studies also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level teachers.

The standard setting studies involved two expert panels, comprised of teachers, administrators and college faculty. The recommended cut scores for each panel, as well as the average cut score across the two panels, were provided to help state departments of education determine appropriate cut (or passing) scores.

Due to the number of tests involved with revisions this year, a chart has been attached with the changes in test number, test title, and recommendations for passing scores, along with an updated version of Policy 5.105 reflecting these changes.

The Recommendation:

The Department of Education recommends adoption of this item on final reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

Test Code/ Passing Score Changes for 2014-15

New Test Name and Praxis ID Number	Current Praxis Test ID Number	Current Praxis Test Cut Score	Current Praxis Test Pass Rate	Multi-State Task Force Recommended Cut Score for New Test	TDOE Recommended Cut Score for New Tests
Agriculture (5701)	0700	530	54.3%	147	147
Education of Young Children (5024)	0021/5021	155	95%	160	160
Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018)	0014/5014	140	86.9%	163	163
Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017)	0011/5011	159	75.5%	153	153
Family Consumer Sciences (5122)	0121/5121	157	71.9%	153	153
Gifted Education (5358)	0357	146	88.5%	157	157
Middle School Science (5440)	0439	135	88.5%	150	150
School Psychologist (5402)	0401	154	88.7%	147	147
Sociology (5952)	0950	540	93.7%	154	154
Speech-Language Pathology (5331)	0330/5330	600	86.1%	162	162