
Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy 5.105

The Background:

State Board of Education Professional Assessments for Tennessee Educators Policy 5.105 outlines the necessary professional assessments and qualifying scores for specialty area content knowledge assessments. This item makes revisions to the policy to specify the foundational literacy skills assessment in compliance with requirements of the Tennessee Literacy Success Act and adds new Praxis codes and qualifying scores for physical education assessments. This item also introduces eight (8) new ETS assessments with qualifying cut scores that are replacing assessments being retired by ETS, and makes other clarifying revisions to the policy.

Foundational Literacy Skills Assessment:

To ensure all educators are adequately trained in foundational literacy skills, beginning on August 1, 2023, the Tennessee Literacy Success Act requires teachers endorsed to teach in grades K-3 and instructional leaders to complete a foundational literacy skills assessment or professional development course to acquire, renew, or advance a license. Revisions to this policy build on previously approved revisions to the Educator Licensure Rule 0520-02-03-.11 and Educator Licensure Policy 5.502 by detailing the assessment option available to educators to complete this new licensure requirement.

The Department used the assessment required at the conclusion of the optional professional development, also known as the Early Reading Training course, as the basis for developing the foundational literacy skills assessment. The assessment is aligned to the Literacy and Specialty Area Standards for EPPs (State Board Policy 5.505) and consists of 25 questions to ensure that individuals demonstrate knowledge of foundational literacy skills instruction and to allow the Department to gauge the quality of EPP implementation of the revised literacy standards. Out-of-state candidates will also benefit from this assessment option, as they can demonstrate their ability to teach developing readers without taking an additional course. The Department is proposing an 80% passing score on the assessment in order for educators to meet the requirements of the Literacy Success Act.

Physical Education and Health & Wellness K-12 Endorsement Praxis Assessment Scores

This item also proposes changes to the required assessments and qualifying scores for the Health and Wellness K-12 endorsement and Physical Education K-12 endorsement.

Proposed revisions add the Physical Education: Content Knowledge Praxis assessment as the required assessment for the Physical Education K-12 endorsement. The Department has determined that this assessment should replace the current assessment (P.E.: Content & Design) because it is more reflective of skills a prospective educator would develop during their clinical practice. This will also include adding a grace period for candidates who have already taken the current assessment to use the score for a period of three years (3) when applying for licensure – starting the final allowable administration date of 6/30/2024.

ETS also provides an additional Praxis assessment option for both health and physical education: Health and Physical Education: Content Knowledge (5857). In order to strengthen the fields of physical education and health education in Tennessee, this item proposes adding this test option, with a minimum score of 160, for licensure applicants from a dual endorsement approved program.

ETS Praxis Test Adoptions

ETS is replacing eight (8) assessments currently used in Tennessee for educator licensure. This item removes the assessments being retired by ETS and adds the new assessments created by ETS. This will also include adding a grace period for candidates who have already taken the current assessments to use those scores for a period of three (3) years when applying for licensure – starting the final allowable administration date of 12/31/2023.

This applies to the following assessments:

Retiring Assessment	New Assessment	New Assessment Qualifying Score
Biology: Content Knowledge (5235)	Biology: Content Knowledge (5236)	154
Chemistry: Content Knowledge (5245)	Chemistry: Content Knowledge (5246)	146
Earth and Space Sciences: Content Knowledge (5571)	Earth and Space Sciences: Content Knowledge (5572)	154
Library Media Specialist (5311)	School Librarian (5312)	154
Physics: Content Knowledge (5265)	Physics: Content Knowledge (5266)	145
Professional School Counselor (5421)	Professional School Counselor (5422)	159
School Psychologist (5402)	School Psychologist (5403)	155
Special Education: Preschool/Early Childhood (5691)	Special Education: Early Childhood/Early Intervention (5692)	159

Pedagogical Assessments

This item also adds clarifying language regarding pedagogical assessment requirements for candidates coming from out-of-state pathways.

Middle Grades Mathematics 6-8 Scores

Revisions were also made to correct an error in the qualifying scores for the required Middle Grades Mathematics 6-8 endorsements to reflect the correct cutoff score for each assessment.

There have been no changes since first reading.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Department prepare a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA.

Policy Justification:

T.C.A. § 4-5-230 requires that justification for adopting an item as a policy instead of a rule be submitted to the chair of the Government Operations Committee. This item is proposed to be adopted as a policy because it defines or explains the meaning of a statute or rule and/or concerns only the internal management of state government that does not affect private rights or privileges.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item supports the State Board's strategic focuses on Literacy and Teachers and Leaders outlined in the Master Plan by ensuring educators demonstrate knowledge in foundational literacy skills in order to effectively instruct early grade students in reading.

The Recommendation:

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