

## Your Question

You requested 50-state information on initial teacher licensure requirements. Specifically, you were interested in state assessment requirements for initial licensure.

## Our Response

### Requirements for Initial Teaching Licenses

Requirements for entry into teacher preparation programs and for teacher certification following the completion of such programs vary by state, grade and subject area. Fifty-state data on initial licensure requirements are compiled in the resources below.

- [State Policy Yearbook Database](#) (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2017): Provides updated 50-state information and citations on 10 teacher policy categories. State specifics (including the types of licensure assessments used) can be retrieved by clicking each data point and selecting a state from the drop-down menu at the top of the page. On initial licensure, data points include state requirements for:
  - [Student teaching/clinical practice](#) (assignments, mentor teachers, length).
  - [Teaching methods](#) (performance assessment and/or traditional pedagogy assessment).
  - Elementary [content knowledge](#), [teaching reading](#), [teaching mathematics](#) (academic and test requirements).
  - Middle school [content knowledge](#), [adolescent literacy](#) (academic and test requirements).
  - Secondary [content knowledge](#), [adolescent literacy](#) (academic and test requirements).
  - Special education [content knowledge](#), [teaching reading](#) (academic and test requirements).
- [Staff Qualifications and Development](#) (Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, with related datasets from 2011-2017): Click [Test requirements for initial certification of elementary and secondary teachers](#) (2017 and 2018) for high-level state data on assessment requirements.
- [Certification Reference Tables](#) (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, 2015): Download “Broad Requirements for Initial Teaching Certification” for high-level state data on degree, coursework, pedagogy and other related initial licensure requirements.

### Teacher Licensure Assessments and Cut Scores

#### *Basic Skills, Content and Traditional Pedagogy Assessments*

The most widely used basic skills, content and traditional pedagogy assessments for teacher licensing are the:

- [Praxis Series](#) assessments administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).
  - Administered in 46 states and the District of Columbia.
  - See cut scores [here](#) and state specifics [here](#).

- [National Evaluation Series](#) administered by Pearson.
  - Administered in five states: Arizona, New Mexico, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin (Oregon and Wisconsin use tests from both vendors).
  - See cut scores [here](#) (click on subject area test, and then “find the passing score in your state”).

Many states use these testing vendors for one or more licensure assessments and/or have adopted their own or another vendor’s assessment.

### *Performance Assessments*

A growing number of states are incorporating performance/portfolio-based assessments into their requirements for preparation, licensing and/or educator preparation provider (EPP) accreditation/review. Typically, these assessments are intended to complement basic skills and content area assessments and used to measure a candidate’s classroom practice. The edTPA is the most widely used teacher performance assessment. According to [this participation map](#), 19 states (AL, AR, CA, CT, DE, GA, HI, IL, IA, MN, NJ, NY, NC, OR, SC, TN, WA, WI, WV) have approved the edTPA as a performance assessment for program completion, state licensure and/or state program accreditation/review. These policies are in varying stages of implementation; state specifics can be retrieved [here](#).

Other performance assessments exist or are in development — such as ETS’ [PPAT](#), a new version of the Praxis that is meant to be more interactive and produce a portfolio of teacher performance, and ETS’ [NOTE](#), a simulation-based performance assessment which was piloted in 2017 and rolled out in 2017-18. Other states have, or are in the process of developing, their own state-specific performance assessment.

According to NCTQ’s [50-state scan](#) on this topic, as of November 2017:

- Twelve states ([CA](#), [CT](#), [DE](#), [GA](#), [HI](#), [IL](#), [MA](#), [MO](#), [NJ](#), [OR](#), [WA](#), [WI](#)) require a performance test as a condition of licensure. For example, **Massachusetts** requires a state-specific performance assessment for EPP program completion, and “beginning in September 2019, **Connecticut** will require new teachers to pass the edTPA in order to attain licensure.”
- Fifteen states ([AZ](#), [FL](#), [IN](#), [KS](#), [KY](#), [LA](#), [MN](#), [NC](#), [ND](#), [NV](#), [OH](#), [OK](#), [SC](#), [SD](#), [TX](#)) require a traditional pedagogy test as a condition of licensure (down from 22 states in 2015). For example, **Minnesota** requires all teachers to pass an applicable, grade-level and state-specific pedagogy test; and **South Carolina** requires all new teachers to pass the applicable, grade-level pedagogy test from the Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching series.
- Six states ([AL](#), [AR](#), [IA](#), [TN](#), [NY](#), [WV](#)) require either a performance test or a traditional pedagogy test as a condition of initial licensure.\*\* For example, new teachers in **Iowa** must pass the Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching series, the Praxis Performance Assessment for Teachers (PPAT) or the appropriate edTPA.\*\*\* New teachers in **West Virginia** must either pass the Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching series or the EdTPA to obtain licensure.
- Nine states ([CO](#), [ID](#), [MD](#), [ME](#), [MS](#), [NE](#), [NM](#), [PA](#), [RI](#)) require a performance or pedagogy test only for certain candidates. For example, “**Maine** requires all new elementary teachers to pass a pedagogy test from the Praxis Principles of Learning and Teaching series in order to attain licensure. It is only a requirement for middle and secondary school teachers if they have completed certification through alternate route programs.”
- Nine states ([AK](#), [DC](#), [MI](#), [MT](#), [NH](#), [UT](#), [VA](#), [VT](#), [WY](#)) do not require a performance or pedagogy test.

\*\* **Alabama** and **Tennessee** now require all new teachers pass the EdTPA as a condition for licensure.

\*\*\*To our knowledge, **Iowa** is the only state that allows teachers to substitute a passing score on the approved performance assessment for a passing score on an elementary, middle school or secondary content area assessment.