

Your Question:

You asked what other states are doing to waive or loosen requirements for teacher candidates to enter the teaching profession. Specifically, you asked about requirements related to praxis.

Our Response:

Teacher licensure is a topic consistently addressed by state policymakers across the country. This year alone, at least 62 bills regarding certification and licensure have been enacted in 27 states. You can find our summaries of these bills in our [State Education Policy Tracking](#) tool under “Certification and Licensure.” When considering policies around licensure, policymakers often balance the need to fill vacant positions with the need to maintain a highly qualified teacher workforce. Reducing licensure requirements is one way policymakers attempt to reduce barriers to entry in the teaching profession. Licensure exams in particular can be costly for candidates and the research on the predictive value of licensure exams for teacher quality and student achievement is mixed. For example, one [article](#) found a small positive relationship between student achievement and teacher licensure test scores, but noted that increasing cut scores for these exams may lead to an increase in the number of potentially effective teachers that are kept out of the classroom.

In addition to reducing licensure requirements, some states, like [Michigan](#) and [New Jersey](#) have created new license types or routes to allow flexibility in obtaining a standard license.

Regardless of licensure pathway, many experts caution against “fast tracking” teachers into the classroom, given [evidence](#) that teachers with stronger preparation are more likely to stay in teaching and to be effective in their roles.

Below are examples of state actions that reduce requirements for teacher licensure or provide flexibility.

State Examples

- **California [A.B. 130](#)** (2021) exempts teacher candidates from the basic skills proficiency test requirement if they earn at least a letter grade of B in qualifying coursework. The bill also exempts an applicant who has demonstrated proficiency in the basic skills through a combination of qualifying coursework, passage of components of the state basic skills proficiency test and scores on certain tests. The bill also exempts candidates from certain credentials on the subject matter exam if they: 1) complete a subject matter program approved by the commission; 2) complete coursework that addresses each of the domains of the subject matter requirements or a professional program reviews transcripts and confirms that each domain has been addressed; or 3) addresses each of the domains of subject matter requirements through a combination of subtests and coursework.
- **Delaware [H.B. 207](#)** (2021) removes the requirement that applicants for initial and continuing educator licenses obtain a passing score on an approved performance assessment. In place of the performance assessment requirement, the bill requires an assessment of abilities to apply pedagogical skills to meet the needs of students and requires the department of education to establish a committee of stakeholders to gather input and make recommendations on how to assess the pedagogical skills of program participants.
- **Illinois [S.B. 2043](#)** (2021) amends provisions for teacher certification, removing the requirement to demonstrate English language proficiency. Additionally, in 2019, the state passed [S.B. 1952](#), which

permanently eliminated the test of basic skills as a requirement for educator licensure, including for out-of-state teachers.

- [Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure](#) is a pilot program that “aims to create and evaluate increased flexibility in assessments for educator licensure.” The commissioner has approved three alternative assessments to pilot.
- **Oklahoma H.B. 1796** (2021) allows the state board of education, in consultation with the commission for educational quality and accountability, to grant exceptions to the requirement to complete a subject area exam for initial certification in a field which does not require an advanced degree if the candidate has an advanced degree in a subject that is substantially comparable to the content assessed on a subject area exam.
- **Oregon H.B. 3354** (2021) amends standards for approval for educator preparation programs, requiring programs to evaluate teaching candidates using a framework approved by the teacher standards and practices commission. The framework must use multiple measures to determine if a candidate’s knowledge, skills and competencies qualify the candidate for a teaching license. The framework must also include at least one locally determined measure.
- **Washington H.B. 1028** (2021) repeals requirements related to the educator performance assessment (edTPA). The bill also amends provisions regarding educator preparation program certification recommendations, specifying that candidates should demonstrate effectiveness through multiple measures and requires educator preparation programs to publish a list of program completion requirements.

[Additional Resources](#)

The National Council on Teacher Quality collects information regarding licensure assessments in its [state policy database](#) that may be helpful. NCTQ specifically collects information about content knowledge assessments for [elementary teachers](#), [middle school teachers](#), [secondary teachers](#) and [special education teachers](#). Data collected includes information about which states do not require a content test of all candidates, which may be of interest. Please note, Education Commission of the States is not familiar with the methodology NCTQ uses to rate state policies nor do we endorse the rating system used in the NCTQ reports.