Multistate Standard-setting Technical Report

PRAXIS™ SPECIAL EDUCATION:

TEACHING STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS (0282)

Educational and Credentialing Research

Educational Testing Service

Princeton, New Jersey

December 2011

Copyright © 2011 by Educational Testing Service. All rights reserved. ETS, the ETS logo and LISTENING. LEARNING. LEADING. are registered trademarks of Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the United States of America and other countries throughout the world.

Executive Summary

To support the decision-making process for state departments of education with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Praxis™ Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments (0282) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a two-panel, multistate standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level teachers of students with visual impairments.

Participating States

Panelists from ten states were recommended by state departments of education to participate on expert panels. The state departments of education recommended panelists with (a) education experience, either as teachers of students with visual impairments or college faculty who prepare teachers of students with visual impairments and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning teachers of students with visual impairments.

Recommended Passing Score

The recommended passing score for each panel, as well as the average passing score across the two panels, are provided to help state departments of education determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments test, the recommended passing score[1] is 69 (out of a possible 100 raw-score points). The scaled score associated with a raw score of 69 is 163 (on a 100 - 200 scale).

Summary of Content Specification Judgments

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and skills reflected by the content specifications were important for entry-level teachers of students with visual impairments. The favorable judgments of the panelists provided evidence that the content covered by the test is important for beginning practice.

[1] *Results from the two panels participating in the study were averaged to produce the recommended passing score.*

To support the decision-making process for state departments of education with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Praxis™ Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments (0282) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a two-panel, multistate standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level teachers of students with visual impairments. Panelists were recommended by state departments of education[2] to participate on the expert panels. The state departments of education recommended panelists with (a) education experience, either as teachers of students with visual impairments or college faculty who prepare teachers of students with visual impairments and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning teachers of students with visual impairments.

The two, non-overlapping panels (a) allow each participating state to be represented and (b) provide a replication of the judgment process to strengthen the technical quality of the recommended passing score. Ten states (see Table 1) were represented by 23 panelists across the panels. (See Appendix A for the names and affiliations of the panelists.)

Table 1

Participating States and Number of Panelists (Across Panels)

Arkansas (1 panelist)	North Carolina (4 panelists)
Hawaii (3 panelists)	Pennsylvania (2 panelists)
Kentucky (1 panelist)	Rhode Island (4 panelists)
Louisiana (4 panelists)	Tennessee (1 panelist)
Maine (1 panelist)	West Virginia (2 panelists)

The panels were convened in December 2011 in Princeton, New Jersey. For both panels, the same processes and methods were used to train panelists, gather panelists' judgments and to calculate the recommended passing scores.

The following technical report is divided into three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the test. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

[2] *State departments of education that currently use this Praxis test were invited to participate in the multistate standard-setting study*.

The passing-score recommendation for the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments test is provided to each of the represented state departments of education. In each state, the department of education, the state board of education, or a designated educator licensure board is responsible for establishing the final passing score in accordance with applicable state regulations. The study provides a recommended passing score, which represent the combined judgments of two groups of experienced educators. The full range of a state department of education's needs and expectations cannot likely be represented during the standard-setting study. Each state, therefore, may want to consider the recommended passing score (as well as the separate panels' recommended passing scores) and other sources of information when setting the final Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments passing score (see Geisinger & McCormick, 2010). A state may accept the recommended passing score, adjust the score upward to reflect more stringent expectations, or adjust the score downward to reflect more lenient expectations. There is no *correct* decision; the appropriateness of any adjustment may only be evaluated in terms of its meeting the state's needs.

Two sources of information to consider when setting the passing score are the standard errors of measurement (SEM) and the standard errors of judgment (SEJ). The former addresses the reliability of Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments test score and the latter, the reliability of panelists' passing-score recommendations. The SEM allows a state to recognize that a Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments test score—any test score on any test—is less than perfectly reliable. A test score only approximates what a candidate *truly* knows or *truly* can do on the test. The SEM, therefore, addresses the question: How close of an approximation is the test score to the *true* score? The SEJ allow a state to consider the likelihood that the recommended passing score from the current panels would be similar to the passing scores recommended by other panels of experts similar in composition and experience. The smaller the SEJ the more likely that another panel would recommend a passing score for a test consistent with the recommended passing score. The larger the SEJ, the less likely the recommended passing score would be reproduced by another panel.

In addition to measurement error metrics (e.g., SEM, SEJ), each state should consider the likelihood of classification error. That is, when adjusting a passing score, policymakers should consider whether it is more important to minimize a false positive decision or to minimize a false negative decision. A false positive decision occurs when a candidate's test score suggests he should receive a license/certificate, but his actual level of knowledge/skills indicates otherwise (i.e., the candidate does not possess the required knowledge/skills). A false negative occurs when a candidate's test score suggests that she should not receive a license/certificate, but she actually does possess the required knowledge/skills. The state needs to consider which decision error may be more important to minimize.

Overview of the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments Test

The Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments Test at a Glance document (ETS, in press) describes the purpose and structure of the test. In brief, the test measures whether entry-level teachers of students with visual impairments have the knowledge and skills believed necessary for competent professional practice. A National Advisory Committee of expert practitioners and preparation faculty defined the content of the test, and a national survey of the field confirmed the content.

The two hour assessment contains 120 multiple-choice questions[3] covering six content areas: *Principles and Educational Rights for Students with Disabilities (approximately 15 questions); Development and Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments (approximately 23 questions); Planning and Managing the Learning and Teaching Environment (approximately 21 questions); Implementing Instruction (approximately 27 questions); Assessment (approximately 20 questions); and Professional Practice, Collaboration, and Counseling* (approximately 14 questions)[4]. The reporting scale for the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments test ranges from 100 to 200 scaled-score points.

The first national administration of the new Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments test will occur in fall 2012.

[3] *Twenty of the 120 multiple-choice questions are pretest questions and do not contribute to a candidate's score.*

[4] *The number of questions for each content area may vary slightly from form to form of the test.*