

A History of Recent Education Initiatives In Ohio

There are 50 Ohio Institutions of Higher Education that offer teacher education programs. Thirteen of these are public institutions; 37 are private. These institutions graduate approximately 7,000 teacher education graduates annually.

Research has shown that the quality of teaching in the classroom is the most important in-school factor for improving student achievement. The Ohio Board of Education has worked to "raise the bar," not only for preK-12 schools and students but also for colleges and universities engaged in teacher preparation by establishing standards for teacher education and requirements for licensure.

NTE and Praxis

In 1988, the State Board of Education adopted the requirement that teacher candidates pass the National Teacher Examinations in order to qualify for certification in Ohio. This requirement took effect in 1991. Shortly thereafter, the Educational Testing Service revised the tests, which are now offered as a part of the Praxis series. The series includes the following test:

- Praxis I, a test required by some institutions for admittance into the teacher education program;
- Praxis II, a test of pedagogical skills and content-area knowledge at the end of the preparatory program;
- Praxis III, a performance-based assessment of the beginning teacher.

The Board adopted the new Praxis II tests and established cut scores in 1998. The tests were implemented in 1999. The Praxis III was adopted with the new Ohio Standards for Teacher Education and Licensure in 1996. The first teachers to be required to pass this test in Ohio are those who began their teaching careers in the fall of 2002.

Approximately 30 states use some form of Praxis II to evaluate their teacher education graduates. **Ohio's Praxis II cut scores are among the highest in the nation**, ranking first or second in all pedagogical skill test, and close to the top in all content-area tests. Nearly all of Ohio's cut scores in content tests are also higher than the national means. Nevertheless, a higher percentage of Ohio teacher education graduates pass the test than their counterparts in other states who took the same test, if they had to meet Ohio's test scores.

Certification to Licensure

In 1996, the State Board of Education adopted new standards, which moved the state from its previous certification system to a teacher licensure system. These standards were designed to increase the rigor in the teaching profession. The new standards, implemented in January 1998, include the following new requirements:

- All teacher-training institutions must meet the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).
- New teachers will receive a two-year nonrenewable Provisional License.
- Each Provisional License holder will complete an Entry Year Program culminating in the administration of Praxis III by a state-trained assessor.
- Teachers who successfully complete Praxis III will qualify for a five-year Professional License.
- Professional development is required for each five-year renewal thereafter. A master's degree, or the equivalent, is required for the second renewal (within 10 years)