

# EDUCATOR ASSESSMENT SYSTEM WORKGROUP REPORT

Innovative educator assessment policy for a  
rigorous and equitable credentialing system

*October 2020*



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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Education partners and stakeholders,

As the educator licensure and workforce development agency for Washington State, the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) is committed to upholding the highest possible standards for our educators. In 2017, we began our review of the educator assessment system to explore the fundamental role testing plays in educator certification.

Centering equity in the educator profession is a key tenet of our strategic plan, and has been a driving force behind the investigation of testing barriers. Through workgroups and feedback from the field, we find it critical to examine research and data, and seek recommendations that offer greater flexibility to address equity gaps.

In response to recommendations from the educator assessment system (EAS) workgroup, we would like to offer further information and context for the system implications of their suggested policy changes. We are exploring many of the recommendations that are within our authority, as well as items to include in our legislative agenda.

It is important to note that the Legislature requires the performance assessment and content knowledge tests. PESB has the authority to determine the tests, set vendor contracts, and passing scores. Some of the recommendations from the workgroup are directly targeted at the Legislature, and we have included our recommendations for next steps in an official response.

Thank you for your partnership and valuable collaboration on this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alexandra Manuel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alexandra" and last name "Manuel" clearly legible.

Alexandra Manuel,  
Executive Director  
Professional Educator Standards Board

# **PESB RESPONSE TO WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

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# PESB RESPONSE TO WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

*TO: Members of the educator assessment system workgroup and stakeholders*

*FROM: Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)*

*DATE: September 8, 2020*

*SUBJECT: Response to educator assessment system workgroup recommendations*

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) commends the educator assessment system workgroup for examining educator assessment requirements, and producing recommendations for a more coherent and equitable assessment system. The workgroup represented a diverse stakeholder collective with significant knowledge, expertise, and perspective. Their recommendations are grounded in research and a shared agreement on what they believe to be the most equitable policy and practice.

PESB supports workgroup recommendations on several urgent issues for the performance assessment (edTPA) and the content knowledge assessment (WEST-E and NES). The purpose of this response is to provide additional context and implications, as well as recommendations for additional consideration.

## Performance assessment

Washington State cannot afford to lose potential teachers who could bring a range of strengths and skills to the classroom, but are unable to become certified as a result of the high stakes nature of current performance assessment policy. PESB supports the workgroup recommendation that the performance assessment must acknowledge educator differences, and allow educator candidates to use their unique assets to demonstrate their readiness to teach.

After extensive discussion and research, the workgroup has put forward three policy options for recommendation.

All recommendations acknowledge the value in maintaining a consistent performance assessment across educator preparation programs, which is why no recommendation was put forward to eliminate a performance assessment. Each recommendation option includes maintaining a performance assessment, but differs in ways to create a more flexible system for candidates and programs.

## Workgroup options for recommendation

The workgroup created three briefing papers<sup>1</sup> to outline their options. There was no consensus among members on a preferred approach, however, about 65 percent<sup>2</sup> of them preferred option two: multiple measures.

While all of the approaches have a variety of strengths, the multiple measures option responds to issues with the current performance assessment, as well as concerns from the field. The multiple measures option offers greater flexibility, maintains the current research-based performance assessment, and addresses inequities in the system. Additionally, it does not place undue burden on the state and educator preparation programs to develop and implement a costly new performance framework.

### Option 1: A formative performance assessment

- Maintains the current edTPA performance assessment and removes the passing score.
- **PESB's response:** PESB sees the benefits of addressing the high stake natures of the current performance assessment policy. However, using the edTPA as a formative assessment presents challenges to the nature of the assessment. Formative assessments are assessments for learning, rather than assessments of learning. Formative assessments are designed to guide future growth by providing information to the learners, and to those supporting learners. The edTPA, on the other hand, is designed as an assessment of performance. It occurs near the end of a candidate's preparation and serves as an indicator to determine if the candidate is prepared for their role.

### Option 2: Multiple measures to demonstrate evidence of performance

- Maintains the current edTPA assessment and allows candidates with a below passing score to demonstrate alternative evidence of effective performance as determined by the preparation programs.
- **PESB's response:** PESB is exploring the feasibility of multiple measures through a one year pilot. A multiple measures approach maintains the edTPA performance assessment, increases flexibility for candidates and programs, removes barriers in the system, and factors in context, political implications, and cost.

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<sup>1</sup> Briefing papers appear in Appendix C of this report.

<sup>2</sup> Link to [the workgroup policy option survey report](#)

### Option 3: Develop a new performance assessment framework and test or a locally determined alternative framework

- Eliminates the edTPA and develops a new statewide performance assessment framework.
- **PESB's response:** While PESB shares many of the concerns expressed by workgroup members, there are many outstanding and unanswered questions about developing a new performance assessment framework. Developing a new framework would incur significant costs to both the state and to individual preparation programs. These costs would include assessment development, field tests to ensure validity and reliability, scorer training, development of support materials, and professional learning for preparation programs to integrate the new assessment into their systems. Local scoring of a new assessment would also require increased staffing in preparation programs.

### Multiple measures

Allowing multiple measures to meet the edTPA requirement would address concerns that the performance assessment serves as a gatekeeper to the profession, and offers an opportunity for the performance assessment to serve as an educative tool.

A multiple measures process would mean candidates take the edTPA once. If a candidate's score fell within -1 standard error of measurement (SEM) of the passing score, their preparation program could review alternative evidence of performance to determine if they have the required knowledge and skills. Candidates would need to score at least a 35 (or 29 for world/classical languages) out of the passing score of 40 to be eligible for multiple measures.<sup>3</sup>

### Responsibilities

- Preparation programs review, assess, and report multiple measures and requested data.
- PESB creates WAC language to clarify the process, provides guidance on implementation, and provides recommendations to the Legislature.

### Opportunities

PESB anticipates a multiple measures system could result in the following benefits:

- Create a culturally responsive and coherent assessment system
- Ensure a properly credentialed and diverse teacher workforce
- Flexibility to acknowledge individual candidate differences

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<sup>3</sup> The current cut score for edTPA is 40 and 1 SEM is 5 points for most areas that have 15 rubrics. The cut score for World Languages and Classical languages is 34 as it has 13 rubrics. 1 SEM for these two areas is 5 points.



- Provide financial relief by eliminating retake fees
- Reduce barriers for candidates whom analytical writing is not a strength. Programs would have more discretion to use measures that reflect a candidate's teaching skills in the classroom, and lessen the weight of portfolio writing.
- Maintain a common and rigorous assessment system. The use and reporting of multiple measures would maintain program accountability for their decisions to certify candidates. This reporting would track if particular programs are certifying an unusually large percentage of candidates through this approach. Continuing with a widely used common assessment, such as the edTPA, allows programs across the United States to share resources and expertise in preparing teacher candidates.

For these reasons, PESB recommends a legislative change for a multiple measures approach to meet the teacher performance assessment requirement. This change would allow for more equitable pathways into the teaching profession.

## Pilot of multiple measures for the edTPA

To prepare for future legislative sessions, PESB approved a one year pilot on the use of multiple measures for the edTPA in July 2020.

This pilot will provide learnings about unanticipated consequences and how to address them. This pilot will also allow PESB to test procedures and protocols, and generate ideas about best practices.

## How does the pilot work?

Candidates take the edTPA once. Candidates scoring between 35-39 (or at least a 29 for world/classical languages) are eligible for the multiple measures review by their preparation program. The pilot allows for program discretion; meaning preparation programs can use one or more of the following measures as the basis for their review:

- Observing the candidate's practice in their role, as documented by their mentor teacher or the preparation program provider;
- Evidence submitted by the candidate to the program in the areas of planning, instruction, or student assessment;
- Coursework; or
- Other measures as determined by the program.

The pilot is optional for preparation programs. Programs choosing not to participate in the pilot continue to require the existing passing score. Programs participating in the pilot are required to submit data to help inform policy. PESB has provided [guidance for preparation programs](#) on the multiple measures pilot.



## Content knowledge assessment

PESB further explored the recommendation to establish a case-by-case exception process for the content knowledge assessment (WEST-E and NES) by convening a [workgroup](#).

Content knowledge tests are a certification requirement, and are one way to determine whether or not candidates are ready to teach in their subject area. PESB also uses the test scores as part of the program review process.

PESB supports workgroup recommendations on the case-by-case exception process, including:

- Baseline criteria for candidates to be eligible:
  - Candidates must have attempted the WEST-E/NES assessment once.
- Criteria for programs to grant case-by-case exceptions:
  - Program must be Washington State-approved to offer the endorsement.
  - Program can recommend a candidate if they determine the candidate has met the content knowledge standards for the specific endorsement.

PESB agrees with workgroup recommendations that clear guidelines should be provided on:

- Composition of review committees for case-by-case exceptions
- Areas of alternative evidence
- Considerations on the differences between programs.

It is important to ground the case-by-case review process and prompts with a diversity, equity and inclusion framework.

Again, we are pleased to share our response to the workgroup recommendations for both board policy, and to those that rest under the authority of the Legislature. We look forward to exploring the workgroup recommendations further, and to see the impact and benefits they will create for teachers and students in our state.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Washington maintains an educator assessment system to ensure students learn from highly effective educators. While the assessment system has helped set high standards for beginning teachers, there has been growing concern about using assessments as a singular measure for candidates' knowledge and performance.

Almost two decades after the implementation of the statewide assessment system, it is clear that current assessment requirements have become a gatekeeper into the educator profession, and limit the opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their strengths and unique cultural assets. As a result, PESB has prioritized investing in and creating a range of initiatives to innovate the current assessment system.

In 2019, Governor Inslee signed a bill removing the requirement of a specific passing score for the basic skills assessment. Following this change, PESB began to examine policy across all assessments. The educator assessment system (EAS) workgroup convened in 2019 to put forward recommendations to create a culturally responsive and coherent assessment system that ensures a properly credentialed and diverse teaching workforce. The workgroup reviewed data on testing trends and feedback for both content knowledge and performance assessments. In their recommendations, the workgroup expressed the need for a system that acknowledges candidate differences and maintains high-standards for beginning teachers. Rather than using a singular measure, the workgroup recommends creating a more holistic, community approach that assesses the skills and attributes of a good teacher using multiple measures of evidence.

# OVERVIEW OF EDUCATOR ASSESSMENTS IN WASHINGTON STATE

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# OVERVIEW OF EDUCATOR ASSESSMENTS IN WASHINGTON STATE

In 2002, the Washington State Legislature passed a law requiring all teacher candidates to pass a basic skills test. In 2005, the Legislature added that all candidates must also pass a content knowledge test in their specific endorsement (subject-matter) area. During this time, many states were mandating rigorous teacher certification and licensure requirements through the use of standardized tests in response to national concerns about the quality of teachers.

The connection between teacher quality, accountability, and standardized tests was reinforced by the 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) which required states to hold institutions of higher education publicly accountable for the quality of the teachers they produced (Huang et al. 2002). The use of standardized testing for accountability purposes was also heavily driven by the era of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

In the early 2010s, the Legislature passed a law requiring all teacher candidates to pass a statewide, valid, and reliable performance assessment. To address financial concerns around developing a new state-specific assessment, the edTPA, a national performance assessment, was adopted by the Board and became consequential in 2014. The edTPA went through a multi-year development process by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE), and teachers across the nation.

Washington uses assessments to ensure the consistency and rigor of educator

credentials. However, using assessments as the singular measurement of knowledge and pedagogy has raised concerns and questions from candidates, programs, and policy makers. Specifically, concerns have grown on the disproportionate outcomes for candidates of color and bilingual candidates; sparking questions about the effectiveness and fairness of the basic skills and content knowledge tests. Additionally, there have been concerns about the level of support provided by teacher preparation programs to help candidates pass the tests. Regarding the performance assessment requirement, educator candidates have raised concerns about its lack of flexibility for acknowledging individual differences and program discretion.

Initiating efforts to innovate the educator assessment system, PESB convened the testing barriers workgroup in December of 2017 to examine barriers for teacher candidates of color and English Language Learners (ELL). The testing barriers workgroup carefully examined the issue of disproportionate outcomes for teacher candidates on the basic skills and content knowledge exams, and developed recommendations for both the Board and the Washington State Legislature. View [the testing barriers report](#) for more details on these recommendations.

Following the testing barriers workgroup, PESB began efforts to enhance the assessment system including legislative approaches to change the basic skills

assessment (WEST-B) requirement. In April 2019, Governor Inslee signed HB 1621 to help admit more candidates into the teaching profession by removing the requirement of meeting a specific score on the basic skills exam.

To maintain momentum, PESB convened the educator assessment system workgroup in late 2019 to examine policy and propose solutions that reduce barriers and improve access for candidates.

## Current educator assessment requirements in Washington

Washington State's testing requirements are mandated by the Legislature in [RCW 28A.410.220](#), [RCW 28A.410.240](#) and [RCW 28A.410.280](#). The Legislature gives PESB administrative oversight of the assessments, including the authority to establish testing vendor contracts, determine passing scores, establish alternatives or exceptions to the basic skills and content knowledge assessments, and set processes for out-of-state candidates.

### The basic skills assessment

The purpose of the basic skills assessment is to ensure teacher candidates have basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics prior to entering a preparation program. Candidates have many options to meet the basic skills requirement, including the Washington Educator Skills Test – Basic (WEST-B), SAT, ACT, or a number of other [equivalent assessments](#). In 2019, the Legislature removed the requirement of

meeting a specific score on the basic skills assessment. Preparation programs use the results of the basic skills assessment as a formative assessment of academic strengths and weakness to determine the candidates' readiness for the program.

### The content knowledge assessment

The purpose of the content knowledge assessment is to ensure teacher candidates have strong content knowledge in the endorsement area they intend to teach. Depending on the endorsement area, a candidate will either take the Washington Educator Skills Test – Endorsement (WEST-E) or the National Evaluation Series (NES). While this report mainly focuses on the testing requirements for pre-service teacher candidates, it is worth noting that in-service teachers wanting to add a new endorsement are required to pass the content knowledge test for that endorsement.

### The performance assessment

The edTPA is a portfolio-based performance assessment required to complete a teacher preparation program. Candidates have eighteen months to complete the edTPA by demonstrating educator performance through lesson plans, a video, reflection, and an analysis of student work. The edTPA is designed to assess how teacher candidates plan and teach lessons, exhibit culturally responsive instruction, and demonstrate approaches to differentiate student needs.

# WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

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# WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The educator assessment system workgroup was convened to produce recommendations for a culturally responsive and coherent assessment system that ensures a properly credentialed and diverse teaching workforce. This section presents recommendations. Policy briefing papers developed by the workgroup and the full data report of the testing trend in Washington from the Education Northwest are in the appendix.

## Content knowledge assessments: WEST-E and NES

The EAS workgroup was significantly concerned about the disproportionate outcomes experienced between candidates of color and white candidates for the content knowledge test. Consequently, the content knowledge test requirement can be a gatekeeper for candidates of color and bilingual candidates to enter the teaching profession. The data showing this is clear—white candidates consistently score higher than candidates of color and bilingual candidates on these exams. Workgroup members agreed that this is extremely problematic, and positions the candidates as the problem rather than the bias within the test. It may also indicate that candidates of color are not receiving the support they need in order to pass the tests successfully.

The workgroup also emphasized that retake fees are burdensome for candidates who are historically and socially underserved. Each time candidates retake the content knowledge test to achieve the required passing score, they must pay for the test again, and many candidates accrue hundreds of dollars in testing fees.

The workgroup thoroughly examined multiple policy alternatives for the WEST-E/NES requirements, including an implementation plan, feasibility, considerations, unintended consequences, and potential outcomes.

### Recommendation: case-by-case exceptions

The workgroup recommended that PESB define a process in WAC for permitting “case-by-case” exceptions for the content knowledge tests. This would allow discretion and flexibility for programs to permit testing exceptions for candidates, given certain circumstances, and to use multiple criteria to assess the candidates’ knowledge.

Workgroup members expressed that the implications for students should be the priority consideration. Students who are in underserved districts are more likely to be taught by teachers who are not properly credentialed or less experienced. Clear guidelines would be needed for both programs and teacher candidates to alleviate concerns around inconsistencies across different programs.

Workgroup members agreed that a technical workgroup should be convened to discuss policy ideas for the case-by-case process.

## **Establishing a case-by-case exception process**

It is critical for all candidates to have equal access to the teaching profession while receiving ample and consistent support from their programs. The case-by-case exception process is designed to allow programs to review their candidates' content knowledge using multiple forms of evidence, meeting standards and reflecting the diverse backgrounds and experiences of candidates.

### **Case-by-case exceptions workgroup**

In the Summer of 2020, based on EAS workgroup recommendations, PESB convened a technical workgroup to review policy, and produce guidance for a case-by-case exceptions process. The workgroup formulated policy recommendations, including the composition of a review committee and considerations for alternative evidence areas. In addition, PESB developed diversity, equity and inclusion prompts to frame committee members' thinking as they consider and determine whether or not the candidate is eligible for a case-by-case exception using alternative evidence. The workgroup reviewed the prompts and provided feedback on their content and feasibility.

### **The case-by-case exception process**

Candidates must take the content knowledge assessment for a specific endorsement once in order to be eligible for the case-by-case exceptions process. Candidates who do not pass the assessment are eligible for consideration for a case-by-case exception.

A committee convened by the preparation program reviews alternative evidence, and if they determine the candidate has the required knowledge and skills, they can recommend the candidate for certification. Candidates may also choose to retake the content knowledge assessment instead of going through the case-by-case exception process.

### **The role of teacher preparation programs**

Teacher preparation programs play an important role. The preparation program provider must convene a committee of at least three individuals for review of case-by-case exceptions. Committee members should be familiar with the case-by-case exception process, and will want to closely consider the diversity, equity, and inclusion prompts below. They must review at least two forms of evidence to determine the candidate has the requisite knowledge and skills for that content knowledge assessment. Once the committee has determined that the candidate has demonstrated the requisite knowledge and skills through the case-by-case exception process, and the candidate has met all other endorsement requirements, the program may recommend the candidate through the OSPI certification office.

Preparation programs must record which candidates are being recommended through the case-by-case exception process. A data element regarding numbers of candidates in each endorsement area being recommended through the case-by-case exception process is being considered for inclusion in [annual data reporting](#). PESB will provide the detailed [guidance for preparation programs](#).

## **Diversity, equity and inclusion prompts**

Competence measured by content knowledge assessments can be determined using other relevant alternative forms of evidence aligned with the competencies in question. Below are prompts to frame thinking as programs consider and determine whether or not a candidate is eligible for a case-by-case exception using alternative evidence.

### **Prompts for programmatic considerations**

1. Does the candidate already have knowledge and skills to pass the content knowledge assessment in the area that they seek to earn an endorsement(s), or do they need support to do so? What support will you put in place to ensure that candidates will become competent teachers?
2. Who knows this candidate well enough to advocate on their behalf? Does the committee have individuals who can advocate for underrepresented candidates and understand inherent cultural and linguistic bias in the standardized system?
3. Given the demographic differences in the program candidates, which candidates are most likely and least likely to pass the content knowledge assessment on the first try? What strategies are in place to disrupt this pattern at your program?
4. What are the programmatic learning experiences that directly align with the relevant components of the content knowledge competencies? How well were those components planned, enacted, and assessed by the program?

### **Prompts for individual candidate considerations**

5. To what extent is there a discrepancy between the candidate's performance on the content knowledge assessment and the candidate's other demonstrations of content knowledge? Could a candidate's first language contribute to that discrepancy? Did the candidate's performance in the program lead you to believe that they would earn a passing score? Why or why not?
6. Would children, youth, and families be better served by having this candidate as a teacher?
7. What strengths does the candidate possess? Consider community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) and potential to be an effective teacher in diverse learning environments.
8. To what extent does the candidate's race-ethnic-cultural-linguistic identity reflect the typical program candidate? Was the candidate afforded the opportunity to learn the competencies in question through a series of introduced, reinforced, and assessed

learning experiences? Were those experiences responsive and reflective of the candidate's race-ethnic-cultural-linguistic identity?

9. How might individual, institutional, and systemic racism/bias have contributed to this candidate's score on the content knowledge assessment? How are you working to minimize racism/bias in your program?

## The performance assessment: edTPA

The educator assessment system requires in-state candidates to pass the evidence-based performance assessment in order to complete their teacher preparation programs and earn their certification.

Since becoming consequential in 2014, teacher preparation programs and candidates have expressed both strengths and pitfalls of the edTPA. The EAS workgroup considered the practical input from stakeholders, presentations, research, and data analysis on testing trends in Washington. They analyzed opportunities and unintended consequences of the edTPA. The edTPA emphasizes reflective practices and attention to personal, cultural, and community assets. It is a rigorous assessment that sets a high standard for candidates, and provides a common process and language across programs in Washington. Thus, it increases the alignment within and across programs. Furthermore, the edTPA feeds data and information on candidate performance back to programs for improvement.

However, the high-stakes nature of the edTPA makes the assessment a gatekeeper for candidates to enter the teaching profession. The edTPA was implemented without alternative measures, which increases the anxiety and stress of candidates. The writing portion of the edTPA is another concern expressed by workgroup members. Some school districts and candidates view that it takes away authentic student teaching time due to the time candidates spend on writing. Some stakeholders point out that inconsistent support across programs and insufficient support from mentors are problematic. Many mentor teachers are not familiar with the edTPA as they did not experience it when they were in their preparation program. Some workgroup members perceived the edTPA as not authentic as it captures three to four days of teaching and is scored by trained external scorers, not by faculty members or mentor teachers who work closely with candidates.

## Recommendation: acknowledge individual differences with a flexible state assessment system while holding high-standards

In developing recommendations, workgroup members agreed that holding uniform criteria and passing standard in a high stakes assessment resulted in multiple issues. Workgroup members recommended acknowledging individual differences with a flexible state assessment system while continuing to hold high standards. Many workgroup members felt strongly that the use of a statewide common assessment or framework provided consistent support for candidates across

different programs. However, the workgroup did not reach consensus on whether Washington should maintain the edTPA or how the statewide performance system should be implemented. Accordingly, they examined three policy alternatives and developed briefing papers for each option:

#### **Option 1: A formative performance assessment**

- Maintain the current edTPA performance assessment and remove the passing score.

#### **Option 2: Multiple measures to demonstrate evidence of performance**

- Maintain the current edTPA assessment and allow candidates with a below passing score to demonstrate alternative evidence of effective performance as determined by the preparation programs.

#### **Option 3: Develop a new performance assessment framework and test**

- Eliminate the edTPA in favor of developing a new performance assessment framework.

As the workgroup did not reach a consensus on which option to recommend, next steps included a survey.

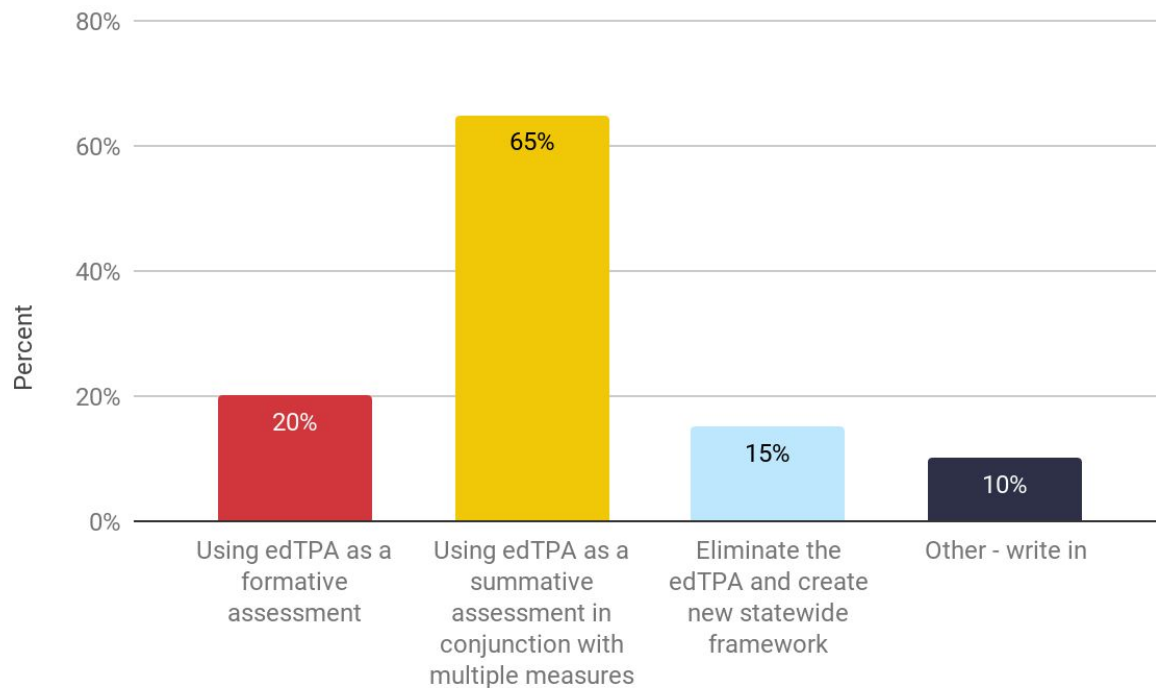
### **Survey results**

Although there was no consensus among workgroup members, about 65 percent<sup>4</sup> of them preferred option two: maintaining edTPA with multiple measures. This is much higher than the percentage of workgroup members who selected option 1: using edTPA as a formative assessment (20%) and option 3: developing a new state-wide performance assessment framework (15 %).

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<sup>4</sup> Link to [the workgroup policy option survey report](#)

Which of the following options would you be comfortable moving forward with? Select one or more from the following.



	Percent	Number of responses
Using edTPA as a formative assessment	20%	4
Using edTPA as a summative assessment in conjunction with multiple measures	65%	13
Eliminate the edTPA and create a new statewide framework	15%	3
Other - write in	10%	2

## Multiple measures

The multiple measures option responds to issues with the current performance assessment, as well as concerns from the field. This option offers greater flexibility, maintains the current research-based performance assessment, addresses inequities in the system, and does not place

undue burden on the state and educator preparation programs to develop and implement a costly new performance framework.

To prepare for future legislative action, PESB approved a one year pilot on the use of multiple measures for the edTPA in July 2020. This pilot will provide learnings about unanticipated consequences and how to address them before statewide implementation. This pilot will also allow PESB to test procedures and protocols, and generate ideas about best practices. To learn about the pilot, see the [PESB response to recommendations section](#) of this report.

## **Multiple measures process**

To recommend a candidate through a multiple measures process, the teacher preparation program convenes an existing committee, such as a PEAB, or forms a new committee. The composition and size of this committee is determined by the preparation program. Committee members should clearly understand the multiple measures process, including the edTPA and the edTPA scoring rubrics, the local preparation program requirements for candidates, and state standards for teacher candidates including program standards, endorsement competencies, and the inTASC standards.

Candidates in every endorsement area are eligible for the multiple measures. Candidates who take the edTPA in the 2020-21 academic year, and who have taken the edTPA in prior years, are eligible for consideration for the multiple measures process. Candidates may be recommended for certification through the multiple measures pilot through June 30, 2021. With each edTPA score release date, programs need to identify candidates who may be eligible for multiple measures. These are candidates who have not met the passing score for the edTPA, but have met the minimum score for recommendation through multiple measures.

Once the committee has determined that the candidate has the required knowledge and skills and has met all other program completion requirements, the program may recommend the candidate for residency certification through the OSPI certification office. Programs participating in the pilot are required to submit data to PESB to inform policy.

## **Recommendations for test administration, program support and future research**

The work group discussed overall recommendations regarding test administration, program support, and future research. Recommendations include specifics on both the content knowledge assessment and the performance assessment.



## Recommendations for test administration

- The writing demands of the edTPA are significant and the writing load could be reduced.
- There are multiple edTPA materials that programs and candidates can use for reference. These materials should be streamlined to increase clarity.
- The edTPA should highlight further the competencies of cultural responsiveness, community knowledge, and social emotional learning in its materials.
- The edTPA should expand its non-translation option of edTPA submissions in languages other than English, especially for candidates in secondary dual language programs.
- More support for districts and mentors should be provided to support candidates in completing their student teaching and the edTPA successfully.
- Candidates expressed the need to receive more specific feedback on their performance, especially when they failed the edTPA.
- The accommodation process for both the edTPA and WEST-E/NES should be enhanced and the communication should be clear.
- Retake fees for the WEST-E/NES and the edTPA are burdensome for candidates and the State should consider providing funding for retakes with various options like grants.



## Recommendation for program support

- Districts and candidates express the need to receive consistent support across different programs. There is a gap in the degree of support that candidates receive depending on which program that they attend.
- Continue current policy: Programs must inform, advise, and support candidates in their assessment requirements.
- A strong partnership between programs and districts is key to providing appropriate support for candidates.

## Recommendation for future research

- There are various contextual factors that affect the performance of candidates in these tests, including program types, endorsement areas, and program levels. The workgroup asked questions like “how are the testing patterns different between alternative route programs and traditional route programs and between graduate programs and undergraduate programs?” “How do the testing patterns in high needs areas like special education or math look?” “Do we see different patterns between in-service teachers and pre-service teachers?”
- While the pass rates data revealed important aspects of the testing experience of candidates, some workgroup members perceive that it may not highlight the assets of candidates of color or bilingual candidates. More research should be conducted to understand and emphasize the assets of candidates of color.
- Further research should be conducted on cultural responsiveness skills demonstration to inform future policy: A study and/or a pilot should take place to inform policy changes for requiring these skills or reflecting these skills throughout the current assessment system.

# CONCLUSION

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## CONCLUSION

The EAS workgroup concluded that Washington needs a more holistic approach to the statewide assessment system. Workgroup members acknowledge there are unintended consequences of the current high-stakes assessment system as a result of using a singular measurement for a candidate's content and pedagogical knowledge. The workgroup finds that the tests serve as a gatekeeper to the educator workforce for potential candidates when implemented without alternative relief. The workgroup envisions an assessment system that is culturally responsive and coherent, and has put forward recommendations to assess candidate skills and knowledge using more holistic strategies.

The workgroup recommends establishing a case-by-case exception process for the content knowledge assessment, using alternative evidence reviewed by preparation programs. Workgroup members emphasized the importance of an asset-based approach for candidates of color and bilingual candidates, moving away from a notion that privileges particular sets of knowledge and cultural norms and consequently creates unfair advantages.

The workgroup also developed three policy alternatives for the performance assessment requirement. PESB conducted a survey of workgroup members, and a majority voted for adopting a multiple measures process for the edTPA. A multiple measures approach provides more flexibility in acknowledging individual candidate differences and addresses concerns around the stress and cost to teacher candidates, as the need for retake fees would be eliminated for these candidates. The full implementation of the multiple measures process would require legislative action.

The workgroup agreed that the role of preparation programs and PESB is important for these changes. Preparation programs must ensure a culturally responsive and rigorous review to assess candidates for case-by-case exceptions with the content knowledge assessment and for multiple measures with the performance assessment. PESB should implement policy changes and provide clear and coherent guidance for programs.

The workgroup also prioritized other recommendations related to test administration, program support and future research.

Using these recommendations as a road map, PESB has put continuous and deliberate efforts to innovate the current assessment system. Furthermore, PESB will gather research and data on these initiatives through research projects supported by the advancing equity grants. These research projects will bring together theory and practice to illuminate promising practices for the use of case-by-case exceptions on content assessments, or multiple measures on the edTPA requirement. These projects will also inform statewide assessment policy and strengthen support across the educator career continuum.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to offer our special thanks to all members of the Educator assessment system workgroup for their time, passion, and contributions to the final recommendations. We wish to acknowledge the great help from Sun Young Yoon and Jason Greenberg Motamedi from the Regional Education Lab of Education Northwest for their research contributions to this report. Additionally, we would also like to thank teacher candidates and new teachers who shared their lived experience with workgroup members and provided insights. Lastly, thank you to PESB staff— Jisu Ryu, Maren Johnson, Leiani Sherwin, Megan Moore, Erin Peck, Sophia Keskey and Alexandra Manuel for leading the EAS workgroup, supporting the development of final recommendations, producing the report, and continuing the innovation.

# APPENDICES

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# APPENDIX A. DATA AND RESEARCH

## Teacher testing results on content knowledge tests and performance assessment in Washington



**By Jason Greenberg Motamedi and Sun Young Yoon**

August 2020

At the request of the Washington Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)'s Educator Assessment Systems Workgroup, Education Northwest examined the number and percentage of teacher candidates who attempted and passed Washington's content knowledge tests (WEST-E/NES) and performance assessment (edTPA) and how this varied by race/ethnicity. We also examined the impact of different cut scores. To do this, we analyzed teacher testing data from Pearson Education (the test vendor) and the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). These data included all 78,357 individuals who took a Washington state teacher test between 2010 and 2019.

To ensure that we had large enough numbers to reliably analyze the data, we created three race and ethnicity categories: Hispanic candidates, Non-Hispanic candidates of color (including American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Black, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and Multiracial candidates), and White (non-Hispanic) candidates. We combined non-Hispanic candidates of color to protect candidate anonymity, as there were small numbers of some groups of candidates in Washington during this period.

Overall, we found that a higher percentage of candidates of color failed the content knowledge tests and performance assessment than White candidates, despite repeated attempts. Specifically, we found that:

- Candidates of color were less likely to pass the content knowledge test than White candidates, after controlling for demographic and other characteristics.
- Unlike the content knowledge test, there was no statistically significant difference in passing rates for the performance assessment between non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates, after controlling for demographic and other characteristics.
- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates made more than one attempt to pass the content knowledge test and performance assessment than non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates.
- The change in the cut score of performance assessment in 2017 had a larger impact on the passing rates of Hispanic candidates than it did on the passing rates of non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates.



- Using a standard error of measurement (SEM) to lower cut scores resulted in increased passing rates on edTPA for all candidates, but a higher percentage of White candidates still passed the performance assessment compared to Hispanic candidates and non-Hispanic candidates of color.

We also examined results from a smaller sample of test-takers: those whose first test record was entered between 2010 and 2016. This allowed us to examine candidates who had four or more years to earn certification and be employed. We found that:

- The basic skills test appeared to be a larger barrier to candidates than the content area tests. It will be important to evaluate how removing the requirement to pass the basic skills test affects teacher candidates.
- Failing a test did not appear to be the primary driver of teacher attrition: A larger portion of test-takers dropped off the teacher preparation pathway after passing a test than after failing one. Understanding the causes for attrition will be essential to addressing the teacher shortage in Washington state.

This memo serves as a follow-up to our investigation of passing rates on the basic skills test (WEST-B) among teacher candidates of color, which we conducted for the Teacher Testing Barriers Workgroup and submitted to PESB in May 2018.

**A higher percentage of candidates of color failed the content knowledge tests and performance assessment than White candidates, despite repeated attempts.**

Overall, we found that a lower percentage of candidates of color, especially Hispanic candidates, passed the content knowledge tests and performance assessment on their first attempt. While some candidates of color passed the performance assessment after multiple attempts, the percentage of candidates of color who failed the tests was higher than it was for White candidates.

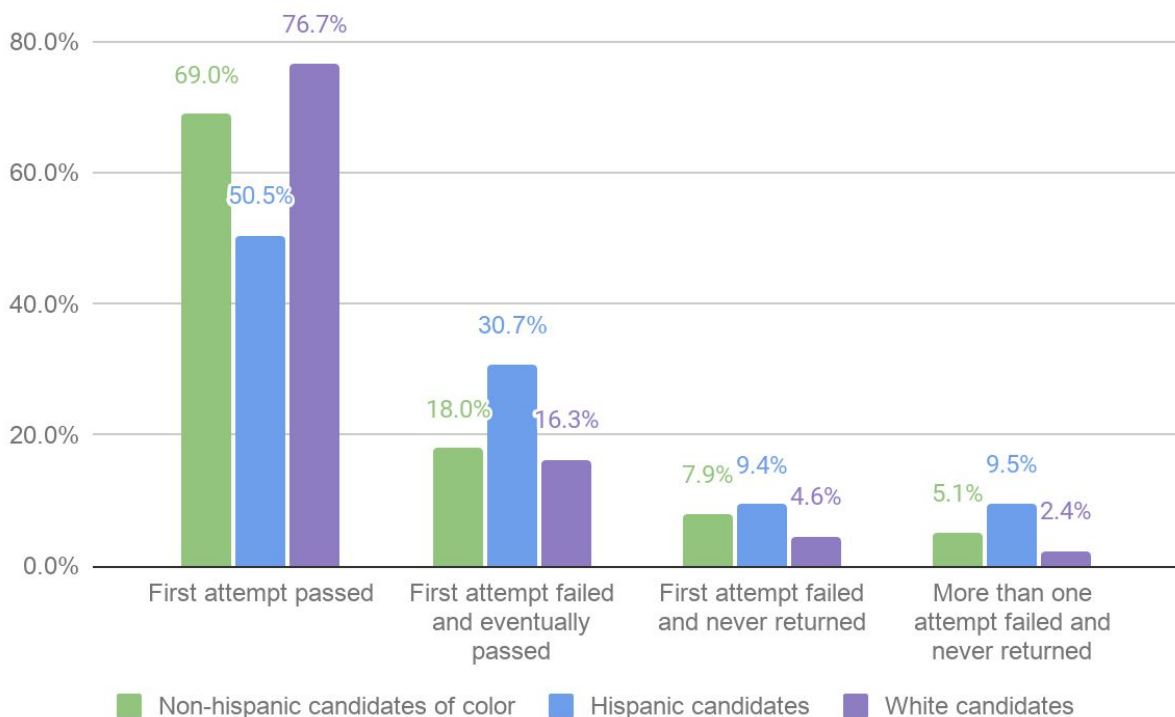
We identified four types of testing patterns: passed on the first attempt, failed on the first attempt but eventually passed, failed on the first attempt and never returned to testing, or eventually failed after more than one attempt.

A total of 58,297 individuals attempted one or more content knowledge tests between 2010 and 2019. Overall, 91.4 percent of all test-takers eventually passed one or more content knowledge tests. Of these, 80.8 percent passed on their first attempt. Our analysis of the content knowledge tests after disaggregating by race/ethnicity found (figure 1):

- A lower percentage of Hispanic candidates (50.5 percent) passed on their first attempt at a content knowledge test than did White candidates (76.7 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (69.0 percent).

- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates (30.7 percent) failed on their first attempt on a content knowledge test but eventually passed than did non-Hispanic candidates of color (18.0 percent) and White candidates (16.3 percent).
- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates (9.4 percent) failed on their first attempt at a content knowledge test and never returned to the testing than did White candidates (4.6 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (7.9 percent).
- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates of color (9.5 percent) failed after more than one attempt at a content knowledge test and never returned to testing than did White candidates (2.4 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (5.1 percent).

Figure 1. A lower percentage of candidates of color passed a content knowledge text at their first attempt than did White candidates

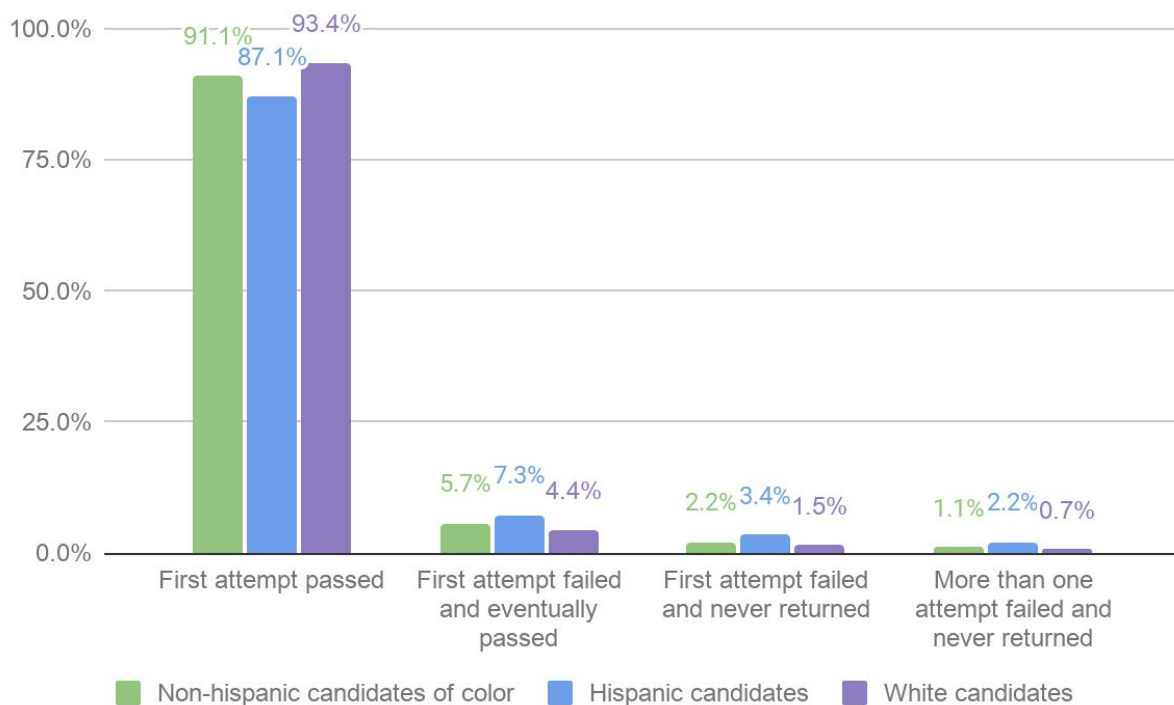


Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2010–2019 data, N = 48,212.

A total of 13,297 individuals attempted the performance assessment between 2014 and 2019. Overall, 97.0 percent of all test-takers eventually passed the performance assessment. Of these, 93.5 percent passed on their first attempt. Our analysis of the performance assessment found smaller differences between groups (figure 2):

- A lower percentage of Hispanic candidates (87.1 percent) passed on their first attempt at the performance assessment test than did White candidates (93.4 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (91.1 percent).
- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates (7.3 percent) failed on their first attempt at the performance assessment test but eventually passed than did non-Hispanic candidates of color (5.7 percent) and White candidates (4.4 percent).
- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates (3.4 percent) failed on their first attempt at the performance assessment test and never returned to testing than did non-Hispanic candidates of color (2.2 percent) and White candidates (1.5 percent).
- A higher percentage of Hispanic candidates of color (2.2 percent) failed after more than one attempt at the performance assessment test and never returned to testing than did White candidates (0.7 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (1.1 percent).

Figure 2. A lower percentage of candidates of color passed the performance assessment on their first attempt than did White candidates



Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2014–2019 data, N = 13,297.

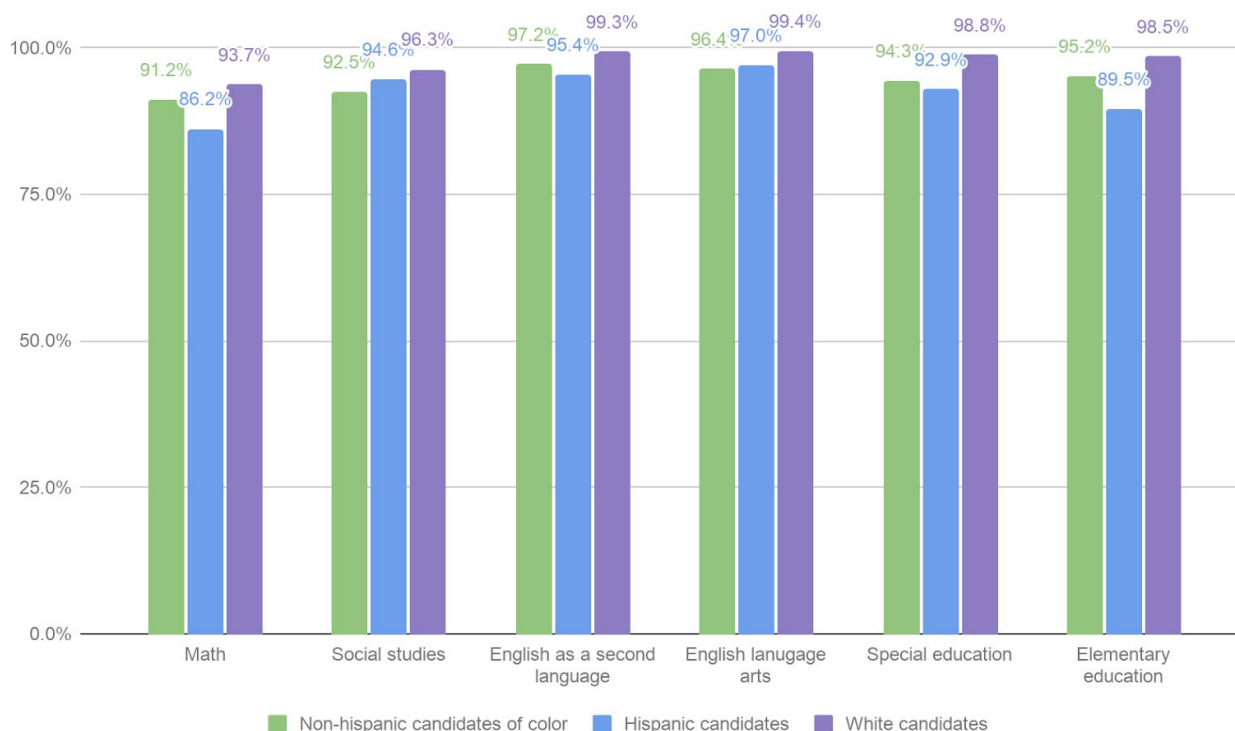
The rest of the memo explores these differences by looking at passing rates, attempts, and the effect of cut score changes on passing rates.

Unlike the content knowledge test, we did not find a statistically significant difference in passing rates between non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates for the performance assessment.

After using a regression analysis to adjust for gender, age, and year of test, we found that Hispanic test-takers were 5.2 percentage points less likely to pass a content knowledge test than White test-takers, and non-Hispanic test-takers of color were 5.3 percentage points less likely to pass than White test-takers (appendix table A1).

Overall, this means that lower percentages of Hispanic candidates and non-Hispanic candidates of color passed a content knowledge test than White candidates across various subject areas (figure 3). For example, lower percentages of Hispanic candidates passed math (86.2 percent), elementary education (89.5), special education (92.9 percent), and English as a second language (95.4 percent) than non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates regardless of the number of attempts candidates made.

Figure 3. A higher percentage of White candidates passed a content knowledge test than did candidates of color across various content areas regardless of the number of attempts



Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2010–2019 data, N = 48,212.

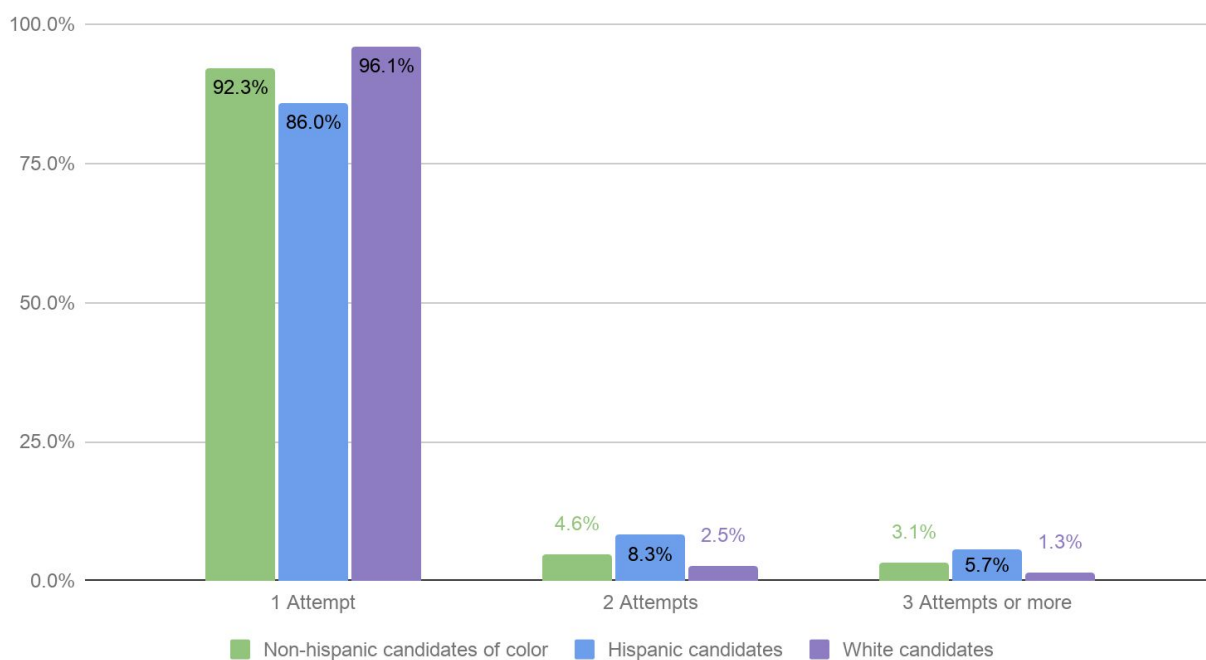
Unlike the content knowledge test, we did not find a statistically significant difference in passing rates between non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates for the performance

assessment, which suggests that the differences may be due to chance or normal population variation. Regression analysis showed that Hispanic candidates were 3.6 percentage points less likely to pass a content knowledge test than White candidates, after controlling for demographic and other characteristics (see appendix table A2).

**Candidates of color required more attempts to pass a content knowledge test and the performance assessment than White candidates.**

Lower percentages of Hispanic candidates (86.0 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (92.3 percent) made a single attempt to pass a content knowledge test than did White candidates (96.1 percent). Specifically, 8.3 percent of Hispanic candidates made two attempts compared to 4.6 percent of candidates of color and 2.5 percent of White candidates. Likewise, 5.7 percent of Hispanic candidates made three or more attempts while only 3.1 percent of non-Hispanic candidates of color and 1.3 percent of White candidates did so (figure 4).

Figure 4. A higher portion of candidates of color made more than one attempt to pass a content knowledge test than did White candidates

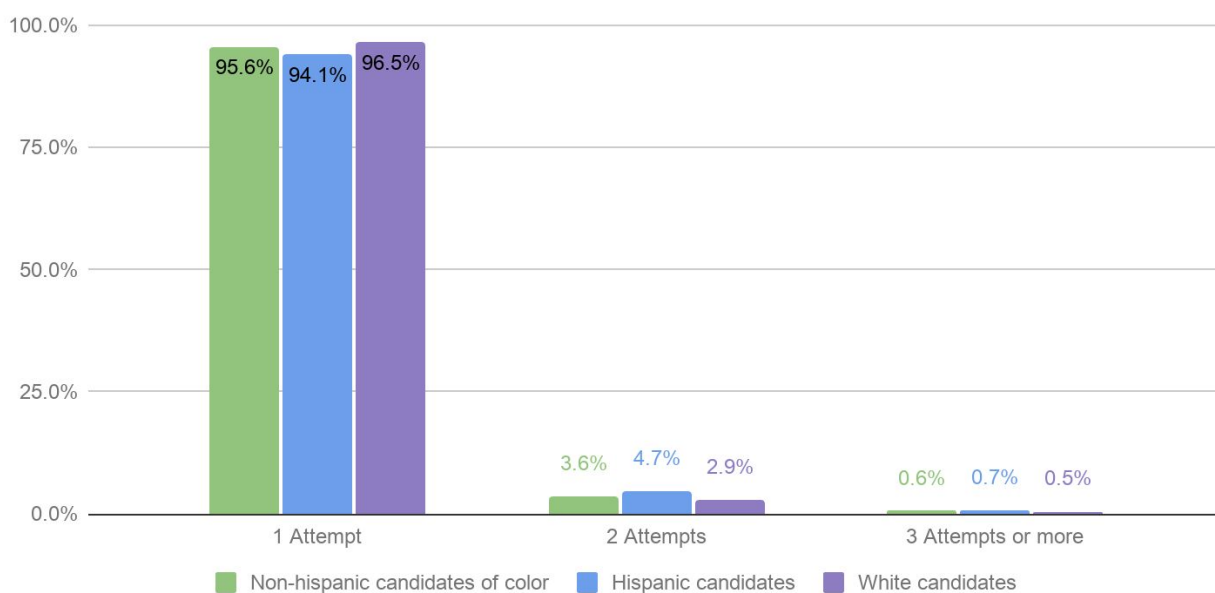


Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2010–2019 data, N = 48,212.

Similarly, lower percentages of Hispanic candidates (94.1 percent) and non-Hispanic candidates of color (95.6 percent) made a single attempt to pass the performance assessment compared to White candidates (95.6 percent). However, this gap disappeared after the second attempt, when

an additional 4.7 percent of Hispanic candidates, 3.6 percent of non-Hispanic candidates of color, and 2.9 percent of White candidates passed the performance assessment (figure 5).

Figure 5. Higher percentages of Hispanic and non-Hispanic candidates of color made more than one attempt to pass the performance assessment than did White candidates

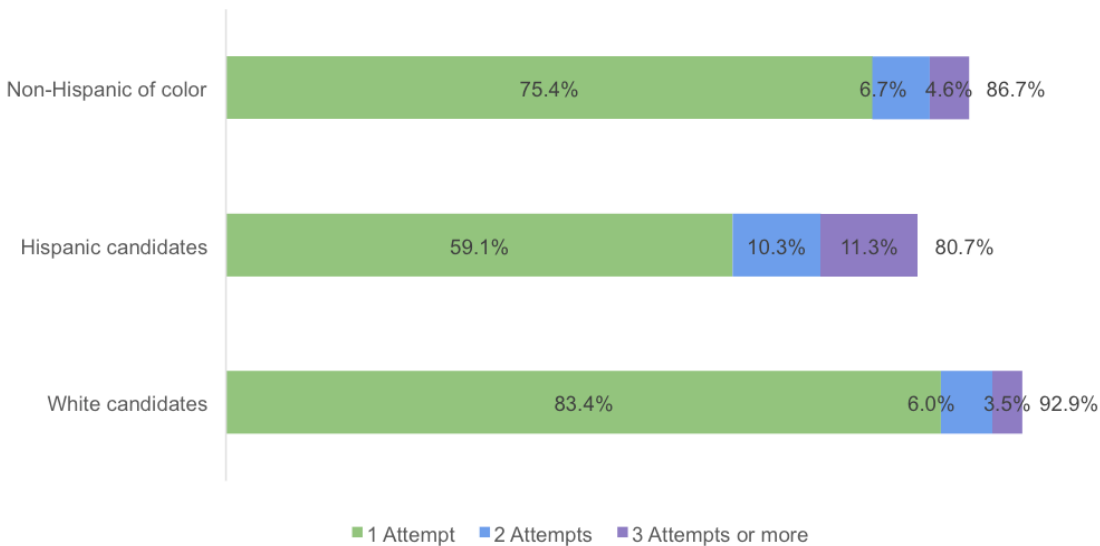


Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2014–2019 data, N = 13,297.

**A lower percentage of Hispanic candidates passed a content knowledge test and the performance assessment than did non-Hispanic of color and White candidates regardless of the number attempts they made.**

We also examined the number of attempts candidates made to pass the content knowledge tests and performance assessment. We found that regardless of the number attempts, a lower percentage of Hispanic candidates passed their content knowledge test than did non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates. An additional 21.6 percent of Hispanic candidates passed their content knowledge test after taking it two or more times (figure 6); however, this increase was still lower than the first-time passing rate of White candidates. Figure 6 shows the percentage of candidates who passed after each attempt at a content knowledge test.

Figure 6. Regardless of the number attempts, a lower percentage of Hispanic candidates passed their content knowledge test than did non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates

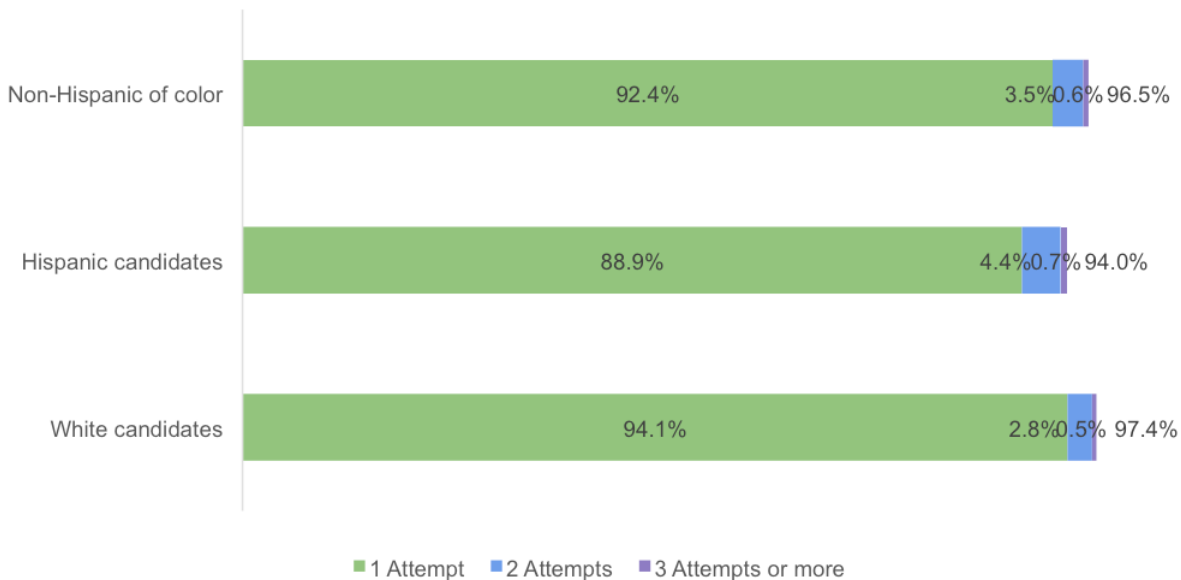


The number farthest to the right is the cumulative percentage. Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2010–2019 data, N = 48,212.

Similarly, a lower percentage of Hispanic candidates passed the performance assessment than did non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates, regardless of the number of times they took it. Again, an additional 5.1 percent of Hispanic candidates passed the performance assessment after taking it two or more times; however, even with this increase, the total passing rate was about the same as the first-time passing rate of White candidates. Figure 7 shows the percentage of candidates who passed after each attempt at the performance assessment.



Figure 7. A lower percentage of Hispanic candidates passed the performance assessment on their first attempt compared with non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates



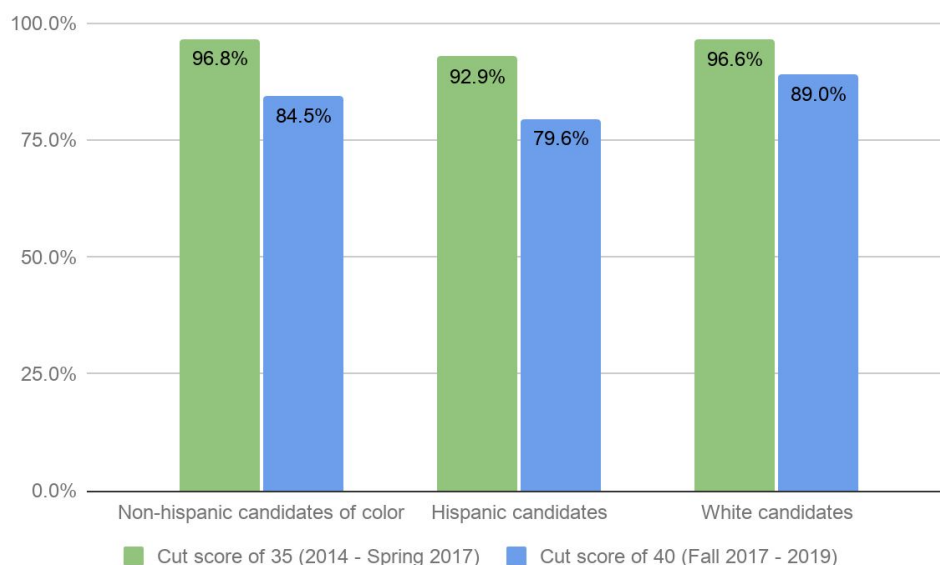
The number farthest to the right is the cumulative percentage. Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2014–2019 data, N = 13,297.

### The performance assessment cut score ramp-up had an impact on passing rates among candidates of color.

When the edTPA became consequential in Washington in 2014, PESB adopted the edTPA with a ramp-up plan, which was designed to allow programs and candidates time to learn the new assessment before making it high stakes. In spring 2014 PESB implemented a passing score (or “cut score”) of 35, which is one SEM below the standard-setting panel’s recommended passing score of 40. In spring 2017 PESB ramped up the cut score to reach the panel’s recommendation.

We examined the passing rates on the performance assessment before and after Washington state ramped up the cut score from 35 to 40. Before the ramp up, the passing rate of non-Hispanic candidates of color (96.8 percent) was slightly higher than that of White candidates (96.6 percent) (figure 8). After the change in the cut score, a lower percentage of non-Hispanic candidates of color (84.5 percent) passed the performance assessment than did White candidates (89.0 percent). This change also had a larger impact on the passing rates of Hispanic candidates (13.3 percentage-point difference in passing rates) than it did on the passing rates of non-Hispanic candidates of color (12.3 percentage-point difference in passing rates) and White candidates (7.6 percentage-point difference in passing rates).

Figure 8. The change in the cut score in 2017 had a larger impact on the passing rates of Hispanic candidates than it did on the passing rates of non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates



Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2014–2019 data, N = 13,297.

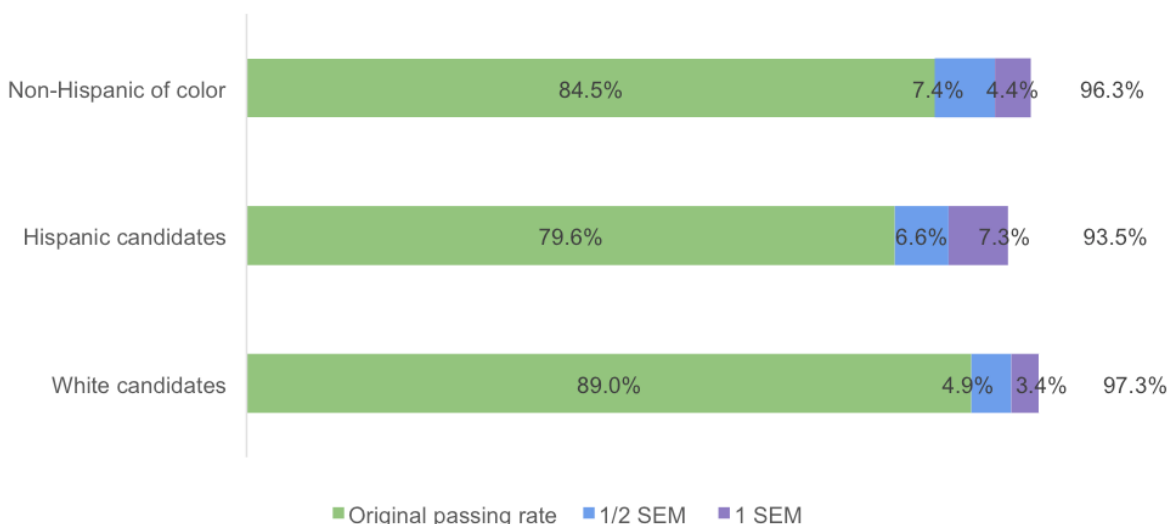
**Using a standard error of measurement to lower cut scores resulted in increased passing rates for all candidates, especially Hispanic candidates, but a higher percentage of White candidates still passed the performance assessment compared to Hispanic candidates and non-Hispanic candidates of color**

Using data collected after spring 2017, we examined the hypothetical impacts of different cut scores on the passing rates of all candidates. Pearson Education calculated the SEM using the distribution of edTPA scores and indicated that three points accounted for half of a SEM and five points as one SEM.

We found that lowering the cut score would increase the percentage of all candidates who would pass and that this would most likely benefit a higher percentage of Hispanic candidates than non-Hispanic candidates of color and White candidates. For example, after reducing the cut score by one SEM, a higher percentage of Hispanic candidates ( $6.6+7.3=13.9$  percent higher) passed than did non-Hispanic candidates of color ( $7.4+4.4=11.8$  percent higher) and White candidates of color ( $4.9+3.4=8.3$  percent higher) (figure 9).

These findings suggest that adjusting cut scores may increase passing rates for all candidates, but a higher percentage of White candidates would still pass the performance assessment than would candidates of color.

Figure 9. The passing rates of Hispanic candidates increases the most from changes in cut scores, based on a standard error of measurement, while a higher percentage of White candidates still passed the performance assessment compared to Hispanic candidates and non-Hispanic candidates of color



The number farthest to the right is the cumulative percentage. Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2014–2019 data, N = 13,297.

**The basic skills test appeared to be a larger barrier to candidates than the content area tests, however failing a test did not appear to be the primary driver of attrition.**

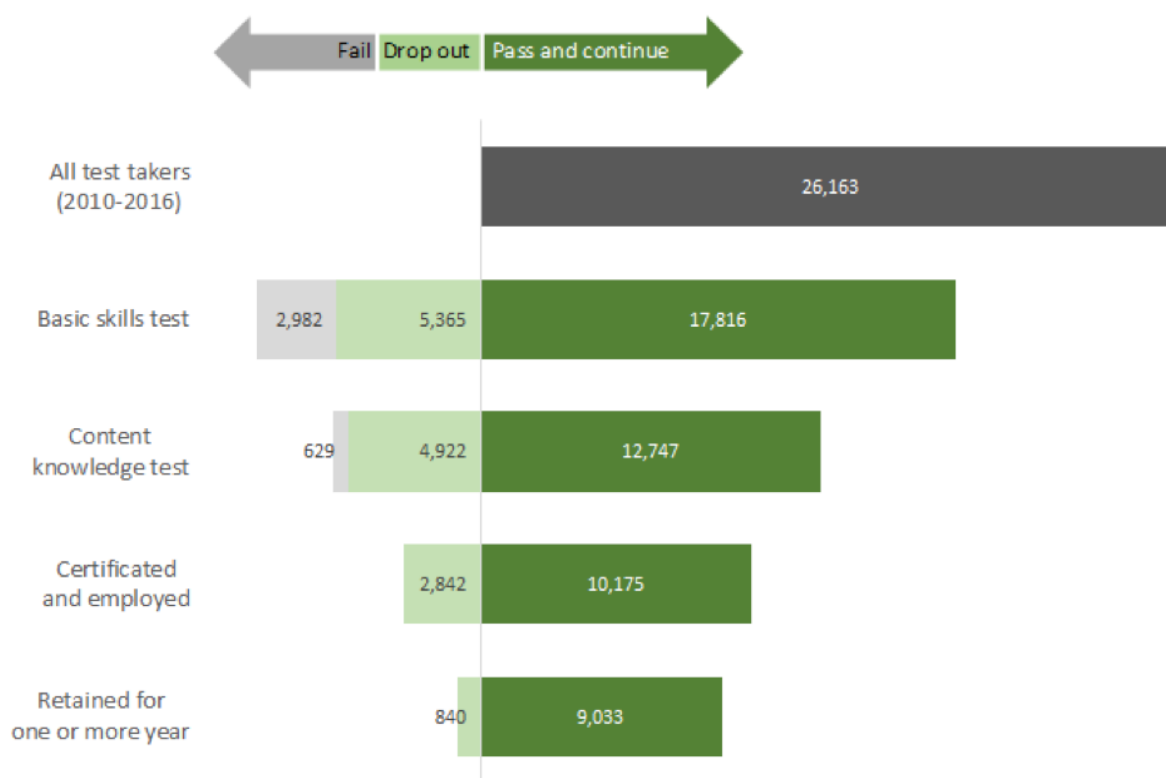
To get a more complete picture of the Washington teacher preparation pathway—and how teacher preparation tests are related to completion of the pathway—we identified a sample of 26,163 Washington test-takers whose first test record was entered between 2010 and 2016. This allowed us to examine candidates who had four or more years to earn certification and be employed. We excluded the edPTA from this analysis because many candidates did not take it prior to 2014. Of the sample, 49.8 percent (13,017 individuals) were certificated in Washington as of 2019/20 and 38.9 percent (10,175 individuals) were employed in a certificated position in a Washington K–12 public school for at least one year (figure 10).

One relevant finding from this analysis was that the basic skills test appeared to be a larger barrier to candidates than the content area tests; 11.4 percent of test-takers (2,982 individuals) failed the basic skills test regardless of how many times they took it, compared to 3.4 percent (629 individuals) who failed a content area test. By eliminating the requirement to pass the basic

skills this test, Washington may have removed one of the barriers to becoming a certificated educator. We recommend that the impact of removing the basic skills requirement be evaluated.

Another relevant finding was that failing a test did not appear to be the primary driver of teacher attrition. In fact, a larger portion of test-takers dropped off the teacher preparation pathway after passing a test than after failing one. In other words, compared to those who failed a test, more test-takers passed the basic skills test and the content area test but never took another test or were never certificated. This suggests that attrition or dropout along the teacher preparation pathway has many causes. Understanding these causes will be essential to addressing the teacher shortage in Washington State.

Figure 10. Less than half of candidates continued the teacher pathway to employment and retention



Source: Education Northwest analysis of Pearson Education and Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2010–2019 data, N = 26,163.

Pearson Education assessment data include results from January 1, 2010, to March 16, 2019, on all Washington educator assessments. These data include all individuals who took the assessments in Washington or in association with a Washington teacher preparation program. Results from the WEST-E, NES, and edTPA teacher preparation tests were collected from Pearson Education. Data include the assessment and subtest name, administration date, raw score, and

pass indicator, as well as the name of the test-taker, a Pearson-created ID, and self-reported demographic information (including race/ethnicity and gender). The sample in the study includes the population of all 78,357 individuals who took a Washington state teacher test between 2010 and 2019 (table A1).

Table A1. Study population and characteristics

Candidate characteristic	N	Percent
All candidates	78,357	
<i>Race/ethnicity</i>		
Non-Hispanic of color	8,462	10.8
White	59,552	76.0
Hispanic	4,433	5.7
Missing	5,910	7.5
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	60,348	77.0
Male	17,337	22.1
Missing	672	0.9

Table A2 provides regression outcomes from a linear probability model to estimate the likelihood of ever passing any content knowledge test.

Table A2. Probability of ever passing a content knowledge test

Variable	Control model
<i>Demographic characteristics</i>	
Non-Hispanic candidate of color	-5.304***
Hispanic candidate	-5.172***
Female	0.128
<i>Interaction effects with female</i>	
Non-Hispanic candidate of color	2.326***
Hispanic candidate	-1.390
<i>Earliest record in the data</i>	
2011	-0.520
2012	-0.759*
2013	-1.042**
2014	-1.358***
2015	-2.218***

2016	-2.126***
2017	-2.052***
2018	-3.347***
2019	-2.747**
<i>Age category</i>	
31-40	-0.714***
41-50	-2.114***
51-60	-3.113***
>60	-5.618***
<i>Attempts</i>	
Number of attempts	-3.984***
Days between first and last attempt	-0.029***
Constant	103.690***
N	55,441
r <sup>2</sup>	0.057

Table A3 provides regression outcomes from a linear probability model to estimate the likelihood of ever passing the performance assessment.

Table A3. Probability of ever passing the performance assessment

Variable	Control model
<i>Demographic characteristics</i>	
Non-Hispanic candidate of color	-0.699
Hispanic candidate	-3.634*
Female	1.968***
<i>Interaction effects with female</i>	
Non-Hispanic candidate of color	0.557
Hispanic candidate	1.994
<i>Earliest record in the data</i>	
2011	-1.496
2012	1.928*
2013	2.680**
2014	2.204*
2015	1.112
2016	-1.398
2017	-1.277
2018	-5.276**

2019	5.266
<i>Age category</i>	
31-40	-0.107
41-50	-0.163
51-60	-0.150
>60	1.575
<i>Attempts</i>	
Number of attempts	-6.094**
Days between first and last attempt	-0.036*
Constant	102.444***
N	11,968
r <sup>2</sup>	0.058



## APPENDIX B. EDUCATOR ASSESSMENT WORKGROUP MEMBERSHIP

Workgroup members represented a diverse stakeholder collective with significant knowledge, expertise, and perspective. Over the course of seven meetings between November 2019 to May 2020, the workgroup asked questions about inequities within the assessment system, and centered the use of data and research to help inform the development of their final recommendations. These recommendations, as well as briefing papers on three options for the performance assessment developed by the workgroup, are included in this report. See workgroup meeting [agendas and materials](#).

Name (first, last)	Organization	Role
Adam Aguilera	Board member, Evergreen Public Schools	Teacher
Ailene M. Baxter	Puyallup school district	District HR
Brandy Alley	Western Washington University	Candidate/Student WEA president
Candis Eckert	Pierce College	Education preparation program faculty
Daniel Harada	WEA, Federal Way public schools	Teacher
Grace Inae Blum	Central Washington University	Education preparation program faculty
Jan Weiss	WACTE, Pacific Lutheran University	Education preparation program faculty
Jan-Olov Johansson	WACTE, Eastern Washington University	Education preparation program faculty
Jason Greenberg Motamedi	REL Northwest	Research partner
Jim Meadows	WEA	Specialist
Julia Aguirre	WACTE, University of Washington Tacoma	Education preparation program faculty
Kari Terjeson	Heritage university	Education preparation program faculty
Keith Lambert	Whitworth University	Education preparation program faculty
Kim Van Atta	Seattle Public Schools	Teacher
Kurt Hatch	AWSP	Associate Director
Leanna Aker	City University	Education preparation program faculty
Luke Thomas	Board member, Mead school district	Teacher

Mark Oursland	Central Washington University	Education preparation program faculty
Mary Jo Larsen	Pacific Lutheran University	Education preparation program faculty
Mel Boyd	Bethel Schools	District HR representative
Melissa Matczak	Yakima Valley Community College	Education preparation program faculty
Mike Esping	ESD 112	Education preparation program faculty
Neria Sebastien	WACTE, Seattle University	Higher education faculty
Patrick Sexton	University of Washington, Seattle	Higher education faculty
Rana Nakkour	WEA, Edmonds School District	Teacher
Sharon Straub	Gonzaga University	Education preparation program faculty
Sobia Sheikh	WEA, Mukilteo School District	Teacher
Sun young Yoon	REL Northwest	Research partner
Tara Haskins	Eastern Washington University	Education preparation program faculty
Taylor Nakamura	WEA, Edmonds School District	Teacher/Assistant teacher
Teddi Beam-Conroy	University of Washington, Seattle	Education preparation program faculty
Tim York	OSPI Certification	Government agency staff
Victorya Rouse	Spokane Public Schools	Teacher

# APPENDIX C. BRIEFING PAPERS REGARDING PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT POLICY ALTERNATIVES

## Briefing paper option 1. Use edTPA as a formative assessment

*Authors: Keith Lambert, Ailene Baxter, Mary Jo Larsen, and Neria Sebastien*

### Overview

Effective January 1, 2014, all teacher candidates prepared in Washington State are required to take and pass a teacher performance assessment per RCW 28A.410.280 and WAC 181-78A-264 as authorized by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), which has established the cut score. The goal of this proposal is to repurpose the edTPA as a formative assessment by developing a professional development continuum beginning during pre-service teacher training and throughout the first year of teaching. Additionally, edTPA as a formative assessment increases the likely use of the teacher growth plans. In Washington State, per RCW 28A.405.100, all certified teachers in Washington State must participate in an evaluation process known as Teacher Principal Evaluation Process (TPEP). Further, both pre-service and in-service teachers are required to write and complete Professional Growth Plans (PGP) as part of either a program completion or on-the-job process that informs a teacher's TPEP.

### Identification of the problem

Too often, policies that could complement each other end up siloed within their respective agencies. For example, all teachers prepared in Washington State are required to complete a PGP at the conclusion of the program; however, more often than not, those PGP's are never used again, and the candidate moves into a teaching assignment only to perform a new PGP. For program completers, the process can feel like a hoop they jump through with no real tangible outcome of writing their PGP. As a new in-service teacher, the PGP process can be cumbersome for administration and teachers in the busyness of the first few months of a new teacher's career. The timeline for the PGP's would need to be made clear to school districts that candidates prepared in Washington state come to their respective jobs with a completed PGP and can be incorporated as soon as their first weeks of employment.

Further, the edTPA is a comprehensive assessment that asks pre-service teachers to provide evidence of their ability to plan, instruct, and assess their students effectively. At a minimum, these goals mirror the overarching goals of TPEP, which is designed to show the effectiveness of a teacher's instructional skills, classroom management, professional preparation, and scholarship.

## Implementation Plan

The first step will require legislative action to amend RCW 28A.410.280(1) as follows:

- (1) Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, all professional educator standards board approved teacher preparation programs must administer to all pre-service candidates the evidence-based assessment of teaching effectiveness adopted by the professional educator standards board. The professional educator standards board shall adopt rules that establish a date during the 2012-13 school year after which candidates completing teacher preparation programs must successfully ~~pass~~ take this assessment. Assessment results from persons completing each preparation program must be reported annually by the professional educator standards board to the governor and the education and fiscal committees of the Legislature by December 1.

We recommend that PESB make this a legislative agenda item and work with other stakeholder groups such as WEA and WACTE to coordinate a unified legislative voice. To determine implementation feasibility, PESB should also convene a stakeholder workgroup beginning in Fall 2020 in anticipation of legislative change. The workgroup should include at minimum representatives from the following: Teacher Preparation Programs, School Administrators, Human Resource officers, and In-service teachers.

## Research

We know through research that formative assessment is a process in which students and teachers work together to improve learning. The edTPA is an assessment which often occurs early in a teacher candidate's student teaching experience. It should and could be used to formulate areas for growth as the candidate moves into the first two years of a teaching. Good formative assessments allow both the student (teacher candidate) and the teacher (mentor) to be active participants in the learning process. A quality formative assessment should allow participants the opportunity to 1) Help candidates identify targeted and specific learning goals, 2) Apply that knowledge to their professional practice as they move into the classroom and 3) Use the information to inform a TPEP on next steps in their first year or two in the classroom. EdTPA, as a formative assessment, positions teacher professional development as a continuum that starts during pre-service.

## Opportunities

Positioning the edTPA as a formative assessment provides the following opportunities to stakeholder's groups:

- A formative assessment is a learning opportunity, and this change would alleviate the stress that candidates and mentors currently experience in the field.

- It has the opportunity to blend in standard policies, such as the PGP, and provide a deeper understanding and meaning to the development of a PGP for teacher candidates.
- The edTPA as a formative assessment allows the state to maintain a uniformed assessment and promote lower stress environments for candidates and mentors that are asset driven and growth minded.
- Districts would have a greater responsibility as they would need to understand the edTPA and its academic language better, and EPPs would need to provide more resources to support teacher candidates post their program year(s).
- The edTPA, as a formative assessment, also positions new teachers as developers and provides a certain level of autonomy guided by seasoned mentor teachers, coaches, and faculty.
- This solution maintains the common assessment system and standards for certification, while also addressing the workgroup concern around the extent to which the edTPA is reasonable or appropriate for teacher candidates to complete at such an early point in their educational careers.
- Similarly, shifting this to a formative assessment provides first year teachers with clear goals and objectives to focus in their first year of teaching by using what they learned in their student teaching experience and through their edTPA that will enable them to: 1) deepen their skills in their first year of teaching, and 2) more time to plan, complete, and submit the assessment.

## Unintended consequences

- Out of state candidates who are not required to take the edTPA will not have one available for their PGP or TPEP.
- Changing to a formative assessment may create an environment where candidates do not take the assessment as seriously as they might if they knew their scores were tied to being certified.
- Several districts have established their protocols for first-year teachers TPEP and PGP, which might not align perfectly with using the edTPA as a tool to inform the writing of these two documents. It may require additional funds to make changes to their district practice.
- Stakeholders would need to agree on developing shared language that positions the edTPA as an assessment and not an evaluation.
- The first full year of teaching is already challenging and full enough without also asking teachers to complete the edTPA during this time.
- The edTPA, as a formative assessment, develops a first-year teacher induction program. While first-year induction programs are used in Canada and Finland, such a plan will require additional resources and oversight.
- Teachers would need to split their attention and commitment between the district's TPEP instructional framework and the edTPA, both challenging sets of academic language to master and understand.

- Teachers would be further removed from the immersion in edTPA language, as they may no longer be attending formal classes as part of their preparation program.
- For districts, the unintended consequence is that they would need to become more familiar with the demands and language of the edTPA and may not have the resources to do so. For EPPs, the unintended consequence is an expansion of the number of candidates supported at any one time, as they would need to support candidates' past program completion additionally.
- Using the edtpa as a formative assessment within programs is very different than using it as a critical piece in the formative development across institutions. It could transfer institutional responsibility onto individual candidates.

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Clayton, C. D. (2018). Policy meets practice in new york state: Understanding early edTPA implementation through pre-service candidates' eyes. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 45(3), 97-125.

Wilkerson, J. R. (2015). The need for instructional sensitivity and construct clarity in PACT: A commentary on "examining the internal structure evidence for the performance assessment for california teachers". *Journal of Teacher Education*, 66(2), 184.

### Feedback from workgroup members for option 1. Formative assessment

Other unintended consequences:

1. The assessment was not built as a formative assessment and can't easily be used as one given the high pass rate and the short amount of time candidates have in-program after the assessment.
2. \$300 is too much for a formative assessment that does not provide enough opportunity after the assessment in the program that prepared them to take it.

This option recognizes the "growth continuum" of a beginning teacher and provides the opportunity for institutions of higher learning, school districts, and state agencies (OSPI/BEST) to put an authentic plan of support into place for all beginning teachers. A growth continuum is an excellent idea although the difficulty is the benchmarks are the same as they were for in-service teachers but have changed for pre-service teachers.

## Briefing paper option 2. Use edTPA with multiple measures

*Authors: Leanna Aker, Keith Lambert, Mary Jo Larsen, Rana Nakkour, Mark Oursland, Neria Sebastien and Sharon Straub*

### edTPA as summative assessment with multiple measures: The use of multiple measures for assessment is a best practice in education.

Just as educators are expected to provide a variety of assessment modalities, products, and types to allow students with differing assets to demonstrate their understanding, so, too, should educator preparation programs (EPPs) provide this variety to allow teacher candidates with differing assets to demonstrate their readiness to teach. Although one can claim that EPPs currently use multiple measures by way of field supervisor/mentor evaluations, coursework, etc., edTPA currently carries unrepresentative weight in the decision about a candidate's readiness to teach. While edTPA has value, it should not be the singular gateway to certification (Gitomer, Martinez, Battey, & Hyland, 2019).

Using edTPA in conjunction with multiple measures explicitly addresses the goal of the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to create a culturally responsive and coherent assessment system that ensures a properly credentialed and diverse teaching workforce.

### Why continue to use the edTPA as part of a multiple measures approach?

The edTPA has educative value for teacher candidates and EPPs. Just as the Teacher and Principal Evaluation and Growth Program (TPEP) instructional frameworks used by Washington state school districts provide a common language for educators to reflect upon their teaching practice, so too does edTPA provide that for teacher candidates and EPPs. The assessment reflects a collaboration among teachers, EPPs, and the Stanford Center of Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) to identify constructs important to effective teaching in order to create an authentic assessment of teaching practice. (SCALE, n.d.).

Because edTPA is widely used, there is a large network of EPPs across the United States using that common language to share resources and expertise in preparing teacher candidates. These strengths of the edTPA address the coherent assessment system and properly credentialed components of PESB's goal. SCALE collaborates with teachers, EPPs, and other stakeholders to continually improve the edTPA. Representatives from SCALE shared with the assessment workgroup some upcoming improvements to the edTPA, which include:

1. Consistent alignment and realignment with 15 high level teaching competencies
2. Reduction in writing requirements, handbook structure, and page length
3. Explicit focus on equity and equitable practices
4. Streamlining support documents and resources (Pecheone & Merino, 2020).



These improvements address some of the assessment workgroup's concerns, as well as the culturally responsive and diverse teaching workforce components of PESB's goal. The edTPA is a rigorous, comprehensive assessment that can help newly certified teachers to feel and be seen as credible and professional. Many respected professions have high stakes assessments as part of the rite of passage into or out of education about the profession—doctors must take the MCAT exam to enter medical school, lawyers must pass the bar exam to begin practicing law. Many within and outside of education question whether teaching is a true profession and if teachers should be considered professionals (García & Weiss, 2020; Ingersoll & Collins, 2018).

The edTPA foregrounds the actual skills of teaching, as opposed to multiple choice assessments that do not reflect candidates' abilities. The writing component of edTPA foregrounds the reflective mindset necessary for continual improvement in teaching.

## Proposed solution and implications

The proposed solution would allow EPPs to use multiple measures for certification when a teacher candidate's edTPA score falls within 0.5-1 standard error of measurement (SEM) of the established cut score of 40. EPPs would have the responsibility to review, assess, and report multiple measures. Certification officers would have a responsibility to report requested data. PESB would have a responsibility to create WAC language to clarify the process. These aforementioned responsibilities would add very little additional tasks and time to the existing responsibilities of these stakeholders. There are precedents for such a solution—New York and Oregon use a similar approach (NYSED, n.d.; TSPC, 2019). PESB also has set a precedent for the consideration of multiple measures in teacher candidate admission to program with the removal of the WEST-B cut score.

## Why 0.5 to 1 SEM?

The suggestion to use a range of 0.5 to 1 SEM around the cut score both confirms the appropriateness of the current cut score and acknowledges there is error in measuring complex constructs such as those in the edTPA. Previous workgroups established a cut score of 40 as a reasonable and rigorous bar for teacher candidates. The current workgroup agreed that the cut score should not be lowered. However, the presumption that a candidate who scores a 35-40 is measurably different or less skilled than a candidate who scores a 40 is not supported by statistical reasoning or principles. A candidate's true abilities will invariably differ from their measured abilities on the constructs reflected in the edTPA, because assessments are not perfect, and assessors are not perfect. Assessment error is theoretically possible, but its existence has also been confirmed through an analysis of edTPA scores by EPPs in Washington State (Lambert & Laurier, 2019). The standard error of measurement (SEM) is an estimate of the range within which the true score would be likely to fall. Thus, the use of the SEM to guide decisions about candidate readiness to teach acknowledges the error inherent in assessments such as the edTPA. If EPPs use a range of one SEM around the measured score (i.e., the

candidate's edTPA score), there is a 68% chance that the candidate's true abilities fell within that range. SCALE's data suggests that a standard of error of measurement would be approximately five points (2015). So, if a candidate's measured score on the edTPA is a 38, it could mean that his or her true score could be a 43. This particular multiple measures approach allows EPPs to ask the question—is this candidate's score of 39 a product of lack of readiness to teach or of assessment error?

## Benefits

This multiple measures solution addresses some of the concerns of the workgroup, particularly the stress and cost to teacher candidates. Some teacher candidate stress would be alleviated by providing a way for those close to the cut score to show readiness to teach in alternative ways, and by assigning a more representative weight to authentic readiness measures EPPs already use to assess teacher candidates. By affording a more representative weight to measures that reflect actual teaching skill in the classroom, and lessening the weight given to an assessment that over-emphasizes writing, this solution would lessen barriers to creating a diverse work force for candidates of color and for those for whom analytical writing is not a strength (Yoon & Motamedi, 2020). This solution eliminates the cost of retaking edTPA for those candidates who are otherwise deemed ready. No legislative change would be required, so this solution would provide immediate relief to teacher candidates. See Appendix A for a summary of RCW and WAC language. This multiple measures approach may help to ameliorate increasing difficulties in securing student teaching placements for teacher candidates.

Reducing the impact edTPA has on the decision to certify teachers may help to alleviate some of the hesitancy that districts, schools, and cooperating/mentor teachers have in placing and accepting student teachers. Mentor teachers may feel validated that their evaluation of a teacher candidate carries a more representative weight. By providing this option to candidates within the SEM range, the effects of small scoring anomalies noted by EPPs could be mitigated (Lambert & Laurier, 2019).

This solution maintains a common and rigorous assessment system for teacher candidates. The use and report of common categories of multiple measures would maintain EPP accountability for their decisions to certify candidates within 0.5-1 SEM of the established edTPA cut score, and would allow PESB to track if particular EPPs are certifying unusually large proportions of teacher candidates through this approach. The use of this multiple measures approach does not constitute a "free pass," but rather it keeps in place a certain level of performance on the edTPA, and requires EPPs to report the multiple measures used to make the certification decision. Remaining Issues and Unintended Consequences.

First, the edTPA is still a cost to the candidate and is still a high stakes assessment that must be completed in a short time frame. Deciding on a process for implementing and assessing multiple measures, as well as deciding upon the measures and how they should be reported will require time and collaboration among EPPs and PESB. Depending upon these considerations, one

unintended consequence to EPPs and candidates is that the process could take more time and resources to show, assess, and report a candidate's readiness to teach. It is also possible that teacher candidates might not take the assessment as seriously.

### **Feedback from workgroup members for Option 2. Multiple measures:**

The briefing paper mentions SCALE told the workgroup about upcoming changes to edTPA. We need further clarification on the proposed changes under discussion and the timeline of implementation of these changes.

# Briefing paper Option 3: Eliminate edTPA and develop a new statewide common framework

*Authors: Sobia Sheikh, Adam Aguilera, Ailene Baxter, Teddi Beam-Conroy, and Daniel Harada*

## Overview

To meet the need for increased diversity among educators in Washington state, and ensure an equitable path for teacher certification, the best choice is to eliminate the edTPA assessment and replace it with the creation of a statewide framework adaptable to local programs. This requires a legislative change to RCW 28A.410.280.

## Context or scope of problem

### Barriers

EdTPA is a barrier for aspiring educators from marginalized communities. Data shows candidates, particularly those of color, struggle to complete certification programs to enter the profession. A gap is present between Black and White teachers who take the edTPA, and in Washington State, “Hispanic” students are three times more likely to fail the edTPA compared to white students (Goldhaber, et al., 2017). The edTPA also reveals an ableist bias against candidates with documented disabilities to request and receive, in a timely manner, appropriate accommodations for successfully completing the portfolio.

Pearson’s for-profit model in assessing the edTPA creates a financial barrier of \$300 for low income aspiring educators. If the candidate fails the exam, the retake cost is \$100 per task or \$300 for an entire resubmission. Other assessments such as the West E, West B, Praxis, and NES also exacerbate the costs to program certification.

### Validity and reliability

Candidates are scored on fifteen rubrics but receive little to no feedback on the edTPA. The assessment lacks reliability and validity: the scoring of multiple categories across many different scorers creates unreliable comparisons between test takers, nor can programs be assured of the score’s accuracy. Individual scorers may be assigned a single test, but due to the numerous standards/rubrics it becomes nearly impossible to create internal reliability- i.e. consistency between scorers. This produces a situation where comparison between test takers is highly unreliable (Gitomer, et al., 2019). There is no certainty if one candidate’s score of “45” is the same or different from another candidate’s “45.” The edTPA scores also lack meaning in articulating statistical variability between a candidate who scores 44 to a candidate who scores 45 in any given year. With no research for determining cut scores or who authored them, the line for

passing becomes arbitrary. Year-to-year variation between candidates and scorers further increases uncertainty in authentic data.

Additionally, the high-stakes nature of the assessment requires the institution and candidate to focus educator proficiency to a narrow lens of academics. This often contrasts with program's adapting to changing needs for aspiring educators such as teaching the social-emotional needs of students during a candidate's practicum.

Pearson as a for-profit entity has made only modest changes to its assessments that continue institutional barriers to certification programs. Combined with a lack of transparency, Pearson's business model prioritizes shareholders over the success of all program candidates.

## **Pandemic**

The national edTPA organization has an incomplete plan to address inequities in its program with no clear timeline for implementation. Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) and certification programs are dependent on the national organization to issue accommodations and guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic which exacerbates existing inequities.

Current COVID-19 accommodations allow candidates to receive emergency certification and can submit their edTPA next year if local program expectations are met. It is unknown when educators will return to classrooms; however, candidates must continue to complete certification programs. With national partners struggling to adapt to these circumstances, Washington State accredited programs are best prepared to certify aspiring educators when receiving COVID-19 guidance from OSPI and the Governor.

## **Imminent legislative change**

In the previous legislative session, a bill was introduced, but did not receive a final vote to eliminate the edTPA. Rising frustrations from educators and stakeholders is increasing certainty that a similar bill will pass in the future. The Educator Assessment System workgroup has the unique opportunity to find resolution and recommend changes that guide legislation to meet the needs of a diverse, highly-qualified educator workforce.

## **Implementation plan**

The goal is to develop and implement a reflective portfolio aimed at demonstrating how candidates have met state and program standards and includes a program that faculty can assess within the context of their own programs. The Professional Education Standards Board would create a statewide framework consisting of guidelines adaptable to local program needs. The framework focuses on the following components throughout the student teaching experience:

1. Relationship with Students: Candidates will use culturally responsive strategies to build authentic relationships with students. Studies have shown student engagement is directly tied to the relationship educators have built with their students.
2. Instructional Planning and Analysis of Student Work: Candidates will work with their cooperating teacher to create lesson and unit plans demonstrating differentiated needs of the students. They will analyze student work to reflect on and inform their practice.
3. Instructional Strategies: Candidates will reflect on their instructional practices using observations from program advisors and cooperating teachers. Candidates will submit an informal video of their teaching to reflect on instructional strategies with peers and mentors.
4. Assessment/Data Analysis: Candidates will collaborate with their cooperating teacher to design a formative and a summative assessment on a unit and analyze the results from the assessments. The candidate will be able to understand how to use the data as evidence of differentiated instruction between the assessments.

Candidates will submit their final products in relation to each component of the program.

### **Implementation considerations/feasibility, examining financial feasibility**

Educator preparation programs are accredited to provide a rigorous program to certify highly qualified educators, and they are qualified to take the lead in meeting the needs of local candidates. Trust in the faculty to provide these educator programs is essential in adapting to local community changes and needs, particularly in a changing education environment from COVID-19. With a common framework across all programs, a designated state agency can select to audit samples of evidence from programs to determine which areas of support are needed. This will be an increased cost.

This option does require a legislative change to RCW 28A.410.280 to eliminate the edTPA.

PESB would create a task force consisting of stakeholders, such as practicing educators and program mentors, to create a statewide framework. This would be an additional cost to PESB. Programs will then transition to adapting to the framework. Much of the proposed framework is similar to what programs are already providing for candidates.

### **Opportunities with this option for students, candidates, stakeholders, and faculty members**

Teaching is a profession requiring growth over time, where individuals are not only the facilitators of learning, but remain lifelong learners. Washington State's educator programs employ experienced faculty members who can prepare diverse, highly-qualified educators. This includes demonstrating the critical and necessary disposition for self-reflection and improvement of practice. With this trust, programs can determine ways to assess their candidates by adapting to a state framework independent of struggling national partners. This policy encourages educator

preparation in compassion and empathy to build meaningful relationships with students and their families within the local community of the program.

Candidates thrive when working collaboratively with a mentor teacher and program advisor to identify and develop qualitative skills. The narrow lens of edTPA's assessments stifles innovative teaching and limits the ability of cooperating educators to support aspiring educators. This recommended state framework allows candidates to submit final products in parts, providing candidates time to reflect on their practice and receive constructive feedback from mentors and cooperating teachers. Faculty members would have more flexibility to differentiate the needs of diverse candidates from marginalized communities. Furthermore, PESB would no longer need to negotiate changes with national partners such as Pearson to respond to the needs of Washington State educator preparation programs.

### **Unintended consequences on students, candidates, stakeholders, and faculty members**

Considering this option requires a legislative change and the creation of a new statewide framework, programs may need to determine ways to adapt which may include hiring additional faculty members or practicing educators to train and grade portfolios. PESB will need to create a new workgroup of stakeholders to complete the work of these recommendations to avoid unintended consequences of program implementation and impact on candidates.

### **Resources**

Goldhaber, D., Cowan, J., & Theobald, R. (2017). Evaluating Prospective Teachers: Testing the Predictive Validity of the edTPA. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 68(4), 377–393. doi: 10.1177/0022487117702582

Gitomer, D. H., Martínez, J. F., Battey, D., & Hyland, N. E. (2019). Assessing the Assessment: Evidence of Reliability and Validity in the edTPA. *American Educational Research Journal*, 000283121989060. doi: 10.3102/0002831219890608

### **Feedback from workgroup members for Option 3. Eliminate edTPa and develop new statewide common framework**

- The actual costs of this option are not reflected in this paper. Washington has deeply considered this option before we went to the edTPA. It was dismissed primarily because of cost and the lack of available expertise. Performance-based assessments are generally more costly to administer and score than multiple choice tests. In addition, teacher preparation programs, which will be directly involved in administering this assessment, may incur additional costs they will likely recover from the candidate. A cost analysis should be recommended for said implementations and those costs should not be deferred to the institutions, but supported by the legislature.



- Reliability and validity of this model is a significant concern. Prior to edTPA, Washington used the Performance-Based Pedagogy Assessment (PPA) developed by colleges of education. Despite the great learning opportunities it offered, PPA revealed many limitations, including reliability and validity of the instrument. This briefing paper questions validity, reliability, and cultural responsiveness of edTPA. Then, it should also address how these concerns will be addressed in the proposed model and the timeline and cost for developing this process.
- IHE's, districts, and organizations worked together to develop the edTPA in order to avoid a multiple choice test on pedagogy. We don't want to face the possibility of going "back to the future."
- The assumption of program operations and the assumption that programs are not differentiating because WA uses the edTPA as part of our assessment system are inaccurate. Also, there is no intention for edTPA to be used to compare candidates.

## APPENDIX D. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE TEST ADMINISTRATION FOR BASIC SKILLS AND CONTENT KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENTS

PESB is committed to on-going efforts towards improving test administration. These enhancements are aligned with the Board's priority of supporting accessible pathways into the educator profession. The recommendations in the [testing barriers report](#) were used as a road map to determine and respond to the following needs:

- Reduce test fees of WEST (Washington Educator Skills Test) assessments
- Increase the number of vouchers
- Strengthen support for programs and candidates
- Add the WEST-B time extension option for English Language Learners
- Update the WEST-B score report with more detailed feedback

### Reduce the test fees of WEST (Washington assessment) programs

Stakeholders have expressed concerns around test and retake fees. Previously, fees for the Washington specific WEST assessments were much higher than fees for the national NES assessments. This was mainly because a much larger number of candidates take the national assessments. In January, 2020, the WEST test fee was reduced to be comparable with the NES test fee.

Assessment		Previous fee	New fee
WEST-B		\$155 (\$75 per sub-test)	\$96 (\$32 per sub-test)
	Designated World Languages	\$95	\$59
WEST-E	Middle Level Humanities	\$155 (\$95 per sub-test)	\$96 (\$48 per sub-test)
	Other WEST-E Tests	\$155	\$96

## Increased number of vouchers

Washington approved preparation programs receive vouchers that cover the entire cost of the test fee for a candidate. These vouchers are provided by the testing vendor. PESB determines the distribution of vouchers based on program size. The number of vouchers significantly increased statewide in 2020.

Assessment	Previous number of vouchers	New number of vouchers
WEST-B	200 ~ 210	300
WEST-E/NES	200 ~ 210	1,550
edTPA	40 ~ 49	118

## WEST-B time extension for bilingual candidates

In 2018, PESB and Pearson implemented a time-extension option for candidates for whom English is not their primary language. These candidates can now request an extension of up to one-and-a-half times the standard test session length.

## WEST-B score report updates

In 2018-19, the WEST-B score report was updated to provide the scaled score for performance on each of the subtests, as well as diagnostic information for performance on each objective across subtests. For WEST-B writing, candidates will now receive their earned score point totals for each of the performance items included in the subtest and the performance characteristics aligned with these score points. Stakeholders indicated that this change will help candidates and programs better understand their performance on the written composition component of the WEST-B writing subtest, and better use the diagnostic information received in a formative manner.

## APPENDIX D. WORKS CITED

Strengthening the Continuum of Teacher Development. Professional Educator Standards Board, 2010.

Grow Your Own Teachers: Enhancing Educator Pathways to Address Teacher Shortage and Increase Diversity. Professional Educator Standards Board, 2016.

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