



AUGUST 2019

What the Elimination of the Test of Basic Skills Means for Educator Licensing

Public Act 101-0220 eliminates the requirement that teacher candidates pass a test of basic skills to receive a Professional Educator License. Here's what you need to know about how this change affects educator licensing.




Frequently Asked Questions

To whom does this legislation apply? How am I impacted if I fall into one of the groups below?

EDUCATOR	IMPACT
Individuals currently enrolled in an Illinois educator preparation program	A test of basic skills is no longer required prior to student teaching or for licensure.
Individuals who are currently seeking the Professional Educator License	A test of basic skills is no longer required for licensure.
Individuals enrolling in alternative educator preparation programs	A test of basic skills is no longer required for admission into alternative educator preparation programs.
Career and technical educators	A test of work proficiency (the ACT WorkKeys) will be used for license renewal for educators issued an ELS-CTE or ELS-CTEP on or after January 1, 2015. Any previously completed tests of basic skills will be honored but not available for new test attempts.
Transitional bilingual educators	A test of basic skills is no longer required for licensure.
Paraprofessionals	The ETS-paraprofessional exam and ACT WorkKeys are no longer options for obtaining licensure. ISBE is working with lawmakers to reinstate this option.

My license is currently deficient only for a test of basic skills. Will it be issued now?

Yes! The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will conduct a data run to pull the files of all educators who have deficient licenses and are missing a test of basic skills. Our evaluation team will update each evaluation to remove the test of basic skills requirement and issue licenses that have no additional requirements missing. Please allow up to a month for your application to be updated, since the volume of educators needing an update may be very high. You will receive an email notice telling you to check your ELIS account once an update has been made.



AUGUST 2019

What the Elimination of the Test of Basic Skills Means for Educator Licensing

My license is currently deficient for a test of basic skills AND another licensure requirement (e.g., content test, coursework, forms). Will my evaluation be updated?

Yes, ISBE will conduct a data run to pull the files of all educators who have deficient licenses and are missing a test of basic skills. Our evaluation team will update each evaluation to remove the test of basic skills requirement. Please allow up to a month for your application to be updated, since the volume of educators needing an update may be very high. You will receive an email notice telling you to check your ELIS account once an update has been made. All other requirements must be met to receive a license.

Does the legislation only impact applications submitted after the date the legislation becomes effective?

No, all applications will be evaluated or re-evaluated under the new legislation; none will require passage of a test of basic skills.

Does my application need to meet current requirements or the requirements in effect at the time I applied?

All pending applications must meet current requirements for licensure. You may need to complete additional coursework or testing prior to receiving your license if you completed your preparation program and applied for licensure several years ago.

Do I still need to submit ACT, SAT, or Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP) scores to ISBE?

No, tests of basic skills, including the ACT, SAT, and TAP, are no longer required for educator licensure. You do not need to send any scores to ISBE. Please note that an institution of higher education may still require test scores for entry into the institution or education programs; any required scores should be sent directly to your college or university.

I did not successfully complete a past preparation program because I needed to pass the test of basic skills. What are my options now for gaining licensure?

You have two options:

1. You may reach out to your institution of higher education and request that it again review your qualifications and recommend you for licensure to ISBE; or
2. You may submit an online application for the license you are seeking to ISBE through your ELIS account.

Is the test of basic skills gone forever or temporarily?

The legislation eliminates the test of basic skills entirely.

I was previously unable to complete student teaching because I had not yet passed the test of basic skills.

What are my options with this new legislation?

Since a test of basic skills is no longer required for any educator license, you may begin student teaching without the test and will not need to pass it for licensure. Please reach out to your college or university to determine when you can begin your student teaching experience.

I am already registered to take the ACT or SAT. Since I no longer need this test, can I be refunded my test registration fee?

The ACT and SAT are not administered by ISBE; thus, the agency has no control over fees collected or refunded. Please explore refund policies on each testing organization's website and reach out to the testing entity if you have questions.

Do I still need to pass the edTPA and content tests to obtain a license?

Yes, candidates for a Professional Educator License still must pass the edTPA and the content test relevant to the subject and grade they intend to teach.

The law mentions a refund for edTPA test fees for teachers in Evidence-Based Funding Tier 1 school districts. How do I qualify for this refund?

The refund provision is applicable "subject to appropriation," which means that refunds will only take place if the Illinois General Assembly appropriates, or grants, ISBE state money for the purpose of edTPA refunds. ISBE has not yet received funds for this purpose. If ISBE does receive this appropriation, the agency will broadcast the news and how to apply for the refund through various channels.

Does this law eliminate the test of basic skills as a licensure option for paraprofessional candidates who do not hold an associate's degree or higher or a minimum of 60 semester hours of credit?

Yes, however, ISBE is working with the sponsors of the legislation to introduce a trailer bill this fall to reinstate the option for paraprofessional candidates to earn the endorsement through a competency test. Paraprofessional candidates may proceed with taking the ETS-paraprofessional exam or ACT WorkKeys with the understanding that ISBE cannot consider a passing score as a means to obtain the endorsement until subsequent legislation is enacted.



Illinois
State Board of
Education

Visit

isbe.net/licensure-requirements