

Testlet FAQ Document

ISBE and Pearson will introduce a new test structure for educator licensure called the “testlet” beginning with the redesigned Elementary Education test, which is scheduled to launch July 1, 2026. Below are responses to frequently asked questions about this new test model.

Q1. What is a testlet?

Testlets are testing modules that break up the assessment into shorter segments. Each testlet is designed to measure a specific subarea of the test subject field. Testlets are administered and scored separately. Candidates have the flexibility to take the entire assessment at once or to take individual testlets. To pass the overall assessment, a test taker must complete all testlets and meet a minimum score on each.

Q2. When and where can my candidate take the testlet?

The testlets will be offered year-round by appointment at Pearson Professional Test Centers and Pearson Authorized test centers in Illinois. This test model will first appear in the new elementary education test that will launch July 1, 2026.

Q3. When will the testlet model be available for all licensure tests?

Other tests will be converted to the testlet model as part of ongoing test development and redesign.

Q4. What can you tell us about score reporting for testlets?

The assessments are scored on a compensatory basis, meaning that the overall score determines the pass/fail decision. While there are no separate passing scores for individual testlets, candidates must demonstrate a minimum level of performance on each testlet. This ensures that candidates have shown evidence of a reasonable attempt or demonstration of “some knowledge” in each subarea.

A candidate’s score on an Illinois Licensure Testing System (ILTS) assessment is the sum of their scaled scores on each of the testlets. If a candidate does not pass, they have the option to retake one or more testlets. Their previous performance on these testlets can be “banked,” allowing their best attempt on any individual testlet to be used in calculating their overall scaled score.

A candidate must attempt all testlets, and meet a minimum floor on each, before they can pass to overall exam. For testlets with multiple-choice questions (MCQs), a reasonable attempt is defined as correctly answering at least 25% of the MCQs in the testlet, so the minimum floor established for each testlet will be the score that equates to correctly answering 25% of the testlet's questions. For testlets with constructed-response items (CRIs), a reasonable attempt involves achieving a scorable response (2 or greater) on each CRI in the testlet. Testlet scores will be banked and after a candidate has attempted (and met the minimum floor on each testlet), they may retake any testlet of their choosing if they still need to accumulate additional points to earn a passing score. This approach will allow candidates to focus on particular subareas where they have the greatest likelihood of improving their overall score.

Q5. What is the cost of a testlet?

The cost of a testlet is the cost of the total assessment, divided by the number of testlets.

Q6. Can candidates who already completed one of the current licensure tests retake subareas of that exam?

No. The Elementary Education test, which is scheduled to launch July 1, 2026, is the first test that will be restructured for the new testlet model. Other tests have not been redesigned with this new structure and are not designed in a way to allow for separate retakes and scoring. ISBE will keep a current list of all tests that are eligible for separate scoring and retakes in the response to question 7 below.

Q7. What tests are currently available under the testlet model and allow for test takers to take each subarea separately (and receive a score on each subarea)?

No tests are available at this time. The redesigned Elementary Education test, which will launch July 1, 2026, will be the first test that allows the option of taking each subarea (or testlet) separately. Each testlet will receive its own score.



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