



NELSON TEACHER CERTIFICATION TESTING POLICIES

Teacher certification exams are an essential component of the Nelson Teacher Education program. Our certification track teacher education programs are designed to prepare students to be successful in the field of education; and, that success includes successful completion of the TExES certification exams.

The Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) is administered by Pearson on behalf of the Texas Education Agency. There are many different TExES exams, and which tests students take is determined by the certification they are seeking. In general, students take at least two exams, the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) and the content area exam (Social Studies 7-12, English Language Arts 7-12, Core Subjects EC-6, Music EC-12, Physical Education EC-12, Theatre Arts EC-12, Science of Teaching Reading, or other approved certification areas). It is expected that students attempt these tests prior to clinical teaching.

For students seeking professional level certificates, there is generally one exam or portfolio submission (School Counselor, Principal as Instructional Leader, and ETS Performance Assessment for School Leader). The passing score on any of the TExES exams is a 240 out of a possible 300. Students register with Pearson for their exams for a cost of approximately \$120 per test. As of September 1, 2015, state law limits testing attempts to 5 times per exam. If an exam has not been passed after five times, that candidate is no longer permitted to take that exam.

Our goal as a Teacher Education department is to help students be completely prepared to pass exams on the first attempt. We provide students with preparation materials and opportunities for practice before sending students to sit for exams with the Pearson. All students must go through an approval process before registering for exams.

Approval for Exams

Before approval can be given for any TExES exam, students must demonstrate proficiency in the subject area and readiness for the exam. Students may demonstrate this by meeting one or more of the following benchmarks as required by program requirements:

- Successful completion of appropriate representative form with a score of 80% or above
- Completion of representative form with a score of 70-79% -AND- Completion of Intervention Plan as assigned by TExES coordinator. Documentation of completion of intervention plan will be required and detailed in the plan. Intervention plan may include a requirement of online tutoring or live workshops from contracted sources that may require additional payment by the student.
- Completion of designated coursework and approval from Testing Coordinator
- Successful completion of online tutoring module including study materials and practice exams

If a student fails to achieve a 70% on their initial attempt on a representative form, a study plan will be provided by the TExES Coordinator. The plan may include a requirement of online tutoring or live workshops from contracted sources that may require additional payment by the student. After students have completed study plan, with documentation, they will have opportunity to retake the representative form prior to testing approval.

Academic Testing Year and Timing of Testing

The goal of our program is for students to be finished with all certification requirements upon graduation. To that end, we strive to help students be finished with testing requirements prior to the student teaching semester.

The academic testing year for first-time test takers will begin on September 1 of each year and end on June 30. Students taking an exam with Pearson for the first time must test during the specified time frame. The time frame of July 1 – August 31 will be available for **retesting** in the event that a student does not pass an exam. If a student does not pass a TExES exam administered by Pearson, they must wait 30 days before retesting (state-mandated waiting period). Students are strongly encouraged to retest as soon as possible after the 30 day wait period. The TExES Coordinator is available for consultation and study planning in this event.

Unsuccessful Attempts

Candidates who fail a state exam must meet with the TExES Coordinator to review their performance. During this meeting, the coordinator will identify areas for improvement, discuss test-taking strategies, and, if needed, provide resources to address test anxiety. Candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the identified areas before being permitted to retake the exam. The coordinator will guide candidates in developing a plan for success on their next attempt.

Alternative Certification Candidates

Alternative certification candidates are required to take and pass state content exams by the end of their first semester and the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam by the end of their second semester. Candidates must contact the TExES Coordinator to confirm the appropriate exam content and receive guidance on effective test-preparation strategies.