



IOWA HOUSE DEMOCRATS

REVISED
BILL AND AMENDMENT SUMMARY
**Praxis II Test For Teacher
Licensure Eliminated
HF 2280/SF 2363**

Status of Bill: HF 2280, House Calendar, Similar to SF 2363, Senate Calendar
Committee: Education HF 2280 (14-9); SF 2363 (15-0)
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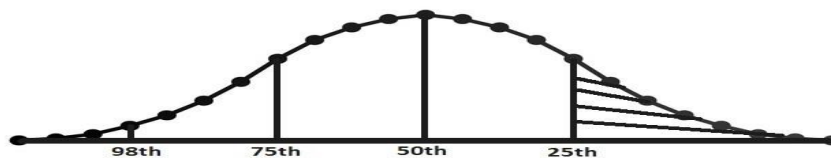
Lead Democrat: R. Smith
Floor Manager: T. Moore

Background

As part of the Ed Reform bill of 2013, Iowa teachers are required to pass an assessment which could be the Praxis II exam. That route also includes an assessment in pedagogy (or how a teacher teaches what a student has to learn). The statute also allows for alternative assessments, and Iowa authorizes two additional options: 1) The edTPA assessment in the appropriate content area taught, and 2) The ETS PPAT which includes a pedagogy test and the appropriate Praxis II content area test.

In Iowa, the teacher is required to score at least above the 25th percentile nationally on the Praxis II test. In practice now, the Department of Education (DE) takes a 3-year rolling average that is updated annually in the summer, with an effective date of August 1st. If you were to grade on a bell curve, Iowa teachers need to be in the upper 75% of the test scores on the test. The teachers at the bottom 25% of the scores on the bell curve, based on the rolling three year average do not qualify for teacher licensure in Iowa. Since implementation, all of Iowa's teacher prep programs have adjusted their classes to prepare students to take the test. The cost of the test is paid for by the test taker, and they can take it as many times as necessary to pass it.

See this bell curve example of where people have to be at in order to qualify in Iowa:



Of the shortage areas that are tested, over the last five years, 391 people completed the Praxis II with the 25th percentile nationally requirement. Only 32 people in five years did not. Candidates who add multiple endorsements are only required to be assessed in the initial or primary license endorsement. A candidate must meet the passing score requirement in place at the time he or she completes the program. An exception is made to protect candidates who student teach in the fall. Such students are allowed to use their score if they pass it prior to their fall teaching experience with the pre-August 1 score until the end of the calendar year. Iowa also allows two other optional tests in an area of endorsement besides the Praxis II series.

Bill Summary, HF 2280

HF 2280 eliminates the Praxis II test requirement in its entirety, along with any other alternative assessment option. Under the bill there would not be **any** assessment requirement to pass to be a licensed teacher in Iowa. The reason given for this is due to the teacher shortage, and a local school district could come up with

their own requirements. However, it is unlikely that an Iowa local school district would require such a requirement on their own. There are 40 states that currently use the Praxis II as part of licensure requirements, so it can make it easier to transfer your licensure from state to state after you pass it.

Amendment Summary

H-8085 by R. Smith: DE Determines Minimum Passing Score (Same as SF 2363 on Senate Calendar)

The amendment strikes the bill and replaces it with a provision that would require a minimum passing cut score on the Praxis II test. It requires the DE to use the recommended score determined by the test provider through a validated standard setting process.

According to DE, the validity measures ensure an evidence-based standard setting method is used to develop a defensible cut score that can be supported by research on the method used, and DE would be able to defend against a complaint that a test or score is not valid. The Department authorizes tests from ETS and Pearson, and both companies have provided their validity documentation.

The amendment also keeps the availability of the alternative assessments. If adopted, it would make the bill identical to SF 2363 which is currently on the Senate Calendar and available for substitution depending on which body passes their version of the legislation first.

H-8169 by T. Moore: Effective Upon Enactment, and Retroactive Applicability

The amendment would make the elimination of the Praxis II requirements immediately. The bill would apply retroactively to July 1, 2012 for individuals who completed the course requirements for an approved practitioner preparation program but attained a score below the upper 75%. Such a person would be deemed to have successfully completed a teacher prep. program, and able to submit an application for an initial license with the Board of Education Examiners (BOEE). The BOEE could issue an initial license for a period of time at their discretion.