

**ADVISORY BOARD ON TEACHER EDUCATION
AND LICENSURE (ABTEL) MEETING**

MINUTES

Meeting Date and Location:

April 25, 2016
Four Points by Sheraton Richmond Airport
4700 South Laburnum Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23231

ABTEL Members Present:

Mr. Allen Lee Bierlair	Mrs. Nancy Moga	Mrs. Ruth Wallace
Mrs. Bonnie Bowen	Mr. Jeff Pennington	Ms. Jane Watkins
Dr. Rebecca Gates	Dr. Diane Simon	Ms. Charletta Williams
Dr. Holly Gould	Mrs. Cheryl Sprouse	Mr. Vern Williams
Ms. Amy Hartswick	Dr. Patricia Stohr-Hunt	Dr. Sherry Wilson
Mr. Brian McGovern	Ms. Kate Sydney	

ABTEL Members Absent:

Kathy Burcher
Dr. Brian Matney
Ms. Tracey Mercier
Dr. Phillip Wishon

Board of Education Liaison:

Elizabeth Lodal (absent)

Ex-Officio Members:

Dr. Monica Osei
State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Dr. Daniel Lewis
Virginia Community College System

Patty S. Pitts
Virginia Department of Education

Department of Education Staff:

Dr. Kendra Crump
Dr. Joan B. Johnson

Guests:

Sandra Barnstead, Virginia Education Association
Rebecca Bower-Lanier, Virginia Counselors Association
Lisa Hedrick, Educational Testing Service
Judy T. Radford, Virginia Department of Education
Paul Joseph, Educational Consulting Services
Natalie Ann DiFusco-Funk, 2016 Virginia Teacher of
the Year

FULL ADVISORY BOARD CONVENES

9:00 a.m.

- **Opening Remarks and Welcome**

Mrs. Nancy Moga, vice chair of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL), called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and welcomed members and guests.

- **Introductions**

The ABTEL members, the Board of Education liaison, ex-officio members, and Virginia Department of Education staff members introduced themselves.

- **Introduction of Guests**

Guests attending the meeting introduced themselves.

- **Approval of Agenda**

Cheryl Sprouse made a motion to approve the agenda. Bonne Bowen seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **Approval of Minutes**

Vern Williams made a motion to approve the March 21, 2016, Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure minutes with technical edits. Jane Watkins seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously

- **Public Comment**

No individuals requested to speak during the public comment period.

- **Recognition of ABTEL members**

The following Advisory Board members were recognized for their outstanding service by Mrs. Nancy Moga and the Advisory Board membership. This meeting will be the last for outgoing members.

Allen Bierlair
Dr. Rebecca Gates
Jeff Pennington
Ruth Wallace
Vern Williams

On behalf of the Department of Education, Mrs. Patty S. Pitts, assistant superintendent for teacher education and licensure, Virginia Department of Education, thanked all members for their service and contributions to the Advisory Board.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentation from the Educational Testing Service

Ms. Lisa D. Hedrick, Client Relations Director, Teacher Licensure and Certification-Praxis, Educational Testing Service (ETS), made a presentation on the Educational Testing Service Standard-Setting Process for Praxis assessments.

Presentation from the 2016 Virginia Teacher of the Year

Mrs. Natalie Anne DiFusco-Funk, the 2016 Virginia Teacher of the Year and a fifth-grade teacher at West Salem Elementary School in Salem City Schools (Region 6), made a presentation to the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL). Mrs. DiFusco-Funk shared reflections of her journey as an educator and ambassador since she was selected the 2016 Virginia Teacher of the Year.

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Patty Pitts presented an overview of the status of the *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* and the *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia*. The Advisory Board's recommendations to revise these regulations will be presented to the Board of Education on April 28, 2016. The regulations will be presented to the Board for final review in the final stage on May 26, 2016. If approved by the Board, the regulations will continue through the processes of the Administrative Process Act, including the Executive Branch Review Process (includes reviews by the Office of the Attorney General, Department of Planning and Budget, Cabinet Secretary's Offices, and the Governor's Office), submission of the final text, and publication in the *Virginia Register*.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Multistate Standard-Setting Technical Report for the Praxis Braille Proficiency**

Dr. Kendra Crump, director of licensure and school leadership, provided the background for the Praxis Braille Proficiency assessment requirement in Virginia, and Lisa Hedrick, client relations director for teacher licensure and certification (Praxis), Educational Testing Service, made a presentation on the new Praxis Braille Proficiency (0633) test standard-setting study.

Some years ago, in consultation with the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired, the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) began discussions regarding Braille instruction, certification, and licensure. On April 20, 2009, the Advisory Board approved a committee to research the policy issues and make recommendations to the full Advisory Board. ABTEL's committee on Braille convened July 8 and August 5, 2009. At the meeting on

August 5, 2009, Dr. Edward C. Bell, director of the Professional Development and Research Institute on Blindness, Louisiana Technology University, and Mr. Michael Kasey, National Federation of the Blind, met with the committee.

On September 20-21, 2009, the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure unanimously recommended to the Board of Education that a reliable, valid, and legally defensible assessment available statewide demonstrating Braille proficiency prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education be required for individuals seeking an initial license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12. The Board of Education approved the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure's recommendation on Braille certification in response to the 2009 Virginia General Assembly House Bill 2224 on November 17, 2009.

At the request of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure, a committee was convened on March 29, 2010, to recommend a Braille assessment to be considered as a requirement for individuals seeking an initial license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12.

On April 19, 2010, the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure voted unanimously to recommend that the Virginia Board of Education approve the Praxis Braille Proficiency test administered by the Educational Testing Service as the required assessment for individuals seeking an initial Virginia license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12. The committee's rationale included the following: (1) the Praxis Braille Proficiency Test developed by the Educational Testing Service is a reliable, valid, and legally defensible assessment; (2) the test appears to cover the appropriate knowledge and skills for Braille; (3) the test would be available after a state-specific standard setting study; and (4) the test is accessible across the state.

On July 22, 2010, the Board of Education approved ABTEL's recommendation that the Praxis Braille Proficiency (0631) Test administered by the Educational Testing Service be the required assessment for individuals seeking an initial Virginia license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12. The Board also authorized Department of Education staff to begin the standard-setting process for the test.

The Board of Education prescribes the Praxis (specialty area) tests as a professional teacher's assessment requirement for initial licensure in Virginia. The Praxis II Braille specialty area test currently required for individuals seeking an initial license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12 is the Praxis Braille Proficiency (0631) test.

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has developed the revised Praxis Braille Proficiency (0633) test. The test revision process was prompted as a result of changes that have occurred by the Braille Authority of North America (BANA). In 2012, the United States members of the BANA voted to adopt Unified English Braille (UEB) to replace English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and add it as an official code along with the Nemeth code, Music Braille, and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). UEB was officially implemented in the U.S. on January 4, 2016. Recently, the BANA Board members representing United States organizations

approved the following statement regarding Braille math and technical materials as it relates to the adoption of UEB in the United States:

“The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) recognizes and appreciates the genuine concerns from the Braille community regarding the transition to Unified English Braille (UEB). BANA stands by our original motion to adopt UEB as a complete code as well as the implementation statement issued in 2014 in which we expressed that the Nemeth Code remains integral to Braille in the United States. The Board of BANA could not reach consensus regarding the establishment of a single standard code for technical materials for Braille in the United States. The decision to use UEB or the Nemeth Code within UEB context for technical materials should be made based on Braille readers' individual needs.”

Currently, individual states are determining whether to implement UEB as a single/complete code for all literary and technical (math, computer, science, technology) materials, or to implement UEB for literary content only with Nemeth Code embedded within UEB for technical materials. The transition to UEB for literary content appears to be occurring consistently across the U.S.; however, concerns and challenges exist for the utilization of multiple Braille codes among states for technical materials.

The full transition to UEB in the U.S. will occur over several years. Likewise, teachers will be required to facilitate students' transition to UEB for several years. The Virginia Department of Education is collaborating with the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired, George Mason University, the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind and stakeholders during the development of an implementation plan for Virginia.

To address the need for teachers of the visually impaired to be prepared for the changes to the Braille code, the Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Vision Impairment (VI Consortium) through George Mason University, in consultation with the Virginia Department of Education, began teaching EBAE with paralleled instruction in UEB to graduate students in the fall of 2014. Participating institutions of higher education in the consortium are George Mason University, James Madison University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, and Radford University. The current GMU faculty Braille instructor participated in the review of the regenerated Braille Praxis exam. The GMU Braille courses now include instruction in UEB (literary and technical) and Nemeth Code. Training in UEB is also offered for teachers of the visually impaired working in Virginia schools through Department of Education-sponsored Braille and literacy workshops, and online courses.

To support the decision-making process for education agencies establishing a passing score (cut score) for the Praxis Braille Proficiency (0633) test, research staff from ETS designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study in January 2016 in Princeton, New Jersey. Education agencies recommended panelists with (a) experience as either teachers of visually impaired students or college faculty who prepare those teachers and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning teachers of visually impaired students. The technical report contains three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the test. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods. The third section presents

the results of the standard-setting study. The *Praxis Braille Proficiency Test at a Glance* document describes the purpose and structure of the assessment. Prospective teachers seeking an initial Virginia license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12 will be required to pay the registration and test fees.

The four-hour assessment measures a candidate's understanding of Unified English Braille (UEB) and Nemeth code. It contains 40 selected-response items covering Reading (approximately 40 items), and 4 constructed-response items covering Production (approximately 4 items). The reporting scale for the Praxis Braille Proficiency test ranges from 100 to 200 scale-score points.

The panel's passing score recommendation for the Praxis Braille Proficiency test is 50.08 (out of a possible 73 raw-score points). The value was rounded to the next highest whole number, 51, to determine the functional recommended passing score. The scale score associated with 51 raw points is 169.

The multistate standard-setting study provides the estimated conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM). The CSEM is a statistical phenomenon and is unrelated to the accuracy of scoring. All test results are subject to the standard error of measurement. If a test taker were to take the same test repeatedly, with no change in his level of knowledge and preparation, it is possible that some of the resulting scores would be slightly higher or slightly lower than the scores that precisely reflect the test taker's actual level of knowledge or ability. The difference between a test taker's actual score and his highest or lowest hypothetical score is known as the standard error of measurement.

The table below presents the estimated conditional standard error of measurement (CSEM) around the recommended passing score. A standard error represents the uncertainty associated with a test score. The scale scores associated with one and two CSEM above and below the recommended passing score are provided. The conditional standard error of measurement provided is an estimate.

Conditional Standard Error of Measurement Summaries
Braille Proficiency (0633)

Passing Scores within 1 and 2 CSEM of the Recommended Passing Score

<i>Recommended passing score (CSEM)</i>	<i>Scale score equivalent</i>
<i>51 (3.70)</i>	<i>169</i>
<i>-2 CSEM</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>-1 CSEM</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>+1 CSEM</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>+2 CSEM</i>	<i>59</i>

The Advisory Board members discussed the change in the Braille code, as well as the standard-setting study. The discussion included the following information that helped frame a recommendation to the Board of Education:

- The Praxis Braille Proficiency Test is a new assessment, and performance data from test takers are not available.
- UEB is a new literary and technical code.
- The faculty member at George Mason University who teaches the Braille said that resources are not widely available for UEB since it is a new code.
- Candidates must learn the UEB literary and technical code, as well as the Nemeth Code.
- The test is a high-stakes test for both students and programs.

Cheryl Sprouse made a motion that the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure recommend that the Board of Education approve the use of the Praxis Braille Proficiency (0633) test as the required Braille assessment for individuals seeking an initial Virginia license with an endorsement in Special Education Visual Impairments PreK-12 and set a passing score of 157 for the test (2 CSEM below the recommended passing score). Jane Watkins seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a unanimous vote.

Holly Gould made a motion that the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure recommend that the Board of Education implement the requirement effective on July 1, 2016, allowing for the acceptance of passing scores for the test if taken prior to July 1, 2016, and accepting the current Praxis Braille Proficiency (0631) test for individuals who passed the assessment during the effective period of the test. Bonnie Bowen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- **Multistate Standard-Setting Technical Report for the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages**

Dr. Kendra Crump provided the background for the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages and Lisa Hedrick made a presentation on the standard-setting study for the Praxis II English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test developed by the Educational Testing Service.

The Board prescribes the Praxis (specialty area) tests as a professional teacher's assessment requirement for initial licensure in Virginia. A Praxis II specialty area test has not been prescribed for individuals seeking an initial license with an endorsement in English as a Second Language preK-12.

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has developed a Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test. The English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) test is designed to measure basic linguistic and pedagogical knowledge within the context of teaching ESOL in elementary or secondary schools.

Upon Board approval, individuals would be required to meet the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test requirement for initial licensure, and individuals holding a teaching

license also may be eligible to add the English as a Second Language preK-12 by passing the assessment. The *Licensure Regulations for School Personnel* allow any individual who holds a Virginia teaching license to add an endorsement to the license by passing a rigorous academic subject test prescribed by the Board of Education. [This testing option does not apply to individuals who are seeking an early/primary preK-3 or elementary education preK-6 endorsement or who hold a technical professional license, vocational evaluator license, pupil personnel services license, school manager license, or division superintendent license.]

Costs associated with the administration of Praxis tests will be incurred by the ETS. Prospective teachers are required to pay test fees.

A multistate standard-setting study was conducted by ETS in December 2015, for the English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test. Participants from 24 states, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands served on the multistate study panel. Virginia was represented by two educators who were nominated by Virginia school divisions. The *Multistate Standard-Setting Technical Report – English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362)* includes participants, methodology, and recommendations. The purposes of the study were to: (a) recommend the minimum passing score for the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test and (b) confirm the importance of the Praxis content specifications for entry-level English as a Second Language preK-12 teachers.

The Praxis *Test at a Glance* document describes the purpose and structure of the assessment. ETS has aligned the questions on this test with the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)/ National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, Inc. (NCATE) Standards for the Recognition of Initial TESOL Programs P-12 ESL Teacher Education as developed by TESOL, in collaboration with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, Inc. (CAEP), formerly known as the NCATE. ETS works in collaboration with teacher educators, higher education content specialists, and accomplished practicing teachers to keep the test updated and representative of current standards.

The Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test contains 120 selected-response items covering six content areas: Foundations of Linguistics (approximately 22 items); Foundations of Language Learning (approximately 26 items); Planning and Implementing Instruction (approximately 28 items); Assessment and Evaluation (approximately 18 items); Culture (approximately 13 items); and Professionalism and Advocacy (approximately 13 items). The reporting scale for the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test ranges from 100 to 200 scaled-score points. Appendix B: *Test at a Glance* provides representative descriptions of topics covered in each category.

Multistate Standard-Setting Study

The multistate standard-setting study was presented to ABTEL. The multistate panel recommended a passing score of 69 out of a possible 110 raw-score points. The scaled score associated with a raw score of 69 is 155 on a 100 to 200 scale.

The multistate standard-setting study provides the estimated Conditional Standard Error of Measurement (CSEM). The CSEM is a statistical phenomenon and is unrelated to the accuracy of scoring. All test results are subject to the standard error of measurement. If a test taker were to take the same test repeatedly, with no change in the test takers level of knowledge and preparation, it is possible that some of the resulting scores would be slightly higher or slightly lower than the scores that precisely reflect the test taker's actual level of knowledge or ability. The difference between a test taker's actual score and their highest or lowest hypothetical score is known as the standard error of measurement.

The CSEM for the recommended passing scores for multistate standard-setting study are shown below. Note that consistent with the recommended passing score, the passing scores at the different CSEM have been rounded to the next highest number, and the rounded values are converted to scaled scores.

Conditional Standard Error of Measurement Summaries
English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362)

Passing Scores Within 1 and 2 CSEM of the Recommended Passing Score – Multistate Panel

<i>Recommended passing score (CSEM)</i>		<i>Scale score equivalent</i>
	69 (5.09)	155
-2 CSEM	59	143
-1 CSEM	64	149
+1 CSEM	75	163
+2 CSEM	80	169

The Advisory Board members discussed the English to Speakers of Other Languages test and standard-setting study. The discussion included the following information that helped frame a recommendation to the Board of Education:

- The Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages Test is a new assessment, and performance data from test takers are not available.
- Virginia has not required a Praxis II assessment for the English as a Second Language assessment.
- The test is a high-stakes test for both students and programs.

Bonnie Bowen made a motion that the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure recommend that the Virginia Board of Education approve the use of the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test as a professional teacher's assessment for the English as a Second Language PreK-12 endorsement and set a passing score of 149 for the test. Ruth Wallace seconded the motion. The motion was approved with a unanimous vote.

Bonnie Bowen made a motion that the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure recommend that the Board of Education implement the Praxis English to Speakers of Other Languages (5362) test as of July 1, 2016, with the exception of individuals applying for licensure through Virginia approved programs who would become subject to the requirement effective September 1, 2017. Jeff Pennington seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

LIAISON REPORTS

Virginia Community College System (VCCS)

Dr. Daniel Lewis presented the report from the Virginia Community College System:

The fall application window has opened for the career switcher program, and VCCS is preparing for the next semester, which will begin in early August. In an effort to build the number of students who earn the ESL endorsement, VCCS is planning for a second site in the Richmond area, in addition to the Manassas site. Considering the growing need for teachers of English Language Learners, VCCS is hoping to grow its ESOL program completion numbers to help meet those workforce needs.

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

Patty Pitts expressed her appreciation and gratitude for Advisory Board members support and service to the Commonwealth of Virginia throughout this past year.

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)

No report was provided.

2016-2017 ABTEL MEETING DATES

Advisory Board members agreed that Department staff could send the dates for the 2016-2017 year to members. The first meeting will be held the third Monday in September 2016.

ADJOURNMENT

The Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure meeting adjourned.