



SOUTH

Teacher Certification Exams & Recent Legislative Reforms in the South

Oklahoma House Common Education Committee

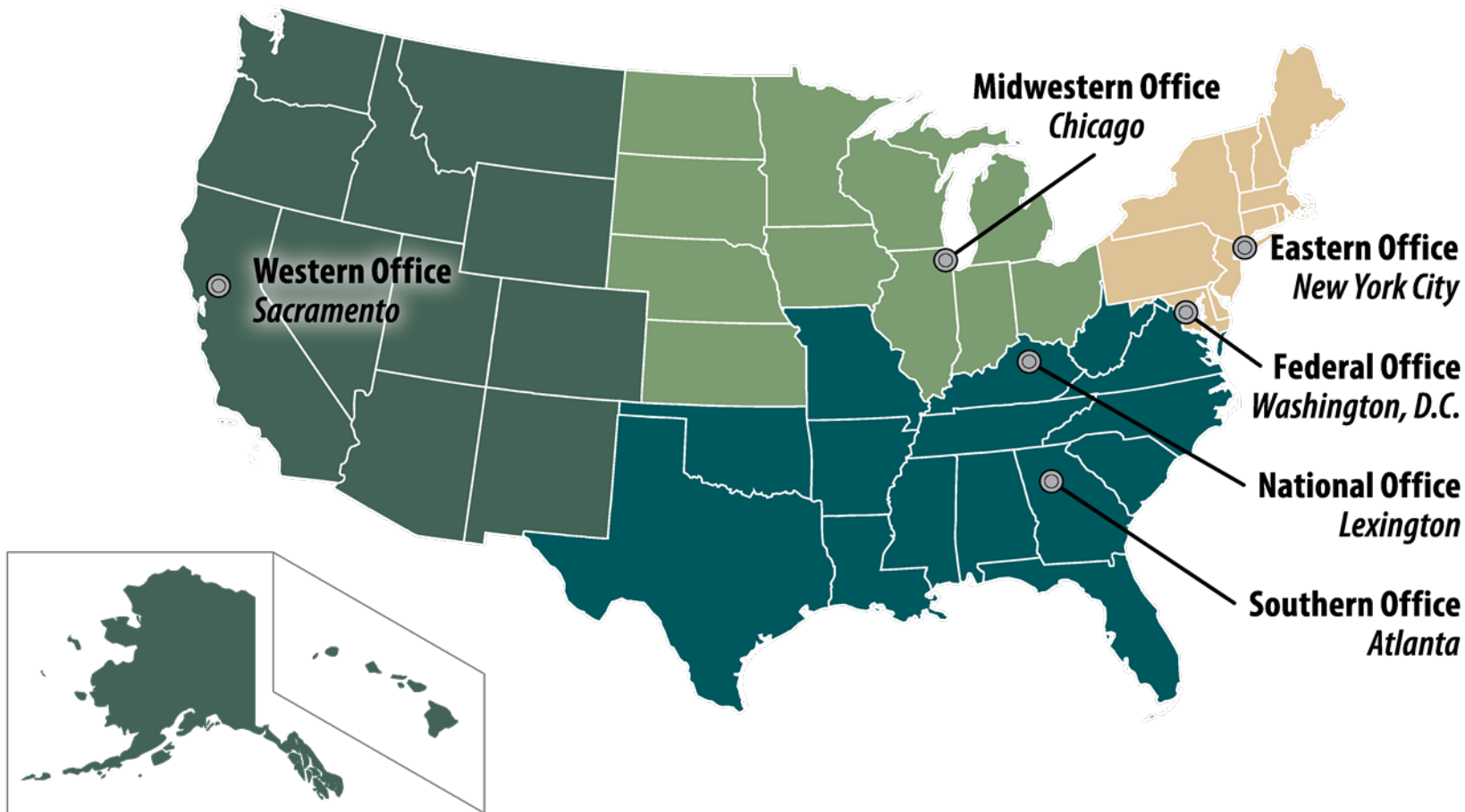
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Southern Legislative Conference, the Southern Office of The Council of State
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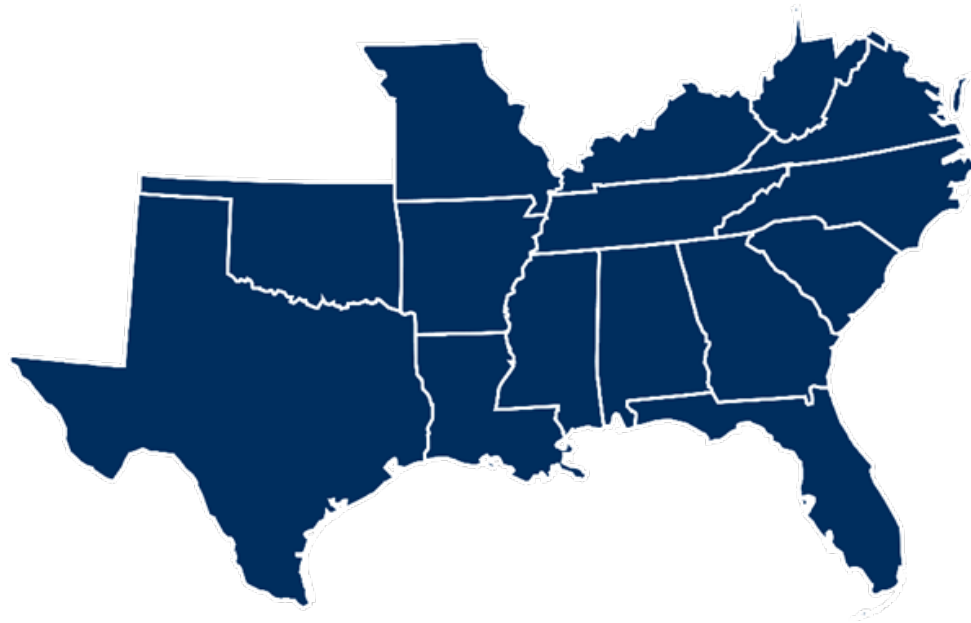
The Council of State Governments (CSG)



Southern Legislative Conference
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Who are we?

- ❑ **CSG South**, or the **Southern Legislative Conference** or **SLC**, based out of Atlanta, **Georgia**
- ❑ As a *nonpartisan, non-profit organization*, our mission is to promote and strengthen intergovernmental cooperation among our **15 member states**



SLC / CSG South Organization

Six standing committees:

- Agriculture & Rural Development
- Economic Development, Transportation & Cultural Affairs
- Education
- Energy & Environment
- Fiscal Affairs & Government Operations
- Human Services & Public Safety

As well as a staff directors' section:

- Legislative Service Agency Directors Group



Oklahomans Leading the SLC



2021-2022 SLC Chair

Senate President Pro Tempore

Greg Treat

2021-2022 SLC Agriculture & Rural Development Committee Chair

Senator Casey Murdock



2021-2022 SLC Education

Committee Vice Chair

Representative Rhonda Baker



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SLC Annual Meeting



The 76th SLC Annual Meeting will take place in Oklahoma City from July 9-13, 2022.



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The State of the South

- ❑ The **South** experienced critical shortages in mathematics, science, and special education disciplines for the 2019-2020 school year, per the **U.S. Department of Education**
- ❑ The coming *Silver Tsunami* of public sector retirements is expected to heavily impact the **South**
 - ❑ During the 2017-2018 school year, **16 percent** of public-school teachers in the **South** were 55 and older, about the same as the **U.S. Average**
 - ❑ However, **Oklahoma** has the highest percentage in the region at **21.5 percent** – significantly higher than the regional and national averages



The State of the South (cont.)

- ❑ **124,000-plus** projected elementary teacher openings over the next decade nationally
- ❑ Approximately **60 percent** of new teachers hired are replacing a colleague who left the profession not due to retirement
- ❑ Replacing early departing educators *can* be a financial burden:
 - ❑ Urban District Avg. Cost-of-Replacement: **\$20k**
 - ❑ Suburban District Avg. Cost-of-Replacement: **\$11k**
 - ❑ Rural District Avg. Cost-of-Replacement: **\$9k**
- ❑ Teachers leaving the profession within first two years can lead to net loss for LEAs



Teacher Supply-and-Demand

- ❑ Impact of the *COVID-19* Pandemic on the **South**
- ❑ Many factors can contribute to teacher retainment, however ensuring there is an adequate, quality *supply* of new educators is a key issue impacting the entire region
- ❑ Licensure Testing can be both a *barrier* to entry and a means of *quality-assurance*
- ❑ Important to strike the right balance between **quantity and quality**



Teacher Licensure Exams in the South

- ❑ Overall, approximately **80 percent** of educators enter via the *traditional* pathway
- ❑ **43 states** require elementary teacher candidates to pass a content knowledge examination
 - ❑ **Arizona, California, Hawaii, New Jersey, Oregon, and Wisconsin** offer alternatives to passing a licensure test
- ❑ **8 of 15 CSG South** member states require passing *Praxis CASE* test in some capacity for initial licensure
 - ❑ Some accept **ACT** or **SAT** scores as alternatives
 - ❑ Additional, *subject area exams* typically required
 - ❑ *Praxis* series of assessments used or accepted by more than **40 states** in some capacity



Teacher Licensure Exams (cont.)

- ❑ **5 CSG South** states use state-specific assessment series instead of the standardized *Praxis CASE* or other tests
 - ❑ **Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Texas, Virginia, and Oklahoma**

- ❑ Only **2** other states in the region require or include the PPAT in their examination battery like **Oklahoma – South Carolina and North Carolina**
 - ❑ **ETS National** Passing Score Recommendation is **40**
 - ❑ **Oklahoma** Passing Score Cut-Off is **40***
 - ❑ **North Carolina** Passing Score Cut-Off is **38**
 - ❑ **South Carolina** Passing Score Cut-Off is **36**

**Increase took effect as of September 1, 2020*



Teacher Licensure Exams (cont.)

- ❑ **North Carolina** is an outlier among the states in the **South**
- ❑ Prospective educators must pass the *Praxis CASE* test, or meet certain *ACT/SAT* scores or degrees requirements *prior to* program-admission, therefore not required again for initial licensure
- ❑ *Only* the *Pearson* or *Praxis* math subtest is required for initial license
- ❑ Teachers have more time to pass the typically required licensure examinations – from the *Pearson* or *Praxis* series covering specific content areas as well as reading
 - ❑ Must ***attempt*** within first year of teaching
 - ❑ Must ***pass*** within three years of teaching



ABCTE Certification & Exams

- ❑ Along with **Oklahoma**, **7 CSG South** states accept ABCTE program and assessments for alternative credentialing
- ❑ **Mississippi** and **Oklahoma** have more limited portfolios of accepted ABCTE certifications compared to others in the region
 - ❑ Pre-COVID, **Mississippi** also required participants pass a *SAT/ACT/Praxis CASE* and *Praxis II Subject* tests prior to enrollment – the *only* regional state to do so
- ❑ **Missouri**, **Florida**, **West Virginia** are only states in region to accept *elementary education* certification via ABCTE
- ❑ **Tennessee** *only* accepts ABCTE pathways in three counties as part of a *pilot program* to address teacher shortages

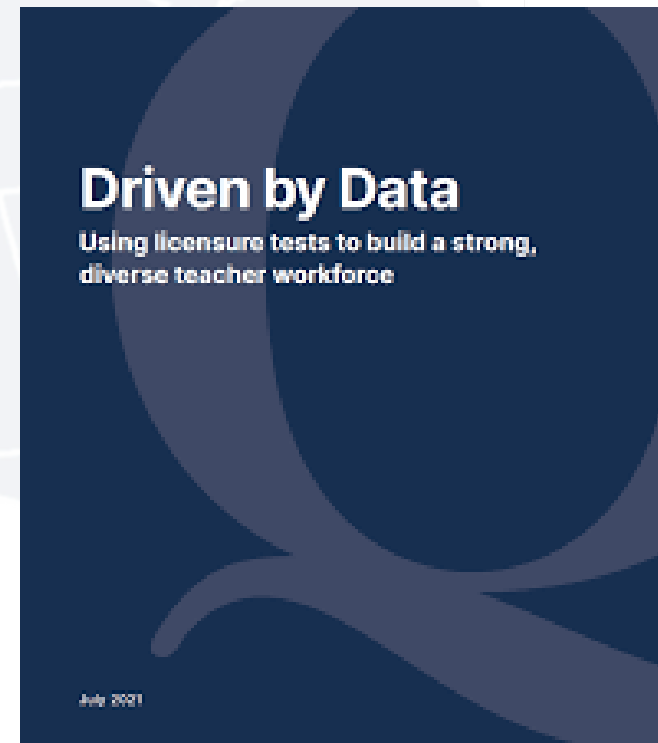


Exam Passage Rates in the South

- ❑ **Title II of the Federal High Education Act** requires states report pass rates
 - ❑ However, this typically is *extremely limited* data – single assessment *and* summary pass rates

July 2021

- ❑ **National Council on Teaching Quality (NCTQ)** published comparative data regarding teaching assessment passage rates not previously available, such as:
 - ❑ **First-attempt passage rates, walk-away rates, and institutional/program-level**



 National Council
on Teacher Quality

<https://www.nctq.org/publications/Driven-by-Data:-Using-Licensure-Tests-to-Build-a-Strong,-Diverse-Teacher-Workforce/>



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Exam Passage Rates in the South

State	Avg. Best-Attempt Pass Rate	Avg. First-Attempt Pass Rate	Avg. Walk-Away Rate	Avg. POC Walk-Away Rate
Alabama	85%	53%	23%	34%
Arkansas	80%	39%	25%	25%
Florida	67%	34%	16%	21%
Georgia	-	-	-	-
Kentucky	86%	46%	17%	28%
Louisiana	80%	45%	21%	27%
Mississippi	-	-	-	-
Missouri	94%	70%	-	-
North Carolina	-	-	-	-
Oklahoma	(81%)	-	-	-
South Carolina	82%	52%	30%	35%
Tennessee	91%	80%	24%	36%
Texas	87%	71%	-	-
Virginia	87%	57%	22%	34%
West Virginia	82%	39%	16%	22%
CSG South Avg.	84%	53%	22%	29%



Lessons from the NCTQ Data

- ❑ Nearly a quarter (22 percent) of all test-takers who *fail their first-attempt walk away* and do not attempt the assessment again – among POC educators the national average is **30 percent**
- ❑ **84 percent** is the average passage rate for the **South** among all test-takers, with a little more than half (**53 percent**) passing on their first-attempt
- ❑ **22 percent** of test-takers in the **South** walk away after *failing a first-attempt*, equal to the national average – for POC teacher-candidates the number is **29 percent**
- ❑ **National** average is a **55 percent** first-attempt passage rate
- ❑ *Comparably, ABCTE reports around a 40 percent first-time passage rate amongst all certification disciplines*

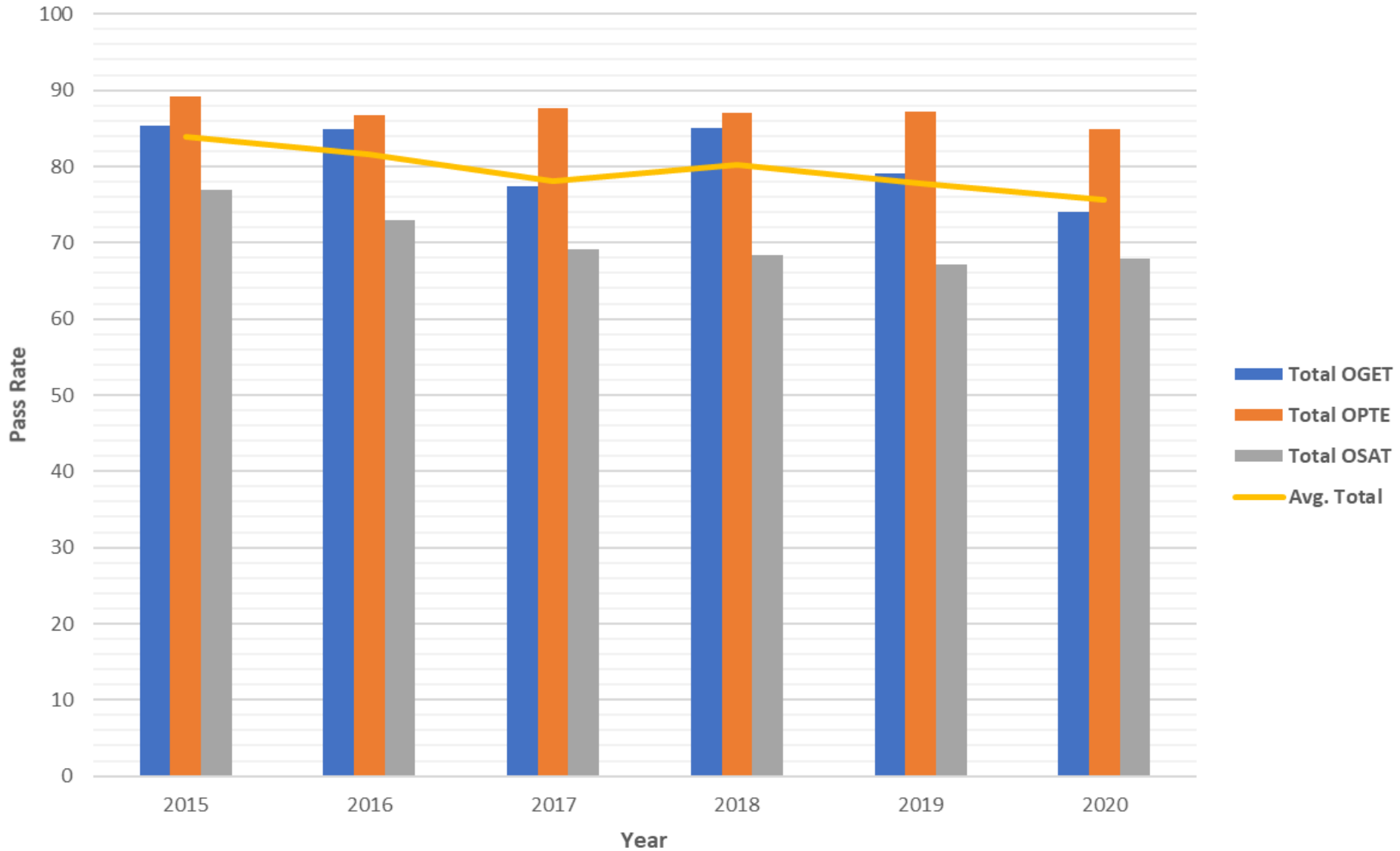


Omissions from the NCTQ Data - Oklahoma

- ❑ Oklahoma did not provide enough data for NCTQ to include in study
- ❑ **Office of Educational Quality and Accountability** data can provide a somewhat comparable aggregate:
 - ❑ Oklahoma's aggregate best-attempt passage rate was **81 percent** for the period comprising the **NCTQ** study
 - ❑ Higher than **three** other **CSG South** member states, but below regional average
 - ❑ However, 2019 and 2020 saw aggregate passage rates drop to **78 percent** and **76 percent**, respectively



Oklahoma Aggregate Exam Passage Rates



NCTQ Recommendations for States

- 1) Use a valid and reliable elementary education licensure test that separately measures knowledge of language arts, math, science, and social studies;***
- 2) Set the minimum score needed to pass the exam at the score that has been recommended through the standard setting process;***
- 3) Improve access to and increase use of assessment data;***
- 4) Make sure that the state's specific needs are reflected in agreements made with licensure exam providers.***

<https://www.nctq.org/publications/Driven-by-Data:-Using-Licensure-Tests-to-Build-a-Strong,-Diverse-Teacher-Workforce#pathForward>



Recent Legislation: Arkansas

Senate Bill 62 (2021)

- ❑ Requires all elementary (K-6) and special education (K-12) classroom teachers pass the state *Foundations of Reading* test
- ❑ Educators unable to pass the exam by 2023-2024 school year may have their evaluator prescribe an intensive support plan to demonstrate proficiency
- ❑ *Foundations of Reading* passage becomes a condition of licensure in 2023-2024 and current licensed/unlicensed teacher will have one year to pass the test

House Bill 1678 (2021)

- ❑ Creates express avenue for university professors and assistant professors to obtain a teaching license *sans* assessment requirements
- ❑ State Education Board currently developing rules for Legislative Council approval prior to the 2022 session



Recent Legislation: Florida

House Bill 1159 (2021)

- ❑ Approved teacher preparation programs now require that the *Florida General Knowledge Test* be passed **by the time of graduation** instead of as a prerequisite to admission
- ❑ Strikes provision *allowing programs to waive admissions testing requirements* for teacher preparation programs – previously allowable for **up to 10 percent** of admitted students
- ❑ Establishes a **competency-based alternative for certification**, instead of examination
- ❑ **Prospective educators with a master's degree, or higher**, from highly-ranked state approved institution no longer need to pass a general knowledge mastery assessment



Recent Legislation: Florida (cont.)

House Bill 7011 (2021)

- ❑ Beginning July 1, 2024, educators can no longer satisfy their reading endorsement via passing a K-12 reading certification assessment – instead, must *complete an evidence-based, competency program* developed by school districts and the state Department of Education
- ❑ Also, requires the state Department of Education to review all subject-area examinations to ensure they align with statutorily required evidence-based instructional and intervention strategies – if not, the department must develop a proposal for an alternative competency-based pathway



Recent Legislation: Georgia

Senate Bill 88 (2021)

- ❑ Established a three-year alternative pathway to licensure for *active-duty, reserve, and honorably discharged service members*, bypassing the battery of assessment requirements for initial licensure
- ❑ Only required to have a bachelor's degree, meet certain GPA requirements, and pass the *Georgia Educator Ethics Exam* for initial licensure
- ❑ During the *three-year program*, service member-educators will receive intensive and classroom-focused developmental mentoring – and be required to pass a content assessment during *by the end of their first year* on the job and a program-admission assessment *by the end of their second year*



Recent Legislation: North Carolina

Senate Bill 582 (2021)

- ❑ Allows prospective educators to become “adjunct instructors” for high-school classes related to the field of their completed bachelor’s or graduate-level degree
- ❑ Adjunct Teachers *must* complete a minimum of one semester of study in a teacher preparation program at a community college – approximately three classes – to contract with an LEA
- ❑ Limited to a max of 20 hours worked per week, or less than six-months at a time, in order to bypass the licensure and assessment requirements
- ❑ Also, requires the State Board of Education develop a proposal to allow collegiate and university faculty to serve as *“adjuncts”* in additional disciplines outside the core curriculum – such as arts and foreign language – where there are critical shortages



Recent Legislation: West Virginia

Senate Bill 14 (2021)

- ❑ Establishes a new educator pathway for professionals to transition into the teaching field, requiring:
 - ❑ A completed bachelor's degree;
 - ❑ Passing a criminal background check;
 - ❑ Completing a pedagogical training or course; and
 - ❑ Passes the *Praxis CASE*
- ❑ Due to the critical teaching shortage in the state, the bill went *immediately into effect upon signing* via an emergency clause
- ❑ As of September 8, 2021, ABCTE has been approved as the state-approved provider for endorsement areas
- ❑ Builds upon Senate Bill 623 (2020) which previously included a qualification that alternative-pathway applicants demonstrate occupational or academic qualifications related to the field they intend to teach



Recent Legislation: Texas

House Bill 2205 (2015)

- ❑ Somewhat uniquely, this measure created an examination attempt limit in **Section 21.048 of the Education Code**
- ❑ Prospective educators seeking accreditation must wait more than 45 days between test attempts and may not retake an exam more than four times
- ❑ However, *waivers may be requested for “good cause”* which can vary based on a sliding scale correlating to the number of educational activity hours a candidate had logged with the difference between their highest score and the passing score cut-off



Possible Solutions

State solutions to consider:

- Adjust emphasis to be more **competency-based** (i.e. performance assessments, etc.) versus *strictly examination-based*
- Grow-Your-Own** strategies to allow for paraprofessionals, other education staffers, and semi-qualified candidates to substitute experience for all or some of the required licensure tests
- Teacher Residencies** as a method to ensure educators receive more hands-on practical experience and can be assessed on classroom-performance (i.e. co-teaching) instead of solely/primarily via a battery of exams
- Fee Waivers** and/or **Reimbursements** for passed/attempts licensure exams, based on other qualifications
- Increased* Educator Preparation Program Data Quality and Transparency**



Questions? Contact the SLC

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Thank you!



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