

New Mexico

Teacher AssessmentsTM

Faculty Guide



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Overview of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments

The New Mexico Staff Accountability Plan of 1981 mandated assessment as part of the state's educator licensure requirements. In response to this mandate, the State of New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) selected National Evaluation Systems (NES®) to fulfill the requirements for a testing program by developing and administering the New Mexico Teacher Assessments™. The explicit purpose of these tests is to help identify candidates for licensure who have demonstrated the level of knowledge and skills that is important in performing the job of an educator in New Mexico public schools.

The New Mexico Teacher Assessments address areas covered by the Public Education Department Teacher Competencies and Indicators and other state policy documentation. The tests are criterion referenced and competency based. A criterion-referenced test is designed to measure a candidate's knowledge and skills in relation to an established standard rather than in relation to the performance of other candidates.

Understanding Test Design and Content

Each New Mexico Teacher Assessment assesses a candidate's knowledge and skills as required by the guidelines for New Mexico educator licensure. The test framework for each assessment describes:

- ▶ the content areas covered on each test; and the
- ▶ the approximate percentage of test questions ("test proportion") by subarea.

See the "[New Mexico Teacher Assessments Preparation Materials](#)" section for more information about how to read the framework.

How the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Are Aligned with the Public Education Department's Curriculum Standards

The development process for the New Mexico Teacher Assessments was designed to meet the specific needs of the state of New Mexico. The New Mexico Teacher Assessments are responsive to and consistent with New Mexico regulations, New Mexico public school curriculum frameworks and standards, and New Mexico educator preparation programs. New Mexico regulations, guidelines, textbooks, and other instructional materials served as the foundation for test content to ensure alignment between the regulations, standards, and programs and the New Mexico Teacher Assessments.

For each test field, education and policy materials used in New Mexico were consulted in developing the test framework to ensure that the framework reflects the appropriate content. Test questions were then developed to correspond to the approved content for each assessment to further ensure that the New Mexico Teacher Assessments are aligned with New Mexico education standards.

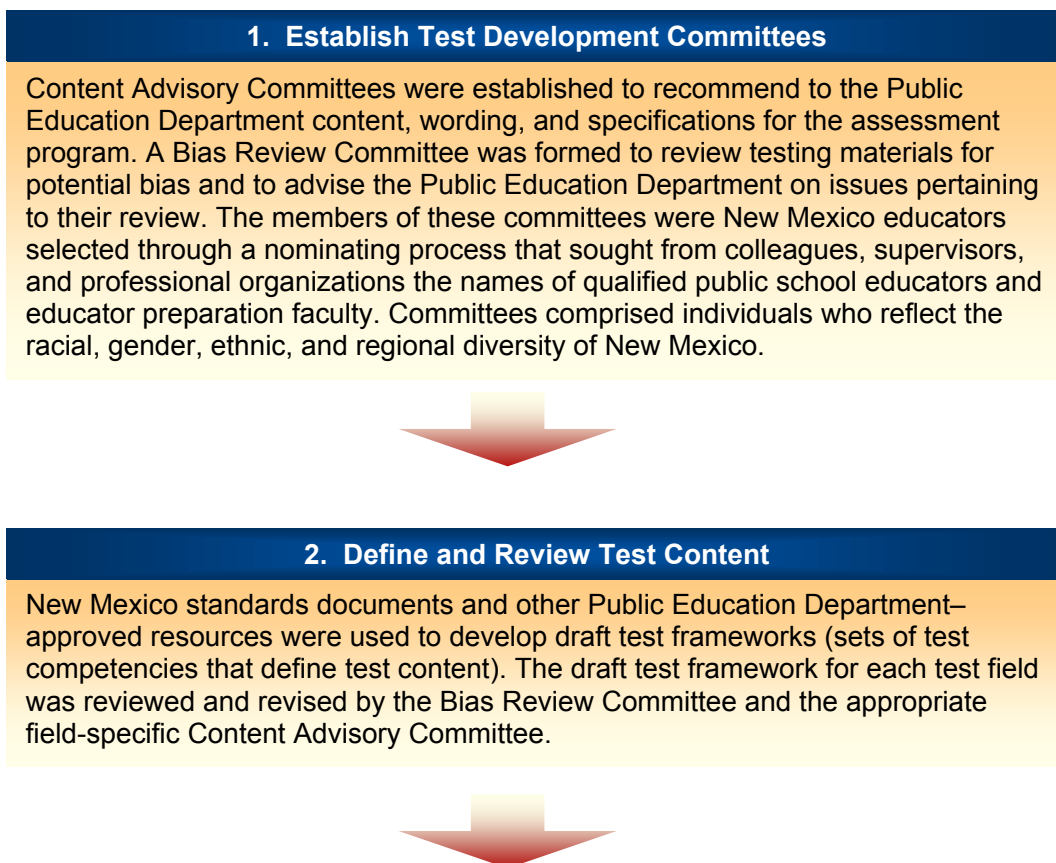
Broadly inclusive groups of New Mexico public school educators and educator preparation faculty were extensively involved in the development and validation of the New Mexico Teacher Assessments in the following ways:

- ▶ For each test field, a Content Advisory Committee—made up of public school educators and educator preparation personnel from throughout the state with experience and expertise in the field—was convened to participate in the critical test development activities described in the next section.
- ▶ The New Mexico Teacher Assessments Bias Review Committee—composed of New Mexico educators who provide representation of gender and ethnic groups and individuals with disabilities—played a critical role in the development process by reviewing test materials to help ensure fairness and sensitivity.

Thousands of New Mexico educators completed content validation surveys to help validate test content and served on Passing Score Review Panels.

How the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Were Developed

Key steps in the test development process are summarized in the illustration below.



3. Conduct the Content Validation Survey

The approved test frameworks were prepared for validation through content validation surveys. Thousands of New Mexico public school educators and educator preparation faculty completed surveys to rate the importance of framework competencies in each test field for performing the job of an educator in New Mexico. Results from the content validation survey were analyzed to ensure that all competencies measured by the assessments are important to the job of a New Mexico educator.



4. Develop and Review Test Questions

Test questions matching the final test framework for each test field were drafted. Each draft test question was developed to correspond to an approved element of the test framework. This correspondence established the alignment of the test questions—through the test framework—with approved New Mexico standards.



5. Review Draft Test Questions for Bias and Content

The Bias Review Committee focused its review on excluding from the test materials any language, content, or perspectives that might disadvantage an examinee because of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, disability, or cultural, economic, or geographic background. The Bias Review Committee also focused on including in the test materials content and perspectives that reflect the diversity of the New Mexico population. The Content Advisory Committees met to review and revise the draft test questions primarily from a content perspective, reviewing the questions for accuracy and freedom from bias and ensuring that the questions match competencies, align with New Mexico standards, and relate to the job of a New Mexico school educator. The committee-approved test questions were then finalized.



6. Conduct Field-Testing

Test questions were field-tested at New Mexico colleges and universities. The field-test data showed how the questions performed with potential New Mexico educator licensure candidates. Questions that did not perform acceptably on the field tests were either identified for deletion or revised for re-examination by the Bias Review Committee and the Content Advisory Committees.



7. Develop Preparation Materials

A study guide for each test field was prepared and published on the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Web site. See the "[New Mexico Teacher Assessments Preparation Materials](#)" section to view the frameworks, sample questions, and other related test-preparation materials for each New Mexico Teacher Assessment.



8. Determine Passing Scores

Following the first administration of the tests, panels of New Mexico educators participated in a structured process to make judgments regarding a passing score for each test. After the meetings, the passing score judgments were compiled and presented to the Public Education Department, which set the passing score for each test field.

Test Administration and Scoring

New Mexico Teacher Assessments are administered under standardized, consistent procedures at sites across New Mexico. Test administrations are designed to provide a professional, equitable, and secure testing environment for examinees, including those who need alternative testing arrangements. Testing sites are screened and selected based on criteria relating to test security, accessibility, and the quality of testing conditions and facilities. Test administrators receive training in the test administration procedures and follow detailed procedural manuals before and during the test administration.

The New Mexico Teacher Assessments are scored accurately and promptly. The answers to selected-response questions are scored electronically, and the process is checked to verify accuracy. For constructed-response assignments, qualified scorers are selected, trained in the scoring process, and monitored for accuracy and consistency. Scoring of constructed-response assignments typically involves two or more scorers working independently.

Test results are reported to individual examinees, their institutions of higher education, and the Public Education Department. See the "Score Reporting" page on the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Web site for a detailed description of New Mexico Teacher Assessments examinee score reports. See the "[Results Reporting for Institutions](#)" section of this guide for a detailed description of New Mexico Teacher Assessments institution reports.

For information about test administration and scoring policies and procedures for the New Mexico Teacher Assessments program, refer to the current registration bulletin available at www.nmta.nesinc.com.



Guiding Candidate Test Preparation




This section provides test-preparation guidelines for both first-time test takers and those who must retake a test. In addition, it describes the preparation materials available for the New Mexico Teacher Assessments, including study guides and test preparation worksheets provided free of charge on the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Web site by visiting www.nmta.nesinc.com and selecting "Preparation Materials."

Guiding Preparation for First-Time Test Takers

An academic advisor may suggest to a candidate that he or she take the following steps in preparing for the New Mexico Teacher Assessments:

1. Begin by completing the "Assessment Preparation Worksheet," where the candidate records his or her academic background, reason for testing, licensure requirements, and testing history, and completes a checklist of preparation steps for testing.
2. Complete the worksheet for "Mapping the Test Frameworks to Courses Taken." This activity involves having the candidate review the test framework and his or her course work to date, and record on a worksheet whether his or her studies have covered the knowledge and skills described by each test competency.
3. Meet with you to review the completed worksheets and test preparation steps taken to date, and to obtain assistance in evaluating his or her readiness to test.

When meeting with a candidate to review the completed materials listed above, an academic advisor may wish to take the following steps:





-  Review page 1 of the completed Assessment Preparation Worksheet to learn the candidate's academic background, reason for testing, licensure requirements, and testing history.
-  Review the completed worksheet for mapping the test framework to the courses the candidate has taken to determine if he or she has completed sufficient course work to take the assessment.
-  Review page 2 of the completed Assessment Preparation Worksheet to guide the candidate in gathering and using New Mexico Teacher Assessments test preparation materials and, if needed, learning or reviewing test content and test-taking strategies.


Guiding Preparation for Candidates Retaking a Test


An academic advisor may suggest to a candidate that he or she take the following steps in preparing to retake the New Mexico Teacher Assessments:

1. Review a copy of his or her latest score report for the assessment. Complete or update the "Assessment Preparation Worksheet" as well as the worksheet for "Mapping the Test Frameworks to Courses Taken."
2. Complete the worksheet for "Analyzing Test Results for Candidates Retaking a Test." This worksheet may help the candidate identify areas of weakness in his or her past performance to better focus his or her studies in preparation for retaking the test.
3. Meet with you to review the completed worksheets and test preparation steps taken to date, and to obtain assistance in developing a study plan before retaking the test.

When meeting with a candidate preparing to retake the New Mexico Teacher Assessments, an academic advisor may wish to take the following steps:

-  Review the completed Assessment Preparation Worksheet to learn the candidate's academic background, reason for testing, licensure requirements, and testing history. If the candidate has answered "no" to any of the test preparation questions on page 2 of this worksheet, the advisor may wish to suggest that the candidate follow the test preparation steps discussed in these questions.
-  Review the completed worksheet for mapping the test framework to the courses the candidate has taken to learn the course work that he or she has completed to date.
-  Review the completed worksheet for analyzing test results to understand the candidate's past performance on the assessment and identify areas of weakness.
-  Review testing performance by content area for selected-response questions and constructed-response assignments. If the candidate performed less than adequately in some content areas, the advisor may wish to direct the candidate to study particular content in those areas and can assist the candidate by
 - ▶ identifying one or more additional courses in which the candidate could enroll to learn the required material;
 - ▶ guiding the candidate in gathering the appropriate test preparation materials, such as textbooks and other references, and the New Mexico Teacher Assessments test framework and study guide for the assessment;
 - ▶ helping the candidate develop a study plan for reviewing test content, textbooks, and notes from courses already taken;
 - ▶ offering special workshops for candidates or tutoring the candidate in specific content areas.

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If the candidate did not perform well on a particular type of question, the advisor may wish to suggest that he or she review the sample questions in the study guide for the assessment. For example, if the candidate received a subarea score of less than 240 for the constructed-response assignments, the advisor might suggest that the candidate complete the sample assignments in the study guide and review the sample very good response, his or her response, and the scoring criteria for each sample assignment. In addition, the advisor might offer to review the candidate's sample response to provide direct feedback to the candidate on his or her performance.
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Assist the candidate in completing the Recommendations for Test Preparation on page 2 of the Assessment Preparation Worksheet by listing additional test preparation activities.

New Mexico Teacher Assessments Preparation Materials

Reviewing the test framework, which contains the entire set of test competencies for a test field, is an important step in preparing to take the New Mexico Teacher Assessments. Test frameworks for all fields are available and can be viewed or downloaded (at no charge) by visiting the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Web site at www.nmta.nesinc.com and selecting "Test Frameworks."

More information about the New Mexico Teacher Assessments can be obtained from the study guides. A study guide is available for each test in the New Mexico Teacher Assessments program. Study guides can be viewed or downloaded (at no charge) at the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Web site, www.nmta.nesinc.com, by selecting "Preparation Materials." The study guide for each test contains the test competencies, sample selected-response questions, sample constructed-response assignments for the fields that include these items, sample responses, and suggestions for preparing for the test.

In addition to the preparation materials describing the test design and content, the New Mexico Teacher Assessments program offers the following worksheets to assist candidates in evaluating their preparedness to test:

- ▶ **Assessment Preparation Worksheet**—Assists candidates in reviewing their licensure requirements, tracking their test preparation, and evaluating their preparedness to test
- ▶ **Mapping the Test Framework to Courses Taken**—Enables candidates to assess whether they have had instruction in the knowledge and skills tested by the New Mexico Teacher Assessments in their college course work to date
- ▶ **Analyzing Test Results for Candidates Retaking a Test**—Helps candidates analyze their test results to identify areas of weakness in their performance to better focus their studies when preparing to retake a New Mexico Teacher Assessment



Results Reporting for Institutions

Test results for each New Mexico Teacher Assessments test administration are provided to New Mexico institutions of higher education with educator preparation programs approved by the Public Education Department. Select "Institution Codes" from the "Before You Register" page on the New Mexico Teacher Assessments Web site for a list of the institutions approved to receive New Mexico Teacher Assessments individual examinee test scores.

Test results are made available to institutions on the NES Institution Score Reporting Web site—a secure, password-protected Web-based data transmission system that allows New Mexico institutions and faculty to receive score report information quickly and efficiently after the scoring for an administration is complete. The dean of education at each institution designates a contact person to receive test results. Institution contacts are notified by e-mail when reports and data files are available after each test administration.

The Institution Score Reporting Web site enables institution contacts to download reports and data files to be saved on the institution's computer system or network. The files are available in two formats:

- ▶ **PDF documents** are versions of the reports that can be viewed or printed.
- ▶ **ASCII files** are data files containing the test results. These files can be downloaded and imported into software databases or applications that are unique to each institution. The ASCII file format allows institutions to format assessment results to meet their individual needs.

Because test results are confidential and need to be protected in a secure manner, the contact person at each institution restricts access to the files—both electronic and hard-copy versions. To protect examinees' privacy, PDF reports display only the last five digits of examinees' social security numbers.

Test Results Reported

Institution contacts and the State of New Mexico Public Education Department will receive the following reports after each New Mexico Teacher Assessments test administration:

- ▶ The **Alphabetical Score Roster**, which provides an alphabetical list of examinees associated with each institution and their passing status for the tests taken at the administration
- ▶ The **Institution Roster**, which provides a summary by test of examinee scores for an institution along with a statewide summary of test results by test for the administration

Information regarding examinee institution affiliation is obtained from examinees as self-reported information during the test registration process. Examinees who request that their score not be released to their institution are not included in reports to institutions. To protect examinees' privacy, PDF reports display only the last five digits of examinees' social security numbers.

Individual examinee test scores are confidential and are for the purpose of New Mexico licensure only. They are not intended to be used for employment decisions, college admissions, or any other purpose.

Reading the Alphabetical Score Roster

For each institution, the Alphabetical Score Roster provides an alphabetical list of examinees from that institution who tested on the specified test administration date. The report lists each examinee's name, the last five digits of his or her social security number, and the test status (P = Pass, F = Not pass, N = Not taken) for each test taken on that test date. The first page of this report summarizes guidelines and cautions regarding the data on this report.

Sample Report

Following is a sample Alphabetical Score Roster. Refer to the table below for a description of the data contained in this score report.

The sample report is titled "New Mexico Teacher Assessments -- ALPHABETICAL SCORE ROSTER". It includes the following information:

- Institution and test date:** Institution: 27 New Mexico State University - ALP; Test Date: June 3, 2006.
- Examinee test results:**

Examinee Name	SSN	Test Taken	Date	Test Status
EXAMINEE 1	1-1111	01 Basic Skills	06/06	P
EXAMINEE 2	2-2222	01 Basic Skills	06/06	F
EXAMINEE 3	3-3333	01 Basic Skills	06/06	F
EXAMINEE 4	4-4444	01 Basic Skills 04 Teacher Competency - Secondary	06/06	P P
EXAMINEE 5	5-5555	01 Basic Skills	06/06	F

Area of Report	Report Field	Field Description
Institution and test date	Institution	Lists the institution name and the test administration date for which results are reported.
	Test Date	
Examinee test results	Examinee Name	Lists the names of all examinees (in alphabetical order) who tested on the date indicated. For each examinee, the report provides the social security number (last five digits only), and test status (P = Pass, F = Not pass, N = Not taken) for each test taken on the date indicated.
	SSN (last five digits)	
	Test Taken	
	Date	
	Test Status	

Reading the Institution Roster

The Institution Roster provides a summary of institution results compared to statewide results for each test as well as rosters of examinees and their individual test results, organized by test. This report is organized by test field and by subarea within each test. For each test, information is provided regarding

- ▶ the composition of the test, including the number of items in each subarea assessed;
- ▶ the number of examinees from the institution and statewide who tested, the mean scaled score, the number and percent passing and not passing, and the percentage of examinees with subarea scaled scores of 240 or greater; and
- ▶ the names and social security numbers (last five digits only) of examinees, along with their passing status, their total test scaled score, their scaled scores for each selected-response subarea, and their constructed-response scaled scores.

Reporting Elements

Test results for the New Mexico Teacher Assessments are calculated on a scale of 100 to 300, with the passing score equal to a scaled score of 240.

Sample Report

Following is a sample Institution Roster. Refer to the table below for a description of the data contained in this report.

New Mexico Teacher Assessments INSTITUTION ROSTER									
Institution: 99 New Mexico College Test Date: June 3, 2006		← Institution and test date							
Summary for Test 01: Basic Skills		← Composition of the test							
Subarea				# of Items					
1	Reading Comprehension			31-40					
2	Foundations of Written Communication			11-20					
3	Mathematics			31-40					
4	Written Communication--Composition			1 constructed-response assignment					
← Institution performance versus statewide results		Number of Examinees	Mean Scaled Score	Number Passing (Percent)	Number Not Passing (Percent)	Percentage of Examinees with Subarea Scaled Scores of 240 or Greater			
Institution	5	241.2	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	1	2	3	4	
Statewide	724	260.9	574 (79%)	150 (21%)	78	86	78	82	
Roster for Test 01: Basic Skills		← Results by testing candidate							
Examinee Name	SSN	Status	Total Test	Scaled Score			Constructed-Response Assignment		
ONE	EXAMINEE A	1-1111	P	266	278	289	256	250	
Two	EXAMINEE B	2-2222	F	234	256	244	233	180	
THREE	EXAMINEE C	3-3333	F	189	178	200	200	180	
FOUR	EXAMINEE D	4-4444	P	289	289	289	300	270	
FIVE	EXAMINEE E	5-5555	F	228	228	244	228	210	

Area of Report	Report Field	Field Description
Institution and test date	Institution Test Date	Lists the institution name and the test administration date for which results are reported.
Composition of the test	Subarea Subarea Name Number of Items	Lists each subarea of the assessment and the number of items in each.
Institution performance versus statewide results	Number of Examinees Mean Scaled Score Number/Percent Passing Number/Percent Not Passing Percentage of Examinees with Subarea Scaled Scores of 240 or Greater	Provides a comparison of institution results to statewide testing results by summarizing the performance of the institution's examinees on the test and the performance of all examinees for the test date. For each group, the report lists the number of examinees who tested, the mean scaled scores, the number of examinees who passed, the number of examinees who did not pass, and the percentage of examinees with subarea scaled scores of 240 or greater.
Results by testing candidate	Examinee Name SSN (last 5 digits only) Status Total Test Scaled Score Selected-Response Subarea Scaled Score Constructed-Response Assignment(s) Scaled Score(s)	Provides individual examinee information for the test indicated, including the examinee name, last five digits of the social security number, passing status, the total test scaled score, the scaled scores for each selected-response subarea, and the constructed-response scaled scores.

Using the Test Results Data Files

In addition to receiving test results in a format that can be viewed or printed, institutions receive test results data as ASCII files. The ASCII file layout, which defines each field within a record, is provided on the Institution Score Reporting Web site.

ASCII file records include the following information for each examinee:

- ▶ Test administration date
- ▶ Examinee name
- ▶ Social security number (last five digits)
- ▶ Test taken
- ▶ Passing status
- ▶ Total test scaled score (for examinees who did not pass)
- ▶ Selected-response and constructed-response subarea scaled scores

ASCII files can be downloaded and the data exported into databases or other applications such as spreadsheets to accumulate test results for more than one test administration. Once centralized, those data can be sorted or filtered to gain unique and meaningful results for the institution. For example, test results can be sorted by examinee to view the cumulative test results for a testing candidate over a given period. Or test results can be filtered to display the names of examinees who have not yet passed an assessment.

Test results files can also be used to analyze areas of strength and weakness for all institution candidates and to enable an institution to determine whether any changes in the curriculum are needed to better prepare students for the New Mexico Teacher Assessments.