

Policy on WEST-B Requirement

In the 2019 Legislative Session, HB 1621 was passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Inslee. HB 1621 removed the requirement of meeting a specific score on the WEST-B (Washington Educator Skills Test – Basic) in order to gain admission to any teacher education program. Although the law takes effect in 90 days (July 1), we may admit applicants under this new approach immediately because none of our programs are shorter than 90 days.

The new law does not eliminate the requirement, but instead states that *An applicant must take this basic skills assessment, or an alternative or equivalent basic skills assessment as determined by the Washington professional educator standards board, and report the individual results to the Washington professional educator standards board and an approved teacher preparation program for admission to the approved teacher preparation program.*

The new law also states that the test may be used as a formative assessment of a candidate's skills.

What does this mean?

- All candidates (graduate and undergraduate) will still need to take all three sections (subtests) of the test (or an equivalent test) and report an official score prior to admission to the program. If they do not achieve the passing score in any (or all) sections, they may opt to take the test again or request an alternative means of demonstrating of basic skills.
- Candidates who have taken the ACT/SAT or similar college test (or PESB approved alternative) may use this test (whether it achieves the passing score or not) as evidence of their attempt at the basic skills assessment.
- If candidates have not passed the WEST-B in the past, that attempt may now be counted as meeting the “attempt requirement” and an alternative or equivalent evidence of basic skills may be documented.
- We will need to determine our equivalent evidence of basic skills and document what we are using to do so.

Ways to meet the basic skills requirements:

- Pass the WEST-B/SAT/ACT or equivalent approved test (all subtests).
- Have earned an approved AA degree from a regionally accredited community college.
- Have earned a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited college/university.

If the basic skills requirements are not met, the following may be used as evidence of basic skills:

- If candidates have attempted the reading test but not passed, a minimum grade of C in two humanities or social science courses may be used to demonstrate evidence of basic reading skills.
- If candidates have attempted the writing test but not passed, a minimum grade of C in two college-level composition courses may be used to demonstrate evidence of basic writing skills.
- If candidates have attempted the math test but not passed, a minimum grade of C in a college level math class or UCORE [QUAN] designated course may be used to demonstrate evidence of basic mathematical skills.