PELSB Out-of-State Testing Policy and Frequently Asked Questions

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) is responsible for overseeing the testing requirements for Minnesota teachers. For an initial Tier 3 license, applicants are required to show competency in a set of examinations including pedagogy and licensure field-specific content area knowledge. In addition to pedagogy and content exams, applicants seeking a Tier 4 license must also demonstrate proficiency in basic skills examinations in reading, writing, and math. Starting March 2022, PELSB will accept examinations from applicants who have completed similar testing requirements out-of-state.

Out-of-state tests will be accepted by PELSB when the following have been met:

- The applicant has completed a state-approved teacher preparation program in another state,
- The applicant holds or held a professional license from another state,
- The applicant has passed similar content, pedagogy, and/or basic skills exams in another state, which were required at the time the license was issued
- For elementary education license applicants: The content examination must include an assessment of the teacher’s:
  - knowledge, skill, and ability in comprehensive scientifically based reading instruction;
  - knowledge and understanding of the foundations of reading development, development of reading comprehension, and reading assessment and instruction; and
  - ability to integrate that knowledge and understanding into instruction strategies.

Applicants seeking to use their out-of-state test scores must work with their teacher preparation provider or the state’s governing licensing body (e.g. Department of Education) to verify passing exams. As part of the application process, the teacher preparation program or licensing body will need to certify all exams taken, the date of the exams, and passing scores (see Section 6A of the licensure application). PELSB will not accept score reports directly from applicants. More information about the application process can be found here.

Teachers who were not required to take content and/or pedagogy exams in order to qualify for their out-of-state teaching license must take the remaining exam(s) prior to applying for a Minnesota Tier 3 license. Those needing to take additional tests will need to take the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (MTLEs) in the appropriate pedagogy and/or content field. Please contact PELSB with questions regarding exam eligibility.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is able to verify that I have passed my teaching exams? Am I able to send in my own score reports?

- The certifying officer of your teacher preparation program or an authorized official of a teacher licensing body (e.g. Department of Education) will need to verify your passing scores. This can be done as part of the “Verification of Out-of-State Educator Credentialing Test Scores (Section 6A)” form, which is
included in all Tier 3 and Tier 4 applications. PELSB will also accept scores that are documented on letterhead and must include the name of the exams, the date(s) taken, and passing score results. The letter must be signed and dated by an authorized official at the applicant’s teacher preparation program or licensing body. At this time, PELSB is unable to accept direct score reports from applicants.

I was only required to take content exams in my state. Will I need to take additional testing in Minnesota?

- Yes, Minnesota requires all initial Tier 3 applicants to pass teacher licensure examinations in pedagogy and field-specific content knowledge. If content exams were the only tests required to receive your out-of-state license, you must take the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (MTLEs) in the relevant pedagogy area. More information about Minnesota testing can be found here.

I am applying for an elementary education license and my out-of-state tests do not meet Minnesota’s scientific reading standards. Which tests do I need to take to qualify for licensure?

- Minnesota requires all elementary education teachers to demonstrate they have passed an exam in scientifically based reading instruction. If your elementary education exam does not meet all of the components of a scientifically based reading instruction exam, you must take the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam (MTLE) in Elementary Education content: subtest 1. You do not need to take subtests 2 and 3.

I completed my licensure program in one state, but hold licensure in another state. Will I qualify to use my out-of-state tests?

- PELSB must see that you have completed teacher preparation, passed state specific licensure exams, and received a teaching license all in the same state. Applicants with different circumstances should contact PELSB for additional information.

I completed testing out of the country. Will PELSB accept out-of-country exams?

- At this time, PELSB is only able to accept test scores from other states when they have been verified by the teacher preparation provider or licensing body. PELSB is unable to accept test scores from out-of-the country.

I am using teaching experience and an out-of-state license in good standing to qualify for Tier 3 licensure. Can I use my out-of-state tests?

- Part of the requirements of using out-of-state testing is verifying you have completed a teacher preparation program. A teacher preparation program or governing licensing body must be able to verify completion of preparation AND passing test scores. Therefore, PELSB is unable to accept out-of-state test scores from applicants who choose to use teaching experience and an out-of-state license to qualify for licensure. Instead, these applicants must take the appropriate MTLEs before applying for a Tier 3 license.