

## Test takers of color earn high pass rates

### Case study: Western Kentucky University

*At Western Kentucky University, test takers of color show that they can excel compared with aspiring teachers across the state.*

Western Kentucky University has found that providing support early — even before aspiring teachers formally enter the teacher preparation program — is key to enhancing teacher candidates' content knowledge. By helping to prepare students for their basic knowledge test, and guiding them toward appropriate content coursework, the School of Teacher Education has increased the number of students, including students of color, who are prepared to become elementary teachers.

Western Kentucky University discovered that preparing students for their Praxis Core basic skills test also leads to greater success on Praxis content tests required for licensure. Kentucky's basic skills test, required for admission into teacher preparation, is a "significant hurdle" for many students at Western Kentucky University, according to Dr. Janet Tassell, Professor in the School of Teacher Education and director of undergraduate teacher education programs. To ensure that future elementary teachers know the mathematics and ELA content they will teach, two courses in writing and language, as well as three courses in relevant mathematics content for teachers, are included in their major. These courses are scheduled to be taken before the Praxis content exams but also help with the Praxis Core exams if the student has yet to successfully pass those areas.

When candidates enter the program, support focuses on preparation for the content licensure test. Dr. Tassell reported that the School of Teacher Education recently reassessed the science and social studies coursework that elementary licensure students take, in order to understand whether that coursework addressed the topics that elementary teachers are most likely to teach. As a result, advisors now recommend a general United States history course instead of a Kentucky history course. Methods classes are used as a vehicle to offer students help in preparing for content exams, such as diagnostic tests and study guides. Dr. Tassell shared that she would welcome additional licensure test data, such as how many students never manage to pass the Praxis Core basic skills test or how many times students typically take the Praxis content licensure tests before passing, to better target support efforts.

Several entities on campus offer students support. The School of Teacher Education's Center for Literacy offers practice exams, peer tutoring, study skills workshops, and other forms of assistance. The Center for Literacy has secured Dollar General grant funding and offers to pay the registration fee for the students that complete the criteria for reviewing for the Praxis Core initial exam (this criteria includes taking a pre-test, going through a tutoring program, and then taking a post-test). The university's Recruitment in Equity and Diversity in Teaching Program offers assistance with the registration fee and in preparing for licensure tests, among other recruitment and support activities.

The "more aggressive approach" to supporting students, paired with proactive activities to recruit more aspiring teachers of color, taken by Western Kentucky University in the past few years, has been beneficial, according to Dr. Tassell. In particular, 60% of teacher candidates of color pass the Elementary Education Multiple Subjects (5001) test on their first try, compared with just 46% of all test takers in the state.

*Western Kentucky University is an urban, public institution with approximately 20,000 students.*

## Institutions where the first-time pass rate for test takers of color exceed the state's average pass rate for all test takers

The following 153 institutions across 31 states counter the narrative that test takers of color cannot achieve pass rates comparable to their White peers. In fact, at these institutions, test takers of color earn pass rates that exceed the state average for all test takers, and in some cases they exceed the average pass rates for all test takers at their own institutions.<sup>1</sup>

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
AL	Auburn University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	53%	75%	63%	19
AL	Birmingham-Southern College	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	53%	80%	57%	7
AL	The University of Alabama	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	53%	71%	57%	30
AR	Harding University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	39%	47%	50%	18
AR	John Brown University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	39%	52%	40%	5
CO	PEBC Teacher Residency	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	65%	50%	14
CO	Relay Denver	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	54%	48%	25

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
CO	University of Colorado Boulder	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	64%	55%	29
CT	Quinnipiac University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	40%	38%	50%	10
CT	University of Connecticut	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	40%	64%	41%	32
CT	University of Hartford	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	40%	40%	60%	10
DC	Teach For America D.C. Region	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	59%	69%	63%	16
DE	University of Delaware	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	43%	59%	53%	49
FL	Ave Maria University	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	65%	50%	2
FL	Brevard Professional Development Certification Program	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	48%	80%	5
FL	Daytona State College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	47%	100%	3
FL	Duval Professional Development Certification Program	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	46%	38%	16

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
FL	Escambia Professional Development Certification Program	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	67%	60%	5
FL	Flagler College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	39%	47%	43
FL	Florida Gateway College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	14%	50%	2
FL	Florida Gulf Coast University	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	58%	100%	1
FL	Florida Southern College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	44%	43%	14
FL	Florida State University	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	60%	66%	35
FL	Gulf Coast State College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	48%	57%	7
FL	Northwest Florida State College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	39%	50%	12
FL	Pasco Professional Development Certification Program	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	33%	38%	8

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
FL	Pasco-Hernando State College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	24%	43%	7
FL	Santa Fe College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	60%	67%	3
FL	Southeastern University	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	40%	42%	12
FL	St. Johns River State College	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	38%	50%	8
FL	State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	46%	71%	7
FL	Stetson University	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	47%	50%	8
FL	University of Central Florida	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	41%	34%	378
FL	University of Florida	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	69%	79%	14
FL	University of Miami	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	55%	45%	20

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
FL	University of West Florida	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	60%	63%	128
FL	Warner University	Composite - Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) Elementary Education (060) Test	34%	63%	60%	5
HI	iteachHAWAII	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	38%	72%	46%	13
HI	Teach For America Hawai'i	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	38%	73%	71%	7
IA	Iowa State University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	81%	90%	89%	10
IL	DePaul University	Subtest - Subtest 1: Language and Literacy (197)	70%	81%	75%	16
IL	Elmhurst College	Subtest - Subtest 1: Language and Literacy (197)	70%	83%	85%	13
IL	Illinois State University	Subtest - Subtest 1: Language and Literacy (197)	70%	67%	71%	42
IL	Loyola University Chicago	Subtest - Subtest 1: Language and Literacy (197)	70%	89%	90%	10
IL	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	Subtest - Subtest 1: Language and Literacy (197)	70%	78%	77%	35
KS	Emporia State University	Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	90%	94.4%	93%	42

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
KS	Haskell Indian Nations University	Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	90%	93.8%	93%	15
KS	University of Kansas	Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	90%	93.5%	92%	13
KY	Bellarmine University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	54%	57%	7
KY	Morehead State University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	38%	80%	5
KY	Northern Kentucky University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	49%	63%	8
KY	Western Kentucky University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	46%	41%	60%	20
LA	Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	45%	62%	53%	34
LA	Southeastern Louisiana University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	45%	43%	50%	8
MA	Boston College	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	81%	71%	21
MA	Boston University	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	72%	78%	18
MA	Brandeis University	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	77%	67%	9
MA	Eastern Nazarene College	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	67%	71%	7



State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
MA	Emmanuel College	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	56%	54%	13
MA	Gordon College	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	66%	86%	7
MA	Salem State University	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	58%	70%	10
MA	University of Massachusetts Boston	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	72%	86%	14
MA	Wellesley College	Subtest - Mathematics subtest	50%	100%	100%	8
MD	Johns Hopkins University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications (5019) test	90%	96%	96%	25
MD	Towson University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications (5019) test	90%	95%	91%	119
MD	University of Maryland	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications (5019) test	90%	95%	91%	78
MD	Urban Teachers Baltimore	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Instructional Practice and Applications (5019) test	90%	100%	100%	22
MI	Calvin University	Composite - Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC): General Elementary Content (103) Test	79%	93%	79%	29
MI	Saginaw Valley State University	Composite - Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC): General Elementary Content (103) Test	79%	86%	80%	10

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
MI	University of Michigan	Composite - Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC): General Elementary Content (103) Test	79%	94%	88%	43
MN	Bemidji State University	Subtest - Subtest 3 (science & social studies)	83%	73%	85%	13
MN	Bethel University	Subtest - Subtest 3 (science & social studies)	83%	90%	100%	7
MN	The College of St. Scholastica	Subtest - Subtest 3 (science & social studies)	83%	85%	86%	7
MO	Central Methodist University	Subtest - 010 Elementary Education: Social Studies Subtest	70%	60%	73%	15
MO	Missouri Western State University	Subtest - 010 Elementary Education: Social Studies Subtest	70%	70%	75%	12
MO	Saint Louis University	Subtest - 010 Elementary Education: Social Studies Subtest	70%	76%	90%	10
MO	WGU Missouri	Subtest - 010 Elementary Education: Social Studies Subtest	70%	85%	73%	11
ND	Minot State University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	87%	90%	89%	9
ND	Valley City State University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	87%	89%	90%	10
NE	Doane University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	90%	92%	100%	5

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
NE	University of Nebraska at Omaha	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	90%	93%	94%	31
NH	Antioch University New England	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	43%	84%	100%	6
NJ	Essex County College	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	34%	29%	40%	5
NJ	Rider University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	34%	32%	45%	29
NJ	Rutgers University–New Brunswick	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	34%	52%	54%	59
NJ	The College of New Jersey	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	34%	62%	56%	102
NY	New York University	Subtest - Part Two: Mathematics Subtest (222)	73%	89%	91%	57
NY	SUNY Cortland	Subtest - Part Two: Mathematics Subtest (222)	73%	85%	80%	35
NY	SUNY New Paltz	Subtest - Part Two: Mathematics Subtest (222)	73%	85%	78%	23
NY	SUNY Oneonta	Subtest - Part Two: Mathematics Subtest (222)	73%	92%	100%	12
NY	Teachers College, Columbia University	Subtest - Part Two: Mathematics Subtest (222)	73%	97%	95%	63

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
OR	Lewis & Clark College	Subtest - Subtest II 103 (Mathematics; Science; & the arts, health, and fitness)	80%	91%	88%	--
OR	University of Oregon	Subtest - Subtest II 103 (Mathematics; Science; & the arts, health, and fitness)	80%	88%	90%	--
PA	Community College of Allegheny County	Subtest - Module 3 (Math, science and health)	62%	59%	83%	12
PA	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Subtest - Module 3 (Math, science and health)	62%	75%	71%	14
PA	Swarthmore College	Subtest - Module 3 (Math, science and health)	62%	86%	80%	10
PA	University of Pennsylvania	Subtest - Module 3 (Math, science and health)	62%	79%	70%	44
PA	University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus	Subtest - Module 3 (Math, science and health)	62%	82%	81%	16
RI	Brown University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	43%	81%	75%	8
TN	Belmont University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	82%	100%	7
TN	Christian Brothers University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	93%	96%	100%	7
TN	East Tennessee State University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	75%	78%	9

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
TN	South College	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	93%	89%	100%	5
TN	Southern Adventist University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	93%	96%	93%	15
TN	Southern Adventist University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	86%	80%	15
TN	TFA Memphis	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	79%	73%	15
TN	The University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	93%	100%	100%	7
TN	The University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	86%	84%	25
TN	Tusculum University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	68%	100%	7
TN	Vanderbilt University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment (5017) test	93%	100%	100%	9
TN	Vanderbilt University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Content Knowledge (5018) test	67%	100%	100%	10
TX	Abilene Christian University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	87%	83%	6
TX	Alamo Colleges District	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	89%	83%	6

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
TX	Arlington Baptist University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	100%	100%	1
TX	Austin Community College	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	100%	100%	1
TX	Baylor University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	95%	96%	24
TX	Concordia University Texas	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	81%	74%	19
TX	Dallas College Mountain View Campus	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	75%	72%	25
TX	Education Service Center Region 11	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	85%	79%	14
TX	Education Service Center Region 13	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	86%	76%	88
TX	Education Service Center Region 2	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	84%	77%	31
TX	Houston Baptist University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	82%	74%	34
TX	Region 10 Education Service Center	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	88%	86%	7
TX	Region 14 Education Service Center	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	90%	86%	14
TX	Region 5 Education Service Center	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	86%	89%	9
TX	Relay Houston	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	74%	74%	38
TX	Southern Methodist University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	92%	100%	8

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
TX	Southwestern Adventist University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	79%	72%	25
TX	St. Mary's University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	78%	83%	6
TX	Stephen F. Austin State University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	77%	74%	125
TX	Texas A&M International University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	72%	72%	140
TX	Texas A&M University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	87%	80%	215
TX	Texas Christian University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	93%	96%	25
TX	The University of Texas at Arlington	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	85%	80%	186
TX	The University of Texas at Austin	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	92%	89%	270
TX	The University of Texas at Dallas	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	87%	84%	64
TX	Training via E-Learning: An Alternative Certification Hybrid (T.E.A.C.H.)	Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	95%	100%	11
TX	Trinity University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	93%	75%	4
TX	University of Dallas	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	95%	75%	4
TX	University of Mary Hardin-Baylor	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	88%	82%	22
TX	University of North Texas	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	82%	75%	239
TX	University of the Incarnate Word	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	79%	77%	53

State	Institution	Test or subtest used for comparison	State average first-attempt pass rate	Institution first-attempt pass rate	First-attempt pass rate, test takers of color	Number of test takers of color
TX	Wayland Baptist University	Subtest - Social Studies Subtest (803)	71%	81%	79%	24
VA	Christopher Newport University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	57%	76%	78%	9
VA	Ferrum College	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	57%	50%	60%	5
VA	University of Mary Washington	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	57%	68%	67%	9
VA	University of Virginia	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	57%	91%	88%	41
VA	Virginia Commonwealth University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	57%	73%	63%	48
VA	William & Mary	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	57%	87%	71%	14
VT	Saint Michael's College	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	56%	61%	60%	5
VT	University of Vermont	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	56%	71%	67%	6
WV	West Virginia University	Composite - Praxis II Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects (5001) test	39%	45%	55%	11

## ENDNOTES

1. When the state provided composite pass rate data, composite pass rates were used to identify strong institutions. When composite data was not available, analysis focused on the subtest that had the lowest state average pass rate, as this presumably is the test on which test takers face the greatest challenges.