



# Testing Teacher Candidates:: The Role of Licensure Tests in Improving Teacher Quality

*Committee on Assessment and Teacher Quality, Center for Education, Board on Testing and Assessment,  
National Research Council*

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Americans have adopted a reform agenda for their schools that calls for excellence in teaching and learning. School officials across the nation are hard at work targeting instruction at high levels for all students. Gaps remain, however, between the nation's educational aspirations and student achievement. To address these gaps, policy makers have recently focused on the qualifications of teachers and the preparation of teacher candidates.

This book examines the appropriateness and technical quality of teacher licensure tests currently in use, evaluates the merits of using licensure test results to hold states and institutions of higher education accountable for the quality of teacher preparation and licensure, and suggests alternatives for developing and assessing beginning teacher competence.

Teaching is a complex activity. Definitions of quality teaching have changed and will continue to change over time as society's values change. This book provides policy makers, teacher testers, and teacher educators with advice on how to use current tests to assess teacher candidates and evaluate teacher preparation, ensuring that America's youth are being taught by the most qualified candidates.

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