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Multistate Standard-setting Technical Report

**PRAXIS™ SPECIAL EDUCATION: TEACHING STUDENTS WITH  
BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS AND EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCES (0372)**

Licensure and Credentialing Research

Educational Testing Service

Princeton, New Jersey

July 2012

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To support the decision-making process for education agencies with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Praxis™ Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances (0372) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level special education teachers.

## PARTICIPATING STATES

Panelists from five states were recommended by their respective education agency to participate. The education agencies recommended panelists with (a) experience, either as special education teachers or college faculty who prepare special education teachers and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning special education teachers.

## RECOMMENDED PASSING SCORE

The recommended passing score is provided to help education agencies determine an appropriate operational passing score. For the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances test, the recommended passing score is 63 (out of a possible 100 raw-score points). The scaled score associated with a raw score of 63 is 154 (on a 100 - 200 scale).

## SUMMARY OF CONTENT SPECIFICATION JUDGMENTS

Panelists judged the extent to which the knowledge and skills reflected by the content specifications were important for entry-level special education teachers. The favorable judgments of the panelists provided evidence that the content covered by the test is important for beginning practice.

To support the decision-making process for education agencies with regards to establishing a passing score, or cut score, for the Praxis™ Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances (0372) test, research staff from Educational Testing Service (ETS) designed and conducted a multistate standard-setting study in July 2012 in Princeton, New Jersey. The study also collected content-related validity evidence to confirm the importance of the content specifications for entry-level special education teachers. Panelists were recommended by education agencies<sup>1</sup> to participate. The education agencies recommended panelists with (a) experience, either as special education teachers or college faculty who prepare special education teachers and (b) familiarity with the knowledge and skills required of beginning special education teachers. Five states (see Table 1) were represented by 12 panelists. (See Appendix A for the names and affiliations of the panelists.)

**Table 1**  
**Participating States and Number of Panelists**

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North Carolina (3 panelists)	South Carolina (2 panelists)
North Dakota (3 panelists)	West Virginia (1 panelist)
Pennsylvania (3 panelists)	

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The following technical report is divided into three sections. The first section describes the content and format of the test. The second section describes the standard-setting processes and methods. The third section presents the results of the standard-setting study.

The passing-score recommendation for the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances test is provided to each of the represented education agencies. In each state, the department of education, the board of education, or a designated educator licensure board is responsible for establishing the final passing score in accordance with applicable regulations. The study provides a recommended passing score, which represent the combined judgments of a group of experienced educators. The full range of a education agency’s needs and expectations cannot likely be represented during the standard-setting study. Each state, therefore, may want to consider the recommended passing score and other sources of information when setting the final Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances passing score (see Geisinger & McCormick, 2010). A state may accept the recommended passing score, adjust

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<sup>1</sup> States that currently use one or more Praxis tests were invited to participate in the multistate standard-setting study.

the score upward to reflect more stringent expectations, or adjust the score downward to reflect more lenient expectations. There is no *correct* decision; the appropriateness of any adjustment may only be evaluated in terms of its meeting the state's needs.

Two sources of information to consider when setting the passing score are the standard error of measurement (SEM) and the standard error of judgment (SEJ). The former addresses the reliability of the Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances test score and the latter, the reliability of panelists' passing-score recommendation. The SEM allows a state to recognize that a Praxis Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances test score—any test score on any test—is less than perfectly reliable. A test score only approximates what a candidate *truly* knows or *truly* can do on the test. The SEM, therefore, addresses the question: How close of an approximation is the test score to the *true* score? The SEJ allow a state to consider the likelihood that the recommended passing score from the current panel would be similar to the passing scores recommended by other panels of experts similar in composition and experience. The smaller the SEJ the more likely that another panel would recommend a passing score consistent with the recommended passing score. The larger the SEJ, the less likely the recommended passing score would be reproduced by another panel.

In addition to measurement error metrics (e.g., SEM, SEJ), each state should consider the likelihood of classification error. That is, when adjusting a passing score, policymakers should consider whether it is more important to minimize a false positive decision or to minimize a false negative decision. A false positive decision occurs when a candidate's test score suggests he should receive a license/certificate, but his actual level of knowledge/skills indicates otherwise (i.e., the candidate does not possess the required knowledge/skills). A false negative occurs when a candidate's test score suggests that she should not receive a license/certificate, but she actually does possess the required knowledge/skills. The state needs to consider which decision error may be more important to minimize.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION: TEACHING STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS AND EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCES (0372)

### Test at a Glance

Test Name	Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances		
Test Code	0372		
Time	2 hours		
Number of Questions	120 Multiple Choice		
Format	Multiple-choice		
	Content Categories	Approximate Number of Questions	Approximate Percent of Examination
	I. Development and Characteristics of Students with EBD	22	18%
	II. Planning and Managing the Learning Environments	31	26%
	III. Instruction	31	26%
	IV. Assessment	20	17%
	V. Foundations and Professional Responsibilities	16	13%

### About This Test

The Special Education: Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders and Emotional Disturbances (0372) test measures whether entry-level special educators of students with behavioral disorders and emotional disturbance (EBD) have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice.

This test may contain some questions that will not count toward your score.

# Topics Covered

## I. Development and Characteristics of Students with EBD

### A. Human Development and Behavior

- Knows typical and atypical human growth and development in all domains
- Knows the similarities and differences between students with and without EBD
- Knows that there is a range of characteristics within and among students with EBD
- Understands the behaviors that characterize EBD
- Understands how social/emotional development may differ in students with EBD
- Knows the etiology of EBD
- Knows the incidence and prevalence of EBD
- Is familiar with the factors that influence the educational experience of students with EBD
- Knows the relationship between EBD and other associated conditions
- Understands that medications may affect students with EBD

### B. Theoretical Approaches to Learning and Motivation

- Understands the distinguishing characteristics of major theoretical approaches to students and motivation
- Understands the distinguishing characteristics of conceptual approaches to teaching students with EBD

- Understands the impact of social and emotional factors on the learning process

## II. Planning and Managing the Learning Environments

### A. Curriculum Development

- Understands the basic concepts of curriculum development
- Knows how to select instructional content, resources, and strategies appropriate for students with EBD
- Knows how to integrate affective, social, and life skills with the academic curriculum
- Knows how to integrate behavior management into academic and affective instruction
- Knows how to integrate instructional and assistive technology into instructional planning
- Knows how to develop longitudinal, comprehensive, individualized programs in collaboration with team members
- Knows how to use formal and informal assessment data to inform instruction

### B. Managing the Learning Environment

- Understands the impact of a safe, equitable, positive, and supportive environment on learning
- Understands basic classroom management theories and strategies for students with EBD
- Knows how to plan and implement environmental adaptations at levels appropriate to the behavior

- Knows how to select and implement a behavior management strategy appropriate to individual students
- Knows how to implement a behavior intervention plan
- Knows how to establish and communicate expectations for student behavior in a variety of settings
- Knows how the importance of using the least intensive behavior management strategies
- Understands the risks associated with restrictive intervention procedures
- Knows strategies for teaching alternative behaviors
- Knows prevention and intervention strategies for students with EBD
- Knows universal precautions
- Knows how to design and manage daily routines

### III. Instruction

- Understands that a number of variables affect how individual students learn and perform
- Knows how to develop observable and measurable instructional objectives in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains
- Knows how to develop and implement a lesson plan
- Knows how to use task analysis
- Knows how to implement and/or adapt strategies, interventions, and resources appropriate to the needs of individual students

- Knows how to manage instructional variables in an inclusive classroom
- Knows a variety of strategies for supporting student learning
- Knows methods for facilitating generalization of skills across learning environments
- Knows how to implement strategies for teaching students self-advocacy
- Knows strategies for promoting students' development of self-regulatory skills
- Knows how to use student responses and performance for guiding instruction and providing feedback
- Knows how to use input from stakeholders when adapting learning environments

### IV. Assessment

- Understands the basic terminology used in assessment
- Is familiar with the uses, strengths, and limitations of various assessment instruments
- Knows procedures for the ongoing formal and informal assessment of students with EBD
- Knows how to use data from informal and formal assessments to make eligibility, placement, and program decisions
- Knows how to assess the social behaviors of students with EBD
- Knows how to prepare a functional behavior assessment (FBA) report
- Knows how to use functional assessments to develop behavior intervention plans

- Knows factors that can lead to misidentification and under identification of students with EBD
- Knows indicators or behaviors that may be associated with the early identification of EBD
- Knows how to report assessment data to a variety of stakeholders
- Knows how to create and maintain assessment records
- Knows a variety of ways to collect data

## **V. Foundations and Professional Responsibilities**

### **A. Educational Rights for Students with Disabilities**

- Knows federal terminology and definitions relating to general and special education
- Understands federal requirements for the screening, prereferral, referral, identification, and classification of students with disabilities under IDEA
- Understands federal procedural safeguards of stakeholders' rights
- Understands the components of an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Understands the provisions of major legislation that impact the field of special education
- Understands the basic characteristics and defining factors for each of the major disability categories as defined under IDEA
- Knows the advantages and disadvantages of different placement options for students with EBD

### **B. Historical and Professional Foundations**

- Is familiar with the historical foundations of special education
- Is familiar with current issues and trends in the field of special education
- Knows how to locate information on research, practice, and movements in the field of special education
- Knows the legal and ethical implications of laws, regulations, and court cases related to the rights of students and teachers
- Understands the impact of an EBD on individuals, families, and society across the life span
- Knows how to assist families to understand the implications of a student's EBD and to offer information on behavior management
- Knows strategies for planning and conducting collaborative conferences with students, their families, and school and community members
- Understands their collaborative role in the creation, implementation, and assessment of IEPs
- Knows strategies for assisting families, school personnel, and community members in planning appropriate transitions for students with EBD
- Knows techniques for structuring the activities of personnel (e.g., paraprofessionals, tutors, and volunteers) who work with students with EBD
- Knows how to integrate input from students and parents/caregivers in instructional planning and decision making
- Knows a variety of strategies for communicating with parents/caregivers about students' progress and needs



- Understands the role as an advocate for special education and as a resource for parents/caregivers, school personnel, and members of the community for information relating to students with EBD and their educational experiences

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