



Introducing the *ETS*® National Observational Teaching Exam (NOTE)

What is NOTE?

NOTE, a new and innovative assessment program, is being designed to evaluate prospective teachers' ability to translate their knowledge of content and teaching into effective practice in the classroom.

Working with stakeholders across the country, ETS and TeachingWorks are bringing research on K–12 teaching and advances in assessment into the development of NOTE. As the project continues, we invite those interested in improving teaching and licensure to join us in the research.

The NOTE program is intended to fit with the work of state education systems and educator preparation programs to improve classroom practice of teacher candidates. In creating the program, we are developing **performance assessments** of critical **high-leverage teaching practices** and computer-delivered **assessments of Content Knowledge for Teaching (CKT)** in core K–12 academic content areas with a focus on **high-leverage content**.

Innovative assessment tasks

The NOTE assessments will assess critical teaching knowledge and practices in innovative ways that call for teacher candidates to apply their knowledge and skills to the authentic work of teaching.

The performance assessments measure active teaching practices outside a candidate's student teaching placement with the goal of providing a **level playing field for all candidates**. By capturing video of candidates' teaching performances in standardized assessment settings and giving each candidate the opportunity to demonstrate critical teaching practices across multiple, specific topics of the student curriculum, the NOTE performance assessments measure essential and generalizable skills of teaching with standardization across candidates. This is vital for good, reliable feedback and scoring.

Because a teacher's interaction with students is an inextricable part of certain high-leverage teaching practices, ETS and TeachingWorks are designing and prototyping **virtual classrooms with interactive avatar students** that can be used to simulate teaching situations. Candidates will be asked to demonstrate a teaching practice in a mixed-reality classroom generated by Mursion™. The students, represented by avatars, are able to respond to what the candidate says and does thanks to the work of rigorously trained human "interactors" using protocols that standardize the teaching challenges presented to each candidate.

About ETS

At nonprofit ETS, we are passionate about our mission to advance quality and equity in education for all people worldwide because we believe in the power of learning. We strive to provide innovative and meaningful measurement solutions that improve teaching and learning, expand educational opportunities and inform policy.

About TeachingWorks

TeachingWorks, a national organization housed at the University of Michigan's School of Education, focuses on ensuring that every child gets skillful teaching every year by building a strong, professional infrastructure for the training, development and assessment of teaching practice.

The focus of NOTE

High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) are actions and tasks central to teaching that are useful across a broad range of subject areas, grade levels and teaching contexts. These practices are helpful in using and managing differences among pupils. The identified HLPs targeted in NOTE assessments are warranted by research evidence and wisdom of practice that, when carried out skillfully, will increase the likelihood that teaching will be effective for students' learning. (For more information about the full set of HLPs, visit www.teachingworks.org/work-of-teaching/high-leverage-practices.)

High-Leverage Content includes topic areas (e.g., place value in mathematics, phonological awareness in ELA) where the difference between effective and ineffective teaching is believed to be most likely to affect student learning. NOTE's focus is on ideas and skills that are foundational to content across the curriculum and multiple grade levels, as well as on ideas and skills that are believed to be fundamental to student learning and are likely to be sources of student difficulty when not taught well.

Content Knowledge for Teaching is the content knowledge used in recognizing, understanding and responding to the content problems that teachers encounter as they teach a subject. Besides being able to do the work of the student curriculum, teachers must be able to apply content knowledge that is specific to teaching to such tasks as selecting a student text that will support a specific learning goal and identifying a student's potential misconceptions based on student work and student talk.

NOTE performance assessment at a glance

Assessment tasks described are those slated for initial NOTE rollout, which are being developed for prospective teachers at the elementary level.

Tasks call for on-demand demonstrations of teaching practices in content-teaching scenarios:

FOCUS	FORMAT
<p>HLP: Making content and practices explicit through explanation, modeling, representations and examples</p> <p>Content: Mathematics and ELA content topics and practices taught in elementary grades</p>	<p>A recorded performance using a virtual whiteboard for instruction, including performance using virtual manipulatives (multiple 7-minute performances).</p> <p>The prospective teacher must demonstrate the ability to model or explain specified content for students, carrying out the instruction using speech and handwriting on the whiteboard, along with provided manipulatives and other instructional materials.</p>
<p>HLP: Leading a group discussion</p> <p>Content: Mathematics and ELA content topics appropriate for the group</p>	<p>A video-recorded teacher-guided discussion of a small group of students in a virtual elementary instructional setting (multiple 15-minute performances).</p> <p>The candidate must lead a content-rich discussion in a virtual classroom setting, showing the skills required to effectively guide student discussion to support the learning of specific content.</p> <p>Delivery using Mursion virtual classroom, with candidate and classroom recorded.</p>
<p>HLP: Eliciting and interpreting individual student's thinking</p> <p>Content: Mathematics and ELA content topics</p>	<p>A video-recorded interaction with a student (multiple 5–10 minute performances).</p> <p>The candidate must demonstrate the ability to have a conversation about student work that will draw out student's thinking (e.g., student misconceptions). The candidate's aim will be to learn how the student thinks about specific content, and the candidate will be able to arrive at that understanding through a spoken one-on-one interaction and using a shared workspace.</p> <p>Delivery using Mursion virtual student with video recording of candidate, virtual student and shared workspace.</p>

