

Key Facts about edTPA Implementation in Illinois

Over the past few years, many Illinois universities and colleges have been implementing edTPA as a capstone assessment of their teacher preparation programs. Now that edTPA is required for teacher licensure in Illinois, it is important that there is a common understanding of the assessment, its value in preparing proficient novice teachers, and the details surrounding the assessment process. Below are the key facts that you should know about edTPA in Illinois.

1. edTPA assesses core elements of effective beginning teaching (features of teaching that have a long track record of importance in P-12) . In particular, the edTPA looks at...
 - a. Planning for students' content understandings
 - b. Planning to support varied students' learning needs
 - c. Using knowledge of students to inform teaching and learning
 - d. Identifying and supporting language demands
 - e. Planning assessments to monitor and support student learning
 - f. Creating a positive and challenging learning environment
 - g. Engaging students in learning
 - h. Deepening student learning
 - i. Use of subject specific pedagogy
 - j. Analyzing teaching effectiveness
 - k. Analysis of student learning
 - l. Providing feedback to guide learning
 - m. Guiding students to use feedback to further their learning
 - n. Analyzing students' use of academic language
 - o. Using assessment to inform instruction
2. edTPA is not new in Illinois. Those of us in teacher preparation found out 5 years ago that this would be a requirement for licensure in 2015 and have been working to implement the assessment over the last 4 years. Since 2013, almost 3,000 Illinois teacher candidates have completed edTPA portfolios and submitted them for official scoring.
3. edTPA is not the first state mandated "exit" assessment. For the last 10 years, the state of Illinois has required that teacher candidates pass the Assessment for Professional Teaching (APT), an exam that assesses their knowledge of schools and pedagogy. edTPA is replacing the APT as the state's "exit" assessment. edTPA is not more consequential than any other state assessment, it just represents a change in the assessment being used.

4. The edTPA is not owned nor controlled by Pearson. Stanford University is the exclusive author and owner of edTPA. The Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) is solely responsible for developing all edTPA handbooks, rubrics, scoring training, supervision of scoring trainers, all benchmarking and training materials and extensive support resources for candidates and programs.
5. Teacher preparation faculty have input into the assessment. SCALE is receptive to the feedback of edTPA implementers and that has been part of the development process of this assessment since it was created. edTPA is the result of input from teachers and teacher educators across the country.
6. Pearson does not own the videos nor does SCALE own the videos. The teacher candidate owns the videos and has parent permissions to use them for the sole purpose of the edTPA assessment. The permission forms that parents are asked to sign are carefully worded to reflect that the videos will not be used outside of scoring and scoring training. SCALE cannot conduct research or use the portfolios for anything else without additional permission from candidates and parents of the children in the video. Pearson cannot use the videos for any purpose.
7. edTPA is improving teacher preparation in Illinois. edTPA supports teacher preparation programs in learning more about what teacher candidates, individually and as a whole, are mastering and where they are struggling. Using edTPA data, teacher education programs are able to provide targeted professional development and support to faculty to help them address these issues in teacher candidates' preparatory course work, leading to better prepared teacher candidates.
8. edTPA prepares teacher candidates to better serve underrepresented student populations. By focusing on student learning and specifically addressing topics like academic language and supporting students' learning needs, completion of the edTPA reinforces the importance of differentiating education for all students in the classroom.
9. edTPA prepares teacher candidates for their future professional development and teacher evaluation. Because it is based on presenting evidence of practice, edTPA is an excellent preparation for the teacher evaluation system being used in Illinois schools today. In addition, because edTPA is modeled after national board certification, it gives teacher candidates a vision of what they can expect if they pursue national board certification in the future.

10. All edTPA scorers are practitioners (P-12 teachers or preparation program faculty) who are experts in their content areas. Although Pearson manages edTPA scoring activities, all scoring training is designed by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) and all scoring is conducted by educators. edTPA scorers include teacher educators, clinical supervisors of student teachers, K-12 teachers, administrators and National Board Certified Teachers. All scorers are selected because of their verified experience both with beginning teachers and teaching the subject-matter area in which they will score. The criteria for selecting and training scorers are rigorous and include:

- Expertise in the subject matter or developmental level of the teaching field (degree and/or professional experience).
- Teaching experience in the field (or experience teaching methods courses or supervising student teachers in that field).
- Experience mentoring or supervising beginning teachers or administering programs that prepare them. Overall, approximately 50 percent of scorers hired are faculty/supervisors and 50 per cent are teacher leaders.

All scorers complete an extensive 20-plus hour training curriculum that includes multiple checks to ensure that they score consistently. In addition, all scorers complete an anti-bias module that highlights potential sources of bias that might influence scoring accuracy.

For those that are interested in more information about the edTPA, there are more resources available to you. AACTE and SCALE have partnered to form the official edTPA support site (www.edtpa.aacte.org), which provides much more detailed information about edTPA, including the research and validity information, identification of other states using edTPA, and much more. For those who have specific questions they would like answered, feel free to contact Elisa Palmer, ISU edTPA coordinator, at (309) 438-1837 or elpalme@ilstu.edu or Tracey Spesia, University of St. Francis edTPA coordinator, at (815) 740-5656 or tspesia@stfrancis.edu.