Illinois colleges and universities have begun using edTPA as a capstone assessment of their teacher candidates. It is important that we communicate its role and value in preparing candidates who are ready to teach and details about the assessment and its process so that we have a common understanding of edTPA (what it is and how it works).

edTPA is not a paper and pencil or computer administered test. Instead, it is a performance assessment that examines evidence of a teacher candidate's work in three areas: planning, instruction, and assessment. Together these represent an important fundamental expectation that all beginning teachers have demonstrated their ability to plan, facilitate, and analyze students' learning. In particular, edTPA looks at:

a. Planning for **content understanding**
b. Planning to **support varied student learning needs**
c. Using **knowledge of students'** strengths, needs, and assets 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. Effectively using **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 results** to inform instruction.

While we have long considered most of these competencies in teacher education, edTPA changes the practice somewhat. First, the teacher candidate's materials are evaluated by independent scorers who have been trained to analyze the candidate's evidence of planning, instruction, and assessment. This is a highly calibrated process and one that is double- and triple-scored to ensure that portfolios that do not meet the passing standard have been accurately assessed. Second, passing edTPA is a new requirement for program completion and licensure as of September 1, 2015.

A team from Stanford University's Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) led the design and launch of edTPA in collaboration with university teacher educators and expert teachers throughout the U.S. As such, edTPA is the first nationally available performance assessment in teacher education. Illinois is among 12 states, to date, that have adopted it as part of their system to evaluate candidates' readiness to teach.

The evidence candidates submit includes commentary to describe their thinking behind the instructional choices they make, video records of them engaging students in learning, and student work samples to support their analysis of, and response to, student learning. Candidates seek permission from students and their parents or guardians to be included in the video and will make accommodations, which will not diminish the learning experience in any way, for those who do not give their consent. Their materials are transmitted and securely stored by the operational partner, Pearson, for purposes of scoring and score reporting. Contrary to the worry that some have expressed, Pearson is not, in any capacity, able to use candidate portfolios for any purpose other than facilitating the official scoring process. Similar to National Board Certification portfolios, the materials are the instructional

property of the candidates and programs emphasize candidate's responsibility to honor the standards of appropriate use and confidentiality. Campuses should have policies that describe strict sanctions for candidates who fail to fulfill this professional obligation.