

Frequently Asked Questions about edTPA

What is different about edTPA?

edTPA requires candidates to actually demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to help all students learn in real classrooms.

By focusing on the act of teaching, edTPA complements existing entry-level examinations that focus on basic skills and subject-matter knowledge.

It is comparable to the licensing requirements in other professions such as medicine, architecture, engineering and law.

Why is this being done?

Minnesota has adopted edTPA in response to legislative direction. The primary goal is to build on the strong foundation that exists in Minnesota to further improve the teacher preparation process, which will benefit schools and their students, teacher candidates and schools of higher education.

Minnesota's schools need new teachers and our students need these new teachers to start their careers ready to ensure that all students are learning in their classrooms. By shifting the focus of teacher assessment to evidence of student learning, edTPA will help accelerate the process of ensuring these new teachers are ready for the classroom.

Who will be affected by edTPA?

Teacher candidates will be held to a common set of expectations for all new teachers anchored in a real-world, student-focused classroom setting. The edTPA assessment experience is intended to accelerate the process of becoming an effective teacher and help candidates develop the confidence and skills they need to be successful in a variety of school settings serving students with diverse needs.

Faculty within teacher preparation programs will use data and evidence from edTPA, a rigorous assessment aligned to state and national standards, to help them focus curriculum and classroom experiences on the skills and habits that improve teaching and student performance.

Cooperating teachers will share a common expectation for the culminating experience of student teaching and better understand their role in the process of helping teacher candidates successfully complete this process. edTPA brings a new sense of shared ownership in the outcome of the student-teaching experience.

School administrators will have greater assurance that teachers can positively impact student performance. The edTPA process gives potential employers a sense of the competence of a teacher candidate based on a common set of expectations and standards.

Does Board of Teaching have the authority to adopt edTPA?

Minnesota law requires the Board of Teaching to implement a performance assessment as part of the teacher preparation experience. In collaboration with the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Board of Teaching selected edTPA as that performance assessment and is on track to meet the legislative deadline of 2013-2014 for implementation.

How are programs changing to accommodate edTPA?

Teacher preparation programs already have made significant changes to their curriculum and clinical experience to align with the expectations of the edTPA.

Teacher candidates must video themselves teaching and collect student work samples. Programs are working with schools to ensure that permissions are in place and that student images and work are kept secure.

A significant new area of teacher learning is in the area of academic language development for all students. New teachers must learn how to actively teach students the specialized language structures and uses of the content subjects they teach.

What does edTPA evaluate?

edTPA is a multiple-measure assessment that covers five areas: planning, instruction, analysis of teaching, assessment and academic language. These areas have been shown by research to be critical to student learning. edTPA uses actual teaching materials to evaluate teaching and student learning in these areas (e.g., lesson plans, assignments, teacher resources, video and authentic assessments of learning).

Will each teacher candidate's scores be available?

We are developing a system to report scores and outcomes both to teacher candidates and their preparation programs. Beyond that, the scores are owned by the candidate, who can decide to share them or not.

What does research say?

We know that the best way to improve student learning is to put an effective teacher in every classroom. We also know that well-prepared teachers are more likely to be effective and stay in the profession, thus reducing the high turnover that plagues many of our schools.

There also is sufficient agreement in the field that teacher performance assessments aligned with standards (such as the National Board Certification assessments) improve teacher performance and predict their future students' achievement gains. Additionally, teaching skills evaluated by edTPA have been shown to help improve student learning.

Minnesota and other states implementing edTPA will continue to collect data and study the effectiveness of edTPA specifically and performance assessment in general.

When do teacher candidates go through the edTPA process?

Each institution will determine the schedule, but in general the edTPA process will take place in the final stages of teacher preparation as a culminating activity. edTPA is not a test or a single assessment, but is a thorough and demanding process that takes several weeks to complete.

Candidates will not be alone. They will be supported throughout the process by faculty members, field supervisors and cooperating teachers. Many teacher candidates also set up formal and informal opportunities to support each other and share their experiences.

Who will score the edTPA?

All scorers are recruited and selected because of their documented experience with beginning teachers and expertise in the subject-matter content. They are carefully trained to make objective, comparable and valid evaluations of teaching skills and readiness for the classroom.

The scoring process will be facilitated by Pearson. Scorers include teacher educators from the programs participating in edTPA as well as qualified experienced teachers and school administrators. They are trained using materials developed by Stanford University.

Who will pay for edTPA?

While edTPA is free in 2012-13, in the future there will be a fee of about \$300 per assessment.

There will be a variety of approaches to payment. Some institutions are trying to support students by paying for the entire fee, other institutions are covering part of the fee and others are embedding costs in program fees or asking candidates to pay the full fee as they do for other state-required exams.

The fee covers the cost of registration, online resources, certified scorers and their training, calibration over time to ensure the reliability of scoring and the infrastructure needed to process and report candidate scores and protect their security.

How will edTPA results be incorporated into the teacher hiring process?

It will be up to the hiring authority or school to ask about the results and the teacher candidate to share them. Beyond the scores, candidates who perform well on edTPA will have a more sophisticated understanding of teaching and learning, and interview questions should be able to tap into the impact of edTPA on their readiness to teach.

How does the video work?

The video is just one of several edTPA components that will be evaluated.

Candidates will be asked to provide a continuous, 15-20 minute excerpt to show their performance in the classroom. Research supports that a 15-20 minute video is highly correlated with what you'd find in a longer video.

Candidates get to choose the video that best represents their teaching performance and can select the portion of recorded classroom teaching that is most appropriate for edTPA submission.

Who has access to the video?

The edTPA process has been designed from the ground-up to protect privacy and confidentiality. Each teacher candidate must agree in advance that the video cannot be shared or posted on any public site. The video submitted by each teacher candidate cannot contain the candidate's full name, the names of the cooperating teacher, school or district or the last names of the students. Once submitted for assessment, video recordings are secured behind a firewall with encryption security and can be reviewed only by authorized Pearson users such as scorers and scorer supervisors or authorized Stanford University developers of edTPA.

To view edTPA's confidentiality and security policy, visit:

<http://www.edtpa.com/Content/Docs/ConfidentialityAndSecurity.pdf>