

Talking About edTPA

A Guide to Explaining the edTPA Process in Minnesota

The Minnesota Board of Teaching, as a leader in the drive to ensure young teachers can demonstrate they are prepared and ready to teach, has developed a variety of materials to explain and communicate the importance of this effort.

The Minnesota Board of Teaching and the Minnesota Association for Colleges of Teacher Education have embraced the edTPA™ process as the best available common measure of teacher candidates. The state's educational community believes it is essential that clear and concise explanations of the process be made widely available.

This conversation guide provides basic information and explanations that anyone can use to summarize Minnesota's efforts to bring performance assessment to all teacher candidates.

edTPA is a new step within Minnesota's existing pathways to teacher licensure. It is an assessment process that requires teacher candidates to demonstrate the skills needed to enter the classroom ready to teach and help all students learn.

- ▶ Minnesota already prepares great teachers. edTPA will help make them even better by asking teacher candidates to demonstrate they know their subject and have the skills to teach it to students with different learning needs.
- ▶ It is the missing piece to other commonly required assessments that will allow us to assess more fully the ability of an individual to succeed in the complex act of teaching and that individual's readiness to begin teaching.
- ▶ edTPA provides research-based, common expectations for colleges and universities about what should be expected of teacher candidates in planning for instruction, delivering instruction, assessing learning, analyzing the impact of their teaching and supporting students' academic language development.
- ▶ While edTPA is a new requirement in the final stages of the program, teacher preparation programs continue to have freedom to determine how they prepare candidates leading up to edTPA.

This is not just another hoop for students to become licensed. edTPA gives Minnesota a common measure of teacher candidates that asks them to demonstrate the skills that we know improve student learning.

- ▶ edTPA is a program-completion requirement that will be one of many requirements reviewed before a candidate is recommended for licensure.
- ▶ edTPA includes a review of the teaching and learning process by documenting each candidate's ability to teach his or her subject matter effectively to all students through video and student work analysis.

- ▶ Because the process occurs during student teaching, candidates will be able to examine and understand how students respond to their lessons and assignments.
- ▶ Teacher preparation programs will have new data and evidence about their teacher candidates that is aligned with state and national standards to help guide program improvement.

Beginning with the 2012–2013 academic year, all 31 Minnesota institutions of higher education that prepare teachers are implementing edTPA, requiring their teacher candidates to complete the edTPA process.

- ▶ Many of these institutions already have made curriculum and program changes to integrate the edTPA.
- ▶ Eventually, the 3,000 plus teacher candidates who complete Minnesota teacher preparation programs each year will go through the edTPA process.
- ▶ As a real-world assessment, each teacher candidate will work with licensed teachers in Minnesota classrooms as they complete the edTPA process.

Minnesota’s interest in performance assessment and edTPA is not new.

- ▶ In 2009, the Minnesota Board of Teaching and the Minnesota Association for Colleges of Teacher Education began discussing how to include performance assessment of teacher candidates in the state’s accreditation system for teacher preparation programs. As part of that process, Minnesota joined states and institutions across the nation as Stanford University and leading education experts developed and piloted edTPA.
- ▶ In 2011, the Minnesota legislature passed a bill requiring teacher preparation programs to adopt a performance assessment as part of the required steps for teacher licensure. Later in 2011, the Minnesota Board of Teaching adopted edTPA as the statewide performance assessment to meet that requirement within the state’s accreditation system.

Minnesota adopted edTPA in response to a legislative mandate and as part of the reformed accreditation process. The primary goal is to further strengthen the process by which Minnesota ensures that new teachers are ready to meet the increasing demands of P–12 classrooms and make strides toward closing achievement gaps.

- ▶ edTPA moves the Minnesota teacher assessment processes to a more sophisticated view of teaching. It honors the complexity of teaching by encouraging a greater focus during the preparation process on effectively delivering instruction to students with diverse needs and showing evidence of student learning.
- ▶ Minnesota schools and students will benefit from the stronger bridge between the preparation of new teachers and the expectations and demands a first-year teacher will face in the classroom.