

## Minnesota edTPA and School Administrators

Minnesota has become a leader in a nationwide effort to better ensure that teachers beginning their career are truly prepared to teach effectively. This initiative revolves around the edTPA™ (formerly the Teacher Performance Assessment) process, which requires teacher candidates to demonstrate the skills needed to enter the classroom ready to help all their students learn.

The Minnesota legislature has mandated the use of a performance-based assessment of aspiring teachers. In response, the Minnesota Board of Teaching adopted edTPA as the tool to satisfy the mandate. All 31 Minnesota institutions of higher education now require teacher candidates to complete the edTPA process during their student-teaching placement. While some of the edTPA requirements will be unfamiliar at first to administrators and cooperating teachers, the process provides Minnesota a common measure of teacher candidates by asking each of them to demonstrate skills required to improve student learning.

School administrators are likely to be involved in edTPA in at least two ways. First, the clinical experiences of teacher candidates will shift to focus more than ever on classroom practices linked to better student performance and also will require candidates to create a video of classroom instruction. Second, in the hiring process, administrators will have a better sense of the capabilities of a new teacher based on a common set of expectations and standards.

The edTPA process in no way changes the responsibility of administrators or cooperating teachers to help develop a candidate into an effective teacher. It does not mandate changes to a cooperating teacher's classroom or alter what a cooperating school asks or expects of teacher candidates. As always, teacher candidates build their instruction on the school's curriculum and Minnesota academic standards.

### How will edTPA impact Minnesota schools?

For the first time, all Minnesota teacher candidates will go through a clinical experience that culminates in a common, rigorous, standards- and performance-based assessment. The edTPA process was developed by educators nationwide under the leadership of Linda Darling-Hammond and her colleagues at Stanford University and requires candidates to identify and collect subject-specific evidence of effective teaching from a learning segment of 3-5 lessons in a unit of instruction for one class of students.

During the assessment process, student artifacts – without information that can identify students – must be collected, copied and handed in. Additionally, one lesson must be video recorded to demonstrate how candidates engage students in the learning process, and then submitted for review along with commentaries by teacher candidates about their instruction.

Candidates' evidence is evaluated and scored within five critical dimensions of teaching through a secure online system facilitated by Stanford's operational partner, Pearson. These dimensions are planning instruction and assessment; instructing and engaging students in learning; assessing student learning; analysis of teaching effectiveness, and academic language development.

The edTPA process draws on experience gained from the 25-year development of performance-based assessments of teaching, including the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and the Performance Assessment for California Teachers.

### **The video recording requirement**

The video portion of edTPA has been designed to address privacy and legal issues while utilizing video recording as a tool that's been proven effective by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in evaluating master teachers. In addition to broader use of edTPA, video recording of teachers for assessment and professional development is increasingly common.

The edTPA process has been designed from the ground-up to protect privacy and confidentiality. Teacher candidates are trained in advance on the need to obtain appropriate permission for each child as well as adults who appear in any video recording. School administrators and cooperating teachers are expected to assist in obtaining the necessary permission forms or to place non-participating children off-camera in compliance with local policies and practices.

The video submitted by each teacher candidate will not contain the candidate's name, the names of the cooperating teacher, school or district or the last names of the students. Each teacher candidate must agree in advance that the video cannot be shared, posted or used for any other purpose.

Finally, guidelines for the program are very precise for placement of all video recordings behind a firewall with encryption security once submitted. A teacher candidate may share a video with authorized faculty at his or her university on a secure site in order to obtain feedback before submission. Once submitted for assessment, video recordings are secured and can be reviewed only by authorized Pearson users including trained and calibrated scorers, scoring supervisors and authorized Stanford University developers.

As the edTPA guidelines make clear: "Candidate materials, including video recordings, will not be shown in any public venue nor made available in a non-secure way. Candidate materials, including video recordings, will not be used for marketing purposes or as exemplars for marketing purposes."

### **A partnership with administrators**

As a school administrator, you play a key role in educating your experienced teachers about the new edTPA requirement and explaining how the process is designed to develop teacher candidates into truly effective new teachers. Your partnership is essential in helping schools and cooperating teachers support this new process as mandated by the Minnesota legislature to create a common measure that promotes long-term, high-quality teaching.

Just as importantly, you will continue to benefit from the experience of hosting teacher candidates. While the candidates gain insight from experienced cooperating teachers, they also bring energy and new ideas and approaches to the classroom that can invigorate any school.

Administrators have to be on the lookout these days for effective new teachers, particularly given the retirement projections for the teaching profession. Observing teacher candidates directly is the best possible form of audition and helps schools hire new teachers who can be effective from Day 1.