

February 5, 2013

Dear cooperating teacher,

I am writing to send information about the new NYS Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA), and offer ways you can support the work of your teacher candidates. I hope the following will be helpful for both experienced and new cooperating teachers. Although the performance assessment affects our May 2014 teacher candidates, we have several student teachers who have volunteered to pilot the experience. You are receiving this letter if your 4th quarter student teacher was selected to participate in the pilot.

A passing score on the new NYS Teacher Performance Assessment is required for initial licensure in New York State. The edTPA Teaching Event is a portfolio of a “slice in time” of the teacher candidate’s teaching. It consists of several components including a written description of the classroom/ learning context, lesson plans, classroom video showing the ways teacher candidates engage students, an analysis of students’ assessments, and a reflection on their teaching and their students’ learning.

The central focus of edTPA is on student learning in a subject area. Each subject area edTPA requires content aligned with NYS Standards and Common Core Standards as well as evidence of specific learning. Please ask your teacher candidate about learning outcomes that are a part of his/her performance assessment. In addition, teacher candidates must explain the thinking underlying their teaching decisions, make visible the strategies they use to connect students with content, and analyze student performance and adjust their teaching accordingly. All the while they must ensure support for students with special learning needs and with diverse academic, cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Basically teacher candidates perform as a teacher! Attention to Academic Language is an important component throughout the teaching event. Teacher candidates submit their edTPA by the end of the spring semester; however, we are asking them to work with you as soon as feasible for planning purposes. The next page details some ways that you can help your student teacher during this process. If you and your teacher candidate are co-teaching, the edTPA teaching event should reflect the student teacher’s own teaching, rather than a co-teaching effort.

Commissioner John B. King describes the edTPA as, “a multiple-measure assessment system aligned to state and national standards, including the Common Core State Standards and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC). Most importantly, the edTPA is on the cutting edge of teacher candidate assessment practices nationally and has been adopted by 25 states. The assessment is based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). In order for a teacher candidate to fully demonstrate his/her readiness to become a teacher, a teacher candidate must submit a video-recorded instruction component featuring 15-20 minutes of instruction, alongside planning and assessment documentation. We believe that the

edTPA can help guide the development of curriculum and practice in our colleges of education in ways that support our common goal of ensuring all students are college and career ready.”

We will be working with you as we all become familiar with the performance assessment. Once again, I sincerely thank you for the tremendous work you do with your teacher candidates. Over the years the teacher candidate’s Teacher Work Samples have been exceptional. We now look forward to seeing their edTPA portfolios when completed. It will provide us with great insights to their teaching, our programs, and our practices as teachers and teacher educators.

This letter is adapted with permission from our colleagues at the University of California, San Diego, who have used a similar performance assessment for 10 years. Background information on edTPA is available at <http://edtpa.aacte.org/>.

Have a wonderful semester.

Sincerely,

Nancy Casper

How can I support my teacher candidate?

Create a timeline

Each subject area Teaching Event contains specific requirements for the learning segment. Determining a learning segment that meets these requirements is the first step to success. It is also important to find the right time to complete the instructional part of the event. We are suggesting that the teaching event must take place the 2nd week of the student's final placement, however, the timing must fit the overall timeline that you, the classroom teacher, have created for your classroom, and it must occur when the candidates feel confident in the classroom. It also must occur soon enough for the candidates to complete the post-instruction tasks in time for the Teaching Event to be scored, and formative feedback be given. It is the joint responsibility of the cooperating teacher, student teacher, and university supervisor to determine the optimal time to complete the learning segment. Therefore, discussion about content and timing should start soon after the student teaching assignment begins. A professor will be working directly with teacher candidates.

Help with Understanding the Context for Learning

You can help the candidate that you work with by providing information about your school and your students needed for completing the Context for Learning Form and Commentary questions.

Help with Video Recording Logistics and Permissions

Candidates are required to record part of the instruction task, and select a segment that meets the subject area Teaching Event requirements. Candidates may need help with the actual recording process. In addition, parental permission for the video recording is necessary and your teacher candidate will be distributing permission letters to the students.

Other acceptable forms of support for constructing the Teaching Event include:

- Explaining the general design of curriculum materials or instructional and assessment strategies, then leaving it to the teacher candidates to make selections and/or adaptations based on perceptions of their students' strengths and needs on the content to be taught
- Making referrals to curriculum materials and professional and research articles on issues the candidate is considering. Many, if not most, teacher candidates will use or adapt curriculum materials developed by others; they should just cite the source, including materials from experienced teachers. It is up to each candidate to explain how the materials are appropriate for their students and the relevant learning objectives and standards.
- Asking probing or clarifying questions that encourage teacher candidates to deepen their analysis of and reflection on the artifacts and commentary prompts.

What level of assistance is appropriate?

The Teaching Event as an assessment plays a role in recommending teacher candidates for a teaching credential. Therefore, the Teaching Event should document the work of teacher candidates and their students in their classroom. Given the demonstrated value of collegiality in education and the placement of the Teaching Event within an educational program, edTPA encourages collaboration but is also interested in ensuring the authenticity of the assessment submission. Teacher candidates are learning how to teach and being guided by more experienced teachers. Professional conversations about teaching and learning are not only appropriate, but desirable. The Teaching Event can and should allow candidates to draw upon these conversations as they create their own understandings of teaching and learning and apply them in the teaching decisions they make. However, Cooperating Teachers providing support should avoid telling candidates what to say in the Teaching Event. Cooperating Teachers should ensure that the teaching decisions and thinking reflected in their Teaching Event are the candidate's own integration of their own experience, research and theory, and insights by other educators about the type of teaching and learning reflected in the learning segment.

In summary, educators and peers providing support to teacher candidates completing Teaching Events should take care that it reflects the understanding of the candidate with respect to the teaching and learning during the learning segment documented and is an authentic representation of the teacher candidate's work.

For our School Based Educators and Administrators

The School of Education at *insert College/University name* would like to take this opportunity to outline important changes regarding state certification for teacher candidates. All student teachers graduating May 1st, 2014 and thereafter will be required by the state to complete the EdTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment) in order to be eligible for certification.

This is a certification test for all student teachers. Similar to all other certification tests, this is to be completed by the student teacher. The purpose of this letter is to bring awareness to the educational community that student teachers are now required to complete this test during student teaching.

Information for the Teacher:

- Student teachers will need to video record an instructional component of a lesson lasting 15 to 20 minutes “for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the EdTPA for certification.”
- *Insert individual College Permission slips info here...*
- Cooperating teachers may receive additional points for mentoring a student teacher on the “other measures portion” of the APPR to acknowledge this contribution to the field:
<http://engageny.org/resource/guidance-on-new-york-s-annual-professional-performance-review-law-and-regulations/>

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Supervisor/College Support

- The College will support student teachers with video recording equipment and general guidance as needed.

More about this test...

- The assessment is based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and is aligned with the common Core. They are required to reflect upon their planning, instruction and assessment.
- You can find more information about this new test at http://www.nystce.nesinc.com/NY_annTPA.asp as well as a letter from Commissioner King at http://www.nystce.nesinc.com/PDFs/NY_TPALetterFromCommissionerJohnKing.pdf.