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Background Information

- The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) has been focused on improving the quality of beginning teachers to better meet the needs of Texas's students through a series of policy levers since 2015.
- In 2019, the SBEC adopted a pilot of the edTPA, a performance assessment certification exam for professional licensure with a focus on improving educator preparation in Texas to ensure that beginning teachers have demonstrated their readiness in foundational skills necessary to positively affect student learning prior to issuance of their standard teaching certificate.
- The goal of the edTPA pilot was to gather data on the impact of the edTPA on Texas candidates, educator preparation programs, and students.
  - The edTPA pilot is in its third year, with 40 Texas educator preparation programs (EPPs) participating.
  - Data collected during the edTPA pilot indicates that Texas EPPs are using edTPA data to improve their preparation practices. Data also indicates that the edTPA represents a more equitable pathway into the profession than the current pedagogy licensure exam, the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam. (See #2 in the chart below.).
- At the February 2022 SBEC meeting, the SBEC voted to approve the proposed rule changes to implement edTPA as the required pedagogy certification exam and will vote again as to whether to adopt the proposed rule changes at the April 2022 SBEC meeting.
- The proposed timeline for implementation of edTPA would include a three-year, phased-in implementation, with edTPA optional in 2022-2023, required as a pass/fail exam in 2023-2024, and fully implemented with a passing standard in 2024-2025.

edTPA and Texas's Current Teacher Shortage and Student Learning Loss Challenges

- Currently, there are flexible options in place for Texas local education agencies (LEAs) to hire the personnel they need to address current staffing challenges, regardless of certification status, through District of Innovation flexibilities and certification waiver processes.
- In terms of teacher production, the edTPA levels the playing field for teacher candidates looking to enter the profession regardless of their background because Texas's candidates have performed equitably across groups on the exam, and the exam holds Texas EPPs accountable for providing high quality preparation.
- Implementation of edTPA as a certification exam for professional licensure is an SBEC policy lever specifically focused on addressing persistent teacher retention and student achievement challenges.
- Through implementation of edTPA, teacher candidates will receive strong, supportive preparation and will have demonstrated their readiness to meet the needs of Texas students for professional licensure.
- Research reinforces that teacher candidates who engage in meaningful practice and demonstration of skill prior to certification positively impact student outcomes and remain in the classroom longer.

Texas edTPA Feedback: Common Claims and Responses

Claim 1: Implementing edTPA as a licensure exam in Texas would do very little to increase the day-one readiness of Texas teachers because approximately 60% of Texas teachers enter the classroom before receiving their standard teacher certification.

Response: SBEC's goal is to improve the preparation and support EPPs provide their candidates, thereby improving the effectiveness of novice teachers across the state of Texas. The implementation of edTPA would hold all programs accountable for providing high-quality training and support to teacher candidates to ensure their readiness to demonstrate critical teacher skills on the edTPA. For the 60% of teacher candidates trained via alternative certification, this means that they would be receiving more frequent and higher quality support from their preparation program during the most critical time in their development, while they're serving as a teacher of record for Texas students.

Note: If a program believes their model is not preparing day-one ready teachers, they should revise their program design to ensure adequate pre-service preparation. Preparation is the responsibility of the EPP.

Claim 2: edTPA will negatively impact the diversity of the teacher pipeline.

Response: In Texas, our numbers are in direct contrast to this claim. Pass rates and candidate performances between demographic groups are near parity.

Note: In contrast to the edTPA candidate mean scores by race/ethnicity as shown below, our current pedagogy exam, the PPR, has a 16% gap in the pass rate between Black and White candidates.

> **Candidate Mean Scores by Race/Ethnicity**
> - Black Candidates – 38.2
> - Hispanic Candidates – 38.7
> - Multiracial Candidates – 38.3
> - White Candidates – 38.9

Claim 3: edTPA has a negative impact on student achievement.

Response: Two independent studies have found the opposite to be true. Bastian et al. (2016) found strong predictive value between edTPA's Task 2 and student achievement scores on standardized tests across elementary, middle, and high school levels. Goldhaber, Cowan, and Theobald (2017) linked edTPA scores in Washington to elementary mathematics scores.

Note: Due to the effects of COVID during the edTPA pilot, there were limitations to collecting student data. Once additional data become available, TEA staff are committed to collecting and sharing data with the SBEC and interested parties to specifically address these concerns.

Claim 4: edTPA has a negative impact on teacher candidates' preparation experience.

Response: A study was conducted in a large, public university that analyzed the effects of edTPA implementation. The study concludes that faculty support is a key predictor of a candidate's perception of their edTPA experience (Cohen et al., 2020). The same has been true for our Texas candidates. Candidates who are well-supported by their EPP report the positive impact edTPA has had on their instructional decisions and

practices. We have also heard reports from cooperating/mentor teachers, school leaders and superintendents noting how much more prepared candidates are who complete edTPA as compared to those who do not.

Note: It is critical that teachers enter the classroom adequately prepared to meet the needs of their students. The edTPA has teacher candidates demonstrate their preparedness far more accurately than the PPR exam and will thus better ensure that teachers enter the classroom ready to teach. The sentiment of this Texas candidate is commonly expressed by other pilot participants: "*The whole set up of edTPA is to cultivate our growth as educators. It's really telling when you go through edTPA…whether or not you're ready. I feel like all of us [Texas A&M San Antonio pilot cohort] have come out on the other side a lot more prepared. The edTPA is a real test of whether or not we're ready to be classroom teachers.*"

Claim 5: edTPA is not valid or reliable.

Response: The edTPA demonstrates technical reliability and validity with a high level of quality to meet the policy and implementation needs of State Boards of Education and State Education Agencies across the country. The Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE) conducted a review of over 200 relevant studies and used this review to inform the design principles of the common architecture of edTPA (SCALE, 2015). Pearson included additional data disputing these claims in the 2019 edTPA Administrative Report. Also, an independent research study that evaluated the theoretical constructs underlying the development of edTPA confirmed that "content and construct validity can be argued as being technically sound in the edTPA" (Sato, 2014).

Note: The scoring model for edTPA has been modified for Texas. All of Texas' edTPA pilot portfolios have been double scored. The national scoring model for edTPA is 20% are double-scored for inter-rater reliability, and 10% are double-scored for portfolios that fall within a scoring band of the state's passing standard or national recommended passing standard.

Claim 6: Some states are removing edTPA.

Response: There are 17 states across the U.S. that have implemented or are taking steps towards edTPA implementation. Five states have removed edTPA as a certification requirement for a variety of reasons. For example, Georgia eliminated their edTPA mandate last year, with state leaders noting that edTPA implementation significantly improved EPP quality and therefore had accomplished its goal and was no longer necessary. Within the 5 states that have removed edTPA as a requirement, many programs still choose to use the assessment due to its effectiveness as an assessment of novice teacher readiness.

Note: In Texas, we have applied the "lessons learned" by other states' paths to implementation to improve our own approach. Here are examples of how Texas has approached edTPA in an effective manner:
1) 3–year pilot: To provide ample time to learn and evaluate data to drive decision making at the agency and EPP level.
2) Extensive stakeholder engagement: Texas specific workshops, webinars, work-sessions, etc. have been held over the last three years with EPPs (alt cert and IHEs), candidates, and LEAs.
3) Double scoring of portfolios: To ensure validity.

Claim 7: edTPA should not be the only certification exam option.

Response: Texas candidates must pass a content exam and a pedagogical exam as part of Texas' multiple measures system for teacher certification. These exams are designed to ensure that beginning teachers have

the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of Texas students. Because edTPA is subject-specific, candidates take the version of the exam that is aligned to the subject area they are going to teach.

Note: In response to stakeholder feedback, at their April 2022 meeting, the SBEC will discuss proposed rules that would codify a process and criteria for considering other options for performance assessments in the future should viable options be presented.

Claim 8: The edTPA fee will create a barrier for entry into the profession.

Response: TEA recognizes the edTPA fee is $165 more than the current pedagogical exam (PPR), and we have worked with the testing vendor to offset the cost for candidates participating in the pilot. Additionally, we have established a process for programs to purchase test vouchers, allowing programs to embed the fee into the program. Programs may identify additional ways to support candidates in paying fees associated with taking certification exams, particularly edTPA which provides programs and candidates with robust data to inform professional growth and continuous improvement.

Note: It costs the school district between $9-$20k to onboard a new teacher, and if a teacher is not prepared and leaves that classroom within their first two years, then the financial burden rests on the school district rather than on the EPP, who is responsible for adequately preparing candidates.