



Illinois State Board of Education

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Gery J. Chico
Chairman

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

August 20, 2013

Dear School Partners,

The Illinois State Board of Education is committed to ensuring that Illinois students are served by highly prepared and effective teachers. To this end, the Illinois State Board of Education strongly supports the use of the edTPA teacher performance assessment to better prepare Illinois teachers for classroom instruction, thereby promoting student growth.

The edTPA is a multiple-measure assessment system aligned to state and national standards, including the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and is on the cutting edge of teacher candidate assessment practices. In order for a teacher candidate to fully demonstrate readiness to become a teacher, a teacher candidate must submit a portfolio of artifacts from classroom instruction, including a video-recorded instruction component, examples of student work, and planning and assessment documentation. The edTPA was designed by classroom teachers and teacher educators, and it measures the complex knowledge and skills necessary for candidates to be successful as they begin careers in teaching. It is not a test of direct content knowledge but rather a summative assessment that emphasizes cohesive instruction focused on student learning and engagement. As of July 1, 2013, teacher preparation programs throughout the state were required to begin phasing in the use of the edTPA, a classroom-based assessment that is conducted during a candidate's student teaching experience. Beginning on September 1, 2015, all candidates in teacher preparation programs will be required to complete the edTPA as a condition of licensure.

As educators and administrators, you know that evidence-based feedback on a teacher's practice in the classroom is an invaluable resource in improving teacher performance and effectiveness. The edTPA process will provide this type of feedback in the scoring component as well as opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in self-reflection. In these ways, the edTPA process fosters professional growth and better prepares candidates for the challenges of classroom instruction.

I ask that schools and school districts join me in supporting teacher candidates who will be completing the edTPA process. Your support is critical in three key ways. First, I ask that you support teacher candidates in completing the edTPA by reviewing policies for the use of video in your classrooms to determine whether current district procedures for obtaining parental permission are adequate and by working with candidates to secure parental permission. Second, I ask that you collaborate with teacher preparation programs in ensuring mutually beneficial student teaching placements. Well-integrated student teaching experiences help to foster candidate success in the edTPA process and contribute to veteran teacher professional development. Third, I ask that your

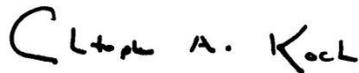
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cooperating teachers support candidates by providing practical support, feedback, and assistance to teacher candidates during their student teaching experiences.

Teacher candidates represent the future workforce of Illinois schools. It is of paramount importance that these candidates have opportunities to develop and improve the extensive skills necessary to effectively educate students and ensure that students are prepared for future success. Illinois' successful implementation of the edTPA and the success of teacher candidates depend on the knowledge, insight, and cooperation of your districts, schools, and teachers. I hope that you will join with me in support of the edTPA process by working with teacher preparation programs and candidates to ensure that Illinois produces beginning teachers who demonstrate effective planning, instruction, and assessment, and who are prepared to enter successful careers in teaching our students.

I look forward to continuing to work alongside you to ensure that Illinois is providing the best possible teacher education and preparation for our teachers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher A. Koch". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education