



Texas Classroom  
Teachers Association

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**Testimony to the State Board for Educator Certification**  
**Re: Item #25 Discussion of edTPA as a Certification Exam for Standard Teacher Certification**  
**By Holly Eaton, Director of Professional Development and Advocacy**  
**December 10, 2021**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. We join a broad array of stakeholders to express our concerns about moving forward at this time with adopting edTPA as a performance assessment for teacher licensure.

In this moment, the teaching profession is at a critical point – we have fewer candidates pursuing teacher certification while we simultaneously have a demoralized and exhausted teacher corps who are looking for a way out of the profession. While teaching has always been a difficult job, teaching during a pandemic has been nothing short of heroic. The profession has struggled for a long time to be an attractive one, and even before the pandemic, fewer college students and other potential candidates were choosing it. It is unwise to operate in a vacuum when making this decision without considering other constraints on the profession. Putting up an expensive barrier to a profession that’s extremely fragile at this point in time, without meaningfully addressing ways to make the profession more attractive, could prove disastrous.

There is really no debate that the better a candidate is prepared when pursuing certification, the more successful they tend to be in the profession; but as with most complex issues, there are more questions than answers about the specific means of accomplishing that. TCTA has consistently supported high standards for the profession, but it’s become increasingly clear that when we have a laser focus on teacher certification without considering that, as a state, we’ve allowed for more and more pathways into the profession, including some not requiring certification and others requiring less rigorous training, we are sending a very mixed message.

Certainly, the proposal to proceed with edTPA as a certification exam is viewed by some as the way to ensure teacher candidates are better prepared for the classroom; however in our minds, with all the unknowns and concerns surrounding it, the question is, is there a verifiable urgency such that this step must be taken now, and, do we know that the end justifies the means?

Are there other approaches that would provide a less abrupt change and costly way of better preparing candidates for success in the classroom? These are all questions we would urge the board to carefully consider before moving forward with adopting edTPA as a performance assessment for teacher licensure.

In sum, we urge the board to proceed cautiously with making major changes that could potentially have far-reaching and long-lasting perverse and unintended consequences for the profession.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify.