Using edTPA Local Scoring to Drive Program Change

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By Lyn Countryman

White paper

We have long been the premier teacher education in the state, but we do cannot rest on our laurels. It is critical to continue to strive to improve our teacher education program and produce effective teachers who know how to connect with students, develop student-centered, standard-based learning experiences, conduct informal and formal assessments informing their future instruction, with the goal of advancing the learning for all their students. Not only do we need to make improvements in our program, in this era of accountability, we also need to be able to demonstrate how effective our candidates are in the classroom using performance assessments (Darling-Hammond, 2012). We have used the InTASC Standards and the aligned edTPA to start this change. edTPA as a performance assessment has been nationally tested and is a reliable assessment of pre-service teacher performance (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2013).

Our large teacher education program produces approximately 600 teacher educators each year and has utilized the edTPA for student teachers the past three years. Two years ago we moved from a small pilot to a two-year phase in for all student teachers. To do this we had to train over 70 teacher education faculty to locally score edTPA’s. This served four purposes: 1) provide quality feedback for our student teachers’ performances, 2) familiarize teacher education faculty about edTPA standards, 3) encourage faculty to implement embedded signature assessments in their courses, and in doing so, to 4) drive system-wide change.

Simultaneously in this phase in, we brought approximately 30 methods instructors together to discuss our teacher education students strengths and weaknesses on the new InTASC standards. We identified areas where we felt we needed renewed focus. Then faculty began to develop embedded signature assessments (ESAs) on these topics within edTPA areas of planning, instruction, and assessment. As a follow-up, a small team of methods faculty worked on adding details to these ESAs. ESA’s templates have been developed in planning, instruction, and assessment. The assessment ESA was piloted Spring 2014.

During the phase-in we had groups of student teachers completing our prior performance assessment, the Teacher Work Sample, and other completing the edTPA. Despite the fact our student teachers were experiencing the edTPA, without prior experience, on a survey given to all student teacher concerning their performance assessment, students reported higher ratings for the edTPA and have greater positive comments. Sawchuk (2014) reported similar anecdotal response of student teachers.
In 2014-2015, we trained additional faculty to score edTPAs. In the future we should bring together faculty to group score edTPA’s in order to talk about what they are seeing from student performance. It is hoped these cross departmental conversations will further drive system change (Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010).

References


