



## Large-Scale Implementation of the edTPA: Reflections upon Institutional Change in Action

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As national attention on teacher education intensifies, teacher preparation programs (TPPs) are faced with the paradox of evolving their practice at institutions that are habitually slow to change. This reflective self-analysis documents how a large, regional TPP elected to adopt and implement the edTPA, moving in four years from one intern in one program to five hundred six interns across fourteen programs. Authors highlight the challenges TPPs face when attempting transformative change: namely, how to develop an organizational structure and support model for large-scale implementation; how to address program and faculty readiness; and how to promote data-directed program improvement and curriculum development. Reflecting on the challenges that arose as the implementation proceeded highlighted the need for faculty training, ongoing discussion and communication amongst all stakeholders, and creating a concise map of how the curriculum needs of planning, instruction and assessment ultimately lead to the final product. While the shift to a national performance-based assessment can be daunting, the collection and analysis of results from the edTPA provides programs with rich and useful data that will lead to successful teacher candidates and programs.

*Keywords:* assessment; data-driven; organizational change

As the spotlight on teacher education intensifies, teacher preparation programs (TPPs) must be able to demonstrate how they document teacher candidate quality and student learning outcomes. However, it is challenging to conceptualize this shift and implement change needed to surge TPPs to the next level of assessment. TPPs have historically been intransigent institutions that are slow to respond to the evolving educational landscape surrounding them. Demands for increased accountability and transformative change made by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)—among others—have sparked a transformation from the outside, but often fall short of being an internal catalyst. While TPPs continue to innovate programs by developing or adopting new assessment methods to increase teacher candidate quality, many faculty remain steadfast in their convictions that current practices and programs produce

good teachers. As external forces influence curricular reform and link educator preparation to student achievement, it is critical for TPPs to build a foundation for institutional change that supports a cultural shift. In turn, this will lead to improved learning for teacher candidates and ultimately PK-12 students.

One meaningful pathway change is to examine the quality of teacher performance assessments, which are employed by TPPs to determine a teacher candidate's readiness to enter the teaching ranks. Without valid and reliable assessments, TPPs have little documentation for stakeholders about their efforts to prepare strong beginning teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Building upon the legacy of the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program in Connecticut, the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, and the Performance Assessment of California Teachers (PACT), the edTPA continues to drive for high quality

performance assessments in TPPs. The edTPA allows TPPs the opportunity to implement a valid and reliable assessment instrument with the potential to enact substantive institutional change in the TPP (Peck, Galluci, & Sloan, 2010). In a small pilot setting with planning, leadership, and support, implementing the edTPA is a challenging but manageable task. In larger edTPA implementations, the scale issue can be confounding. Issues related to faculty buy-in, program readiness, technical support, and leadership may halt institutional change before it begins—that is, before the performance data that can prove its worth is even collected.

This article is not about the edTPA itself, but rather how a specific teacher-producing, large institution adopted and implemented the edTPA. The goal of this reflective self-analysis is to highlight the challenges TPPs face when attempting a transformative change such as an edTPA implementation. Structured reflection through the lens of organizational and cultural change provides a framework for examining the key roles and activities in relation to principles of change (Kezar, 2001). It also identifies potential barriers to overcome in order to successfully implement the edTPA at scale and transform teacher preparation. This self-analysis was conducted at a large regional institution in the southeastern United States that produces nearly 20% of all new teachers in the state annually. While this context is unique to the institution, all TPPs implementing edTPA are likely to encounter similar challenges regardless of size or location, particularly as the national spotlight on TPPs intensifies.

**Literature Review**

**Organizational Change in Higher Education**

Change is difficult in higher education, and if judged by past performance, change to enact diverse learning and professional environments is particularly hard. The values and organizational dynamics of higher education are unique and especially problematic for making foundational and cultural change. (Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005)

While national attention on teacher education may convince TPPs of the need to evolve their practice, institutional change in higher education is a slow process (Scott, 1998; Tagg, 2012). In order to achieve effective change in TPPs, a subgroup of committed faculty must be willing to adopt new practices while simultaneously shifting from an individual understanding to a collectively negotiated understanding of the practicality and need for change (Schien, 1990; Tagg, 2012; Peck et al., 2009). Part of the negotiation process is the need for stakeholders to have a clear conceptualization of the connection between the institutional culture and the understanding of the change process (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). This connection between institutional culture and the change process becomes clearer as individuals within the institution emerge and are identified by stakeholders as

key players. Ginsberg and Bernstein (2011) identify the roles involved in organizational change in institutions of higher education, including a leader, change agents, and facilitator(s). They offer a tool for outlining the role of each, as illustrated in Table 1. Each function plays an essential part in building the foundation for change, and through their actions, principles of change may be observed.

Table 1  
*Roles involved in cultural change (Ginsberg & Bernstein, 2011)*

Role	Importance	Person(s) Playing Role
Leader(s)	Possesses institutional power and influence to help change institutional culture	Dean of SOE
Change Agent(s)	Possesses passion and substantive knowledge to help make change occur	edTPA Pilot Faculty Members
Facilitator(s)	Possesses combination of institutional clout and substantive knowledge to help smooth the process of change	Director of Assessment and Accreditation Technology Facilitator/ Portfolio Manager

According to Ginsberg and Bernstein (2011), the leader of any institutional change effort must have a clear vision of where he or she wants to lead the organization and have the ability to articulate that vision to others. Once shared, the visionary leader must command the institutional power and influence to accomplish the vision. The leader is aided by the support of two key groups: the change agents and the facilitators, each with key roles. Change agents have the passion and content expertise to actualize the vision of the leader. They are supported by facilitators who have a combination of content expertise and institutional clout that can support and facilitate change efforts.

While the research literature in higher education organizational change focuses on the entire institution, organizational change in TPPs is not wholly unique. For instance, Kezar’s meta-analysis of change theory in higher education in 2001 has evolved into a “complex set of research-based principles” (p. 5) of change that, in isolation or combination, yield a framework for describing organizational change in action. Kezar (2001) states, “these principles are derived from the collective wisdom of hundreds of research studies, no recipe is offered; understanding change requires the development of common language and conceptualization of change that is content based” (p. 6). This reflective self-analysis utilizes six of Kezar’s principles of organizational change because of their alignment with emerging issues identified through the self-analysis. Together, they provide a

framework for reflecting upon the edTPA implementation and a potential model for other TPPs embarking on an edTPA implementation.

### **National Calls for Increased Accountability in Teacher Preparation**

Accountability in higher education is sharpening its focus on TPPs and their graduates. No longer can TPPs claim their graduates are well prepared; they must also demonstrate that their graduates can positively impact K-12 student achievement. The research literature linking K-12 students' performance and teacher characteristics is growing as more states connect K-12 student performance to teacher evaluations and TPPs (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Goe, 2007; Wayne & Youngs, 2003; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Munday, 2001). There is little argument among educational researchers that a teacher's preparation and qualifications are the most predictive indicator of student achievement (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wycoff, 2009; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Goldhaber & Brewer, 2000; Wayne & Youngs, 2003; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Munday, 2001). Until recently, there was no standardized assessment that could be used to measure a teacher candidate's readiness to become a "teacher-of-record." Individual states determine the criteria for teacher licensure. In many states, teacher candidates are required to pass one or more tests to prove their knowledge of basic skills, subject matter, and professional practice (Baines, 2006; Wilson & Youngs, 2005). A majority are "paper and pencil" tests that lack a performance component. In 2001, there were more than 600 aforementioned teacher tests in use (Mitchell, Robinson, Plake, & Knowles, 2001). Recognizing the link between teacher quality and student achievement, federal and state governments are demanding increased accountability in teacher education. Accountability in schools of education has been influenced by the passage of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). It requires all teachers who teach core academic subjects to be "highly qualified." However, the parameters of highly qualified were to be determined by each state, resulting in multiple definitions of the term. Therefore, a highly qualified teacher in one state may not be considered highly qualified in another.

Calls for accountability have also been addressed at the state level. In 1998, California enacted a law requiring all teacher candidates to successfully complete a state-approved performance assessment in order to be eligible for licensure. Until recently, Connecticut required beginner teachers to pass a performance assessment in their second or third year of teaching in order to be eligible for a professional license. (The requirement was suspended in 2008 due to funding issues.) Both assessments have been validated as predictors of student achievement (Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Wilson, Hallam, Pecheone, & Moss, 2007). Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, Tennessee, and Washington are all on accelerated

timelines to adopt a valid and reliable teacher performance assessment as mandated by state law (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2011).

### **National Pilot of edTPA**

Recognizing the need to assess teacher candidate readiness, the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) set out to create such an assessment. Working with the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and teacher educators nationwide, the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC) was formed. Using PACT as a model, the consortium developed a new version of the assessment that would be nationally available, the edTPA (Darling-Hammond, 2012) (edTPA was known as the TPA during the pilot and field test years, but called edTPA in this article for consistency). The assessment is intended to be used for teacher licensure and is comparable to licensing exams in other professions (e.g., medicine, architecture, law) (AACTE, 2012). According to Linda Darling-Hammond (2012): "The critical importance of this move for the teaching profession is that it has the potential to dramatically improve how teachers are prepared and to ensure that beginners enter the classroom truly ready to teach" (p. 12).

The edTPA was piloted in 2010-2011 and field-tested in 2011-2012. The national field test involved more than 7,000 teacher candidates in 21 states. A second field test was conducted during the 2012-2013 academic year involving 4,500 teacher candidates from five states. In November 2013, SCALE released the edTPA technical report establishing the validity and reliability of the assessment (SCALE, 2013).

Currently, there are 34 states and the District of Columbia involved with edTPA (AACTE, 2013). Six states have a current policy in place that requires successful completion of a state-approved performance assessment for program completion and/or licensure recommendation, including Hawaii, Minnesota, New York, Tennessee, Washington, and Wisconsin. The edTPA has been approved for this purpose in these states, while California, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, and Maine are taking steps toward the implementation of edTPA. In 23 other states, the edTPA is being used by at least one teacher preparation provider.

In states where the edTPA is required by state policy, student portfolios are submitted to the operational partner, Pearson, for official scoring. The edTPA is officially scored by evaluators who are trained and calibrated by Pearson, and also have expertise in the subject matter or developmental level of the teaching field under assessment (SCALE, 2013). The cadre of more than 500 evaluators consists of both university faculty and P-12 educators. Other states and teacher education providers are using the assessment for local evaluation only. Portfolios are only scored by locally-trained evaluators (SCALE, 2013).

**A Brief History of edTPA Implementation**

In an effort to reform the teacher education program approval process in 2008-2009, the North Carolina State Department of Education (SDE) mandated program revisions of all initial licensure programs. This included the submission of an electronic portfolio containing course-embedded evidence products to demonstrate teacher candidate proficiency of the state teaching standards. Then, while the revised programs were being implemented, the state university system commissioned a study of the effectiveness of all public TPP graduates as measured by K-12 student achievement scores in the state. This value-added modeling research, which included program by program ranking of teacher effectiveness, was disseminated to the state system education deans and their faculty. Following this system-wide study, the dean of the School of Education initiated a series of drill-down studies, including validity and reliability analyses of all teacher candidate performance assessments. In this context, a drill-down study was a more focused analysis that examined data at a deeper and more granular level. Analyses conducted at the university system level (Henry et al., 2014) were replicated at the program level (Henry et al., 2013). These studies revealed significant weaknesses in the teacher performance assessments utilized by the TPP, which therefore led the institution to seek a new, more valid, and reliable assessment to implement in its programs.

This work at the university system and institutional level coincided with the rollout of the national edTPA pilot. In 2010, the institution was invited to participate in a pilot of the new edTPA, a consortium supported by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), with a goal of providing valid and reliable assessment data to drive program improvement and curricular reform. Entry to the edTPA began in spring 2010, with one middle grades education teacher candidate participating in a trial to determine how a potential edTPA implementation would impact program process and curriculum.

In spring 2011, three teacher education programs (secondary English education, secondary history education, and middle grades education) entered the edTPA pilot with a group of committed faculty members leading the implementation. Approximately 85 teacher candidates piloted the edTPA during the student teaching semester, forming “Generation 1” of the edTPA implementation. Together, they navigated the many new edTPA requirements, activities, and expectations with their faculty and university supervisors. As part of implementing the edTPA, the faculty, university supervisors, and teacher candidates were required to access a new online portfolio assessment system, record and review video clips of teacher candidate instruction, and score portfolios using the edTPA rubric. Workshops were held approximately once a month to provide training

to university supervisors. Workshops were also held to introduce university supervisors to the rubrics and how to score them. Additional workshops focused on the technical aspects of accessing teacher candidates’ portfolios via the department’s electronic portfolio system.

Table 2  
*Engagement in edTPA Pilot, 2010-2013, Spring to Spring Comparison*

Year	Generation	# Programs	# Spring Interns	Total # Spring Interns	% Total Spring TPP
2009-10	---	1	1	---	-
2010-11	Gen 1	3	94	469	20%
2011-12	Gen 2	6	354	459	77%
2012-13	Gen 3	14	486	506	96%

The scale of the implementation increased significantly in spring 2012 with the addition of the elementary education, music education, and special education programs to the edTPA pilot. This increased the pilot to 354 interns, or 77% of all teacher candidates at the institution. These new programs formed “Generation 2” of the edTPA implementation. Tripling the size of the edTPA pilot necessitated the development of significant infrastructure (e.g., project management, communication, local scorer training, technology support) to support teacher candidates, university supervisors, clinical teachers, and faculty engaged in the pilot. The dean charged an edTPA leadership team to guide and support the implementation through this expansion. The edTPA leadership team included a faculty member from a pilot TPP, the director of assessment and accreditation, and a technology facilitator/portfolio manager. While the director of assessment and accreditation and the technology facilitator/portfolio manager assumed this role and related tasks as part of their workload, the dean of the School of Education provided a single course reassignment for the TPP faculty member supporting of edTPA implementation at the unit level. In addition to the edTPA leadership team, lead faculty in each program began meeting monthly as “pods,” i.e., groups of program faculty and university supervisors at the same stage of edTPA implementation. In spring 2012, there were two pods, one for Generation 1 programs and another for Generation 2 programs. The two pods met jointly to address issues of importance to the entire group, as well as separately to address generational concerns.

In spring 2013, building upon the success of the previous year’s expansion, the edTPA implementation expanded to 486 interns from 13 of the 17 TPPs at the

institution. The additional seven programs that comprised Generation 3 included: birth-kindergarten education, business education, health education, secondary mathematics education, physical education, secondary science education, and theatre education. The pilot’s distributed leadership model evolved from the pods to include lead faculty from each program engaged in the edTPA at the institution. These liaisons, known as “edTPALs,” are key partners with the edTPA leadership team. As new programs join the edTPA pilot, a lead faculty member is identified to serve as an edTPAL. They serve as program representatives, participate in collective decision-making for the edTPA implementation, communicate with program faculty about trainings and scoring timelines, and work with program faculty to develop embedded signature assessments in alignment with edTPA language and constructs.

This article focuses on the spring 2013 implementation of edTPA and includes all programs in Generations 1, 2, and 3. Since the majority of programs at the institution only offer the two-semester senior year internship in consecutive fall and spring semesters, the spring 2013 semester offers the larger proportion of teacher candidates and programs engaged in the edTPA implementation. This accounts for approximately 96% of spring semester interns at the institution. Having a critical mass of teacher candidates and programs engaged provided additional data for analysis (such as quantitative data and anecdotal feedback from interns, university supervisors, and faculty). While all available teacher candidate performance data is shared with programs annually, the edTPA offered the TPP an opportunity to analyze data across programs and address concerns and issues at the program and unit level.

**Institutional Change as a Result of an edTPA Implementation**

To support the growing edTPA implementation, a model of distributed leadership was developed to leverage the role of the leader, change agents, and facilitators to enact institutional change in the TPP. The institution’s edTPA leadership team was empowered by the institutional leader (the dean) to lead the edTPA implementation and develop an organizational model utilizing pod leaders and edTPALs over time. As the scale-up progressed, many issues emerged (both anticipated and unanticipated) that required action by the edTPA leadership team. How did the TPP address these emerging issues? An analysis of edTPA implementation artifacts led the edTPA leadership team to identify three foundational issues that TPPs implementing edTPA must address. The three issues include:

1. How to develop an organizational structure and support model for large-scale edTPA implementation.
2. How to address program and faculty readiness for the edTPA.

3. How to leverage the edTPA to promote data-directed program improvement and curriculum development.

Table 3  
*Theory to Practice Reflective Framework*

Emerging edTPA Issues	Kezar Principle (2001)	TPP Experience/Action
1. Developing an organizational structure and support model for large-scale implementation	Lay groundwork for change Be open to a disorderly process	Create organizational chart to structure edTPA work Develop communication protocol Provide technology support and anticipate needs
2. Addressing program and faculty readiness	Promote organizational self-discovery Realize change in higher education is often political Create a culture of risk and help people in changing belief systems	Other portfolios not successfully implemented and/or integrated Independent empirical evidence of program strengths and weaknesses Develop academic language of edTPA among faculty
1. Promoting data directed program improvement and curriculum development	Construct opportunities for interaction to develop new mental models Create a culture of risk and help people in changing belief systems	Seize opportunities to share edTPA data, teacher candidate work samples, and edTPA-related research by faculty Develop curriculum blueprints with edTPA to align with IHE, state, and national accreditation Hold edTPA data summits to connect faculty teaching across scope of TPP curriculum

To assist TPPs in conceptualizing these emerging issues, the six principles of organizational change most relevant to the edTPA implementation provide a framework for reflection and refinement (Kezar, 2001). For each issue, a situational context is provided, including a description of how the TPP addressed the issue and the organizational change principle in which it is linked.

**1. Develop an organizational structure and support model for large-scale edTPA implementation.**

The development of a distributed leadership model provided an organizational framework that allowed the institution to formalize the operational component of edTPA. The edTPA leadership team was empowered by the dean of the School of Education to lead the implementation. Responsibilities assumed by the edTPA leadership team include: planning local scorer training, developing help guides for teacher candidates and faculty, communicating with program faculty, and organizing monthly meetings with program contacts. The edTPA leadership team developed an organizational framework to provide structure, clear lines of communication, and a chain of command for clinical practice, faculty development, and technology support. The organizational

model, which aligned with Kezar's principles (2001), sought to encompass the many factors at work during the capstone experience of student teaching as the edTPA was introduced.

In the area of clinical practice, the institution established a system of pod leaders to provide university supervisors with a direct link for questions and issues. Pod leaders were full-time university faculty who act as liaisons between the program faculty and the university supervisors in the field. Pod leaders met monthly with the edTPA leadership team to review protocols, timelines, and address emerging issues and concerns. The pod leaders helped the edTPA leadership team analyze how university supervisors, clinical teachers, and interns were "taking up" the edTPA. For example, if the same questions were being asked by multiple university supervisors, the leadership team could immediately trace the questions to determine if it was a common widespread issue or a miscommunication within one pod. The strength of the pod leader model was that it balanced both the needs of the faculty (program development and research) and clinical practice (interns and university supervisors).

In spring 2012, the pod leader model evolved as more programs entered the edTPA implementation. As eight new programs entered Generation 3, the implementation became too large for the edTPA leadership team to support pods at the program level. As a result, the role of the edTPA liaison, or edTPAL, evolved. This new role focused on faculty development in three key areas that were not typically linked to the student teaching experience, but were essential to teacher candidate success in that experience. The edTPALs met with university supervisors on a regular basis to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of teacher candidates as they entered the field, which provided a forum for interaction and support to lay the groundwork for change. Next, by engaging with the edTPA more deeply and collectively, edTPALs were able to align their institutional student learning outcomes with the tasks in the edTPA. This allowed faculty to be more strategic in their assessment efforts. In addition, edTPALs began to build a collective research agenda around the practice of preparing teachers.

Technology support in the organizational model stood independent of clinical practice and faculty development, but it supported the efforts of both. The edTPA presented technology issues for teacher candidates, faculty, and edTPA scorers that were both complementary and individual. As an electronic portfolio, the edTPA required online submission of portfolio artifacts for teacher candidates and online scoring for faculty. Both stages required targeted training and support that must be built into the teacher education program over time. Lacking the opportunity to develop capacity prior to the scale-up phase, technology

facilitators held multiple support sessions for teacher candidates and faculty, including focused video support sessions in order to aid the edTPA submission and scoring process. Over time, as requisite technology skills are built into and reinforced through course work, and as the video and e-portfolio technology become more pervasive, the role of the technology facilitator will continue to evolve.

Overall, the organizational model allowed participating faculty to see their role in the edTPA implementation and how they interact with others. Individuals participating in new initiatives enter into what Doyle and Ponder refer to as the "practicality ethic" in decision-making (1977). This timeless concept, aligned with Kezar's (2001) change principle of "be open to a disorderly process," provides participants with a framework for understanding how they fit as an individual (skill set or position). It also helps them to understand how their participation fits into the larger organizational reform model. Participants were aware that the edTPA implementation was an iterative process that would evolve over time and involve a variety of ongoing discussions and revisions to the process. The model provided a foundation upon which further institutional change could be built. For example, between Generation 2 and Generation 3, the edTPA organizational model shifted focus from the role of the pod leader to that of the edTPAL. The organizational model of edTPA implementation provided a foundation for change, yet it continues to develop to ensure ongoing faculty involvement, technological updates, and most importantly, responsiveness to teacher candidate needs.

**2. Address program and faculty readiness.** In this specific setting, micro-political issues were the most significant barrier to implementing the edTPA, which aligns with Kezar's (2001) principle that "change in higher education is often political." There were three key micro-political issues involved in this TPP's edTPA implementation. While unique in context, they are not uncommon across the spectrum of higher education institutions. First, with teacher education programs in five colleges across the university, the edTPA implementation had to navigate five different political landscapes. In addition, five of the six edTPA programs in spring 2012 were housed in a large department that was undergoing its own organizational change—a reorganization that would result in three new, separate departments. These micro-political issues at the college and department levels impacted faculty readiness to engage in the edTPA implementation. Next, all teacher education faculty were strongly invested in developing teacher candidate evidences for the state-mandated licensure portfolio. Considerable time and effort were devoted to the state-mandated program revisions and faculty were very hesitant to replace their products with the edTPA. It was imperative that the edTPA leadership

team “develop a culture of risk” that would empower faculty to change their perspective on the edTPA (Kezar, 2001).

There was another micro-political issue posing a significant challenge: many faculty members disagreed with or were unaware of the philosophy behind the edTPA, including the role of Pearson as the operational partner. Team members addressed this issue by embracing Kezar’s (2001) principle of self-discovery. The team first provided edTPA information, including news and journal articles, handbooks, and other materials to all participating faculty. The team then provided data from the 2011 pilot to identify and illustrate program strengths and weaknesses. Data quickly revealed that teacher candidates in all program areas struggled with academic language and providing assessment feedback. The initial data was eye-opening and served as catalyst for faculty buy-in at several levels. Broadly sharing information about the edTPA (including criticism) promoted transparency in the implementation process and opportunities for faculty participation in edTPA-related research. Focusing on student outcome data rather than course instruction also kept student learning at the forefront and reduced concerns regarding academic freedom of instruction. In addition, continued dialogue (in both a formal and informal setting) continued with all faculty members across the colleges at many different levels and helped to minimize micro-political issues. Finally, maintaining local evaluation of the edTPA at the program and campus levels obviated the need to engage with official edTPA scoring with Pearson. However, as the national launch of edTPA continues, more faculty are choosing to become trained and calibrated scorers with Pearson because they feel it provides a different perspective of the edTPA and a deeper understanding of the instrument.

The major issue the institution faced in addressing program and faculty readiness was not capacity, but rather dispositional readiness. The TPP faculty boasted dedicated and innovative teacher educators, but in North Carolina they were weary of change and concerned about how more change would impact their work and their teacher candidates’ success. The unit had to concede that, despite the time and labor intensive process, the revision of the state-mandated program did not yield a more informative assessment of teacher candidate readiness. What was created was no more valid or reliable than what had existed before. Secondly, the faculty had to acknowledge that the edTPA was a more effective way to assess teacher candidates, and that it ultimately would be more valid and reliable. Once they had accepted the edTPA, program faculty worked through a backward curriculum mapping process in their individual programs to ensure that teacher candidates would successfully complete the edTPA portfolio during their student teaching semester. This

process involved revising courses and individual course activities prior to the culminating experience. For example, senior-level pedagogical methods courses developed new formative, embedded signature assessments aligned with edTPA. Earlier courses in the program are now also being revised to embed edTPA-related language, provide scaffolded support for teacher candidates, and ensure teacher candidate competence. Finally, existing program assessment goals and institutional-level assessments needed to be revised or integrated to better align with the edTPA portfolio. Models developed in one program in the edTPA implementation were shared with others as the implementation grew.

**3. Promote data-directed program improvement and curriculum development.** During the institution’s most recent NCATE accreditation visit, the unit was cited for inconsistency in reviewing its teacher performance data on an annual basis. Lacking meaningful assessment data, the program faculty completed annual assessment reports as a perfunctory task or academic exercise, rather than a meaningful process to inform program improvement. With the implementation of the edTPA, the TPP has collected high quality teacher candidate performance data to share readily and easily with program faculty. Once shared within programs, edTPA’s common language fostered discussions across programs. As the edTPA implementation expands, faculty members are developing their own academic language around the edTPA that links conceptual and skill development throughout the teacher education curriculum and across content areas. Kezar’s (2001) principles are a reminder that institutional change in higher education requires institutions to: 1) “Construct opportunities for interaction to develop a new mental model;” and 2) “Create a culture of risk and help people in changing belief systems.” When promoting data-directed program improvement and curriculum reform, these principles remind unit leaders and facilitators to keep the edTPA in front of faculty in as many venues as possible and to clearly illustrate how the edTPA aligns with and supports assessment and accreditation efforts at the institutional, state, and national levels. One recurring opportunity to highlight the use of edTPA data and its alignment to various sets of national standards is as part of the unit’s annual assessment reporting process. Through focused conversation and abundant data, more programs within the TPP are using the edTPA architecture to focus the annual student learning outcomes assessment for regional accreditation. In this example, three program learning outcomes in individual TPPs are focused on evidence of planning, content pedagogy, and assessment of student learning—and are all clearly aligned with edTPA tasks.

From the series of drill-down studies, including validity and reliability analysis of teacher candidate performance assessments, it became clear that the first

order was to identify such an instrument that could be used for multiple purposes. The evolutionary process developed by the edTPA leadership team created a comprehensive framework that allowed program areas to implement the edTPA in phases. Each phase included collaborative activities that allowed faculty members from within and between program areas to share best practices, reflect on the process, and most importantly, refine and customize professional development activities ranging from scorer training to program development. Finally, the “why” of change was continually reinforced in two areas. First, an ongoing analysis that connected student learning to the edTPA and other multiple sets of data (e.g., intern progress report, internship syllabus, early experience activities, teacher quality partnership) provided a framework to establish consistency within and between programs. In addition, a wellspring of research studies focused on student learning allowed both clinical and research faculty to collaborate in an unprecedented fashion (i.e., American Educational Research Association presentation, AACTE presentations). The edTPA leadership team promoted data-driven program improvement and curriculum reform in the edTPA scale-up through several key activities. With support from the School of Education dean, the edTPA leadership team seized opportunities to share edTPA data, products, and reflections by teacher candidates and faculty. Schools of Education have many preexisting opportunities to focus their attention on performance data, including college, department, and program level faculty meetings. By making assessment a regular agenda item, interactions with edTPA performance data increased in quantity, quality, and impact. Additionally, making performance data available for faculty following these meetings allowed for continued engagement on faculty terms, not forced interactions. Curriculum blueprints were also developed to align the edTPA with institutional, state, and national accreditation. Historically, institutional assessment activities have been add-on activities, not embedded throughout the curriculum. As part of the edTPA implementation, deliberate efforts to align program approval and accreditation efforts have streamlined assessment tasks and made the assessment of the curriculum as important as curriculum development and implementation.

A powerful example of data-directed program improvement was the first edTPA data summit held in June 2013. This event brought together edTPALs and other program faculty with the edTPA leadership team to focus on available edTPA from the most recent semester of implementation (spring 2013). Data from the semester was aggregated at the unit level and disaggregated at the program level, and was shared with all faculty members. Additional data analyses examined edTPA scores by faculty rank, edTPA scores versus internship grades, and other exploratory analyses. The goal of the data summit

was to share data openly and broadly with program faculty, and to also develop a set of guiding priorities for the next year of edTPA implementation. The data summit led to four key priorities for the edTPA leadership team and edTPALs to address in 2013-2014, including:

1. Curriculum mapping where formative and summative assessment is taught in the TPP
2. Determining if and how edTPA scores should be used to determine student teacher internship grades
3. Working to improve the quality and focus of local evaluator training; and
4. Engaging professional studies core course faculty (educational psychology, social foundations, and special education) in the edTPA implementation.

While these priorities are currently being addressed, one area in which progress can be reported is the fourth item. Faculty who teach professional studies core courses, such as educational foundations and educational psychology courses, are often marginalized from program level curriculum discussions. As the edTPALs began their monthly meetings in fall 2013, new edTPALs representing each of the professional studies core courses joined the edTPAL group. Now, faculty teaching across the full scope of the curriculum are connecting through the edTPA in ways that were previously not possible. Using the edTPA’s common architecture and language, professional core course faculty and TPP methods faculty have new opportunities to highlight the importance of each course in the program of study as they work to develop well-prepared beginning teachers.

#### **Discussion and Final Recommendations**

While this TPP’s experiences implementing the edTPA are shared by other TPPs across the nation, its responses to implementation challenges are context-specific. As the edTPA implementation expands nationally, the type and complexity of the challenges will continue to evolve. Kezar’s (2001) principles of organizational change provide a practical framework for reflection and anticipation that can be utilized by institutions currently engaging in or planning for an edTPA implementation. The principles of change create an effective model for rapid expansion in a large-scale TPP. The change process will not end once the edTPA is implemented in all TPPs at the institution because change is a dynamic, ongoing process. As TPPs move from edTPA exploration and adoption, to implementation and iterative refinement, Kezar’s principles continue to provide a valuable framework for reflecting upon and planning for institutional change.

Amid policies and practices in teacher education and higher education, the shift to implementing a national performance-based assessment can be daunting.



Successful implementation and communication by program leadership team can lead to transformational change. Recommendations to TPPs include:

1. Offer initial training for all faculty members.
2. Encourage discussions and communication regarding the components and potential impacts of using a national-based performance assessment.
3. Create a curriculum map connecting specific components of planning, teaching, and assessment that leads to the final product.
4. Dive in.

Program leadership must think about ways to build the workload into existing workloads for faculty that relates to implementing the edTPA. It must involve the entire program faculty in the process of a summative assessment. The collection and analysis of results from the edTPA will provide programs with rich and useful data on success of their teacher candidates, as well as areas for improvement. Further data analysis will provide TPPs and teacher educators with strong data to improve curricula, programs, and the success of teacher candidates.

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