



PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

DATE:

April 8, 2025

NUMBER:

25-05

**SUBJECT: CLARIFYING ACCEPTABLE SUPPORT FOR CANDIDATES ON TEACHING
PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS**

Summary:

This Program Sponsor Alert seeks to (a) remind programs of the required program supports for candidates on the Commission-approved Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) models (CalTPA, edTPA, and FAST); (b) provide additional guidance about what constitutes acceptable support; and (c) remind programs of what supports are unacceptable.

Key Provisions:

Multiple Subject/Single Subject (MS/SS) and Education Specialist (EdSp) Program Standard 5B and PK-3 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Specialist Instruction Program Standard 6B provide specific guidelines about what supports educator preparation programs (EPPs) are required to provide to candidates within the TPA process, what supports are acceptable but not required, and what supports are unacceptable.

According to the standards, programs are **required** to provide the following forms of support:

- Provide candidates with access to guides/handbooks and other explanatory materials about the TPA and expectations for candidate performance on the assessment.
- Explain TPA tasks and scoring rubrics.
- Engage candidates in formative experiences aligned with a TPA (e.g., assignments analyzing their instruction, developing curriculum units, or assessing student work).
- Provide candidates who are not successful on the assessment with additional support focusing on understanding the task(s) and rubric(s) on which the candidate was not successful as well as on understanding what needs to be resubmitted for scoring and the process for resubmitting responses for scoring.

According to the standards, programs **may** provide the following supports:

- Guide discussions about the TPA tasks and scoring rubrics.
- Provide support documents such as advice on making good choices about what to use within the assessment responses.
- Use TPA scoring rubrics on assignments other than the candidate responses submitted for scoring.
- Ask probing questions about candidate draft TPA responses, without providing direct edits or specific suggestions about the candidate's work.
- Assist candidates in understanding how to use the electronic platforms for models/programs using electronic uploading of candidate responses.
- Arrange technical assistance for the video portion of the assessment.

While the required supports are clear, the field has come to a variety of interpretations over the areas of acceptable and unacceptable support. The sections below seek to provide clarification and guidance for these areas.

Examples of Acceptable TPA Support

The following suggestions are intended to provide examples of what acceptable support looks like in practice. These recommendations are clustered into four areas: general support, support embedded within coursework, support with the program's specific TPA model, and support embedded within clinical practice:

General TPA Support:

- The program holds a TPA orientation for candidates at the beginning of each term. Included within the orientation is an overview of:
 - the guide/handbook with links to access resources
 - the TPA tasks required of candidates that term
 - the scoring process and rubrics
 - a sample submission
 - how to submit the completed TPA
 - resources the program has available to support candidates
- Faculty and/or staff who support candidates with the TPA provide a webinar/workshop to model for candidates the step-by-step processes for registration and submission of the TPA.
- The program creates a course/module in its learning management system that includes links to guides/handbooks, key resources, and a suggested timeline for completing the TPA.
- The program holds a seminar for candidates who did not pass the TPA, which helps the candidate understand the reason(s) they did not pass and changes they need to make before they resubmit.
- The program guides candidates in creating a TPA timeline that includes TPA tasks, coursework, and clinical practice requirements to help candidates manage their workload.

TPA Support Embedded in Coursework:

To support embedding the TPA within coursework, the TPA Coordinator and program faculty collaboratively create a matrix that demonstrates the alignment between TPEs addressed in each TPA task and TPEs addressed in the program's coursework (activities, assignments). Together, they also designate courses in which to embed assignments that align with the TPA tasks, ensuring candidates receive feedback on those assignments prior to completing their TPA submission.

Specific examples of ways instructors may embed TPA-aligned tasks into courses include:

- Modeling assignments after TPA tasks to familiarize candidates with the tasks of the institution's adopted TPA model (e.g., creating lesson and/or unit plans that include the TPA-required elements, utilizing TPA-provided templates).
- Supporting candidates in analyzing student data to inform instructional decisions.
- Providing candidates with sample student work to practice analyzing student learning.
- Requiring candidates to identify student assets (e.g., home language, community knowledge, learning preferences) and integrate them into their instructional planning.
- Inviting candidates to analyze their clinical practice classrooms and create lesson modifications that leverage students' assets (cultural and/or linguistic).
- Having candidates design lesson plans using UDL principles and/or watch classroom videos to identify UDL-identified strategies.
- Using the TPA task rubrics to evaluate candidates on assignments modeled after TPA tasks.
- Encouraging candidates to collaborate with peers for feedback and discussion on their TPA.

Support to Familiarize Candidates with Specific TPA Model Tasks and Scoring Criteria:

Programs may also develop specific course assignments and/or activities to familiarize candidates with the program's specific TPA model. Options for assignments and/or activities include candidates:

- Discussing possible responses to TPA task prompts.
- Mapping evidence to the rubrics on a prescored submission.
- Scoring a sample submission using the rubrics to support candidates in better understanding the tasks and rubrics.
- Drafting responses to TPA tasks and then evaluating one another's responses using the appropriate rubric(s).

TPA Support Embedded in Clinical Practice:

- When evaluating candidates in their clinical practice, district/university supervisors and/or cooperating teachers/mentors use relevant rubric(s) from the adopted TPA model.

- Engage candidates in guided reflection on their clinical practice experiences, requiring them to cite evidence to support reflections.
- Ask candidates to regularly reflect on their growth in areas aligned with the TPEs\ to reinforce reflection skills.
- Require candidates to video record at least some teaching observations to become familiar with the process of recording themselves. Candidates then view the recording and self-reflect on their observations, sharing their reflections with their district/university supervisor.
- Following clinical practice observations, coaches use prompts from the TPA to guide candidates in reflecting on their instruction.

Unacceptable Support

The standards provide specific details of what constitutes **unacceptable support** from programs:

Unacceptable Support Includes:

- Editing or revising a candidate’s official materials prior to submission and/or prior to resubmission (for candidates who are unsuccessful on the assessment).
- Providing specific feedback to candidate responses that suggests or provides alternative responses (i.e. telling candidates what to write/say), prior to submission for official scoring and/or prior to resubmission (for candidates who are unsuccessful on the assessment).
- Providing a candidate with the content or answer in response to a prompt or task (e.g., selecting/suggesting the focus student, analyzing student work, determining next steps for instruction for a group of students)
- Telling candidates which video clips to select for submission.
- Uploading candidate TPA responses (written responses or video entries) on public access websites, including social media.

Additional Resources:

To better guide candidates in preparation for their TPA submissions, program support providers—including course instructors, clinical practice supervisors, and TPA coordinators—the program standards also require “program faculty (including full time, adjunct, and other individuals providing instructional and/or supervisory services to candidates within the program) to become knowledgeable about the TPA tasks, rubrics, and scoring, as well as how the TPA is implemented within the program so that they can appropriately prepare candidates for the assessment and also use TPA data for program improvement purposes.” Resources can be found at the following links: [CalTPA](#); [edTPA](#)

Background:

In accordance with CA Ed Code §44320.2, all individuals seeking a California teaching credential must pass a Teaching Performance Assessment, in addition to successfully completing coursework and clinical practice through a Commission-approved program. The TPA measures

teaching credential candidates' proficiency on elements of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE) aligned with the credential they are seeking.

Currently there are three Commission-approved TPA models for Multiple Subject (MS), Single Subject (SS), and Education Specialist (EdSp)-Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN) and Extensive Support Needs (ESN) candidates: CalTPA, the Commission's TPA model; edTPA, operated by Evaluation Systems; and the Fresno Assessment of Student Teachers (FAST), implemented by California State University, Fresno. Models of the CalTPA for Early Childhood Special Education (EdSp-ECSE), Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH), and Visual Impairments (VI) are currently being field tested.

Commission-approved teacher preparation programs are expected to demonstrate how they support candidates through the TPA process, as articulated in each credential area's program standards, during the accreditation process.

References

[Assembly Bill 320 \(Medina, Chap. 663, Stats. 2021\)](#)

[Education Code section 44320.2\(c\)](#)

[Education Code section 44259\(b\)\(3\)\(A\)](#)

[Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject Credential Program Standards and Teaching Expectations](#)

[Preliminary Education Specialist Teaching Credential Program Standards, and Teaching Performance Expectations](#)

[PK3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook](#)

Commission Agenda Items

[Agenda Item 4E: June 2024](#)

[Agenda Item 5D: August 2024](#)

[Agenda Item 4C: October 2024](#)

[Agenda Item 4A: February 2025](#)

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