



It's All About Teaching Performance!

In the end, it all comes down to performance in the classroom. Will those many hours of course work, observation and student teaching result in teacher candidates who can help students meet academic content standards? How will we know?

As a result of legislation supported by the PTA [SB 1209 (Scott), 2006], beginning July 2008 all elementary, middle and high school teacher candidates need to pass a new Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) to demonstrate that they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a beginning teacher in California public schools.

SB 1209 charged the Commission on Teacher Credentialing with developing a model teaching performance assessment for California. The Commission's TPA model is the CalTPA. This model was developed working with professional educators and the Educational Testing Service. State law allows teacher preparation program sponsors to develop an alternative TPA model for approval by the Commission.

The CalTPA provides the teacher candidate with a series of four performance tasks, each of which increases in complexity. All but one of the tasks includes work with actual K-12 students. Taken as a whole, the four tasks measure teaching performance in multiple ways. The tasks are embedded within the teacher preparation program sequence and are administered and scored by trained faculty and other educators.

Parents have a role in this important teacher assessment as well. If your child's class has been served by a student teacher or intern, the school will be requesting parents' permission to video the lesson performed as the final task of the TPA. Although the video would show both the teacher and students, the primary focus is on the teacher's instruction, not on the students in the class. Parents, of course, will be given the opportunity to have their child opt out of the video by having their child placed out of taping range; however, we encourage as many students as possible to be a part of the video so that the lesson represents a real classroom situation that assesses the teacher's skill and abilities. A process and protocol are being developed so that the video is protected like any other student teacher record.

The TPA is assessed by qualified educators who may be university faculty, K-12 teachers, administrators, supervisors, mentors, and support providers, as well as retired faculty, teachers, and other education professionals. Each program sponsor identifies its own assessors and ensures that the assessors have the necessary background and training to assess candidate performance accurately and fairly.

The CalTPA scoring results are used to judge both the success of a candidate and the success of the teacher preparation program in the following ways:

- As part of the recommendation of a candidate for a credential
- As an indication of program effectiveness
- By the candidate to judge his or her progress and needs
- As evidence of a candidate's development for use in a beginning teacher support and assessment induction program.

The CalTPA brings the entire education community, parents, teachers, administrators, and universities, together to take part in the growth and development of our new teachers. **Parents have an important role in this new teacher performance assessment by understanding and supporting this assessment.**

For more information on the **CalTPA**, visit the Commission website at
<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/TPA.html>