The Consequences of the State Implementation of a Nationally Standardized Teacher Performance Assessment as a Certification Requirement: A Mixed Methods Study

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By

Deborah Greenblatt

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Urban Education in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
ABSTRACT

The Consequences of the State Implementation of a Nationally Standardized Teacher Performance Assessment as a Certification Requirement: A Mixed Methods Study

By

Deborah Greenblatt

Advisor: Dr. Anthony Picciano

The edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment) is a nationally distributed and scored standards-based teacher performance assessment being promoted throughout the country (AACTE, n.d.-a). This mixed methods study investigated the experiences of New York City teacher candidates and teacher educators with the elementary education edTPA portfolio. It was found that teacher candidates experienced various supports and challenges based on their personal demographics, school of education, and student teaching placements. Additionally, the edTPA affected participants' personal, professional, academic and student teaching experiences. Furthermore, the study revealed ways that implementation of the edTPA affected teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum.

Based on the findings, multiple semesters of student teaching, structures but not firm deadlines, technology support, and working with peers were helpful. There was an apparent need for more faculty training, more informed and consistent cooperating teachers and field supervisors, and emotional/psychological support for teacher candidates to mitigate the stress of the process. Furthermore, there is a concern that the factors associated with urban teaching make taking the edTPA more challenging and dissuade teacher candidates and schools of education from placing student teachers in this setting.
Policy recommendations include having a safety-net more consistent with the other State assessments, increasing funding for the ongoing demands to provide appropriate support, changes to the scoring process and portfolios, and allowing for teacher educators to contest a score that is inconsistent to field assessments.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.”

—*Cat in the Hat*, Dr. Seuss

I am truly grateful to have such people in my life. The story is often retold by my mom that at commencement for my Masters degree at GW, I pointed to a doctoral tam and said, “I’m going to get one of those someday.” Well, that “someday” would not have been possible without the following people.

I am truly fortunate for my family. My parents always put their children first and are the most generous people I know. My mom should get a degree for all she has learned from reading every paper I have written in my doctoral program. She has dealt with my moods due to frustration and stress with patience and kindness. My dad envisions me becoming a future Secretary of Education. He has always believed in my work ethic and passion to achieve whatever I set my mind to doing. My twin brother, Jeff, knows me a way no one else can. It’s a rare occurrence in life when you can know how supported you are without someone having to tell you.

Jem is my sunshine.

Without Dr. Gibbs Williams, I would not be accomplishing this goal. He gave me the tools I needed to lift me out of a dark time and get back to the person I am.

The Model Elementary Education Program at The George Washington University prepared me to be a confident, caring, and capable classroom teacher and shaped me into the teacher educator I have become. I am especially grateful to Dr. Sylven Beck who has been my mentor since 1999.
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There are few people who are patient and understanding enough to maintain a friendship with an overworked doctoral student and also support her on in the process. Since my application to the Urban Education program through to the dissertation defense, Kim, Vera, Adam, and Rasha have counseled me through the tough times and celebrated the achievements. What humbles me the most is how each one of them believes that I deserve any conference presentation, journal article, or job for which I apply.

I am truly grateful for my dissertation committee of Dr. Anthony Picciano, Dr. Nicholas Michelli, and Dr. Karen Koellner. Over countless lunches, Dr. P has supported me and pushed me to do my best. I don't know how I would have survived without the funding provided by the research opportunities he found for me. Dr. P cares so deeply about his students, and I am humbled by the pride and confidence he has in me as a person, scholar, and educator. Nick sees my potential as a teacher educator and an activist. I have had the privilege of going to NNER and presenting with him. Being able to say I am one of Nick's students has not only gotten me warm receptions from those who know him personally but has also job opportunities from those who know the work he does. I look forward to our continued work together to strengthen education for social justice and sharing pictures of our beloved dogs. Karen has helped me grow as a researcher and teacher educator. As a colleague at Hunter, Karen always listened to my ideas, even though I was "just" an adjunct and a graduate student. She has supported me during difficult situations as we worked together to solve problems. She saw my dedication to the profession and knew that I had the best interests of the teacher candidates at heart.

In addition to the faculty mentioned above, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Stephan Brumberg and Dr. Ira Shor, who have shown amazing support for me and have taught me so much in past few years.
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Christine Saieh - our mother hamster - my fellow Wonder Woman. With love and devotion, she takes care of all of us in the Urban Education program. Christine is always ready to make me laugh, give me a hug, or threaten to beat up anyone who gives me a hard time.

What a turn of events since that fateful day at Hunter College when Jade Young-Micheals asked if I would be interested in teaching a course because an adjunct had to drop it at the last minute. Jade has been a listening ear and smiling face throughout my time at Hunter.

Thank you to my former teacher candidates at Hunter College and Teachers College who inspired this dissertation. Special thanks to my QUESTies, especially my Hunter alumni happy hour group: Jamie, Elwira, Jackie, Kate, Donna, Lucia, Andrijana, Kristie, Amanda, Clariza, and Sofia. Additionally, thank you to the teacher candidates and teacher educators who participated in the study. My research agenda is to give a voice to those on which policy is enacted, so this is really for all of you.

When I first thought about writing this, it reminded me of the scene in the Wizard of Oz when Dorothy says goodbye to all her friends in Oz; however, she leaves because she wants to go home. For me, when I found The Graduate Center, I was home. So, thank you to my GC family, those alumni, faculty members, staff, and fellow students who make the Urban Education program so special. Special thank you to Cohort 3’s Dr. Kate O’Hara. As an experienced assistant professor, Kate was gracious enough to partner with a doctoral student to write an article. This experience resulted in my first publication and a special friendship. Another special thank you to Cohort 11’s Dr. Audra Watson. From our non-verbal communication across the room during discussions in Critical Social Theory to our many lunches together, Audra has been my mentor and trusted friend through every step of my GC journey.
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This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Jean Anyon. I enrolled as a non-matriculated student in her Critical Social Theory class in the spring of 2012. After the first session, I walked to the elevator and tears rolled down my face as I smiled and knew I had found what I had been looking for all these years. It is an honor to say I was one of her students, and I can only hope that my dedication to social justice can carry on her legacy.

“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.”

– Winnie the Pooh, A.A. Milne
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Chapter One: Introduction

This study investigated implementation of a state-mandated nationally distributed and scored pre-service teacher performance assessment (edTPA) for elementary teacher candidates in New York City. It relied on a mixed-methods approach that used survey data and interviews of teacher candidates and teacher educators to study the supports and challenges faced when taking the edTPA. It also examined how the implementation of the assessment affected participants' personal, professional, academic and student teaching experiences. Additionally, it investigated the effects of the implementation on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum.

edTPA stands for "Teacher Performance Assessment." This test was created as an evaluation of teacher readiness by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE), is promoted by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), and is nationally distributed and scored by Evaluation Systems, part of Pearson Education, Inc. It differs from previous tests in that it purports to measure "teacher performance" by requiring student teachers to compile a portfolio of planning, instruction, and assessment material for a "learning segment" of 3-5 lessons. For the edTPA portfolio, teacher candidates are required to submit lesson plans, student work samples, a 20-minute classroom video, and a 40-60 page "instructional commentary." In this commentary, teacher candidates explain their instructional choices, analyze student data, and reflect on their teaching.

As you will see in the following chapters, this study is contextualized within the history of teacher certification, the rise performance assessments, and the current political climate of teacher education and accountability. Bourdieu's theories of capital, Foucault's theories of power and discourse, and the political theory of neoliberalism are used a critical policy lens for
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analyzing and discussing the data. Conclusions will be drawn by connecting this study to the literature and suggesting areas for further study.

This study will contribute to the literature by providing data about the experiences of teacher candidates and teacher educators taking the elementary education edTPA in the largest urban city in the United States. Based on the findings, policy recommendations will be made to schools of education, states, and SCALE.

Stated Goals, Objectives, and Benefits of the edTPA by SCALE and AACTE

Since the purpose of this dissertation is to document the teacher candidates’ and teacher educators’ experiences with the edTPA and the resulting ramifications, it is important to provide SCALE and AACTE’s intentions. Additionally, in latter chapters, SCALE and AACTE’s intentions will be examined using support from the literature and various aspects of the theoretical framework.

The following statements were taken from the “About the edTPA” and “edTPA FAQ” webpages. They express the goals, objectives, benefits for teacher preparation programs, benefits for states, and how the edTPA can be “educative” for schools, teacher candidates, licensure boards, and policy makers.

Stated goals of the edTPA. SCALE and AACTE layout the following goals:

edTPA is the first nationally accessible preservice teacher assessment and support program to:

• Improve student outcomes;
• Improve the information base guiding improvement of teacher preparation programs;
• Strengthen the information base for accreditation and evaluation of program effectiveness;
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- Be used in combination with other measures as a requirement for licensure; and
- Guide professional development for teachers across the career continuum (AACTE, n.d.-a).

**Stated objectives of the edTPA.** SCALE and AACTE state the following as objectives of the edTPA:

Policy makers and the public demand an objective and trustworthy process to evaluate the performance of aspiring teachers before they lead an actual classroom. As the first nationally accessible teacher performance assessment, edTPA meets the following objectives:

- Help candidates develop the confidence and skills they need to be successful in urban, suburban, and rural schools.
- Provide a uniform and evidence-based process that can be used across states to confirm that aspiring teachers demonstrate their readiness for the classroom.
- Measure candidates’ ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners, including English language learners and special education students.
- Inform teacher licensure and recruitment.
- Provide meaningful and consistent data that can be used to improve and update teacher preparation programs and renew program curriculum.
- Allow states, school districts, and teacher preparation programs to share a common framework for defining and measuring teaching performance.
- Create a body of evidence about teacher performance that will ultimately establish a national standard for relevant and rigorous practice that advances student learning (AACTE, n.d.-a).

**Stated benefits to teacher preparation programs.** SCALE and AACTE declare that the
edTPA offers many benefits for teacher preparation programs, including:

- Ongoing professional development and resources through an online community and face-to-face workshop opportunities through the National Academy.
- Measurement of candidates' abilities to plan instruction to meet learning standards and to differentiate instruction for diverse learners.
- Formative use of rubrics in course assignments, locally developed curriculum-embedded assessments, and clinical practice evaluations.
- Actionable evidence of candidates' performance over time to address the real-world needs and challenges that teachers face every day.
- Opportunities for continuous program renewal based on meaningful performance data.
- Support for state and national accreditation through easily accessible individual data that can be aggregated to analyze performance within and across subject areas and program options (AACTE, n.d.-b).

**Stated benefits to states.** SCALE and AACTE assert that the edTPA provides the following as benefits to states:

States can use edTPA results as a key indicator for granting an initial license to teacher candidates regardless of the path they take to teaching. Benefits to states include:

- edTPA gives states, school districts, and teacher preparation programs a common framework and language for defining and measuring performance of teacher candidates.
- Gives states the ability to evaluate the impact of teacher preparation on candidate knowledge and skills that lead to greater student learning.
- Provides a nationally available common measure that is valid and reliable to evaluate pre-service teachers' readiness to teach.
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- Use of a subject-specific, performance-based assessment system aligned to general and discipline-specific teaching standards designed and developed by educators for educators.
- Access to an array of educative implementation resources and protocols that support preparation program renewal (AACTE, n.d.-b).

**Stated ways the edTPA is “educative” for schools, teacher candidates, licensure boards, and policy makers.** According to SCALE and AACTE,

'educative' simply means that everyone who is engaged in this assessment process learns something; that this is a continuous learning process. Schools, candidates, licensure boards, policy makers, everyone.

For example:

- Programs can use edTPA rubrics and other support materials to ensure candidates have formative opportunities to learn what edTPA measures.
- Candidates integrate knowledge and skills learned in their programs and demonstrate them in real practice.
- Programs receive candidate data and use candidate experience to tell them what is working and where they need help.
- Collaborating teachers and schools use edTPA to reflect on their own teaching practices.
- Policymakers have more insight and data on how programs are preparing new teachers (AACTE, n.d.-b).

Listing and highlighting some of the goals, objectives, benefits for teacher preparation programs, benefits for states, and how the test can be “educative” sets the context for the publicly stated intended purpose for the edTPA. It is important to keep this in mind as the research is
What does the elementary education edTPA ask of teacher candidates?

Since the edTPA has subject-specific handbooks, it is important to become familiar with the handbook that is used by candidates in this study to understand their experiences better. The elementary education edTPA handbook is a 64-page instruction guide. This manual outlines the instructions and expectations for the portfolio to be created consisting of a 60-to 68-page document accompanied by no more than 20 minutes of video.

The elementary education edTPA consists of four tasks: one for math and three for English language arts. The math task asks teacher candidates to analyze assessment data to plan a "re-engagement" lesson for a group of students based on a mathematical misunderstanding. A new strategy must be used that is tailored to meet the needs of the identified group of students. This lesson is conducted with a small group or with the whole class depending on the assessment data. Teacher candidates must clearly teach mathematical conceptual understanding along with either procedural fluency or problem solving. After the re-engagement lesson, teacher candidates must use data to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching.

The English language arts section is made up of three tasks: planning, instruction, and assessment. Teacher candidates must plan a 3-5 lesson "learning segment" on either comprehension or composition while including a reading/writing connection. Throughout the learning segment, teacher candidates are asked to assess their students' progress and show evidence of their understanding of the "language function," "literacy strategy," and "syntax or discourse" used (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2015). (The language of the test is discussed further in sections that follow.) The teacher candidates also must show how
they met the needs of English language learners, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals for special education students, and any other group such as struggling readers and writers or gifted and talented students.

**Problem Statement**

The high-stakes implementation of a performance assessment is controversial. As an educational policy, it has the potential to result in some positive and negative consequences for teacher candidates, teacher educators, and teacher education.

For teacher candidates. Teacher quality is an important issue throughout this country, from individual parents' concerns for their own children to employers demand for a prepared workforce (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012). Those preparing for their careers in education and (as well as their professors) want to ensure that teachers arrive ready for the job. A performance assessment is intended to give teacher candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their teaching in context rather than just answer multiple choice questions or respond to hypothetical scenarios.

Some teacher candidates found that taking a performance assessment made them a more reflective practitioner and a better teacher (Barron, 2015; Butler, 2015; Huston, 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013). There were reports that the requirements of the exam resulted in detailed lesson planning (Abdul-Alim, 2013; Langlie, 2015; Lunsford, 2015) and focusing on meeting the "language demands" of a lesson, especially when it came to supporting English language learners (Bunch, Aguirre, & Téllez, 2009; Bunch, Aguirre, & Téllez, 2015).

Others felt that the assessment interfered with their student teaching experience, changed the focus of their coursework, and was not an authentic measure of their day-to-day work in the classroom (Chiu, 2014; McConville, 2014; Proulx, 2014). Additionally, it was reported that teacher candidates find the edTPA to have negative consequences on their personal, academic,
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and professional lives and relationships. Some of this may be due to the role the context of the student teaching placement has on the ease or challenge of the requirements for the test as well as the level of support teacher candidates are given by their schools of education, cooperating teachers, field supervisors, professors, or classmates (Barron, 2015; Burns, Henry, & Lindauer, 2015; Chung, 2008; Guaglione, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009; Huston, 2015; Langlie, 2015; Lin, 2015; Lunsford, 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013; K. Meuwissen, Choppin, Shang-Bulter, & Cloonan, 2015; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; I. S. Okhremtchouk, Newell, & Rosa, 2013; Selvester, Summers, & Williams, 2006). The challenges and costs, both for teacher candidates and for schools of education, may prove to be a barrier to entry for those already underrepresented in the teaching profession (Davis, 2015).

For teacher education. There are new federal requirements to link assessment of program performance to eligibility for the Federal TEACH Grant program (U. S. Department of Education, 2014). "Supported by foundation and state funds, and integrated into many states' proposals for the federal Race to the Top education grant program" (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 11) the edTPA is being implemented across the country as a high-stakes assessment in several states. In New York State, edTPA results are used as a measure of program effectiveness leaving teacher education programs under the required passing rate of 80% to be labeled ineffective by the State Education Department (Lindauer, Burns, & Henry, 2013). Advocates of the edTPA see the test as a way to professionalize teaching and teacher education (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2013; C. A. Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014) and as an authentic assessment of teacher performance (Burns et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000). It is also viewed as a better measure of teacher readiness than traditional paper-and-pencil tests (Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Nelson, Waechter-Versaw, Mitchener, & Chou, 2014; C. Peck, 2010) and as an
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“educative” and accountability tool for schools of education (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Stillman, Ragusa, & Whittaker, 2015). Additionally, Darling-Hammond (2010) contests that a reliable and valid system of performance assessments based on common standards would provide consistency in gauging teacher effectiveness, help track educational progress, flag areas of need, and anchor a continuum of performance through a teaching career (pp. 3–4).

Advocates also explain that the edTPA can provide a common language and structure around a set of universal standards and goals that can improve articulation from within a program to across schools of education around that country (Stillman et al., 2015).

However, questions have arisen about the authenticity and validity of the test especially once the edTPA has become high-stakes for certification (Henning, 2014; K. Meuwissen, 2014, sec. New York State Assembly Standing Committees on Higher Education; Sato, 2014; Wilkerson, 2015). Additionally, the use of a nationally scored test brings concerns about a lack of local context which could lead to inequitable testing situations (An, 2015; Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015b; Ginsberg & Kinston, 2014; Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013). Criticisms have also arisen about the outsourcing of the edTPA to private corporation (Au, 2013; Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; Lanham, 2012). All of these points have led some to claim that the edTPA actually deprofessionalizes teacher educators (Cochran-Smith et al., 2013; Conley & Garner, 2015; Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015a; PSC & UUP, n.d.). Stillman et al. (2015) writes, "Some teacher educators have suggested that the use of common assessment tools like the edTPA may lead to rigid implementation approaches, reduce program autonomy and narrow or standardize the teacher education curriculum" (p. 187).
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The de/professionalization capacity of the edTPA is even debated throughout the profession. While some feel that a teacher performance assessment for certification leads to program improvements (Lys, L’Esperance, Dobson, & Bullock, 2014; Pecheone & Chung, 2006; C. A. Peck & McDonald, 2013), others struggle with the balance between the demands of the tests and the missions and values of their schools of education or as teacher educators (Barron, 2015; Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Rupp Ruddell, 2007; Lachuk & Koellner, 2015). There is even debate between the two national teachers’ unions. National Education Association (NEA) views the edTPA as a move in the right direction (NEA, 2014) while the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is concerned about consequences of the test such as the marginalization of the expertise of the faculty and the "fail[ure] to take into account the specific communities and populations teacher education programs serve" (American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO., 2014).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this mixed methods study is to investigate:

- The supports and challenges faced when taking a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes.
- The effects of the implementation of the assessment on participants’ personal, professional, and academic experiences.
- The effects of the implementation of a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum.

In other words, does the "ends justify the means" of the implementation of the edTPA as a high-stakes assessment in New York State.
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Research Questions

The main research question that will be explored in this study is: How do teacher candidates and teacher educators perceive their experience of the implementation of a nationally available standardized teacher performance assessment for certification? This will be broken down into three component questions:

- What are the supports and challenges for teacher candidates when taking a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes?
- What are the effects of the implementation of the assessment on teacher candidates' personal, professional, and academic experiences?
- What are the effects of the implementation of a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum?

Overview of Methodology

Using a mixed methods design, this study had two components. The first component consisted of collecting survey data. Questions focused on teacher candidates' demographics and their perceptions about their experience taking the edTPA. Those being surveyed had the option to volunteer for a follow-up interview to get a deeper understanding about the experience and the effects of the edTPA. Additionally, interviews with teacher educators were conducted to help triangulate the data as well as get a sense of their experience with the exam. The data was then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tests. The qualitative data was coded using Saldaña's (2013) methods to find the most relevant patterns and themes.

Definition of Key Terminology
Throughout this dissertation proposal, there are several terms which need to be defined for consistency between the reader and the researcher.

**Nationally available** - This is a term used on the edTPA website. In making the test “nationally available,” the objective is that the edTPA will become a national certification for teachers that can be used across states (AACTE, n.d.-a).

**Nationally scored** - “The national pool includes qualified scorers who access and score portfolios submitted from across the country” (AACTE, n.d.-b).

**Standards-based** - The edTPA is based on the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards (AACTE, n.d.-b).

**Standardized test** - The directions, prompts, rubrics, and scoring procedures are the same for all participants taking the exam. As explained by SCALE, “Scorers are trained specifically to edTPA rubrics, they use standardized scoring procedures and are calibrated and monitored during scoring” (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, n.d., p. 6).

**High-stakes tests** - Tests that have serious consequences and are used in a system for ranking and comparing (Jones, Jones, & Iargrove, 2003).

**Calibrated scorer** - Someone who has been trained to score in a consistent fashion to objectively rate work using the scoring rubrics for high inter- and intra-rater reliability. “The calibration process makes scoring student work more consistent among a group of educators and more aligned to the standards upon which rubrics and scoring criteria are based” (Rhode Island Department of Education & National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc, n.d., p. 2).

**Performance assessment** - A test in which the participant completes a task/activity to demonstrate skills and knowledge. The definition of an “authentic contextualized performance
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assessment” is discussed further in its own subsection in the Policy Paradox section of the theoretical framework.

Perceived experience - Specific to this study, perceived experiences are the supports and challenges of taking the edTPA on a personal level, from their school of education, or at their student teaching placement.

Effects - Based on data from the pilot of this study, the projected areas affected by teacher candidates’ experience with the edTPA are: sense of self, personal life, well-being, personal relationships, academics, relationship with cooperating teacher, and impact on student teaching experience. For teacher educators, this would include changes in policy and curriculum, professionalism, and academic freedom.

Rationale and Significance/Contribution to the Field

This study investigated the early implementation of a policy that is being considered in many states across the country. The high-stakes application and possibility of acceptance as a national certification exam has great implications. For these reasons, this study uses a critical policy lens that is explained in detail in chapter two: The Theoretical Framework. Additionally, as Dover et al. (2015a) writes, "it seems the speed of edTPA implementation - fueled largely, perhaps, by the intense profitability of the privatization of teacher preparation - has both outpaced and precluded scholarly engagement" (p. 3) and puts forth a call for continued scholarship in this area.

How this Study is Different. Since the edTPA evolved from the PACT and has not been used for many years, most of the TPA studies are about the PACT (Bunch, Aguirre, & Tellez, 2009; Bunch, Aguirre, & Téllez, 2015; Caughlan & Jiang, 2014; Chung, 2008, 2008; Duckor et al., 2014; Guaglianone et al., 2009, 2009; Kornfeld et al., 2007; Lee & Ajayi, 2010; Liu & Milman,
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2013, 2013; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013; Pecheone & Chung, 2006, 2007; Peck & McDonald, 2013; Porter & Jelinek, 2011; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012; Selvester et al., 2006; Sharp, 2010; Sloan, 2013, 2013; Stillman et al., 2013, 2013; Stillman, Anderson, Fink, & Kurumada, 2011). In order to investigate the validity, benefits, and consequences, some research was conducted while the PACT or edTPA was being piloted, field tested, or when it was not yet a high-stakes assessment (Barron, 2015; Bastian, Henry, Pan, & Lys, 2015; Chung, 2008; Guaglianone et al., 2009; Henning, 2014; Lindauer et al., 2013; Lunsford, 2015; Lyness & Peterson, 2015; Margolis, 2006; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Nayfeld, Pecheone, Whittaker, Shear, & Klesch, 2015; Pecheone & Chung, 2006, 2007; Pecheone, Shear, Whittaker, & Darling-Hammond, 2013). In 2014, the edTPA was introduced as part of the teacher certification process in New York and Washington. Only a few studies have been conducted when the edTPA was high stakes (Burns et al., 2015; Carroll, 2013; Herbert, 2015; Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Lin, 2015; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015, 2015; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Miller, Carroll, Jancic, & Markworth, 2015; Rosenfeld, Givner, & Tasimowicz, 2015). The current research study investigated the nationally distributed TPA during the first three semesters of its implementation as a certification exam in New York State. The experience in New York can provide insight for other states as they consider adopting a similar policy and what they should be aware of for those are already in the implementation process.

A few studies were conducted in urban schools of education and/or with candidates in urban student teaching placements (Chung, 2008; Lindauer et al., 2013; Liu & Milman, 2013; Micheal-Luna & Rodrigues, 2015; Rosenfeld et al., 2015, 2015, Stillman et al., 2011, 2015), however, these studies did not focus on the variables or use a critical theory lens as it relates to implications for urban environments. As a group, urban teacher candidates face obstacles to
success for many reasons. This study investigated the experiences of teacher candidates both in and from an urban environment. Although some participants may be commuters from the surrounding suburban areas, they will be attending schools of education and student teaching placements in New York City.

Most researchers have limited their data collection on this topic to one campus (Chung, 2008; Kornfeld et al., 2007; Liu & Milman, 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013; C. A. Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010; Jenna M. Porter & Jelinek, 2011; Jennifer Marie Porter, 2010; Regenspan, Bloom, & McDowall, 2014; Rennert-Ariev, 2008; Rosenfeld et al., 2015; Selvester et al., 2006; Sloan, 2013) with a few conducted across two or more campuses (Duckor et al., 2014; Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Lee & Ajayi, 2010; C. A. Peck & McDonald, 2013). Only two were conducted across both public and private colleges (Guaglianone et al., 2009; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). This dissertation consisted of survey data and interviews from public and private colleges across New York City.

Due to the methods used, many studies in the literature had small sample sizes (under 25) (Bunch et al., 2009; Chung, 2008; Herbert, 2015; Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; Kornfeld et al., 2007; Margolis & Doring, 2013; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Mills, 2015; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013; C. A. Peck & McDonald, 2013; Rennert-Ariev, 2008; Sharp, 2010; Stillman et al., 2011) and a few had medium sample sizes (40-80 participants) (I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Rosenfeld et al., 2015; Sloan, 2013). Those with large (n=181 to 1,711) sample sizes analyzed portfolios or candidates scores and did not survey teacher candidates (Duckor et al., 2014; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Pecheone et al., 2013; Porter & Jelinek, 2011) except for one study (K. Meuwissen et al., 2015). The study with the largest sample size (n=4,055) was the
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2013 edTPA Field Test Report which analyzed which was also based on submitted portfolios scores and demographics (Pecheone et al., 2013).

As might be inferred from the sample sizes, most studies were qualitative (Kornfeld et al., 2007; Langlie, 2015; Lee & Ajayi, 2010; Liu & Milman, 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013; C. A. Peck et al., 2010; Rosenfeld et al., 2015; Sato, 2014; Selvester et al., 2006), few were quantitative (Duckor et al., 2014; Guaglianone et al., 2009; Pecheone & Chung, 2006), and some were mixed methods (An, 2015; Chung, 2008; Fayne & Qian, 2015; Huston, 2015; Lunsford, 2015; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013). Of all the research, only one (Pecheone & Chung, 2006) included analysis of the data beyond descriptive statistics. This study used descriptive and inferential methods to analyze the data. Additionally, this study was medium sized and used mixed methods which helps to fill important gaps in the literature.

The current literature also includes research about teacher education faculty and/or administration (An, 2015; Fayne & Qian, 2015; Fuchs, Fahsl, & James, 2014; Gary, 2015; Guaglianone et al., 2009; Herbert, 2015; Kornfeld et al., 2007, 2007; Lachuk & Koellner, 2015; Lys et al., 2014; C. A. Peck et al., 2010, 2010; C. A. Peck & McDonald, 2013; Jenna M. Porter & Jelinek, 2011; Sloan, 2013) with a few gathering only teacher candidates (Chung, 2008; Denton, 2013; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013). There was a small number examining data from both faculty and students (Henning, 2014; Liu & Milman, 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Micheal-Luna & Rodrigues, 2015; Rennert-Ariev, 2008, 2008; Selvester et al., 2006) with only one including K-12 faculty and administration in their study (DeMink-Carthew, Hyler, & Valli, 2014). For this dissertation, data will be collected from teacher candidates and faculty to triangulate the data and
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get a fuller sense of the consequences of the implementation of a nationally standardized teacher performance assessment.

Of the studies conducted, some focused on elementary education teacher candidates or portfolios (An, 2015; Bunch et al., 2009, 2015; Chung, 2008; Duckor et al., 2014; Huston, 2015; Lewis & Morse, 2013; Lin, 2015; Miller et al., 2015; Rennert-Ariev, 2008; Rosenfeld et al., 2015) while others looked at secondary teacher candidates (Kornfeld et al., 2007; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013) with most studies using a combination various specialties (Guaglianone et al., 2009; Lee & Ajayi, 2010; Lindauer et al., 2013; Margolis & Doring, 2013; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Pecheone & Chung, 2006, 2007; Pecheone et al., 2013; Porter & Jelinek, 2011). For this dissertation, data was collected for elementary school teacher candidates. This is important because the portfolios and rubrics are different across content areas, and the elementary education teacher candidates have an additional task with three corresponding rubrics.

Role of Researcher

For the survey portion of the study, the researcher's role was virtually non-existent. The surveys were administered online. The survey participants may have been recruited in-person where they had an opportunity to meet the researcher and ask questions. For the interview portion of the study, the researcher was an instrument of data collection. The researcher asked follow-up questions and prompted the participant to elaborate on responses.

Assumptions

Assumption 1: Participants will answer the survey and interview questions honestly and factually. This was assured through member checking (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), making sure answers were kept confidential, and establishing a rapport. Participants signed an
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informed consent document that made them aware that can stop the survey or interview at any time and do not have to answer any questions that make them feel uncomfortable without ramifications.

Assumption 2: The survey and interview properly address the research problem. These methods were piloted prior to the study being conducted. The interview was purposefully left to be open-ended to allow for participants to talk freely and start with the aspects that stood out most in their experiences. Mixed methods were used to thoroughly address the research problem. Additionally, the Likert scale survey questions were adapted from studies looking to explore similar research questions (Burns et al., 2015; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015).

Assumption 3: The edTPA will continue to be considered/used as a nationally scored high-stakes performance assessment. Although Washington and New York were the first states to make the edTPA a requirement for certification, Wisconsin, Illinois, Hawaii, and Iowa are committed to do the same. Some states are using the edTPA in other ways, such as making it requirement for graduation or as an alternative assessment for certification. Ohio, West Virginia, and Alabama projected to soon be putting a policy in place utilizing the edTPA (AACTE, n.d.).

Scope, Limitations, and Delimitations

This mixed-methods study focused on the teacher candidates who were enrolled in schools of education, fulfilled their student teaching placements in New York City, and took the elementary education edTPA. The participants were recruited in the spring and fall of 2015, however, they could have taken the edTPA as early as spring 2014, when it became a certification requirement. Although including participants from various semesters has benefits, it also has drawbacks. Overtime, challenges with the edTPA implementation has changed in both positive (faculty is more familiar, curricular alignment with the test) and negative (state funding
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for edTPA implementation support ran out) ways. Additionally, the length of time between completing the test and sharing thoughts about the experience can either result in biased views (only remembering the strongly positive or negative aspects) or a difficulty in remembering the feelings or thoughts from the experience. Additionally, having participants complete the survey right after they finish their experience and/or get their test results back can bias their reporting as well. To offset these potential issues, the data were collected from as many participants over several semesters and the surveys were not sent out until at least a week after test results were to be received.

This study also focused on participants in an urban setting. The intention was to capture the experiences for urban teacher candidates and teacher educators, however, recruiting only from this population did not allow for a comparison across urban, suburban, and rural settings or to capture the experiences of the implementation of the policy throughout the state.

Additionally, this study did not use a random sampling because of the small number of New York City teacher candidates who have taken the elementary education edTPA since its implementation. Additionally, access was limited to the campuses and course sections which responded to recruitment emails to administrators and teacher educators. Many elementary education teacher candidates were in dual certification programs and could choose to take the edTPA for their other area of certification hence making them ineligible for the study. Furthermore, participation was voluntary. There was also participant drop-off from the time recruitment to the time of survey and interviews were conducted, which was to be expected. A limitation of the study could be that those who decided not to participate may have been those with failing scores on the edTPA, hence under-representing the experiences of this population.

Chapter Summary and Organization of the Dissertation
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This study explored how teacher candidates and teacher educators experience the implementation of a nationally available standardized teacher performance assessment. Chapter one introduced the problem, purpose, and research questions as well as gave an overview of the contribution to the field, role of researcher, assumptions, scope, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Chapter two outlines the theoretical framework which uses concepts from Bourdieu, Foucault, and neoliberalism as well as policy paradoxes. Chapter three consists of a review of the literature. Chapter four explains the research methods used while chapter five will give the results of the study. Chapter six is a discussion of the findings. Chapter seven links the work of the previous chapters together as the conclusion of the study, proposes policy recommendations, and will outline areas for future research.
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

Using the following theoretical framework, this research explored the implementation of a nationally distributed standardized teacher performance assessment. The theoretical framework will start with an explanation of Bourdieu's theories regarding cultural, social, symbolic, and economic capital and their relation to social reproduction. This is important in investigating the additional challenges posed for underrepresented populations in teaching and how this might affect their edTPA experience. Bourdieu's theories will guide the data analysis for this study.

The theoretical framework then explains the lens with which to explore the policy starting with a definition of the theory of neoliberalism. Next, will be a description of the ways neoliberalism has influenced policies in education, such as the marketization of teacher testing and outcome-based accountability. This will lead into the following section which looks at Foucault's ideas related to power through three tools of control: 1) the examination, 2) "relays," and 3) discourse. These tools are explained and then the theories are used to analyze the edTPA. The section concludes with Stone's theory of policy paradoxes and how this theory is applied to the educational policies connected to the teacher performance assessment.
Bourdieu: Social Reproduction and Types of Capital

Bourdieu’s theory of social reproduction postulates that social inequalities are repeated over generations due to the societal framework that replicates the conditions for some groups to continue to be successful while other groups continue to face barriers to success (Bourdieu, Passeron, & Nice, 1990). Different types of capital: cultural, symbolic, social, and economic can be converted and exchanged for other forms of capital and can be accumulated (Bourdieu, 2010). Accumulated capital defines the dominant social group, which then in turn controls the discourse and defines what is given the most value in society. This results in social reproduction ensuring the continued control of the elite over all forms of capital.

Cultural capital consists of the knowledge that is privileged by the dominant group in a society. Some cultural capital can also be considered symbolic capital, which is capital that symbolizes the possession of other capital, like owning a piece of art. Social capital is defined as
the connections that people have that give them an advantage. Economic capital is at the heart of striving to gain all the other types of capital. Economic capital results in giving people the money they want to be a part of the dominant group and control the other types of capital (Bourdieu, 2002).

Bourdieu explained that social groups are defined by particular tastes and dispositions that he defined as a group’s habitus. Although something may have value within a particular habitus, it may be of no value or even have negative value in another habitus. For example, high society has a preference for fine dining while working class people might find delicacies such as escargot unappealing and prefer "meat and potatoes." One habitus values classical music while the other values hip-hop. This also applies to fashion, art, television, and other cultural aspects. Understanding the differences among habitus is what allows people to attempt to move social standing. Even with increased capital, a person must acquire the tastes and dispositions of a higher ranking habitus to be accepted into another class (Bourdieu, 2010).

Cultural capital. Much of one's habitus is associated with cultural capital. Cultural capital is the knowledge that one has, whether it is a formal education or from the home. It is associated with familiarity of art, music, or literature. Bourdieu explains that there are "legitimate" types of cultural capital that are given value by the dominant class and are showcased in museums, galleries, and universities to show a distinction of their cultural capital over cultural capital that might exist in other habitus as "pop culture" (Bourdieu, 2010). For example, works of Picasso, Matisse, and Van Gough hang on the walls of museums while graffiti art is limited to the sides of buildings, trains, or buses. During gallery openings, patrons hear the sounds of classical music rather than hip-hop or rock music. One can think of capital in terms of
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demographics. Sharing the demographics of the dominant group can allow people to accumulate capital that leads to advantages over others.

According to Bourdieu (2002), "transmission of cultural capital is no doubt the best form of hereditary transmission of capital, and therefore receives proportionally greater weight in the system of reproduction strategies" because the other forms of capital are transmitted in direct and visible ways which can be more censored and controlled (p. 284). However, the link between cultural capital and economic capital is important because economic capital allows for more "free time" which can then be "harnessed" into cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2002). Cultural capital is also the "ability to understand and use 'educated' language...This makes it difficult for lower-class pupils to succeed in the educational system" (Sullivan, 2002, p. 145).

Bourdieu categorized cultural capital into three forms: 1) embodied, 2) institutionalized, and 3) objectified (Bourdieu, 2002). As is apparent, these forms and the categories of capital themselves are not distinct from one another and are often intertwined. Embodied cultural capital is the assimilation of culture and cannot be given or purchased but must be obtained over time. It also requires an investment of money and energy but often happens unconsciously within a habitus (Bourdieu, 2002). Objectified cultural capital is cultural capital represented by a material object. Institutionalized cultural capital refers to academic qualifications.

Bourdieu was very adamant in his stance on educational credentials as a vehicle for social reproduction (Bourdieu, 2002; Sullivan, 2002). He felt that

Given that academic success mainly depends on inherited cultural capital and on the propensity to invest in the educational system...it is clear why the proportion of pupils in a given school or college who come from the richest fraction rises with the position of
Bourdieu went on to explain that institutions of higher education are organized as hierarchies, both from within and outside the educational system. The ranking from within the system uses academic criteria, which Bourdieu posits is related to the number of students attending from the highest social class (Bourdieu, 2010). Colleges benefit from the reputation received by being associated with those having high capital as well as from the jobs alumni secure upon graduation. Hence, elite colleges may take a small number of students on scholarship because of their academic qualifications, but they might also be thoughtful about those students' ability to adapt to a different habitus while getting their degree and upon graduation. The ranking system from outside the educational system looks at the number of students attending from the highest economic capital and access to power in a similar way (Bourdieu, 2010). Publications, like *U.S. News and World Report*, rank colleges based on variables associated with capital such as alumni donations, selectivity, and faculty resources (“How U.S. News Calculated the 2015 Best Colleges Rankings,” 2014). This continues the cycle of social reproduction.

**Symbolic capital.** Institutionalized and objectified cultural capital are sometimes considered symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is the capital represented in an object that symbolizes the possession of other capital. For example, ownership of a famous work of art shows a person's economic capital that is available to purchase such an item and the cultural capital to know its "legitimate" value in the dominant culture. Symbolic capital is also the reputation and recognition that comes with certain achievements, or experiences, such as where a person went to college or the rank or title of a specific office (Bourdieu, 2010). Symbolic capital is seen with the edTPA with the distinction in status among the scoring levels. Teacher
candidates don't just pass or fail but rather receive a failing, passing, or "mastery" level score. This label may play a role in job attainment, as might the record of having to retake the edTPA.

**Social capital.** Social capital consists of the social connections people have that allow them to gain advantage over others (Bourdieu, 2010). Social capital allows for benefits such as access and privilege to opportunities. These connections can also be "socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name" (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 286). In other words, having a certain family name, being an alumnus of a certain school, or being part of a certain club or group can connect people socially even if they have never met before. Social capital in teaching can be obtained during the student teaching experience through relationships made with the cooperating teacher, principal, and other staff members. The impact the edTPA might have on these relationships will be explored in this research.

**Economic capital.** Economic capital is anything that "is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights" (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 243). Examples are: stocks, intellectual property rights, or other assets. Economic capital is the foundation for all other types of capital. It is what a person often needs to have to obtain cultural, social, and symbolic capital, and it is the one most people are striving to accumulate or represent with the other forms of capital. In other words, without wealth, one has difficulty having access to other forms of capital while conversely the other forms of capital give access to increased wealth. This is the cause of social reproduction. To change one's habitus, a person must acquire a certain amount of economic capital to obtain the appropriate symbolic and cultural capital that may then lead to making connections that will increase one's social capital. All of this is done to move up in class ranking.

**Neoliberalism**
Neoliberalism is the joint effort of business and government to accumulate capital. Also referred to as “the Washington Consensus,” neoliberalism promotes democracy through a free-market economy where businesses have the same rights as people to do what is in the company's best interests. The theory espouses that a free-market economy gives businesses the opportunity to make money which will have a “trickle-down effect” (Lipman, 2011). Neoliberal theory makes the claim that the creation of wealth will improve the well-being of the masses (Harvey, 2005). Lower costs of production, due to deregulation and tax cuts, will produce better and less expensive products. But in fact, if these savings were passed along to the consumer, it would still come at a high cost to social welfare. Ultimately, the financial gains are acquired by a few and the losses are seen by many. “Neoliberal doctrines, whatever one thinks of them, undermine education and health, increase inequality, and reduce labor’s share in income; that much is not seriously in doubt” (Chomsky, 2011, chap. 1, sect. 3, para. 13). Thus, although neoliberalism claims to help everybody, it inherently cannot because it creates a restoration of class power.

A free-market system can be considered a Darwinian concept. Individuals or companies work to make as much profit as possible without concern for how it might affect others. There is an important contradiction from theory to practice here because although there is an initial promise of opportunity for all, the end result is power and profit for a few. Without initial social, cultural, or economic capital, there is little chance for the lower and middle class to compete (Bourdieu, 2002). This power is not just over businesses trying to establish themselves in the market, but it is also the power that creates an ever increasing class divide. The economic elite have social capital that gives them access to information not available to others, specifically when it comes to financial markets. Although this obviously applies on an individual level, it is important to recognize how the large businesses push out small businesses in the name of
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capitalism and do not allow lower and middle class entrepreneurs to create enough business to expand and compete with large corporations. However, in order for neoliberalism to take a strong-hold, a new economic elite had to be formed first; one committed to the interests of free-enterprise (Harvey, 2005). Pauline Lipman expands on the influence that different forms of capital play in neoliberal theory. “In the neoliberal social imaginary, rather than ‘citizens’ with rights, we are consumers of services. People are ‘empowered’ by taking advantage of opportunities in the market…One improves one’s life situation by becoming an ‘entrepreneur of oneself,’ (cultivating the image, persona, resume that enhances one’s competitive position in the marketplace of ‘human capital’)” (2011, intro., sect. 5, para. 3). In making an enterprise of oneself, there is a “demand for the constant production of evidence” (Apple, 2001, p. 188).

The neoliberal agenda is deeply embedded into the American educational system in the form of standardization, individualism, outcome-based accountability, and free-market schooling. As decisions are made by policy makers with the goal of improving education, it is important that they understand the consequences of these initiatives and if the ends justify the means. The neoliberal discourses related to education will be further discussed in the Foucault section that follows.

**Free-market schooling and outcome-based accountability.** Test scores are used to create a “free-market” economy of schooling. It is believed that there will be an improvement in education if schools of education and alternative “teacher preparation” programs are forced to compete against one another or against having their programs disbanded (Apple, 2001, 2010; Lipman, 2011). Since the passage of Title II of the Higher Education Act in 2008, colleges and universities are obliged to report their teacher candidates' pass rates on certification exams to their states or risk losing millions of federal dollars (U. S. Department of Education, 2014).
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Passing rates are used to reward colleges with the top performance rates and shutdown those with low performance rates (Berlak, 2011a). As stated in the introduction, there are new federal requirements to link assessment of program performance to eligibility for the Federal TEACH Grant program (U. S. Department of Education, 2014) and the edTPA is linked to many states’ proposals for the federal Race to the Top education grant program (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Kumashiro (2015) explains that “market-based ‘reforms’ may sound commonsensical but, on the whole, lack a sound research base” (p. 1). He goes on to explain that the Council of Chief State School Officers created a task force that recommended outcome-based accountability policies linked to licensure, program approval, and data.

Currently, a majority of states have indicated a willingness to implement these recommendations, and seven states are participating in a two-year pilot known as the Network for Transforming Educator Preparation. Included in the recommendations are the high-stakes use of performance assessments like the edTPA (the Pearson-administered Teacher Performance Assessment), and the rating of teacher preparation programs using outcomes data on the students of the teachers who graduate from the programs (p. 2).

It is important to note that this task force was made up of members of the National Association of State Boards of Education and the National Governors Association but did not include teacher educators.

Additionally, outcome-based accountability posits that if incoming teachers are better tested, the country will weed out the teachers who will be ineffective and that this will lead to greater student achievement as measured by outcomes on standardized assessments. On the surface, this sounds reasonable but when one looks at all the factors related to validity and
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reliability of the edTPA and the other factors that affect student test scores (American Statistical Association, 2014; D. Berliner, 2015; D. C. Berliner & Glass, 2014; Bloom, 2013), this is an oversimplification of a complex issue. This theory ignores the political economy of schooling, the biases and flaws in standardized tests, and how the tests are scored. Results are also used to justify the privatization of public schools under the assumption that if schools were run more like businesses, there would be a more efficient use of time, money, and resources (Lipman, 2011). Although "good management" is important to the effectiveness of a school of education, a management philosophy needs to consider the “type of product” it is trying to output. Management of a school of education should be consistent with its mission and conceptual framework.

In analyzing the edTPA, it is clear how the test is meant to prepare teachers for outcome-based accountability. The edTPA states that teacher candidates are to "analyze student work from the selected assessment to identify quantitative and qualitative patterns of learning within, and across learners in, the class" (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2014a). The tasks and rubrics clearly privilege assessment over all other aspects of teaching with ten of the eighteen rubrics in the elementary education portfolio focusing on some aspect of data collection, analysis, or usage (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2014b).

**Foucault: Power and Discourse**

Policy makers institute regulations from their positions of power. This section explains three tools of control as conceived by Foucault: 1) the examination, 2) "relays," and 3) discourse.

**The examination as a disciplinary tool.** As Foucault (1977) posited, exams are used as a discipline device deployed to manage a mass constituency. Foucault (1977) explained how exams can be used as a tool by those in power to control and dominate others.
The examination combines techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of normalizing judgment. It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates and judges them (p. 184).

For the edTPA, the end result is the regulating and ranking of potential teachers and schools of education through a bureaucratic testing regime. Through its questions, an exam controls the group being tested by privileging certain information and skills that are deemed acceptable - or in the case of the edTPA what defines "effective teaching."

The push for a national standardized test for teacher certification has also added to the virtual "panopticon" (Foucault, 1977) over teacher education, allowing the examination to be a means of control and method of domination. A panopticon is a structure, physical or virtual, that gives the impression that one is being consistently watched. "The examination that places individuals in a field of surveillance also situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them" (Foucault, 1977, p. 189). This is evident in the edTPA portfolio. Foucault (1977) explained that "the accumulation of documents, their seriation, the organization of comparative fields mak[es] it possible to classify, to form categories, to determine averages, to fix norms" (p.190). The ability to rank teacher candidates is clearly shown in New York State's two cut score levels on the edTPA: passing and mastery. Additionally, New York State has higher than recommended cut scores (King, 2013). In fact, they set the highest cut score in the country (Gurl et al., 2016). As a national standardized assessment, the edTPA has a strong potential for various ways to rank and classify teacher candidates, teacher educators, schools of education, and states.
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Foucault explained that the power of a ranking system comes from the fact that rank is a mark of privilege (Foucault, 1977). Those schools of education or teacher candidates who receive the highest scores will be considered the best even though:

a) the test is only given to those seeking initial certification - which is a fraction of the teacher education programs,

b) privileging teacher certification tests does not take into account other measures of program excellence such as the quality of faculty or student teaching placements,

c) those getting dual certified only take the edTPA for one area, which may not end up being the main area in which they teach, and, most relevant to this study,

d) those with less support and more challenges may do worse on the test even though they are high quality teacher candidates.

Foucault (1977) expanded on the intentions and consequences further saying, "The distribution according to ranks or grade has a double role: it marks the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills, and aptitudes; but it also punishes and rewards." (p. 181). This "disciplinary coercion establishes...[a] link between an increased aptitude and an increased domination" (p. 137). An example of such is seen through the promotion of teaching standards concurrent with increased control over what is valued on the test to demonstrate "effective teaching."

Foucault (1977) expanded on this further explaining that examinations not only homogenize and normalize but also individualize through cellularization, comparing and ranking. This gives power to the central administration and disperses solidarity. These methods work to create "docile bodies" "that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved...political puppets, small-scale models of power" (Foucault, 1977, p. 136). This is a word of caution for teacher candidates and schools of education. A certification exam is the first line in a
series of control measures that can be used to transform teaching. Although there are some intended outcomes (as outlined in the introduction) that can improve the profession, there are also some unintended outcomes that will be investigated in this study.

**Taking on the role of a relay.** Foucault (1977) would say that the edTPA is a management tool, an instrument used by “relays,” or enforcers of institutional policy, to supervise from the top down. Administrators in schools of education and teacher educators potentially take on the role of a "relay." Not only has academic freedom been compromised with curricular alignment and parallel tasks to the edTPA, but teacher educators are also scrutinized for their student teachers' scores, which can result in test preparation over teacher education. While programs are focusing all their effort on ensuring that teacher candidates understand the prompts and rubrics, they are abandoning aspects of teaching that are not prioritized on the test such as social justice or classroom management (Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013b). In describing their work with the PACT (Performance Assessment of California Teachers), the predecessor to the edTPA, teacher educators in California report the "shame they carry for their silence in the face of mandates that are stealing the soul of their work and preventing them from modeling the kind of critical pedagogy they hope will inspire teacher candidates" (Madeloni & Gorlewski, 2013b, p. 21). Madeloni and Gorlewski (2013a) explain that "Preparing teachers requires intellectual rigor, emotional openness, psychological understanding, physical energy, and interpersonal wisdom. A standardized national assessment limits the questions we ask about our work to those privileged by the instrument" (para. 9).

**Dominant discourses in education.** Those in power create a "dominant discourse" that privileges certain knowledge. In other words, what is accepted as fact is really information that has been promoted throughout society by those with the power to control the dialogue. The
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dominant discourse of neoliberalism in education is powerful. It is bipartisan. It is pervasive. It is seen as truth. As Foucault (1984) explains, “‘Truth’ is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it.” The “regime of truth” is what allows a certain discourse to prevail. One can see how power is circulated through networks and how it is created, maintained, or strengthened through discourse and "regimes of truth." The current dominant discourse will be examined in terms of: 1) the purpose of schooling, 2) the teacher education, and 3) teacher professionalism.

The purpose of schooling: Human capital investment. The dominant discourse about education is that the purpose of schooling is for improving the workforce to better compete in the global economy (Cochran-Smith et al., 2012). The current rhetoric regarding testing revolves around the concern with the international ranking of the American educational system and how this reflects poorly on the economic forecast for the United States. Neoliberal theory has surfaced in education as an investment in “human capital development.” Test scores are seen as measures of quality and production - a private good, an investment in oneself "to better compete in the labor market, not a social good for development of individuals and society as a whole” (Lipman, 2011, intro., sect. 7, para. 2). This has resulted in an “audit culture” where “professional judgment and wisdom are replaced by measurable and supposed neutral, a-political quantifiable ‘scientific’ processes for establishing objective truths" (Berlak, 2011b, p. 188).

The “human capital theory is based on the twin assumptions that a nation’s place in the knowledge economy depends on the quality of its educational system, and that the primary purpose of education is to produce a workforce that can meet the demands of the competitive global market” (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013, p. 11). Schools are looked at as factories for human capital production (Hursh, 2000, para. 6). In fact, a national testing program
is the most essential step towards increased marketization and provides comparative data (Apple, 2001). The ability to rank and compare gives additional power to the dominant group.

**The problem of teacher education.** Cochran-Smith et al., (2013) explains the dominant discourse of teacher education is framed as the "construction of the problem of teacher education." This neoliberal discourse posits two major things: 1) our teachers are not good enough and this is the fault of teacher education programs and 2) if we test teachers better, we will weed out those that shouldn't be in the profession and close those schools of education not doing a good enough job to prepare teachers. Berlak (2011b) explains that this "problem of teacher education" is created by those in power who create a "political spectacle" to be used as "a diversion from addressing the real crises that are presently confronting us by scaring ordinary citizens as well as teacher educators into thinking that what ails us as a society is that millions of unqualified teachers, having been miseducated by U.S. teacher educators, are teaching U.S. children" (p. 205). The real crises Berlak is referring to are issues of poverty and racism. As Hursh (2000) writes, "Neo-liberal economic policy discourse has become so dominant in the public sphere that it has silenced the voices of those calling for alternative social conceptions emphasizing the quality of life measured not in material goods but the environment, culture, health and welfare" (para. 7).

**Teacher professionalism.** From the discourse of "the problem of teacher education" came the discourse regarding teacher professionalism. Accreditation, standards, and licensing have been tools that have been touted to improve the reputation of and respect for teachers from within the profession (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1999). By regulating the profession from within, it is the hope of those involved to ward off attacks on teachers and teacher education and that teaching can be lifted to a level of respect as in medicine and law.
While groups like the National Center for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) work to create a discourse declaring there is a lack of rigor in teacher education programs, AACTE works to overcome this reputation with a focus on the "professionalization" of teachers. Saroja Barnes explained the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education's (AACTE) perspective on the edTPA is that it "provides us with common language and a set of data that we can draw on to be accountable for the teachers we produce" (Abdul-Alim, 2013, p. 2). "Barnes [also] said if more schools of education would use the edTPA, it would give them a way to better fend off 'attacks' from the federal government and other critics who say teacher preparation programs are not producing quality teachers to raise student achievement in underperforming schools" (Abdul-Alim, 2013, p. 2). However, both these efforts have fed into the dominant discourse around the testing, accountability, and standardization (Apple, 2001). As Cochran-Smith (2005) explains, "[T]he [ed]TPA emerged from a context wherein the problem of teacher education was a lack of accountability and standardization of expectations across programs and states" (p. 16).

Teacher professionalism and neoliberalism - although seemingly on opposite ends of the spectrum - have both contributed to the same discourse about a need for a nationally scored standardized teacher performance assessment. The following subsections will start to reveal the role of professionalism and neoliberal discourse in education, its consequences for teacher education, and the importance of voicing the perceptions and effects of the edTPA to see the if outcomes are worth the experience. This will also be addressed further in the policy paradoxes section.

Policy Paradox

In her book, Policy Paradox, Deborah Stone (2002) defines a paradox as complications around what different groups find important. There are many perspectives on what is important
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to consider in the creation of educational policy. Stakeholders include: teachers, parents, students, school boards, administrators, politicians, and the general public. This can cause some policies to contradict the efforts of other policies when stakeholders claim to be working towards similar goals.

**Campbell's Law.** Campbell's Law states: "The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor" (Campbell, 1979, p. 49). This paradox can be found in many professions. Police departments accountability can lead to pressure to keep the crime rate low which can incentivize making less arrests and lead to more plea bargaining. Productivity rates for factory workers might result in sacrificing quality for quantity (Campbell, 1979). This audit-culture has also taken hold in the medical profession, where doctors are rewarded based on the number of patients they see. Speeding through appointments cannot only decrease the quality of "bed-side manner" and information patients get when they visit their doctors but can also result in mistakes or missed diagnoses (Nichols & Berliner, 2007).

The intended purposes of accountability mechanisms in education can be easily corrupted as well when they become high-stakes (Nichols & Berliner, 2007). This is already seen in K-12 with "teaching to the test" and cheating scandals. Campbell (1979) wrote, “when test scores become the goal of the teaching process, they both lose their value as indicators of educational status and distort the educational process in undesirable ways” (p. 35). As will be explored in the literature review, teacher candidates and teacher educators describe the tensions they experience when their certification has high-stakes (Lachuk & Koellner, 2015; Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Okhrentchouk, Newell, & Rosa, 2013). With a performance assessment, the
pressure to pass can result in an unauthentic representation of teaching (Henning, 2014; Lanham, 2012) and use "strategies disconnected to educational theory and practice" (Denton, 2013, p. 32) to fit what will earn a high score. Additionally, some teacher candidates have even resorted to hiring edTPA private coaching services resulting in questions about unethical support in constructing the portfolios (Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015; Sawchuk, 2015). As Nichols & Berliner (2007) explain,

Apparently, you can have (a) high stakes and greater uncertainty about the validity of the assessment or (b) lower stakes and greater certainty about validity. Uncertainty about the meaning of test scores increases as the stakes attached to them become more severe. The higher the stakes, the more likely it is that the construct being measured has been changed (p. 27).

Examples of various policy paradoxes and the research behind them will be explored in the literature review.

**Chapter Summary**

Using theories from Bourdieu, Foucault, and neoliberalism, this study uses a critical policy lens to examine the implications of a nationally distributed standardized performance assessment. This lens will be used to analyze and discuss the data collected.

Bourdieu’s theories were explained as they will be a lens for sections of the literature review and for analyzing the data. Various statistical methods, including OLS regression, will be used to see how amounts and types of capital may be correlated with challenges, levels of support, and perceived experience with the edTPA. It is important to be vigilant and look at the edTPA's potential for social reproduction and the reinforcement of inequality that can contribute to the underrepresentation of certain populations in the teaching profession.
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Foucault's theories about power set the stage for the explanation of the current dominant discourses of neoliberalism that is focused on outcome-based accountability. This audit-culture permeates education. From K-12 students to teacher candidates to schools of education, test scores are used to surveil, rank, and punish. This is important to understand before collecting data to understand what has led to the current policy and what the climate is for the edTPA experience for both teacher candidates and teacher educators. The chapter concluded with Stone's theory of policy paradoxes and outlined the various contradictions with the implementation of the edTPA.
Chapter Three: Review of the Literature

This section will begin by setting the context for the study through examples of performance assessments in other professions and a historical background of teacher certification and the standardization and accountability movement in teacher education. It will follow with literature describing how teacher accreditation policy will be linked to edTPA data. Next, the origins of the edTPA will be explained along with a brief overview of its implementation in New York State. The next subsection will examine what licensure is meant to indicate and follow with studies that compare results on the edTPA to definitions of good/effective teaching. The subsequent subsection explores the various types of validity in order to clarify what the edTPA hopes to measure. Furthermore, literature will be explored about additional challenges teacher candidates have, the financial costs associated with the test, its possible impact on the profession, and the methods being used to support various groups when it comes to the TPA. This chapter will conclude with a subsection on how the TPA is being used as a measure to assess the quality of teacher education programs. Throughout the literature review, “TPA” will be used when referring to combined literature on teacher performance assessments (most predominately the PACT and the edTPA), otherwise, specific titles of exams will be named.

Performance Assessments in Other Professions

Part of the discourse of teacher certification is that teacher licensure should parallel certification in other highly respected professions (Crowe, 2010; Mehta & Doctor, 2013; Stillman, Ragusa, & Whittaker, 2015). The following is a brief overview of performance exams for doctors and lawyers.

The United States Medical Licensing Examination is a three-part exam consisting of various multiple choice tests and two performance tasks. The clinical skills test requires medical
students to meet with “standardized patients.” Each patient presents as "a case" created to “test examinees on their ability to gather information from patients, perform physical examinations, and communicate their findings to patients and colleagues” (Federation of State Medical Boards & National Board of Medical Examiners, 2016). The clinical skills test is taken during medical school. The second performance test consists of case-based computer simulations, which requires test takers to “apply comprehensive knowledge of health and disease in the context of patient management and the evolving manifestation of disease over time.” This is taken during a medical internship which varies in length depending on the specialty area but is anywhere from 3-7 years long (Federation of State Medical Boards & National Board of Medical Examiners, 2016).

In 38 states and the District of Columbia, law students take The Multistate Performance Test (MPT) as one of multiple measures for licensure. MPT was developed by the National Council of Board Examiners and is made up of two 90-minute items. Each state or territory determines the weight of the test unless the state uses the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE), a nationally distributed standardized test suite. Those using the UBE are required to make the MPT worth 20 percent of the total grade. The stated purpose of the MPT is “to test an examinee’s ability to use fundamental lawyering skills in a realistic situation and complete a task that a beginning lawyer should be able to accomplish. The MPT is not a test of substantive knowledge. Rather, it is designed to evaluate certain fundamental skills lawyers are expected to demonstrate regardless of the area of law in which the skills arise” (National Conference of Bar Examiners, 2016).

A Brief History of Teacher Certification and the Standards and Accountability Movement in Teacher Education
Throughout the history of schooling, two main methods have been used to ensure a workforce of competent teachers: (a) licensure and (b) professional credentials from a teacher preparation program. Sometimes, these two methods worked in unison with schools, counties, or states requiring both a license and a credential. In times of teacher shortages, alternative certification requirements gained more popularity, which allowed those with any kind of four-year degree to become teachers as long as they passed the licensure exams. The use of licensure and credentials for certification has long been politicized and controversial (Cochran-Smith, Feinman-Nemser, McIntyre, & Demers Kelly E., 2008).

In the mid-19th century, policy makers started to use licensure as a way to ensure that those in the classroom were qualified for the job. In the middle third of the 19th century, licensure started to become centralized at the county and then state level (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008; Davis, 2015). However, this move resulted in some corruption. There was pressure to falsify scores for those with economic and social capital. Additionally, when the exams became public information, results were used to compare teacher education programs leading them to compete for status among one another (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008).

Concurrently, there was a move by state departments of education and professional societies to standardize teacher education programs rather than assess teacher knowledge and skills (Arends, 2002). In 1863, California became the first state to accept professional credentials as an alternative to passing the licensure tests. By 1900, 41 states did the same, accepting diplomas from normal or 4-year colleges as a basis for licensure. By 1921, all but one state recognized a normal school diploma as a criterion for certification. This was coupled with a movement to raise standards in the 1920s through regulating the content of teacher education
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programs (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008). By 1999, 41 states required teacher candidates to pass a standardized certification exam (Davis, 2015).

In 1939, the American Council on Education formed the National Commission on Teacher Exams to examine the quality of teacher tests throughout the country. They found that there was an inconsistency in certification standards. This gave rise to the establishment of the first National Teacher Exam in 1940. The intention was not only to assist school districts in the hiring process but also for schools of education to evaluate their students’ readiness and to judge the quality of higher education. The National Teacher Exam (NTE) consisted of multiple choice questions and took 12 hours to complete. Teachers and teacher educators criticized the test for not being a measure of good teaching. There were also fears that teacher education programs would be required to teach to the test, resulting in a reduction of the quality of teacher education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008). The same year also brought the establishment of the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards (NCTEPS). In 1952, AACTE and NASDTEC established an accreditation body to develop and enforce national standards (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008).

Teacher quality and training gained federal attention after the launch of Sputnik, throughout the Cold War, and following the release of A Nation at Risk. In the 1960s, the federal government began to scrutinize whether federal funds were producing their intended outcomes and scholars began to study how teachers impact student learning. Educational leaders, even from colleges of teacher education, began to endorse educational reform and national standards all with a focus on student outcomes. This led to the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) (W. D. Lewis & Young, 2013).
Title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965 focused on improving teacher quality. This act works to hold both schools of higher education and states accountable by reporting pass rates on content knowledge licensing exams. Title IV of HEA prohibits low performing programs from enrolling students who receive federal financial aid (such as a Pell grant) (National Research Council, 2001).

In the early 1970s, the focus shifted to studying teacher effectiveness. There was an emergence of research initiatives that tried to identify teacher behaviors that affected student achievement. Teacher education programs began documenting their teacher candidates’ attainment of these competencies to prove that their graduates were qualified to be recommended for licensure. Criticism arose as these competencies became too discrete and defined, neglecting the critical thinking and reflective nature of good teaching (Arends, 2002). However, according to Arends (2002), this movement helped create the beginning of a system that ensured that beginning teachers entered the profession with some level of competence and expertise, and it laid the groundwork for many of the significant teacher education program initiatives and assessment processes at the state, federal, and local levels that categorized the 15-year period between 1985 and 2000 (Arends, 2002, p. 10).

Then, with the release of A Nation at Risk, in 1983, there became a national government-led scrutiny of teachers and teacher education programs. During this time, there was an influx of strategies as to how to improve the quality of the teacher workforce through accountability systems. In a reaction to the criticisms in A Nation at Risk, there were several moves made to improve teacher quality both from within and outside the profession (Darling-Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1999). In 1986, A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the Twenty-first Century was
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published by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy which continued to focus on the notion of identifying what makes an “effective teacher” but with a new perspective. The report stated that teachers should also understand:

- how physical and social systems work,
- how to interpret and use data,
- how to foster creativity,
- how to be collaborative yet independent thinkers, and
- how to be continuously learning about their profession.

The report also recommended the creation of a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), which was then created in 1987 (Arends, 2002). NBPTS began developing a performance assessment for advanced certification for in-service teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999). During this time, some states like Connecticut, California, and Indiana made efforts to create their own teaching standards and performance assessments for pre-service or beginning teachers. These efforts led to a collaboration known as the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) created by the Chief Council of State School Officers (CCSO). INTASC, made up of 17 states at the time, began creating performance-based standards for initial licensing that were parallel with the NBPTS (Arends, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al., 1999).

The Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing, Assessment and Development: A Resource for State Dialogue (also known as the INTASC Report) was issued under the leadership of Linda Darling-Hammond, co-chair of the INTASC task force, and was well received. The Performance Assessment Development Project was then established, which created the early version of the INTASC Teacher Portfolio modeled after the NBPTS portfolio. The INTASC
Teacher Portfolio was comprised of instructional materials, student work samples, videotapes of teaching, written records and exhibits, and reflections on teaching (Arends, 2002). Mostly due to the cost, only Connecticut, out of the 12 states that were part of the pilot between 1996 and 1999, had implemented the INTASC Teacher Portfolio for permanent certification by 2001-2002 (Youngs, Odden, & Porter, 2003). The pilot, however, initiated the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to revise and improve its National Teacher Exam (NTE) to better represent the skills and dispositions of quality teachers resulting in the creation of the Praxis (Arends, 2002).

The 1992 reauthorization of HEA of 1965 resulted in a consistent effort to use federal policy to direct changes in certification and teaching policy more generally (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008, p. 892). As W. D. Lewis & Young write (2013),

The teacher education provisions of HEA that resulted proved to be quite controversial, with Congress showing willingness to intervene in the affairs of institutions of higher education as never before. Title II required states and colleges of teacher education receiving federal funds either directly or indirectly through HEA to provide the U.S. Department of Education with data on teacher preparation standards and licensure procedures (W. D. Lewis & Young, 2013, p. 194).

There were eight requirements set forth for states including reporting the percentage of teacher candidates who passed each required licensing examination and the pass rate scores on these exams disaggregated by school of education, college, or program (W. D. Lewis & Young, 2013).

At this time, the AACTE took additional efforts to improve teaching and teacher education through re-envisioning the accreditation process by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In 1995, the INTASC standards were incorporated into the NCATE standards. The coordinated efforts of the National Board,
INTASC, and NCATE were clearly laid out by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) in the 1996 publication *What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future* (Arends, 2002).

The acceptance of a knowledge base represented by the National Board propositions and the INTASC standards was a very important occurrence in the history of teacher education, because it represented for the first time a consensus about the knowledge and skills needed by teachers to engage in effective practice...It also made it possible to develop test and performance assessments to measure the acquisition of important professional knowledge and skills (Arends, 2002, p. 15).

NCTAF report in 1996 made recommendations that led to more than $30 million for its implementation by the government with additional grants by philanthropies. This was an unprecedented amount of funding for teacher education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008). However, the report also provoked an increased scrutiny of teacher education programs (W. D. Lewis & Young, 2013). The NCTAF policy ideas were integrated into six Congressional proposals in 1998 that were related to the reauthorization of HEA. Now educational policy rested on the triad of accreditation, assessment, and certification (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008). When the HEA was reauthorized in 1998, the teacher certification provisions changed from content knowledge only to also include an assessment of teaching skills (U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

Prior to the mid-1990s, teacher education assessment focused on what is now retrospectively referred to as “inputs,” such as institutional commitment, qualifications of faculty, content and structure of courses and fieldwork experiences, and the alignment of these courses and experiences with professional knowledge and standards, rather than outcomes (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013). In the late 1990s and early 2000s, however, there
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were fierce debates about the evidence base for university teacher preparation (Cochran-Smith et al., 2013). The professionalization agenda shifted the focus “from institutional practices and academic controls to external or centralized policies” and “authority shifted from campus and state agencies towards national entities formulating policies and practices” (Cochran-Smith et al., 2008, p. 894).

**Teacher education accreditation and the edTPA.** Following the release of *What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future* by The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education began "NCATE 2000," a performance-based system of accreditation. NCATE 2000 moved away from accreditation based on faculty qualifications, students’ GPAs, and course offerings toward the goal of better balancing inputs, processes, and outcomes and to increase “emphasis on quality of the candidate work, candidate subject matter knowledge, and demonstrated teaching skills” (Campbell, Melenyzer, Nettles, & Wyman, Jr., 2000, p. 78). Since The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future called for all schools to be accredited, this caused a major shift in schools of education.

In 2016, The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) officially replaced NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) as the "sole accrediting body for educator preparation providers" (CAEP, 2015). This transition gave rise to new accreditation standards as well as updated Specialty Professional Associations’ (SPAs) standards for specific content areas. The general CAEP Standards address five areas:

- content and pedagogical knowledge,
- clinical partnerships and practice,
- candidate quality, recruitment, and selectivity,
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- program impact, and
- provider quality, continuous improvement, and capacity.

Several of these standards link teacher education programs to their graduates’ P-12 student outcomes. edTPA is alluded to throughout the Standards document. For example, CAEP requires programs to use "valid, reliable assessments aligned with instruction during clinical practice experiences" as a "pre-service measure of P-12 student performance" (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2015, p. 41), which is what the edTPA is hoping to achieve through predictive validity. A more concrete description is given in the call for a "clinical capstone assessment" that uses videos and rubric values (p. 43). These scores are to be monitored across cohorts, and average cohort scores are to be compared with national cut scores. CAEP then specifically mentions the edTPA by name as one of the two standardized capstone assessments to be used for this purpose. Additionally, projections of an "edTPA for in-service teachers" for permanent/professional certification is mentioned (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2015, p. 48).

Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity (SCALE), CAEP, and the SPAs have been working together to identify alignment between the edTPA and the subject specific CAEP/SPA standards (NCATE & SCALE, 2012). The Association for Childhood Education International previously served as the SPA for elementary education programs, however, spring 2016 CAEP developed new K-6 Elementary Teaching Standards, and elementary education no longer has a SPA to represent the discipline. Other disciplines have already settled on their CAEP/SPA standards and investigated how they align with the edTPA. For example, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics’ (NCTM) document, “Alignment of NCTM CAEP Standards (2012) for Middle Grades to edTPA Rubrics” states:
Alignment is based on how well edTPA Middle Grades Mathematics Operational Handbook 2013-14 rubric criteria, rather than task directions, provide evidence supporting elements of the *NCTM CAEP Standards (2012) for Middle Grades*. Two of 15 edTPA rubrics provide sufficient evidence (moderate or strong support level) for one or more elements of Standards 3 and 4. edTPA rubrics do not provide any evidence for elements of Standards 1, 6, and 7 and provide insufficient evidence (limited support level) for elements of Standards 2 and 5. edTPA is designed as a measure of pedagogy and is not intended to measure ALL aspects of effective teaching. Elements of the *NCTM CAEP Standards (2012) for Middle Grades* not listed below are recognized as beyond the scope of edTPA purpose and composition (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2015, para. 1).

This statement explains that although the edTPA does address some of the NCTM CAEP standards, it does not cover them all, even in a subject-specific test. The edTPA, however, can be used as one piece of evidence in the accreditation process (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014).

**Origins of the edTPA.** “edTPA stems from a 25-year lineage of teacher performance assessment development led by Linda Darling-Hammond and Raymond Pechone at Stanford University” (Stillman et al., 2015, p. 180). This work has been influenced by the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) test and developed through Linda Darling-Hammond’s work on the NBPTS exam and the PACT.

**Beginning Educator Support and Training.** Using the INTASC Standards, the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) was created in 1986 and was the one of the first teacher performance assessments for licensure (Denton, 2013). In order to obtain state certification, second or third year teachers in Connecticut had to pass the BEST (Darling-
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Hammond, 2010). It is easy to see the similarities between BEST and edTPA. Both have subject-specific handbooks that require certification candidates to answer writing prompts that are graded using rubrics. Additionally, each portfolio includes lesson plans, video clips, student work samples, and analysis and reflection commentary on teaching and learning. One major difference is that “[i]n the BEST system, scorers generate comprehensive feedback reports for use by teachers in identifying areas for growth, along with suggestions for professional development” (Denton, 2013, p. 21). Due to funding difficulties for the mentoring component, the BEST was discontinued. Predicative validity studies show a correlation between BEST scores and students’ value-added scores on state reading tests (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

**National Board Certification.** As previously noted, the National Boards led to the INTASC standards and call for performance assessments during the first years of teaching to earn "permanent certification." The edTPA has emerged through a backwards design from the NBPTS and is set to be the first in the line of performance assessments across a career to impact “initial certification” as well as teacher education programs (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014). The CCSSO has articulated the four stages of a "high-quality educator development system to ensure student success” as

1. preparation,
2. novice,
3. professional, and
4. expert

and see the TPA as the exam that moves the teacher candidate from preparation to novice (Hill, Hansen, & Stumbo, 2011).
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Research on the National Boards has been used as a rationale for implementing the edTPA. Although admitting that the research is somewhat inconsistent, Darling-Hammond (2010), claimed that the National Board Certification exam differentiates between teachers who are effective at raising student achievement and those who are not as effective. Research also showed that through reflecting on their teaching and analyzing student work for the National Boards, teachers learned to:

- better assess student learning,
- understand the effects of their teaching moves,
- improve their subject matter knowledge, instruction, classroom management, and evaluation, and support for student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

However, research also showed that the difference in scores between African Americans and Whites on the NBPTS test mirror those seen on multiple choice exams. Additionally, the National Research Council, (2001) pointed out that the National Boards do not examine teaching performance of the same individual across different contexts of teaching and that schools and communities offer unique challenges and opportunities.

There are some important differences between the TPA and the National Boards:

- The TPA asks teacher candidates to create a “more integrated” portfolio of a learning segment rather than a portfolio that can use evidence from various points in time.
- The NBTS exam has “assessment center components” in which teachers complete online exercises that examine content knowledge specified in the NBPT Standards (Pecheone & Chung, 2006, p. 23).
- The NBPTS exam is voluntary and low-stakes.
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- The test is taken by experienced teachers at any time in their career, allowing participants to choose when they feel they have the time and expertise to tackle the portfolio.

Performance Assessment for California Teachers. The edTPA was closely adapted from the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT), which was spearheaded by Linda Darling-Hammond and her team at SCALE. The PACT was one of several performance assessments created in California in response to the 1998 legislation requiring all teacher candidates to pass a state-approved performance assessment to be eligible for certification (Berlak, 2012). The PACT is made up of two parts: The Teaching Event and embedded signature assignments, which are course assignments completed throughout teacher education programs using state-approved criteria for evaluation. The Teaching Event is the aspect of the PACT that is similar to the edTPA.

Although the AACTE uses studies based on PACT to make claims about the edTPA, there are important differences between the two tests. First of all, the prompts and rubrics are not the same. Additionally, PACT handbooks and rubrics are available through an open website while edTPA materials are password protected. Furthermore, PACT is locally scored, and teacher candidates are encouraged to get support from university faculty and cooperating teachers whereas there are strict guidelines as to the input and feedback teacher candidates are allowed to have on the edTPA (Denton, 2013).

In his 2009 speech at Teachers College at Columbia University, Arne Duncan, United States Secretary of Education, named PACT as an exemplar for the next generation of teacher certification exams (Berlak, 2012). He "declared that a standardized performance-based exit exam would measure both prospective teachers' competence to teach and the quality of the
credential programs that get them 'classroom-ready' was key" to improving America's public schools in order to keep America competitive globally. He explained that "Part of the $4.3 billion Race to the Top funds would provide resources and incentives to construct and promote these assessments" (Berlak, 2011, p. 188).

PACT creators and chief advocates claim that PACT provides the crucial link in the chain of evidence connecting classroom performance of individuals at the end of their credential programs to achievement of their pupils in their first year of teaching, as measured by standardized tests. In academic lingo this is called 'predictive validity.' The assumption is that PACT will identify how well various credential programs promote teaching practices and learning outcomes valued by federal and state authorities (Berlak, 2012, para. 6).

In 2002, the Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC) was established. TPAC is led by SCALE and organizes efforts to bring teacher performance assessments throughout the country (Nelson, Waechter-Versaw, Mitchener, & Chou, 2014; Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2014a). With the edTPA also being "endorsed and promoted by AACTE" (AACTE, n.d.), SCALE gained a large advantage in the field of performance assessments. When SCALE partnered with Evaluation Systems of Pearson, their presence got even stronger (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, 2013). The corporate education empire now distributes, manages, and scores portfolios nationwide taking away the local context and scoring that was a hallmark of the PACT. Although it is not clear what financial gain SCALE makes from the edTPA, it is undoubtedly substantial.

edTPA in New York State
New York was one of the first states to adopt the edTPA as part of its package of four standardized tests required for teacher certification. Although the New York State Education Department had begun working with Pearson in 2009 on its own teacher performance assessment, it switched to the edTPA when the test became available in February 2012. The handbooks and rubrics were released to faculty and students in New York’s schools of education that same spring (J. D’Agati, 2012). After one year of field testing was completed at 51 colleges, the edTPA was then slated to be used as a requirement for certification for those graduating in May 2014 (J. D’Agati, 2014).

New York State uses higher "cut scores" (passing and mastery level scores) than what is recommended by SCALE. Unlike the other tests, teacher candidates who fail the edTPA cannot realistically take it again during their student teaching placement since it takes six weeks to get the results back and most teacher candidates are not ready to finish their portfolio until the last few weeks of the semester. Additionally, the eligibility for schools of education to certify teachers is tied to teacher candidates’ scores.

At the time of its adoption, there was very limited research on policy implementation in teacher education programs (Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010) and on creating stricter requirements for teacher certification (Earley, Imig, & Michelli, 2011). Furthermore, literature on the edTPA was sparse because the exam had limited field testing. Due to these concerns, in July 2014, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) provided a "safety net" for teacher candidates, which allowed those who failed the edTPA to then take the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written (ATS-W), which was the test the edTPA "replaced." The safety net was provided for candidates until June 30, 2015, however, after educators across the state voiced much skepticism about the validity, content, and design of the edTPA, the State extended the
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safety net another year in 2015 (United University Professions, 2015) and then for a second time in 2016 (J. L. D’Agati, 2016). Once the edTPA safety net expires in June of 2017, additional complications remain. What happens when teacher candidates don't pass the edTPA and want to retake it? Unfortunately, if candidates pass student teaching but fail the edTPA there is no clear procedure for how graduates will be able create a new portfolio once their placement has been completed (Dwyer, 2014).

**What Does Licensure Indicate?**

Licensure works as a form of accountability on two levels: (a) for individuals and (b) for schools of education. It serves as both a gatekeeper - a way to demonstrate readiness for the classroom- and to ensure that teacher education programs are giving their students the knowledge and skills they need to teach. The debate remains between if these efforts are to develop “good/successful” teachers or if they are meant to create “effective” teachers (Berliner, 2005).

The discourse of an “effective teacher” is associated with raising student achievement as measured by standardized tests typically through value added models (Crowe, 2010; Goldhaber, 2007; Goldhaber & Hansen, 2010; Newton, 2010). The use of student outcomes as the primary measure of teacher effectiveness has significantly increased over the past 15 years (W. D. Lewis & Young, 2013). However, others believe that effective practice is “contextual, multifaceted, and situated” (Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015, para. 5) and that good teaching is subjective and considers inequality and social justice (Berlak, 2011).

**Comparing results on the edTPA with definitions of good/effective teaching.** Gary’s (2015) research investigated the question “What is a ‘good’ teacher?” and “Does ‘good’ resonate
with edTPA?” In her study, three main characteristics of effective teachers were identified by the eight international participants in the study who were either parents or educators:

- knowledge of subject matter,
- individualizing instruction, and
- having a passion for educating.

Five teacher educators across disciplines at a Midwestern state university volunteered to complete the edTPA themselves. The participants concluded that teacher candidates who are not passionate about teaching will not be “good” teachers despite having passed the edTPA. In K. Meuwissen et al. (2015) study of 104 teacher candidates in New York and Washington States, 46% of teacher candidates agreed (44%) or strongly agreed (2%) that the goals of the edTPA are consistent with their ideas of good teaching.

**What is the edTPA Claiming to Measure? edTPA and Validity**

K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin (2015) concluded that there are two core assumptions underlying TPA's positioning as policy levers (p. 4) (a) "valid and dynamic assessments" can improve instruction and (b) TPA's are better at doing this than other types of assessments. The following subsections will review the literature in the following types of validity:

- content,
- predictive,
- construct,
- internal structure,
- face,
- consequential, and
- concurrent.
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Content validity. Content validity looks at how well the test is aligned to the content it is claiming to assess. The 2013 edTPA Field Test Summary Report stated that the edTPA was found to have content validity based on job analysis studies and alignment with professional-standards (InTASC). Fifty-two participants on the edTPA Content Validity Committee rated each of the tasks on a 5-point scale in the following categories:

- how much “importance” the tasks had to the knowledge and skills needed by teachers,
- how well the tasks aligned to the InTASC standards, and
- how well the rubric represents relevant teaching tasks.

The committee rated all measures highly, which indicated a “strong relationship between the assessment’s key tasks and the job of an entry level teacher” (Pecheone, Shear, Whittaker, & Darling-Hammond, 2013, p. 20). It is important to note that these participants were involved with SCALE and the edTPA in various ways and were not outside evaluators. The report asserted that these studies show that “the assessment is well-aligned to the professional standards it seeks to measure, reflects the actual work of teaching, and that the score measures a primary characteristic of effective teaching” (Pecheone et al., 2013, p. 2).

The 2014 edTPA Administrative Report shared findings of a confirmatory national job analysis of one hundred forty P-12 educators who were also “experts on the edTPA.” They rated 105 teacher tasks in relation to job relevance. Nineteen tasks were rated by more than 10% of teachers as “not performed” while 86 of the 105 tasks met or exceeded the critical threshold (meaning that 90% or more of respondents agreed they performed the task and the task’s mean criticality rating was 8.0 or higher [(2x importance) + time spent] (range 3-15) (Nayfeld, Pecheone, Whittaker, Shear, & Klesch, 2015).
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**Predictive validity.** Supporters of the edTPA hope to use it as a tool to predict student teachers’ future impact on their P-12 students’ achievement and other measures of teacher effectiveness. In fact, "SCALE is committed to conducting predictive validity studies in the future that connect candidate scores to on-the-job performance" (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, n.d., p. 7). Predictive validity of teacher assessments typically utilizes student outcomes on standardized tests (Berlak, 2011, 2012; Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2013). It is important to note that there is an inherent flaw in predictive validity studies using assessment results. Those who do not pass the exam are not licensed and hence do not have K-12 student data (Darling-Hammond et al., 2013).

Newton (2010) conducted a study of the predictive validity of PACT using VAM data for fourteen intermediate grade first- and second-year teachers in San Diego. The results indicated that PACT scores had a moderately strong correlation (approximately .50) with VAM for elementary literacy and math test results. In other words, for each additional point a teacher scored on PACT, her students averaged a gain of one percentile point per year on California Standards Tests as compared to similar students after controlling for prior achievement. It is important to note that all but one of the participants in this study was from a district intern program and that this study was conducted during the pilot tests from 2005 to 2008 and when the PACT was not high-stakes. Using student-teacher data from 53 ELA teachers and 52 math teachers in three school districts in California, Darling-Hammond et al. (2013) found that teacher candidates’ PACT scores were significant predictors of their later teaching effectiveness as measured by their students’ achievement gains in math and ELA. OLS regression was conducted to control for demographics, districts, and grade levels.
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In the 2014 edTPA Administrative Report, Nayfeld et al. (2015) cited one unpublished study on predictive validity linking edTPA scores to ratings of teacher effectiveness as measured by student performance data and classroom observations. Additionally, Bastian, Henry, Pan, & Lys's (2015) study of the pilot of the edTPA at East Carolina University showed that local assessed edTPA scores significantly predicted evaluation ratings, and, in some models, teachers' value-added.

**Construct validity.** Construct validity studies look to answer the question: Do the items on the test measure what they say they measure? The research shows mixed results when looking at alignment with professional standards. The 2013 edTPA Field Test Summary Report stated that “validation studies were conducted that document that the edTPA is well-aligned to the professional standards it seeks to measure, reflects the actual work of teaching, and that the score measures a primary characteristic of effective teaching” (Pecheone et al., 2013, p. 2). However, the Bastian et al. (2015) study, found that the 12 InTASC standards are only partially aligned with the three main TPA constructs (planning, instruction, and assessment) and two cross-cutting themes (analysis of teaching and academic language).

**Internal structure validity.** Internal structure validity studies look to see if the total score on the portfolio summarizes the candidate’s performance and if the patterns across the rubrics support the theory underlying the development of the tasks and rubrics. Pecheone et al., (2013) explained that “[f]inding one or a small number of related underlying dimensions in the data supports the validity of inferences that edTPA measures a primary characteristic of effective teaching” (p. 22).

Again, there were few studies exploring this area with mixed results. The 2013 edTPA Field Test Summary Report stated “all factor loadings are positive and of a moderate to large
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magnitude. These results support the use of a single score” (Pecheone et al., 2013, p. 23) while Duckor, Castellano, Téllez, Wihardini, & Wilson (2014) found sufficient internal structure validity evidence to support the continued, but limited, use of the PACT as a summative assessment.

**Face validity/authenticity.** Face validity for the edTPA can be defined as to how authentic the tasks are to teacher candidates’ daily practice during their student teaching experience (Sato, 2014). The creators of the edTPA made efforts to make the assessment authentic which include:

- not requiring a specific lesson plan template,
- having teacher candidates collect work samples from daily activities,
- the context for learning section and commentaries where teacher candidates justify their instructional choices, and
- teacher candidates’ ability to choose the instructional activities they feel best fit with their student population (Sato, 2014).

However, Lit and Lotan argued that the strict requirements of the (PACT) Handbook not authentic to professional practice and “reduce the potentially educative effect of the process of completing the Teaching Event” (p. 65). According to I. S. Okhremtchouk, Newell, & Rosa (2013), participants were unclear as to what was asked of them on the PACT and that this lack of clarity, including clarity as it relates to the specifics of what is required, introduces a twofold challenge for the pre-service teachers encompassing an authentic demonstration of teaching skills by the candidates and, ultimately, successful completion of the assessment (p. 11).
Mills’ (2015) study of seven undergraduate science teacher candidates reported the edTPA to be “authentic and integrated in the everyday practices of candidates” (p. 2) while other studies reported the opposite. One threat to authenticity was found to be when there was a mismatch between daily practice and the edTPA when teacher candidates worked in a school that had a scripted curriculum (Sato, 2014). Additionally, authenticity was at risk when teacher candidates were nervous to be in front of the camera (Cochran-Smith et al., 2013).

Studies specifically indicate that authenticity challenges are even greater when the edTPA is high-stakes. Denton’s (2013) study of 71 teacher candidates across three programs at a university in Washington State looked to find the specific attributes that were consistent across high scoring portfolios. The results revealed that candidates:

- used the minimum number of lessons (three rather than four or five),
- maximized the commentary page limits,
- used concise writing (analytical with frequent reference to lesson, video, and student work sample evidence),
- crafted clear teaching objectives which were well-connected to academic language,
- chose activities that highlighted the objectives, pre- and post-assessment, assessment and work sample,
- wrote out the details of their interactions to the students, and
- gave detailed feedback to students.

Some of these strategies were connected to educational theory and practice while other strategies were not. Those "strategies meant to earn points and simplify portfolio assembly do not violate edTPA administrative policies yet there misaligned with the goal of improving new teacher effectiveness" (p. 32). This calls into question whether teacher candidates were really
demonstrating their readiness for the classroom or if they were just demonstrating their ability to take a standardized assessment. The results indicated that “the high-stakes features of the edTPA may encourage the use of strategies misaligned with the goal of improving teacher effectiveness because the focus is on earning points” (p. 19).

K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin's (2015) study of the high-stakes implementation of the edTPA in New York and Washington State looked at the tensions that arise from the assumption that “assessment’s conceptual framework and core teaching tasks are embedded in placement school and classroom cultures” (p. 16). The results indicated that many teacher candidates found there to be a mismatch. “Consequently, their efforts to complete edTPA tasks according to the rubric criteria sometimes were constrained by resistance among stakeholders at their placement sites and challenges associated with shifting classroom practices to meet the demands of the assessment” (p. 16) leading to less authentic representations of their day-to-day teaching. The authors found other threats to authenticity:

In accordance with its high-stakes status, edTPA’s representation of teaching as orderly and convergent discouraged some candidates from including practical challenges in their portfolios and made them anxious that isolated incidents could derail their edTPA portfolios… They sought to demonstrate a consistent and continuous trajectory of practice across their edTPA portfolios, even when their actual teaching and classroom interactions were more tumultuous (p. 15).

As pointed out by Sato (2014), the face validity of the assessment is also threatened by the use of video and pressure to make compromises to fit the requirements of the test. Teacher candidates shared that they were so focused on the rubrics and the technical aspects of videotaping their lessons that “Many credential candidates elected to plan the simplest and most
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technically unchallenging lessons they could think of,” (Berlak, 2012, p. 114) and some students even rehearsed their videotaped lessons in advance, literally teaching the same lessons twice, to make sure they captured a good performance (McGrath 2014). Because candidates only choose 20 minutes of video, they can pick snippets that represent the teaching the scorers are looking for and hide evidence of badly executed instruction or poor interaction with their students (Sandholtz & Shea, 2012). Additionally, for several of the certification areas, teacher candidates choose one student or small group of students for the video. This allows candidates to easily avoid students with behavioral issues or the ones with the greatest learning challenges (Berlak, 2011). Conley & Garner (2015) posited that “Grooming teacher candidates to prepare the perfect videos and classroom vignettes with artifacts and assessments do not allow for authentic assessment of candidate growth through multiple observations of changing teaching episodes over the course of a semester or intern year of teaching experience” (para. 32).

**Consequential validity.** Consequential validity for the edTPA “must come from examining how the use and implementation of edTPA impact program curricula, faculty, and teacher candidates” (Nayfeld et al., 2015, p. 22). It must also come from examining how the benefits and "challenges or unintended consequences experienced by program faculty, and candidates as they work to integrate edTPA requirements into existing practice and navigate the pressures that come with high-stakes policy” (p. 23). SCALE asserts that the “edTPA was designed as a support and an assessment program and targeted attention to capacity building and implementation was explicitly built into the system to help mitigate the high-stakes use of edTPA-- from a system of compliance to a system of inquiry” (p.23). Darling-Hammond et al. (2013) made an important conclusion about the link between the level of support teacher candidates receive and consequential validity of the PACT. They explained that "the more
candidates felt well-supported by their programs in learning to teach and in completing the assessment, the more they felt they learned from the assessment experience. Thus, the consequential validity of the assessment appeared to be strengthened as it was embedded in a supportive environment for learning to teach" (p. 193).

The following subsections will look at the impact of the TPA on program curricula, school of education faculty, partner schools, cooperating teachers, and teacher candidates. Where appropriate, sections will start with research about the PACT then move to studies of the edTPA in low-stakes environments and then end with studies in high-stakes environments.

*Impact on program curricula.* As the research shows, “[p]rograms using edTPA are encouraged to develop curriculum-embedded signature assessments for use prior to and during field experiences as formative assessments to engage in practice teaching that reflects outcomes measured by edTPA” (Stillman et al., 2015, p. 184). While some felt that “TPA can provide motivation and direction for continuous program improvement efforts, contribute to the development of a common and concrete language of practice, and accelerate the professionalization of teaching” (Peck, Singer-Gabella, Sloan, & Lin, 2014, p. 8) others found that the edTPA creates tension and leads to compromise (Conley & Garner, 2015; Lachuk & Koellner, 2015; Lit & Lotan, 2013; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). Policy analysts warn “widespread implementation of teacher performance assessments could pose risks” like other high-stakes tests have and end up privileging “compliance over more adaptive responses” and that “effective leadership, particularly structural changes and resources are required preconditions for approaching such mandates from an inquiry orientation” (Stillman et al., 2015, p. 173).
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Many schools found it necessary to make major changes in their curriculum due to the edTPA including:

- rearranging course sequences,
- changing program assessments and rubrics,
- conducting mock-edTPAs,
- giving technical training of digital literacy skills, and
- integrating of test-specific language (Barron, 2015; Burns, Henry, & Lindauer, 2015; Cacicio & Le, 2014; Fuchs, Fahsl, & James, 2014; Gary, 2015; T. Lewis & Morse, 2013; Lys, L’Esperance, Dobson, & Bullock, 2014; Miller, Carroll, Jancic, & Markworth, 2015).

In some studies, these modifications were presented as fact rather than positive or negative revisions. Few studies actually measured “program improvement” or documented “curriculum change” whereas others described the strategies and efforts made to make program change possible.

Guagianone et al.’s (2009) survey of associate deans, deans, and TPA/assessment coordinators at 19 California State University campuses revealed there to be increased communication and collaboration among staff, influences on learning, and program improvement. However, because the study was done during the pilot of PACT, many answers were projections. Sloan (2013) also studied the organizational change that occurred during the implementation of the PACT. The study consisted of 40 faculty members at The University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) and explained how UCSB had to create embedded assignments throughout the program to parallel the work needed to pass the PACT.
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Additionally, courses, syllabi, and assignments were changed based on the PACT. The results indicated that

through implementation there was an increase in articulation across program courses, structures, and roles, that content of some course changes, that foci of fieldwork supervision changed, and that there were structural changes to program features such as field seminars and the portfolio assessment process (p. 30).

The program has been described as having "a culture of inquiry [original emphasis], characterized by the way the faculty communicate with shared understandings in conversations grounded in evidence" (p. 30). Distributed leadership was credited in developing an “inquiry versus compliance orientation to implementation” (p. 29).

Peck & McDonald's (2013) study looked at three programs which used “particularly vigorous and systematic efforts to implement PACT and to use the resulting data for program evaluation and improvement” (p. 13). Although the programs differed in many ways due to their context, size, and history, there were general implementation strategies that seemed to lead to program improvement:

- collegial involvement with decision-making around the adoption of the PACT,
- the use of an “inquiry stance” rather than a “compliance stance” when it came to implementation,
- special attention made to maintaining the values and identities of the programs,
- a strategic effort was made to involve faculty, on all levels, in the training, scoring, and data analysis activities,
- faculty meetings focused on questions related to PACT data when making decisions about program structure, curriculum, and practice, and
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- the examination of candidates’ work to clarify what the data was describing.

Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan (2010) conducted a qualitative case study of one University of California teacher education program and how it dealt with the tensions of implementing a state mandated high-stakes performance assessment. The researchers collected freewrites, notes from meetings, and questionnaires from 35 program faculty and had fifteen participants work as key informants throughout the policy implementation process. In their methodology, the researchers invited participants to express their concerns about the policy, “We conceptualized this process as one of scaffolding dissent in ways that supported active engagement with the policy challenges and reaffirmation of program values and identity” (p. 456). They found that there was a shift in the “motivational dynamics of the implementation process” through the faculty’s participation in text analysis of the policies and collaboration to define a set of programmatic values they would work to preserve throughout the implementation process. A pivotal event around which motivation further shifted from an orientation toward compliance to an orientation toward inquiry took place when faculty and staff members examined examples of their students’ work on the new TPAs. These data challenged faculty assumptions about the efficacy of the program... and motivated deeper engagement with inquiry and change (p. 459).

The TPA data prompted them to evaluate what candidates were applying from their courses to their field experiences. They also investigated why students were performing below expectation and documented the curriculum changes that were made in response to the TPA. The researchers found that “[m]any of the new activities and roles that developed through the implementation process were viewed as highly productive with respect to issues of long-standing concern in the program” and that “the policy implementation process led to development of a clearer
articulation of connections across courses and across coursework and fieldwork dimensions of the program” (p. 458).

Lit & Lotan (2013) reflected extensively on their experience at Stanford University and the “dilemmas” they encountered with the PACT and the other requirements in California. They asserted that their participation in the PACT consortium and the implementation of the performance assessment was an important and positive influence in the work of their program but with some caveats:

- the establishment of a high-stakes summative assessment refocused efforts in alignment with the high-stakes assessment and, thus, the assessment indeed drove our curriculum.
- This effort resulted in more focused, aligned, and clear instruction and support of candidates. Assessment-driven curriculum can have a positive impact on practice...however, there have been times when alignment to a high-stakes assessment seems to push the program too far (p. 69).

They went on to explain that although the implementation of the PACT helped their program focus their efforts on “underlying principles and shared priorities,” however, this work is challenging.

- A narrow and rigid correspondence between the curriculum and the summative examination restricts conceptualizations and understandings of other valid principles of teaching for learning. Given the pressures of limited time and the push for doing well on this high-stakes assessment, there is a danger that alternative, if not conflicting, theories and perspectives on teaching and learning might not find space in the university curriculum (p. 66).
Additionally, they explained that the high-stakes nature of the PACT has required faculty to withhold professional judgment and act on “teachable moments” with their teacher candidates.

At East Carolina University, where the edTPA was low stakes, administration took steps to use the test for program improvement such as:

- addressing program and faculty readiness;
- promoting data-directed program improvement and curriculum development; and
- conducting faculty training and ongoing discussion and communication (Lys et al., 2014).

The results indicated that the distributed leadership model and collective decision-making was integral to a positive implementation experience and outcome.

As Illinois is slated to soon require the edTPA for certification, schools of education in that state are working to align their programs’ content to this upcoming mandate. In the article "Redesigning a Special Education Teacher Preparation Program: The Rationale, Process, and Outcome," Fuchs et al. (2014) explained the steps one program took to align with the edTPA. They started using edTPA language in their forms, assignments, lesson plan templates, and rubrics. Additionally, the student teaching observation document was revised and expectations for journal reflections were made to parallel the work on the edTPA.

Based on edTPA requirements, there was an increased emphasis on thorough description, synthesis of ideas, insightful and well-supported viewpoints, and professional tone. Increased weight was given to the revised journal assignment with the expectation that candidates would engage in more meaningful, in-depth reflection and synthesis (p. 150).

An (2015) studied the impact of the edTPA on an elementary school social studies teacher education program in Georgia where the edTPA is linked to the State’s Race to the Top
grant. The teacher educators felt that the edTPA had impacted their program a "great deal" (88%) and their students and courses "somewhat" (12%). Changes were made in terms of the curriculum and use of resources, and there was an effect on the climate of the program (in terms of environment of stress, helplessness, unhappiness). The teacher educators also predicted the status of elementary social studies teacher education was getting worse (72%). Meanwhile, 76% took a "constructive resistance" or "critical compliance" approach to the edTPA implementation.

Lachuk & Koellner (2015) documented changes in their practices and program at Hunter College at The City University of New York in order to accommodate the edTPA. There was a demand for more evidence-based writing. Faculty also realized that they needed to give written feedback that was specific enough to allow candidates to understand how to revise their work to prepare for the edTPA. This inspired some instructors to allow for multiple rounds of revisions on course assignments to assess if students were able to apply the feedback successfully. The focus on candidates’ writing prompted the authors to ask, “Does writing well about one's teaching ensure one will be an effective literacy teacher?” (p. 91). The answer they found was “no.” Even though writing improved, the same teacher candidates still struggled in their teaching practice and although they had “many ‘stellar’ writers about teaching” they still had “few ‘stellar’ teachers” (p. 92). Lachuk and Koellner also expressed their concern about teaching to the test and that the high-stakes nature shifted pedagogy from a more constructivist approach to a more teacher-as-expert model. Their self-study also revealed that the time and work needed to complete the edTPA led them to require fewer assignments as part of the student teaching course. They saw the need “to strengthen the articulation between course experiences and field experiences” and to “design writing assignments across our program and methods courses that are evidence-based” (p. 93). These realizations led to two changes in program
curricula: (a) a move from observation during fieldwork experiences to embedded assignments from methods courses that allow for more opportunities to teach and (b) a revision of coursework where gaps were found in the use of high-leverage practices.

Because the edTPA is focused on language development regardless of subject area, some programs found that they had to make significant changes to meet the needs of the test. For example, in Lim, Stallings, & Kim's (2015) study, teacher educators of mathematics contested that there is a lack of research on the role of language functions or syntax in teaching math and that these skills are more appropriately explored in advanced math courses. This aroused concerns about the curricular realignment that was occurring in these areas.

Teacher educators of literacy have apprehensions as well. Hochstetler & Orzulak (2015) argued that “programmatic or individual interpretation of the edTPA can marginalize writing instruction (and writing teacher education) by focusing on what the edTPA labels as the ‘subject specific pedagogy’ assessment for English language arts, which focuses on ‘complex texts’” (p. 74). Similarly, T. Lewis & Morse (2013) investigated how the edTPA impacts teacher education for elementary school literacy teachers. They claim that the level of mastery required by the edTPA in our reading methods courses undercuts our ability to teach other important domains of knowledge that equip our candidates to become more effective teachers of literacy through the narrowing of the curriculum in terms of teaching reading content and instructional contexts (p.77).

They found that the edTPA favors effective instruction focused on comprehension and that “other important conventional literacy instruction associated with independent reading, fluency, vocabulary, phonics, and phonemic awareness remain unacknowledged” (P. 73). However, they found that the benefit of the edTPA is that literacy is embedded into other content areas.
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Additionally, the curricular alignment with edTPA’s focus on higher level literacy strategies, language functions, and text and task analysis will result in well prepared teacher candidates.

**Impact on faculty.** The implementation of a performance assessment also has an impact on faculty members as well. While some felt “the absence of a shared language or structure for talking about teaching contributes to the profession’s vulnerability and struggle to respond to criticism in agentive and productive ways” (Stillman et al., 2015, p. 172), others contested that the edTPA test-specific language has co-opted current professional discourse (T. Lewis & Morse, 2013). In An’s (2015) case study of teacher educators in Georgia, there were varied and conflicting views on the edTPA with a 60/40 split among faculty between “not or little supportive” of the edTPA and "somewhat or very much supportive" of the edTPA. Several researchers mentioned the specific conflicts teacher educators encounter when preparing teacher candidates for the TPA.

Kornfeld, Grady, Marker, & Rupp Ruddell (2007) conducted a qualitative self-study that included 10 full-time faculty at Sonoma State, California State University. Using critical discourse theory, they found the implementation of a state-mandated teacher performance assessment led to faculty members' increased use of “[t]echnocratic language and terminology reflecting compliance with the new state standards [which] reveals a substantive shift in the ways they think about what they do” (p. 2).

Teacher educators like Lachuk & Koellner (2015) explained the tensions they encountered are related to managing test preparation versus quality teacher preparation. “[I]n many ways, our beliefs about literacy instruction were consistent with the beliefs on literacy teaching that are embedded within edTPA, yet we struggled with managing the balance between preparing our teacher candidates for a test and preparing our teacher candidates for teaching
literacy” (p. 87). They also discussed the struggle they felt between directly preparing their teaching candidates for the specifics rubrics of the edTPA and more self-directed learning and reflection.

Several policy analysts questioned the imposition of the edTPA on teacher educators’ autonomy (Berlak, 2011; Peck et al., 2010; Stillman et al., 2015). Part of Gary’s (2015) study included research on experiences of five faculty members at Midwestern University from five different teacher education programs who volunteered to complete the edTPA themselves. Participants expressed concerns that the edTPA “would interfere with their autonomy of instruction resulting in losing control of the current courses taught” (p. 18).

At Lehman College at The City University of New York, Fayne & Qian (2015) studied participants’ “stages of concern” about the edTPA before and after it was implemented. Faculty had fewer Stage 1 (informational), 2 (personal), and 3 (management) concerns. Mixed patterns were identified at more advanced stages in that faculty had higher Stage 4 (Impact on Students) and Stage 6 (Reframing Innovation or Finding and Alternative) concerns but slightly lower Stage 5 (Collaboration) concerns.

Other teacher educators found the implementation of a performance assessment to be a helpful tool. DeMink-Carthew, Hyler, & Valli (2014) conducted a study at the University of Maryland where the edTPA is low-stakes. In their survey of 22 teachers who scored their candidates’ edTPA, participants found that reading commentaries helped participants reflect on their own teaching and was a professional development opportunity. Nevertheless, they found that “[t]enured faculty felt it was a top-down decision with little input from them and it is an add-on with no connection to the College's commitments” (p. 18). The clinical faculty had conflicting experiences. Although they “spoke highly of the structure and content” (p. 19), they
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criticized the logistics and that much of the burden to familiarize K-12 faculty fell on their shoulders.

Cochran-Smith et al. (2013) argued that the TPA "may narrow the gauge of program quality" and cause a "loss of local control and voice about teacher endorsement" for certification (p.17). They go on to point out that "[t]he irony may be that with the TPA as a national assessment, the evaluation of teacher candidates’ work is dislocated from the local site of teacher candidates’ learning, and there are restrictions on local teacher educators’ access to and use of their own teacher candidates’ portfolios. In addition, with the national assessment, there are restrictions on teacher educators’ roles as mentors in teacher candidates’ construction of portfolio materials and on their opportunities to participate in generating assessments in keeping with their own core values and assumptions (p. 18).

Impact on partner schools and cooperating teachers. Only a few studies have been done on the impact of the edTPA on partner schools and cooperating teachers. In DeMink-Carthew et al. (2014) study at the University of Maryland where the edTPA is used for accreditation purposes, cooperating teachers and partner school administrators spoke highly of the edTPA; however, Miller, Carroll, Jancic, & Markworth's (2015) study at Western Washington University found there to be challenges when it came to school partners because the edTPA was seen as an intrusion by the cooperating teachers.

Lanham's (2012) self-study about the edTPA pilot at the University of Massachusetts (UMass), Amherst, revealed that schools and cooperating teachers reported not wanting to take student teachers in the future because of the edTPA. One principal decided to discontinue placing UMass students at his school because videos of his students would be sent to Pearson. “Concerns over images of students being sent to a private corporation prompted other area
schools to bar teacher candidates from the videotaping that had been a valuable part of their training as teachers. As the public schools had not previously balked at this, Pearson's intrusion into the classroom seems to be the sole reason that my class of teacher candidates lost this resource” (p. 116).

**Impact on teacher candidates.** The research shows that stakeholders see various benefits of the edTPA for teacher candidates although these are somewhat mediated when the test becomes high stakes. A few studies documented how the high-stakes caused some teacher candidates to find the TPA to be overwhelming (Burns et al., 2015; Lindauer, Burns, & Henry, 2013; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015; Proulx, 2014). Impact on specific groups of teacher candidates will be examined in the concurrent validity section.

For some, the TPA was seen as a tool for teacher development and preparation for teacher evaluation and reflection (Chung, 2008; Darling-Hammond et al., 2013; DeMink-Carthew et al., 2014; Langlie, 2015; Lunsford, 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013), while others found that the TPA inhibited authentic and deep reflection in favor of prescribed answers to narrow prompts (Herbert, 2015; Lanham, 2012). Similarly, the video component was also noted as being helpful for some (Langlie, 2015; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; I. S. Okhremtchouk et al., 2013), while a challenge to authenticity to others (as noted in a previous section).

Darling-Hammond et al. (2013) evaluated surveys by 305 PACT candidates from eight programs who participated in PACT pilots in 2005. According to their analysis, a large majority of teacher candidates felt that they learned important skills through the process of constructing the PACT Teaching Event and that the experience helped them improve their knowledge of
learners, their assessment of student learning progress, and their ability to reflect more carefully on instructional decisions.

I. Okhremtchouk et al. (2009) surveyed 73 elementary and secondary education candidates in four programs at one university. Their research shows that:

- 44% found the PACT as being helpful in student teaching practices;
- 32% stated it was not helpful;
- 11% were neutral; and
- 12.5% had mixed feeling

These findings varied by subject with those taking the multiple subject portfolio having the most difficulties. While 25% found the PACT to be helpful, 44% found it not to be helpful in their student teaching experience. Some teacher candidates also shared that the videotaping was helpful, and the PACT forced them to think about assessment in meaningful ways. More details about this study are included in the sub-section that follows on the impact of the TPA on the teacher candidates’ academic and personal lives.

Several studies were completed when the edTPA was low-stakes. At Austin Peay State University, in Tennessee, some graduates, professors, and principals noted benefits of the edTPA such as an improvement in the teacher candidates’ performance and a stronger readiness for the classroom and future teacher evaluations (Barron, 2015). Lunsford (2015) conducted her master’s thesis about agricultural educational students at North Carolina State University and found that teacher candidates learned about the importance of planning and thought edTPA was a good assessment and reflection tool.

Huston’s (2015) dissertation about four elementary teacher candidates’ experiences with the edTPA at a university in the Midwest found that “data from this study supported the
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contention that the process of completing EdTPA deepened student teachers' understanding of their own teaching. Informants gained a deeper understanding of their educational experience in a number of realms, which clearly implicated a broader awareness and appreciation of the complexities of learning to teach” (p. v).

Langlie's (2015) dissertation explored teacher candidates' perspectives on the edTPA across various disciplines. This study was of 22 teacher candidates across content areas from three schools of education in Minnesota, which uses the edTPA for teacher education program approval, not for teacher licensure. Five participants felt that the edTPA was a personal benefit in their development as a teacher, and thirteen felt the reflection component was beneficial. Even though participants did not feel that the video clip was able to show their relationships with students, eight participants expressed that the video aspect was still valuable. Twenty participants reported a negative attitude towards the performance assessment. “They clearly expressed that teaching was their priority and were disturbed by the time commitment required to complete the edTPA” (p. 67). Furthermore, “Findings indicate that many teacher candidates were willing to devote time to the assessment despite the challenges they faced during the process; however, they did not perceive the edTPA to be an accurate reflection of their readiness for teaching.” (Langlie, 2015, p. xvi).

Lin's (2015) dissertation utilized case studies of seven teacher candidates, two focus groups, and a cohort survey from one elementary education teacher program at the University of Washington, Seattle. Additionally, interviews were also conducted with cooperating teachers and field supervisors. This study took place the year before the edTPA became high-stakes in Washington State. Although it was found that the edTPA allowed candidates opportunities to develop their practice, there were "variations in the extent to which candidates take up these
opportunities to learn” and that “learning opportunities are likely affected by the personal characteristics of the candidates and the nature of the interactions and collaborations they have with others in the context of their participation in the edTPA process” (p. v).

Using a total of forty seven semi-structured interviews with teacher educators, teacher candidates, support coordinators of the edTPA, and edTPA scorers, Herbert (2015) looked at the impact the edTPA had on teacher candidate reflection. The analysis showed that “reflection is reduced to a process of answering preformulated questions that are subsequently evaluated through the use of rubrics” and that “[c]andidates are rewarded for demonstrating a reflective process that fulfills specific requirements, each corresponding to a particular number on the rubric” (p. 5).

Although the studies in this section reported mostly on positive outcomes the TPA had on teacher candidates, the following subsections focus on the outcomes the TPA has on teacher candidates’ teaching experience, coursework, and academic and personal lives. These studies found mostly negative consequences.

**Impact on the student teaching experience and coursework.** Research shows that candidates spend many hours breaking down the prompts, examining the rubrics, and writing up pages of commentary which takes time and focus away from their coursework and their students (I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012; Singer, 2014). For many, this burden becomes too much to handle resulting in teacher candidates skipping class, needing extensions on assignments, or handing in substandard work. Berlak (2011b) explained that

An informal survey revealed that most of the students in elementary credential programs at our university and at least four other California State Universities found PACT a serious distraction from their coursework and student teaching, creating unnecessary
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...anxiety and exhaustion as they tried to satisfy the requirements of what they perceived as repetitive, bureaucratized tasks (p. 202).

Additionally, in some cases, teacher candidates took days off from student teaching to write up the commentaries. Jen Boerner, a graduate student at SUNY Brockport, shared similar sentiments. “[T]he biggest drawback to the edTPA was the lack of attention she was able to pay to all of her students…‘I feel I lost out on a lot of student teaching. I really couldn’t do as much as I wanted; I couldn’t go over all the lesson plans I wanted to try out because I was teaching to the test. That was unfortunate’” (United University Professions, n.d.). McConville (2014), a teacher candidate at Columbia University Teachers College, voiced similar sentiments,

In the amount of time my peers and I spent jumping through edTPA’s hoops, we could have been actually growing and reflecting as young teachers through meaningful coursework and classroom discussions…I feel less prepared to teach because of the amount of time and energy this dastardly assessment demanded (McConville, 2014, p. 34).

In the study conducted by Burns et al. (2015) at Canisus College in New York, 67% of teacher candidates and 53% of cooperating teachers felt the edTPA contributed to the professional development of the student teachers. However, in the high-stakes environment, only 22% of student teachers and 16% of cooperating teachers indicated that the edTPA actually did enhance the student teaching experience. While 51% of cooperating teachers thought that the time spent on the edTPA during student teaching was appropriate, 39% expressed that their student teachers’ edTPA work did interfere with other student teaching responsibilities. A much higher percentage of student teachers felt similarly with 80% reporting that the edTPA interfered with their other student teaching responsibilities.
Impact on the teacher candidates' academic and personal lives. Some researchers found that the amount of work and level of expected performance on the TPA in the context and final weeks of student teaching is unrealistic and unfair to candidates and competes with other degree requirements (Carroll, 2013; DeMink-Carthew et al., 2014). Teacher candidates reported sleep deprivation, problems with their personal relationships, and high levels of stress associated with the demands of the test (Berlak, 2011; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012). In the Burns et al. (2015) study previously mentioned, researchers found 87% of teacher candidates agreed or strongly agreed that the edTPA was overwhelming, and 65% of cooperating teachers reported that their student teacher seemed overwhelmed by the edTPA work.

I. Okhremtchouk et al.'s (2009) study was the first year of a two-year project. This phase, which consisted of 73 participants in four programs at a University of California campus, revealed that the majority of teacher candidates found that PACT was not helpful in their coursework, and 65% said it impacted coursework negatively due to time and stress. The elementary school multi-subject teacher candidates were most stressed and felt the PACT took their attention away from their students. Additionally, 94% of participants said the PACT affected their personal time in a significantly negative way, and they experienced sleep deprivation, strain on personal relationships, and health complications.

I. S. Okhremtchouk et al.'s (2013) study was the second year of the two-year project and consisted of 20 participants in English and Social Science cohorts. Results indicated that teacher candidates were more confident about their teaching skills measured by the PACT than the actual scores earned. Participants reported that the PACT had “significant impact on the candidates’ practical component of teacher preparation and experience outside of PACT... especially in the areas of lesson planning for those courses not involving the PACT assessment and classroom
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management at their student-teaching placements” (p.11). Additionally, over 50% of the teacher candidates reported that interactions with their cooperating teachers had diminished while preparing the PACT, and 70% of the participants stated that their coursework in classes that did not cover the PACT was strongly impacted due to the time commitment needed to complete the PACT. Furthermore, 90% of the participants reported that the PACT assessment had significantly affected their personal time. However, “[d]espite the drain on their time for completing their coursework while student teaching and planning lessons, pre-service teachers do appear to have acquired knowledge about their teaching practice from completing the PACT assessment” (p. 13).

**Concurrent validity.** Concurrent validity is measured by comparing scores on a test to other measures of performance, such as grade point average, other teacher exams, or classroom observations, and other sources of variance such as demographic categories and prior skills and knowledge (Nayfeld p. 23). Sandholtz & Shea's (2012) study investigated university supervisors' predictions of PACT scores based on their observations of teacher candidates’ teaching. Their results showed that university supervisors' perspectives did not always correspond with outcomes on the PACT, particularly for high and low performers. The next subsections examine studies on other potential sources of variance in TPA scores. Some of the literature expresses concerns about the potential for a standardized performance assessment to impact under-represented populations in teaching, meanwhile, some of the quantitative research studies have shown this fear to be unwarranted, however, it is important to note that the statistical studies were conducted by the creators of the TPA.

It has been reported that people of color and those for whom English is not their first language fail the PACT at a disproportionate rate (Berlak, 2012) and edTPA scores are showing
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similar results (Clayton, 2014). The extensive writing component of the exam is also a challenge to those who are the first in their family to go to college and those who attended low-performing high schools although they may be excellent practitioners (Hogness, 2014; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012).

During the first two years of the PACT pilot, Pecheone & Chung (2006) found that candidates whose primary language is English score .20 points higher on average versus those whose primary language is not English, which was statistically significant. They found no significant difference in PACT scores when comparing scores by race, percentages of English language learners in the classroom, or classroom socioeconomic status. Females scored statistically significantly higher than males. Being that teacher candidates in urban schools were more likely to report constraints on their teaching decisions related to district-mandated curriculum and are in “instructional contexts in urban areas [that] are often more challenging and generally require greater command of teaching skills to meet students’ diverse needs” (p. 29), it is not surprising that candidates teaching in suburban schools scored higher than those in urban or inner-city schools. In general, higher levels of reported constraints were associated with lower scores on the Teaching Event.

The 2014 edTPA Administrative Report, separately analyzed portfolios that were submitted from states where the edTPA was of consequential use. Similar to the PACT pilot data, it was found that women scored higher than men; however, there were some other disparate results. The data revealed that all demographic variables taken together explained less than 4% of the total variance in edTPA scores. Differences by racial/ethnic group were small, with differences within groups much larger than differences between groups. White and Hispanic candidates had similar results as did English speakers and those whose primary language is one
other than English, however, “small sample sizes for some groups and differences in group sizes prevent strong generalizations” (p.7). Additionally, candidates teaching in urban settings had the highest average scores, while candidates teaching in rural settings had the lowest average scores. The difference between urban and rural, as well as urban and rural/suburban subgroups, was statistically significant (p<.01) while there was no significant difference between urban and suburban subgroups. Bachelor’s /bachelor’s plus additional credits scored statistically significantly higher than candidates with a master’s/master’s plus additional credits (p < .05).

The authors hypothesized that this may be due to the fact that master’s degree teacher candidates may be “change of occupation” candidates and have less coursework and clinical experience than their undergraduate counterparts (Nayfeld et al., 2015).

Additional Challenges

Throughout the literature, teacher candidates articulated their concern over the technological skills needed to create their portfolio including: creating, compressing, and uploading their video clips to the edTPA platform (Burns et al., 2015; Chung, 2008; Lanham, 2012; Theoharides, 2014). Teacher candidates who do not have expertise with these processes expressed the need for technical support (Burns et al., 2015). Video recording can be complicated when certain students do not have permission to be on camera, audio needs to be heard from various corners in the room, the camera gets moved or knocked over by students, or the battery or memory runs out during recording (Au, 2013; Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015; McGrath, 2014).

Teacher candidates might need special permission to deviate from the mandated curriculum to showcase their best work in their videos (Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015). As Countryman & Stone (2015) explained,
Potential problems arise, for example, when the cooperating teacher is using scripted learning and therefore requires the student teacher to use this same pedagogy. Without allowing the student teacher to have some leniency in designing and implementing their own instruction, it may not be possible for the candidate to satisfactorily demonstrate mastery of sound pedagogy (Countryman & Stone, 2015, p. 10).

Tensions can arise because of conflicting priorities. There can be differences in the classroom management style and culture expected on the edTPA and that of the cooperating teacher (Miller et al., 2015). Differences between the needs of the student teacher and the requirements of the principal/school district can even cause cooperating teachers to decide not to host a student teacher in future semesters (Au, 2013; Lanham, 2012).

**Financial Costs and the Potential Impact on the Profession**

As Snyder (2009) expounded, “If the performance assessment process is expected to improve candidates’ development in the learning from teaching process, then the time, expense, and teacher educator expertise required cannot be ignored” (p. 10). Some of these costs include course redesign and professional development for faculty as well as hiring of assessment/TPA coordinators and conducting edTPA workshops, seminars, and one-on-one consultation for students. Additionally, there is a need to purchase, store, and maintain video equipment, unless the cost is passed on to the teacher candidates. Furthermore, many campuses purchase ePortoflio systems, like TaskStream, TK-20, or LiveText, and must train faculty and students to use these platforms (Denton, 2013; Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015; Guaglianone et al., 2009). Guaglianone et al. (2009) expressed an important concern about the state funding associated with these cost. “The problems with many of these funding strategies are that they don’t provide adequate funding, they may negatively impact program quality and enrollments, or that they are not
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sustainable over time” (p. 143). To compound the issue, schools or programs that are considered “low-performing” may lose accreditation, state funding, and federal student financial aid leading schools to be shut down (Kumashiro, 2015).

In addition to the costs for schools of education, teacher candidates also have expenses related to the edTPA. In many cases, they must print the manuals and associated documents, purchase an online TPA management account, and pay for the test (Lanham, 2012). While Pearson provides fee waivers that can be purchased by the state to serve as vouchers, only 1,400 fee waivers were made available for eligible edTPA candidates between September 2013 and June 2014 (Nayfeld et al., 2015) with 600 vouchers distributed across all of New York State (J. L. D’Agati, 2014). Since there are not enough to meet student demand, many students with high-financial need do not receive a voucher. This has left some schools of education to create a lottery system or not communicate about the existence of vouchers (Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015). The financial burden has left many candidates to delay submission of their edTPA and their certification (Greenblatt, 2016a).

In general, licensure tests increase the cost of entering into the profession and can be a barrier to entry for some or make it less appealing to others (National Research Council, 2001). Hildebrandt & Swanson (2014) warned that policy makers need to take into account the rising costs of teacher certification on the teacher workforce.

Clearly, adding additional formal assessment experiences like edTPA to existing assessment mandates may further discourage prospective teachers, who already struggle with sizable educational debt while preparing for a job that is compensated at about $36,000 annually at the beginning of a career (p. 589).
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However, Goldhaber (2007) argued that although this cost may discourage some, it is worth it if the test “serve[s] as an effective screen to keep individuals who would make for ineffective teachers out of the labor market” (p.767).

Supports for Teacher Candidates Taking the edTPA

In acknowledging the necessity to help students in navigating the edTPA process, guidelines were set up to outline how teacher educators could help their students in an ethical way. SCALE (2014) clarified these procedures in a document entitled *edTPA Guidelines for Acceptable Candidate Support*. This document explains that faculty members are allowed to:

- Provide, discuss, and explain the tasks, rubrics, handbooks, exemplars, and related edTPA materials.
- Assign "formative experiences aligned with the edTPA" (p. 2). Additionally, edTPA scoring rubrics may be used with these parallel tasks.
- Use the "rubric constructs or rubric language to evaluate and debrief observations" (p. 2).
- Offer seminars "focusing on the skills and abilities identified in the edTPA, such as an Academic Language Seminar" (p. 2).
- Ask probing questions but not provide direct edits or specific answers to the prompts.
- Provide technical support with the video and digital literacy necessary for the edTPA.

This outline is important as one begins to understand the challenges teacher candidates have in traversing the edTPA. The teacher candidates must understand the language used, breakdown the handbook, rubrics, and supporting documents, and master the digital literacy skills needed for the edTPA. For schools of education to prepare their teacher candidates to pass the edTPA, they

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1 This section and the subsections that follow are a revised version of Greenblatt, D. (2016). “Supporting Teacher Candidates Taking the edTPA.” In Polly, D., Heafer, T., & Hart, L. (Eds.) *Evaluating Teacher Education Programs through Performance-Based Assessments*. 

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must look at how to utilize the various team members involved in the student teaching experience to provide support for teacher candidates.

Since the beginning of the use of mandatory teacher performance assessments for certification in California, teacher candidates have expressed the need for support with standardized mandated teacher performance assessments. Three studies were conducted about the PACT that focused on finding out what supports teacher candidates were getting and what they felt they needed. In Selvester, Summers, & Williams, (2006), 35% of those in the study indicated that they needed more assistance and would have liked more support from supervisors, cooperating teachers, and professors. Participants also suggested additional course work, closer fieldwork supervision during the TPA, clearer directions, and more exemplars.

In I. Okhremtchouk et al.'s (2009) study on the PACT, it was found that those most pleased with the TPA process felt supported by their supervisors and their teacher education program and that “academic, technological, and emotional support from supervisors, teacher educators, and resident teachers is essential to preservice teachers’ satisfaction with the PACT process” (p. 58). The follow up study went more in depth when identifying challenges and supports. I. S. Okhremtchouk et al. (2013) found that over 70 percent of participants relied on their university supervisors and their classmates for support, and over 50 percent found their coursework as helpful or somewhat helpful, yet the majority of participants did not cite their cooperating teachers as a support source. Sixty-eight percent of the participants felt more advising and modeling were necessary with approximately 40 percent saying they would have liked to examine more models during class discussions about PACT. Additionally, early introduction to PACT, mentorship/buddy system with alumni, and peer-review were seen as valuable.
New York and Washington were the first two states to require the edTPA for certification. Due to the high-stakes, one might assume that these teacher candidates would be well supported and prepared to navigate the handbooks and rubrics of the test; however, in Meuwissen et al.’s (2015) study of teacher candidates in these states:

- 42% felt they did not understand the prompts and rubrics in their subject area.2
- 50% did not have a good understanding of the edTPA.
- 43% did not know where to find resources for the edTPA.
- 69% felt there was not adequate preparation from their teacher education program in selecting a video.
- 63% felt there was not adequate preparation from their teacher education program for formatting and uploading to the edTPA website.
- 47% felt there was not adequate preparation for writing the narratives.
- 80% did not feel their cooperating teacher was knowledgeable about the edTPA process.

As the authors explained, this “study demonstrates that ‘readiness for edTPA’ is not so simply determined by pass rates on the exams” (p.12).

In places where the edTPA is high-stakes, schools of education may choose to filter out those that need extra support. Micheal-Luna & Rodrigues’ (2015) study looked at admission, assessment, and completion data from early childhood graduate students at a large urban university in New York in the first year the edTPA was high-stakes. “Faculty found that the TPA writing requirements in tandem with the demands for a shorter program, contributed close adherence to GPA and writing sample rubrics” when admitting students (p. 3). Admissions

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2 These percentages are based on those who answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”
committee members felt that the school did not have the time or money to remediate teacher candidates who may have English language deficiencies. One participant said,

‘TOEFL scores aren’t enough for me to know if a student can learn to use written professional discourse. I don’t want to admit a student who cannot pass the TPA because their written English has English language learner errors. We don’t have the time (financial support) to give them the writing classes they need to pass the TPA.’ (Faculty interview). Linguistic diversity became a key point in admissions (p. 3-4).

Additionally, although the teacher candidates had a 100% pass rate, many linguistically diverse students were able to opt out of the TPA by using alternative pathways to certification.

Curriculum redesign and pre-student teaching support. Because of the complexity of the TPA, there is a need to start preparation for it prior to student teaching and to continue support for teacher candidates while they complete their portfolios. In some schools of education, teacher candidates are being asked to complete assignments referred to as “embedded signature assignments,” “mock-TPA portfolios,” or parallel assignments/tasks prior to student teaching (Burns et al., 2015; Lys et al., 2014; Miller et al., 2015). This early exposure to the TPA also consists of embedding the test-specific language into earlier courses (Lys et al., 2014).

Sloan’s (2013) self-study of the implementation of the PACT at the University of California at Santa Barbara showed that it is necessary to develop and embed formative experiences to adequately prepare teacher candidates for a performance assessment. Similarly, Hildebrandt & Swanson (2014) suggested that teacher candidates in their programs complete an “abbreviated edTPA based on teaching grades K-4 at a local community center so they can gain familiarity with it and acquire authentic student data to analyze prior to the high-stakes assessment” (p. 587). Furthermore, faculty at Austin Peay State University felt even in a low-
stake environment “it was important that elements of the edTPA be embedded in the courses, so that from the moment teacher candidates entered the teacher education program, they were practicing the edTPA, and in doing so, advancing their skills as a professional” (Barron, 2015, p. 72).

In the Meuwissen et al. (2015) study, many candidates in New York and Washington shared that it was helpful to complete parallel tasks and use the prompts and rubrics as guides prior to attempting the edTPA. They also recommended that the edTPA be introduced early in their programs and that preparation should begin earlier as well. Preparation prior to student teaching may be even more important for particular content areas. Teacher candidates suggested that teacher educators dedicate more instructional time to discussing the specific requirements that are unique to certain certification area portfolios and recommended giving feedback in methods course assignments to align with the edTPA rubrics (K. Meuwissen et al., 2015).

**Technology support.** edTPA practice is important technically as much as academically. Video practice can ameliorate the edTPA experience. For example, at Canisus College, "in each section of pre-student teaching, there was a horror story of deleted video and lost files. These served as cautionary tales in a low-stakes practice semester, and we had no cases of deleted video or lost files during student teaching" (Burns et al., 2015, p. 22). Support was provided to teacher candidates through an instructional technology support staff trained in the specific needs of those taking the edTPA. It was noted that having a handle on the digital literacy component of the test helped teacher candidates focus on the important aspects of the edTPA (Burns et al., 2015). In fact, in other research, teacher candidates sighted technical assistance as an important support for creating and submitting their edTPA portfolio (K. Meuwissen et al., 2015). Understanding this need, technology support was expanded throughout
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the North Carolina University system during the edTPA pilot and consisted of support sessions for faculty and teacher candidates. The teacher educators then worked to integrate the digital literacy skills into their coursework (Lys et al., 2014).

School of education support services. Being that passing the edTPA is required for licensure in Washington and New York, some schools of education in these states have already infused various support services into their programs. At Western Washington University, online and whole school professional development modules were developed to support student teachers in the technical writing and learning goals of the edTPA. Other supports included aligning observations, mentoring and instructional coaching practices to the demands of the edTPA (Miller et al., 2015). The University of Washington focused on the literacy demands of the test by holding an analytical writing "boot camp." Teacher candidates take time out from student teaching and do their edTPA write-up with faculty members on-hand to give them feedback (cIcu, 2013).

With limited budgets, it is important to know what services teacher candidates feel are most helpful. K. Meuwissen et al. (2015) found that teacher candidates in New York and Washington found seminar or workshop dedicated to edTPA prep, watching and analyzing videos of teaching (including those recorded especially for the edTPA), writing reflectively in general, and analyzing samples of edTPA videos and commentaries to be useful. They also felt that looking at written feedback to better understand how scorers interpret the rubric criteria was valuable.

Supporting faculty and field supervisors. As helpful as workshops and modules can be, it is integral that faculty and field supervisors receive thorough training about the edTPA to support the teacher candidates. This professional development is not just needed for those
working with teacher candidates during the student teaching semester. As previously mentioned, edTPA parallel tasks, vocabulary, and rubrics are now being integrated throughout teacher education programs.

Lys et al.’s (2014) self-study of the edTPA pilot in North Carolina’s public university system revealed that colleges were providing workshops on the language, rubrics and technical aspects of the digital components for teacher candidates, faculty, cooperating teachers, and field supervisors. An edTPA leadership team was also created to facilitate monthly support meetings for cohorts of faculty (“pods”) based on their experience implementing the edTPA. Pod leaders acted as liaisons between university faculty and field supervisors to help support field supervisors as they worked directly with candidates in their placements. Pod leaders had monthly meetings with the edTPA leadership team “to review protocols, timelines, and address emerging issues and concerns” (p. 6).

This model of distributed leadership evolved into the creation of liaisons called “edTPALs,” who represented their programs as part of collective decision making around the edTPA and to communicate with faculty about training and creating parallel tasks with edTPA language and constructs. The edTPA leadership team also created guides for faculty and teacher candidates. Furthermore, the edTPALs met with field supervisors regularly to discuss the needs of teacher candidates. Additionally, the university system worked to develop the faculty’s academic language, provide technology support, share data, work samples, and research, develop curriculum aligned with the edTPA, and hold “edTPA data summits” to connect faculty across the curriculum (p. 5).

**Student teaching placements.** In order to support teacher candidates taking the edTPA, some schools of education have their teacher candidates do pre-student teaching fieldwork in the
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same placement where they will student teach. Burns et al.’s (2015) study showed that 83% percent of student teachers and cooperating teachers agreed that this practice was a valuable support for the edTPA. Being in the same classroom where there is an already established relationship with the cooperating teacher and the students gives teacher candidates the advantage of being able to move right into their student teaching responsibilities. The teacher candidate also knows the students’ abilities, Individualized Education Plan goals, interests, and other information that will help in planning successful lessons for the learning segment. Knowing the students, curriculum, and cooperating teacher also frees up additional time to allow the teacher candidate to learn the requirements and language of the edTPA.

Many colleges have historically placed teacher candidates in groups at the same placement. With the edTPA, this practice seems to have additional benefits for conducting the edTPA. Canisus College found that placing teacher candidates in cohorts "led to a school-wide focus on the edTPA. These candidates had a peer group on-site to assist each other practically and emotionally with edTPA work" (Burns et al., 2015, p. 21).

**Structure of the student teaching experience.** Schools of education have been investigating ways to restructure the student teaching experience to facilitate the completion and submission of the edTPA portfolio. This has happened in several ways:

- giving teacher candidates “days off” to focus on their edTPA,
- lengthening the student teaching experience, and
- using “team teaching buddies.”

Some programs have looked to find ways to lessen the teacher candidates’ responsibilities. One college gave teacher candidates time off between their two student teaching placements in order to work on their edTPA portfolios. This allowed teacher candidates to get
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support from each other and the faculty while also not having the responsibility of student teaching (Burns et al., 2015). Other colleges have also given teacher candidates time off; however, if days occur during the middle of one placement, teacher candidates might see this as an interruption of their student teaching experience. For example, during the edTPA pilot, candidates at one college in Washington State reported that they would rather have not been away from their teaching duties when given two days off to work on their portfolios (Margolis & Doring, 2013).

Establishing deadlines was another support strategy utilized. The World Languages programs at Illinois State and Georgia State used deadlines to support early submission to allow teacher candidates to revise and resubmit if they do not pass; however, “Requiring candidates to submit their work early enough in the student-teaching experience to allow for evaluation and subsequent resubmission, if needed, may threaten candidates’ performance because they may not have gained sufficient mastery during the first half of their student teaching experience to succeed on this high-stakes assessment” (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014, p. 586). To help mediate the time challenges, both programs are considering lengthening student teaching and following the K-12 calendar rather than the university calendar.

Some teacher education programs noticed that having two semesters of student teaching instead of one allows for more experience to be ready and time to construct the edTPA portfolio (Barron, 2015). At Western Washington University, elementary education teacher candidates have a full year of student teaching to pace out the rigorous requirements, to avoid making the portfolio feel as overwhelming and to allow student teachers the opportunity to focus on their full-time teaching. During the first semester, teacher candidates take methods courses, do edTPA-support coursework, and complete the math task. In the second semester, the teacher
candidates are only completing their fieldwork requirement and completing the ELA tasks. This allows them to be able to focus on their full-time teaching responsibilities and finishing their edTPA portfolios without the additional responsibility of coursework (Miller et al., 2015).

Brooklyn College of the City University of New York tried an innovative approach to restructuring student teaching to provide teacher candidates with more support. Elementary education candidates were assigned “team teaching buddies” for student teaching. This meant that two student teachers were placed in the same classroom with one cooperating teacher. Some student teachers reported that having a team teaching buddy allowed them to split the student teaching responsibilities which gave them more time to devote to the edTPA. Teacher candidates also reported that this configuration provided important logistical support for videotaping because there was an available camera person to record parallel assignments and the edTPA learning segment. By using their team teaching buddy, teacher candidates didn’t have to rely on a cooperating teacher, who might not have a full understanding of what needs to be captured in the video. Additionally, this situation avoided the disruption of pulling colleagues from other classrooms when they might normally be teaching (Rosenfeld, Givner, & Tasimowicz, 2015).

However, this set up had costs as well. One teacher candidate said that due to the new certification demands, having another person in the room made it challenging to achieve the requirements for student teaching. Additionally, having two student teachers might be a big burden on a cooperating teacher and may result in the cooperating teacher not being able to give each teacher candidate the time she needs. Some student teachers also felt that having a team teaching buddy did not permit them to gain an understanding of what solo teaching without any help would be like (Rosenfeld et al., 2015).
Cooperating teachers and clinical supervisors as supports. Cooperating teachers are the most important support people teacher candidates have. These mentors teach how to plan, instruct, and assess in context. Being that the edTPA is conducted during the student teaching experience, it is vital that these team members understand what is expected of teacher candidates on the edTPA.

Lindauer et al.’s (2013) study was conducted at a small, private college in a large urban area of upstate New York, during the pilot of the edTPA in spring 2013. A small sample of teacher candidates, their coordinating cooperating teachers, and clinical supervisors participated from multiple areas. The cooperating teachers felt their participation in the edTPA should be minimal. There were mixed results from the supervisors regarding their expectations of the cooperating teachers’ involvement with the edTPA. The student teachers indicated getting little support from their cooperating teachers and supervisors but articulated wanting more support from their supervisors. Some teacher candidates shared that their supervisors were helpful with pacing and deadlines. Cooperating teachers and supervisors communicated that they needed more information to better support the teacher candidates with their edTPA portfolios.

In the Meuwissen et al.’s (2015) study of teacher candidates from New York and Washington, only 10% of participants said their cooperating teachers were knowledgeable about the assessment. Margolis & Doring (2013) revealed that cooperating teachers expressed being very confused about their role in supporting teacher candidates with the edTPA. Additionally, teacher candidates expressed that their cooperating teachers needed more explicit training; even those who were Board Certified and, in so, had gone through a similar process.

Burns et al.’s (2015) study showed that although 74% of cooperating teachers felt that they should actively support their student teacher in the edTPA process, only 57% felt that they
received enough information about the edTPA to do so\(^3\), and “[c]ooperating teachers remained a bit confused and overwhelmed even after they received training especially as it related to the acceptable forms of support allowed” (p. 27). Burns also found that 87% of teacher candidates felt supported by their college supervisors.

**Classmates.** Peer support is an effective and no-cost way of providing support. In many studies, teacher candidates reported that they found it to be helpful to work in pairs or small groups to either support one another, plan together, discuss their portfolios, provide resources to one another, or talk about the expectations, demands, and challenges they faced (Barron, 2015; Burns et al., 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015). Western Washington University created “communities of practice” to facilitate teamwork among each other. The focus is to foster collaboration rather than isolation since the edTPA can feel very overwhelming. As Miller et al. (2015) explained:

candidates get many opportunities to bring assessment data, instructional plans, and their initial analyses (all components of edTPA) to share and unpack with their colleagues as a way to plan for and support their students’ learning. These ongoing conversations about how to enact this kind of teaching inevitably take on a metacognitive dimension, as candidates explore how to foster students’ awareness of their learning progress. Collective inquiry results from repeatedly sharing and examining exemplars from previous candidates’ efforts and practicing a variety of coplanning and reflection strategies in class sessions (p. 47).

**Alumni.** Schools of education have tried to utilize the expertise of former teacher candidates who have successfully navigated the edTPA process. For example, Canisus College

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\(^3\) These percentages are based on those who answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”
hired an alumna to work part-time with teacher candidates as a tutor (Burns et al., 2015). Other campuses used alumni work as samples to discuss, dissect, and help candidate build their portfolios (Miller et al., 2015). Teacher educators in New York City shared that they also provide alumni exemplars to give teacher candidates a sense of the level of writing needed, what learning segments lent themselves to the requirements, and the types of video clips utilized. In some schools, alumni were also paid to help support teacher candidates during edTPA workshops (Greenblatt, 2016b).

In this researcher’s own section of student teaching, alumni are asked to volunteer to support teacher candidates in two ways. They are asked to be student teaching/edTPA buddies. As much as possible, teacher candidates are paired with alumni who have either worked with the same cooperating teacher or worked in the same school. Alumni are also asked to come to coach teacher candidates for edTPA help sessions during Student Teaching Seminar. Alumni give advice about the process, answer questions, and do peer-review of the portfolios. The volunteers “pay it forward” as they remember the support they received from previous alumni and how it felt to navigate the edTPA experience themselves. These alumni are often working and in graduate school themselves, yet they take the time to support the current teacher candidates (Greenblatt, 2016b).

Assessing the Quality of Teacher Education Programs

In California, TPAs are already being promoted as a way to measure program effectiveness (Luster, 2010). In Georgia, the edTPA counts as 15% of the State’s Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure, which is part of the teacher preparation program approval process/accreditation (An, 2015). Madeloni & Gorlewski (2013a) argued that although the advocates of the edTPA claimed that the test “will help teacher education programs measure
their effectiveness, but will not narrow their curriculum,” however, the authors contested that “the edTPA is a high stakes measure of a complex act. Meaningful teaching has consequences that are not always immediately obvious or measurable” (para. 13). W. D. Lewis & Young (2013) examined public documents, archival data, and interviews with “policy actors” to investigate the causes of the increased interest in teacher education accountability initiatives over the years. They identified multiple aspects that have contributed to the current climate which led to Race to the Top (RttT) and its implications. They explained that

[approaches to outcomes-based accountability for teacher preparation programs have fallen into one of four main categories: (a) evaluation based on the achievement scores of students taught by program graduates, (b) evaluation based on teacher candidates’ demonstration of research-supported teaching behaviors, (c) evaluation of teacher candidates during their preparation period based on how students perform in response to teaching, and (d) evaluation based on how students perform in response to program graduates’ teaching during graduates’ early years of teaching” (p. 191).

The authors felt that RttT led to a greater scrutiny of teacher education through the establishment of state-wide data systems that looked at outcomes, specifically program graduates’ students’ test scores, for accountability purposes.

**Chapter Summary**

The context surrounding the edTPA is important to understanding the need to research the effects of the implementation of the use of a nationally distributed standardized performance assessment for certification. Benefits, consequences, controversy, and tensions have been discovered throughout the literature. The complex and conflicting results show the need for further research and importance of using a critical theory lens when analyzing the data.
Chapter Four: Methodology

This study investigated the implementation of a nationally distributed and scored pre-service teacher performance assessment (edTPA) for elementary teacher candidates in New York City. It relied on a mixed-methods approach that used survey data and interviews of elementary education teacher candidates and interviews with teacher educators to study teacher candidates' experiences taking the edTPA. This included the supports and challenges and how the implementation of the assessment affected teacher candidates' personal, professional, academic, and student teaching experiences. Additionally, it looked at teacher educators' perspectives of the edTPA implementation on teacher candidates, themselves, and the teacher education curriculum.

This chapter will start with the rationale for the research approach and explanation of the importance of the research setting/context. Next, the research sample and data sources will be outlined. This will be followed by the research design. Then, the data collection methods and ethical considerations will be described. Subsequently, the data analysis methods and issues of trustworthiness will be summarized. The chapter will end with the limitations and delimitations of the study.

Rationale for Research Approach

A mixed methods design uses qualitative and quantitative data to explore the research question. For this study, data will be collected using a mixed methods design consisting of surveys and interviews. According to Creswell (2013),

mixed methods can be seen as a new methodology originating around the late 1980s and early 1990s based on work from diverse fields such as evaluation, education, management, sociology, and health sciences. It has gone through several periods of
development including the formative stage, the philosophical debates, the procedural developments, and more recently reflective positions (noting controversies and debates) and expansion into different disciplines and into many countries throughout the world (chap 10, sect. 1, para. 4).

Mixed methods was chosen for this dissertation because it minimizes the limitations of each of the approaches on their own and helps to triangulate the data (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The mixed methods design gives a complex approach to research and a more complete understanding of the research questions.

The purpose of the study is to investigate:

- The supports and challenges faced when taking a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes.
- The effects of the implementation of the assessment on participants' personal, professional, and academic experiences.
- The effects of the implementation of a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum.

Researching the effects of the edTPA will reveal important findings about how teacher candidates experience the implementation of the test and the effects of that experience on their:

- sense of self,
- personal lives, well-being, and relationships,
- academics,
- professional lives/relationships, and/or
- student teaching semester.
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Also important are the relationships of these effects to the support and challenges teacher candidates face on a personal, school of education, and student teaching placement level. This study will also reveal teacher educators' perspective on the implementation in terms of the effects on teacher candidates, themselves, and the teacher education curriculum. This data can inform policy adoption across the country, especially in urban contexts, where candidates have to face unique challenges, and in states where the edTPA is considered as a high-stakes certification requirement. The study can also support teacher education programs slated to use or already using the edTPA in terms of the challenges/tensions faced, potential benefits provided, and the supports needed for teacher candidates to pass the edTPA and to assuage the negative aspects of their experiences taking the exam.

The main research question that will be explored in this study is: How do teacher candidates and teacher educators perceive their experience of the implementation of a nationally available standardized teacher performance assessment? This main research question will be broken down into three component questions:

- What are the supports and challenges for teacher candidates when taking a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes?
- What are the effects of the implementation of the assessment on teacher candidates' personal, professional, and academic experiences?
- What are the effects of the implementation of a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum?

Research Setting/Context
This study focused on the experiences of teacher candidates taking the elementary education edTPA who were enrolled in schools of education and were student teaching in New York City. Only a few studies have been conducted in urban schools of education and/or with candidates in urban student teaching placements (Chung, 2008; Lindauer, Burns, & Henry, 2013; Liu & Milman, 2013; Micheal-Luna & Rodrigues, 2015; Rosenfeld, Givner, & Tasimowicz, 2015; Rosenfeld et al., 2015; Stillman, Anderson, Fink, & Kurumada, 2011; Stillman, Ragusa, & Whittaker, 2015), and these studies did not focus on the variables as it relates to implications for urban environments or use a critical theory lens.

Urban teacher candidates often come from under-represented populations in the teaching profession. As was reported in the literature review, there are mixed results as to the statistical correlations between TPA scores and demographic characteristics, such as race or being a native English speaker. It was noted that small sample sizes for certain demographic groups prohibits researchers from making generalizations about the findings. Additionally, there weren't any studies that looked at the teacher candidates' socioeconomic level or other characteristics of "non-traditional students" that are frequently seen in urban environments.

Teacher candidates fulfilling their student teaching placements in New York City face additional challenges to standardized assessments more so than those student teaching in suburban settings. On a student teaching placement level, it is known that in low-income communities where students are not scoring well on standardized tests, schools are more likely to have scripted curricula and have students with a variety of special needs (Stillman et al., 2011). Both of these aspects present challenges to passing the edTPA that are not taken into consideration on a standardized exam. As noted in the literature review, teacher candidates in urban schools were more likely to report constraints on their teaching decisions related to
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district-mandated curriculum. Additionally, those in “instructional contexts in urban areas are often more challenging and generally require greater command of teaching skills to meet students’ diverse needs” (Pecheone & Chung, 2006, p. 29). Although passing rates have potential consequences for diversity in teaching and urban education, which will be considered in the conclusion chapter of this dissertation, the focus of this study is to investigate the experience itself and its consequences, which go beyond passing or failing the test.

**Research Sample and Data Sources**

Participants in this study are teacher candidates and teacher educators. The teacher candidates: a) took the elementary education edTPA, b) attended a school of education in New York City, and c) student taught in a New York City school. Those taking the elementary education edTPA were chosen for several reasons:

- the researcher has expertise with the elementary education edTPA, which helps with establishing rapport and understanding the terminology and explanation of the edTPA Handbook specific to this content area,
- the elementary education edTPA has four tasks rather than three, and 18 rubrics rather than 15. These additional demands make their situation unique, and
- typically, student teaching in an elementary school takes place with the same group of students all day and is a multi-subject content area. Unlike secondary education candidates, teacher candidates in these placements cannot use one section of a class to try out their edTPA lesson and another for the actual test.

Teacher candidates who were getting dual certified (special education, early childhood, bilingual education, middle school extension, etc.) were included in the study as long as they took the elementary education edTPA to become a certified teacher.
This study focuses on the experiences of teacher candidates both student teaching in an urban school and attending a teacher education program in an urban setting. Although some participants may be commuters from the surrounding suburban areas, most of the participants live and/or grew up in one of the five boroughs of New York City, especially those who are undergraduates in the City University of New York system. The following public and private colleges and universities were included in the study:

- *Public from the City University of New York (CUNY)*: Hunter College, Medgar Evers College, Brooklyn College, City College, College of Staten Island, Lehman College
- *Private*: Teachers College, Fordham University, New York University, St. John's University

Undergraduates enrolled in the City University of New York share characteristics with the overall urban population. In fall of 2014, of CUNY undergraduates at senior colleges:

- 24.8 were Hispanic, 24.5 were Black, 27.9 percent were White, and 22.5 percent were Asian, and 0.3 were American Indian/Native Alaskan
- 36.3 percent were born outside of the U.S. mainland
- 40.4 percent had a native language other than English
- 170 different languages spoken
- 76.6 percent of CUNY's first time freshman are from New York City public schools
- 53.1 percent received Pell Grants
- 38.1 percent were first-generation college students
- average age is 24 with 27.1 percent being over 25 years old
- 30.3 percent worked more than 20 hours a week (CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, 2015)
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- and in fall 2013\(^4\), 12.5 percent were supporting children (CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, 2014)

Students in private colleges and universities (Peterson’s, 2014) and the graduate programs at CUNY (The City University of New York, 2012) tend to be less representative of the students in New York City school classrooms (The New York City Department of Education, 2014). In fall of 2014, the CUNY graduate student population was as follows: 16.0 were Hispanic, 15.7 were Black, 53.8 percent were White, 14.4 percent were Asian, and 0.2 percent were American Indian/Native Alaskan (CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, 2015). Other data about student demographics was not reported.

**Research Design**

This study used a concurrent mixed methods design with both surveys and interviews gathered throughout the data collection period. Only a subset of the survey participants volunteered to be the interviewed. In order to collect a larger sample, all volunteers were contacted for interviews rather than a selective or representative sample. Data were then analyzed for each method (see the following subsections) and the results were compared to get a broader perspective on the overarching research question.

(See Appendix A: Research Design)

Although mixed methods have many benefits, they also pose some challenges. This requires extensive data collection. The amount of data makes the analysis more time consuming and requires the researcher to be familiar with quantitative and qualitative methods and analysis procedures (Creswell, 2013).

(See Appendix B: Research Timeline)

\(^4\) This data was not given on the 2014 report.

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**Surveys.** As noted above, surveys were collected from teacher candidates who took the elementary edTPA from various public and private schools of education in New York City. Attempts to strengthen the validity of the survey are described below and included adapting questions from previous surveys on the topic. Additionally, the survey (see Appendix C) was field tested with five teacher candidates. These participants did follow up interviews or emailed their thoughts about the survey to express any confusions or recommendations they had with the wording or sequence of the questions. They were also asked if they have recommendations for other questions that addressed areas not covered in the survey. Recruitment emails and in-person solicitation for participation of teacher candidates were then conducted. Surveys were collected on Typeform, an encrypted site for data storage.

Survey questions were created to get a background profile of the population on three levels: personal, school of education, and student teaching placement. The Likert scale questions gave a sense of how teacher candidates perceived their experience of taking the edTPA. Specific questions asked them to rate the level of support they received. Other questions asked participants to list the supports their schools of education provided and how much they utilized them, if at all. Sixty-one surveys were collected during the study.

**Interviews.** Teacher candidates were interviewed to expand on their answers in the survey and share more deeply about their experience in terms of the perceived benefits or challenges and any personal, academic, and/or professional affects of their experiences. Teacher educators were used to triangulate the data by providing their perspectives on the teacher candidates’ experiences. Additionally, teacher educators were given the opportunity to reflect on how the implementation has affected them personally and/or professionally and share about the edTPA's impact on the curriculum, if any.
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Interviews were conducted using an "informal conversational" approach which is an unstructured interview where the questions naturally emerge from the data collected (Tashakkori & Teddle, 2003). The interviews each began with the same basic prompt, "Talk about your experience with the edTPA." Follow up questions were then asked based on their responses. Teacher candidates were also asked to elaborate further on their responses from the survey. Fourteen teacher candidates from six different colleges were interviewed along with eight teacher educators from seven different colleges.

Data Collection and Ethical Considerations

The researcher recruited participants by reaching out to teacher educators and administrators of schools of education via email. Recruitment took place in the spring of 2015 and the fall of 2015 although the teacher candidates may have taken the edTPA in a previous semester. Care was taken to contact as many of teacher education programs that certify elementary education teacher candidates that could be found in New York City. Several Internet searches were made to find all the programs in the area. Emails of professors and administrators were found on the schools' websites. On some occasions, email addresses were acquired through professional contacts. Additionally, professional contacts made announcements at CUNY-wide meetings of teacher education programs to inform faculty of the research project.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was given for the entire project as proposed. There is one IRB process for all of CUNY. Only one private school contacted about the project asked for the researcher to go through an additional IRB process. Since that would require a faculty sponsor at that university, the school was no longer considered for the study.

Some recruitment was conducted in-class where teacher candidates provided their email addresses directly to the researcher. In other cases, the contact person either provided a list of
emails or emailed the teacher candidates directly with a copy of the recruitment letter with the link to the survey. If teacher candidates were contacted directly from their college, it was after the semester was over and the students' grades were submitted, to avoid any feelings of coercion. Online consent forms were approved by the IRB for those being recruited virtually. When the researcher was granted access to do in-class recruitment, an announcement was made in student teaching seminars and recruitment letters were passed out asking for contact information. All teacher candidates present filled out a form, checking "yes or no" in response to their interest, to ensure that classmates do not know who was choosing to participate and who was opting out of the study. Teacher candidates interested in being interviewed for the study were asked to provide their email addresses. Those participants were then contacted (after three attempts, the researcher assumed the participant changed his/her mind about participating). Additionally, teacher educators were emailed about their interest in being interviewed.

The following schools did not respond to repeated email recruitment sent out to a variety of faculty members: Queens College, St. Francis College, Long Island University-Brooklyn, Mount Saint Vincent College, New York Institute of Technology, and Bank Street College. Repeated contact was made with York College with confirmation that the survey request was sent out, but there were no survey responses received from their teacher candidates. The contact person at Mercy College said she would send out the email recruitment over the summer, but no one participated from that school either. Manhattan College responded but stated that it was too late in the semester to recruit teacher candidates in-person and did not respond to follow up emails about sending out the survey after the semester and getting electronic consent.

To establish rapport during recruitment and interviews, the researcher communicated her educational background, experience as a teacher educator and student teaching supervisor, and
familiarity with the edTPA. The establishment of rapport was important to the research, to limit reactivity, as the teacher candidates needed to feel that they could share openly about their experience in a non-evaluative space. Participants felt comfortable sharing positive aspects of their experience as well difficulties they were encountering. This helped to achieve the goal of representing participants’ authentic experience.

The data collection procedures were piloted with a group of teacher candidates who were students of the researcher at the time of the pilot and came from her home institutions (Hunter College and Teachers College) and would therefore not be considered as part of the data for the dissertation due to ethical considerations. The expectations for the pilot were not as rigorous, but participants were asked to engage in surveys and interviews. Debriefing of all methods was conducted to get feedback as to how to improve the process for the research participants. Some pilot participants sent email feedback while others spoke to the researcher in person. Pilot participants for the survey gave recommendations on the wording, order, and relevance of questions as well as additional questions that should be included.

Research participants in the study were allowed to refuse to answer any questions and still remain in the study. They were also able to exit the research project at any point. If at any point during the interview teacher candidates or teacher educators wanted to stop or leave, they were able to do so. The researcher recorded and transcribed the interviews. This allowed the researcher to establish rapport and remain fully present in the interactions and to review the contents of the materials later. Participants had the right to review the recordings or transcriptions of their interviews to determine whether they should be edited or erased in whole or in part. Additionally, any excerpts from interviews that are to be included in papers for publications will be sent to the participants for their approval and for any revisions. All efforts
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will be made to conceal any identifying information. Pseudonyms will be used when sharing findings from interviews with teacher candidates. Teacher educators were labeled as Teacher Educator A-G. Colleges were labeled separately as College 1-7. If the findings would lead to identifiable information, the general terms were used (college, teacher educator). Only the principal investigator had access to the interview recordings which were used for research purposes only.

Interview locations and times were selected by the participants. Participants had the option of doing the interview in-person, over the phone, or via Skype/Facetime/Google Hangout interview. Most participants chose to speak over the phone and the remaining participants met the researcher in person.

Data Analysis Methods

This mixed methods study used statistical measures to analyze the quantitative data and coding to analyze the qualitative data. The qualitative findings for support and challenges were reported on three areas for capital which were identified as personal, school of education, and student teaching placement. There was also a combined analysis of the interview and survey data on the individual case level and then in the overall interpretation of the data. The following subsections will detail the statistical measures and coding methods.

Statistical measures. Descriptive statistics (frequency distribution, mean, median, standard deviation, range) and inferential statistics (t-tests, ANOVA, Pearson’s correlation) were found for the appropriate variables. Statistical tests were run to look for correlations between/among the various demographic variables, school of education variables, and student teaching placement variables, edTPA test scores, perceived level of support, the effects of the edTPA, and teacher candidates’ perceptions of taking the edTPA.
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Although this study uses inferential statistical methods, the data is not intended to be inferential to a larger population or similar populations. This study represents some of the experiences of the teacher candidates taking the elementary education edTPA in New York City in the first two years of its implementation.

Variables in the study. Independent variables were categorized as either demographic, school of education, and student teaching placement variables. Two of the three dependent variables used in this study were created by combining other variables to make a continuous variable that could be used to run certain tests (explained further below). edTPA score was a dependent variable for some tests as well. Table 5.1A-D provides a list of the variables used in the study and gives detailed as to how new variables were created.

The Likert scale questions gave a sense of how teacher candidates perceived their experience of taking the edTPA. Tests of internal reliability (exploratory factor analysis) were run to see if variables could be combined to create composite variables (Chronbach’s alpha listed on Table 5.1A-D for each new variable). These were to represent the concepts in the research questions. One variable (SUP_MEAN5) was created to represent "overall feeling of support" based on the Likert scale questions that asked about various ways teacher candidates felt supported in completed their edTPA. Another variable for "overall school of education support" (SOESUP_SUM4) was created to separate the variables related to the school of education from those related to student teaching placement. An "effect" variable (EFFECT MEAN2) was created by finding the mean from the responses to the Likert scale questions about concerning feeling overwhelmed and how much the edTPA interfered with the student teaching experience.
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Table 5.1A Weighted Comparison of Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges on General Variables for New York City Teacher Candidates who Took the edTPA (N=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description of variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>edTPA score</td>
<td>59.26</td>
<td>7.46</td>
<td>32-71</td>
<td>Raw score on the edTPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelmed (OVRWHLM)</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Degree to which R felt or did not feel overwhelmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interfered (INTST)</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Degree to which R felt the edTPA did or did not interfere with student teaching responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of edTPA experience (EFFECT_SUM2)</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>2-10</td>
<td>Composite variable: sum of OVRWLM and INTST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORT VARIABLE (SUP_MEAN5)</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.17-5.00</td>
<td>Composite variable: mean of STSEM, SUPCT, SCHENV, SUPCT, SUPFS, SUPSOE when at least 5 of the 6 questions were answered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent goals (GOALS)</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.148</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>R's rating of how much the goals of are consistent with R's ideas of good teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness of the edTPA (FAIR)</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.123</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>R's rating if the R feels the edTPA was a fair assessment of R's teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 ORWLM and INTST are Likert scale variables with a scale of 1-5, however, these were the ranges of responses that were reported.

6 Chronbach's alpha .710

7 Chronbach's alpha .782
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Table 5.1B Weighted Comparison of Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges on "Personal Level" Variables (Demographics) for New York City Teacher Candidates who Took the edTPA (N=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female/Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.852</td>
<td>.3428</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.3428</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White/Under-represented in teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>.574</td>
<td>.4955</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-represented in teaching</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>.4955</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian, Middle Eastern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>26.26</td>
<td>4.557</td>
<td>21-40</td>
<td>Age at time of the survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School level (LEV)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate/Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>.672</td>
<td>.4733</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>.328</td>
<td>.4733</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Undergraduate student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade point average</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>3.7682</td>
<td>3.00-4.03</td>
<td>GPA while in the teacher education program leading to certification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received Financial Aid (FINAID)</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.452</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Received financial aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Citizen (IMM)</td>
<td>.967</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Immigration status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native English Speaker (ENAT)</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>English is R's native language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Either parent's highest level of education (PLE2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Highest level of education by either R's mother or father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't finish high school</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>.2516</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Parent didn't finish high school (collapsed didn't finish elementary, middle, or high school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school/GED/trade school diploma</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.3428</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>Parent earned a high school/GED/trade school diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

8 There were no Native Americans in the study. Additionally, there were no respondents who identified as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Respondents who were mixed race with White were counted in the underrepresented category. Since the teaching force is primarily White, this designation was to represent any diversity present.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Probability</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some college/Associates Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.3025</td>
<td>Parent attended some college or earned an Associates degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>.4810</td>
<td>Parent earned a Bachelors degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters/Advanced Degree</td>
<td></td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>.4810</td>
<td>Parent earned a Masters, Ph.D., medical, or law degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First in family to go to graduate from college (COL1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.390</td>
<td>First in family to go to graduate from college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status during student teaching (EMPTST)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td>.5246</td>
<td>.5054</td>
<td>Unemployed during student teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time employed</td>
<td></td>
<td>.3770</td>
<td>.4887</td>
<td>Part-time employed during student teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time employed</td>
<td></td>
<td>.0984</td>
<td>.3003</td>
<td>Full-time employed during student teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**Table 5.1C Weighted Comparison of Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges on "School of Education" Variables for New York City Teacher Candidates who Took the edTPA (N=61)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester edTPA was taken (SEMST)</th>
<th>117</th>
<th>94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.3601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.3601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>.672</td>
<td>.4690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.1291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type (PUBPRI)</th>
<th>117</th>
<th>94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>.4925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>.607</td>
<td>.4925</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often R used edTPA support services (UTSERV)</th>
<th>117</th>
<th>94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.3254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice/occasionally</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.3673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>.4401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>.5041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of education support (SUPSOE)</th>
<th>117</th>
<th>94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student teaching seminar as a support (STSEM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field supervisor support (SUPFS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classmate support (SUPCL)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total school level supports (SOESUP_SUM4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composite variable: Sum of SUPSOE, STSEM, SUPFS, SUPCL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronbach's alpha .809</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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| Table 5.1D Weighted Comparison of Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges on "Placement Level" Variables for New York City Teacher Candidates who Took the edTPA (N=61) |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Free lunch percentage                      | 52.13           | 38.318          | 0-100           | Percentage of students at the school receiving free lunch |
| Amount of students                         | 26.342          | 4.3026          | 12-35           | Total amount of students in the classroom during the student teaching placement (An average was taking for those respondents with multiple placements.) |
| Students with IEPs                         | 4.0678          | 3.8556          | 0-14            | Amount of students in the classroom during the student teaching placement with Individualized Education Program (An average was taking for those respondents with multiple placements.) |
| English language learners                  | 3.418           | 5.5892          | 0-24            | Amount of students in the classroom during the student teaching placement who were considered English language learners (An average was taking for those respondents with multiple placements.) |
| Scripted curriculum                        | .492            | .504            | 0-1             | If there was a scripted curriculum |
| Strictness of following the curriculum     | 3.30            | 1.499           | 1-5             | How strictly R's were expected to follow the scripted curriculum |
| Strictly                                   | .1333           | .3428           | 0-1             | Had to follow it strictly |
| Minor adjustments                         | .2833           | .4544           | 0-1             | Minor adjustments allowed |
| Major adjustments                         | .0500           | .2198           | 0-1             | Major adjustments allowed |
| Ideas                                      | .2167           | .4155           | 0-1             | Just to get ideas |
| No scripted curriculum                     | .3167           | .4691           | 0-1             | No scripted curriculum |
| How conducive the school environment was   | 3.70            | 1.295           | 1-5             | How conducive the school environment was to completing the edTPA requirements |
| (SCHENV)                                   |                 |                 |                 | |
| Support of cooperating teacher (SUPCT)    | 3.85            | 1.246           | 1-5             | How supported R felt his/her cooperating teacher |
Coding. According to Saldaña (2013), coding is most effective when done in two cycles and concurrent with the use of analytic memos. Appendices D-F provide coding maps. Additionally, simultaneous coding (use of two or more methods) occurred throughout the cycles to get a fuller sense of the data. Both the qualitative answers on the survey and the interviews were coded. The data gathered from both instruments was combined when it fit with the coding procedure. Based on the questions, survey answers were more reflective of challenges and supports and the open-ended and personal nature of the interview revealed more about how the teacher candidates were affected by taking the edTPA. Each survey question was coded inductively both for trends in responses to the question and then for overall codes used throughout the data.

The first cycle of coding, started with attribute coding to link the survey responses to the interview by person. Demographic information and the qualitative answers from the survey helped give a more complete sense of the participant's experience. Those who volunteered for interviews entered their email addresses on their surveys, which identified the participants. This coding linked responses to the theoretical framework by giving a sense of each participant’s capital as represented by the questions on the survey. For example, financial aid status, native language, and parent level of education are all forms of capital that can be a support or challenge when taking the edTPA. This allowed for participants' experiences to be compared and contrasted across and within specific variables.

Additionally, general trends were considered across the data for interviews with teacher candidates and teacher educators. In the next cycle of coding, structural coding was used to identify the sections of the interviews that relate to the specific research questions.
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Words/phrases associated with the research sub-questions were color-coded for supports and challenges, affects for teacher candidates, affects for teacher educators and changes in the teacher education curriculum. Then these sections were grouped together on a separate document. This was followed up by a more in-depth analysis of these sections. Structural coding is considered a good match for open-ended survey responses and interviews across multiple participants (Saldana, 2013).

After structural coding, magnitude coding was done quickly to identify the positive, negative, neutral, or mixed feelings statements in the data. Symbols were recorded next to statements to designate the magnitude of the statement. In vivo coding (using the language of the participants) was done next. This honors the voices of the participants and gives an authentic sense of what the data is telling the research about the participant's experience (Saldana, 2013). In field testing, most participants used words such as "overwhelmed," "tedious," "stressful," and "time-consuming," so these words serve as a priori codes as well. These words were highlighted. Since some of these words are already linked to emotions, emotion coding was done where these specific words are not used but the sense of these emotions are expressed. Values coding and versus coding were used to explore the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the participants about the policy and how they reveal issues related to the policy paradoxes, tensions, or issues of power. These statements were highlighted. This was especially important for the interviews with teacher educators as previous literature revealed that there are "tensions" that occur for this group.

The following additional a priori codes (provisional coding) were used for the interviews: supports, challenges, political/policy, sense of self, personal life, well-being, personal relationships, academics, relationship with cooperating teacher, and impact on student teaching.
experience. Codes were created from information gathered from the pilot of the surveys and interviews, literature review, and the researcher's experience working with teacher candidate's taking the edTPA. These codes were used to further sort the responses into sections. Teacher candidates and teacher educators’ responses were combined for how teacher candidates were affected. Supports and challenges were coded within the groups and then comparing and combined in the analysis.

After this round of coding and analytic memos, focused coding took place for the second round of coding. This method required the researcher to find the most frequently coded and develop categories to decide which codes are best for analysis. An organizational outline is created followed by an analytic memo. "Focused Coding enables you to compare newly constructed codes during this cycle across other participants’ data to assess comparability and transferability" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 217).

**Issues of Trustworthiness: Validity and Reliability**

Triangulation occurred through the use of survey data, interviews with student teachers, and interviews with teacher educators. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Respondent validation and member checking occurred by allowing respondents to read the analysis drawn from their data and comment on it. Gathering a significant sample of interviews allowed for discrepant cases. To contribute to the validity of this study, survey questions were adapted and credited from the survey questions used for the Meuwissen, Choppin, Shang-Bulter, & Cloonan (2015) and the Burns, Henry, & Lindauer (2015) studies. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the data collection procedures were piloted and feedback was given to improve the construct validity of the tool. In the findings from the survey, statistical significance will be reported and various statistical tests will be used to measure aspects of validity. Reliability was
considered by making sure the definition of the codes remained stable throughout the process by comparing data with the codes and writing memos about the codes and their definitions (Creswell, 2013).

**Limitations and Delimitations**

Ten schools of education participated, however, nine did not. Since all the schools of education did not participate, this study cannot be used to infer the experiences of all teacher candidates taking the elementary education edTPA in New York City. Additionally, there were very few participants in the study who failed the edTPA. Knowing that there is an 81% pass rate on the edTPA state-wide (Danyla, 2015), this shows that an important section of the population is being left out. Another limitation of the study is that teacher candidates were asked to participate after they received their edTPA score, so they could report it for the survey. This resulted in three limitations:

- participants’ recollection of their experience may have been influenced by their test results,
- waiting until they received their test results may have caused a recall bias,
- those who did not submit their edTPA are not included (although there were a few participants that indicated they were in this category on the survey).

In New York State, there is a large issue with the submission rate for several reasons focused on time and cost (Greenblatt, 2016). In terms of these limitations, most teacher candidates scored very well on the edTPA yet reported negative experiences. Additionally, there were survey questions about time and financial constraints during student teaching as well as a prompt which asked teacher candidates to explain if they did not submit their edTPA during the semester of their student teaching experience.
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This dissertation consisted of 61 surveys as well 14 interviews, which represent about 21 percent of the survey participants. Since many teacher education programs only have spring student teaching, this limited the amount of teacher candidates participating in the second wave of data collection. Eight teacher educators from seven different schools were also interviewed representing 64 percent of the colleges in the study. Three teacher educators from private schools participated, two of whom were from the same school. Although there was a larger amount of participation from the researchers' home institutions, these institutions also represent the two largest teacher education programs in New York City.

Although most participants passed the edTPA and had negative experiences with the exam, some discrepant cases were found. There were those participants who did not submit or did not pass the edTPA. One interviewee was pretty neutral, if not somewhat positive, about the test. Many of those who were negative still had positive things to say even though they had negative feelings about the experience overall. Another limitation was that one of the interviews did not get recorded due to technical issues, but notes were taken during the interview. Not having the full transcript interferes with comprehensive coding of the interview.

The study had some purposeful delimitations. Part of the theoretical framework of this study is to consider Campbell's Law. This resulted in only having data collected in a state where the edTPA was considered high-stakes. This is to help inform policy makers that are considering making the edTPA high-stakes in their state and teacher education programs that are just beginning a high-stakes implementation. New York State was chosen because the researcher works in and is familiar with the policy and edTPA used in this state. (Not all states have the same edTPA for elementary teacher candidates. Washington State has a student voice component on all their edTPAs. Additionally, in other states elementary teacher candidates can
choose between the elementary literacy portfolio or elementary math portfolio, which have 15 rubrics. New York State has an elementary education portfolio that has three literacy tasks and one math task and 18 rubrics.)

Although more participants could have been included if recruitment occurred in any school of education in New York State, this study was restricted to only those attending schools of education and student teaching in New York City. This was to focus the study in this specific urban context. As mentioned above, urban teacher candidates and student teaching placements may have more challenges than those in other settings.

More participants may have also been included if the study had been open to teacher candidates that had taken any of the edTPA portfolios; however, this study only included participants that took the elementary education edTPA. As mentioned above, this edTPA was chosen because it has the additional demand of a fourth task with three more rubrics. Furthermore, the researcher has both content expertise and a deep familiarity with the elementary education edTPA.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the rationale for the research approach and explanation of the importance of the research setting/context. The research sample and data sources were outlined along with the research design. Then, the data collection methods and ethical considerations were described. This was followed by a summary of the data analysis methods and issues of trustworthiness and the possible limitations and delimitations of the study.
Chapter Five: Findings

Introduction

In this concurrent mixed methods study, the quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical measures and the qualitative data was coded over several cycles. The open-ended nature of the interviews also allowed for data that may not have been captured using survey questions. The interviews with teacher educators also triangulated the data and added additional information. Additionally, teacher educators were able to talk about their experiences with many teacher candidates over the course of several semesters.

In order to answer the research question "How do teacher candidates and teacher educators experience the implementation of a nationally available standardized teacher performance assessment?" the chapter will be organized into several sections based on the subsequent research questions. First, the quantitative data will be reported. Then, the following sections will report qualitative data starting with the perceptions of the supports and challenges the teacher candidates faced. The next section will share the perceived effects of the edTPA on teacher candidates’ personal, professional, and academic experiences. The subsequent section will explore the effects of the implementation of a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum. The final section will report findings on educational policy that relate to aspects of the theoretical framework of the study.

Throughout this chapter, "participants" will be used when the data is about both teacher candidates and teacher educators. As noted in the methodology chapter, pseudonyms will be used when sharing findings from interviews with teacher candidates. Colleges and their coordinating teacher educators were labeled as (i.e. College A, Teacher Educator A). The two
faculty members from the same school were delineated with a number following the letter. If the findings would lead to identifiable information, general terms were used (college, teacher educator). For some of these qualitative findings, the effects could not be separated from the supports and challenges.

**Descriptive Analysis**

To get an overall sense of the variables in the quantitative aspect of the study, refer to Table 5.1 that reports means, standard deviations, and ranges. The findings show that this study has a large sample of those underrepresented in the elementary education teaching force in terms of gender, race, and socio-economic status. In this study, 13% of teacher candidates were male and 39.3% were people of color. In terms of socio-economics, 28% were on financial aid and 18% were the first in their family to graduate from college. Public school teacher candidates represented 60.7% of the population, which is in line with the percent of public colleges in the study. The average free lunch percentage for the elementary schools in the study was 52.13 with a standard deviation of 38.318. Class sizes averaged at 26.342 students with a standard deviation of 4.3026 and a range of 12-35. Within these classes, there was an average of 4.0678 students with IEPs with a standard deviation of 3.8556 and a range of 0-14 and 3.418 English language learners with a standard deviation of 5.5892 range of 0-24.

Additionally, 21.3% used school of education support services “often” and 39.3% used them “always,” yet the mean score for "feeling overwhelmed" was high (4.55). The mean edTPA score was 59.261 (47 is passing and 57 is mastery level) with a standard deviation of 7.4650 with a range of 32-71. Furthermore, 49.2% of schools used scripted curriculums with 41.66% following them strictly or with only minor adjustments.
The Table 5.2 gives the distribution of the participants’ answers to the Likert scale questions that capture the teacher candidates’ perceptions of taking the edTPA.

**Table 5.2** Frequency Distribution of "edTPA experience" Likert scale variables for New York City Teacher Candidates who Took the edTPA (N=61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Valid %</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelmed (OVRWLM3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interfered (INTST3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent goals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness of the edTPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How conducive the school environment was (SCHENV3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support of cooperating teacher (SUPCT3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student teaching seminar as a support (STSEM3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field supervisor support (SUPFS3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classmate support (SUPCL3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of education support (SUPSOE3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Findings show that 93.4% of the population strongly agreed/agreed that the edTPA was overwhelming, 73.8% strongly agreed/agreed it interfered with their student teaching experience, and 45.9% disagreed/strongly disagreed that the edTPA was a fair assessment of their teaching skills. Classmates and cooperating teachers showed the highest percentages of providing support. Interestingly, percentages increased for “support variables” from strongly disagree/disagree to agree/strongly agree for school environment, cooperating teachers, and classmates; however, that was not the case for student teaching seminar, field supervisors, and school of education.

Bivariate Analysis

Three ANOVA with LSD post hoc tests were run to compare average scores among independent variables. The dependent variables used were effect, overall feeling of support, and edTPA score. Table 5.3 shows the independent variables that had statistically significant differences at the .05 level. Other variables tested included race, how often support services were utilized, and semester of student teaching. Additionally, independent sample t-tests were run on appropriate variables with no statistically significant findings.
Table 5.3
Comparison of Means on Independent Variables for NYC Teacher Candidates Taking the edTPA for Effect Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect Variable</th>
<th>Effect (EFFECT_MEAN2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals are consistent with R’s ideas of good teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>4.5882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>4.6304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>3.8158(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The edTPA was a fair assessment of my teaching practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>4.6964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>4.3750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>3.6364(^a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each variable category and dependent variable, only those mean scores that do not share a common superscript differ from one another at the .05 level. Those mean scores without a superscript, or those that share a common superscript, do not differ at the .05 level. T-tests were used to calculate the statistical significance of mean differences. ANOVA with post hoc (LSD) were used to calculate the statistical significance of mean differences.

There was a statistically significant difference in the mean effect scores between those who agreed/strongly agreed that the goals of the edTPA were consistent with their ideas of good teaching (3.8158) and those who felt neutral (4.6304) or strongly disagreed/disagreed (4.5882).

There was also a statistically significant difference in the mean effect scores between those who agreed/strongly agreed that the edTPA was a fair assessment of their teaching (3.6364) and those who felt neutral (4.3750) or strongly disagreed/disagreed (4.6964).
Table 5.4
Comparison of Means on Independent Variables for NYC Teacher Candidates Taking the edTPA for Support Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Feeling of Support (SUP_MEAN5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goals are consistent with R's ideas of good teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The edTPA was a fair assessment of my teaching practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each variable category and dependent variable, only those mean scores that do not share a common superscript differ from one another at the .05 level. Those mean scores without a superscript, or those that share a common superscript, do not differ at the .05 level. T-tests were used to calculate the statistical significance of mean differences. ANOVA with post hoc (LSD) were used to calculate the statistical significance of mean differences.

There was a statistically significant difference in support scores between those who strongly disagreed/agreed that the goals of the edTPA were consistent with their ideas of good teaching (2.70) and those who felt neutral (3.74) or agreed/strongly agreed (3.91). Additionally, there was a statistically significant difference in support scores between those who strongly disagreed/agreed that the edTPA was a fair assessment of their teaching practices (3.16) and those who felt neutral (3.70) or agreed/strongly agreed (4.06).
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### Table 5.5
Comparison of Means on Independent Variables for NYC Teacher Candidates Taking the edTPA for edTPA Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felt supported by my classmates in completing the edTPA</th>
<th>edTPA score (RAWSC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>49.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>55.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>60.956(^a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felt supported by my cooperating teacher in completing the edTPA</th>
<th>edTPA score (RAWSC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree/disagree</td>
<td>63.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>53.000(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree/strongly agree</td>
<td>60.232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within each variable category and dependent variable, only those mean scores that do not share a common superscript differ from one another at the .05 level. Those mean scores without a superscript, or those that share a common superscript, do not differ at the .05 level. T-tests were used to calculate the statistical significance of mean differences. ANOVA with post hoc (LSD) were used to calculate the statistical significance of mean differences.

There was a statistically significant difference in edTPA scores between those who agreed/strongly agreed that they felt supported by their classmates (60.959) and those who felt neutral (55.429) or who strongly disagreed/disagreed (49.000). There was also a statistically significant difference in edTPA scores between those whom felt neutral about feeling supported by their cooperating teachers (53.000) and those who agreed/strongly agreed (60.232), or strongly disagreed/disagreed (63.286).

**Supports and Challenges**

This section is broken down into three "levels" of supports and challenges teacher candidates face: personal, school of education, and student teaching placement.

**Personal level.** Personal supports and challenges teacher candidates faced are reported below. These include demographics, time, economic capital, challenges for those being certified in bilingual education, the language, associated documents, and demands of the test, and technology/video.
Demographics. Teacher educators shared their concerns that students of color, those underprepared for college, and English language learners had more challenges during their edTPA experience. These factors resulted in a more stressful edTPA experience. The teacher educators at public colleges raised concerns regarding challenges faced by their undergraduate student population (see methodology section). Teacher Educator A explained,

when you are coming from urban settings, you are coming in underprepared for college and so three years to prepare you compared to your counterparts, who have been better prepared, that is not even enough. Then when you get to me in the fourth year, for clinical practice, and you are asked to write this 90-page document, which has to be written well, it is such a challenge. It is a huge challenge for them and the people preparing them because you are teaching literacy. You are teaching content. You are teaching pedagogy. You are teaching skills. It is just a lot.

Teacher Educator C shared that due to her student population her department provided focused and intensive support. She perceived that the teacher candidates had much gratitude for this effort.

The public school graduate students had various levels of academic preparation. Teacher Educator D said that whether the teacher candidates have an "elite education" or not, the challenge comes from "the ability to carve out the time, to actually sit down and write out the edTPA, [which] is incredibly stressful because it is just enormously time consuming no matter how good of a writer you are."

Additionally, participants mentioned the difference in age/maturity between undergraduates and graduates. One graduate student said, "The maturity and responsibility that comes along with this process, I would not have been able to do (as an undergraduate). I
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wouldn’t have been able to handle the time management.” Teacher Educator F concurred, “the graduate students are more mature about their work than the undergraduates tend to be.”

For either group, being an English language learner is a challenge. Those who were not native English speakers discussed the challenges of understanding the test documents/vocabulary and intensive writing involved (as did many others). Teacher Educator C acknowledged,

In terms of English language learners, they are really behind the eight ball. I’ve had several students who are English language learners and you can see in their writing that it’s much more difficult to decipher what they are trying to say, so it makes it more difficult for the rater. We’ve been lucky, because as I’ve said, we’ve directed them to a writing tutor to help them with that, so they’ve needed that support. In my case, luckily, they have all passed but by the skin of their teeth.

Findings about challenges for English language learners are described in the section “The test itself: Language, associated documents, and demands.”

Time. Many of the participants cited a lack of time as a challenge in the edTPA experience. Lisa explained the reality of the student teaching schedule when the experience is only one semester long saying,

You can’t film in the first month because you have to become familiar with the students and become familiar with the CT and ask them what to do. I think it takes a month or a month and a half before you are really comfortable standing up there with a video camera.

The forty to sixty-page portfolio requires detailed explanations and reflections on planning, teaching, and assessing, which takes a lot of focused time and attention. Katie said, "I estimate that I probably spent about 200 hours on the edTPA and that’s a shared feeling among all of my
student teacher colleagues as well." Christy said that she spent at least eight hours looking at her 15 minutes of video repeatedly to extract intricate details about her modeling, rapport, and communication with and among her students.

The amount of competing demands for time posed different levels of challenge for the teacher candidates. For some, the responsibility of full-time student teaching took up all of their time and energy. There were also students like Lisa who said, "I know some people felt it was hard to student teach and write at the same time or work on edTPA at the same time, but I didn't really find that because I dedicated all my weekends to edTPA. I didn't really work on it during the week." Those without additional commitments, such as classes, work, or family obligations, had more time to balance the demands.

Michelle shared having to go from working 40 hours a week to 25-30 hours and eventually down to five hours in order to have more time for student teaching and to work on her edTPA. Another teacher candidate acknowledged,

My experience of completing the edTPA was stressful because my plate was already more than full with a part-time job, student teaching, and my regular coursework. I wasn't able to focus on completing the edTPA until I finished my part-time job in early April (right before graduation). I felt that the stress from edTPA wasn't from edTPA itself, but more from the fact that there was already so much we had to juggle as student teachers in a teacher certification program.

Depending on the structure of their teacher education program, faculty at College D advised teacher candidates not to take other classes while student teaching due to the workload required of the edTPA.
We have actually shifted where we are actually encouraging our students to only take student teaching seminar during student teaching for the whole semester so that they are not taking other classes and having to split their brain in that way, and some of our students need more time, and we have made that a priority.

Adam expressed how thankful he was not to be taking any other classes because planning lessons every day and working on the edTPA "felt like a lot."

Some teacher candidates had the additional challenge of being a parent or taking care of a sick relative during student teaching. At the same time, family members were an important support throughout the edTPA experience. They may have provided emotional encouragement, childcare needs, or meals.

Teacher candidates who didn’t have the time to write up their edTPA commentaries during the student teaching semester may end up delaying submission of their edTPA because they have to return to full-time employment after graduation. Teacher Educator D explains,

The problem is we have to get them to complete it, and I have folks who are great students, and they got most of it done and then they go off and they need to make money. They need salaried employment. When they are working again, in whatever field they were working in, they have a hard time finding the time to finish the edTPA. Once they are out of our grasp, it’s a little bit harder.

The next section will reveal findings about the additional challenge that economic capital played in the teacher candidates’ experience with the edTPA.

**Economic capital.** Many participants cited the cost of the edTPA as a challenge.

Teacher educators at public colleges were very concerned about this issue. Teacher Educator C explained,
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We've had students say to us, "I can't register (for the edTPA). I can't put it on my credit card." For our students, that money is definitely an issue, and the costs of all of these tests is just becoming prohibitive.

Teacher Educator D shared a conversation she had with a student.

He said, 'Sometimes I am choosing between having electricity in my house, like having lights, and being able to pay for an exam.' Those costs come up to be the same for him on a monthly basis.

Although many participants stated their frustration with the cost of the edTPA, one graduate student without financial challenges felt that the cost of the exams is something that goes along with professional certification in any field.

A lot of my classmates complained about how much money it costs. It doesn't really make it excusable, but, for many another professions, there are hundreds of thousands of dollars of certification like to be a doctor or a lawyer or an accountant with all of the tests so maybe there is no perfect answer all around but it's not like it's just teachers - unfair to teachers. My brother is a doctor. It cost him $5,000 to get certain paperwork.

Challenges for those being dual certified in bilingual education. Those being dual certified in bilingual education must take the elementary education edTPA because there is no content specific Handbook for bilingual certification. In this study, six surveys and two interviews were conducted with bilingual education majors. Teaching in a bilingual/dual language setting created some special considerations. Claudia was in the French component of a dual language English/French setting, so she had to do her lessons in French. She found that translating her video and worksheets "adds a challenge." Other teacher candidates chose to do
"English-only" edTPAs to avoid some challenges or potential biases from scorers. In fact, teacher candidates are being encouraged to do so. Teacher Educator C shared,

We have instructed them all to do them in English. 'Just do yourself a favor and do them in English.' But that takes a little maneuvering. I have had some students who have had to guest teach in another classroom just because of the constraints of their classroom which certainly isn't ideal. And again, it's supposed to be showing how you know your students deeply. Well, you know, I don't think so.

*The test itself: Language, associated documents, and demands.* Although the rubrics and Handbook were helpful, most participants in the study found the amount of text and the test language to be difficult. Teacher Educator C said,

the manual and the instructions are completely overwhelming - the Handbook, the rubrics, and the Rubric Progressions charts. We don't even give them the rubric progression charts because it's too much. The related tasks are so wordy that it is difficult to decipher exactly what they want. I've read it how many times now? And still while I am reading responses, I have to go up to the prompt and say, 'What were they asking again here?' There are many places where the students have to repeat what they have already said in a prior prompt and that can get really monotonous and really tedious at times.

Teacher candidates felt that the "questions were very poorly worded and way too verbose. The prompts were not straightforward, and it was difficult to dissect what the test was looking for" and "it seemed to have its own form of academ-eze that was really kind of challenging to decipher."
The language was another challenge, even for highly prepared students. A teacher educator of graduate students acknowledged, "The language of the edTPA is pretty impenetrable even for our students who are pretty savvy and prepared for academic tasks." Adam shared that the edTPA was a different way of doing things at least. Not totally different, but the language of it was different, and the methodology, the structure of it, is different than the way I have been doing things. It was a whole other kind of structure and approach towards teaching. Not entirely different, but different enough to make me feel like I was kind of having to figure out a whole other way of doing things at the last minute.

Lisa confessed,

I still to this day don't know what they are asking about in the question about the language function, and if your students used it. I completely made up that answer. I had no idea. Because my language function was 'analyze' and I was like, 'Am I supposed to say if my students used the word 'analyze' or if they analyzed?' So, I just made up whatever I thought.

The test vocabulary was even more challenging for those for whom English is not their first language. Teacher Educator C explained,

They (ELLs) have some difficulties sometimes especially with new vocabulary, like academic vocabulary/academic language...That's difficult for people who speak English to understand. People who have been in the education field for a long time - sometimes I am still guessing myself, 'Is that a language function?' Where did they come up with these? And I think that that makes it even more difficult. That first part, if you don't pick
the right academic language function or you don't get the syntax or the discourse - you're off the mark there, the whole rest of Task One can possibly be off the mark.

The edTPA has very specific requirements that can be a challenge for a novice to include in 3-5 days of teaching. Lisa said, "I feel like they really want specific types of lessons. I know they don't say that, but I feel like they do. I would say we (me and my cooperating teachers) talked about it for about two months before we came to like something that I was just going to do." Katie expressed similar perceptions saying,

There were such strict rules around stuff like the academic language. You had to be very aware to be able to use academic syntax and being able to prove that the students could use this kind of academic syntax. You had to have these very specific things you had to include in this lesson, which meant that it couldn't be a lesson on anything. You couldn't... It wasn't as flexible as it needs to be. Because we are student teachers, we just don't have a lot of say on what we are teaching day in and day out.

A scripted curriculum compounded this challenge. (This is discussed further in the "school placement level" section.) The constraints of the test were also apparent in the video aspect of the portfolio. Claudia explained, "The videotaping was funny because you have to use a very limited amount of footage to explain an awful lot of different things." Further information on the technical and logistical challenges related to the video are reported below.

**Technology/video.** Teacher candidates had computer issues such as:

- water spilled on the computer
- not enough memory on the hard drive to store all the video
- computer virus
- old system that crashed
Teacher candidates also had various levels of ease with getting video release forms. A support implemented at some colleges was placing teacher candidates in cohorts for peers to be videographers. However, those teacher candidates who were alone had to set up the camera in the corner of the room and hope they were in the frame for the entire lesson and that all student voices could be heard on the recording. Another challenging situation teacher candidates faced was realizing the camera stopped in the middle of the recording because either the camera was not charged or the memory ran out of space. Additionally, certain students "acted silly" when they were on camera. Lisa shared the reality of recording a performance-based assessment saying.

The filming was probably the most stressful, the most daunting of the tasks. Because even though it's one of the easier ones, when you look back, you have to kind of plan it and do it, and it is something that if you do it once and it gets messed up you might not be able to use your video.

The teacher educators did not express concern about the challenges with technology but rather shared the supports that their school provided. These are reported in the section below.

**School of education level.** Teacher candidates reported mixed experiences with support from their school of education from it being "invaluable" to "confusing" and "not helpful at all." Supports came in the following various forms that will be outlined below: faculty, alumni, classmates, and school of education services. The final subsection will be about the challenges to providing ongoing support now that the State implementation funding is no longer available to schools of education.
Teacher candidates said that the support they often received was to use the Handbook and rubrics. Janet explained that at her college,

It was really just, ‘You read the instructions and you follow the instructions. If you have generic, general questions about a particular item, I can give you feedback about that using examples that other people have talked about in the past after they have completed the edTPA.’ So, they gave that kind of support, but actually seeing what I submitted, they did not do any of that.

At other colleges, faculty conducted one-on-one reviews of teacher candidates’ portfolios within the Pearson guidelines.

Two teacher candidates said that their professors "didn't care" about the edTPA or refused to talk much about it. When student teaching faculty was not helpful, teacher candidates reached out to other professors. One teacher candidate wrote,

Though my student teacher fieldwork supervisor was not helpful during the process, my Literacy Core fieldwork supervisor was invaluable in preparing me for the edTPA. She made herself available for questions during my student teaching, which was very helpful.
Teacher candidates also talked to specialized content faculty to get support about specific aspects of the exam. Lisa explained that she sought out her math professor when working on the math task even though "he didn't know anything about edTPA." She decided to reach out to him because she "wasn't sure about the whole conceptual understanding versus procedural fluency thing."

When the school of education had an edTPA Coordinator, that person was a reliable resource. Adam noted how one-on-one support was helpful to understand the exam and to make a schedule for completing the tasks and submitting the portfolio. Additionally, he felt the edTPA coordinator was "good for making me feel positive about it." One college had an edTPA Coordinator devoted exclusively to the elementary education program. This faculty member was cited, by name, as an invaluable support.

In addition to academic support, Teacher Educator D noted the need to provide emotional support for the teacher candidates.

I think it is generally overwhelming and there are lots of ways that that is playing out. Like you were saying, I sat down with one of my student teachers and told her she needed to take a day off a week because she was overwhelmed. It is very specific to the student teacher. Like some of them need my permission to take a breather.

The following section will have more on the findings of the personal affects teacher candidates felt in their edTPA experience

**Alumni.** Several teacher candidates said that it was "really helpful" when their professors invited alumni to intend class and share their passing portfolios. Katie explained that alumni "were able to answer a couple of questions because they had just gone through it, so that was
really helpful." Other teacher candidates sought out alumni on their own to get more samples or to have the alumna read over their portfolios and give feedback. Christy commented,

I have a lot of teacher friends who have taken the edTPA, and it's almost like going into war. I will help you. Send me emails. I'll give you my old one.' It's this community of like 'we just have to get through this.'

**Classmates.** Those who could find the time to work with classmates found their peers to be a good resource. Lisa advised, "rely on your peers because being able to talk it out sometimes was really, really helpful. Talking about a question, talking about what it meant, sometimes I could answer my own questions when I talk about it for long enough." She went on to say,

We would go over how we answered specific questions and things we talked about and since our subjects were so different, we looked at each other's...They helped me with editing and making sure everything was there and that was probably the biggest help.

Janet explained that helping a classmate was useful to the person giving the support as well.

I ended up supporting that girl more because she was a second language learner. So, her tackling the edTPA was even more challenging than what I was facing. I was helping her understand what the English meant in the edTPA Handbook, so I supported her, but she wasn't able to support me but by teaching you learn.

Some colleges integrated peer evaluation and feedback into workshops or courses. This was helpful for those who had other commitments outside of student teaching. One faculty member also said how having classmates video record for each other was beneficial because then the videographer knows what needs to be captured for the edTPA rubrics.

**School of education services.** Teacher candidates were asked to identify what support services were available through their schools of education. Most schools of education provided
supports outside of courses for the edTPA, however, two schools did not. For one of these schools, student teaching seminar was devoted to the edTPA. Teacher candidates at the other colleges felt there was very little information provided about the edTPA throughout their program. Most teacher candidates (n=46) cited workshops as the support method at their college. Others stated drop-in sessions and online modules or resources. As mentioned above, some candidates sought support from professors on their own. The most beneficial aspects of the support services provided were deciphering the language/terms, format/expectations, and directions/rubrics of the exam. Teacher candidates also said it was beneficial to have high scoring edTPA portfolios to use as mentor texts, a professor or support person, or an opportunity to work with classmates.

**Workshops.** There were many schools of education where teacher candidates found the workshops to be confusing or too general. One participant noted that because administrative staff conducted the workshops at her college, the staff was only able to give support about the technical aspects of the exam. Since they had never taken it or mentored teacher candidates taking it, they were not able to answer certain questions or give support related to the experience.

Teacher candidates at most colleges found the workshops to be very valuable. Nicole explained that because she did not have time to read all the documents front-to-back she could not possibly "figure out exactly what they are looking for everywhere," so she "relied on going to those workshops and getting guidance about what they mean and what they are asking for." Some colleges conducted workshops before the student teaching semester to familiarize the student teachers with the Tasks and Handbook. At one public college, a math professor ran the Math Task workshops. She gave students support with the content as well as understanding the requirements of the Task. At a different public college, the Dean did an academic language
workshop, and the faculty did several rubric-specific workshops. One of the private colleges puts the onus on the teacher candidates to take advantage of the workshops available and commit to attending.

It is all voluntary; however, in the very beginning of the year, we have them sign a contract that says that if you want support with the edTPA, you need to attend our edTPA workshops. I keep attendance and I have a right that if someone arrives in April and says, 'Oh, I didn’t think I needed to do my edTPA but suddenly I’d like to.' I can say, 'Sorry. You missed your chance. We are not providing support for those who did not take us up on the offer for the workshops that we planned.'

**Writing support.** Due to the challenges reported above, many schools of education provided various ways to support teacher candidates in writing their edTPA. One teacher educator explained how her college has a special arrangement with the writing tutors on campus. None of them are actually education students, so we have that support of a writing tutor for our students to go to because they are not changing the content of what they write, but they can help them just with sentence structure and editing and making sure they are answering all of the parts. So, that is a huge support we have had to put in place for our students.

This teacher educator explained that her college runs three on-campus days for student teachers and interns during their student teaching. On those days, the writing tutors come to the school of education. Teacher candidates can sign up ahead of time for blocks of time to work with the tutors rather than waiting on line for hours if they would go on their own. At another school, the edTPA Coordinator ran writing camps for when the teacher candidates were close to finishing
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the tasks. The teacher candidates wrote for three hours with breaks for peer reflection and feedback.

One professor integrated the writing support into the student teaching seminar. Teacher Educator F explained,

I have students who certainly run the gamut from very strong writers to needy/at-risk writers so to speak, and we talked about how important it is for them to be able to write well not just because of edTPA but because of the profession. The profession demands that we demonstrate to children correct writing, and, obviously, the edTPA is very important in that aspect. But I think again, like with the professional language, these are things that good teachers should be doing anyway. So, I think for me it just forced me to focus more on these issues because I knew now that it wasn't just for the profession but for the edTPA materials they would be working on.

Structure/deadlines. While some teacher candidates perceived the need for more structure to complete the portfolio by the end of the semester, others felt that the deadlines caused them to rush when they needed more time. At Freyja's college, edTPA submission was a graduation requirement. She reflected on the time constraint saying, "I feel like if we were given more time to complete it, everybody would have gotten mastery or better."

Several teacher educators felt deadlines was a support the teacher candidates appreciated. Teacher Educator C explained the various benefits of having deadlines even if they are a challenge to some people.

For the most part, they meet the deadlines, and I actually gave them sort of a little survey at the end just for my personal information about what things were helpful and not helpful to them in terms of planning for my next year, and they found the deadlines
helpful. They were really glad that they were done and over and that they had their scores back before graduation because it still takes time after that to get certified. But at least they knew that now they were going to be certified, and they can look for something for September. Of course, every semester, there are a couple of students who can't meet the deadlines for whatever reason, and that's perfectly fine and then we think about what is a reasonable deadline for you. We set new deadlines. Of course, I have students, I had one last year, who still hasn't finished it—who still hasn't completed it—but she got an incomplete for her course as well so that is sort of a little push to them as well to try to get it finished and handed in.

Teacher Educator D had her teacher candidates create their own structure and deadlines.

Some students need more structure than others, so I think that part of that is as an educator you have to figure that out. But the first day of class I say, 'This is going to take a lot of time so take out your calendar.' I make them carve out two hours a week when they can just sit down and write the edTPA. Most of the feedback I have gotten on that is that it was very helpful to make that commitment in the beginning of the semester but there are two issues with that.

Video support services. Some schools of education had various approaches to help teacher candidates learn how to capture quality video footage and trim, compress, and upload the clips. Teacher candidates received support through guest speakers, online supports, or an 'IT Help Desk'/technology office. Colleges also had ePortfolio systems such as Digication, Taskstream, Filotek, or TK20, which allowed teacher candidates to compile their portfolio as they worked through it while their professors and/or classmates could also have access to give
feedback. Programs also purchased video equipment such as cameras, iPads, tripods, Bluetooth microphones to lend out to the students.

Teacher candidates most commonly used their own device or borrowed equipment from their school of education. Others used cameras that belonged to a friend or their cooperating teacher. It was noted by one teacher candidate that she "didn't trust" the cameras from her school of education, so she purchased her own equipment. It is not clear if teacher candidates used their own camera due to convenience, quality, or accessibility reasons.

The challenges of providing ongoing support. Teacher educators explained that the State provided temporary funding for the initial implementation of the edTPA. Colleges used this money to purchase video cameras, and pay for the development of online modules, and to hire faculty to run workshops or provide technology support. Teacher educators expressed concern about how schools of education would be able to continue these supports when the funding was gone. Schools of education either:

- Scaled back on the support with the assumption that professors are more knowledgeable about the edTPA and that curricular changes could provide enough support
- Found money in their budget to continue the services
- Relied on faculty volunteers to continue the support without financial compensation.

Faculty volunteer work is described in more detail in the last section of this chapter.

Student teaching placement level. Since the edTPA is a performance assessment, the student teaching placement is integral to the edTPA experience. One teacher educator reported that her college now has their student teachers stay at the same school for their fieldwork experiences and student teaching semester to save the teacher candidates time in acclimating
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themselves. This is a "tremendous support" and is credited as one of the reasons the for this college's high passing rate.

Sometimes, just the reality of doing a performance assessment in a real context can result in unexpected challenges. Teacher Educator C recalled a specific example of a situation that occurred.

I have one student teacher who was taping for her Task 2, and a parent came into the class and starting throwing things at the classroom teacher, started swearing up a storm. We can't prevent that. That derailed the entire lesson. These are realities of things that are going on.

There are also predictable challenges and supports at the student teaching placement level. These include:

- the curriculum used at the school
- the cooperating teachers
- being placed in a testing grade
- poorly performing schools and
- having students with various learning needs.

**Curriculum.** As noted above, meeting the specific requirements of the edTPA is a challenge. This is compounded when the teacher candidate has to follow a strict curriculum. Participants cited the rigidity of charter school curriculums as not conducive to accommodate the lesson structure and atmosphere required for the edTPA. One teacher candidate said, "they teach totally different" at the charter school she was placed in. The teacher educator that supervised her explained that once her school of education saw the challenges of taking the edTPA at this school they discontinued working there. She explained, "many of the charter schools do not
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work for edTPA. Although they may be wonderful in what they do, their programs are so rigid and structured to meet their needs" and teacher candidates cannot stray from that. She went on to say, "So we had a fantastic school that worked well in many, many ways for our students, but we had to stop. We used them for one semester and then we realized we can't use that school because they are not flexible enough for edTPA."

In some situations, the cooperating teacher or the principal allowed the teacher candidate to stray from the curriculum in order to have more flexibility. Michelle was in one of these schools. She said,

A lot of schools and classrooms are limited because they follow a certain curriculum that may not focus on the strategies they are looking for or may not be as clear on the strategies you are looking for...Luckily, I was in a school where the principal allowed us to do our own thing aside from the curriculum. So, if we saw that the kids needed more help making inferences or something, we could plan our own learning segment. We don't have to go by any written curriculum that he has, but not every school is like that. So it's sometimes hard that way too because the materials that teachers use sometimes, even though some of these materials may be good, they don't focus on what you need to focus on for edTPA. You have to really alter things and change things.

Kelly student taught at a school for the gifted and talented and found the pedagogy used at her placement was a challenge when it came to creating a 3-5 lesson learning segment. She explained,

And I wanted to start a new topic, and kind of finish it by the end of my mini-unit and not pick up in the middle of the third week of their writing unit where they were just editing on their own. Because in a project-based school like that, once they get started, it's not
like you are teaching too many other lessons. They are on their way and they are doing what they got to do. It wasn't like mini-lessons every day or anything.

**Cooperating teachers.** Cooperating teachers were seen as being supportive of teacher candidates in the general aspects of the edTPA that were parallel to everyday student teaching, like lesson planning and evaluating student work. Teacher educators also mentioned the important role the cooperating teacher played in the ability to get signed video consent forms from the parents. Challenges with cooperating teachers occurred when they were unfamiliar with the demands and language of the test, had a strict curriculum to follow, or did not want to give up control of their classroom to their student teachers.

Participants often commented about the challenge when cooperating teachers wanted to support their teacher candidates but did not know how because they had never taken the performance assessment themselves. A couple of the teacher educators said that their schools of education offered workshops the first semester the edTPA was implemented, but no cooperating teachers were interested in attending; however, there were reports of cooperating teachers who wanted to familiarize themselves with requirements or vocabulary on the edTPA as they began to see the complexity of the exam. Teacher Educator F shared,

> Quite often the cooperating teachers will ask me, 'I see Ms. So and So used this term. Can you explain it to me?' and I have actually made copies of the glossary for the cooperating teachers so they have this information as well. I think it is important that they are on the same page. I haven't gone as far as making them copies of the Handbook. Teacher Educator E shared how she supported her teacher candidates in explaining the terms on the edTPA to their cooperating teachers,
We have had cooperating teachers who are like, 'I just don't know how to support you on this. This sounds like gobbledygook to me.' And so I have had conversations with students to try to help them come up with the language that will kind of help them translate what the edTPA is asking of them with language that it a little more 'cooperating teacher-friendly.'

Michelle (although from a different college) did just that. She explained,

My teacher, he really didn't know too much about edTPA. It was his first time ever hearing about it. He definitely did try to help. I tried to explain what it was looking for and what it wants. He did try and help and would say 'Maybe you should do this' or 'Add this,' and he gave me a whole bunch of his books that he had for different strategies I could teach. He was very helpful that way...I don't think he really understood how much work it was until I opened up my laptop and showed him all the documents.

Teacher Educator E explained that the bottom-line is that becoming certified is the teacher candidates' responsibility, and they have to be proactive about helping their cooperating teachers understand the edTPA to get the support they need.

We also send out a letter to cooperating teachers and cooperating principals at the beginning of each year that kind of lets them know the basics of the edTPA. But at the end of the day, our policy is that completing the edTPA is the student teacher's responsibility and that includes developing the professional capacity to have a conversation with your cooperating teacher about: the fact that you do have a certification exam you need to complete in this class, what it is going to entail, being proactive about the scheduling, and making sure that it does not bother your cooperating teacher.
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She went on to explain how she helped her teacher candidates mitigate tensions that occurred when cooperating teachers do not have a full understanding of the edTPA.

The easiest experiences are the ones where the cooperating teachers are interested and open. At the other end of the spectrum, we have had issues where the cooperating teacher basically hands the student teacher a curriculum and says, 'Just teach this for five days. You can do that for your edTPA.' And often, what happens with that is because most curriculum doesn't satisfy all of the demands of the edTPA, then students will come to me, and we will talk through: A) the fact that you probably will have to make some tweaks to make it work and B) you need to have a conversation with your cooperating teacher about what those tweaks are going to be.

Teacher Educator C, however, explained how she shared some of the responsibility. There are those moments of 'I was going to videotape and my cooperating teacher said I couldn't.' ...there is less support and understanding about how important this really is and how stressful it is and that if a student has picked a certain day to start their lessons and videotape them that any change or straying from that plan is just completely overwhelming. Where I have had students who have planned their whole three-lesson segment and then the cooperating teacher is like, 'You know what? That's not going to work out because of this, that, and the other, and we are going to have to push it back a week and that lesson segment is not going to make sense anymore.' It's like, 'No, you don't understand. I have to; I have already written Task One!' We have definitely had issues where we have had to go back and forth with the cooperating teacher. And I tell the student teacher, 'Blame it on me.' I said, 'You don't have to be the bad guy.' I said, 'Tell them to call me. Give me their number. Let me talk to them...Let your supervisor
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go in and talk to that cooperating teacher because they don't seem to understand that you can't just switch in the middle.' Those stories come up more often than not, for sure.

Additionally, it was clear that there were cooperating teachers who felt it was not their responsibility to help teacher candidates figure out how to navigate their certification exam. Kelly explained,

My cooperating teacher didn't and still does not understand it, and I heard that from a lot of other teachers, like the teachers I work with now...I can't imagine that my cooperating teacher would want to know more, so she could help me more. Because they want to help you become a teacher; they don't want to help you become an expert certification test passer. Like, why would they care? My cooperating teacher was helpful when it came to planning lessons to teach to her students that was related to the unit that she was already involved in. But planning this mini-unit that was outside of her curriculum...how much would she even want to help?

Cooperating teachers posed their own set of supports and challenges in terms of flexibility or willingness to relinquish control to their teacher candidates. Katie shared the tension that occurred in her placement.

Some of us had cooperating teachers who were very understanding about it and others of us had cooperating teachers who just didn't care at all. And for us to be able to even teach three lessons in a row was a huge thing to ask of them but...we certainly did not get to choose what those three lessons were about, and you get graded on the arch of these three lessons and putting all of this stuff, all of these requirements, into these lessons. Some of us are really required to teach very specific lessons in a very specific way.
Teacher educators noted that the edTPA experience in Professional Development Schools (PDS) was less challenging than at other schools because of the relationship faculty had with cooperating teachers. Teacher Educator C explained,

The assistant principal invited me in to talk to the whole faculty when it started. I did a little PowerPoint on what it is. I sit down with the cooperating teachers at the beginning of the semester because sometimes it is the cooperating teacher who hasn't had this before. I give the cooperating teacher an abbreviated calendar and schedule, ...So, I give that kind of support and structure to the cooperating teachers as well, and I don't have issues in the PDSs, but some of our teachers that don't have that support and are not a part of the PDSs, there is almost always some kind of issue.

Additionally, Janet commented about how her cooperating teacher was supportive but not when it interfered with her priorities, one of which was preparing her students for the state tests. The challenges of student teaching in a testing grade are presented below.

**Testing grades.** Student teaching in a testing grade during the spring semester proved to add an additional challenge to the edTPA experience. Claudia explained that preparing for and taking the state tests caused a huge interruption in the semester. For weeks, she was very limited on the amount of teaching she could do, which made it impossible for her to do her edTPA. Michelle’s situation was similar. She said that because her students were "stressed out" about the tests, it was hard to get them to focus. Additionally, even though her cooperating teacher was supportive, Michelle's certification exam became secondary to getting students to pass the State tests. Once the tests were over, teacher candidates had more freedom; however, another challenge emerged. Christy remarked,
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We had the April break, the State tests, and then I did it (the edTPA). After the state tests, at least with my students, they feel like they don't have to learn anymore. And they're like "Ohhh, summer!"

Teacher educators reflected on their teacher candidates' ability to complete the edTPA with two weeks of the semester dedicated to testing, in addition to the weeks spent preparing for the tests. Teacher Educator A revealed,

Forget when it's testing time. What we are finding out now is that edTPA needs to be taken in the fall, and you need to submit during the winter session because when it is testing time here...forget it. The principals and the teachers are saying the student [teachers] can't come in. It's just a lot. The schools are stressed out.

Poorly performing schools. Participants mentioned the challenge of student teaching in a poorly performing school. One teacher educator said,

We work with some of the highest need poorest performing schools in the city. So some of those classrooms are not going to be ideal places where you can easily implement an essential strategy.

In fact, Christy admitted,

it may sound kind of bad, but I felt that if I wasn't in a failing school, I would have had an easier time with the edTPA.

Students with learning needs. The edTPA asked teacher candidates to show how they met various learning needs in the classroom such as students with IEPs, English language learners, and gifted students. Claudia, who was a bilingual education teacher candidate, admitted,
I quickly realized that I didn't need to tell edTPA about my struggling learners. I just decided to have a very uniform set of kids that conveniently didn't have IEPs... because you quickly realize that 'Why would I?' Because if I wasn't meeting their needs...I could make sure that I didn't have to face that issue...That didn't make any sense because I learned so much from having to figure out the different kids and everything, but no one wants to run that risk with edTPA because there are so many moving parts, and you don't know which bit you should be trying to satisfy.

For Michelle, her challenge was how unpredictable the scheduling was for pullout services for her students with specific learning needs during her learning segment.

I was teaching a lesson and everything went wrong that day. We were in the middle of recording. And without being notified, one of the teachers, I think it was the ESL teacher, she came and started pulling out some kids, and then I have like 5 English language learners in my class... And I had at least 6 or 7 students with IEPs and so then they got pulled out... The kids being pulled out just killed the whole flow of things. And then it was hard for me to teach because the kids were just sidetracked. I had kids work with partners so now their partner was gone. And then, I had to find new partners.

Teachers also accommodated students learning needs through flexible grouping based on formative assessment. Teacher Educator E explained how this was a challenge when having to plan, teach, and assess lessons that include the same three focus students.

We have had situations where folks have to get really creative, for example, about capturing what is called the whole class. They are in settings where over the course of three days the groups are so flexible...that it is actually very difficult for them to pull six kids for three days in a row. It's counter-cultural in the classroom.
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Effects on Personal, Student Teaching, Academic Experiences

The challenges teacher candidates faced and the support they received affected their overall experience with the edTPA. Carla explained, “It was really overwhelming, not just academically but emotionally. I felt like I just had to follow whatever they wanted.” Teacher Educator D felt similarly saying, “A lot of it is emotional support and a lot of it is me being like, ‘Hey, it’s all going to be okay. You can do this.’ A lot of them don’t believe in themselves. They can do it. They just need the time to do it.”

Amy shared that the challenges of the edTPA resulted in her poor performance on the edTPA.

When I was student teaching, I was taking two additional classes on top of that, and I was working part-time, so, personally, it was a lot going on at once, and I felt like I really couldn’t dedicate my time to something like the edTPA. I’m the kind of person who needs to sit down and do it. I can just take breaks and get back to it because I know I just won’t remember what to write.

The following sections will outline the edTPA’s negative effects on teacher candidates’ personal, student teaching, and academic experiences. The subsequent section will report the positive effects related to the edTPA experience.

**Personal.** Teacher candidates were personally affected by the edTPA due to the:

- high-stakes,
- discourse of “bad teachers,”
- challenges faced, and
- lack of perceived support.
Having the edTPA as a certification requirement was a cause of anxiety for teacher candidates. Christy shared,

I just like worried about it because I know that I want to be a teacher, and I know that I am not an amazing teacher yet, but I can get there. I know that I can just work on myself and work on my lesson plans and work on whatever I have to and just continuously learn from my students and from my experiences. I knew that the edTPA would not let me learn any of that about myself, and I was just so nervous because it was just so high-stakes.

Adam commented on the pressure he felt counteracting the discourse about teachers,

It seemed kind of part of the narrative of ‘that it's all the teacher's fault. And that it's just a bunch of bad teachers and if we get rid of all the bad teachers then the education system will be wonderful.’ Putting all the blame on the teachers created a tremendous amount of pressure. I felt I was really feeling the pressure because I understood that.

Additionally, a perceived lack of support caused stress. Michelle explained, “I also think one of the reasons why this process is so stressful is because there are not many people who know about it who can help you.” Throughout the interviews and open-ended questions on the survey, many participants mentioned words associated with psychological effects. Table 5.6 shows how many participants used specific words in their responses.
Table 5.6 Participant count of in vivo coding of combined interviews and survey responses from teacher candidates (n=14) and teacher educators (n=8)

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<th>Word</th>
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<th>Teacher educators</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelming</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxious</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emotional/psychological (and the physical effects of the stress). Teacher candidates found that "just talking about it is stressful" but also commented how they felt a sense of closure after sharing about their experience. For some, the psychological effects of the edTPA started before the student teaching experience. Christy said, "I just remember last semester, getting anxiety, and I didn't even have the test yet!"

Differentiating the meanings of the terms on the edTPA and understanding what the prompts were asking was a source of stress. Kelly said that she was “worrying about using a specific wording… I don't want to describe syntax when I mean to describe discourse. [I was worrying about] just not really understanding what the questions are really asking or fearing that I wouldn't answer it the right way.”

Michelle talked about her conversation with peers about the certification exams. She recalled,
when they come to the edTPA, they are like, ‘It’s not that bad, right?’ I am like, ‘It is literally hell. It is the worst thing I have ever done in my life. Be prepared.’ And when I tell them this, they’re like, ‘Oh no! Now, I’m scared.’ But you can’t even put into words how annoying and stressful it is, and it’s just so much work. The thing is that it’s not hard. It’s just so time consuming, and it’s so much work for their own reasons. I was going to say for no reason but... for their own reasons, they make you do so much work.

I don’t think you really realize how much work it is until you are doing it.

She then gave details about the affects of her edTPA experience. “I was so physically and emotionally drained from it that I called out of work. As soon as I went home, I would sleep and eat ice cream. I felt like I was going through a break up. That’s how stressful it was.” Another teacher candidate wrote, “I would even venture to say that I went through a brief depression period while working on this test.”

Several teacher candidates broke down in tears during their edTPA experience. Carla said, “While I was trying to work to get some things done, I was also trying to do my edTPA, and I just started crying because I had worked so hard to make sure I had all my items for the edTPA.” Kelly said, “I cried a lot. I was so stressed out.” Janet shared a specific moment she remembered breaking down and decided she needed to take off from work to be able to finish her edTPA.

I cried in the hallway one day in front of all of my classmates because the pressure was so high and the semester was coming to an end, and I still hadn’t gotten what I needed for the video footage, and I still had like three quarters of the test to write and the time was coming to an end. All the deadlines were approaching. I had to ask my boss, ‘Can you
just let me work 10 less hours a week for the next few weeks?’ That was the only way I got it done. I sacrificed my paycheck.

Claudia recalled having “crying breakdowns” through the semester. She said, “I had a lot of crisis moments. Oh my god, I panicked all the time.” Freyja sacrificed her sleep in order to get her edTPA done, “It was more pressure. Some nights you were sleeping and some nights you weren't because you had to be done.” The stress not only affected the quantity of teacher candidates’ sleep but also the quality. Janet said, “I was having nightmares during student teaching about this edTPA process. It was crazy how it even dominated my sleep.”

Teacher candidates shared how the psychological effects of the edTPA experience manifested themselves physically. Christy said, “It just gave me like depression and anxiety being inside staring at a laptop. My left eye starts twitching when I look at it too much.” Aisha reported that she was not eating regularly and was losing weight during the semester. Michelle said, “I was literally getting nosebleeds...My head felt like it was going to explode. My eyes were like going crazy. I just couldn't do it anymore. It was just a lot of work on top of whatever work we have to do for student teaching. I just think, ‘Where do they think we get this time?’ We do have personal lives. And trying to work and dealing with our personal lives and having to do student teaching on top of other coursework and then having us do this is just so much.”

Although Adam earned a 65 out of 90 (Mastery level > 57), he said,

It made me feel less confident, less capable. It made me feel like something was being done to me and that made me not want to do it. It kind of killed my motivation to do a good job on top of when I was just doing tasks.

In fact, Teacher Educator D explained that the teacher candidates with the most responsibility in the classroom were the ones that were most stressed.
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I can say that generally people are stressed about it. It’s a lot. There’s a lot going on…They have all the stuff that they are doing for student teaching, and good student teachers are getting a lot of responsibility in the classroom.

Katie said,

it was just such a completely overwhelming amount of work. It was what our entire semester was about instead of trying to figure out how to be a teacher. We were figuring out how to do the portfolio assessment. I mean literally the entire semester. And especially for someone like me…if there’s a rubric that gives me a chance to earn a five, I’m going to try to do the thing to get the five. I’m not even the one who would allow myself to just pass and if that represents 40 hours of work, I’m going to do those 40 hours of work. For a lot of people, it just proved to be so incredibly overwhelming on their entire life, while they were student teaching, that a lot of us didn’t get the full student teaching experience.

**Specific populations more than others.** As noted above, some groups have more challenges than others do. Some participants noted these additional challenges as affecting the edTPA experience. One teacher educator said,

I want to reiterate that for the students, this is a very stressful experience. I also want to be explicit that for ELL teacher candidates, for teacher candidates of color, for teacher candidates of lower SES, or any combination of that, it is even more stressful because they are often underprepared in terms of their preK-12 experience.

**On family/personal life.** In some cases, the edTPA affected not only the teacher candidates but also their families and friends. Katie said, “It made me feel not overwhelmed, but
just guilty that my family life was suffering. You are constantly writing this thing that you can't even explain. My husband, I think, felt like a single parent.” She went on to say,

At the end of edTPA, when I finally turned it in, I all of a sudden realized that I hadn't seen any of my friends in months. I realized that I had sort of been sequestered. I spent more time on it than I spent on my thesis for my undergrad or for my master's degree. I spent more time doing that one thing than I have on any other project I have in my entire life. It's so difficult to explain what you are doing to anyone who doesn't go through this process. When I finished it, I felt like I was able to return to being myself as a person and seeing my friends and family again. I felt like I was getting out of jail.

Christy shared similar sentiments saying,

During the edTPA experience, I definitely lost contact with my mom and my boyfriend and my friends just because I felt that I had to...And my boyfriend would want to hang out, and I would allow him like nights. I'd be like, ‘Okay, Saturday from like when I wake up at ten or nine and till five I'm going to do edTPA work and then we can go see a movie.’

**Student teaching experience.** Many teacher candidates said that the edTPA shifted the focus of student teaching while a few others felt it did not. Adam talked about how the edTPA did not allow him to take risks during student teaching because he was trying to figure out how to teach in the way the test wanted rather than finding an approach that worked best for him and his students.

It was a whole other kind of structure and approach towards teaching. Not entirely different, but different enough to make me feel like I was kind of having to figure out a whole other way of doing things at the last minute and under pressure trying to figure that
out, which wasn't what I wanted out of my student teaching experience. Ideally, I wanted a little bit of space to find my own way to make mistakes when the consequences are low and being able to take risks and knowing that the supervising teacher was going to be able to help me out, and the kids are going to be fine no matter whatever I do.

Teacher candidates mentioned that they were not fully engaged in student teaching because they were absorbed with the edTPA. Katie said,

My student teaching was impacted because I had to be so focused on the edTPA...that I was not always participating as much as I could have been. I wasn't always asking to jump in to do small group work or whatever because I was in the back focused on trying to madly type up these 60 page long responses to the prompts. It definitely impacted that. I don't think I got a full experience as a student teacher.

Claudia found that it was not just the writing demand that took the focus off day-to-day teaching; it was trying to meet the specific requirements of the exam.

I think ultimately you try to just tailor it to the rubrics, and it takes away from your student teaching, your actual practicum aspect of learning to teach in the classroom. And you end up just sort of like, ‘Okay, I have to get these sequence of lessons and just check your boxes’ and you just end up tailoring things. It's out of context almost, and it takes away from the value of student teaching.

One teacher candidate wrote about how she could not keep up with her teaching responsibilities because of the edTPA.

As it is now, it actually takes away from our experience--we were so busy planning around it that we sometimes actually had to turn down teaching opportunities! (‘Would you like to teach math tomorrow?’ ‘I can't--I am planning my learning segment and it's
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all I can think about because I have to teach it Thursday and there are 15 rubrics I have to pour over and plan toward.’)

Michelle shared a similar experience.

When it came to planning other things, at one point, when we were supposed to teach full days, every day I had to tell my teacher, ‘Please can you please take up some of these days so I can plan for edTPA and do the work?’ And luckily he was very accommodating that way because throughout the semester he let me do whatever I wanted, so I kind of made up for it in the beginning. It kind of upset me because I really liked spending time with my kids and teaching them and helping them, and I feel like they took that away. It was kind of frustrating that way.

She went on to say,

I feel like the whole edTPA thing takes away from your experience as a teacher just because all my time was dedicated on it. I really felt bad because I felt like my priority really wasn't my kids, which I feel like it should have been, but my priority was finishing the exam and making sure I have all the materials before my time was up.

Carla didn't want her edTPA to distract her from her student teaching responsibility, so she decided not to complete it during her student teaching semester,

I was glad about the fact that I gathered all the data and then focused on my student teaching and then I actually decided to do edTPA. As soon as I graduated, I went to the ceremony and all that but then I still didn't feel like I graduated because I still had to do the edTPA and the pressure of getting it done.
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The effects of the edTPA on the student teaching semester affected not only teacher candidates, but also cooperating teachers, elementary school students, and university supervisors. Michelle admitted that her anxiety was obvious to the students.

My students knew that I was frustrated and stressed just to do this one thing and record them and stuff. ...We all just went back to the rug and then they saw on my face that I was kind of stressed. And I felt bad because I didn't want to show them I was stressed but it was kind of hard not to get upset or stressed because this video really counts for a big part of your grade and you need it for this commentary that is taking me forever to finish.

One candidate commented about the effect on cooperating teachers. She wrote, “It's awful and places unnecessary stress on already overworked student teachers, disrupts our Cooperating Teachers' classrooms, and puts pressure on CTs unnecessarily.” Teacher Educator B explained that despite being in favor of a teacher performance assessment for certification, the edTPA “takes away from just the relaxed observations, and connections, and involvement that they would have normally without worrying about the edTPA. It pulls them back from that time period. So, they are very glad when it is over, and it is submitted because they have a couple of weeks then, hopefully, they can take in, and absorb all of the other aspects of teaching.”

**Academic.** The demands of the edTPA caused some teacher candidates difficulty keeping up with readings and or putting their full effort into assignments for their classes. Carla admitted,

I only read chapter one or the first section because at some point, I had to be like, ‘You know what? I'll just pretend that I'll participate in class.’ You have to know what to let
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I needed a good grade on my supervision when they went to see me teach, so I had to just move it to the side.

Two other teacher candidates said they rushed through assignments in favor of spending more time and energy on the edTPA especially because of the high-stakes of the exams.

**Positive effects.** Although participants reported mostly negative effects of the edTPA, many also saw positive consequences as well. Claudia felt the focus on assessment was helpful, but the demands were too intense,

> I mean, it's a learning experience, especially the error analysis and using data-based instruction. You do learn something from it, but I think it took up an awful amount of time at a stage when a lot of people are doing so many other things. It's excessively frustrating.

One teacher candidate wrote,

> Although I felt the rubric was incredibly unclear and the work was overwhelming, I feel there were positive aspects that I drew from the experience. It helped me critique certain parts of my teaching methods, it helped me consider how to work in a variety of settings (small group, conference, etc.) and it helped me think about using assessments which I hadn't been responsible for in my placements.

Another teacher candidate wrote,

> While I feel some of the vocab used did not relate to my training and education studying to become an educator, some of the planning and assessing was useful.

Teacher Educator C felt that the performance assessment had a lot of positive potential.

> I think that a lot of the elements in the edTPA, or the majority of the edTPA, really focused on what a good teacher really should be doing. Of course, is it monotonous? Is
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there minutia? It is repetitive, and it can be extremely frustrating, but there are elements that we thought were good practice that we were already doing in a lot of ways in our program.

She went on to say,

I think our student teachers come out of the program better equipped to use data to assess students in their classes than they did previously. I think that is a pro. I think they feel more confident after they finish the edTPA because it is such a huge task that they feel like, ‘Wow! I really can do this.’ When they pass they really feel like, ‘I am ready to be a teacher.’ I think those are pros.

Effects on Teacher Educators and the Teacher Education Curriculum

In addition to triangulating the data about the perceptions of the teacher candidates’ experiences, teacher educators also shared about how the implementation of the edTPA affected their assignments, language, time, and the curriculum.

Effects on teacher educators. Only a few teacher educators spoke about how the edTPA affected them personally. The three areas mentioned were:

- the pressure to help all the teacher candidates pass
- the additional non-compensated workload absorbed by teacher education faculty, and
- academic freedom.

One teacher educator shared about the stress she felt working in a small teacher education program with only a few faculty members familiar with the edTPA.

To be honest, it’s a lot of pressure on me as an individual. When colleagues don’t know it, a lot of things fall on you. This year, two of us really helped 20 students through edTPA - two faculty members for 20 students. That became my whole life.
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She went on to explain,

Honestly, I think we need to be paid more for edTPA or get more load credit because - not exaggerating - I would be here many, many nights till 10 PM and at 10 PM the security people are like, 'You have to go.' It would have been later. I gave them (student teachers) my phone number even though they are texting me and calling me and at some point, I'm like, 'I need a break too.' At the end of the semester this year, I still have so much work to do because I could not work with them still having to submit edTPA. Each student takes... 20 hours, at least, and that is on the low end... We don't get additional pay. You don't get additional load credit. You get nothing for doing way more work.

With a department as small as ours, literally it was two of us supporting students for edTPA - two. It's tiring work. It's very challenging.

The teacher educator from College 1 shared the accommodations to the student teaching semester she has made to alleviate pressure on her and her students.

Actually, we hold two class sessions in January as well before the semester officially starts. I don't get any different compensation for that. In the long run, it makes my job easier because it spreads it out a little bit for them. I'm not as stressed. They're not as stressed, and they are just way ahead of the game. They are still doing the exact number of student teaching days that they are supposed to do. I've just moved the schedule up. Although this timeline is less stressful, the teacher educator is not compensated for working during the winter term.

The only compensation is that they have allowed my class size to be smaller than they normally allow because of the amount of work with the edTPA. That was a big lynchpin part at one point. They weren't going to give the full three credits for having 12 students.
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I'm like, 'Do you want an adjunct to teach it or do you want a full time person to teach it? And if you want me to do it correctly then you can't give me 20 students.' That is a form of compensation, but not really, but they have allowed that to make it more manageable.

As mentioned above, on many campuses, temporary State funding paid faculty to run edTPA workshops. One teacher educator commented that

Now it's gone...I can't pay anybody to give any workshops additionally other than the ones that I do. I have hope that people will be kind enough to do it just because they care. And then also, when we do our reviews of the edTPA, when we look at it and make sure the students have all of the components, I usually pay them as well, and I can't do that. That's our stress, but we continue to give workshops as long as somebody is willing to give it.

**Effects on the teacher education curriculum.** Aspects of the edTPA were not new for the teacher education programs in this study. These included video analysis of teaching and preparing a Context for Learning (although colleges had their own name for it). Teacher educators commented on how they have always had teacher candidates:

- plan,
- teach,
- assess, and
- conduct analyses of student work and whole class data.

While some teacher educators were confident in the skill level they developed in their teacher candidates, others felt that the edTPA pushed their programs to improve in these areas.
Five interviews produced data about the changes in teacher education programs in the study. There were additional teacher educators who spoke only about changes they made in their own syllabi. The following subsections outline these findings on those two levels.

**Teacher education program level.** This section will outline the changes made to teacher programs in the study. There are not findings from every program based on the interview protocol. For anonymity purposes, the names of the colleges were removed and not paired with the codes for the teacher educators from that college.

*College 1.* The teacher educator from College 1, explained that the edTPA had us think about our program as a whole. We really had to back-map the elements that are involved in the edTPA into all of our courses beginning in the first course the students take as a foundations course. Because it is such an overwhelming project for them to have to do at the end, it's not fair to not infuse the language and the tasks and similar tasks that align with the edTPA. So, when they get there they are used to the language, they have been looking for aspects of teaching that they are asked to look for in their own teaching, and they are also used to citing relevant theory and research in conjunction with teaching. College 1 does parallel tasks throughout their master’s degree program. In the first semester, the teacher candidates watch videos to look for respect and rapport, similar to what is the edTPA rubrics assess. In their literacy methods course, they write a lesson in an “edTPA format,” teach the lesson in the field, and answer prompts aligned with the edTPA.

In student teaching seminar, teacher candidates do an analysis of an alumnus’s video with “a checklist that aligns with all of the elements they are supposed to be looking for in their own video of the edTPA.” They decide which ten minutes they would choose if they were to submit the video for an edTPA portfolio. The teacher educator from College 1 said,
[this] is an enormous tool for them to start looking at their own videos because it’s huge to look at their entire video and all of their lessons and think about what 10 minutes, or whatever minutes they have, to pick. They can use that checklist again...for when they are watching their own video.

College 1 also has an unofficial and voluntary alternative plan for student teaching for both the teacher candidate and the teacher educator who provides it. The teacher educator explained,

They go in one day a week in the fall semester, so again, I'm the PDS liaison at the school, so I'm at the school one day a week anyway. It just so happens that they can all go to the school on the same day that I am going to be there. So, instead of student teaching five days a week in the spring semester, they will student teach four days a week and that is helpful for them too because then they get a day to work on their edTPA.

She went on to say,

They are not even officially enrolled in student teaching yet, and I am getting their first observation in. We do four observations. I'll do one now, and I'll do one in January. If they want, I can do something in February, but if not, I can leave them alone while they are doing the edTPA and after they are done I can do the last two.

During the student teaching semester, teacher candidates at College 1 take a traditional research course. The edTPA replaced the research paper for that course. Additionally, the same professor teaches the Student Teaching Seminar and research class and schedules them back-to-back. She uses that four-hour block of time to dive into some intense work with the teacher candidates. Across the two courses, the professor focuses on the edTPA for the beginning of the semester. As a requirement for the course, teacher candidates have to complete and submit the edTPA. This class has become pass/not pass because university faculty cannot grade the teacher
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candidates' edTPA submission. In reflecting on the change in the course, the teacher educator from College 1 said,

I think this is much more worthwhile for them. It's not a doctoral program. It's a master's program. What are the odds that these teachers are going to go on and do that kind of research in their own classrooms that they are going to write up and submit to be published? Very, very slight. The opportunity to practice the aspects that I think are good teaching from the edTPA is much more worthwhile.

In reflecting on the changes in the program, this teacher educator was aware of the importance of being cautious when preparing students for a certification exam. She said she has to stop herself and “make sure I’m not just teaching to the test. I want to make sure that the elements that I am infusing throughout the program for two years are also elements that I think are good teaching that they need to know.”

College 2. At College 2, the Context for Learning was infused earlier into the course of study. It is now introduced "a year prior to even entering clinical practice." College 2 also rewrote their Clinical Practice Handbooks. Those starting clinical practice in the fall are required to do summer preparation work to become familiar with the edTPA. Student teaching course work was revised to be more "edTPA-friendly" and include a timeline with weekly goals to support students throughout the semester. Additionally, College 2 made the edTPA a requirement for program completion and changed their research requirement. Prior to the edTPA, the action research project could be about any topic the teacher candidate chose. Additionally, teacher candidates would do “conceptualizing essays” for their lessons in social studies, science, math, and English language arts similar to the commentary sections on the edTPA. The program now focuses on units instead of lessons. Teacher candidates do an English
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language arts unit where they “integrate social studies” and a math unit where they “integrate science.” The teacher educator from College 2 was concerned that “social studies and science suffer” because the elementary edTPA is focused on math and literacy instruction. She also noted, “I don’t know how good of a job every single student is doing with that integration, and how good of a job every single supervisor is doing with that.”

College 3. College 3 also made the edTPA a graduation requirement. The demands of the edTPA have caused programs at College 3 to consider if they should offer a separate assessment course rather than just have assessment integrated into courses throughout the curriculum. The teacher educator from College 3 shared, “I think definitely there has been a lot more discussion about the data-based nature of education right now.” She also explained some other curricular changes that have occurred.

We had two assignments, a home/school connection assignment and a physical education assignment, that they have to do that are aligned with our NCATE accreditation. Those had to be shifted to another class because it was just so overwhelming and even though we are still working on developing teaching portfolios, it is not as rich as it used to be. It's simply because we don't have the time, and they don't have the time. Really, it's not that we don't have the time in class, it's that they don't have the time to work on it.

On a broader note, the teacher educator from College 3 said that she got a sense that the program previously had a stronger social justice orientation. She said, “I think it is still there, but it is being talked about differently, or it is not being talked about as much just because there isn't the time.”

College 4. At College 4, faculty members are being encouraged to "use the lingo and the different strategies from the edTPA in the methods course so they [teacher candidates] get used
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to it." Most of the student teachers are also "set up in the same schools for student teaching as they were for their methods courses."

College 5. The first year of the edTPA, College 5 rearranged the student teaching calendar.

We actually had the student teachers go into their spring placements in December just to meet the kids and get a hold of the literacy curriculum because we were so concerned in making sure they were prepared for their literacy edTPA. Because students did so well with it, we actually went back to our regular calendar after that.

Teacher educator level. To prepare teacher candidates for the edTPA, teacher educators made changes to their individual courses. Two teacher educators commented on the possible infringement the implementation of a high-stakes assessment can have on academic freedom. Teacher Educator B said,

Most of the seminar professors are okay with devoting a few minutes, 20 minutes, 15 minutes, of seminar to any concerns they might have about the edTPA or looking at certain aspects of the edTPA in line with what they are doing… So, for me, it was not a problem but for many of the professors who are not- don't have my background, it was ‘Oh my god, do I have to give up my syllabus? Do I have to give up my content? Do I have to give up all of my curriculum in order to…be able to support my students and at the same time be able to teach what I need to teach?’…And we had a retreat recently where we included all of the adjunct professors, well as many as would come. And one of the things that came up was that they believed that they had to give up their curriculum. One of the things I tried to explain to them is that you do not have to do that
as long as you look at the aspects that are required, the different strategies, the language, and you always incorporate it in whatever you are doing.

Teacher Educator F did something similar herself.

What I tried to do is look at the topics I always taught in a seminar and think are important for the students to know about as they enter the profession and while they are doing their student teaching and see if there are ways I could connect those topics to support the students as they work on their edTPA materials.

Teacher Educator C was clear that

All of the changes that I've made, I've made on a volunteer basis. You know, I guess, if I was really against - trying to make a point - about academic freedom, I wouldn't have had to have made any of the changes. I wouldn't have to teach any of the edTPA in my course. I just don't think that it is fair to my students. This is something that they have to do, so I want to support them in all the best ways possible.

Teacher educators also noted the need to shift their vocabulary to align with the edTPA.

Teacher Educator F found that most of the changes were to the “terminology they use when delivering lessons.”

The videotaping became much more interesting when they were able to see themselves, listen to themselves using really professional language as opposed to just saying whatever the common language would have been otherwise.

Teacher Educator F also changed the lesson plan template to include “language function information and other sections that mirror the requirements of the TPA.” He felt “that is just a matter of language” and he “would have been asking for that in a different way anyway.”

Teacher Educator D felt differently. She felt that although she wants her students to think more
broadly about education, the edTPA language is something they need to know. They also needed to be able to talk about education in terms of data-based decisions and tracking students. She also made other changes to her course to prepare teacher candidates for the demands of the edTPA such as having a parallel assignment with Task 4. Teacher Educator D has her class review a set of whole class data and define the conceptual understanding, the procedural fluency, and the problem solving in the assessment.

We define those as what we are looking for and then we go through and we analyze those and we create a chart, and we think about the gaps in understanding and what our re-engagement lessons might look like. That is a skill they need in general to be a teacher, and also I integrate that very specific idea of what the edTPA seems to be looking for in terms of data display and articulating those kinds of competencies and also making good choices about what assessments they gathered from their students. Sometimes, when they gather something like straight up multiplication time test, it doesn't work for that process. So, [it's about] helping them make good decisions. So, a lot of skills-based sort of teaching as opposed to teaching to the test.

In line with focusing on assessment with actual student work, Teacher Educator D has teacher candidates look at the feedback they get from their fieldwork supervisors to notice how “that feedback is or is not designed to help them move forward.” This also continues Teacher Educator D’s skills-based approach. Her philosophy is “Let me teach you how to think about this so that you can replicate this in a variety of different situations.”

**Educational Policy**

Some participants commented on the policy implementation of the edTPA. There was a common feeling that what the edTPA was asking the teacher candidates to demonstrate was
appropriate and a performance assessment was preferable to a pencil-and-paper test, but there were still concerns about the edTPA. Katie said,

We should submit a video of ourselves teaching. We should absolutely have to submit lesson plans and graders should be able to see us following through on that lesson plan and see our flexibility in the classroom setting and see what we do to follow up. I think all of that is right, but the way that it’s implemented... there's just so much to do.

Teacher Educator B also shared her support for having a performance assessment,

I have always believed in performance assessments - that if you are going to do anything, the edTPA is the way to go. The other exams are ridiculous because they are one moment in time, and I don't believe anyone can be evaluated like that. But if you are going to do any kind of assessment with teachers, it should be a performance assessment.

Comments were also made about the disconnect between policy makers and teacher educators, Campbell’s Law, and the decision to complete certification or become public school teacher. Findings were reported earlier about the effects of decrease in the State funding after the initial implementations.

Teacher Educator A felt the policymakers did not have an understanding of the time and effort involved when working with students who were taking the edTPA. She stated,

Whoever created this test and made it mandatory, I don't think they thought about the individual professors who have to really roll this out, and who have to support the students. This is not the type of test where the students can just do it by themselves with no support, with nothing, and be successful, and I'm talking the most incredible amazing student teacher. It's not based on your knowledge for example, right, it's based on
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instruction and sometimes you have some amazing students who just do not give quality classroom instruction, so that's my biggest, biggest challenge with edTPA.

On a similar note, Teacher Educator B commented on the lack of power teacher educators have when teacher candidates do not pass the edTPA.

You must allow professors who know these students to have an input in the decision-making. There should be a certain percentage where we can say, if they fail it by one point, ‘No, excuse me. These students should be in the classroom. We've seen them there. They are strong. They are smart, and they know what they are doing.’ That aspect has been taken away. We have no say at all other than they graduated. That's it.

As noted in the theoretical framework, Campbell’s Law states that "The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor" (Campbell, 1979, p. 49). The findings presented evidence of Campbell’s Law. As was reported earlier, Claudia purposefully chose to leave students with special needs out of her “class” for the edTPA, so she was not responsible for writing about how she met their needs. She also reflected on the situation saying,

I think a performance test is the way to go, but I came to realize that, like I was saying about the kids, you can sort of make up your population really and tweak it to whatever you think will get you a good score and that seems kind of pointless. It should be kind of a learning process when you are a student teacher and have different populations because you have to really make sure that those needs are met but then you can easily leave out those needs, so you don't have to worry about that part.
Carla admitted to adjusting her plans and commentary based on what the edTPA was asking rather than presenting a completely accurate depiction of her lessons.

If I'm honest with you, I had to tweak it to make sure. We were talking with (name) actually, and she was like, ‘Yeah, but it doesn't really align.’ And I'm like, ‘But I need to be certified. I need to make sure it works. So, I'll make it work.’

These participants felt comfortable enough to share this aspect of the experience. Other participants “caught themselves” as they felt they were revealing something that could be construed as cheating.

As previously mentioned, the edTPA experience has resulted in delaying submission for some teacher candidates or deciding not to go into public education or teaching at all for others. These findings are important when looking at the intended consequences of the implementation of a teacher performance assessment for certification, which will be discussed in the following chapters. One teacher candidate wrote,

It was extremely overwhelming to the point that I was dreading having to type it. I had all the data and all I had to do was to work on it but I had a hard time doing it. It was the hardest test I have taken in my life. The fact that my certification is at stake because of this test is very discouraging and stressful... I personally consider myself a workaholic; someone that loves what she does enough to not have a social life. This test made me have second thoughts about teaching.

Although he earned his certification, Adam decided not to become a public school teacher. He explained,

I thought a lot about it and it ultimately impacted my decision not to work in public schools or charter schools, at least not yet. That was kind of the straw that broke the
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camel’s back in making me think about working in other areas of education not as a public school teacher because part of the message of the edTPA was ‘This is how you will be assessed. From here on out, we will be doing this to you forever. This is part of teaching, so deal with it. Show some grit. Suck it up because this is what your experience is going to be like from here on out.’

This experience allowed him to empathize with his elementary school students who were also taking high-stakes assessments. He reflected,

The value I did extract from my edTPA experience was how it helped me to better empathize with young students who are forced to endure similar standardized high-stakes tests at every stage of their formal education. Completing the edTPA helped me to better understand the confusion, frustration, and anxiety that I observed children experiencing as a result of high-stake assessments. The edTPA also helped be to better understand how such tests narrow the breadth of learning and disempower learners by reducing the agency and capacity for self-determination.

He expanded on the greater political implications of his experience writing,

I have studied in depth the role of such assessments in the top-down accountability model of education management and, more broadly, their disruptive function in education reform and privatization. My personal philosophical and ethical views about the importance of learning and education in a democratic society have led me to reject these high-stakes assessments and the authoritarian neoliberal ideologies and business interests that support them. Furthermore, I recognized that the kind of profit-motivated managerial control through ‘evaluation’ that the edTPA represents would be a continuing feature of any career teaching in state-controlled education. Therefore, I decided that my time and
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energy should be directed in other areas of education that offer a greater degree of freedom for teachers and lea[r]ners.

Chapter Summary

Findings for this concurrent mixed methods study were presented as both statistical data from the survey and qualitative data from open-ended questions and interview prompts. The findings from teacher educators triangulated the data and added additional information about the edTPA implementation over time and allowed teacher educators to share their experiences and changes made to teacher education curriculums.

In order to answer the research question "How do teacher candidates and teacher educators experience the implementation of a nationally available standardized teacher performance assessment?" the chapter was organized into several sections based on the subsequent research questions. It started with the perceptions of the supports and challenges the teacher candidates faced, followed by the perceived effects of the edTPA on teacher candidates’ personal, professional, and academic experiences, and ended with effects of the implementation of a state-mandated pre-service teacher performance assessment for certification purposes on teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum. The final section reported findings on educational policy that relate to aspects of the theoretical framework of the study.
Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter will discuss the findings of this study in relation to the theoretical framework presented in chapter two, SCALE and AACTE’s goals, objectives, and benefits laid out in chapter one, and other consequences of the edTPA. The author does not use the words “unintended consequences” due to the neoliberal influence on the edTPA policy adoption. Although some of the consequences are not stated, they may be intentional on the part of those who wish to privatize education, end university-based teacher education programs, and profit from standardized testing. Additionally, this chapter will explore the various types of validity presented in the literature review with respect to the findings.

This study was conducted to collect data about teacher candidates in New York City taking the elementary education edTPA during the first three semesters of its implementation in New York State. The findings cannot be generalized. Differences with the literature may be a result of sample size, timing, context, or population for the study. This study is unique in its focus on those taking the elementary education edTPA, which has three additional rubrics, and on teacher candidates attending an urban school of education and student teaching in an urban elementary school. Most of the participants were also New York City residents, many of whom attended New York City public schools themselves. Urban teacher candidates and student teaching placements may have challenges that are not present in other settings (as will be explored below).

According to Bourdieu, social reproduction occurs when the dominant social group is able to accumulate cultural, social, symbolic, and economic capital more easily than others. Since "academic success mainly depends on inherited cultural capital,” this was a main focus of the study (Bourdieu, 2010). The supports and challenges that teacher candidates faced affected
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their experience. The supports that are available and their usefulness are forms of "edTPA capital." Teacher candidates accumulate this capital by taking advantage of these supports.

Challenges can prevent one teacher candidate from capital that is available to another. For example, time is capital. Those who have to take other classes, work, or have family obligations do not have as much time as those who do not. The following sections discuss the findings of the study in relation to the literature in terms of areas of capital that affect the student teaching experience.

Two important findings also frame the analysis in this chapter. 1) Participants were most frustrated when they perceived that either restrictions from the test itself and/or the curriculum they were required to use got in the way of demonstrating their best teaching, and 2) 60.6% of teacher candidates used support services “often” or “always,” yet 93.4% still found the edTPA to be overwhelming. The amount and quality of support services provided varied widely across the schools of education in the study. This chapter will explore these differences, the financial challenges to providing support, and the need for emotional/psychological support. Additionally, challenges of the test and implementation will be discussed.

This section will begin with the positive consequences of the edTPA. Then, differences in edTPA scores for various groups will be discussed. This will be followed by a discussion of the concerns about the test language. Afterward, challenges with technology will be explored as well as the consequences for those with additional demands on their time and for bilingual education teacher candidates. The subsequent sections will discuss the consequences to academics and teacher candidates’ emotional/psychological wellbeing. Next, the costs to schools of education and privileges based on student teaching placements will be considered. Then, the authenticity of the performance assessment and the costs to the student teaching
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experience will be examined. Additionally, consequences for teacher educators and the teacher education curriculum will be investigated. Finally, there will be an analysis of the success of the current supports for teacher candidates in this study.

**Positive Consequences**

Previous studies have found that some programs used the TPA as a tool for teacher development and a way to prepare teacher candidates for evaluation and reflection once in the workforce (Chung, 2008; Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2013; DeMink-Carthew, Hyler, & Valli, 2014; Huston, 2015; Langlie, 2015; Lunsford, 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013; I. S. Okhremtchouk, Newell, & Rosa, 2013). Possibly due to the high-stakes in New York State, only a few participants spoke of the positive consequences of their edTPA experience. Even those who did have positive comments shared them with a "disclaimer," about the confusing language, heavy workload, and associated stress. The benefit cited the most was the importance of error analysis and data-based planning. Teacher candidates also mentioned how the edTPA pushed them to reflect and critique their teaching. Teacher educators expressed related sentiments with some explaining that similar tasks were already part of their programs. Others felt that the edTPA pushed them to think further about their courses and make program improvements. Although often stated in the rhetoric of the edTPA, reflection and data-analysis are not specifically mentioned in goals, objectives, or benefits by SCALE or AACTE; however, being able to “interpret and use data” is one of the major descriptors of an “effective teacher” in A Nation Prepared.

**Differences in Scores for Groups Taking the edTPA**

The 2014 edTPA Administrative Report also found that bachelor’s /bachelor’s plus additional credits scored statistically significantly higher than candidates with a
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master’s/master’s plus additional credits (p < .05). In this study, however, there were no statistically significant findings based on age or school level (graduate vs. undergraduate). Originally, this discrepancy was surprising because it inferred that the undergraduates might fare better due to their four years of teacher education training versus the approximately 30 credits for a master’s degree; however, participants did share that there was a sense that those in graduate school had more maturity, discipline, and skills than their undergraduate counterparts which aided in their completion of the edTPA. The need for studies on barriers to submitting the edTPA will be addressed in the conclusion chapter.

The literature also showed an inconsistency in findings about differences in groups except that women consistently scored higher than men. (Pecheone & Chung, 2006) study of the first two years of the PACT pilot (n=628) found that primary English language speakers scored slightly higher on average that those whose primary language was not English. They found no significant difference in PACT scores by race. The 2014 edTPA Administrative Report showed that on portfolios for consequential use, there were small differences by racial/ethnic groups, English speakers, and those whose primary language is not English (but generalizations were cautioned based on the small sample size for these groups).

In this study, there were no statistically significant findings correlated with being a non-native English speaker (n=7), however, there were very few participants who were not native English speakers. Of that group, most grew up in a dual language household or had been speaking English for 15-20 years. This leaves the findings about the challenges for English language learners to be based on teacher educators' perceptions. Since the literacy demands of the edTPA are so high, one can infer that non-native English speakers would have even more difficulty with the edTPA than native English speakers. In this study, there were also no
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statistically significant findings correlated with race, financial aid status, parents' highest level of education, or being the first family member to graduate from college. These differences may have been a result of sample size, context, or population for the study. However, in this study of urban teacher candidates, teacher educators from public colleges were concerned about their students’ lack of capital. There were schools of education that instituted targeted supports based on their student populations as well as concerns about the inequity present when disadvantaged teacher candidates have to compete with their more privileged counterparts (which will be discussed below). This inequity placed an additional burden on the teacher educators at these colleges.

Students’ level of economic capital is an important concern because rising costs of teacher certification may further discourage potential teacher candidates from majoring in education as a result of the debt-to-compensation ratio for the profession (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014; National Research Council, 2001). Harriet R. Fayne, Dean of the School of Education at Lehman College, City University of New York, explained,

As is the case across CUNY, we are seeing a steep drop in the number of applicants for teacher education programs and a significant decrease in the number of those who complete their courses of study and actually get a teaching certificate within six months of graduation. What do I believe are the factors that have caused this precipitous “melt” in our pool of credentialed teachers? Time and money (and often, time is money). edTPA requirements take up too much 'space' during a one semester student teaching experience leaving little room for anything else. (Greenblatt, 2016, p. 4).

Concerns over the $300 fee for the edTPA was mentioned by many participants. Additionally, some teacher candidates had to reduce their hours of employment during student teaching to
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keep up with the workload of the portfolio, which resulted in an additional financial burden. There were also teacher candidates who did not have room on their credit card for the fee and those who needed the money to pay for essential living expenses. As one public college teacher educator explained, "For our students, that money is definitely an issue, and the costs of all of these tests is just becoming prohibitive." Although one teacher candidate was resigned to the fact that certification costs come with many professions, he was in a position of privilege compared to the undergraduate public school teacher candidates in the study. The rising costs and the language demands have the potential to disproportionally reduce the amount of teachers already underrepresented in the profession.

Concerns about the Test Language

The text complexity, the difficulty of the vocabulary, and amount of writing required of the edTPA was cited as a challenge even for highly prepared graduate students. Participants talked about the test being repetitive, which made it confusing and left teacher candidates questioning if they were answering the questions correctly. In fact, even after getting their passing scores, teacher candidates were still unsure of what the many vocabulary words on the test meant. This leaves one to wonder about the effectiveness of the assessment.

Teacher educators also said that the terms were unfamiliar and admitted to being unsure of some of their meanings despite being an expert in the field. This brings up major concerns. First, teacher educators cannot confidently support their students. Second, the test being used as a tool to control the acceptable discourse. As will be discussed later, the vocabulary of the edTPA is being embedded throughout the teacher education curriculum as a support to students, but the consequence is that the language used in teacher education classrooms is being dictated by a test and is not consistent with what is being used at the university and K-12 levels (Lewis &
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Morse, 2013). However, one of SCALE and AACTE’s stated benefits of the edTPA is that it “gives states, school districts, and teacher preparation programs a common framework and language for defining and measuring performance of teacher candidates” (AACTE, n.d.-a). This statement shows the intention of the test to control the discourse in not just higher education but in K-12 schools.

One teacher educator in the study said she refrained from giving her teacher candidates the Rubric Progressions chart because she felt the amount of documents was already so overwhelming. Although this is her professional judgment, it is a concern that these teacher candidates are not exposed to the Rubric Progressions chart because it is very similar to the document the scorers use called “The Thinking Behind the Rubrics.” The Rubric Progressions shows which prompts are matched to what rubrics and subtleties that distinguish each level. Knowing which prompts are used as evidence for each rubric is essential because scorers are restricted by these rules. In other words, evidence cannot be used from a different prompt even if it fulfills the demands of the rubric. This is also why the teacher candidates felt the test was repetitive and tedious. As will be discussed, this feature of the edTPA caused some participants to be confused, lose confidence, or feel anxious.

**Challenges with Technology**

As reported in the literature, there are challenges to video recording including capturing audio and technical mishaps with the camera (Au, 2013; Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015; McGrath, 2014). In this study, teacher candidates reported similar issues plus problems with their computers as well. Challenges with technology were another source of frustration for teacher candidates. A few of these situations were preventable while others were just cases of “bad luck.” Some circumstances may have been avoided if teacher candidates had the economic
capital to purchase the more up-to-date equipment. Regardless of the cause, technical issues were very stressful especially when they resulted in unusable footage.

Even though teacher candidates only chose 20 minutes of material from 3-5 days of video, losing a day of footage can be very anxiety provoking, especially when it happens early in the process. The teacher candidates are distracted because they feared that something might be going wrong with the video recording. As one teacher candidate explained, the video aspect was the most stressful because if there is a problem with it, the recording can become unusable. This is why comfortability with and confidence in the technology can allow teacher candidates to focus on the important aspects of the edTPA (Burns, Henry, & Lindauer, 2015).

Teacher educators shared small incidents about technology issues but felt these challenges were easily solved. In the interviews, they mostly shared about the supports their schools provided. With instructional technology offices at many colleges, teacher candidates are likely to have reported their challenges to these staff members. The technology experts then mitigated the challenges encountered. Creating an edTPA portfolio requires knowledge of certain technology skills that will be discussed later in the chapter.

Consequences for Those with Additional Demands on their Time

In this study, those who took additional classes, worked, or had family obligations experienced more demands on their time. The additional time required for the edTPA resulted in some teacher candidates reducing their work hours or having family members pick up some childcare responsibilities. While teacher educators encouraged teacher candidates not to take other classes during student teaching, this meant either taking the maximum allowed course load in the semesters leading up to the edTPA or delaying graduation. Although teacher candidates
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could take classes in the summer or winter term, undergraduates had to pay additional tuition, which their financial aid did not cover, and there were limited course offerings.

Furthermore, those with obligations during student teaching may delay submitting their edTPA. As Teacher Educator D shared, teacher candidates may need to go back to work after graduation, which will delay submitting even further. The need for future research on submission rates and the relation of access to capital will be explored in the conclusion chapter.

Consequences for Bilingual Education Teacher Candidates

In "What About Bilingualism? A Critical Reflection on the edTPA With Teachers of Emergent Bilinguals," (Kleyn, López, & Makar, 2015) explain "the requirements for translations of any materials or use of a different language in the videos (except for Spanish in the elementary edTPA) placed a time-consuming and arduous requirement on the student teachers, which most went to great lengths to avoid." Additionally, it "created a de facto English only policy for the edTPA that was in contradiction to the policies of New York state" (p. 100). The same results and concerns are present in this study. One teacher candidate shared about the effort it took to translate her video and worksheets while the other teacher candidates chose to do an "English-only" edTPA to avoid those challenges and potential biases from scorers.

This situation raises major concerns about bilingual education. With the edTPA originating from the PACT, it is not surprising to see this bias when one considers California's educational policies towards bilingualism\textsuperscript{10}. The fact that other certification areas have their own edTPA shows at least the acknowledgement of and at best a respect for those content areas. Additionally, bilingual education teacher candidates are purposefully leaving out the bilingual

\textsuperscript{10} Proposition 227 added an “English-only” policy to California’s educational law stating that all children are required to be taught in English. Non-native speakers receive a temporary transition time in sheltered English immersion for the maximum of one year.
aspect of their instruction. This sends a message that the teacher candidates themselves feel they have to accept the bias against bilingual education in order to become certified. SCALE and AACTE’s objective to “Use of a subject-specific, [emphasis added] performance-based assessment system aligned to general and discipline-specific teaching standards designed and developed by educators for educators” (AACTE, n.d.-b) is not being upheld for bilingual educators.

Consequences to Academics

The literature review showed that the amount of work and expectations for the TPA in the context and final weeks of student teaching is unrealistic, unfair, and competes with other degree requirements (Carroll, 2013; DeMink-Carthew et al., 2014). For those enrolled in other classes during their student teaching semester, the edTPA takes time and focus away from teacher candidates’ academic coursework (Berlak, 2011; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012; Singer, 2014). This study also found that the demands of the edTPA caused some teacher candidates to not complete all the course readings and or put their full effort into assignments for their classes. With time at a premium, teacher candidates felt they had to prioritize their certification over their coursework. This reality could be considered a policy paradox of the edTPA or an unspoken intension to change the discourse of teacher education.

Emotional/psychological Consequences

Similar to this study, the literature found the high-stakes of the TPA caused teacher candidates to feel overwhelmed (Burns et al., 2015; Lindauer, Burns, & Henry, 2013; K. Meuwissen, Choppin, Shang-Bulter, & Cloonan, 2015; Proulx, 2014). The Burns et al. (2015) study found 87% of teacher candidates agreed or strongly agreed that the edTPA was overwhelming, and 65% of cooperating teachers reported that their student teachers seemed
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overwhelmed by the edTPA work. Similarly, in this study, 93.4% of the teacher candidates strongly agreed/agreed that the edTPA was overwhelming. As previously mentioned, despite 60.6% of teacher candidates using support services “often” or “always,” 93.4% still found the edTPA to be overwhelming. There were several reasons why teacher candidates were personally affected by the edTPA:

- the high-stakes,
- combatting the discourse of lack of teacher quality,
- the challenges faced,
- confusion about the exam, and
- the lack of perceived support.

Another one of SCALE and AACTE’s stated objectives is that the edTPA will “Help candidates develop the confidence and skills they need to be successful in urban, suburban, and rural schools.” Teacher Educator C felt that the performance assessment did result in her students feeling more confident. Because the portfolio was “such a huge task” they had a feeling of accomplishment of professional readiness. On the other hand, Teacher Educator D found that her teacher candidates doubted themselves and needed the emotional support to believe that they could successfully complete the portfolio. Teacher candidates shared that they questioned their abilities throughout the edTPA process. The confusing language and prompts led teacher candidates to wonder if they would earn acceptable rubric scores. Adam, who earned a mastery level score, felt the edTPA made him feel less confident and capable and decreased his motivation. Christy said she would stare at the screen and second guess if she really wanted to be a teacher.
Feeling overwhelmed led to sleep deprivation, strain on personal relationships, health complications, and high levels of stress associated with the demands of the test (Berlak, 2011; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012). In this study, teacher candidates reported similar affects such as crying, feeling depressed, and physical reactions to stress such as losing weight, nosebleeds, and eye twitching. Teacher candidates who were also parents shared the guilt they felt when taking time for the edTPA. Other teacher candidates felt isolated because of all the time they spent in front of their computer working on the portfolio. These consequences show that the “stress” of the edTPA was at an unacceptable level. Considering there were 22 interviews conducted, it is troubling how many participants used negatively toned emotional words such as: stressful, overwhelming, frustrating, tedious, pressure, and anxious.

Besides the need for targeted emotional/psychological support, some of the candidates perceived there to be a lack of test support. Teacher candidates found it stressful when they felt the faculty gave conflicting information, they were not knowledgeable about the edTPA, or they were misinformed about the acceptable guidelines for candidate support from Pearson. This shows the need for more faculty training about the test. Additionally, the edTPA is revised every year, so it is important faculty are not only aware of these updates but understand the subtleties of these changes. Furthermore, assignments that were created to parallel the edTPA may need to be revised to reflect changes in content and language. This has the potential to complicate key assessments for accreditation.

Teacher candidates found that "Just talking about it is stressful" but also commented how they felt a sense of closure after sharing about their experiences with the researcher. For some, the psychological effects of the edTPA started before the student teaching experience. Teacher
candidates were stressed because they felt\textsuperscript{11} their certification was at stake. Even though only 18\% of participants felt the edTPA was a fair assessment of their teaching, they still wanted to earn a high score. This may be because many of the teacher candidates in this study considered themselves to be “overachievers” and wanted to attain the best scores possible. Participants felt that if they were going to expend so much time and effort on the test, they wanted to ensure that they passed. Much of their stress came from feeling confused about the language and repetitive nature of the exam and feeling that the scorers might not understand them or the context in which they taught. Adding to this anxiety was the fact that scorers are only allowed to use evidence from specific questions for each separate rubric. Issues concerning the scorers will be explored in the following chapter.

Costs to Schools of Education

Snyder (2009) explained, “If the performance assessment process is expected to improve candidates' development in the learning from teaching process, then the time, expense, and teacher educator expertise required cannot be ignored” (p. 10). Although New York State provided initial funding, teacher educators in this study expressed concerns about maintaining equipment, workshops, and edTPA Coordinators now that the funding has expired. Either supports have been discontinued or teacher educators are not being compensated for the work they are doing. There was an assumption by the State that initial investment would yield long term changes. This is true for money that was used to realign program curriculum, train teacher educators about the specifics of the test, or create online modules, however, continued funding is

\textsuperscript{11}If they did not pass, these teacher candidates knew they could use the “safety net.” Except for one participant, the teacher candidates did not think about the safety net as way to reduce the stakes of the edTPA.
needed for in-person workshops, video support services, ePortfolios, training new faculty, and writing support.

It is important to note how the lack of economic equity across schools of education can affect the support teacher candidates receive or the burden teacher educators experience. While some colleges can afford to dedicate finances for edTPA-specific support staff, other colleges either have one coordinator to support a multitude of edTPA subject area portfolios or have passed the additional workload onto full-time faculty (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009). Schools of education with available revenue are able to allocate capital for these costs. Other schools are relying on faculty volunteers. Although it was not in the findings of this study, research shows that in some places the costs are being passed on to the students (Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015; Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009).

Inadequate and unsustainable funding strategies for TPA implementation may reduce program enrollment and hinder quality (Guaglianone et al., 2009). Additionally, “low-performing” schools may lose accreditation, state funding, and federal student financial aid leading schools to be closed (Kumashiro, 2015). These consequences feed into the neoliberal “issue of teacher quality” when in reality a lack of financial investment is causing some of the problem. As explained in the theoretical framework, test scores are used to create a “free-market” economy of schooling (Apple, 2001, 2010; Lipman, 2011).

**Privileges Based on Student Teaching Placements**

As a group, teacher candidates in urban placements have challenges that other teacher candidates may not have. As noted in research on the PACT, those student teaching in urban settings were more likely to report restrictions due to mandated curriculum (Pecheone & Chung, 2006). Additionally, “instructional contexts in urban areas are often more challenging and
generally require greater command of teaching skills to meet students' diverse needs” (p. 29). This inequity may dissuade teacher candidates from wanting to student teach in urban settings (Dover & Schultz, 2016). Challenges common in urban settings will be highlighted below.

In this section, the variables at the student teaching placements that affected teacher candidates’ edTPA experience will be explored. These included: cooperating teachers, grade level placement, the student population, and curriculum used.

Cooperating teachers. Social capital during student teaching exists through relationships between the teacher candidates and cooperating teachers and other staff members. Some tensions occurred in these relationships when priorities differed. While teacher candidates were concerned about the high-stakes of the edTPA, classroom teachers were focused on the high-stakes of their teacher accountability system. Additionally, the expectations and assumptions of the edTPA do not exist in every classroom. Teacher candidates’ and teacher educators’ relationships with cooperating teachers were able to mitigate various tensions.

As was confirmed in this study, there can be differences in the classroom management style and culture expected on the edTPA and that of the cooperating teacher (K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015; Miller, Carroll, Jancic, & Markworth, 2015). (K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015) explain that “efforts to complete edTPA tasks according to the rubric criteria sometimes were constrained by resistance among stakeholders at their placement sites and challenges associated with shifting classroom practices to meet the demands of the assessment” (p. 16) leading to less authentic representations of their day-to-day teaching.

Those with flexible cooperating teachers had an advantage their peers did not. There were cooperating teachers who did not provide their teacher candidates many opportunities to teach. This is a major concern for the student teaching experience in general but especially
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problematic when a teacher candidate’s certification performance assessment occurs during his/her first attempt at teaching a series of consecutive lessons. As Katie explained,

Some of us had cooperating teachers who were very understanding about it and others of us had cooperating teachers who just didn't care at all. And for us to be able to even teach three lessons in a row was a huge thing to ask of them but... we certainly did not get to choose what those three lessons were about, and you get graded on the arch of these three lessons and putting all of this stuff, all of these requirements, into these lessons.

Some of us are really required to teach very specific lessons in a very specific way. Katie’s comment was especially worrisome because not only was it difficult for her to get opportunities to teach but to combat her cooperating teacher’s inflexibility, Katie had to create fictitious lesson plans in order to meet the requirements of the tasks. More about the consequences of high-stakes testing will be discussed in the section on authenticity.

Teacher candidates received an important privilege when faculty had strong relationships with cooperating teachers, such as at professional development schools (PDS). At the PDS Teacher Educator C collaborated with, she spoke with the whole faculty when the edTPA was implemented and met with cooperating teachers each semester to set a schedule and explain the tasks. She noted the privilege her teacher candidates receive who are placed at her PDS. She explained, “I don't have issues in the PDSs, but some of our teachers that don't have that support and are not a part of the PDSs, there is almost always some kind of issue.” This shows the importance of the relationship between faculty and cooperating teachers. Utilizing the relationship between supervisors and cooperating teachers will be explored further below.

SCALE and AACTE state that the edTPA is educative in that “Collaborating teachers and schools use edTPA to reflect on their own teaching practices” (AACTE, n.d.-b). There was
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no evidence of this in the findings for this study. Cooperating teachers found the edTPA to use language that was inconsistent with their education and work experience.

**Grade level.** Testing grades typically are a challenge for those student teaching in the spring because there is less time to teach and much test preparation leading up to the State exams. The timing of the edTPA complicates this further. In this study, teacher candidates found that student teaching in a testing grade impinged on their development. Additionally, the timing of the State tests coincided with when teacher candidates finally had the skills and knowledge about the edTPA to conduct their learning segment. Teacher candidates were left to conduct their lessons during test preparation or right after students had completed two weeks of exams. In the former situation, several challenges resulted. Teacher candidates:

- were limited on the amount of instruction they were entrusted with due to the high stakes of the State exams,
- found it difficult to create a “test-prep” learning segment, and
- had difficulty with student focus and engagement because they were “stressed out” about the tests.

In the latter situation, teacher candidates had more freedom, but, as one teacher candidate explained, the students were so relieved the State testing was over that focus and engagement was still an issue, just for a different reason. Additionally, depending on the timing of the State exams, teacher candidates may only be left with two weeks to complete their edTPA. This not only limits the teacher candidate in choosing a unit of literacy that is conducive to the edTPA but also does not leave much time if something goes wrong, and the teacher candidate needs to do another learning segment. Furthermore, this small window creates extra stress to an already overwhelming experience.
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**Student population.** Findings in this study about the influence of the student population were inconsistent with the literature. Pecheone & Chung (2006) found no significant difference in PACT scores by race, percentages of English language learners in the classroom, or classroom socioeconomic status. However, in this study, there was a negative correlation between school free-lunch percentage and edTPA scores. As is noted by (Stillman, Anderson, Fink, & Kurumada, 2011), schools in low-income communities often have students who are not scoring well on standardized tests and are more likely to have scripted curricula. Participants in this study also felt that these settings posed additional challenges to their edTPA experience.

One of the stated objectives of the edTPA is “Measure candidates’ ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners, including English language learners and special education students.” It is important that all teachers, not just specialists, are providing access to the curriculum to all students. This objective could push teacher education programs to infuse strategies or courses for differentiating instruction. However, because the edTPA is for initial certification, the coursework teacher candidates take focuses on a particular content area. This “add-on” teacher education could give teacher candidates false confidence that what they have learned is sufficient enough to meet the needs of these groups.

Furthermore, not all placements have diverse learners, so some teacher candidates show their proficiency working with these populations while others do not. This exposes an issue of capital on the student teaching placement level since some teacher candidates can skip this aspect of the assessment. Teacher candidates in this study reflected on how much they learned from working with these students but also admitted to excluding them from their "class" on the edTPA to simplify their portfolio commentary. Authenticity issues related to manipulating the student population for the assessment will be discussed below.
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Curriculum. During the pilot of the PACT, there was an association between constraints on teaching and lower scores (Pecheone & Chung, 2006). When teacher candidates were faced with scripted curriculums they negotiated with their cooperating teacher and/or principal to deviate from the mandated curriculum to showcase their best work (Countryman & Stone, 2015; Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015). In this study, 49.2% of schools used scripted curriculums with 41.6% following them strictly or with only minor adjustments. It was noted that charter schools and low-performing schools posed particular challenges because they strictly followed a scripted curriculum. Curriculum privileges also surfaced in a school for the gifted and talented. Because the curriculum used project-based learning, Kelly found the type of lessons the edTPA was looking for to be counter-cultural to her placement. The challenge of meeting the specific demands of the edTPA will be discussed further below.

Trying to meet the requirements of the exam. The requirements of the edTPA places limits on what types of lessons would be acceptable to submit. For example, the requirement to show modeling limits the ability to conduct a discovery-based learning segment. Additionally, the lesson must have an essential literacy strategy which means that foundational skills lessons on phonics, grammar, or vocabulary development are unacceptable. Furthermore, there are so many required components in the learning segment that teacher candidates are very restricted. As Lisa explained, “I feel like they really want specific types of lessons. I know they don’t say that, but I feel like they do.” Katie explained her challenges with the “strict rules” governing academic language and syntax. She also felt that due to the “specific things” she had to include in her learning segment, she was limited in what lessons she could teach. It wasn’t just the requirements but also the stress of using the “correct” terms or putting information under the correct prompt in order to get credit for their answers. For example, Kelly said that she was
“worrying about using specific wording…I don't want to describe syntax when I mean to describe discourse.” Furthermore, teacher candidates commented that the restriction of 20 minutes of video across 3-5 lessons was a constraint that made it difficult to demonstrate mastery in different areas. This resulted in Christy spending many hours reviewing her video because she needed to show all the elements in a short time frame.

**Authenticity of the Exam**

SCALE and AACTE claim that one of the benefits of the edTPA to teacher education programs is that it provides “Actionable evidence of candidates' performance over time to address the real-world needs and challenges that teachers face every day” (AACTE, n.d.-b). There are two questionable aspects of this statement. Although the edTPA asks teacher candidates to give evidence of their teaching over a short period of time, clinical faculty observe teacher candidates throughout a semester (or more). Throughout this time frame, formative assessments are used to create long term growth plans. These clinical faculty members know the cooperating teachers, principals, students, and neighborhoods which enable them to work with their teacher candidates on context-appropriate skills and to target the needs of their classrooms. Additionally, the high-stakes and requirements of the edTPA may lead to portfolios that do not represent teacher candidates’ daily practice and, in so, threaten the face validity of the test (Lit & Lotan, 2013; Sato, 2014). As one teacher candidate in this study explained, “ultimately you try to just tailor it to the rubrics…and just check your boxes.” Furthermore, 45.9% of teacher candidates did not feel the edTPA was a fair assessment of their teaching skills. Since most participants in the study scored well on the edTPA, one can infer that in assessing “fairness,” teacher candidates were not referring to their scores being accurate according to the rubrics but rather that the edTPA did not give a fair representation of their teaching ability.
Although SCALE claims the test allows for the completion of an authentic portfolio, these actions are not always realistic from the perspective of teacher educators and teacher candidates. For example, although the edTPA does not require a specific lesson plan template, many participants in this study found this statement to be unreasonable based on the requirements of the test. Many schools of education created a mandatory template built to meet the needs of the edTPA rubrics.

As mentioned above, threats to authenticity included differences between the curricular mandates or pedagogical structures and the requirements of the edTPA (Sato, 2014). One participant, Michelle shared that although the scripted materials may have merit, they don’t focus on what is needed for the edTPA, so she altered her lessons to fit the test requirements. For Kelly, the student-directed pedagogy used at her placement did not meet the requirements of the edTPA either. Additionally, Teacher Educator E explained how flexible grouping based on formative assessment was a challenge when having to teach the same three focus students across the learning segment. When each teacher in the classroom is assigned a group, the teacher candidate may not have the same students daily.

The “class” size requirement for the edTPA is meant as a tool for flexibility, due to problems with obtaining video consent; however, this allows teacher candidates to avoid students with behavioral issues or those with the greatest learning challenges (Berlak, 2011). In this study, Claudia said,

I quickly realized that I didn't need to tell edTPA about my struggling learners. I just decided to have a very uniform set of kids that conveniently didn't have IEPs... because you quickly realize that 'Why would I?' Because if I wasn't meeting their needs...I could make sure that I didn't have to face that issue...That didn't make any sense because I...
learned so much from having to figure out the different kids and everything, but no one wants to run that risk with edTPA because there are so many moving parts, and you don't know which bit you should be trying to satisfy.

This is a major concern since one of the goals of the edTPA is to “Measure candidates’ ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners, including English language learners and special education students” (AACTE, n.d.-a). In addition, one of the stated benefits to teacher preparation programs is for the edTPA to be a “Measurement of candidates' abilities to plan instruction to meet learning standards and to differentiate instruction for diverse learners” (AACTE, n.d.-b).

In conjunction with making modifications to the curriculum and class composition to ease the requirements of the test, the high-stakes resulted in consequences associated with Campbell’s Law (Berlak, 2012; Conley & Garner, 2015; Denton, 2013; McGrath, 2014; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012; Sato, 2014). Denton’s (2013) study showed that “the high-stakes features of the edTPA may encourage the use of strategies misaligned with the goal of improving teacher effectiveness because the focus is on earning points” (p. 19). In this study, there were participants who admitted to adjusting their plans and commentary based on what edTPA was asking rather than presenting a completely accurate depiction of their lessons. These participants felt comfortable enough to share this aspect of the experience; however, there were others who “caught themselves” if they felt they were revealing something that could be interpreted as cheating. In addition to posing questions relative to the authenticity of these portfolios, there are also concerns about the moral/ethical tensions teacher candidates felt when creating a high-stakes portfolio for an anonymous scorer.
The high-stakes put pressure on teacher candidates to represent their teaching as “orderly and convergent” which “discouraged some candidates from including practical challenges in their portfolios and made them anxious that isolated incidents could derail their edTPA portfolios” (K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). For example, Michelle asked her cooperating teacher to turn off the camera during one of her edTPA lessons due to the confusion that occurred when there was an unexpected scheduling change in her students’ pull-out support services. One of the teacher educators shared how a parent came storming into a classroom cursing and throwing things disrupting an entire lesson. The ability to adjust to unplanned circumstances is an important area for evaluating perspective teachers as is evident with this performance indicator being on The Hunter College Student Teaching/Practicum Rubric, which aligned with the Association of Childhood International (ACEI) Standard 5.1 professional growth, reflection, and evaluation.

The video component also influenced the authenticity of the edTPA. For Michelle, the ability to select only 20 minutes of her learning segment allowed her to avoid being penalized for a genuine difficulty she had; however, this time limitation also allows teacher candidates to hide evidence of badly executed instruction or poor interaction with their students (Clark-Gareca, 2015; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012). Teacher candidates can submit as little as three minutes of video to show evidence of a positive learning environment, how they engaged students in the literacy skill, and teacher modeling. This means that the 3-20 minutes presented in the portfolio may be the only time the teacher candidate was able to satisfactorily execute these skills in the 3-5 days. This small amount of evidence can result in an inauthentic representation of teacher candidates’ proficiency on a consistent basis. Additionally, teacher candidates and their
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students have to be comfortable in front of the camera and act naturally. This was a challenge for several participants in the study.

When the lessons on the edTPA are so different from the day-to-day teaching, there are concerns as well as potential benefits. When teacher candidates are putting together a portfolio that does not represent their typical teaching, they are just preparing a one-time portfolio for an exam. The positive result of this situation is that it shows what teacher candidates are capable of in terms of some important aspects of effective teaching, whether they teach this way every day or not. On the other hand, the reality remains that if teacher candidates are only teaching a specific way because they are required to on a test, they will just go back to previous methods once the learning segment has been executed. In other words, it shows the potential but not the future habits of teacher candidates. Much of these future habits of practice will depend on the context in which the teacher candidate will work.

Costs to the Student Teaching Experience

Throughout the literature, teacher candidates felt the TPA detracted from their student teaching experience (Burns et al., 2015; I. Okhremtchouk et al., 2009; United University Professions, n.d.) and, as a result, they were less prepared to teach (McConville, 2014, p. 34). In (Burns et al., 2015) study, 39% of cooperating teachers and 80% of teacher candidates felt edTPA work interfered with student teaching responsibilities. The current study found 73.8% of teacher candidates strongly agreed/agreed that the edTPA interfered with their student teaching experience.

Several teacher candidates commented on the impact of the edTPA on their student teaching experience. Katie didn’t jump in and do more instruction when she could have because she was frantically trying to complete her portfolio. Another teacher candidate wrote how she
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turned down opportunities to teach because she was preoccupied with the edTPA. Michelle gave responsibilities back to her cooperating teacher during what was supposed to be her full days of student teaching because she couldn’t keep up with the workload of planning for so many lessons while completing her edTPA, admitting that her priority was the edTPA rather than her students. Claudia was concerned that the edTPA would take her focus away from her students, so she decided to wait until after the semester to type up her edTPA. This is the major policy paradox of the edTPA. In the hope to assess the readiness and preparation of teacher candidates through a performance assessment, the edTPA may undermine clinical practice and take over the student teaching experience.

Consequences for Teacher Educators

There were three consequences for teacher educators shared that warrant discussion: faculty workload and compensation, the power to decide who becomes a teacher, and academic freedom.

**Faculty workload and compensation.** As previously mentioned, the lack of continued State funding has resulted in some teacher educators absorbing an additional workload. Those from small schools of education felt heavy burdens. One teacher educator explained that with two faculty members and 20 teacher candidates, providing support for the assessment “became [her] whole life,” and often the security guards had to prompt her to leave the building at 10PM. Another teacher educator expanded the student teaching semester by starting during the winter session. Additionally, faculty continued to provide workshops even though they were no longer compensated or given release time. Teacher educators commented that these sacrifices were made voluntarily because they were in the best interests of the teacher candidates. Although this commitment to students is admirable and shows dedication to the future of the profession, there
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are negative consequences to these actions. This causes inequity in compensation among education faculty and, even further, between education faculty and those in other fields.¹²

**The power to decide who becomes a teacher.** Cochran-Smith et al. (2013) claims that the TPA causes a "loss of local control and voice about teacher endorsement" for certification (p.17). Similarly, Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan (2015) found the “the rise of teacher performance assessment undermines teacher preparation by marginalizing the local experts best situated to evaluate candidates’ performance” (para. 2). This plays into the professionalism debate described in Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework.

Teacher Educator B had similar concerns. She felt that if someone fails by a few points, professors, who have seen the teacher candidate teach throughout the semester, should have input in deciding if that person should be certified. Critics say that teacher education is not doing a good enough job of producing highly-qualified teachers and that the edTPA is an important gatekeeper that will hold schools of education accountable to these standards (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). As addressed in the theoretical framework, this is a policy paradox regarding professionalism in teacher education. Scorers, with questionable qualifications, are paid $75 to grade each portfolio, which, according to Pearson, takes two to three hours (Dover et al., 2015b; Wahl, 2016). “The low rate of compensation and high time commitment suggests that the available pool of scorers will include far more new, adjunct, retired, and underemployed educators than full-time teacher educators” (Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan, 2015a, p. 6). Additionally, scorers are asked little about their qualifications because the focus is to have a pool of highly trainable scorers to be “calibrated” to follow the rubrics (Dover et al., 2015a, 2015b;

¹² Salaries compared on https://www.higheredjobs.com/salary/salaryDisplay.cfm?SurveyID=24
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Gurl, 2014). Teacher educators, who have spent an entire semester with the teacher candidate, have no protocol for repealing a scorer’s grade.

**Academic freedom.** In the literature, policy analysts questioned the imposition of the edTPA on teacher educators’ autonomy (Berlak, 2011; Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010; Stillman, Ragusa, & Whittaker, 2015). One study revealed participants’ concerns that the edTPA “would interfere with their autonomy of instruction resulting in losing control of the current courses taught” (Gary, 2015, p.18). In this study, teacher educators were not concerned about the impingement of academic freedom. They expressed that they made changes voluntarily because it made the edTPA experience easier for both the teacher educator and the teacher candidates. They also connected the edTPA to work they had already been doing. When teacher educators in this study spoke about issues with academic freedom, they seemed to define this issue in terms of college mandates on faculty rather than the imposition of policy on curriculum, coursework, or academic discourse. The ways the edTPA is changing the discourse of teacher education will be further discussed in the following section.

**Consequences for the Teacher Education Curriculum**

Another one of SCALE and AACTE’s objectives for the edTPA is to “Provide meaningful and consistent data that can be used to improve and update teacher preparation programs and renew program curriculum” (AACTE, n.d.-a). Additionally, one of the stated benefits of the edTPA is that it affords “Opportunities for continuous program renewal based on meaningful performance data.” According to the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER), unlike educational reforms that have a beginning and an end, “renewal work assumes that we must question assumptions and continue to make changes as we see where improvements can be made and gaps in quality education exist” (NNER, 2016). However, for this inquiry-
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stance towards program improvement to be realized, there must be the right leadership and resources or else the edTPA will lead to “compliance over more adaptive responses” (Stillman et al., 2015, p. 173). As previously mentioned, a lack of funding is already causing issues for continued progress. Additionally, once schools of education make modifications aligned with the test, there is little reason to continue to make changes once students are scoring well. When the impetus for change is a high-stakes test, the potential for educational renewal is diminished.

According to the literature, many schools found it necessary to make major changes in their curriculum including: rearranging of course sequences, changing of program assessments and rubrics, conducting mock-edTPAs, giving technical training of digital literacy skills, and integrating test-specific language (Barron, 2015; Burns, Henry, & Lindauer, 2015; Cacicio & Le, 2014; Fuchs, Fahsl, & James, 2014; Gary, 2015; T. Lewis & Morse, 2013; Lys, L’Esperance, Dobson, & Bullock, 2014; Miller, Carroll, Jancic, & Markworth, 2015). Some schools in this study reprioritized aspects of the teaching cycle, particularly assessment. While some teacher educators were confident in the skill level they had been developing in their teacher candidates in terms of planning, teaching, assessing, and analyzing student work and whole class data, others felt that the edTPA pushed their programs to improve in these areas. In terms of assignments, two colleges replaced their research paper requirement with the edTPA (which they do not grade as an assignment). One teacher educator felt that since very few students continue on and conduct research, it was logical and time-effective to make this change. The edTPA also develops teacher candidates’ data analysis skills they will need on the job. However, replacing a master’s level research requirement with a standardized test has consequences. Teacher candidates are being denied the opportunity to choose personally meaningful research questions about education. Even if a very small percentage pursue a doctorate, they will now be less
qualified to do this kind of work. Classroom teachers are also important K-12 partners in research with university faculty. Furthermore, an inquiry-stance on education is important for the growth of individual teachers, schools, and the profession.

Many of the modifications made for the edTPA focused on integrating edTPA language and parallel tasks. These types of changes resulted in questions about what is left out when a certification test emerges as a priority. As was expressed at the 66th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Educators (AACTE), faculty was “concerned with ‘teaching to the test,’ curriculum resources, and the edTPA dominating all other courses resulting in content that may not be taught because of time limitations” (Gary, 2015, p. 19). There are concerns that teacher education curriculum no longer focuses on how historical, sociocultural, or political contexts are important for classroom instruction and community. The New York State edTPA Alternative Scoring Consortium investigated what was assessed by the SCALE/Pearson rubrics and what the research group of New York State teacher educators deemed important for those entering the profession. Their alternative rubric included categories such as advocacy, expectations, and displaying flexibility, which were not considered in the SCALE/Pearson rubric. As Cochran-Smith et al. (2016) explain,

the edTPA does not prioritize creating the conditions necessary for strong equity. These include preparing and expecting teachers to: recognize and build on the knowledge traditions of marginalized groups; understand and challenge inequities in the existing structures of schools and schooling; and work with others in larger efforts for social justice and social change (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016, p. 4).

There is much to lose if the edTPA narrows the curriculum. This was seen by one teacher educator in the study who noted that her program used to be more social justice oriented before
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the edTPA implementation. It is important to be aware that what is assessed determines what is valued and what will ultimately be the focus for schools of education (Greenblatt, 2015). Some faculty members felt the tension between the demands of the test and their own priorities resulted in compromise (Conley & Garner, 2015; Lachuk & Koellner, 2015; Lit & Lotan, 2013; K. W. Meuwissen & Choppin, 2015). In this study, the teacher educators were more concerned about supporting their teacher candidates and making sure they were certified rather than what was being omitted from the curriculum.

One of the stated benefits of the edTPA is the “Formative use of rubrics in course assignments, locally developed curriculum-embedded assessments, and clinical practice evaluations” (AACTE, n.d.-b). This statement assumes these rubrics are clear and evaluate what is important in teaching. As has been previously discussed, the edTPA documents have been reported to be confusing by both teacher candidates and teacher educators.

Supports at Work

According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2013), “the consequential validity of the assessment appeared to be strengthened as it was embedded in a supportive environment for learning to teach” (p. 193). Policymakers have suggested that, with time, schools of education will become familiar with the test, and they will know how to better support their students. This improvement will result in higher passing rates and a better edTPA experience. However, in this study, the semester of student teaching was not correlated with overall affects, edTPA score, or overall feeling of support. Considering this study included those from the first semester the edTPA was implemented in New York State, it was concerning that there were no statistically significant differences in these variables compared with the following semesters despite changes in the curriculum. Level of support may not have improved as a result of decreased funding.
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Additionally, there is an assumption that faculty familiarity improved, but, as will be discussed in the following sections, this was not the case as reported by participants in this study. Furthermore, overall affects may have been similar because as the semesters progressed the more teacher candidates knew about the test, the more anxiety it provoked. Additional supports that are needed will be explored in the Conclusion chapter.

**Human support.** I. S. Okhrentchouk et al.’s (2013) study identifying the supports teacher candidates faced when taking the PACT found that over 70% of participants relied on their university supervisors and their classmates for support, yet most participants felt their interactions with their cooperating teacher diminished during the PACT process. Lindauer et al.’s (2013) study about the edTPA revealed that teacher candidates were receiving little support from their cooperating teachers and supervisors; however, in Burns et. al’s study at Canisus College, 87% of teacher candidates felt supported by their college supervisors. The latter study reflects the efforts of a particular context where a strong effort was made to ensure that faculty were well informed about the edTPA. In this study, faculty development/training for the edTPA was not mentioned by any of the teacher educators.

The current research also showed percentages increased for “support variables” from strongly disagree/disagree to neutral to agree/strongly agree for school environment, cooperating teacher, and classmates. In other words, as one would predict, more people felt supported than the felt neutral, and more people felt neutral than unsupported. Furthermore, at least 60% of teacher candidates felt supported by their cooperating teachers or found the school environment to be conducive to taking the edTPA. As will be discussed, schools of education have become more selective in their placements of student teachers to find environments that are advantageous to taking the edTPA. Teacher educators were also discerning in their choices for cooperating
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teachers. Several teacher educators noted that being an urban school of education gave them the luxury of access to hundreds of schools across the five boroughs. If there was a school or cooperating teacher that was not willing to be flexible, schools of education felt they could find alternatives.

Throughout the literature, teacher candidates found classmates to be a source of both practical and emotional support (Barron, 2015; Burns et al., 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015). In this study, a resounding 75% of teacher candidates felt supported by classmates. It was also statistically significant that those who felt supported by their classmates had higher edTPA scores than those who felt neutral or did not feel supported by their classmates. From both the survey and interview findings, in some cases teacher candidates relied on one another because they had no place else to turn. Teacher candidates also found that helping others allowed them to understand their own confusions about the test.

Unfortunately, support from other sources did not show a similar pattern. Only half of participants found their schools of education to be supportive. Most concerning is that 41% of participants did not feel supported by their field supervisors. These are the faculty members that are most connected to the teacher candidates’ edTPA experience. The qualitative data revealed that many teacher candidates felt that their professors had little or no understanding of the edTPA. Surprisingly, these findings were consistent across the semesters included in the study. Additionally, there were inconsistencies in professors’ knowledge about the acceptable guidelines for supporting candidates as outlined by SCALE. Schools of education should focus their efforts on giving staff development to student teaching seminar and field supervision faculty. Meeting this goal may be problematic, however, since many schools of education use adjunct faculty for clinical work.
Alumni support. In previous studies, alumni were seen as an important resource for edTPA support. Having completed the portfolio in context, they provided insight that was vital. Faculty utilized high-scoring models as exemplars as well as portfolios with a range of scores for analysis. In some cases, alumni were hired to work with current students to give advice and feedback on portfolios (Burns et al., 2015; Greenblatt, 2016; Miller et al., 2015).

Teacher candidates in this study also found it very valuable to have alumni support. This may have been because they perceived that their professors weren't very knowledgeable about the edTPA. Alternatively, it may be because alumni had unique expertise. As a performance assessment, one has to experience the edTPA to truly be able to understand how to navigate the documents and the challenges it poses in real-life contexts. This familiarity with the exam was also considered when teacher candidates reflected on the workshops they attended. They found that there were certain questions that could only be answered by those whom had been through the exam themselves or worked with teacher candidates while they were taking it.

Cooperating teachers. The research shows that cooperating teachers have very little knowledge about the edTPA. The Meuwissen et al. (K. Meuwissen et al., 2015) study showed that only 18% of the New York State participants found their cooperating teachers knowledgeable about the edTPA. (Burns et al., 2015, p. 27) study revealed that although 74% of cooperating teachers felt that they should actively support their student teachers in the edTPA process, only 57% felt that they received enough information about the edTPA to do so13, and “[c]ooperating teachers remained a bit confused and overwhelmed even after they received training.” The findings from this study suggest that cooperating teachers wanted to support student teachers but either didn’t have the time to attend workshops at the university or

13 These percentages are based on those who answered “disagree” or “strongly disagree.”
underestimated the complexity of the test and then realized they needed more information once they started working with their student teachers.

**Support services and structures.** The support that teacher candidates received is “capital” in their edTPA experience and in earning a passing score. There was a noted inconsistency in the support that teacher candidates received. One elite private college in the study had an edTPA Coordinator just for their elementary education program and two semesters of student teaching. At this school, teacher candidates had to commit to attending workshops throughout each semester focusing on the Math Task in the fall and the ELA Tasks in the spring. As will be discussed in the following section, multiple semesters of student teaching provided a privilege that ameliorated the edTPA experience. Although most schools of education provided supports outside of courses for the edTPA, two schools did not. For one of these schools, student teaching seminar was devoted to the edTPA. Teacher candidates at the other college in the study felt that they had very little support for the edTPA throughout their program.

As previously mentioned, although the majority of teacher candidates in this study utilized the support services provided by their schools of education, over 90% found the edTPA to be overwhelming. Additionally, how often support services were utilized was not correlated with the overall effect variable, edTPA score, and overall feeling of support. These findings show a need for adding targeted supports to help teacher candidates cope with their stress, manage their time, and have a better understanding of test documents and demands.

**Multiple placements.** According to the literature, some teacher education programs noticed that having two semesters of student teaching instead of one allows for more experience to be ready and time to construct the edTPA portfolio (Barron, 2015). This aids in feeling less
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overwhelmed to allow student teachers to dedicate time to their teaching responsibilities (Miller et al., 2015).

In the (Burns et al., 2015) study, 83% percent of student teachers and cooperating teachers agreed that having pre-student teaching fieldwork in the same placement as student teaching was a valuable support for the edTPA. In this study, Lisa was at the same placement for both semesters of student teaching and found it very helpful. This arrangement allows teacher candidates the time they need to get to know their students and feel comfortable being video recorded before they can do their edTPA. Additionally, it takes time to get video permission. The negative aspect of this arrangement is that teacher candidates don’t get experience in various classrooms. As a compromise, some colleges have the teacher candidates at the same school but in different classrooms. This affords a quicker transition into the second semester.

Being that the elementary education edTPA has two tasks, those with multiple clinical experiences have the advantage of completing their Math Task in a different semester. Furthermore, some teacher candidates with multiple placements conducted their edTPA at the end of their fall semester. This not only allowed teacher candidates to work on their commentary over the winter session, but it also allowed them to conduct another learning segment in the spring if they were unsatisfied with their first attempt.

Structure/deadlines: A support that is also a challenge. As seen in the literature, some schools use deadlines to support teacher candidates with timely submission and/or considered extending the student teaching calendar; however, if the deadlines are too early, mastery cannot always be obtained by the time of submission (Hildebrandt & Swanson, 2014, p. 586). The same tension was found in this study. Some teacher candidates appreciated having deadlines to structure their completion of the edTPA while others found the deadlines hindered their ability to
complete their best work. Teacher educators had similar perceptions. Those teacher candidates who could not meet the deadlines were given individual accommodations. Due to the participants' anxiety and feeling overwhelmed, it seems like the deadlines might be helpful in completing the edTPA but not in ameliorating their experience. On the other hand, navigating the test without any structure may have caused a more stressful experience for some. This is why having teacher candidates create their own structure and deadlines may be a good strategy, as was being done by Teacher Educator D.

**Additional supports.** Based on the needs previously presented, schools of education provided various additional supports in anticipation of the needs of their students. These included technical supports, writing supports, workshops, curricular changes, parallel tasks, and embedding the test language throughout the program.

Throughout the literature, teacher candidates have voiced the importance of technological skills in creating their portfolios (Burns et al., 2015; Chung, 2008; Lanham, 2012; Lys, L’Esperance, Dobson, & Bullock, 2014; K. Meuwissen et al., 2015; Theoharides, 2014). In this study, technical support was prominent. Most participants utilized guest speakers, online supports, or an "IT Help Desk"/technology office.

There was only one study in the literature that reported a specific support for the writing demands of the edTPA (cIcu, 2013) whereas writing supports were a strong focus for the schools of education in this study. This could be because 60% of the schools in the study are public colleges serving many teacher candidates who were non-native English speakers. In this study, the volume of documents associated with the edTPA was perceived as overwhelming, so many teacher candidates found the workshops helpful in navigating the texts. Teacher candidates found that the most helpful support was in understanding the meaning of the language/terms,
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format/expectations, and directions/rubrics of the exam since this was the area teacher candidates felt was the most challenging. In some schools, supports in these areas were also a result of curriculum changes. The teacher educator from College 1 remarked “because it is such an overwhelming project” it would be unfair to “not infuse the language and the tasks and similar tasks that align with the edTPA.” Again, this exhibits the need to “teach to the test” to ensure teacher candidates pass their certification exam.

Chapter Summary

Using the findings from this study, the following aspects of SCALE and AACTE goals, objectives, and benefits were found to be questionable or problematic:

- a common framework and language for defining and measuring performance
- a subject-specific, performance-based assessment system aligned to general and discipline-specific teaching standards
- candidates develop the confidence and skills they need to be successful in urban, suburban, and rural schools
- collaborating teachers and schools use edTPA to reflect on their own teaching practices.
- candidates' performance over time to address the real-world needs and challenges that teachers face every day.
- data that can be used to improve and update teacher preparation programs and renew program curriculum.
- Opportunities for continuous program renewal based on meaningful performance data.

The additional consequences of the edTPA were:

- emotional/psychological
- appropriation of discourse and curriculum
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- detraction from academic and student teaching responsibilities
- inequity based on capital in terms of personal, school of education, and/or student teaching placement
- threats to the authenticity of the portfolio
- additional demands on teacher educators without compensation

Many participants were frustrated by restrictions from the test itself. This was compounded in settings where the required curriculum came in conflict with these limitations. Additionally, most teacher candidates were eager to do their best and utilized the support services made available, yet almost all the participants found the edTPA to be an overwhelming experience. It is important that schools of education and policymakers are aware of the differences between the stated outcomes and the consequences found in this study for elementary education teacher candidates in New York City.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter starts with conclusions about the edTPA experience and focuses on its impact for urban and diverse placements. The challenges that are more common in urban settings that can affect teacher candidates’ edTPA experience are explained below. The following two sections of recommendations propose policies assuming the continued implementation of edTPA rather than an appeal of the implementation or substituting a different performance assessment. This assumption is based on the continued renewal of the "safety-net" (described below), the adoption the edTPA by additional states, and CAEP and AACTE’s backing of the edTPA. First, policies for schools of education will be offered followed by State policy recommendations and considerations for SCALE. The final section will outline areas for future study.

Summary of Findings

As outlined in the discussion, evidence from this study does not support that SCALE and AACTE’s goals, objectives, and benefits of the edTPA are being met. In fact, in several instances, these statements are contradicted (as are stated in the Chapter Six Chapter Summary). It is a major concern that 73.8% of participants felt the edTPA interfered with their student teaching responsibilities. Additionally, with over 90% of participants finding the edTPA to be overwhelming and several participants reporting health issues related to the assessment, one has to wonder if the ends justify the means. Policymakers claim the edTPA will identify which teachers will raise student achievement. However, as previously explained, predicative validity for the edTPA has not been established (Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015). Additionally, most studies on predicative validity use standardized test scores, which are already known to be flawed.
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measures of teacher accountability (American Statistical Association, 2014). Furthermore, for some teacher education programs, what is being required on the edTPA is similar to what programs have been asking of their teacher candidates for a long time (Dover & Schultz, 2016). As Dover, Schultz, Smith, & Duggan (2015a) explain, “student teaching has historically been an intensive, educative, semester-long ‘performance assessment’” (p. 2).

**Impact on urban and diverse placements.** The challenges that are more common in urban settings that can impact teacher candidates’ edTPA experience (and potentially their scores) were described in Chapter Five. These challenges may dissuade teacher candidates from wanting to student-teach in culturally diverse, low-income, or underperforming schools (Dover & Schultz, 2016; Jordan & Hawley, 2016; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016). There are potential ramifications when a high-stakes certification exam is more difficult to enact for those student teaching in high-needs urban placements. Schools of education may avoid placing teacher candidates at these schools. Additionally, colleges that are committed to serving these communities might be penalized in two ways: 1) with a lower passing rate, and 2) with fewer applicants to their programs. Partnering with low-income, high-needs schools provides benefits to the community, by lowering the student-teacher ratio and, to the teacher candidates, by preparing them (and encouraging them) to work with a population that needs high-quality teachers. These consequences are counterproductive to Race to the Top’s goal of improving the lowest-performing schools.

**Recommendations**

The following sections provide policy recommendations for schools of education, the State, and SCALE.
School of education policies. According to the data and the literature, certain supports were helpful in mitigating the edTPA experience such as:

- Multiple semesters of student teaching,
- Structures but not firm deadlines, and
- Technology support (Barron, 2015; Burns, Henry, & Lindauer, 2015; Clark-Gareca, 2015; Miller, Carroll, Jancic, & Markworth, 2015).

Additionally, findings also revealed that those who felt supported by their classmates or cooperating teachers scored higher than others on the edTPA. The literature also showed that teacher candidates turned to their peers for support during the edTPA process (Barron, 2015; Burns et al., 2015; Margolis & Doring, 2013; Meuwissen, Choppin, Shang-Bulter, & Cloonan, 2015). Since peers and cooperating teachers are the people with the most contact and, potentially, the closest relationships with the teacher candidates, recommendations for utilizing these groups will be discussed. Furthermore, since teacher candidates felt overwhelmed despite taking advantage of supports, additional recommendations to schools of education and policymakers are provided.

Faulty training. There is a need for ongoing faculty training. The edTPA goes through revisions every year that result in changes to the requirements and language of the exam. For example, in the first year, teacher candidates submitted one to two clips that added up to no longer than 15 minutes of video. For the 2015 Handbook, teacher candidates had to submit two clips and use up to 20 minutes of video. Additionally, in the 2013 version of edTPA, teacher candidates had to explain the requisite skills used to support their essential literacy strategy. This term was changed to related skills in the newest edition of the Handbooks.
In this study, many teacher candidates reported misconceptions their professors had about the acceptable guidelines for support. This suggests the need for more faculty training. Simply sharing the updates as documents does not seem to be enough. Devoting some time at faculty meetings would push professors to prioritize reading about these changes and get clarifications. Teacher educators in this study talked about how it would be “unfair” not to infuse the “edTPA-friendly” vocabulary early in the teacher educator program. For this to be effective, teacher educators must utilize the current terms on the edTPA.

Some teacher candidates felt they had no one to turn to for help. Additionally, many teacher candidates felt they were getting conflicting information from faculty. This led to a sense of confusion and “not knowing who to trust.” The differences in advice may have been due to the changes in the Handbooks, but they also may have been due to a superficial understanding of the test or of support guidelines.

**Clinical supervisors and cooperating teachers.** Clinical supervisors are the faculty members who have the most contact with teacher candidates while they are working on their edTPA. This role entails that the clinical supervisors have expertise on the edTPA in order to support cooperating teachers and teacher candidates in this process. For this to occur, there needs to be consistency in the faculty that supervise student teachers.

When clinical supervisors consistently work in the same partner schools, they build strong relationships which helps to mitigate tensions between the requirements of the test and the curriculum and classroom structures. The findings from this study suggested that cooperating teachers wanted to support their student teachers. This showed the commitment of cooperating teachers as partners in the teacher education experience, and the need for collegiality in the edTPA process.
Emotional/psychological support. Although only one teacher educator mentioned the importance of providing emotional support, it is obvious from teacher candidates’ responses that emotional/psychological support is needed to both sustain confidence and to combat the effects of stress and anxiety. This reality leads to two questions: 1) Is it ethical to have a certification test that creates such emotional/psychological strain? and 2) What does having a test like this prove? Is the purpose of such a test to show the qualities of perseverance and grit? Michelle implied this idea when she said, “The thing is that it's not hard. It's just so time consuming, and it’s so much work for their own [test makers'/policymakers’] reasons. I was going to say for no reason.”

Teacher candidates can work as buddies or in teams to support each other with the technical aspects of the exam and help each other not feel so overwhelmed. However, it is important that there are structured opportunities for peer support with guidance from knowledgeable sources so that teacher candidates are not just feeling lost together. This can occur in class or during edTPA workshops. Although these sources may be faculty or alumni, recent graduates may be the best choice to ease anxiety because they have gone through the process themselves, are part of their peer group, and are a different voice than the professors they already have access to in classes. Alumni buddies are another good option for outside of class. Professors can assist with these connections.

Schools of education can also consider having “edTPA de-stress events” throughout the process, similar to what is done on many college campuses during finals weeks. These events include: yoga, aerobic exercise classes, mindfulness/meditation, massages, therapeutic games/activities, and animal therapy. Additionally, faculty advisors need to be aware of the
stress student teachers are feeling. They can reach out to their advisees and gauge how well they are coping and if extra support is needed.

**State policy and considerations for SCALE.** Linda Darling-Hammond herself admitted that "New York is a prototype of how not [original emphasis] to implement teacher performance assessment" (Nast, 2014). Furthermore, the edTPA Task Force, made up of teacher educators from across New York State, found the policy to be flawed and made recommendations that were largely ignored by government officials (edTPA Task Force, 2016). Based on the literature and this study, the author has outlined aspects of the current policy that require more careful consideration as well as recommendations below.

**Issues with the “safety net.”** After one year of field testing, the edTPA was implemented as a high-stakes assessment in New York State (United University Professions, 2014) with a “safety net” available for those who did not pass. This policy has been renewed for the past two years, with the current safety net set to expire in June 2017, yet one has to wonder if this policy is the best solution. The continued use of the safety net in New York State shows that there is a need for a more “gradual supported implementation” (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016, p. 15). Many schools of education communicated that there was not enough time to make decisions and implement changes to prepare teacher candidates appropriately (Wahl, 2016). Teacher educators remain concerned about the validity, content, and structure of the exam, and the State hoped that the safety net will appease these critics. However, the opposite has occurred (McGrath, 2015; United University Professions, 2015).

To use the safety net, teacher candidates have to “take and fail” the edTPA and then take and pass the Assessment of Teaching Skills-Written (ATS-W)\(^{14}\) (D’Agati, 2016). Despite

\(^{14}\) Unless the teacher candidate took the ATS-W before or on April 30, 2014.
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cconcerns about the edTPA, teacher candidates cannot “protest the edTPA” by handing in a blank portfolio because that submission will be marked as unscorable and will not be considered a “fail,” making them ineligible for the safety net.

Part of the rationale behind implementing a performance assessment was the critique of inability of pencil-and-paper tests to assess authentic teaching practices (Burns et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Pecheone & Chung, 2006; Ratner & Kolman, 2016; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012; Sato, 2014), so it is illogical for the ATS-W to be the safety net. For the other New York State exams, other safety nets included: a letter from the university showing the candidate had “demonstrated comparable skills” through coursework or having a lower “safety net cut score” (D’Agati, 2016, p. 4). Again, since the edTPA is a performance assessment, these latter options make more sense for this exam. Furthermore, taking the ATS-W requires teacher candidates to sit through an additional 4-hour exam and pay a $119 fee. Additionally, although there are a “limited number of vouchers” available for teacher candidates (NYSED, 2016), the State pays the fee to Pearson. Most importantly, the problem with the edTPA has not been the passing rate (which would lead to the use of the safety net) but rather the submission rate (Gurl et al., 2016; New York State United Teachers, Professional Staff Congress, & United University Professions, 2015), which results in less teachers getting certified.

**Funding needed.** Continued funding is needed for the sustained use of the edTPA. First of all, certain teacher educators were taking on additional uncompensated workloads. Clinical work in teacher education programs is already considered a “position of low status” (Slick, 1998, p. 821). Spending additional time running workshops and meeting with students about their portfolios makes this work even less attractive.
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Additionally, money is needed to maintain the video equipment (Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009) and pay the technology support staff. Additionally, most ePortfolio systems, such as Taskstream, are paid subscription services (Guaglianone et al., 2009). As previously mentioned, in some places, these costs are being passed on to the students (Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015; Guaglianone, Payne, Kinsey, & Chiero, 2009). This is a major concern considering the rising costs of college and getting certified. A concern that has the potential to further disproportionally reduce the amount of teachers already underrepresented in the profession (Barmore, 2016).

Considerations of differences on a standardized assessment. Understanding the context of a student teaching placement is important to reducing bias by knowing the constraints of the curriculum used, the flexibility of the cooperating teachers, the management style of the classroom, and understanding culturally relevant pedagogy. If the edTPA is going to be continued to be used, Pearson and policymakers should move to local scoring by highly-qualified scorers and double score the portfolios. These changes are costly, which poses a conflict between responsible and professional practices in the scoring of a certification exam and the profits of a private corporation.

During the field test of the edTPA in New York, scorers completed in-person local double scoring. This researcher of this study was a scorer for the math section of the elementary education portfolio. Meeting in person and discussing questions or doubts with a colleague not only combated scorer fatigue but created an environment of inquiry about mathematical conceptual understanding and how to engage our teacher candidates in this kind of thinking. Time seemed to go by quickly. The researcher also did the at-home scoring training for the
elementary literacy portfolio and found the opposite to be true. The task seemed tedious and boring and individual scoring felt isolating and confusing.

Additionally, Pearson should release justifications for scores, even if it is just for failing portfolios, to allow teacher candidates to know what they did incorrectly. Furthermore, more vouchers need to be made available to teacher candidates who are economically disadvantaged.

*Local scoring by highly-qualified scorers.* The national pool of scorers are “calibrated” to give the appropriate rubric score and trained to be objective; however, objectivity “fails to take into account either the situated nature of effective teaching or the locally specific complexities that influence teaching and learning, particularly in historically marginalized communities” (Dover & Schultz, 2016, p. 97). In Bastian, Henry, Pan, & Lys’s (2016) study, local scores were higher than national official scores, yet local scoring significantly predicted teacher outcomes. Furthermore, as was explained in Coloma’s (2015) study, teacher candidates

…preferred to be assessed locally by those who regularly observed their teaching and interactions with students and who conferred with their cooperating teachers and student teaching supervisors. This preference was consistent with their comments that edTPA was not an effective tool to assess their teaching quality and competence (p. 23).

Since only 18% of participants in this dissertation felt that the edTPA was a fair assessment of their teaching skills, the national pool of anonymous scorers might have played into this perception as well.

In addition to having local context, it is equally important that the scorers be highly qualified. Participants in this dissertation doubted the expertise of the scorers and felt they had to be repetitive and caused much anxiety. The rationale for this skepticism was explained throughout the literature (Clark-Gareca, 2015; Dover et al., 2015a; Dover, Schultz, Smith, &
Duggan, 2015b; Gurl et al., 2016; Kleyn, López, & Makar, 2015; Wahl, 2016). Teacher education faculty have found there to be scoring irregularities (Dover et al., 2015a; Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015). Additionally, “applicants do not have to provide evidence that they actually were good teachers, worked in inclusive and multicultural classrooms, or are familiar with, support, and use state learning standards of the states where student teachers are working” (Singer, 2014). Furthermore, no data has been released about the pool of scorers despite vocal concerns about scorer qualification from teacher educators throughout the country (Dover & Schultz, 2016; edTPA Task Force, 2016; Gurl et al., 2016; Singer, 2014). Additionally, from analysis of the field test reports, there was concern that there is a disproportionate ratio of portfolios to scorers (Parkes & Powell, 2015). Now that the pilot is over, there are continuing concerns about the shortage of scorers (Gary, 2015).

**Double scoring in partnerships.** In conjunction with local scoring, portfolios should be evaluated by teams of scorers. The original plan was to have at least two scorers evaluate each edTPA portfolio (Greenblatt & O’Hara, 2015; Jordan & Hawley, 2016) to maintain accuracy. Despite widespread recruitment, Pearson does not have the capacity to do this. Local scoring might entice more qualified people to participate. Although some people might appreciate the flexibility of scoring at home and completing a portfolio over a 24-hour period, others find working from home distracting or isolating or are opposed to the disjointed way scoring can occur.

There are many benefits to having scoring centers where people can confer with other professionals about the portfolios. For areas of the country where in-person scoring is

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15 According to an email sent to a perspective scorer, “The standard Scorer training required to become an edTPA Scorer is expected to take 19-23 hours to complete.”
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problematic, scorers can have “virtual partners” to work with electronically. Although double scoring would be beneficial even if the scorers are working individually, there are benefits that are lost as explained above. Even with "quality control" measures put in place by Pearson, such as random portfolios being "back read" by a supervisor (NYSED Office of Higher Education, 2014), it is not clear how often portfolios are reviewed by more than one person. This means that inaccurate or biased scorers may have given inappropriate scores for many candidates before this problem was uncovered. Although these scorers go through "recalibration training," the portfolios they scored are not re-scored. Teacher candidates are not made aware of the issue. This is especially unfair for those who got failing scores.

Justification of scores. If the edTPA is supposed to be truly educative, then teacher candidates should receive the justification for their scores. When working for Pearson, scorers have to clearly "tag" evidence from specific questions that have been assigned to certain rubrics. If Pearson considers this appropriate evidence that the scores are accurate, then this information should be released to the teacher candidates with their score report. This will give teacher candidates more insight as to whether their score represents a skill they need to improve upon, a test taking error, or an issue with the clarity of their writing. At the very least, those with failing portfolios should get this evidence to allow those teacher candidates the opportunity to know how to improve their work for resubmission.

Vouchers. For many students who are paying their way through school while working a part-time job or are who come from low-income households, the $300 fee can be highly prohibitive. Although the “edTPA Myths and Facts” document explains,

The $300 fee for edTPA covers all development costs and operational assessment services associated with the resources and support for implementation, delivery, scoring
and reporting of edTPA, as well as customer support service for candidates and faculty

(Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning and Equity, n.d.).

The bottom line is that Pearson is a for-profit company and the cost of the test could be decreased and/or more vouchers could be given to those in need. In 2013-2014, New York State only provided 600 edTPA vouchers (D’Agati, 2014). Since that time, no additional information about edTPA vouchers has been released by the State; however, vouchers have been reserved for those who have failed the edTPA and now need to pay for the ATS-W. Although Pearson makes vouchers available for purchase by institutions (Pearson Education Inc., 2016), this is only taking the burden off of the teacher candidate and putting it on schools of education. For those colleges serving lower income populations, not only would there be too many candidates needing this accommodation, but also these are often the most underfunded. On the Pearson "Fees and Payment Options" page it states, "Vouchers are available for purchase by institutions to be used as determined by the institution to provide full or partial credit toward edTPA registration fees for candidates at the institution" (Pearson Education Inc., 2016).

Changes to the portfolio. Based on this study and the literature, there are two recommendations about content of the portfolios. First, if other areas have content-specific portfolios, bilingual education should also have a portfolio that honors the specific pedagogy and content of that discipline. Second, as one of the teacher candidates in the study said, “It should be heavily streamlined and more easily modified for student teachers who have to keep to strict curriculum.” The terminology specific to the edTPA and repetitive prompts should be revised to avoid confusion and allow teacher candidates to showcase their teaching rather than test taking ability. Additionally, the amount of writing versus the amount of video should be reconsidered. Although “performance” in a classroom includes planning and data analysis, the act of teaching
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should be a greater focus of this type of assessment. Furthermore, the fragmented scoring protocol has teacher candidates more focused on the specificity of scoring procedures than on authentic reflecting and analysis of their teaching (Au, 2013; Coloma, 2015; Dover et al., 2015b; Jordan & Hawley, 2016).

**Power to decide who becomes a teacher.** As mentioned in the discussion, those who have spent a semester (or more) working with a teacher candidate in the field have no recourse if that person receives a failing score on the edTPA. It is very possible that due to the language and writing demands on the assessment, a teacher candidate could be an excellent pedagogue but not be a good test taker (Hogness, 2014; Sandholtz & Shea, 2012).

**Limits of the Research**

This research is limited due to several factors. Additional rounds of survey collection could be completed to increase the total number of participants. This would allow for more sophisticated statistical analysis. Further efforts could be made to recruit participants from other colleges in New York City that were not in the initial study. This study also did not include cooperating teachers who could have helped to triangulate several aspects of the data.

**Future Study**

There are many areas for further study related to this research. Participants mentioned various barriers to edTPA submission. Being that some of these variables are linked to the types of capital explained in the theoretical framework of this study, this researcher has already begun another study on this topic with a colleague.

Participants also mentioned other issues that are important areas for future study. There were concerns about the authenticity and validity of the edTPA. One study could include collecting data comparing how many students in the teacher candidates’ entire class were ELLs or had IEPs
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compared to how many were included in the learning segment. Another study could include follow-up reflections with novice teachers on the effectiveness of edTPA in preparing them for their first year as a teacher. Furthermore, questions arose throughout the literature and study about who is scoring the test and details about the scoring process.

This study specifically investigated those taking the elementary education portfolio. Further research could include different populations. This study could be expanded to include all the portfolios or to compare experiences of those taking the elementary education to those taking the other portfolios. Other research could look at differences among urban/suburban/rural teacher education in terms of the schools of education, teacher candidates, and/or student teaching placements. Even larger studies could include comparisons across states where the edTPA is high-stakes or between those states that use it as high-stakes and those who do not. Furthermore, as mentioned throughout this study, there were specific issues for those pursuing bilingual certification. There was only one study in the literature that focused on these teacher candidates.

Future study could also focus on schools of education faculty and staff. Expertise is needed to master the nuances of the edTPA. It could be important to investigate if there is any difference in the level of support student teachers felt from adjunct faculty versus full-time faculty in terms of the edTPA. Additionally, some of the literature has investigated the tensions felt by teacher educators or what is left out of the curriculum in favor of the edTPA. More research could be done in this area since the edTPA was newly implemented at the time and was only high-stakes in two states. Technology support staff could also be included in a study to share their experiences supporting teacher candidates.

Chapter Summary
Using a high-stakes assessment as an accountability tool may not actually improve teacher education or make graduates more prepared for the classroom (Angrist & Guryan, 2008; Ledwell & Oyler, 2016). The state and federal government and universities need to invest in public teacher education so that programs can:

- hire more full-time faculty,
- expand the amount of time in field for each teacher candidates,
- find high-quality K-12 partner schools (and professional development schools).

This chapter outlined conclusions about the edTPA experience. Based on these conclusions, areas for considerations and recommendations were made for policies for schools of education, New York State, and SCALE. Finally, areas for future study were outlined.
Appendix A: Research Design

QUAN
Data collection

QUAN
Analysis: descriptive and inferential statistics

QUAN + QUAL
Combined analysis of interviews and

QUAL
Data collection: interviews and a few open-ended survey

QUAL
Analysis: coding

Combined data
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Appendix B: Research Timeline

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<td>Field test and revisions (QUAN and QUAL)</td>
<td>Quantitative data collection (QUAN)</td>
<td>Interviews with teacher candidates (QUAL)</td>
<td>Preliminary data analysis (QUAN)</td>
<td>Additional round of survey data collection and data analysis (QUAN and QUAL)</td>
<td>Interpretation based on QUAN and QUAL results</td>
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<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>End of Spring 2015</td>
<td>Early Summer 2015</td>
<td>Late Summer to Early Fall 2015</td>
<td>Fall 2015 to Spring 2016</td>
<td>Summer 2016</td>
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**Phase 1**
- QUAN: Field test survey questions and revise them based on participant answers and feedback
- QUAL: Field test qualitative data collection procedures and revise based on feedback

**Phase 2**
- QUAN: Survey of elementary education teacher candidates in New York City in public and private schools of education
- QUAL: Conduct interviews with teacher educators

**Phase 3**
- QUAN: Interviews with teacher candidates
- QUAL: Conduct interviews with teacher educators

**Phase 4**
- QUAN: Preliminary data analysis using SPSS to conduct statistical tests to get preliminary data analysis
- QUAL: Start to transcribe data from interviews

**Phase 5**
- QUAN: Additional round of survey data collection and data analysis
- QUAL: Conduct additional interviews with teacher candidates and transcribe interviews and start coding

**Phase 6**
- Interpretation based on QUAN and QUAL results

**Timeline**
- Phase 1: Spring 2015
- Phase 2: End of Spring 2015
- Phase 3: Early Summer 2015
- Phase 4: Late Summer to Early Fall 2015
- Phase 5: Fall 2015 to Spring 2016
- Phase 6: Summer 2016
Appendix C: Survey of Teacher Candidates

This is to be taken at the end of the student teaching semester. Surveys will be online using Typeform.

Teacher candidate level:

1) Indicate your race/ethnicity. You have the ability to check more than one box or to self-identify using your own term. (definitions from http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/reic/definitions.asp):

- Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- White
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.
- Mixed
- self identify __________
- Choose not to answer

2) Indicate your age.

3) Indicate your gender

- male
- female
- transgender
- chose not to identify
- self identify __________

4) What college or university do/did you attend the semester you took your edTPA?

5) Are you/were you an

- undergraduate
- graduate
  - the semester you took your edTPA?

6) Do/did you have or did you qualify for any of the following? You can check multiple boxes.

- Federal Pell grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant
- Iraq or Afghanistan Service Grant
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- Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)
- NYS Educational Opportunity Program

7) If you receive(d) a Pell grant, did you receive a fee waiver for the edTPA?

8) Did you receive any other scholarship or other school funding?
   Please identify the amount received.

9) What is your student loan status for your degree that led to teacher certification?
   - not receiving
   - receiving
   Amount of loan

10) Immigration status
    (definitions from http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/reic/definitions.asp):
    - resident alien/undocumented citizen
    - citizen
    - non-resident alien
    - choose not to identify

11) Is English your native language?
    - yes
    - no

12) How many years have you been proficient in English (reading, writing, and speaking altogether)?

13) What was/is the primary language spoken in your household through your K-16+ academic career? (Feel free to explain.)

14) What are your parents'/guardian's educational levels?
   Please indicate the familial relationship you have to the person.
   Please include and indicate education outside of the U.S. as well as mixed education if degrees were earned in more than one country. Explanations of terms/situations is encouraged. (For example: My grandmother helped to raise me with my mother. My grandmother did not finish primary school. My mother has a Bachelor's degree. My father has an Associate's degree.)
15) Will you be the first in your family to graduate from college?
☐ no
☐ yes

16) Where did you go to high school? (name/# of school, district)

17) What year did you graduate high school?

18) Employment status during student teaching:
☐ unemployed
☐ part-time
☐ full-time

19) Enrollment status throughout the program:
☐ full-time
☐ part-time
☐ mixed

20) How many years did it take for you to complete your degree leading to teacher certification?

21) GPA in program leading to teacher certification:

The following questions were adapted from (Burns, Henry, & Lindauer, 2015) and (Meuwissen et al., 2015).

Please circle your response to each of the following statements on a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.
Feel free to add any comments you think will help.

22) edTPA work was overwhelming.

23) edTPA work interfered with my other student teaching responsibilities/experience.
24) I felt supported by my school of education in completing the edTPA.
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

25) I felt supported by my field supervisor in completing the edTPA.
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

26) I felt supported by my cooperating teacher in completing the edTPA.
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

27) I felt that school environment was conducive to completing the edTPA requirements.
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

28) I felt supported by my classmates in completing the edTPA.
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

29) Attending student teaching seminar (or other courses associated with student teaching) helped me to prepare a quality edTPA.
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

30) The goals of the edTPA are consistent with my ideas of good teaching.
   1  2  3  4  5
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31) The edTPA is a fair assessment of my teaching practices.

School level:

32) Where did you student teach/do your practicum the semester you completed your edTPA portfolio? (school name/number)

33) If you did part of your portfolio in a different semester, please explain below.

34) How many elementary school students were in the class you were placed for student teaching?

35) How many of your students had an IEP (Individualized Education Plan)?

36) How many of your students were English language learners?

37) What literacy and math programs were used in your student teaching placement?

38) Were there scripted curricula?
- [ ] yes
- [ ] no

38a) How strictly were teachers expected to follow them?
- [ ] strictly
- [ ] minor adjustments
- [ ] major adjustments
- [ ] just to get ideas
- [ ] other- please explain

School of education level:

39) What supports outside of your courses were there for taking the edTPA? (i.e. workshops, online modules, drop-in sessions, etc.)
40) How often did you utilize these services?

41) What did you feel was most beneficial about these services?

42) What was your accessibility to technology for taking the edTPA? (i.e. Did you have your own device? Did you borrow equipment from your program?)

43) How long after taping your edTPA did you take to submit?

44) What was your score on the edTPA?

45) Would you be interested in participating in a follow up interview about your experience taking the edTPA?

☐ yes
☐ no

Indicate your email address.

46) Feel free to share anything else about your edTPA experience you think will be valuable for this study.
Appendix D: Coding Map for Teacher Candidates

Affects for teacher candidates

stressful
tedious
overwhelmed
Time-consuming

Sense of Well-being

- Stress
  - Pressure
  - Anxiety
  - Crying
- Professional relationships
- Multiple
  - Sense of self
  - Motivation
  - Confidence
- Health issues and physical effects
- Personal
- Student teaching experience

Political/Policy

- Impacted decision to teach
- Empathy (for students taking their high-stakes tests)
- Scoring

Structural coding

A priori, emotion, and

In vivo, further a priori, and
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Appendix E: Coding Map for Teacher Educators and the Teacher Education Curriculum

Teacher educators and the curriculum

Teacher educators

Work with compensation

Academic

Pressure and stress

Teacher educator curriculum

What has changed

edTPA as a graduation requirement

What has been lost

What is the same

In vivo, further a priori, and values coding

A priori, emotion, and magnitude coding
Appendix F: Coding Map Supports and Challenges

Supports
- Technology video
- Supervisors
- Family
- Other
- SoE supports
  workshops, modules, writing tutors, writing center, lab hours/Video Help Desk, structure/deadlines, study halls, office hours, writing camps, office hours, emails, website, FAQ page
- Seminar or methods classes
- Supports for ELLs
- Language documents
  prescribed writing questions hard to understand
- Alumni
- Educational background
- Non-traditional students competing

Challenges
- Work other classes workload
- Language documents
  prescribed writing questions hard to understand
- Money/Cost/Expense
- Health
- Bilingual extension
- Educational background
  Due dates
- Seminar or methods classes
- SoE supports
  workshops, modules, writing tutors, writing center, lab hours/Video Help Desk, structure/deadlines, study halls, office hours, writing camps, office hours, emails, website, FAQ page
- Classmates/peers
- Non-traditional students competing
- Other
- Supervisors
- Cooperating teachers
  supporting them to support ST's, their own support of ST/flexibility
- Student teaching placement
  testing time, poorest performing schools, tough classrooms, flexible groups, out of student teacher's control, curriculum, restricted, no conducive, being asked to teach a lot
- Professors edTPA coordinator
- ELL
- Repetitive
- Cooperating teachers
  supporting them to support ST's, their own support of ST/flexibility
- Professors edTPA coordinator
- Due dates
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