TO: IACTE Executive Committee

FROM: Larry Sondler, St. Xavier University, Julie Peters, University of Illinois at Chicago

DATE: May 5, 2014

RE: IACTE support for edTPA rule change petition

We request that the IACTE Executive Committee bring the issue of edTPA rule change to the IACTE general membership for consideration. If the membership supports the idea, we request that the IACTE petition for a rule change under Section 5000 of the Illinois Administrative Rules. The petition would ask to change the current rule requiring the edTPA as a single, consequential assessment for teacher licensure beginning in September 2015.

The rule change request would support the use of the edTPA in teacher preparation programs but would remove it as a single, consequential assessment for teacher licensure. Programs would be allowed to use the edTPA as one of multiple assessments and would retain the ability to recommend teacher candidates for licensure based on these multiple assessments rather than only on a passing edTPA score. This practice is consistent with the way that approximately 20 states have implemented the edTPA. Illinois is currently one of only five states using or planning to use the edTPA as a single consequential assessment (New York, Georgia, Wisconsin, and Washington are the other four).

A section 5000 appeal is a simple procedure (see Exhibit 1). A person or group puts a request in writing and includes reasons a rule should be changed along with suggestions for how a rule should be revised. ISBE considers the recommendation. If it agrees to submit the change to ISBE board members, the 45 day public comment period commences. After the public comment period, ISBE would then vote on the suggested rule change. If, however, ISBE declines to consider the rule change, those who submitted the request would be able to pursue other legislative avenues, including but not limited to appealing to JCAR.

In January 2014, members of CCADE (Chicago Area Deans) submitted a letter in favor of changing the current rule mandating the edTPA as a single, consequential assessment for licensure (see Exhibit 2). The letter was addressed to Supt. Christopher Koch and Assistant Supt. Jason Helfer. Assist. Supt. Helfer responded to CCADE in a manner that did not result in changes to current policy (see Exhibit 3). Issues raised in the CCADE letter included:

1. The establishment of cut scores without sufficient time to study the results of the pilot test of the edTPA or the effect of those cut scores on new teacher pipeline in Illinois

2. Concerns about validity and reliability due to the wide variation of contexts for student teaching placement and the lack of research studies about these concerns

3. Concerns about variation in the way that the edTPA will be administered and supported in programs and in student teaching placement sites

4. Concerns about the lack of a remediation plan for students who do not pass the edTPA and the possibility of increased costs (including possible extra tuition) for students who fail

5. The use of the edTPA as a sole source of assessment of teacher performance, rather than the use of multiple assessments to recommend a candidate for licensure

The letter recommended that:

1. Teacher education programs continue to embed the assessment, require its use during student teaching, use Pearson as a scorer, and provide scores to ISBE
2. ISBE pursue research about the effect of the assessment on teacher candidates as well as other concerns outlined in the letter
3. Programs be allowed to use other forms of assessment, previously approved by the state, to recommend candidates who do not pass the edTPA but who the programs believe are competent teachers worthy of licensure

In addition to these issues outlined in the CCADE letter, other concerns have surfaced from conversations with colleagues, many of whom are members of IACTE. These addition concerns include questions about Pearson’s capacity to score the influx of assessments submitted by teacher candidates in a timely and effective manner. We also lack data about the effect of the edTPA on teacher candidates from states using the edTPA as a consequential assessment. The recent decision by the New York State Board of Regents to offer a “safety net” for recent graduates who were unable to pass the assessment is an indication that concern about the use of the assessment is growing. Others have raised the specter of lawsuits arising from students who believe they failed the assessment due to the nature of their student teaching placement or lack of adequate support from their program.

We are asking the IACTE executive committee to recommend the request for a rule change to the membership. If the membership supports the rule change, we are asking IACTE to initiate the request for a rule change under Section 5000.