

EdTPA Town Hall

Matthew Kyle

Hello, My name is Professor Ollie Tabooger I represent Pearson Education through the Frequently Asked Questions page on the edTPA website. I am here as an expert on general information about the edTPA. The edTPA, or the Teacher Performance Assessment is a preservice assessment for new teachers that evaluates their readiness to enter the profession through a portfolio of authentic teaching materials. It includes the submission of a portfolio with lesson plans, video recordings of teaching, and written commentaries to Pearson Education for national scoring. It supports teacher preparation, is a requirement for licensure, and is the primary assessment for aspiring teachers.

Summary

Today we held a town hall style discussion about the edTPA. There were six people at the front acting as board members and facilitators of commentary. Meanwhile the audience comprised of both experts, teachers, and parents discussed various views regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the edTPA, where personally I heard a lot of criticism.

New Learning

At first, I honestly didn't know much about the edTPA, and I usually don't question things like standardized tests. I tend to just accept them as part of the system. But during the discussion I learned that people can actually pay for a perfect score on the edTPA, which really surprised me. That made me start thinking about whether the test is fair at all, or if it just benefits people who have more money. Another thing that bothered me was finding out that Pearson, a big private company, runs the edTPA. It feels strange that a corporation has so much control over who gets licensed to teach. Since public education is supposed to serve everyone, it seems wrong that profit might be such a big factor in the process.

Personal Reflection

Even though I had doubts about the topic, I liked the town hall format. Normally I prefer something more like the call-in show, but I appreciated how this setup gave everyone a chance to talk. Hearing from parents, teachers, and experts helped me see the issue from different angles. Before this meeting, I barely understood what the edTPA was. Now I feel more critical of it, especially since it reminds me of other standardized tests like the SAT and ACT, which are often criticized for favoring wealthier students. That makes me think the edTPA could make inequalities in education worse. Plus, one person pointed out that the test encourages teachers to all follow the same method instead of being creative, which could discourage talented people from teaching. Overall, the town hall was a good experience. It pushed me to think more critically and made me realize that it's important to question systems that might not be fair.