

# Annotated Bibliography:

## Certification Exams

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**Amrein-Beardsley, A., Barnett, J., & Ganesh, T. G. (2013). Seven Legitimate Apprehensions about Evaluating Teacher Education Programs and Seven “Beyond Excuses” Imperatives. *Teachers College Record*, 115(12).**

Via the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA), stronger accountability proponents are now knocking on the doors of the colleges of education that prepare teachers and, many argue, prepare teachers ineffectively. This is raising questions about how effective and necessary teacher education programs indeed are. While research continues to evidence that teachers have a large impact on student achievement, the examination of teacher education programs is a rational backward mapping of understanding how teachers impact students. Nonetheless, whether and how evaluations of teacher education programs should be conducted is yet another hotly debated issue in the profession. Purpose: The purpose of this project is to describe how one of the largest teacher education programs in the nation has taken a lead position toward evaluating itself, and has begun to take responsibility for its impact on the public school system.

**Boulton, H. (2014). ePortfolios beyond pre-service teacher education: a new dawn? *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(3), 374-389.**

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the efficacy of using ePortfolios to enhance career skills for newly qualified teachers (NQTs). The context is the final phase of a longitudinal action research project investigating whether an ePortfolio, created as a pre-service teacher to evidence a digital story of developing professional identity, could transition into employability, i.e. the first year as an NQT. Thus, this paper focuses on a new area of ePortfolio-related research in teacher education; the transition from university into employment. The research findings indicate a changing purpose of the ePortfolio from training to the workplace, an increasing strength of ownership as part of the transition, and empowerment in becoming a teacher. Secondary findings demonstrate an increasing acceptance amongst head teachers regarding the usefulness of the ePortfolio in pre-service teacher education and in the continuing professional development of qualified teachers. Key outcomes are discussed and arguments are presented for an ePortfolio to support professional development from university to employment.

**Cochran-Smith, M., Cannady, M., McEachern, K., Mitchell, K., Piazza, P., Power, C., & Ryan, A. (2012). Teachers' Education and Outcomes: Mapping the Research Terrain. *Teachers College Record*, 114(10).**

Questions about teacher quality, including how teachers ought to be educated and licensed, rank near the top of the educational agenda in the United States. These controversies persist because of lack of consensus about what "teacher quality" means, conflicting claims about the empirical evidence, and public skepticism about the need for formal teacher preparation. Because there has been relatively little research on the outcomes of preparation programs and pathways and because researchers work from diverging paradigms, there are few clear conclusions in this area. Purpose /Focus of Study: The purpose of this article is to offer a conceptual analysis of empirical research on teachers' education and outcomes that is linked to the political controversies and policy debates that shape it.

**Danielson, C. (2012). *Observing Classroom Practice. Educational Leadership, 70(3), 32-37.***

The article discusses effective approaches to teacher observation systems. Special attention is paid to observing the classroom environment and teaching based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching, including discussions of research-validated effective teaching practices, levels of teacher performance, and the collection of evidence. Skills needed by observing principals are highlighted including the abilities to conduct professional conversations with teachers and to interpret evidence against levels of performance. Other topics include actively involving teachers in observations, increasing teacher learning, and post-observation reflections.

**DeLuca, C., & Bellara, A. (September/October 2013). *The current state of assessment education: Aligning policy, standards, and teacher education curriculum. Journal of Teacher Education, 64(4).***

In response to the existing accountability movement in the United States, a plethora of educational policies and standards have emerged at various levels to promote teacher assessment competency, with a focus on preservice assessment education. However, despite these policies and standards, research has shown that beginning teachers continue to maintain low competency levels in assessment. Limited assessment education that is potentially misaligned to assessment standards and classroom practices has been identified as one factor contributing to a lack of assessment competency. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to analyze the alignment between teacher education accreditation policies, professional standards for teacher assessment practice, and preservice assessment course curriculum. Through a curriculum alignment methodology involving two policy documents, two professional standards documents, and syllabi from 10 Florida-based, Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education-certified teacher education programs, the results of this study serve to identify points of alignment and misalignment across policies, standards, and curricula. The study concludes with a discussion on the current state of assessment education with implications for enhancing teacher preparation in this area and future research on assessment education.

**Denton, D. W. (2013). *Responding to edTPA: Transforming Practice or Applying Shortcuts? AILACTE Journal, 10(1), 19-36.***

Some states have used new teacher performance assessments in an attempt to improve teacher quality for more than two decades. New teacher performance assessments include performance expectations, scoring rubrics, and writing prompts, which are organized into subject-specific handbooks. Teacher candidates completing performance assessments assemble portfolios comprised of teaching artifacts

and writing commentary. Early performance assessments focused on growth and professional development. EdTPA is the newest teacher performance assessment and it has been adopted by 24 states. Unlike previous new teacher performance assessments, stakeholders at various levels are using edTPA for credentialing and accountability purposes. The high-stakes features of edTPA may encourage use of strategies misaligned with the goal of improving new teacher effectiveness. Results from a case study show that candidates can apply strategies for earning points on edTPA. Although many of the strategies are connected to educational theory and practice, others are meant to earn points and simplify portfolio assembly.

**Ginsberg, R. & Kingston, N. (2014). Caught in a vise: The challenges facing teacher preparation in an era of accountability. *Teachers College Record*, 116(1).**

This study examines accountability in teacher education in an era of testing. It compares how multiple professions evaluate program outcomes and identifies concerns with overemphasis on value-added models as the basis for assessing the impact of teacher preparation program graduates. Suggestions are offered for possible alternative paths.

**Gitomer, D., Bell, C., Yi, Q., Mccaffrey, D., Hambre, B., & Pianta, R. (2014). The Instructional Challenge in Improving Teaching Quality: Lessons From a Classroom Observation Protocol. *Teachers College Record*, 116(6), 1-32.**

Teacher evaluation is a major policy initiative intended to improve the quality of classroom instruction. This study documents a fundamental challenge to using teacher evaluation to improve teaching and learning. Purpose: Using an observation instrument (CLASS-S), we evaluate evidence on different aspects of instructional practice in algebra classrooms to consider how much scores vary, how well observers are able to judge practice, and how well teachers are able to evaluate their own practice.

**Hill, H. C., & Grossman, P. (2013). Learning from Teacher Observations: Challenges and Opportunities Posed by New Teacher Evaluation Systems. *Harvard Educational Review*, 83(2), 371-384.**

In this article, Heather C. Hill and Pam Grossman discuss the current focus on using teacher observation instruments as part of new teacher evaluation systems being considered and implemented by states and districts. They argue that if these teacher observation instruments are to achieve the goal of supporting teachers in improving instructional practice, they must be subject-specific, involve content experts in the process of observation, and provide information that is both accurate and useful for teachers. They discuss the instruments themselves, raters and system design, and timing of and feedback from the observations. They conclude by outlining the challenges that policy makers face in designing observation systems that will work to improve instructional practice at scale.

**Konstantopoulos, S. (2014). Teacher Effects, Value-Added Models, and Accountability. *Teachers College Record*, 116(1).**

In the last decade, the effects of teachers on student performance (typically manifested as state-wide standardized tests) have been re-examined using statistical models that are known as value-added models. These statistical models aim to compute the unique contribution of the teachers in promoting student achievement gains from grade to grade, net of student background and prior ability. Value-added models are widely used nowadays and they are used by some states to rank teachers. These models are used to measure teacher performance or effectiveness (via student achievement gains), with the ultimate objective of rewarding or penalizing teachers. Such practices have resulted in a large amount of controversy in the education community about the role of value-added models in the process of making important decisions about teachers such as salary increases, promotion, or termination of employment. Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to review the effects teachers have on student achievement, with an emphasis on value added models. The paper also discusses whether value-added models are appropriately used as a sole indicator in evaluating teachers.

**Lambe, J., McNair, V., & Smith, R. (2013). Special educational needs, e-learning and the reflective e-portfolio: implications for developing and assessing competence in pre-service education. *Journal of Education For Teaching*, 39(2), 181-196.**

This article reports on the use of e-portfolios to assess aspects of a one year, post-graduate pre-service teacher education programme in Northern Ireland within the specific context of special needs education. The rationale for using an e-portfolio for programme assessment and the potential it offers in demonstrating a range of teaching competencies is examined, with participants in the study challenged to develop their individual e-portfolios by selecting and presenting evidence for assessment drawn from a wide range of sources. In so doing they were asked to reflect upon their personal, academic and pedagogical learning and development across the pre-service year. The article also reports on the individual student experience of building an e-portfolio and attitudes towards its use for assessment purposes within pre-service education and beyond. Finally, it considers the potential for using e-portfolios across all phases of teacher education.

**Leonardatos, H., & Zahedi, K. (2014). Accountability and “Racing to the Top” in New York State: A report from the front lines. *Teachers College Record*, 116(9).**

Written by New York public school principals, Harry Leonardatos and Katie Zahedi, this article shares a shop-floor view of the impact of Race to the Top on New York Public Schools. The New York State Regents Reform Agenda involves mandated compliance with the federal legislation within Race to the Top (RTTT). Requirements related to an increase in student testing and the coupling of teacher evaluations to students’ scores on state tests is at cause in the deterioration the quality of public education in New York State. Imposed political directives are shown to have a role in creating confusion through untested policies, engendering a culture of distrust, diverting money from sound educational practice that are dismantling public schools in favor of market models.

**Margolis, J., & Doring, A. (2013). National Assessments for Student Teachers: Documenting Teaching Readiness to the Tipping Point. *Action in Teacher Education*, 35(4), 272-285.**

To evaluate the impact of the emergent national teacher performance assessment (TPA) on student teachers, this study examined a pilot implementation at one university in Washington State during

Spring 2011. The qualitative research focused on the lived experience of those directly affected by TPA implementation: student teachers, mentor teachers, and university supervisors. Findings include some potential benefits to the TPA, including student teachers reporting greater levels of reflection enabling them to better focus on student thinking, and university supervisors appreciating the shift in analysis of teaching episodes to the student teacher. However, there is also evidence that the TPA is trying to do too much too soon—with several aspects of the TPA being developmentally inappropriate and implausible within the context of student teaching. With too many requirements and not enough supports, student teachers are in danger of being positioned beyond “the tipping point.” Recommendations include piloting different versions of the TPA, highlighting varying levels of description, analysis, and reflection. Relatedly, portfolio processes must be analyzed to seek the optimum balance between documenting positive learning interactions with and allowing teach

**Oakley, G., Pegrum, M., & Johnston, S. (2014). *Introducing E-Portfolios to Pre-Service Teachers as Tools for Reflection and Growth: Lessons Learnt. Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 42(1), 36-50.***

E-portfolios are being introduced into initial teacher education programmes internationally to help pre-service teachers build records of their learning journeys and develop into reflective practitioners; to allow them to assemble collections of evidence of their achievements against graduate standards, which can function as digital CVs; and to facilitate the seeding of personal learning networks that will support lifelong learning after graduation. Despite certain tensions between these aims, the potential benefits of eportfolios make them an increasingly popular choice in teacher education. In this article, we discuss the introduction of Wi-Fi-based e-portfolios into a Master of Teaching programme at an Australian university. These served primarily as developmental e-portfolios or personal learning environments (PLEs), and were designed to place particular emphasis on reflective practice. We describe how the e-portfolios were perceived and used by preservice teachers in the first year of their implementation, and indicate the challenges and limitations encountered. Lessons learnt from the implementation are outlined and recommendations are proposed.

**Ogan-Bekiroglu, F. (2014). *Quality of Preservice Physics Teachers' Reflections in Their Teaching Portfolios and Their Perceived Reflections: Do They Intersect?. Action in Teacher Education, 36(2), 157-170.***

Although proponents support portfolios' value to enhance the reflective thinking of novice teachers and imply that such thinking improves teachers' practice, few studies have confirmed these assertions by directly measuring in-depth reflection or describing conditions that develop it. In this study, reflective thinking in preservice teachers' portfolios was measured and compared with their perceived reflection. Qualitative research design was used for this study. The participants were preservice physics teachers. Data were collected through the participants' portfolios and interviews. Their portfolios were evaluated based on the rubric developed by the researcher focusing on personal reflection, artifacts, professional development, and organization. Findings show that most of the preservice teachers gained expertise in reflecting about their teaching skills in their portfolios. These findings also indicate that the instructor's supervision and help throughout portfolio preparation may have assisted the preservice teachers with creating more reflective portfolios.

**Oon-Seng Tan. (November 2012). Singapore's holistic approach to teacher development. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 94(3).**

As battle lines are drawn in the U.S. over linking student performance to teacher evaluations, Singapore offers an approach that could help both students and teachers.

**Pieczura, M. (November 2012). Weighing the Pros and Cons of TAP. *Educational Leadership*, 70(3).**

The article discusses the benefits and flaws of Tennessee's teacher evaluation system, which was adopted in 2011-2012 and based on a model from the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). The author explains that half of teachers' evaluation scores are based on student test scores and the other half on classroom observations. She discusses her student teaching experience and the importance of feedback for teachers. Other topics include the use of rubrics in evaluating teachers, the amount of time taken to design lesson plans, and value added assessment data.

**Sato, M. (2014). What Is the Underlying Conception of Teaching of the edTPA? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 65(5), 421.**

The edTPA, a nationally available performance assessment for teacher candidates, has recently been developed and implemented in teacher education programs across the United States. Advocates make arguments for the need for such an assessment while critics of standardized performance assessments point out the dangers of standardization. This article takes a step back from the arguments in support of or in opposition to the assessment and asks fundamentally what the underlying conception of teaching of the edTPA is. After examining conceptions of teaching articulated by scholars such as Nathaniel Gage, Larry Cuban, Lee Shulman, Paulo Freire, and bell hooks, this article argues that the underlying conception of teaching of the edTPA is one of professional practice, not only at the individual level but also at the level of teaching as a collective enterprise. The conception of teaching argument is also connected to discussions of the validity arguments for the edTPA with specific attention to face validity, content validity, and construct validity.

**WEISS, J. (2012). Data for Improvement, Data for Accountability. *Teachers College Record*, 114(11), 1-7.**

An introduction is presented in which the author discusses articles within the issue on topics related to the use of data in education including educational accountability, school improvement, and educational policy.