
Educator Preparation Policy 5.504

The Background:

All Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) and the specialty area programs (SAPs) that lead to licensure shall be approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). Educator Preparation Policy 5.504 provides further details of requirements for EPPs and SAPs in accordance with State Board Educator Preparation Rule Chapter 0520-02-04.

In October 2024, the Educator Licensure Review Committee met and discussed the future use of pedagogical assessments for candidates seeking licensure following completion of State Board-approved educator preparation programs. Ultimately, the Committee came to an agreement that the current requirements for pedagogical assessment (namely the edTPA) are no longer serving teacher candidates, educator preparation providers, and districts in a way that best aligns with the expectations and needs of Tennessee classrooms. The Committee advocated for strengthening requirements related to clinical practice and clinical mentoring for all candidates, ultimately positioning the State to remove the edTPA requirement by 2026.

During the February 2025 meeting of the State Board, the Board approved revisions to the Educator Preparation Policy 5.504 that:

- Require candidates completing licensure programs in areas covering broad grade spans (e.g., 6-12 or K-12) to have opportunities in classrooms across multiple grade bands throughout clinical experiences.
- Remove the requirement that candidates complete clinical practices in two settings, to ensure continuity and depth of experience in the primary clinical practice setting.
- Add requirements related to formal observations of candidates during clinical practice, including:
 - An expectation that candidates receive formal observations a minimum of four times during clinical practice using an approved observation tool;
 - Directing the EPP to determine the most appropriate structure of formal observations, considering both the role of the clinical mentor and supervisor;
 - Directing the EPP to set appropriate pacing of observations during clinical practice;
 - Setting expectations regarding the use of formal observation data for candidate growth, development, and progression in the program; and
 - Requiring clinical supervisors to be trained in the use of the approved observation tool.

In addition, changes were made to align with recent changes to State Board rule related to institution accreditation and recent changes to state law related to the Clinical Practice Permit.

Between first and final reading, following feedback from multiple Educator Preparation Providers, language has been added to allow EPPs and LEA partners, under certain circumstances, to utilize data obtained from the formal evaluation process conducted by school-based administrators to meet the expectation of four formal observations conducted during a job-embedded clinical practice.

The Fiscal Analysis Impact:

T.C.A. § 49-1-212 requires that the Board staff prepare a fiscal analysis of any policy, rule, or regulation proposed to the State Board of Education. This item has no financial impact on an LEA.

Policy Justification:

T.C.A. § 4-5-230 requires that justification for adopting an item as a policy instead of a rule be submitted to the chair of the Government Operations Committee. This item is proposed to be adopted as a policy because it defines or explains the meaning of a statute or rule and/or concerns only the internal management of state government that does not affect private rights or privileges.

Connection to the [Master Plan](#):

This item supports the State Board's strategic focus on Teachers and Leaders outlined in the Master Plan by increasing the rigor of clinical experiences to ensure future teachers are well prepared for Tennessee classrooms.

The Recommendation:

State Board staff recommend approval of this item on final reading.