

Securing Personal Information in Performance Assessment of Teacher Candidates



Ensuring Smart, Secure, and Ethical Assessment in Educator Preparation



QUALITY
PERFORMANCE
ASSESSMENTS

SECURE PERSONAL INFORMATION

In fall 2015, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education convened an Information Privacy Task Force of leaders from across the educator preparation, PK-12 education, and assessment fields. The Task Force was asked to develop a set of principles regarding the secure and ethical use of classroom video and associated materials collected in performance assessment of newly prepared teachers. The widespread participation in the Task Force signals the importance of using rigorous performance assessments for teacher candidates. This brief aims to promote and enforce high standards and rigorous practices to protect student, teacher, and teacher candidate privacy throughout the assessment process. It also addresses the need for beginning teachers to understand privacy issues and policies before their first day in the classroom as teachers of record.

OVERVIEW

Teacher preparation programs and local schools work together to ensure every child has access to great teachers. Insisting that teacher candidates provide evidence of *effective classroom practice* is increasingly recognized as a key to meeting that goal. In response, a new generation of performance assessments has been developed and is being widely implemented. Many of these assessments make use of classroom video to document candidate performance. Technological advances have made these better assessments possible, but also pose potential challenges related to privacy.

This document was created to support the implementation of these valuable new assessments to promote the effective performance of new teachers and to ensure that classroom video and other related materials are used only for instructional and assessment purposes by authorized users. Everyone with a role in preparing the next generations of teachers also has a role in ensuring that student, candidate, and teacher privacy is protected each step of the way. This document represents agreement in the field about how to meet this responsibility.

WHAT IS PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Great teaching begins with great preparation.

Each year, an estimated 193,000 aspiring teachers graduate from some 2,200 preparation providers. Regardless of where future teachers are prepared, the quality, rigor, and relevance of their preparation will determine if they are ready to be effective with all students from their first day in the classroom.

Performance assessment measures teacher candidates by their teaching. Teacher candidates who complete performance assessments demonstrate that they can teach by sharing examples of their work with faculty, peers, and independent reviewers. The evidence includes lesson plans, student work samples, written reflections, and classroom video of actual teaching performance. These assessments complement tests of subject-matter expertise by documenting a candidate's ability to deliver, monitor, and adjust instruction in a classroom setting. Videos used for performance assessment and the expert feedback from those videos give candidates opportunities to better understand the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective beginning teachers. They also give the public confidence that new teachers can do the actual work of teaching.

Videos of candidates teaching are an essential part of quality performance assessment.

Classroom video is an essential part of performance assessment because it captures teacher candidates as they deliver instruction and interact with students. Reviewing their video recordings helps candidates reflect and improve. In addition, candidates' teaching can be observed and evaluated by impartial, trained observers. This evidence supports programs' culminating evaluations – and in many cases, the teacher licensure process – by grounding them in an assessment of candidates' actual performance in a classroom. Video is an established tool in teacher self-evaluation. For decades, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards® certification of accomplished teaching has placed significant importance on teachers' ability to describe, analyze, and reflect upon video of their own teaching practice.

Protecting student, teacher, and candidate privacy is integral to performance assessment.

Protecting the privacy of student identities is of paramount importance in the use of performance assessment and classroom video. Everyone who uses video or other classroom materials that involve student work has a responsibility to maintain the privacy and the security of students. Similarly, teacher and teacher candidate privacy must be secured when classroom video is independently reviewed as part of a performance assessment.

PK-12 students and schools benefit from performance assessment. By asking teacher candidates to demonstrate teaching in real-world settings, performance assessment helps give aspiring teachers the skills and confidence to succeed in the classroom. Using this relevant and rigorous kind of measure as a final assessment of educator preparation ensures that new teachers can create inspiring, stimulating, and responsive learning environments for all students. Performance assessment strengthens public confidence in the nation's educator workforce because it requires a demonstration of skills, just as other professions require for licensure or certification. It also aligns entry to the teaching profession with the evaluation frameworks that ensure quality teaching and guide professional development for experienced teachers.

Privacy must be protected by everyone with a role in performance assessment.

Teacher preparation programs, cooperating PK-12 instructional settings, assessment developers, and those who review or score the assessments accept the responsibility to protect student, teacher, and candidate privacy. They must collaborate to communicate, support, and implement clear standards and effective practices. Securing privacy begins with understanding and adhering to applicable federal, state, and local policies regarding classroom video, student work, and parental permission. That commitment must continue through assessment scoring, the reporting of scores to candidates and programs, and the archiving and destruction of video files.

CREATING PRINCIPLES TO PROTECT STUDENT AND TEACHER-CANDIDATE PRIVACY

Classroom videos give educators new opportunities to talk about what really matters in teacher preparation – actual teaching – particularly when they are used in performance assessment. At each step of the process, however, educators, assessment developers, and scorers are taking steps to make student, candidate, and teacher privacy and public confidence a top priority.

To advance this goal, the Information Privacy Task Force decided, following thorough deliberation on the issues, to articulate a set of privacy principles around the use of video in assessment. The final principles are grounded in the following commitments:

- Performance assessment must adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable federal laws and regulations.
- Understanding and responding to varying state policies and concerns by state legislatures about protecting student and teacher candidate privacy is a priority. This priority will continue as more states require video as part of next-generation assessments.
- District and school policies must be understood and adhered to throughout the preparation and assessment process. Signatories commit to understanding and abiding by these policies, adapting practices to local contexts as necessary.
- Preparation programs, assessment providers, and scorers must proactively set and share clear expectations about how performance assessment will be used. This commitment includes making sure that practitioners require agreements from candidates stating they will not share the video or related materials beyond their faculty members or assessment scorers or post their videos electronically unless they have obtained permission to do so.

PRINCIPLES FOR USING CLASSROOM VIDEO IN PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF TEACHER CANDIDATES

Task Force members are in agreement that the following principles should guide the use of classroom video and instructional artifacts in assessing the performance of teacher candidates:

1. Classroom video and associated materials and artifacts used for performance assessment should be used first and foremost to further and support student learning and success.
2. Classroom video and associated materials and artifacts used for performance assessment are most powerful when used for continuous improvement and to enhance student learning.
3. Classroom video and associated materials and artifacts used for performance assessment should only be shared, under terms or agreement, with service providers for legitimate educational purposes and consistent with federal, state, and local requirements. Consent to share must be given by a parent or guardian, or by a student (if the student is over 18). All parties involved in the authorization and use of classroom video should consider these principles and ensure that their own policies are consistent with them.
4. Everyone with access to classroom video, including educational institutions, assessment providers, state testing agencies, scorers, student teachers, and researchers, should have clear, publicly available rules and guidelines for how they collect, use, protect, and destroy those videos and associated materials and artifacts. Rules and guidelines should be consistent with existing industry standards, to the extent possible, and appropriate training in use of these rules and guidelines should be available to everyone with access to classroom video.



5. Those with access to classroom video should have access to only the videos and associated materials needed for scoring, assessment, and reflection.
6. Parents have the right to make informed decisions about the use of their students' information, and programs, districts, and others have a responsibility to provide them with the appropriate information.
7. Video of teacher candidates working in PK-12 classrooms should be used exclusively as part of performance assessment to promote candidate learning, preparation program success, and appropriate licensing or program completion decisions. Examples include use of video by faculty and candidates as part of in-class learning activities, by teacher candidates and PK-12 educators as part of candidates' clinical experience, and in the context of scorer training.
8. Any educational institution with the authority to collect and maintain classroom video and associated materials and artifacts should have:
 - a. A decision-making body that establishes rules and procedures regarding video collection, use, access, sharing, and security and use of online educational programs;
 - b. A policy for notifying families of any misuse or breach of information related to classroom videos and associated materials and artifacts, and steps the institution will take to remedy the breach;
 - c. A point of contact where students and families can go to learn of their rights and have their questions answered about classroom video collection, use, and security.
9. Educator preparation programs and PK-12 institutions and leaders should collaborate with state and local officials to develop clear and coherent policy guidance on the use of video in performance assessment and to review such policy guidance on a regular basis.

These principles draw on, and are intended to be aligned with, the Student Data Principles developed in 2014 by the Data Quality Campaign and the Consortium for School Networking (<http://studentdatapinciples.org/the-principles/>).

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