

FAVORABLE
House Bill 888
Education – Initial Teacher Certification – Qualifications

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
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The Maryland State Education Association strongly supports House Bill 888, which would give Maryland teacher preparation programs the option to develop their own portfolio-based assessment to count toward licensure requirements for teacher candidates.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Beginning this year, most aspiring educators in Maryland must pass a nationally recognized portfolio-based assessment for teacher licensure. Accepted assessment products include the edTPA and PPAT assessments, though the PPAT will be discontinued after 2025.¹ Portfolio-based assessments require candidates to demonstrate their teaching competencies by compiling lesson plans, videos of their lessons, student work artifacts, and detailed reflections on their pedagogical strategy.

House Bill 888 would add another high-quality option for students in a teacher preparation program that opts to develop their own portfolio-based assessment. Instead of completing an assessment product like edTPA, students could fulfill this licensure requirement by completing a portfolio via their college or university.

¹PPAT Assessment. ETS (2025). <https://www.ets.org/ppat/test-takers/register/dates-deadlines.html#:~:text=As%20announced%20in%20August%202024,Spring%202024%20through%20Spring%202025>



Institutions of higher education are well-equipped to evaluate students' experiential learning. In this setting, students are likely to receive consistent feedback and guidance from their instructors throughout the weeks- or months-long process of developing a teaching portfolio.

Further, research points to the troubling potential impacts of relying heavily on assessment products such as edTPA for teacher licensure. Concerns include that the scoring of the assessments may indicate racial and cultural bias, that the assessments may have limited ability to accurately predict how effective a teacher will be in the classroom, and that the fees may pose financial barriers at \$300 for an initial attempt.^{1 2} In recent years, several states have curtailed or altogether eliminated such requirements.^{3 4 5}

Providing high-quality, locally developed alternatives to national portfolio-based assessment products would mitigate some of these concerns. Considering the role of teacher preparation programs already play in developing student teachers, it is sensible and fair to count portfolio-based assessments developed by nationally accredited programs toward licensure requirements.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 888.

¹ Everyone's Doing It, but What Does Teacher Testing Tell Us about Teacher Effectiveness? Dan Goldhaber (2006).

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED509664.pdf>

² Potential Testing Barriers for Teacher Candidates of Color. Motamedi, Leong, & Hanson (2018).

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/potential-testing-barriers.pdf>

³ edTPA eliminated as a state requirement for teacher certification (2021). Washington Professional Educator Standards Board. <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAOSPI/bulletins/2d7d4ac>

⁴ Elimination of the edTPA Requirement for Certification (2022). New York State Education Department.

https://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/news/newsitem04.12.22_edTPA.html#:~:text=Office%20of%20Teaching%20Initiatives&text=April%2012%2C%202022.,an%20Emergency%20COVID%2D19%20certificate

⁵ Georgia Streamlines Certification for Educators (2020). Press Releases, Office of the Governor.

<https://gov.georgia.gov/press-releases/2020-06-18/georgia-streamlines-certification-educators>