



Education Specialist **CalTPA**  
California Teaching  
Performance Assessment



# Performance Assessment Overview

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Overview of Instructional Cycles and Rubrics  
Version 01

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## Acknowledgments

California has been an innovator in the development and use of teaching performance assessments since 2003. The Education Specialist California Teaching Performance Assessment (EdSp CalTPA) was developed at the direction of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing with the assistance of a 22-member design team; the Evaluation Systems group of Pearson; consultants in the field of special education; and California special education organizations. The EdSp CalTPA draws from and is informed by California’s rich experience with different performance-based assessment models, including the original California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA), the redeveloped CalTPA (2016), the California Administrator Performance Assessment (CalAPA), the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT), and edTPA®. Participants in each of these other systems contributed to the redesigned CalTPA. The Commission on Teacher Credentialing acknowledges the contributions of these assessment systems and the educators who have developed, administered, and scored them.

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## Introduction

In 2015, the Statewide Task Force was formed to examine California’s complex systems for serving students with disabilities and forwarded recommendations to the State Board of Education, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the California Department of Education for consideration. The content of the report [One System: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students](#) outlines how to improve outcomes and services at the local, state, and federal levels.

At its February 2018 meeting, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing adopted a [revised credential structure for the Education Specialist teaching credentials](#). The new credential structure includes five preliminary teaching credentials.

One of the important outcomes in the Commission’s reform work in both special education and general education over the past several years is the development of a common or universal set of [Teaching Performance Expectations \(TPEs\)](#) that are met by both general education and education specialist candidates. **These universal TPEs establish a common foundation for all teachers, based on the concept that all teachers are teachers of all students, that all students are general education students first, and that all students need intervention at different points in their academic career.**

The Commission’s goal in establishing universal TPEs was to ensure that all teachers learn the fundamentals of teaching, ideally in common coursework that allows for collaboration across credential types, and then each candidate specializes in the content of their particular credential area. Each of the five credential areas of emphasis have their own [Teaching Performance Expectations](#) for education specialist credential candidates. The development of the Education Specialist CalTPA (EdSp CalTPA) has taken place against the backdrop of these significant changes in the framing of teacher preparation.

The table on the following page lists the five education specialist credentials for the EdSp CalTPA offered in California.

## EdSp CalTPA: Education Specialist Credentials

Specialist Credential	Student Age/Grade Range	Authorization
<b>Mild to moderate support needs (MMSN)</b>	Kindergarten, grades 1–12 through age 22, and classes organized primarily for adults	Authorizes the holder to provide instruction and special education support to students with mild to moderate support needs related to one or more of the following disabilities: autism, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, and traumatic brain injury
<b>Extensive support needs (ESN)</b>	Kindergarten, grades 1–12 through age 22, and classes organized primarily for adults	Authorizes the holder to provide instruction and special education support to students with extensive support needs related to one or more of the following disabilities: autism, deafblind, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, and traumatic brain injury
<b>Early childhood special education (ECSE)</b>	Birth through kindergarten	Authorizes the holder to provide instruction and special education support to students who are eligible for early intervention special education and related services related to one or more of the following disabilities: autism, emotional disturbance, intellectual disability, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, traumatic brain injury, and multiple disabilities including developmental delay and a disabling medical condition
<b>Deaf and hard of hearing (DHH)</b>	Birth through age 22 and classes organized primarily for adults	Authorizes the holder to provide instruction and special education support to students with a primary or secondary disability of deaf or hard-of-hearing or deafblind, and services to students with a hearing loss that manifests itself in conjunction with additional disabilities including unilateral or bilateral, whether fluctuating, conductive, sensorineural, and/or auditory neuropathy
<b>Visual impairments (VI)</b>	Birth through age 22 and classes organized primarily for adults	Authorizes the holder to provide instruction and special education support to students with a primary or secondary disability of visual impairment including blind and deafblind, with autism

Depending on the authorization statements identified above, Education Specialists may learn to support students from birth to age 22. Preliminary education specialist programs will provide learning and assessment opportunities for candidates to learn about birth to 2-year-old students and for specialized settings that are not appropriate for video recording (e.g., private homes, hospitals).

The EdSp CalTPA includes two instructional cycles with a focus on content-specific instructional planning and assessment:

❖ **Instructional Cycle 1: Learning About Students with IEPs and Planning Instruction**

- To complete Instructional Cycle 1, EdSp CalTPA candidates are required to
  - provide content-specific instruction and informal assessment with appropriate supports and instructional adaptations (accommodations and/or modifications) **to students aged 3 and older** and
  - teach **a minimum of 3 focus students with IEPs from their assigned caseloads**

❖ **Instructional Cycle 2: Assessment-Driven Instruction for Students with IEPs**

- To complete Instructional Cycle 2, EdSp CalTPA candidates are required to
  - provide instruction and assessment **to students aged 3 and older** and
  - teach one set of lessons to **a minimum of 3 students with IEPs in a whole class/small learning group**.<sup>1</sup>

Each instructional cycle reflects four iterative steps commonly used in teaching: (1) plan, (2) teach and assess, (3) reflect, and (4) apply. This pedagogical cycle provides an overarching conceptual framework of progressively interrelated cognitive steps to help guide and refine the candidate's thinking and encourage active decision-making throughout each cycle of planning, teaching, and assessing student learning.

The EdSp CalTPA is intended to provide both a formal assessment of candidate ability and a framework of performance-based guidance to inform candidate preparation and continued professional growth through induction. Analytic feedback provided at the completion of each cycle will facilitate data-driven collaboration and reflection by the candidate in preparing for the subsequent assessment cycle. Performance data will be shared with institutions to assist them in making program improvements and will guide induction programs as they work with new education specialists to individualize learning plans. The EdSp CalTPA is designed to be embedded within the field experience of a teacher preparation program so that the candidate may draw on authentic evidence of teaching ability and student learning experienced during clinical practice.

The two instructional cycles were developed to build on each other, but may be completed independently and in any order deemed appropriate by a preparation program.

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<sup>1</sup> Extensive Support Needs Cycle 2 allows for candidates to teach one set of lessons to a minimum of 3 students with IEPs in a whole class/small learning group OR an individual student with an IEP.

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## Evidence Tables

The tables on the following pages provide a summary of the expectations of candidates completing the EdSp CalTPA, including what actions should be taken and what evidence should be submitted by pedagogical step.



## Instructional Cycle 1: Learning About Students with IEPs and Planning Instruction

Cycle Step	What You Need to Do	Evidence to Be Submitted
<p><b>Step 1: Plan</b> (templates provided, including sample lesson plan formats)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the whole class/small learning group and 3 focus students from your assigned caseload, gather contextual information, including students' assets and learning needs from their IEP goals.</li> <li>Use current, grade-level California Content Standards and/or Curriculum Frameworks, California English Language Development Standards (CA ELD Standards), content-specific pedagogy, and knowledge of your students to develop one lesson plan focused on literacy or mathematics (you may integrate other subjects as well as functional and/or life skills into the lesson).</li> <li>Explain how the lesson plan addresses the learning needs of your students and is informed by relevant student assets, as well as how you planned for UDL strategies to create a supportive learning environment.<sup>2</sup></li> <li><b>Provide at least one ELD goal for the English learners in your class and Focus Student 1 (FS1).</b></li> <li>Provide a description of instructional support personnel (e.g., general education teachers, co-teachers, paraprofessionals, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, counselors, administrators, behaviorists) and how you will facilitate their roles to assist students to meaningfully participate in content-specific learning.</li> <li>Provide key instructional resources and materials related to the lesson (e.g., PowerPoint slides; assignments and/or directions; one-paragraph description of text students will read; computer program or app; materials needed to support, clarify, and/or illustrate the lesson plan or specific student activity[ies]).</li> <li>As appropriate, you should demonstrate the ability to support the movement, mobility, sensory, and/or specialized healthcare needs required for students to participate fully in classrooms and/or non-classroom contexts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Part A:</b> Written Narrative: Getting to Know Your Students (no more than 9 pages)</li> <li><b>Part B:</b> Lesson Plan</li> <li><b>Part C:</b> Written Narrative: Lesson Plan Rationale (no more than 7 pages)</li> <li><b>Part D:</b> Related Instructional Resources and Materials (no more than 8 pages)</li> </ul>

(Continued)

<sup>2</sup> For Extensive Support Needs, if applicable, candidates must describe how they facilitate student health and mobility by practicing appropriate and safe techniques for lifting and positioning and instructing or supervising other personnel in such procedures.

**Instructional Cycle 1: Learning About Students with IEPs and Planning Instruction (continued)**

Cycle Step	What You Need to Do	Evidence to Be Submitted
<p><b>Step 2: Teach and Assess</b> (annotation tool provided in the ePortfolio system)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach the planned literacy or mathematics lesson to your students within the classroom or non-classroom context.</li> <li>• <b>Video record the entire lesson.</b> Select and annotate 3 video clips that show (1) how you create a positive and safe learning environment, connect to prior learning, and establish expectations for content-specific learning; (2) how you engage students in activities and use instructional strategies; and (3) how you clarify next steps for students to learn the content.</li> <li>• Annotation titles include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating a Positive and Safe Learning Environment</li> <li>• Explaining Connections to Prior Learning and Establishing Expectations for Content-Specific Learning</li> <li>• Engaging Students in Content-Specific, Age and/or Developmentally Appropriate Higher-Order Thinking</li> <li>• Monitoring for Students' Understanding of Content</li> <li>• Establishing Next Steps for Students' Learning of Content and/or Skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Part E:</b> 3 Annotated Video Clips (no more than 5 minutes each)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3: Reflect</b> (template provided)</p>	<p>Drawing on information from Step 1 and/or Step 2, reflect on the effectiveness of your asset-based lesson planning as well as facilitation and/or collaboration with instructional support personnel. Explain how your lesson planning did or did not support students in reaching grade-level content-specific and ELD learning goals. Indicate what you needed to do to support your 3 focus students from your assigned caseload during the lesson.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Part F:</b> Written Narrative: Reflection on What You Learned (no more than 3 pages)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 4: Apply</b> (template provided for written narrative only)</p>	<p>Provide responses to prompts regarding what you learned through completing this instructional cycle and how it will advance your teaching practice. Describe next instructional steps for the whole class/small learning group and for the 3 focus students and how you can facilitate and/or collaborate with instructional support personnel differently in the future to support students with disabilities. Cite evidence from Steps 1, 2, and/or 3 to demonstrate your rationale for next instructional steps for your students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Part G:</b> Narrative: Application of What You Learned (no more than 3 pages of written or no more than 5 minutes of video explanation)</li> </ul>

## Instructional Cycle 2: Assessment-Driven Instruction for Students with IEPs

Cycle Step	What You Need to Do	Evidence to Be Submitted
<p><b>Step 1: Plan</b> (templates provided)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide contextual information about the whole class/small learning group you are teaching within a classroom/non-classroom context.</li> <li>• Develop a plan for a series of three to five lessons (in either literacy or mathematics), and complete the Learning Segment Template that includes:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. grade-level California Content Standards and/or Curriculum Frameworks</li> <li>2. California English Language Development (ELD) Standards, if appropriate</li> <li>3. Grade-level content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s), if appropriate</li> <li>4. evidence and description of assessments of learning (classroom-based informal assessment, student self-assessment, and formal assessment)</li> <li>5. how each lesson links to where the students are currently and/or builds on prior learning and previous lessons</li> <li>6. lesson activities, including how you and your students will use educational technology and, if applicable, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and/or assistive technology, and how you will ensure equitable access to content</li> <li>7. instructional strategies</li> <li>8. grouping strategies</li> <li>9. English language development (ELD) and academic language development (ALD)</li> <li>10. instructional adaptations (accommodations and/or modifications) addressed by the IEP for each student in the learning group</li> <li>11. facilitation of instructional support personnel</li> <li>12. resources and materials to support learning</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Describe one of your planned informal assessments, a student self-assessment, and the formal assessment and explain how they are aligned to and measure the grade-level content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s), if appropriate.</li> <li>• Provide a description or blank copy of the informal assessment, student self-assessment and rubric, and formal assessment and rubric, including definition of proficient student performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Part A:</b> Written Narrative: Contextual Information (no more than 4 pages)</li> <li>• <b>Part B:</b> Learning Segment Template</li> <li>• <b>Part C:</b> Written Narrative: Assessment Descriptions (no more than 7 pages, including additional materials, if necessary)</li> <li>• <b>Part D:</b> Description or Blank Copy of the Informal Assessment</li> <li>• <b>Part E:</b> Description or Blank Copies of Both the Student Self-Assessment and Corresponding Rubric</li> <li>• <b>Part F:</b> Description or Blank Copies of Both the Formal Assessment and Corresponding Rubric</li> </ul>

(Continued)

## Instructional Cycle 2: Assessment-Driven Instruction for Students with IEPs (continued)

Cycle Step	What You Need to Do	Evidence to Be Submitted
<p><b>Step 2: Teach and Assess</b> (template provided)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct the instruction and assessment activities in your learning segment (three to five lessons).</li> <li>Video record your learning segment lessons in their entirety. Select 4 clips (each up to 5 minutes of unedited video) that include (1) instruction and assessment of academic language development,<sup>3</sup> (2) student use of educational technology,<sup>4</sup> (3) instruction and informal assessment of content, and (4) instruction and student self-assessment of content.</li> <li>Annotate the 4 video clips. Annotations include a title and brief rationale (the “why”) for instruction and assessment practices recorded. Annotation titles include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessing Student Learning and Development of Academic Language</li> <li>Students Using Educational Technology</li> <li>Providing Content-Specific Feedback to Students</li> <li>Assessing Student Learning and Use of Age and/or Developmentally Appropriate Higher-Order Thinking Skills</li> <li>Facilitating Instructional Support Personnel to Engage Students in Learning</li> </ul> </li> <li>Provide an analysis of the informal and student self-assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Part G:</b> 4 Annotated Video Clips (no more than 5 minutes each)</li> <li><b>Part H:</b> Written Narrative: Analysis of Informal and Student Self-Assessments (no more than 3 pages)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3: Reflect</b> (template provided)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Score the formal assessment responses for the whole class/small learning group, using a rubric. Select 3 examples of student responses (products, processes, or recorded performances) with your detailed, content-specific, rubric-based feedback from the formal assessment that demonstrate a range of achievement: a student response that (a) exceeds the learning goal(s), (b) meets the learning goal(s), and (c) does not yet meet the learning goal(s).</li> <li>Analyze student results from the informal assessment, student self-assessment, and formal assessment used throughout the learning segment. <b>Note:</b> Candidate must conduct analysis of assessment data; however, instructional support personnel can assist in data collection.</li> <li>Address how you will assist the families and/or guardians of these 3 students to support them in understanding the assessment results and the role they will play in supporting student learning beyond the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Part I:</b> Formal Assessment Responses from 3 Students (products, processes, or recorded performances) that represent evidence of learning (labeled “exceeded,” “met,” and “not yet met”) with Feedback</li> <li><b>Part J:</b> Written Narrative: Analysis of Formal Assessment Results and Reflection for Whole Class/Small Learning Group and 3 Students (no more than 5 pages) (If detailed, content-specific, rubric-based feedback is not included with responses in Part I, include the feedback with this written narrative; feedback does not count toward the 5-page limit.)</li> </ul>

(Continued)

<sup>3</sup> Extensive Support Needs includes instruction and assessment of communication development in addition to academic language development.

<sup>4</sup> Extensive Support Needs includes student use of assistive technology in addition to educational technology.

### Instructional Cycle 2: Assessment-Driven Instruction for Students with IEPs (continued)

Cycle Step	What You Need to Do	Evidence to Be Submitted
<p><b>Step 4:</b> <b>Apply</b> (template provided)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the evidence you observed of student learning and accomplishment of the learning goal(s) and describe               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what was most and least effective;</li> <li>• a goal for increasing instructional effectiveness; and</li> <li>• how you facilitated instructional support personnel.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Plan and conduct a follow-up instructional activity based on your analysis of the range of assessments (informal, student self, formal). Your follow-up activity will be either               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Re-teaching:</b> For those students who did not meet the grade-level content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s), if appropriate, implement a new approach to instruction to support their continued progress.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <li>• <b>Extension:</b> If students met or exceeded the grade-level content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s), if appropriate, connect or apply instruction to develop new learning by building on what your students were able to demonstrate during the learning segment.</li> </li></ul> <li>• Describe how you decided on your instructional approach, in relation to IEP goals for each student in the learning group, including facilitation of instructional support personnel, in the follow-up re-teaching or extension activity and how that change was informed by the analysis of the range of assessment results from Steps 2 and 3.</li> <li>• Video record the entire follow-up activity and select 1 video clip that demonstrates how you adjusted or built on your instruction based on the analysis of the range of assessment results.</li>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Part K:</b> Written Narrative: Next Steps for Learning and Re-Teaching or Extension Activity Description (no more than 7 pages) for the target learning group</li> <li>• <b>Part L:</b> 1 Annotated Video Clip (no more than 5 minutes) of Follow-Up Instruction (Re-Teaching or Extension Activity) for the target learning group</li> </ul>

## Rubric Essential Questions

For each cycle, rubrics are aligned to the specified steps of the instructional cycle (plan, teach and assess, reflect, and apply). Each rubric is framed by an essential question that outlines the knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed within the rubric. The tables below list the essential questions for the CalTPA rubrics contained in each instructional cycle. Refer to the rubrics in each instructional cycle guide for performance level descriptors and alignment to the TPEs.

### Instructional Cycle 1: Learning About Students with IEPs and Planning Instruction

Step 1: Plan	
<b>Rubric 1.1:</b>	How does the candidate’s proposed learning goal(s) connect with prior knowledge and define specific outcomes for students? Based on UDL principles, how do proposed content-specific learning activities, instructional and grouping strategies, and facilitation of instructional support personnel support, engage, <b>and/or</b> challenge all students to meet the learning goal(s) of the lesson?
<b>Rubric 1.2:</b>	How does the candidate use UDL principles to plan instruction using knowledge of FS1’s assets and learning needs to support meaningful engagement with the content-specific lesson goal(s) and ELD goal(s)?
<b>Rubric 1.3:</b>	How does the candidate use UDL principles to plan instruction using knowledge of FS2’s assets and learning needs to support meaningful engagement with the content-specific lesson goal(s) and, if appropriate, ELD goal(s)?
<b>Rubric 1.4:</b>	How does the candidate plan to use UDL principles in instruction using knowledge of FS3’s assets and learning needs to support meaningful engagement with the content-specific lesson goal(s) and, if appropriate, ELD goal(s) and address the student’s well-being by creating a safe and positive learning environment during or outside of the lesson?
Step 2: Teach and Assess	
<b>Rubric 1.5:</b>	How does the candidate maintain a positive and safe learning environment that supports all students to access and meet the content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s)? How does the candidate support students in making connections between prior learning and the current lesson and establish clear learning expectations?
<b>Rubric 1.6:</b>	How does the candidate actively engage students in higher-order thinking, monitor/informally assess their understanding, and explain to students next steps for content learning <b>and/or</b> skills?
Step 3: Reflect	
<b>Rubric 1.7:</b>	How does the candidate reflect on (citing evidence from Steps 1 <b>and/or</b> 2) the impact of their asset- and needs-based lesson planning, teaching, and informal assessment of student learning and instructional support personnel to analyze how effective the lesson was in supporting the whole class/small learning group and the 3 focus students in meeting the content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s) and creating a language-rich environment?
Step 4: Apply	
<b>Rubric 1.8:</b>	How will the candidate apply what they have learned about UDL principles in Cycle 1 (citing evidence from Steps 1, 2, <b>and/or</b> 3) about students’ learning to strengthen and extend students’ understanding of content, higher-order thinking, and academic language development to determine next steps for instruction, including collaboration with <b>and/or</b> facilitation of instructional support personnel?

## Instructional Cycle 2: Assessment-Driven Instruction for Students with IEPs

Step 1: Plan	
<b>Rubric 2.1:</b>	How does the candidate’s learning segment plan provide appropriate grade-level content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s), if appropriate, assessments, rubrics, and facilitation of instructional support personnel that offer multiple ways for all students to demonstrate knowledge and affirm and validate students’ assets, including strengths, experiences, and backgrounds?
<b>Rubric 2.2:</b>	How does the candidate plan a learning segment in which assessments and rubrics, instructional strategies, and lessons align and build on one another to provide a progression of learning that develops the students’ concepts and skills to achieve the standards-based learning goal(s)?
Step 2: Teach and Assess	
<b>Rubric 2.3:</b>	How does the candidate support student development and demonstration of academic language in relation to the grade-level content-specific learning goal(s)?
<b>Rubric 2.4:</b>	How does the candidate incorporate educational technology (digital/virtual tools and resources) to provide opportunities for students to use these tools and resources to enhance, improve, <b>and/or</b> demonstrate knowledge, skills, <b>and/or</b> abilities related to the learning goal(s)?
<b>Rubric 2.5:</b>	How does the candidate use informal assessment to monitor the students’ deep learning of content (age <b>and/or</b> developmentally appropriate higher-order thinking skills) and adjust instruction to meet the needs of all learners?
<b>Rubric 2.6:</b>	How does the candidate model and engage the students in self-assessment to build their awareness of what they have learned, provide feedback, and support their progress toward meeting grade-level content-specific learning goal(s) and ELD goal(s), if appropriate?
<b>Rubric 2.7:</b>	How does the candidate use results of informal assessments <b>and/or</b> student self-assessment to provide feedback to the students about how to improve or revise their work to continue progress toward <b>and/or</b> beyond the learning goal(s)? How does the candidate facilitate instructional support personnel to assist students to access content during the lesson <b>and/or</b> engage with informal <b>and/or</b> student self-assessments?
Step 3: Reflect	
<b>Rubric 2.8:</b>	How does the candidate analyze the <b>formal assessment</b> results based on the rubric and identify and describe learning patterns <b>and/or</b> trends for the students and determine what was most and least effective about their instructional approach in relation to the grade-level content-specific learning goal(s)? How does the candidate provide feedback to families <b>and/or</b> guardians for the students to support caregivers in understanding the assessment results and the role they will play in supporting student learning beyond the classroom?
Step 4: Apply	
<b>Rubric 2.9:</b>	How does the candidate use the analysis of results from informal assessment, student self-assessment, and formal assessment to plan and teach a follow-up learning activity and provide a rationale for the activity choice, citing evidence?