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STATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR QUALITY TEACHER PREPARATION

Education Commission of the States and the National Center for Teacher Transformation

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Introduction

There are increasing concerns that the disconnect between teacher preparation programs and K-12 schools has resulted in teacher education graduates who are not optimally prepared to teach today's diverse population of students the new, more rigorous state proficiency standards. In an effort to more effectively integrate teacher preparation with the increasingly complex realities of today's classrooms, some states are exploring how the creation of partnerships between K-12 and postsecondary education institutions can create greater responsiveness to K-12 workforce needs. Questions that states must consider as they encourage greater collaboration between teacher education and K-12 schools include:

- Are teacher preparation program requirements aligned with state K-12 standards for what students should know and be able to do at various course levels?
- Is there a set of performance standards for teachers and/or teacher education programs that encourage greater collaboration between K-12 schools and teacher education programs?
- Are data gathered on the quality and effectiveness of teacher graduates available for use in improving the teacher preparation programs from which teachers graduate?
- Are there models of effective partnerships that systematically result in the continuous improvement of teacher education programs and schools?

The Education Commission of the States and the National Center for Teacher Transformation (NCTT) at St. Petersburg College in Florida examined these questions as part of a project to provide policymakers and education leaders with information and resources on how stronger partnerships between school districts and postsecondary education institutions can drive continuous improvement in both teacher education and teacher quality.

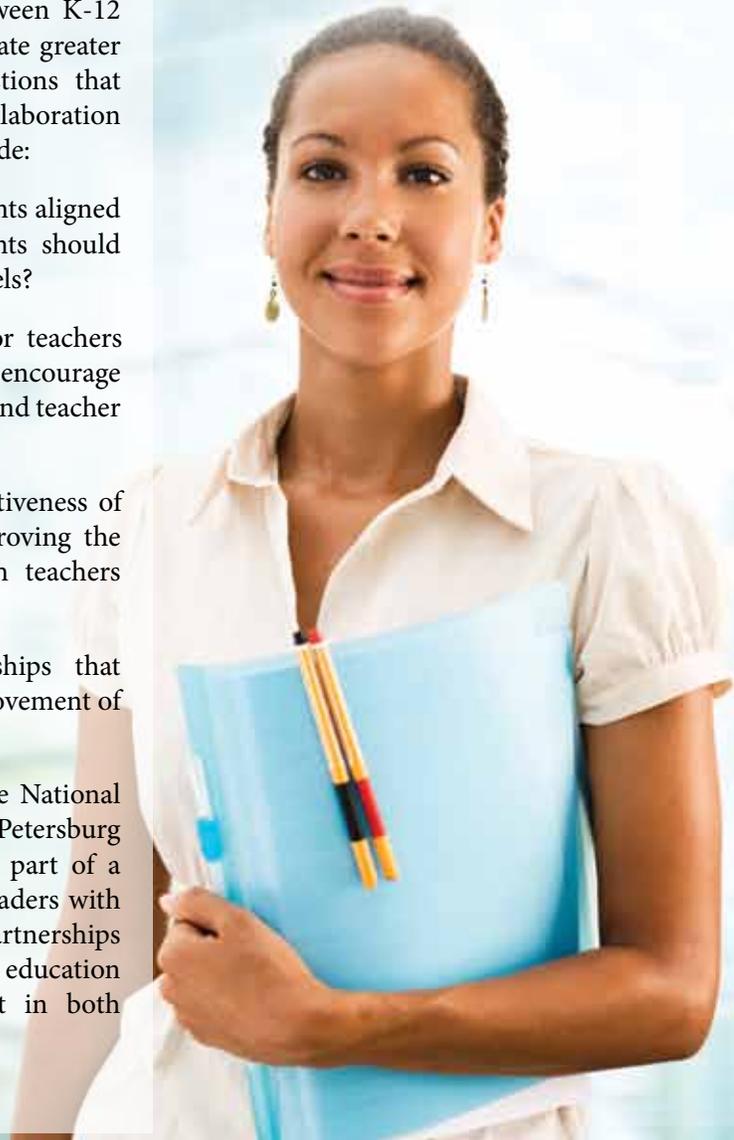




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In April 2008, the Education Commission of the States and the National Center for Teacher Transformation convened state education leaders to explore how states can develop stronger collaboration between K-12 institutions and teacher education programs for the purpose of linking teacher preparation to improved student achievement. The ideas discussed during that meeting are the foundation for this issue paper.

The movement for greater accountability in education has propelled the education industry into the 21st century through calls for more sophisticated systems for evaluating and improving the quality of instruction in the nation's classrooms. Increased global competitiveness, a stagnation in the education levels of U.S. citizens, the persistent achievement gap between low-income students and their higher-income counterparts, and No Child Left Behind have resulted in a more profound and urgent need for systemic change in America's education system.

While the epicenter of the current accountability movement has been in states, school districts and individual schools, the tremors have been felt by teachers, teacher unions and teacher education programs because of the recognition that high-quality instruction is the primary and most important factor in improving student achievement.

As the accountability movement continues to shed a brighter light on the education industry, it is important for teacher education programs to develop continuous improvement models that will impress state, district and school leaders. These programs must be able to train new teachers in a manner that will result in increased student

achievement and will in turn enable schools and school districts to meet accountability measures outlined by state governments.

Concern about the effectiveness of teacher education programs is not a new phenomenon. Many reports, speeches and editorials argue that teacher education programs are disconnected, unresponsive entities that do not train students in the skills they need for 21st century classrooms. One more prominent study expressing concern for the current state of teacher preparation was by Arthur Levine, former president of the Teachers College at Columbia University. Levine's examination of the impact of teacher education graduates on student achievement identified several critical concerns about the effectiveness of teacher education programs. His primary findings include:

Inadequate Preparation. Both teacher education program alumni and the principals who hired them reported that they did not possess the wide range of skills necessary to be effective, which include: integrating technology into the curriculum, using student assessments to drive practice, implementing curriculum standards, maintaining classroom order or addressing the needs of special populations such as students with disabilities and students from diverse backgrounds.

Lack of a Standard Approach. The inconsistency in the delivery of teacher education from program to program yields inconsistent results. There is no common practice on how to link theory to practice and how field experiences are built into programs.





Disconnected Faculty. Many teacher education faculty have not been in a K-12 classroom in years and as a result, have not updated their lessons. Courses often are not aligned, and engagement with arts and sciences faculty across the institution is limited.

Low Admission Standards. Universities often do not value their teacher education programs as legitimate academic departments. Programs have low admission standards that lead to increased enrollments and more revenue for the institution.

Insufficient Quality Control. State licensure standards and program accreditation disproportionately focus on process and not enough on program outcomes.

Disparities in Institutional Quality. While Masters I universities produce more than half of the teacher education graduates each year, the quality of their programs often are not competitive with doctoral programs. Masters I programs have higher student-to-faculty ratios and spend less money per student than doctoral institutions. These disparities bear themselves out in the quality of graduates, with students graduating from doctoral institutions having a more significant impact on student achievement.¹

Levine's study makes the case for many of the common criticisms aimed at teacher education programs. While many can argue with the substance of the findings, they do reveal some important issues teacher education programs must consider as they develop strategies for maintaining and improving the quality of their programs. Important issues include:

- ♦ The role of state and accreditation accountability systems to set appropriate standards of quality that drive institutional improvement
- ♦ The relationship between teacher education programs and the schools that employ their graduates
- ♦ The measurement of teacher education program outcomes such as demonstrated competencies of teacher education graduates and the academic achievement of their students.

These three elements are playing a significant role in the debate on how teacher education programs can meet the need for highly effective teachers in our nation's schools. There are many state policies and programs that attempt to address these key policy elements. While some efforts have more impact than others, it is important to realize that the

common denominator in all efforts will lie in the quality of the relationship among state policymakers, teacher education leaders, school districts and schools.

Partnerships to Drive Teacher Education Improvement



Partnerships between K-12 school districts and teacher education programs are a logical mechanism for addressing many of the challenges facing teacher preparation. Building systems where teacher education programs: provide substantive field experiences for teacher candidates, customize professional development, and utilize student achievement data to guide continuous improvement in their programs can be achieved through partnerships between teacher education programs and the schools that employ their graduates.

While most teacher education programs have arrangements with school districts to provide field experiences and other services to school districts, many of those arrangements are not viewed as a mechanism for systemic change in teacher education programs or schools.² At a time when state accountability systems are driving continuous improvement processes for schools and school districts, partnerships with teacher education programs provide a more comprehensive system for supporting the improvement of schools, the supply of teachers, the professional development teachers receive on the job and the programs that provide training to both pre-service and current teachers.³

As states seek to improve teacher quality through greater accountability of teacher education programs, some consideration should be given to policies that encourage teacher education programs to engage in continuous improvement strategies with the K-12 schools and school districts they serve.

A review of accountability systems and continuous improvement efforts provides insight into how to effectively marry these two important components into a state strategy that leads to stronger partnerships that increase the quality of teacher education programs.



Leveraging the Accountability Movement to Drive Continuous Improvement

The development of uniform proficiency standards for students and the use of student assessment data to measure student achievement to those standards has been a sea change in the education industry. Since the passage of No Child Left Behind, state investments in the development of academic standards, student assessments and longitudinal data systems have proliferated at a breakneck speed. While most of the waves made around academic standards and student achievement data have focused on public accountability of schools and school districts, a quiet undercurrent has been the use of student achievement data to drive continuous improvement processes in schools and school districts.

Likewise, new standards for measuring the effectiveness of teachers in classrooms likely will lead to greater public accountability for teacher education programs. This focus on standards for both student achievement and teacher effectiveness presents a unique opportunity for stronger partnerships among schools, school districts and teacher preparation programs. Following is a further examination of the current trends in the accountability movement that lay the groundwork for greater collaboration between K-12 education and teacher education.

Longitudinal Data Systems and Value-added Assessment

The movement toward longitudinal data systems that allow states and their education institutions to track the progress of students from year to year has become a critical innovation in efforts to drive continuous improvement. The Data Quality Campaign (DQC) — which is a partnership of national education organizations including the Education Commission of the States — has been the primary advocate for states to build longitudinal data systems.⁴ In its 10 Essential Elements of a Longitudinal Data System, DQC argues that along with creating a unique, statewide student identifier that connects student data across years and education institutions, states also should develop a teacher identifier that can match teachers to the students they teach.⁵ Currently, 21 states have created data systems that incorporate a unique teacher identifier, allowing them to track the impact individual teachers have on the student achievement of their students.⁶

Longitudinal data systems will enable states to track student progress over time. Commonly known as value-added assessment, education stakeholders are able to examine in

greater detail the impact that school districts, individual schools and teachers have on student achievement.

Value-added assessment is an important and critical tool for driving continuous improvement within schools and teacher education programs. Studies of value-added assessment have found it to be a powerful way to link the impact of teachers on student learning. In addition, a value-added model provides the opportunity for teacher education programs to isolate various teacher characteristics to determine which have the greatest impact on student learning.⁷

State leaders have looked to value-added data as a way to evaluate teacher performance for promotion, tenure and compensation purposes. Likewise, there is a growing movement to use value-added data to examine the quality of teacher education programs.

While this approach shows great promise, there are several limitations to current value-added analyses that need to be worked out before they can be a reliable tool for such high-stakes decisions as teacher promotion and accountability of teacher education programs. Small class sizes and school-based factors such as the demographics of the student body and variability in the delivery of student assessments are just some of the factors to consider when creating a reliable system that utilizes value-added data to evaluate the impact of teachers on student learning.⁸ As state and institutional researchers resolve these issues, it is safe to say that value-added systems will be an important element of both state accountability systems for teacher education and a valuable tool for continuous improvement of teacher education programs.

Linking Student Achievement Data to Teacher Skills and Competencies

As states seek to link student achievement data to the teachers that provide instruction, there is a parallel effort to set performance standards for teachers to ensure they deliver instruction that utilizes the skills and strategies that are positively related to student achievement. States such as Missouri⁹ and Colorado¹⁰ are outlining their expectations for teacher preparation programs regarding the skills and competencies teachers should possess upon graduation from a teacher education program. This movement to performance standards is leading to an examination of teacher education programs to ensure their curriculum is in line with these standards.¹¹ In addition to being an accountability mechanism for states, performance standards provide a valuable baseline that schools,



school districts and teacher education programs can use to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers who graduate from teacher education programs. Standards provide an opportunity to evaluate which skills and competencies are most important to student achievement. By connecting student performance on standardized assessments to the skills that teachers employ in the classroom, states can determine the skills that are most positively connected to improved student achievement.

Linking student achievement data to the specific skills and competencies of teacher education graduates is an important component of a system for evaluating the effectiveness of teacher education programs. Even the most reliable value-added data is of limited value to teacher education programs if there is not some effort to link the achievement of students against the specific skills and competencies that teachers employ in classroom settings. Furthermore, state performance standards for teachers can not effectively lead to improved student achievement unless they are tested against actual student achievement data. As states set performance standards, they should consider working closely with K-12 schools and teacher education programs to evaluate the effectiveness of state standards by examining whether the application of the skills outlined in state standards increase student achievement.

Efforts, such as the Renaissance Group, have set an important precedent for how to use teacher performance standards and properly designed assessment tools to measure teacher candidate competency. The teacher education programs that make up the Renaissance Group use teacher work samples and portfolios to measure the effectiveness of their students. According to those involved in the Renaissance Group, the process of working with K-12 schools and teacher educators to develop the teacher work-sample design resulted in a change in the curriculum of many teacher education programs.¹²

Evidence from the Renaissance Group demonstrates the positive impact that assessing teacher performance against established standards has on student achievement. More systematic attempts to connect student achievement data to performance-based standards and assessments provide great potential for improving teacher education programs, the effectiveness of their graduates and student achievement by providing real evidence of the impact of various teaching approaches on student achievement.

Employer and Graduate Satisfaction Surveys

Several states require teacher education programs to survey past graduates and the schools and school districts that employ their graduates to assess the effectiveness of their programs.¹³ These surveys provide critical feedback from the primary customers of teacher education programs and in turn, result in more effective teacher education programs.

While these surveys can be an important source of information for programs, they are not a replacement for an ongoing relationship between K-12 schools and teacher education programs where specific feedback about graduates, as well as opportunities to create customized professional development for current teachers, can be developed and delivered. Surveys should be part of a comprehensive system of evaluating teacher education programs that facilitate more substantive partnerships with K-12 schools and school districts.

Developing an evaluation system for teacher education programs that incorporates value-added student data, the assessment of the teacher education graduate's skills and feedback from recent graduates and employers of teacher education professionals can be the foundation of accountability systems for teacher education programs and the impetus for partnerships with K-12 schools and school districts. In turn, partnerships can drive continuous improvement of teacher education programs, the development of effective field experiences, mentoring of new teachers and professional development for current teachers.

Creating Partnerships to Drive School and Teacher Education Reform

Most teacher education programs can tout a variety of relationships with K-12 schools for coordinating field experiences for teacher education candidates and delivering professional development to existing teachers. These activities are viewed as essential elements to teacher education programs, but it is unclear whether these activities are customized to meet the needs of the schools and school districts that employ teacher education graduates.¹⁴ In fact, some of these arrangements can undermine more systemic reform by providing an isolated solution that is not related or connected to school, district or teacher education program reform efforts.¹⁵ According to Zimpher and Howey, partnerships between K-12 schools, teacher education programs and the universities that house them enable a more systemic view of education reform that can align school improvement efforts with

teacher education reform efforts on college campuses. The end result can be teachers who have the skills and content knowledge necessary to teach effectively in classrooms and participate in school and districtwide reform efforts.¹⁶

Players in Successful Partnerships

Creating a successful partnership requires meaningful involvement from an influential set of stakeholders responsible for developing, implementing and sustaining reform in teacher education. Partners must include key institutional leaders as well as K-12 teachers and postsecondary faculty who can provide important on-the-ground insight into the viability of reforms. When developing a partnership with the goal of creating more systemic reform of schools and teacher education programs, the following players should be at the table:

District superintendents provide a powerful convening function and can ensure that reforms are taken system wide

University presidents communicate that teacher education is a primary way the university serves the larger community and should be viewed as a responsibility of the university as a whole

Arts and sciences deans and faculty at universities provide a critical linkage between teacher education programs and the rest of the university to ensure that teacher education programs are aligned with state curriculum content standards

Current teachers and school leaders assist in the development and implementation of mentoring for new teachers, planning professional development, and redesigning curriculum and instruction for teacher education candidates.¹⁷

Key Aspects of Successful Partnerships

An excellent source of information on systemic partnerships is found from the results of the U.S. Department of Education's *Partnership for Reform: Changing Teacher Preparation Through The Title II HEA Partnership Program*. The program funded 25 separate initiatives to "make teacher-training programs accountable for producing high-quality teachers and providing sustained and quality pre-service field experiences and professional development opportunities."¹⁸ A comprehensive evaluation of these partnerships sought to determine which aspects of these partnerships were most effective. The final evaluation provides important information on the effectiveness of partnerships in the following areas:



- ◆ Partner relations and organizational changes
- ◆ Teacher preparation reform efforts
- ◆ Partner schools and school districts
- ◆ Institutionalization of partnerships.

Among the key findings from the evaluation are:

- ◆ The importance of mission-driven initiatives that involve key leaders from both schools and universities
- ◆ Improved offerings for teachers and teacher candidates
- ◆ More internal accountability within teacher education programs
- ◆ The importance of physical proximity to partnerships
- ◆ The value of identifying measurable goals for the partnership.



Key Lessons Learned from U.S. Department of Education's Title II HEA Partnership Program

Partner Relations and Organizational Changes

- ♦ Partnerships that are mission driven and have formalized systems of cooperation are more effective.
- ♦ Support from the university president, deans and department heads is important for creating stronger collaboration between teacher education and arts and sciences departments.

Teacher Preparation Reform Efforts

- ♦ Course content in teacher education programs is revised by aligning teacher education and arts and sciences courses with teacher and student content standards for the state.
- ♦ Participation in the partnership results in the offering of field experiences earlier and more often in teacher education programs.
- ♦ Teacher education faculty in residence at local schools results in more frequent mentorship of new teachers and support for principals and teachers.
- ♦ Teacher education faculty pay more attention to internal accountability measures and make reforms to entry and exit standards.

Partner Schools and Districts

- ♦ The most effective ways to involve current teachers in the partnership are by mentoring new teachers and creating professional development opportunities.
- ♦ The scope of the partnership (local, regional, state or national) does not negatively impact the involvement of teachers.
- ♦ Principals see the greatest collaboration occurs between teachers and teacher education faculty when supporting new teachers and assessing instructional practices in student internships.

Institutionalization

- ♦ University and district leaders' involvement is important to sustaining the partnership.
- ♦ Partnerships based on previous collaborative relationships are easier to sustain.
- ♦ Partnerships that provide rewards and prestige for participation help sustain commitment.
- ♦ Geographic distance between the university and the participating schools can undermine sustainability.
- ♦ Turnover of key personnel is a constant and must be planned for by participating partners.
- ♦ Partnerships must have measurable goals for tracking progress of the partnership.



Promising State Policies and Practice That Support Partnerships to Improve Teacher Quality

The emergence of value-added assessments, the addition of teacher identifiers in P-20 data systems, and performance-based standards and assessments for teachers are providing the building blocks for the next generation of accountability for schools, school districts and teacher education programs. Individually, these policies can make substantive contributions to the improvement of teacher quality. Together, as integrated policy elements, they provide the opportunity to create a comprehensive approach to continuous improvement through powerful partnerships between K-12 and teacher education programs. To date, there are few examples of state partnerships that fully leverage each of these policy elements into a comprehensive system. However, many states are providing key leadership in one or more of these policy elements that provide insight into the development of systemic state partnerships to improve teacher education. Following are some promising models.

Louisiana Value Added Teacher Assessment Model

In Louisiana, high-level support for establishing a comprehensive system to evaluate teacher quality has been evident since 1999. Concerns about the low postsecondary completion rate of teacher candidates, the low percentage of students of color in teacher education programs, poor performance on the PRAXIS exams teacher education candidates take to demonstrate minimum teaching competency and the high percentage of uncertified teachers moved Louisiana policy leaders into action.

Policymakers, including the governor, State Board of Elementary & Secondary Education and the State Board of Regents created a Blue Ribbon Commission on Teaching Quality (later renamed Blue Ribbon Commission for Teacher Excellence). The commission's efforts resulted in state policies requiring all teacher preparation programs to either redesign existing or establish new programs with the goals of having all programs be nationally accredited, deliver content-specific PRAXIS tests to all candidates and align their curriculum with state and national content standards.

The commission established four levels for measuring the effectiveness of teacher programs. The levels of effectiveness reflect a systematic effort to embed within teacher education programs evidence-based, continuous improvement processes responsive to the needs of teacher candidates and the school districts that hire them. The four levels move programs through effective planning processes, implementation, evaluation of impact and accountability for student learning. Current progress on the four levels is as follows:

Level 1 Effectiveness of Planning – From October 2001 to July 2003, all of Louisiana's teacher preparation programs completed comprehensive plans to recruit, prepare and support new teachers. Plans were developed by college of education, colleges of arts and sciences, and school district personnel. All teacher education programs were aligned with state content and teacher standards, and evaluated by national experts.

Level 2 Effectiveness of Implementation – All of Louisiana's teacher preparation programs have been accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and are using the Web-based performance assessment system called PASS-PORT to assess the knowledge, skills and dispositions of teacher candidates.

Level 3 Effectiveness of Impact – All of Louisiana's teacher preparation programs are being assigned Teacher Preparation Performance Scores on an annual basis (exemplary, high-performing, satisfactory, at-risk, or low-performing). The scores are based a wide range of variables to include rate of completion on the Praxis exam, number of graduates who meet all certification requirements, satisfaction that new graduates express with the program, number of minority graduates and the number of graduates in high-need teaching fields such as math and science.

Level 4 Effectiveness of Growth in Student Learning – A value-added teacher preparation program assessment model was developed during the 2003-04 school year and piloted during the 2004-05 school year in 10 of Louisiana's 68 school districts. This new model uses student achievement data of students in grades 4-9 to assess whether or not Louisiana's teacher preparation programs are preparing teachers whose students demonstrate academic growth.¹⁹

Initial data on redesigned teacher preparation programs show that teachers completing these programs performed better than, or as well as, experienced teachers. Additionally, alternative certification programs were of a shorter duration

and produced graduates faster. Nearly 100% of teacher graduates passed the PRAXIS exams and the percent of teachers with standard teaching certificates improved from 86% to almost 96% in six years.²⁰

Ohio's Teacher Quality Partnership

With support from the Ohio Board of Regents, the Ohio Department of Education and several private corporations, Ohio's postsecondary institutions came together to study how teacher preparation practices impact student achievement.²¹ The Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) seeks to improve teacher preparation by collecting data on new and practicing teachers and raising the academic achievement of students in Ohio schools.

TQP consists of a consortium of all teacher preparation institutions in Ohio, the Ohio Board of Regents and the Ohio Department of Education. TQP is governed by a board of directors that includes education deans from

four universities: University of Cincinnati, Cleveland State University, University of Dayton and Ohio State University. Additionally, TQP has an advisory board that monitors project goals and planning efforts.

Through five interrelated research projects, TQP is tackling a comprehensive and statewide longitudinal research effort to learn about the characteristics of effective teachers, and identify teacher preparation and professional learning strategies that increase student achievement at different grade levels, in different subjects and with different types of students. The findings of the research are influencing the effectiveness of teacher education programs and informing educational policy on teacher development programs in Ohio.²²

Alabama Governor's Commission on Quality Teaching

In January 2009, The Alabama Governor's Commission on Quality Teaching issued its second report – *Innovations in Teaching: Creating Professional Pathways for Alabama Teachers*. Alabama Governor Bob Riley created the commission to recommend initiatives that would increase student achievement by improving teacher effectiveness.

This latest report contains seven recommendations targeting:

- ♦ The creation of professional pathways for teachers to advance in the profession, without having to move to administration and leave the classroom
- ♦ Partnerships between colleges of education and P-12 schools and districts that would improve teacher preparation
- ♦ Consolidation and expansion of teacher recruitment efforts
- ♦ Improvement and expansion of alternative routes to teacher certification
- ♦ Expansion of the Alabama Teacher Mentoring Program (a program created through a previous recommendation by the Governor's Commission)
- ♦ Adoption of a new definition for "professional development"
- ♦ Continuation of the biennial Take 20 Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey.





For the purposes of this issue paper, the most significant recommendation of the commission was the development of partnerships between P-12 schools and teacher education programs for the purpose of improving teacher preparation.

According to the commission, better and more meaningful partnerships between colleges of education and the schools and districts in which teachers are needed are critical. Teacher preparation programs must be in touch with and responsive to the needs of schools and districts when preparing new teachers. Over the years, content and pedagogy have changed, as have the needs and expectations of students, families and communities. Just as schools and districts are held to high levels of accountability and achievement for all students, teacher preparation programs must be held accountable for the quality and effectiveness of their teacher graduates.²³

Arkansas Educational Renewal Zones

In 2003, the Arkansas General Assembly passed Act 106 and Act 97 to establish the Division of Education Renewal Zones within the Arkansas Department of Education for the purpose of creating partnerships of public school districts, education service cooperatives and public higher education institutions to improve public school performance and academic achievement.²⁴

The purpose of each renewal zone is for the partners to work together on continuous improvement processes, more efficient use of resources and to access the expertise of postsecondary institutions and other education providers to support public schools.

The renewal zones will use partnerships between K-12 schools and teacher education programs to evaluate and redesign teacher preparation programs and professional development programs that meet the needs of the schools and communities within the renewal zones.²⁵

The Division of Education Renewal strongly encourages renewal zone partnerships to engage in a seven-step process to implement their partnerships. Many of the steps are consistent with best practices related to the establishment of partnerships, including:

1. Identifying partners to include the school of education and the college of arts and sciences, public schools, local community colleges and other key community leaders
2. Establishing a common vision and understanding of partnership's goals

3. Developing tentative organizational plans for supporting student achievement in schools
4. Assessing organization plans to ensure alignment with needs of individual schools
5. Sustaining a seamless partnership strategy that continuously assesses school needs, refines initial plans, identifies service gaps, negotiates across institutional boundaries and clarifies partner roles
6. Implementing and revising strategy as necessary.²⁶

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

Alaska is working to improve quality and accountability in its teacher preparation programs. The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (EED) has the authority and responsibility to accredit these programs, using the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) process, or a state-developed system that is substantially equivalent to the NCATE process. In recent years in Alaska, the NCATE process has been used as there was no state accreditation system in place.

In 2004, the president of the University of Alaska requested an alternative system to NCATE be developed as a second accreditation option for Alaska's teacher education programs. In 2005, the State Board of Education & Early Development (EED) approved moving forward with the creation of a performance-based teacher education accreditation system.

The Director of the Division of Teaching and Learning Support for EED has been working with representatives from Alaska's colleges, universities and school districts to create this new, performance-based system. While not yet finalized, progress has been made. As of this writing, the new system likely will include many of the following measures and data:

- ♦ Teacher preparation graduates' Praxis I scores (ability to read, write and compute)
- ♦ Teacher preparation graduates' Praxis II scores (content knowledge)
- ♦ Performance of teacher preparation graduates on the Alaska Teacher Performance Review, which evaluates competency of teacher candidates through classroom assessments and paper documentation to ensure graduates can plan a lesson, deliver a standards-based lesson and demonstrate proficiency on observable and measurable Alaska Beginning Teacher Standards

- ♦ Survey of principals who hired the graduates to assess preparedness and effectiveness of new teachers
- ♦ Survey of graduates to assess their perceptions of their preparedness and effectiveness
- ♦ Survey of student performance at the end of practicum, internship or student teaching that is completed by the college supervisor and supervising teacher.

EED worked with representatives from a variety of educational entities in Alaska to develop Beginning Teacher Standards, which were approved by the Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development in mid-2008 and will be integrated throughout the new performance-based teacher preparation program accreditation process.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) has allowed agency sharing of many data elements. The MOA will be updated to include new sources of data as they are identified.²⁷

The Boston Teacher Residency

A good example of how a local school district and a teacher preparation program are making changes that will result in new teachers being better prepared to teach in today's classrooms can be found in the Boston Teacher Residency.

The residency was created by then Boston Public Schools' (BPS) superintendent Thomas Payzant to address high teacher turnover rates and shortages of specialists and educators of color. "They wanted people who were really prepared to do Boston's work," explains Program Director Jesse Solomon. "People who were committed to Boston, who knew Boston, who were ready to hit the ground running and prepared to stay."

The close collaboration between BPS and the University of Massachusetts Boston resulted in a 13-month teacher training program modeled on a medical residency. The residency starts during the summer, with courses designed by BPS.

Students spend the entire school year working in classrooms and alongside a mentoring master teacher. Students experience what being a teacher involves on a day-to-day basis — routine events, lesson planning, student assessments, special programs and events, parent-community-school collaboration, etc. Students learn first-hand what to expect during the course of a school year and build relationships with the students in their classrooms.

When students successfully complete their residency, they are awarded a master's degree and are expected to commit

to the district for a three-year period of teaching. BPS continues to provide mentoring during this time.

Another innovation of this residency program is that resident students receive an \$11,100 stipend plus a \$10,000 loan to cover most of the \$30,000 cost per student. For every year a graduate works in the BPS, a third of the loan is forgiven.

The Boston Teacher Residency program prepares 100 new teachers every year and is the largest feeder program into Boston's schools. Recent statistics show more than 90% of the residency graduates are still teaching in these schools. This is evidence of the positive impact this K-12 and postsecondary partnership has had on revamping teacher preparation.

The Boston Residency program reflects a more proactive effort by the Boston Public Schools to become actively involved in the preparation of their teachers. The program reflects a more "market-driven" approach by the Boston Public Schools which communicates to teacher preparation programs that they must ensure that their graduates have the capacity to meet the unique needs of Boston students.

Milwaukee Partnership Academy

The Milwaukee Partnership Academy is a partnership of six colleges of education and the Milwaukee Public Schools to assess the impact teacher education graduates have on student achievement. A key focus of the partnership is the development of professional learning communities in each of the Milwaukee Public Schools, as well as among the participating teacher education programs. These communities ensure that all teacher education programs are sharing knowledge and information on how best to serve Milwaukee schools. The result is greater collaboration and less competition.²⁸

The partnership is developing a collaborative assessment system that examines the district's hiring, placement and orientation of teachers; the induction of teachers by individual schools; and new teacher performance. The assessment of teachers goes beyond the value-added measurement of student achievement, to include the district's curricular goals and the use of assessments by teachers to track progress on proficiency standards.²⁹

The partnership also is developing a set of characteristics of highly effective urban classrooms that uses state standards as a baseline for determining the practices that contribute to student success in economically and culturally diverse classrooms.³⁰

The end result is a system that builds on state standards to develop more refined characteristics of effective instruction that consider the unique culture and context of the schools and school districts the participating teacher education programs serve by preparing their teachers.

Anne Arundel Community College's TEACH Institute

Maryland's Anne Arundel Community College has applied a customized training model to the offering of professional development for teachers from area schools. Community colleges are well known for their partnerships with employers to provide customized training in specific skills and technologies related to a particular industry. When done well, customized training generates revenue for community colleges by being responsive to the needs of employers and delivering training to current employees in a timely and efficient manner. Customized training programs must be informed of the latest technology and approaches in a given industry, and must be able to offer training in a manner and timeframe that meets the specific needs of the customer — namely the employer.



Anne Arundel's Teacher Education and Child Care Institute (TEACH) is housed within the college's customized training division and provides training to local school district personnel through a customized approach that identifies the specific needs of the school district and delivers the appropriate training to meet those needs.

The TEACH Institute is a component of the University Consortium that has brought together area four-year institutions, Anne Arundel Community College and local public school districts to work in partnership to improve the quality of teaching and teacher preparation. In addition to the professional development services delivered by the TEACH Institute, the consortium is a place where faculty and administration at Anne Arundel and postsecondary institutions can align Anne Arundel's Associate of Arts in Teaching with the baccalaureate programs offered at four-year institutions. In addition, the consortium has organized a career pathway into teaching, beginning with high school students, through its Academy of Teaching Professions and partnered with K-12 and postsecondary institutions to develop teacher education and professional development in career and technical education.³¹ The consortium is a seamless partnership that drives continuous improvement in teacher preparation all along the P-20 pipeline.

The Florida Department of Education and St. Petersburg College

The Florida Department of Education encourages strong partnerships between K-12 and postsecondary education through a variety of mechanisms including:

- ♦ The Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, which provide clear content and competency standards that all pre-service educators must complete to earn certification
- ♦ A requirement that colleges of education in Florida must assess the impact of their students and graduates on P-12 student learning during their internships and first year of teaching
- ♦ An expectation that all faculty in colleges of education are engaged with at least one P-12 school in work that is related to the content area they teach within teacher preparation programs
- ♦ A requirement that colleges of education have plans to provide professional development to their graduates during their first two years in the classroom.



St. Petersburg College (SPC) leveraged these state requirements to partner with P-12 schools in an effort to continuously improve their College of Education and to respond to the needs of the P-12 schools that their graduates serve. The strategies that St. Petersburg College implemented include:

- ♦ The College of Education Advisory Board at SPC, which includes district superintendents and board of education members, reviews the educator preparation programs to ensure alignment with school district needs
- ♦ Professional development programs customized to meet the specific needs of schools and school districts
- ♦ The Student Learning Inquiry Project requires all students to examine student learning data to study the practices that positively impact student achievement.

Creating a Model of Effective Partnerships to Improve Teacher Preparation



A review of the literature and some of the more prominent examples of state and institutional efforts provides some insight into the key policy elements that can contribute to the development of teacher education programs that are accountable to state policymakers, responsive to K-12 schools and engage in continuous improvement processes for teacher education programs and schools. Key policy elements include:

- ♦ Ensure P-20 data systems include a teacher identifier that can connect student achievement to individual teachers.
- ♦ Set state performance standards for teachers that outline the skills, competencies and dispositions teacher graduates must possess to be effective in classrooms.
- ♦ Assess teacher performance through a variety of methods including performance assessments and value-added models that measure the extent teachers positively impact student achievement.

- ♦ Provide teacher education programs access to data on the performance of their teachers so they can evaluate whether teacher education curriculum and pedagogy are delivering teacher candidates the skills and competencies necessary to increase student achievement.
- ♦ Empower schools and school districts to assess the quality of their teachers, along with their respective teacher education programs by surveying building principals and providing schools access to data on the performance of teachers from various teacher education programs.
- ♦ Encourage schools, school districts and teacher education programs to engage in continuous improvement processes that can align the needs of schools with the curriculum and content delivered to teacher education candidates.
- ♦ Customize professional development by assessing school and teacher needs through the joint examination of data and interventions that promote the involvement of teacher education faculty at school sites.
- ♦ Consider how existing partnerships that provide field experiences to teacher candidates and mentoring for new teachers can scale up into a more robust continuous improvement process for both schools and teacher education programs.
- ♦ Leverage K-12 and teacher education partnerships to evaluate state teacher education performance standards by assessing how the application of skills and competencies outlined in state standards impacts student achievement.
- ♦ Examine how partnerships can build the leadership skills of principals and superintendents by developing preparation programs more connected to the current realities of schools.
- ♦ Encourage teacher education faculty to conduct greater research on the impact of state teacher performance standards on student achievement.
- ♦ Include participation in partnerships with K-12 schools as an indicator in state accountability systems for teacher education programs.

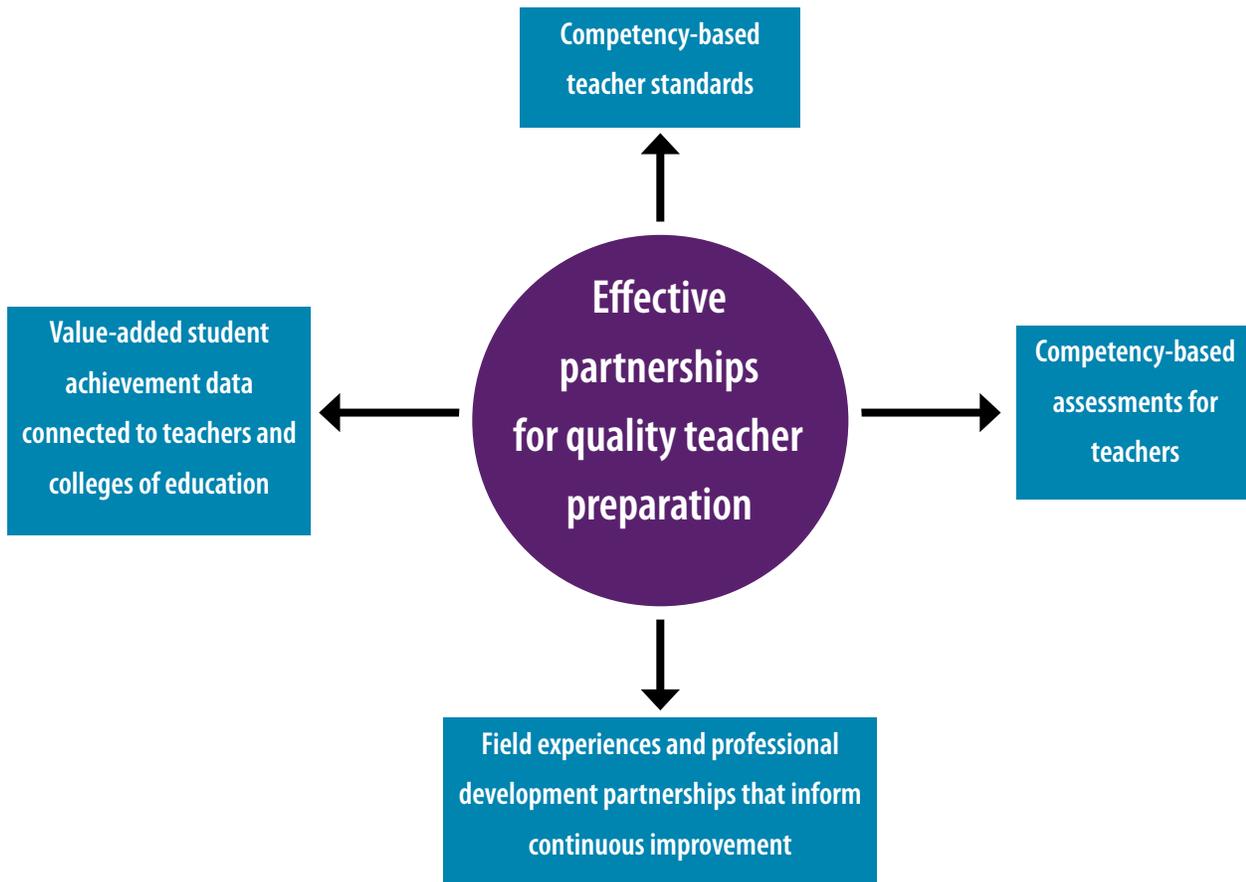
While all of these elements are important to creating stronger partnerships between P-12 education and colleges of education. The real power seems to be the interrelationship of these four critical practices:

1. Connecting value-added data on student learning to teachers and teacher preparation programs
2. Setting competency-based standards for teachers and requiring teacher education programs to ensure the standards are taught effectively in teacher preparation programs
3. Assessing teacher competencies through a variety of assessments to include written exams and teacher work sample strategies
4. Leveraging partnerships with schools to provide field experiences to teacher candidates and professional development for in-service teachers to create continuous improvement strategies for teacher education programs.

Data, standards, assessment and practical interventions lay the groundwork for schools and schools districts to be more discerning of the teachers they hire and the colleges that produce educators that meet their needs. Likewise, colleges of education are able to be transparent about the success of their graduates and their motivation to respond to the schools and districts that hire their graduates.

States should examine current accountability systems to ensure standards and assessments facilitate these partnerships, rather than isolate teacher education programs from the rest of the education system. Consequently, standards and assessment systems should be developed in close consultation with teacher preparation programs, schools and school districts to ensure state policy facilitates stronger collaboration among schools, school districts and teacher education programs.

The end result of stronger partnerships is a far more aligned system where public investments in K-12 education and teacher preparation can be directed toward the same goals and needs of students.





Appendix

Roster of Attendees, State Partnerships for Quality Teacher Preparation April 7–8, 2008, Madison, Wisconsin

Mary Jo Barnett

Southeast ERZ Director, Arkansas Education Renewal Zone
University of Arkansas – Monticello

Stuart Bennett

Chief Deputy State Superintendent
Georgia Department of Education

Paulette Blacknall

Director, Southwest-A Education Renewal Zone
Henderson State University

Diane Bradford

Deputy Superintendent, Education Support and Improvement,
Georgia Department of Education

Daphne Buckley

Assistant State Superintendent
Mississippi Department of Education

Hon. Elizabeth Burmaster

State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Jeanne Burns

Associate Commissioner for Teacher Initiatives
Division of Academic Affairs
Louisiana Board of Regents Teacher Education Initiatives

Tricia Coulter

Director of Teaching Quality and Leadership Institute
Education Commission of the States

Colleen Eisenbeiser

Director, TEACH Institute
Anne Arundel Community College

Sam Evans

Dean, College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Western Kentucky University

Tammy Huth

Assistant Director for Teacher Education
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Estelle Matthis

Director, Education Renewal Zone
Arkansas Department of Education

Sally Naylor

Dean, College of Education, St. Petersburg College

Adeniji Odutola

Director, St. Petersburg College's
National Center for Teacher Transformation

Raymund Paredes

Commissioner of Higher Education
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Richard Rhoda

Executive Director
Tennessee Higher Education Commission

Roger Sampson

President, Education Commission of the States

Bruce Vandal

Postsecondary Education and Workforce Development
Institute Director, Education Commission of the States

Bill Wagnon

Chairman, Kansas State Board of Education



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