Delivering a High-Quality Teacher Workforce for Texas:
Reconsidering University-Based Teacher Preparation in Texas,
Renewing Commitments, and Improving Practice in the Twenty-First Century

A report by the Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum
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Delivering a High-Quality Teacher Workforce for Texas

The Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum

Founded in October 1990, the Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum provides a venue for leaders from schools, business, government, universities, and foundations to discuss education reform. Delivering a High-Quality Teacher Workforce for Texas is the sixth report that the Forum has published since its inception. Dr. William E. Reaves, co-chair of the Forum, wrote the report, based on research provided by members of the Forum.

In 1990, the Forum published the widely disseminated The Professional Development School: A Commonsense Approach to Improving Education, recognized nationwide as a document of integrity that has had a direct impact on the national move toward development of clinical, field-based, teacher-preparation programs.

In 1997, the Forum published two more reports, Restructuring the University Reward System, written by its task force on tenure and promotion practices, and Principals for the Schools of Texas: A Seamless Web of Professional Development, which was written by David A. Erlandson, Ed. D., professor of educational administration at Texas A&M University.

In 2001, the Forum organized an executive advisory committee to develop recommendations on teacher preparation, which resulted in Excellent Teachers for All Texas Schools: Proposals for Engaging Educational Stakeholders in Concerted Action.

In 2002, the Forum published Superintendents for Texas School Districts: Solving the Crisis in Executive Leadership, which was written by John R. Hoyle, Ph.D., professor of educational administration at Texas A&M University.

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On behalf of the Aspen Institute’s Education and Society Program, it has been our privilege to serve as facilitators of this study of university-based teacher preparation in Texas sponsored by the Sid W. Richardson Foundation. This experience complements recent work of the Aspen Program in which we have been exploring, from a national perspective, issues such as the shortages of qualified teachers, the expanding variety of preparation and certification programs, and the ways in which school districts recruit, induct, and support their teachers. Through our participation in this Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum, we have gained a deeper understanding for how these issues play out in a state with well-developed programs for teacher preparation and certification and with thoughtful and committed leadership in school districts, universities, and state agencies.

We applaud and thank participants in this Forum for devoting their time and considerable talents to the exploration of questions of teacher supply and quality and their impact on the school experiences of Texas children. It is unusual to see such proactive work initiated within a state's educational community, involving as it has a full range of university, district, and community leaders as well as state policy-makers. The discussions that resulted in the recommendations in this report were thorough and objective, collegial, and rewarding for all of us. We are confident that, if acted on, the steps laid out here will ensure that Texas will have the numbers and quality of teachers it needs for very positive future education outcomes for the state’s young people.

Texas is fortunate to have private philanthropies such as the Sid W. Richardson Foundation and others, whose leaders possess the wisdom and vision to support efforts such as this. The Forum has been exemplary in identifying important, complicated, and therefore often politically charged issues and inviting prominent thought leaders to come together for candid discussions about those issues. We applaud the Richardson Foundation for its initiative and also highlight the important collaboration in this effort on the part of the Houston Endowment and the Meadows Foundation.

Issues of teacher supply and quality are pressing concerns for educators across the nation, transcending the boundaries of a single state. Yet, because education is a state responsibility, truly effective strategies for addressing these issues will come from the work of local and state leaders. For many reasons, Texas has a unique opportunity when it comes to teacher recruitment and training. Success on the part of Texas in addressing the problems of teacher production and teacher quality will, without a doubt, contribute to significant breakthroughs on the national scene.

Texas universities in particular have a unique and powerful opportunity to mobilize their intellectual assets in pursuit of strategies to produce sufficient numbers of talented and well-prepared teachers. To this end, the report’s call for executive and academic leadership is well placed and timely. Effective pilot programs have been developed here in Texas. The principles distilled from Forum discussions of these and other programs offer a framework to universities for concrete changes that will strengthen university education programs and, in turn, the future workforce of Texas schools. We hope that university leaders will recognize the opportunities presented here and be quick to take the initiative and make the commitments that are needed.

Texas is fortunate to have a support structure for those institutions that are serious about reviving teacher preparation programs. The Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE) is an important resource for work in this field. This consortium of state and private universities represents a unique venue for extending work in the field of teacher preparation and offers an established capacity for higher education
research and development initiatives that can inform improved practice. We congratulate the managing university systems for their leadership in establishing this important research center and encourage CREATE members to draw on their consortium as they address the recommendations in this report.

Public school districts in this country will not and cannot ultimately fulfill their promise to American society—and the ever-increasing expectations placed on them by their communities—without an adequate and reliable supply of well-prepared and effective classroom teachers. And those teachers will not be found unless universities renew their institutional commitment to meeting this critical human capital need. The leaders of our universities must step up to this challenge if we are to achieve the nation's ambitious educational goals. For those brave and insightful higher education leaders who are willing to do so, we commend the work contained in this report as a useful guide and standard for their endeavors. And we will look forward to great ideas coming forth from Texas!

Dr. Michael O'Keefe
Co-Chair, Aspen Institute’s Education and Society Program, and President, Minneapolis College of Art & Design

Ms. Nancy Pelz-Paget
Director, Aspen Institute’s Education and Society Program

The Aspen Institute seeks to promote nonpartisan inquiry and an appreciation for timeless values through its seminars, policy programs, conferences, and leadership development initiatives. For over two decades, the Aspen Institute's Education and Society Program has provided an informed and neutral forum to aid education practitioners, researchers, and policy leaders in their efforts to improve student achievement and education policy. The Program helps local, state and national education leaders share knowledge about how school systems can improve the education and life chances of poor and minority students and works with them to create programs and policies to accomplish these goals.

(www.aspeninstitute.org/education)
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The Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE) is a multi-system educational research consortium focusing on issues of teacher preparation and teacher quality. CREATE is currently comprised of 37 teacher education institutions. It is managed by the state’s four largest university systems: The University of Houston System, The Texas A&M University System, The Texas State University System, and The University of Texas System. The mission of CREATE is to improve the quality and effectiveness of teacher preparation programs in Texas universities through research and development that focuses on teacher education practices and the effects of these practices on public school improvement. The primary funding for CREATE has come from the Houston Endowment Inc., augmented by substantial support from the Sid W. Richardson Foundation and The Meadows Foundation. (www.createtx.org)
The Importance of Teacher Development in Texas

In charting a course for continued growth and prosperity, we can think of no other sector of the public workforce more critical to the future success of the state of Texas than its classroom teachers. As a group, teachers represent a critical infrastructure through which to educate future generations of Texans, sharpening their skills as workers and honing their sensibilities as active and enlightened citizens. The long-term sufficiency of the state’s education workforce, however, is a quiet yet serious concern among informed Texans who care deeply about the quality of the state’s public school system. There is a dearth of talent and an undersupply of well-prepared teachers willing and able to serve the state’s burgeoning student population, and this is a fundamental problem looming large over the public education system. Such teacher shortfalls carry with them profound long-term consequences. Left unattended, these educational human resource deficits in the state’s public schools afford knowledge and opportunity gaps to swell, slowly constricting the capacity of the state’s workforce and eventually hampering economic and social progress.

The state’s system of public education remains arguably its most vital asset for advancing long-term economic prosperity and quality of life for its citizens. Since excellent teachers constitute the lifeblood of any quality educational system, assuring a strong and consistent supply of highly effective teachers must become a serious educational priority for Texas if we are to avoid erosion in the quality and effectiveness of our public schools. The current scale of the educational enterprise in Texas is extraordinary, already exceeding 320,000 schoolteachers and 4.5 million children. Faced with continued population growth and ballooning socioeconomic diversity, the viability and quality of the state’s public school workforce seems to be particularly crucial.

The viability of the teacher workforce takes on even greater significance as the state pursues long-term efforts to create jobs through the Governor’s recently announced “cluster initiative.” While education is not classified as a priority work cluster under this initiative, educators, and specifically classroom teachers, will provide the fundamental capacity-building workforce necessary to advance any or all of the priority clusters. Likewise, public education job growth will rival many of the defined priority clusters in terms of the scale and significance of the workforce required. Thus, cultivating and sustaining a quality teacher workforce will be an imperative for achieving the state’s educational and economic objectives.

In the instance of the Texas teacher workforce, “viability” must be viewed as a two-dimensional concern, including (1) the adequacy of supply of certified teachers related to the employment needs of the state, and (2) the effectiveness of classroom teachers in facilitating student growth and intellectual development. Both dimensions—adequacy of supply and degree of effectiveness—must ultimately be addressed in order to insure the overall quality of the Texas teacher workforce and the continued success of the state’s public schools.

The Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum, an educational think tank sponsored by the Sid W. Richardson Foundation, has devoted considerable time and attention to teacher quality issues over the past several years, because the Foundation views educational human resource concerns to be under-attended fronts in the state’s continuing battle for sustained public school improvement. In 2001, the Richardson Forum commissioned an 18-member panel to conduct a review of state needs related to teacher supply and demand. This group issued its report entitled Excellent Teachers for All Texas Schools: Proposals for Engaging Educational Stakeholders in Concerted Action, which contains some 40 recommendations for addressing the state’s long-term needs for classroom teachers. In this particular
investigation, the Forum revisits the supply side of the teacher quality issue and focuses especially on the university’s role in recruiting, preparing, placing, and inducting teachers into Texas schools.

To conduct this work, the Forum once again impaneled a diverse group of 18 Texas leaders with backgrounds and expertise in educational human resource issues. In addition, the Foundation engaged policy leaders of the Aspen Institute’s Education and Society Program to guide and facilitate the panel’s work. With this capable team of investigators and facilitators, the Forum conducted a yearlong study of the issues. This report incorporates major learnings of the Forum’s examination based upon the panel’s review of pertinent literature, dialogue with professional experts, and firsthand knowledge and informed observations of the panelists themselves.

The Imperative of University Leadership

In reconsidering higher education’s important role in teacher development, we understand that recent trends in state policy have tended to favor alternative teacher preparation programs as a means of broadening the range of training options, spurring innovative teacher preparation practices, and meeting the increased demand for teachers brought about by growth and retirement. Alternative teacher education programs have, in fact, proliferated in recent years, and the “market share” of new teachers produced by state universities has declined commensurately, particularly university production of secondary content teachers. Certainly, as a foundation, we have underwritten and actively supported many high-quality alternative programs for our state. Yet it is our contention that, in spite of the advent and growth of alternative teacher preparation venues, Texas universities maintain a unique and vital leadership role in the preparation and improvement of the state’s teacher workforce. In our judgment, it is a leadership role that is entirely too vital to both state and university interests to abdicate to alternative providers alone.

We have seen compelling evidence in recent years, however, to suggest that universities are falling short in their teacher development obligations, especially in the preparation of high school teachers. The Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE), a consortium of 37 Texas universities associated with the state’s four largest systems, has reported that total teacher production has declined among their member institutions by some 13% over the past five years, dropping from approximately 12,600 new teachers in 2002-03 to less than 11,000 in 2006-07. Twenty-seven of CREATE’s 37 institutions showed an actual decline in the number of new teachers produced between 2002-03 and 2007-08. Furthermore, when considering teacher production as a proportion of university undergraduate degree production, 33 of the 37 university members evidenced a decline in the ratio of teachers certified per university graduates. We view these as deleterious educational trends, which not only threaten the viability of the public schools, but ultimately contribute to performance deficits within the higher education community as well. In our view, unabated declines in university teacher production, and especially the production of secondary teachers, will almost certainly jeopardize the success of many state policy initiatives already under way to increase educational attainment within the state, including centerpiece programs such as the Closing the Gap Initiative, the P-16 Initiative, and the Texas High School Initiative.

Our examination of university-based teacher preparation has proven to us that higher education institutions can and must improve the scale and effects of their teacher preparation programs in the interests of both the university and the state at large. To achieve these improvements, it will be necessary for Texas universities to refine and restructure many of their existing institutional practices. Fortunately most of these changes do not require “acts of congress” to get the process under way. It was striking to us that although members of the Forum vigorously discussed state policy implications related to this issue, there seemed to be a final consensus that new legislation (although facilitative in some instances) was not necessary at present to increase university teacher production. Likewise, other than strengthening interagency alignment and coordination as it affects teacher preparation, the panel did not advocate significant changes in state policy.

What did seem imperative throughout the panel’s discussion was the need for top-level prioritization and university-wide leadership as essential prerequisites for improved teacher preparation within the university.
Along with active and influential leadership, the panel stressed the necessity of acculturating all university faculty to place greater value on the teacher production function in their respective fields and to embrace teacher development as a departmental or institutional priority (especially in the case of secondary teachers). Thus, the panel’s observations lead us to conclude that improvement in university productivity rests largely on active institutional leadership and stronger focus within the university itself!

A Call for University-Wide Action

This paper, therefore, represents a call for such proactive leadership and concerted action within the state’s higher education community. It is a professional admonition to reconsider and renew university commitment to excellence in teacher preparation (with special emphasis on high school teaching) as a means of simultaneously improving the quality of the state’s public schools as well as public universities! This is a university-wide declaration and not simply another treatise laid at the doorstep of colleges of education. Our panel was adamant that teacher education is a university-wide responsibility, and we believe that this interpretation is consistent with the intent of current state policy on the matter. While education colleges bear significant responsibilities for the university’s teacher preparation and certification function, the state’s abandonment of undergraduate teacher education degrees some twenty-plus years ago means that education colleges alone cannot be solely and exclusively accountable for declining teacher productivity within the university.

Through this call to action, we implore regents and university governing boards to formally affirm teacher preparation as an institutional priority. We encourage executive and academic leaders of every institution to invite the principals of their teacher preparation programs to the table to rethink the quality and productivity of the university’s teacher preparation programs, especially those programs responsible for the preparation of secondary content teachers and other state-designated shortage areas. We urge university executives to convene and actively support their own internal study groups comprised of all stakeholders and to empower them to objectively and critically evaluate existing university efforts and offer plans for meaningful improvement. We believe that these leadership actions alone will go a long way in reversing waning university production trends and will seed the development of refined practice and strengthened research in the field.

Principles for Renewal and Redesign

In our judgment, each institution can and should develop its own game plan for improving teacher development as it seems to best fit for them, and they should keep working at it to ensure that their plans actually yield teacher increases necessary to meet school demands. In support of university-based improvement, we have gleaned a set of ten core principles from our panel deliberations that seem to be essential redesign elements in university efforts to improve teacher preparation programs. A listing of these core principles for the redesign of university-based teacher education and some of the necessary manifestations are described below:

1. Prioritize University-Wide. Our review has made it clear that teacher education must be embraced and managed as an important university-wide responsibility. While teacher education is certainly an established component of most university programs, it seldom shares the stature and influence of other undergraduate professional educational programs within the university community such as public accounting, engineering, or nursing. Perhaps one reason for this disparity is the distribution of responsibilities for the academic degree and certification requirements found within the education programs of most universities. This division of responsibilities seems to be especially problematic in issues of secondary teacher preparation. Currently, the preparation of secondary teachers is relegated to academic departments distributed across the university’s various colleges. Given the general presses and prerogatives of these disparate departments, there is often little faculty incentive and scant curricular focus on the specialized preparation of teachers. As a consequence, university production of secondary teachers has fallen precipitously. To overcome this organizational phenomenon, teacher preparation, especially that of preparing
high school teachers, must be elevated in priority and status within each university department, and faculty who are engaged in this important work must be recognized and rewarded.

2. Lead University-Wide. University-wide teacher education can only be actualized through university-wide leadership structures that are sanctioned and empowered by the chief academic and executive officials of each institution. To this end, presidents and chief academic officers must maintain active, high-profile leadership roles, serving as strong, “hands-on” advocates and continuing champions of the teacher preparation function. Ultimately, it is up to top-level leadership to build and nurture a functional and effective management team through which to design, monitor, and continuously refine university-based teacher preparation.

3. Organize Institutional Data Systems That Promote Teacher Quality. There was strong consensus among Forum participants that necessary improvements in university-based teacher preparation programs should be informed and monitored based on sound data. Although universities seem immersed in a virtual sea of student information, our panel discussions revealed that surprisingly little data is readily available, much less routinely applied in efforts to inform and monitor the success of teacher preparation programs. Significant information for lower division undergraduate (freshman/sophomore) students pursuing teacher education options is often overlooked within university student information systems since the area of teacher education is construed (within university parlance) to be a certification option rather than a degree option. As a result, many institutions fail to identify freshman or sophomore “education” students in their student information systems and thereby limit the institution’s ability to monitor and track this critical student cohort during their earliest years of study. Even where more complete undergraduate documentation does exist, there appear to be very few management reports available to university leaders that chart the input, progress, and output characteristics of teacher education students throughout the university. This would appear to be especially true for secondary teacher candidates in academic fields. While CREATE is attempting to fill this information void through its PACE reporting system, one of the important contributions that might be made by the proposed university leadership teams is that of designing and applying robust, integrated information management systems within their respective institutions. Such integrated systems could result in a better understanding of student progress within university teacher preparation programs and a better understanding of the placement patterns of university teacher graduates. Ultimately, they could inform higher education leaders how well their teacher graduates do in terms of retention and performance in their public school assignments.

4. Set Goals/Manage Results. One might assume that enrollment and production targets would be the norm in all university programs; however, we have discovered that this is generally not the case in university production of classroom teachers. Few, if any, institutions establish and communicate teacher production goals, and this would seem an obvious flaw in the university’s effort to supply teachers. Organizational goals (in this instance, production goals) are necessary to foster clear programmatic expectations, essential for proper resource allocation and ultimately necessary to gauge program success. University leaders in teacher preparation must insist on measurable production goals and manage their organizations in a manner that ensures their long-term attainment. In establishing production thresholds, it also stands to reason that leaders of teacher preparation programs will ensure that their targeted production levels are consistent with the employment demands of state and area school districts.

5. Recruit Talent/Market Leadership. Universities must also get serious about recruiting outstanding teacher candidates if they are to step up teacher production and quality. While it is fair to say that universities are adept at recruiting for general admissions purposes, our study indicates that most are less proficient in recruiting for specialized talent. This is certainly the case with teachers.
Generally, we found that, aside from general dissemination of program information, few university teacher preparation programs engage in active recruiting, either inside or outside the university. Fortunately, we were able to learn much in this area through our review of the Teach for America Program. One of the important lessons learned from this successful program is that university leaders in all academic disciplines must seek to attract and encourage the most intellectually talented students to consider teaching. Not only did we learn that identifying and recruiting intellectual talent is vital in teacher preparation, but we also saw that the recruiting message is critical as well. Teaching can be appealing to the social consciousness of many of today’s university students, and therefore, the most successful university recruiting initiatives will present teaching as a challenging yet compelling public service leadership opportunity as well as a gratifying long-term career option.

6. Train as Intellectual Thought Leaders.
Universities are also obligated to offer an educational and training experience that treats their teacher candidates as valuable intellectual and thought leaders for future classrooms. To nurture student motivation and provide prospective teachers with a “high end” undergraduate learning track, university teacher preparation programs should incorporate the type of experiences now subsumed in many university “honors programs.” This would mean that even in conjunction with their matriculation within the university’s “core” curriculum, bright teacher candidates would experience enriched and specially targeted activities throughout their university career, and these activities would be differentiated to underscore their teaching focus. To this end, universities must do a better job of formally identifying cohorts of teacher candidates (across all disciplines) early in the process and designing a continuum of educational opportunities that include rich, intellectually compelling experiences. Examples of these specialized instructional opportunities include special and early access to notable educational leaders or master public school teachers, special field experiences, or simply early mentorship opportunities with university faculties.

7. Engage/Reward Faculty. Universities must also cultivate talented and dynamic multidisciplinary teacher preparation faculties with joint appointments in both education and the arts and sciences. These faculties should be deeply engaged in the redesign and continuous improvement of the university’s teacher preparation programs and services within their respective subject fields. They should also be actively involved in the recruitment, placement, induction, and professional development of their students. The university’s teacher preparation faculty should be encouraged to work actively with public school partners and within public school settings. Most importantly, they should be rewarded within the university’s tenure and promotion structure for their important professional work and acknowledged for their efforts.

8. Nurture/Involve School Partners. Universities cannot produce the effective teachers that we need in isolation. It is simply not possible to produce the quality and quantity of teachers needed in today’s public schools without the active support and engagement of partnering schools and exemplary educators. Authentic experiences and professional exemplars seem particularly crucial in effectively translating the nuances of classroom management and pedagogical content knowledge to novice teacher candidates. To this end, it is important that universities grow and nurture a regional cadre of public school partners, integrating them as full-fledged members of the university “community” and actively engaging them in the improvement dialogue as well as instructional delivery of the teacher education program. Based on the panel’s discussion of these school-university partnerships, it seems particularly important from the perspective of secondary teacher development that arts and sciences faculties (as well as those in education colleges) play a vigorous role in school-centered instruction, research, and instructional evaluation, and that this active participation is rewarded in the
tenure and promotion process. Finally, there was strong support for the involvement of professional partners in the formal appraisal and evaluation of the university’s teacher preparation efforts.

9. Nurture/Expand Community College Partners. Just as it is necessary for successful university teacher preparation programs to collaborate with public school colleagues, so is it essential to cultivate and strengthen partnerships with feeder community colleges in order to enhance the quality and productivity of university-based programs. While community colleges would seem to be an obvious partnership connection for university teacher preparation programs, our deliberations have suggested that deep faculty dialogue and ongoing program collaboration are exceptions rather than the rule of current practice. Likewise, early professional enrichment opportunities for community college teacher candidates are rare. Community colleges represent the initial point of entry into higher education for many teaching candidates in Texas, and universities must develop genuine partnerships with these feeding entities in order to recruit the most talented students entering though the community college route and provide a seamless transition that ensures their academic progress through lower division courses and nurtures their early interests as prospective teachers.

10. Expand Research on Teacher Effectiveness. Universities must cultivate and support energetic and productive research communities on teacher qualities and effectiveness. These research collaboratives should be comprised of teacher preparation faculties from throughout the university, working in collaboration with public school partners. These researchers must be encouraged and supported to build and carry out a long-term, multidisciplinary research agenda around issues of teacher learning and effectiveness. While there is a growing body of studies that underscore the important influence of effective teachings, there appears to be less definitive research on the repertoire of skills and classroom practices that actually enable teachers to attain high levels of effectiveness! Teacher effectiveness has indeed proven to be the more complex and often illusive construct (or set of constructs). The notion of effectiveness in teaching is plagued by lack of a conceptual clarity, as well as a concomitant lack of professional consensus related to its measurement and standards. With the possible exception of early reading, teacher quality has also proven to be one of the most under-funded and under-researched components within the professional community — a fact that further contributes to ambiguity surrounding the issue. Teacher quality represents, therefore, a critical educational research agenda that begs for empirical investigation through concerted, long-term study within the professional community.

Foundations Upon Which to Build

The good news is that efforts to increase the quality and productivity of university-based teacher preparation in Texas will not require institutions to start from scratch. The task at hand is one of renewing and redesigning existing programs. Fortunately, our review has shown us that our state universities already have many fine initiatives under way. In the course of our study, we discovered numerous examples of innovative teacher preparation practices reflective of the panel’s design principles and worthy of continued review and attention. These promising programs are tucked away in large and small universities throughout the state. These examples are heartening and serve as testaments to the enlightened leadership of many teacher educators within our state. The challenge is now to bring these examples of best practice to the forefront and bring them to operational scale.

Also encouraging for university partnership efforts is the extensive network of Texas public schools already engaged in placement and support of the university student teaching experiences. In a recent statewide survey, CREATE discovered its member universities working in over 2200 Texas campuses (or 27% of the total number of schools in the state) to place and supervise student teachers each semester. This is great news for school-university relationships and seems to us a natural starting point in university efforts to expand public school collaboration.
Finally, we must cite CREATE as an important catalyst for this work. This research and development consortium that focuses on university-based teacher preparation is unique in the country and presents a distinctive organizational advantage to Texas universities for advancing the redesigns that we have called for. It is significant that this center was voluntarily initiated by the state’s four largest university systems and speaks to their acknowledgment of the importance of this work within their respective systems. This university consortium presents an important point for coordinating and disseminating the work of teacher education reform in Texas. We encourage continued university participation and active support of the CREATE improvement agenda.

Perfecting Public Policy

As we noted in this report, our panel generally concluded that universities can make substantial progress on the teacher quality front simply through their own volition. While refinements in policy may be useful and advisable, we have felt that these might be best considered after, rather than before, universities take concerted action on their own behalf to renew and optimize their teacher program outputs. Their successes, however, will remain an important matter of public interest and concern, and their work will definitely be affected by state policy directives. Therefore, in requesting university action on this matter, it is our hope that state policy leaders and elected officials will offer favorable support to these university overtures. Furthermore, we hope that these officials will be open to policy solutions that might have the effect of accelerating work in the field of teacher preparation. In this sense, there will soon be need for serious review of existing state policy related to teacher preparation and quality, especially in light of reauthorization of pertinent federal legislation. As a contribution to the upcoming policy agenda, we offer a few points here as placeholders for future deliberations, these representing some of the major considerations discussed in panel deliberations.

Among those policy items worthy of further review, the Forum suggests the following:

- Strengthened policy coordination across federal and state agencies governing teacher preparation.
- Easier access to student performance data for purposes of teacher quality research and program evaluation, along with policy direction to ensure the confidentiality of this information for those students and teachers who are subjects of such research.
- Increased appropriations and/or modified formula funding to support recruitment of teacher candidates in high-need fields, specialized faculties in high-need fields, and model school/university partnership programs to increase teacher supply.
- Teacher compensation and professional development policies that will continue to enhance the economic stature and working conditions of Texas classroom teachers so that teaching remains an attractive and competitive work option for talented young professionals.

Conclusion

We close simply by reiterating our initial call for university leadership in this vital area. We encourage higher education leaders at all levels to heed this request in the educational interests of our state. We are confident that many will indeed rise to the challenge. We hope that our thoughts and ideas will serve as an impetus for renewed university attention to teacher preparation for Texas schools to deliver a high-quality teacher workforce.
January 16, 2009

On behalf of the Council of Public University Presidents and Chancellors, appreciation is expressed to the Richardson Forum for their work in examining the current status of university-based teacher preparation in Texas. These findings will serve as useful guidelines to improve education programs.

Teacher preparation has been, and continues to be, a valued and integral part of a university’s mission. The development of outstanding classroom teachers contributes immediately to the quality of life and well-being of communities served by our universities; the production of teachers also yields dividends to the university in terms of enhanced student readiness and greater academic productivity. Thus, the Council recognizes our institutional role in teacher preparation and is committed to continued improvement in this area.

There are opportunities for Texas’ public universities to improve existing teacher preparation programs, especially in the preparation of middle and high school teachers. While all stakeholders should pay attention to the “bottom line” of teacher production and classroom effectiveness, this report clearly calls for strong, hands-on leadership by university presidents and provosts. To accomplish this, we support informed university-wide dialogues on these issues and encourage university leaders in all academic fields to assume an active leadership role in these discussions and related decisions. Additionally, attention to the resources necessary for successful expansion and innovation in university teacher preparation programming is imperative. Together, university leadership teams and our partners supporting public education will creatively develop effective solutions to incorporate necessary improvements in teacher education.

The work of the Forum is to be applauded with grateful acknowledgement of the vision of the Sid W. Richardson Foundation as a champion for educational human capital development in our state. As an organization, the Council is ready to carry forward this important work.
Appendix A

Background Readings for
The Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum

Delivering a High-Quality Teacher Workforce for Texas:
Reconsidering University-Based Teacher Preparation in Texas,
Renewing Commitments, and Improving Practice in the Twenty-First Century


The issue brief released by the Alliance for Excellent Education, a national policy organization, highlights the need for increased high school student college readiness. The Alliance promotes training teachers during teacher preparation followed by mentoring and ongoing training while they are in the classrooms.


The datasheet was prepared for the Aspen Institute and highlights available research about the teacher workforce offering basic information on teacher characteristics, retention and turnover, and compensation.


The table illustrates a comparison of five-year teacher retention trends of all teachers prepared by CREATE consortium universities and teachers prepared through all other teacher preparation routes. Data was gathered and compared using CREATE’s system for Performance Analysis for Colleges of Education (PACE).


The table illustrates a comparison of five-year teacher retention trends of high school teachers prepared by CREATE consortium universities and teachers prepared through all other teacher preparation routes. Data was gathered and compared using CREATE’s PACE system.


The table illustrates a comparison of five-year teacher retention trends of middle school teachers prepared by CREATE consortium universities and teachers prepared through all other teacher preparation routes. Data was gathered and compared using CREATE’s PACE system.


The table illustrates a comparison of five-year teacher retention trends for elementary school teachers prepared by CREATE consortium universities and teachers prepared through all other teacher preparation routes. Data was gathered and compared using CREATE’s PACE system.


The brief prepared by Deloitte Consulting provides a broad, generalized synopsis of the characteristics, beliefs, and experiences of the generation of young adults entering the workforce.

The authors, a former schoolteacher and a former Board of Education member, promote management of the teacher workforce by utilizing a more strategic approach to human capital management. The authors call for reform of the preparation, training, evaluation, and compensation of teachers, as well as improving recruitment of prospective teachers and raising the standards for entry into teacher preparation programs to create competition among programs.


The research brief, distributed by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, is a comprehensive review of 16 nationally representative public opinion polls conducted between 2000 and 2006 on the perceptions of the teaching profession. Among many of its findings, the review found that while several polls reported high job satisfaction among teachers, nearly a quarter of teachers reported that they plan on leaving the profession. Another finding revealed that more than three quarters of public school principals and superintendents reported teacher shortages in their districts, with twice as many urban districts facing widespread shortages than suburban districts. The author discusses reasons for these and many other findings discussed in the review. Finally, the brief also includes a table of the 16 polls reviewed for the brief, a short description of their samples, and the reported sampling error for each poll.


The article summarizes the results of a 2007 survey of the experiences and insights of 641 first-year teachers throughout the United States. The study, commissioned by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality and conducted by Public Agenda (a nonprofit research organization), was designed to better understand the aspirations and experiences of new teachers, including those who teach in at-risk schools. The findings from the study revealed that in general first-year teachers were dedicated to their profession and were confident about having made the right career choice to teach. However, teachers who taught in high-needs schools were less optimistic about their effectiveness as teachers and future in the field. In addition, the majority of the teachers responded that they intend to make teaching a lifelong career. The researchers stressed that the findings presented in this article were preliminary in nature and noted that further in-depth analyses and subsequent policy recommendations would be conducted.


The article presents how one university implemented quality principles incorporating value-added premises in their teacher preparation program to achieve teacher candidate effectiveness and program improvement while maximizing teacher candidate retention. Using the extensive data information available through the university, a culture of accountability between teacher candidates and teacher education faculty was developed. This resulted in course and overall program modifications that yielded improved candidate performance on knowledge, skills, and disposition measures in addition to demonstrating evidence of positive impact on the learning of P-12 students.


The report, conducted by researchers at the Texas State Board for Educator Certification, examines teacher turnover and out-of-field teaching rates in school districts from 2000-2001 to 2003-2004. The report found that there appeared to be small differences among the different types (i.e. urban, suburban, rural) and sizes of districts in teacher turnover and out-of-field teaching. However, the report did find that smaller, rural districts had slightly higher turnover and greater rates of out-of-field teaching. Data were obtained from SBEC certification records, employment records from Public Education Information Management System, and the Academic Excellence Indicator System.
Delivering a High-Quality Teacher Workforce for Texas


The report, conducted by researchers at the Texas State Board for Educator Certification, examines emerging trends in teacher production and retention of beginning teaching teachers in Texas from 1999 to 2003. More specifically, the report examines these trends among the three primary models of teacher preparation: undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and certification programs. The researchers found that over the five-year period, traditional undergraduate programs experienced a significant decline in the number of new teachers produced, while alternative certification and post-baccalaureate programs produced more new teachers. The report also found that teachers prepared in undergraduate programs tend to teach longer and leave the profession at lower rates than teachers prepared in alternative certification and post-baccalaureate programs.


The report, conducted by researchers of the Math and Science Partnership Knowledge Management and Dissemination, is a review of theoretical perspectives, research-based findings, and practice-based insights on teacher content knowledge. The synthesis is the completion of the first stage (knowledge acquisition) in a three-stage knowledge management model, which posits that learning occurs in three identifiable stages: knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, and knowledge utilization. The report included both literature reviews of empirical studies on mathematics and science content knowledge of in-service teachers and findings from interviews with practitioners of various Math and Science Partnership programs.


In this article, the author outlines and responds to recent attacks about the legitimacy of university-based teacher education programs to adequately prepare teachers for our nation's schools. In response to the criticism of university-based teacher education programs, the author argues that colleges and schools of education must (a) reframe the debate about traditional versus alternative programs; (b) broaden the goals of teacher education and roles of teachers beyond raising test scores on standardized achievement tests; (c) change the center of gravity in teacher education to create stronger roles for schools and communities in the preparation of teachers; and (d) take teacher education more seriously or not engage in it all.


This article reviews ways in which the effects of different teacher education programs have been studied in the past several decades. The author offers suggestions on how to conceptualize and conduct studies that both (a) highlight the nature and impact of different approaches to educating teachers and (b) differentiate selection effects and influences of teaching and policy contexts from those of the teacher education programs. Furthermore, the author recommends the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in future research on the relationship between teacher education, the teacher, and student learning.
Appendix B

Resource Testimony for
The Sid W. Richardson Foundation Forum

Delivering a High-Quality Teacher Workforce for Texas:
Reconsidering University-Based Teacher Preparation in Texas,
Renewing Commitments, and Improving Practice in the Twenty-First Century

I. Superintendents

These school district CEO’s offered their perspective on the preparation of teachers, the strengths and weaknesses of their new teachers, what universities can do to improve teacher quality and preparedness, as well as suggestions for enhanced district and university collaboration on teacher preparation.

John Folks, Superintendent
Northside ISD

Jim Hawkins, Superintendent
Killeen ISD

Mike Moses, Former Commissioner of Education
and Superintendent of Dallas ISD

Joe Neely, Former Deputy Commissioner
and Superintendent of Rockwall ISD

II. Other Providers of Alternative Certification Programs

These leaders of successful alternative certification programs provided insights on recruitment, instruction, and assessment practices used to manage these alternative certification programs.

William McKinney, Executive Director
Region 4 Education Service Center

Ellen Moir, Executive Director
New Teacher Center at University of California, Santa Cruz

Ariela Rozman, Chief Executive Officer
The New Teacher Project
III. Promising Program Practices in Texas

Leaders of promising university programs shared information about these programs and provided insight into factors important for achieving success. These programs were chosen to demonstrate programs with strong public school and university collaboration.

Irma Harper, Director
Distance Education & Certification, Texas A&M University System

Bill Larmer, Director
Effective Schools Project, Tarleton State University

Susan Weaver, Director
Mesquite Professional Development Center

Virginia Resta, Associate Dean of the College of Education
Teaching Fellows Model, Texas State University – San Marcos

Robert Wimpelberg, Dean
UTeach Program and replication at the University of Houston

IV. Recruitment and Induction of Teachers

These experts were invited to discuss recruitment and induction practices and to offer recommendations to strengthen recruitment and induction activities.

Robert Carreon, Executive Director
Teach for America – Rio Grande Valley

Ed Crowe, Consultant
Teachers for a New Era Project