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Introduction

As teacher preparation and teacher performance moves to the fore in state, local, and federal policy discussions, the role and value of NCATE moves front and center as well.

State and national policymakers are emphasizing new measures in teacher licensing to improve teacher performance. NCATE has moved to a performance-based system of accreditation. These steps will increasingly help answer the question, “How do we know that teachers know their content and can teach it effectively?” Questions are arising from a variety of audiences about the effectiveness of teacher preparation. We have some answers.

This Speaker’s Guide was developed to assist you as you communicate with the public and your members.

You will want to tailor your speeches to your audiences. NCATE provides you with facts, figures, sample talking points, presentation pointers, and public speaking strategies. The guide also contains a discussion of various print and broadcast media and available resources.

Speakers should direct audiences to NCATE’s website, www.ncate.org, which features continuously updated information on NCATE and teacher preparation.

This material is for your use. Feel free to use it as you communicate with your members and with other audiences. Please cite the original source of any magazine or newspaper articles contained in this document.

About NCATE

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is the teaching profession's quality assurance mechanism, setting and implementing standards for teacher preparation. NCATE relies on educators in the field and public members to develop rigorous standards for teacher preparation and determine which schools, colleges and departments of education measure up to them.

The U.S. Department of Education recognizes NCATE as the professional accrediting body for teacher preparation. The Department has noted that "NCATE standards have clearly been formulated to serve as valid indicators of quality and the basis for consistently determining the educational quality of different institutions and programs."

Teacher education accreditation is similar to accreditation in the other professions. To seek accreditation, an institution of higher education must meet specific conditions. Once these are met, NCATE schedules an accreditation visit. The college prepares a self-study in which it addresses each of the NCATE standards. Four to eight members of the NCATE Board of Examiners then visit the campus to interview faculty and students, and to gather additional data to evaluate the program. The team writes a report on its findings. The institution may write a follow-up report in response. All material is forwarded to NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board, which reviews the data and makes the final accreditation decision. NCATE's procedures also include an appeals process.

Who is NCATE?

NCATE is the profession, setting standards for P–12 teacher preparation, holding institutions that prepare teachers accountable to the public they serve.

NCATE enjoys broad support from the entire spectrum of education stakeholders. The organization is a private, non-governmental, non-profit partnership composed of

- Over 30 national professional organizations representing millions of professionals (teachers, teacher educators, state and local policymakers, school specialists) and members of the public
- 550 accredited institutions (public and private, small and large) that produce two-thirds of the nation's new teacher graduates each year
- 100+ candidates for accreditation
- 1,500 volunteer professionals and members of the public serve as on-site team members, program reviewers, and policy board members; and
- 46 states that rely on NCATE to supplant or supplement state review.

National commissions and organizations have recognized NCATE's leadership in teacher preparation.

■ The National Conference of State Legislatures conducted a study of NCATE in the mid-1990's and found the organization "a means for states to upgrade the quality of teacher preparation."

■ The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, chaired by former Governor Jim Hunt of North Carolina, recognizes NCATE as one of the three quality assurance mechanisms in the teaching profession. The Commission has recommended that all schools of education be accredited by NCATE.

Learn More About NCATE

The NCATE website, <http://www.ncate.org>, is a resource that provides a wealth of information about the organization.

The main webpage provides links to the following sections: About NCATE, Standards, Institutions/Programs, Research/Resources, Publications, Accreditation Procedures, Program Reviews, State Partners, Board of Examiners, Policies/Governance, NCATE Store, Position Vacancies, Upcoming Events, Press Center/News, Answering the Call to Teach.

NCATE: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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NCATE
The Standard of Excellence
in Teacher Preparation

Answering the Call to Teach...
Here is the latest information on
careers in education.

**Upcoming
EVENTS**

**Executive Directors
Meeting**
December 3, 2002
Washington, DC

NEWS

New! NCATE Media
Resource Guide
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Solving the Teacher
Shortage
> [MORE](#) by Kurt M.
Laudgut, President and
CEO of Educational
Testing Service

NAAEE Joins NCATE
> [MORE](#)

**Research and Rhetoric on
Teacher Certification**

Linda Darling-Hammond,
published in the American
Educational Research
Association peer-reviewed
journal, *Education Policy
Analysis Archives*, says that
P-12 students of fully prepared
and licensed teachers
outperform students whose
teachers are not fully qualified.
Her article, "Research and
Rhetoric on Teacher
Certification: A Response
to Teacher Certification
Reconsidered," says an
earlier report of the Abell
Foundation included inaccurate

Photo: Linda Darling-
Hammond, Charles
E. Bucommun
Professor of
Education at
Stanford University,
an NCATE accredited
Institution

**Complete Part C
of the
AACTE/NCATE
Annual Report
by December 2**

Done Internet

NCATE Messages

NCATE Messages

“Messages” help you communicate accurately; the use of facts and well-reasoned arguments can be convincing. Agreed upon messages help to ensure consistency since all spokespeople will be communicating similar content.

Messages are necessary not just for use with the media but in addressing any audience, from one-on-one discussions to large gatherings of education stakeholders. Messages are incorporated into soundbites, talking points, speeches, and op-eds. The message is not only what you want to say but also how you want to say it.

One of your most important tasks when speaking in public is to determine your audience, and what is appropriate for that audience.

The following are NCATE messages and talking points:

All Audiences

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is dedicated to improving P–12 student learning by improving the quality of educator preparation. NCATE establishes high and rigorous standards for preparation programs, holds accredited institutions accountable for meeting these standards, and encourages unaccredited schools to demonstrate the quality of their programs by working for and achieving professional accreditation.

■ NCATE is a partnership of over 30 organizations of Americans committed to quality teaching. This partnership unites teachers, teacher educators, policymakers, subject matter specialists, and members of the public in setting rigorous standards for teacher preparation.

■ **NCATE is a lever of reform** in teacher and other educator preparation. As institutions meet NCATE standards and evaluate candidate knowledge and skills, they are engaged in the reform of teacher preparation. NCATE helps create new norms in teacher preparation.

■ **NCATE’s performance-based standards are state-of-the art.** They expect

- candidates to know their subject matter and how to teach it effectively.
- the college to have an assessment system that evaluates candidates throughout the program of study, including the development of benchmark levels of performance.
- teacher educators to model effective teaching.
- candidates to demonstrate that they can teach students of diverse backgrounds.
- candidates to be able to use technology effectively.

-
- the university and the P–12 schools with which it works to function as partners who work together to design and implement the program for teacher candidates.

■ **Good teachers learn what works over time—not overnight. They develop their skills during an extended period of learning and supervised practice.**

■ **NCATE makes a difference in teacher preparation. Prepared teachers make a difference in P–12 student learning.** Study after study indicates that student achievement increases when teachers are fully prepared and fully licensed.

■ The public expects that colleges of education should be professionally accredited and meet rigorous standards. A public opinion poll conducted by Penn and Schoen found that 82 percent of the public favors requiring teachers to graduate from nationally accredited professional schools.

■ America is experiencing a teacher retention problem. School districts may not be able to find and hire qualified teachers in every field. However, districts can **make teacher qualifications available to the public so that the public becomes aware of the problem.** Districts can also **reorganize staffing patterns** to ensure that prepared and licensed teachers supervise those who are unlicensed and unprepared.

State Policymaker Audiences

■ **NCATE serves as a resource** to state policymakers. State policymakers have examined NCATE’s standards and have found them to their liking.

■ NCATE shares standards for teacher preparation with states. Many states now use NCATE standards when they evaluate programs. States see the value in the NCATE standards developed through nationwide professional consensus. Increasingly, states are delegating the job of reviewing individual teacher education programs, i.e., math education, to NCATE, while they focus on developing state licensing standards and assessments. These developments parallel the relationship of other national professional accrediting bodies to the states.

■ **NCATE standards are increasingly the norm** in teacher preparation.

- 33 states have adopted/adapted NCATE unit standards as their state standards so that all colleges of education are evaluated according to the profession’s standards.
- The National Conference of State Legislatures issued a report that calls **NCATE a cost-effective means to upgrade quality in schools of education.**
- The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future recommended in 1996 that all schools of education be professionally accredited by NCATE or be shut down.
- **ETS concludes that NCATE accreditation helps candidates meet state licensing requirements.** A recent ETS study shows that 91 percent of NCATE

graduates passed state licensing examinations. NCATE graduates outperformed graduates of unaccredited institutions and those with little or no preparation.

■ NCATE recognizes that not all districts are able to find qualified teachers from accredited institutions. NCATE encourages states and districts **to make teacher qualifications available to parents**, and to use innovative staffing methods to ensure that prepared and **licensed teachers supervise those who are unlicensed**. We can staff classrooms with integrity, recognizing that there can be **different roles, responsibilities, and titles** for qualified, licensed teachers and for those who have not met state licensing requirements.

■ NCATE works with states via its State Partnership program to strengthen the accreditation of teacher education, while reducing duplication of effort and paperwork.

● **NCATE's partnership program saves time, effort, and expense for institutions seeking NCATE accreditation.** NCATE has partnership agreements with 46 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, so that institutions may seek professional accreditation while gaining state approval. State/NCATE partnerships eliminate duplication of effort and substantial paperwork for institutions seeking state program approval and professional accreditation.

● State/NCATE Partnerships allow states to choose the option that best suits their needs. The state and NCATE might work separately, but conduct concurrent reviews and share results. Or, NCATE examiners and state evaluators can work together as one team. A third option is for NCATE to conduct the entire evaluation, an option that can save the state and institutions a substantial amount of money.

■ NCATE expects institutions to use multiple measures to determine candidate readiness for a professional role. NCATE uses results on state licensing exams as a factor in accreditation decisions.

Presidents, Deans & Faculty Member Audiences (Higher Education)

■ **NCATE accreditation makes a difference.** It operates as a lever of reform for schools of education.

■ NCATE has received hundreds of unsolicited testimonials from institutions that attest to the value of professional accreditation and write that it has stimulated them to improve their programs.

■ NCATE's accredited colleges and universities are a diverse group, indicating that all types of institutions can and do meet professional accreditation expectations. One-third of accredited institutions are independent liberal arts colleges.

■ **NCATE accreditation is challenging, but achievable. NCATE accreditation assures the public:**

-
- that the professional school, in this case, the school of education, has undergone rigorous external review;
 - that candidate performance is thoroughly assessed throughout the program and before candidates are recommended for licensure;
 - that the programs meet standards set by the profession and members of the public.

School District Audiences

Graduates of NCATE-accredited institutions:

- know their subject matter and a variety of ways to teach it effectively;
- are able to manage classrooms with students from many different backgrounds;
- are able to use technology as an instructional tool;
- reflect on their own practice and change what does not work;
- have had a number of diverse clinical experiences in P–12 schools and studied under a variety of master teachers during a coherent program of clinical education.

■ A study of new teachers in Kentucky indicates that over 90 percent of new teachers feel well prepared for their roles. The study also indicates that their principals agree. NCATE standards are a major contributing factor to these positive results. This finding contrasts dramatically with older surveys of teachers who criticized the preparation they received as being removed from the real world. NCATE has helped accredited schools of education integrate theory and practice.

■ **NCATE prepares teachers for the real world.** NCATE standards require accredited colleges of education to form true partnerships with P–12 schools and to engage the school partners in designing and implementing the program of study for teacher and other educator candidates.

- A recent ETS study, *How Teaching Matters*, finds that student achievement increases when students have teachers who are trained in developing higher order thinking skills, who are skilled at implementing hands-on experiences in the classroom, and who are trained to work with special populations. The study is an empirical validation of NCATE standards, as effective classroom practice and knowledge of special populations is required of candidates from NCATE accredited institutions.

■ America is experiencing a teacher retention problem, resulting in shortages. School districts may not be able to find and hire qualified teachers in every field. However, school districts can **make teacher qualifications available to the public**. School districts can also **reorganize staffing patterns** to ensure that prepared and licensed teachers supervise those who are unlicensed and unprepared.

Tailoring NCATE's Messages

As you tailor the message to your audience, the following general guidelines should help:

Determine the Goal You Want to Achieve.

You need a clear understanding of what you want to accomplish before you start. Do you want to achieve a specific goal regarding teacher preparation in your state? Do you want to heighten the image of NCATE and NCATE-accredited institutions? Do you want to raise public awareness? Do you want to gain support of parents and the community?

Identify the Target Audience.

Think about whom you are trying to motivate or reach. Each audience will have different interests. Your message should be tailored accordingly.

Is it legislators or other elected officials? Is it potential new members or benefactors? Is it teachers, administrators, the public? Is it the media who can convey your concerns to the broader public?

Research the Views of Your Target Audience.

As you begin to formulate your communications, use available survey data to learn more about your target audience. Are they friendly or hostile? Are they looking for information to make their case? What is their history when dealing with teacher preparation and accreditation?

Review Past Media Coverage.

Past media coverage will tell you how the messages of NCATE and the quality of the nation's teachers have been conveyed. What does the media focus on? Confuse? Misunderstand? The media frequently confuses accreditation, licensing, and certification. Be clear when discussing each.

Examine the editorial and news coverage in your state and local media on key education issues. Note the terminology used, slant, key arguments cited, and quotes used. Ask yourself what works and what doesn't, and apply that analysis to your own communication strategy.

Know the Debate, Know the Issue.

The more knowledgeable you are, the more you can shape your communication.

Use Facts to Support and Give Justification for Your Message.

Audiences may be persuaded by facts. Find those that are relevant and use data to expose the myths about the quality of teachers in our schools.

Use “Real Life” Examples.

If you can tell the audience a real life anecdote, they are more likely to respond to your communication. A short personal anecdote or an account of an experience builds interest.

Study Opponents’ Messages and Determine A Counter-Strategy.

Often, issues affecting teachers and education are seen to compete with other agendas. Show how your goals will help others achieve their goals.

You may choose not to counter an opponent’s argument, but you will need to be prepared to answer their charges and correct errors.

Brainstorm with Your Peers and Colleagues.

Work with your peers and public information officers whenever possible to develop broad message strategies.

Develop Succinct and Quotable Talking Points to Help Summarize Your Message.

Given the time and space constraints of the media, make certain your message can be expressed in succinct and quotable sentences for the print media and in 10-, 30-, and 60- second soundbites for the broadcast media.

Pre-Test your Strategy in Small Groups.

Once you have developed your communication, test it on friends and others not directly involved in your efforts. This will provide you with the informal equivalent of a focus group, and you can use the results to modify your plan.

Share Your Message with Your Political Allies.

It’s important that your political allies understand your message so they don’t contradict or weaken it. If you supply them with copy, they can help reinforce your points.

Don’t Let Your Message Get Derailed.

Once you have chosen the key phrases and sentences you will use, don’t fall into the trap of expanding or elaborating beyond what you have scripted. This is the surest way to derail your message. Reporters will follow your tangent and fail to report the central point you really want to make.

Tips for Getting Across the NCATE Message

Everyone remembers a clever turn of phrase, a vivid image, and a passionate plea. Offer useful analogies. Often, your audience will not understand what you are talking about unless you relate the concept to something they may know much better.

■ We pay more attention to the preparation of those who take care of our pets than the preparation of those who educate our children.

■ NCATE accreditation helps raise the quality of new teachers in this country in precisely the same way that professional accreditation of medical and engineering schools raised the quality of new doctors and engineers.

■ Trying to improve student learning without improving the quality of new teachers is like putting the cart before the horse.

■ We would never go to a doctor that knew how your heart worked but didn't know the right tool to use to listen for your heartbeat. Just like doctors, teachers need to know their content, and how to use the tools to communicate that content to our kids.

Restate the obvious in a new way people can easily comprehend

■ Good schools require good teachers. Graduates from NCATE-accredited schools are well prepared to be good teachers.

Use data wisely. Data can provide powerful ammunition to back up your main points. Never use more than two numbers in a sentence and try to express your data in terms of percentages—50 percent, two out of three.

■ Two in three Americans say student performance would improve if teachers received more rigorous preparation.

Shatter myths. Just as records are made to be broken, myths are meant to be shattered. Don't hesitate to clear the air or set the record straight.

■ America is one of the few developed countries where teaching is not viewed with esteem.

Offer the big picture. While it is important to stress the key points and offer valuable examples and detail, make sure you don't forget the big picture. The "vision thing" is crucial to framing your argument.

■ If we do not improve the quality of our nation's teaching force, we have no guarantee that our children will receive the kind of education needed to succeed in this changing economy.

■ NCATE is dedicated to improving student learning by improving the quality of teacher education. We do this by establishing rigorous standards for teacher education programs, holding accredited institutions accountable for meeting these standards, and by encouraging unaccredited schools to demonstrate the quality of their programs by working for and achieving professional accreditation.

■ Audience of state policymakers: Graduates from NCATE-accredited schools are well prepared to teach the children of your state. You can help by strongly encouraging unaccredited schools of education to pursue high standards through seeking and achieving NCATE accreditation.

■ Audience of deans and faculty from unaccredited schools: Achieving NCATE accreditation takes an investment of work, and of time. But the benefits that schools receive from undergoing the process makes it well worth it: the strengthening of your programs, your membership in an organization of your peers who are committed to high quality programs, and the public's recognition that your graduates make the grade.



Ask for the help you need. Don't forget to end with a plea for action. Say what you want your audience to do.

FAQs

How to handle questions and answers

The question and answer period is an important aspect of most speaking engagements. All of the hard work you have put into preparing your speech can be undone if you are not prepared for the questions of your audience. Here are a few tips to keep in mind when answering audience questions.

- 1) Don't ask questions of the person who is asking you a question.
- 2) Don't be a know-it-all. If you don't know the answer, admit it and tell them you'll get back to them.
- 3) If the question is destructive and untrue, shake your head "no" while the person is still talking.
- 4) Never have an audience member repeat a negative question. If people can't hear the question, rephrase it, give the answer, then "bridge" to your message.
- 5) Tough questions: Give the answer, then break eye contact, turn to the audience and "bridge" to one of your messages.

FAQs about NCATE

Q: Is NCATE accreditation expensive? Too expensive for small colleges?

The cost of NCATE is a little more than the cost of a well-run unit that can support its programs. Every five years, the institution bears the cost of travel and expenses for the four to eight visitors from the Board of Examiners; this cost is about \$1,000 per visitor, or about \$4,000 - \$8,000 total. Each year, there is an annual fee; depending on the size of the unit, it ranges from \$1,680 - \$3,750. There are also reproduction costs and staff time involved in preparing the self-study.

Q: Does NCATE prescribe a curriculum?

NCATE leaves curriculum decisions to the institution. NCATE expects institutions to meet professional, state, and institutional standards, and the curriculum should reflect those standards. NCATE accreditation focuses on candidate performance.

Q: Our school has a unique mission. How will this be taken into account?

NCATE respects institutional missions and goals. NCATE does not specify a single way to meet a standard. NCATE asks the institution what kind of teacher it is trying to produce, and to develop a conceptual framework for each program based on research and best practice. The school is expected to be able to articulate and defend its conceptions of the knowledge base as part of the accreditation process.

Q: Do small colleges have a difficult time meeting NCATE standards?

Of the 650+ colleges and universities in the NCATE system (including candidates for accreditation), over one third are private, liberal arts institutions, and most of them are

small. This number includes members of the Council for Independent Colleges, the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges of Teacher Education, and members of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities.

Q: What do institutions say about the NCATE review?

Each accredited institution evaluates the NCATE process and on-site visiting team members. On a scale of 1 (not effective) to 5 (very effective), the most frequent institutional rating is 5. During a recent round of accreditation visits, the overall rating of NCATE procedures rated a 4.65 out of a possible 5. In addition, NCATE receives many letters from institutions that have completed the NCATE review saying that the it was a highly valuable experience.

Q: Is NCATE a tool of teachers' unions?

Teachers' unions are but two of over 30 national organizations that are members of NCATE. Together they provide about 7 percent of NCATE's budget. We are pleased that they support NCATE. Our collective goal is to improve teacher preparation.

Q: Doesn't NCATE dictate how many faculty, etc. a school of education must have?

No. NCATE simply tries to determine that the college is adequately staffed and organized for the programs it chooses to offer.

Q: What is NCATE's relationship to the National Board for Teaching Standards?

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a member organization of NCATE. NCATE and NBPTS are working together to ensure that professional standards for teacher preparation are aligned with licensing and certification standards. This partnership is an important part of an emerging continuum of quality teaching, in which rigorous standards for teachers and students are linked to promote well-qualified professional educators for our nation's children.

Q: What does NCATE contribute to the field of teaching, and why does it matter to the public?

NCATE ensures that subject matter, and how to teach it, is a priority.

■ NCATE standards require the school of education to base its programs on rigorous content and teaching standards set by professional associations in each content area. Secondary teachers must have a major or the equivalent of a major in their chosen subject. Elementary teachers are required to meet rigorous content standards. All teachers are expected to gain a firm foundation in the liberal arts.

■ NCATE expects teacher candidates to work from a solid base of research and best practice. Professionally accredited schools of education are required to infuse the growing knowledge base about effective teaching into the curriculum. Accredited schools of education are vastly different from schools of education just 20 years ago.

NCATE is on the cutting edge. NCATE is a leader in standards development and serves as a resource to states, colleges and universities, and policymakers.

■ NCATE launched its performance-based system in 2001. Accreditation decisions now focus in large part on the performance of candidates. NCATE is leading specialized accrediting bodies in the development of this system. NCATE wants to know: what does the teacher know and what can he or she do? Can the teacher meet new, performance-oriented state licensing requirements? Can he or she teach effectively? Has the college prepared teachers well? Should it be accredited?

NCATE accreditation makes a difference. NCATE operates as a lever of reform. Its purpose is to stimulate institutions to grow and change. NCATE accreditation is challenging, but achievable. It is not a popularity contest.

■ NCATE accreditation is voluntary in most states. Currently, 76 to 80 percent of the institutions that apply for accreditation for the first time receive accreditation. Approximately 85 percent of those that already have accreditation receive continuing accreditation for five more years. About 15 percent of institutions that are accredited receive accreditation with probation, which requires an in-depth visit in two years to determine if weaknesses have been remedied. Institutions that are denied accreditation can and do try again, and many are accredited after weaknesses are corrected.

Q: What is the state's role vs NCATE's role?

NCATE confers accreditation status only on institutions that meet professional standards. It is a status that all schools of education do not meet, and one reason why we cannot yet guarantee that each child will be taught by a qualified teacher.

About 550 accredited institutions producing approximately two-thirds of the nation's new teacher graduates each year emphasize quality and accountability to the public through their participation in NCATE accreditation reviews.

The number of accredited teacher preparation institutions varies dramatically by state, from zero to 100 percent. Approximately 600 institutions with teacher preparation programs are not accredited; some are large; most are small.

Because NCATE is voluntary in most states, a few high quality and many low quality schools of education have not volunteered for review by NCATE.

NCATE renders a professional judgment about the quality of the school of education. It has no authority to close a school of education. The State is the authority that determines whether a school of education operates. States may choose to use the results of NCATE accreditation reviews to take action with regard to their institutions, and thus to upgrade the quality of teacher preparation in the state.

Q: What is NCATE's State Partnership Program?

The NCATE State Partnership Program was established during the NCATE redesign in the late 1980s. The goals of the program are to integrate state and national professional teacher preparation standards, increase the rigor of reviews of teacher education institutions, and reduce the expense and duplication of effort that occurs when states and NCATE conduct two separate reviews.

Colleges in partnership states can meet NCATE and state requirements simultaneously. Partnerships vary according to states' unique needs and circumstances; however, all of the partnerships are based on NCATE's high quality standards.

In all cases, NCATE unit standards are applied. NCATE and states also evaluate the institution's teacher education programs (e.g., early childhood education, elementary education, math education, school psychology, etc.). Institutions' programs in partnership states may be reviewed in two ways: by using the state's program standards and review process or by using NCATE's program standards and review process.

■ NCATE State Partnerships Based on Candidate Performance

The standards frameworks must now be based on candidate performance whether NCATE or the state conducts the program reviews. In addition, two new goals have been added to the State Partnership Program: 1) align state teacher education program and teacher licensing standards in the content areas with NCATE's program standards that define what teachers should know and be able to do; and, 2) develop a relationship in which NCATE and its state partners will collect and analyze data and information on candidate performance as a part of the state approval and NCATE accreditation process.

■ NCATE Partnership Conditions

NCATE State Partnerships under NCATE's performance-based accreditation system will require NCATE to work with states as they develop new standards for teacher education and licensing and information systems. The new state systems must reflect the benchmarks of quality embedded in the NCATE standards. Future partnerships will center on an agreement between the state and NCATE that includes a plan and benchmarks for progress. This includes the state's development of teacher education program standards and/or initial teacher licensing standards that closely align with NCATE's specialized professional association program standards and an approval system sufficiently similar to NCATE's program review process. The state system should base its approval of institutions' programs on multiple means of assessments of the candidates' knowledge, skills and performance in the teaching field.

Research on Teacher Quality

Summary Data

The Issue

The 21st century will demand more of our students. The information society requires a higher level of skill and knowledge of all individuals than did the industrial economy, geared to factory production. Individuals should be able to reason analytically, solve complex problems, and gather and synthesize data. Therefore, student performance must rise to a higher level. As the society raises its expectations for student achievement, it must concomitantly raise standards for teachers. Teachers must be able to help all students increase conceptual understanding and analytical ability.

Yet every fall, administrators struggle to provide a qualified teacher for every classroom. It is an increasingly difficult task—even an impossible task in some districts. Administrators often resort to hiring anyone that they can. Teachers are often hired at the last minute, as bureaucratic hiring procedures create roadblocks for qualified candidates. Teachers are assigned to teach out-of-field courses in shortage areas such as math or science. Many legislators see nothing wrong with hiring anyone with a bachelor's degree. These policymakers still have the view of teaching as a simple activity that anyone can do—no special preparation required. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future:

- In recent years, more than 50,000 people who lack the preparation required for their jobs have entered teaching annually on emergency or substandard licenses.
- Recently, 27 percent of newly hired teachers have not been fully licensed (U. S. Department of Education, NCTAF). 12.5 percent had no license, and 14.9 percent were hired on temporary, provisional, or emergency licenses.
- Nearly one-fourth of all secondary teachers do not have a college major or minor in their main teaching field. This is true for more than 30 percent of mathematics teachers.
- 56 percent of high school students taking physical science are taught by out-of-field teachers, as are 21 percent of students taking English.
- The least prepared teachers work with the most needy students. The percentage of unlicensed teachers hired in schools where more than half of the students are minority or poor is at least four times that of other schools. In schools with the highest minority enrollments, students have less than a 50 percent chance of getting a science or mathematics teacher who holds a license and a degree in the field he or she teaches.

The Research

Teacher Preparation Makes A Difference

■ Teacher quality—knowledge and effectiveness—is the number one school based factor in student achievement.

■ Two studies published in September 2002, by the peer reviewed academic journal *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, found that P-12 students who have fully prepared and licensed teachers outperform students whose teachers are not fully qualified. In addition, teacher preparation programs result in positive effects on the academic achievement of low-income primary school children.

• Teacher Certification Research

In the first study, “Research and Rhetoric on Teacher Certification: A Response to ‘Teacher Certification Reconsidered’,” Linda Darling-Hammond, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University, refutes claims made in “Teacher Certification Reconsidered: Stumbling for Quality,” a report released by the Baltimore-based Abell Foundation in October 2001. The Abell Foundation report, authored by K. Walsh, claimed that uncertified teachers are as effective as certified teachers, and that teacher education makes no difference in teacher effectiveness. Moreover, the report asserted there is “no credible research that supports the use of teacher certification as a regulatory barrier to teaching” and urged that certification in Maryland be discontinued.

Darling-Hammond’s analysis found that teacher certification is a good predictor of teacher effectiveness. Her article details misrepresentations of a number of studies cited in the Abell Foundation report. She found that the report included inaccurate statements about methods and findings, false claims about their study authors’ views, and distortions of study data and conclusions.

Find this on the web at: <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v10n36.html>

• Academic Achievement Benefit of Teacher Certification

Students of certified teachers significantly out-perform students of teachers who were under-certified, report Ildiko Laczko-Kerr, Arizona Department of Education, and David C. Berliner, Regents Professor of Education, Arizona State University, in “The Effectiveness of Teach for America and Other Under-Certified Teachers on Student Academic Achievement: A Case of Harmful Public Policy.”

The authors compared the academic achievement of students taught by under-certified primary school teachers with the achievements of students taught by regularly certified primary school teachers. This was true on all three subtests of the SAT for reading, mathematics, and language arts.

The findings favored the students of certified teachers by about two months on a grade equivalent scale across reading, mathematics, and language arts. Thus,

certified teachers' students enjoyed a substantial advantage equivalent to almost 20 percent faster progress in a 10-month school year.

The authors conclude that “present policies allowing under-certified teachers, including those from the Teach for America program, to work with our most difficult to teach children appear harmful. Such policies increase differences in achievement between the performance of poor children, often immigrant and minority children, and those children who are most advantaged.”

Both Professors Darling-Hammond and Berliner are former presidents of the 25,000-member American Educational Research Association and members of the prestigious National Academy of Education.

Find this on the web at: <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v10n37/>

Clinical Preparation & Pedagogical Knowledge Is Crucial

■ The National Research Council, an arm of the National Academy of Sciences, published a report that indicates that teachers must be highly skilled in working with students to develop true understanding of concepts. The level of skill that a teacher must have to ensure student understanding takes time to develop. It does not happen overnight. The Council's study found that

- Teachers must be very skilled at working with students' preexisting and mistaken ideas about how the world works. Students tend to maintain mistaken understandings even after they have been taught a new model that contradicts the naïve understanding. Research with young children all the way to research on physics students at elite colleges confirms this finding.
- The model of the child as an empty vessel must be replaced. The teacher must actively inquire into students' thinking, creating tasks under which student thinking can be revealed. Teachers must be able to devise formative assessments that examine the understanding of the student.

All of these principles and data provides provide strong evidence that content knowledge alone, while necessary, is not sufficient knowledge for a teacher today. Clinical practice and professional study are crucial.

■ *How Teaching Matters*, an ETS study released in October, 2000, finds that teachers' classroom practices greatly influence student achievement, and that 'more attention needs to be paid' to improving classroom practices. Student achievement increases when students have teachers who are trained in developing higher order thinking skills, who are skilled at implementing hands-on experiences in the classroom, and who are trained to work with special populations. The findings support the need for content-specific pedagogy, the 'how to teach' portion of teacher development, and

dispels the idea that only subject matter knowledge is necessary in order to teach effectively.

- The study found that students of teachers who conduct hands-on learning activities outperform their peers by more than 70 percent of a grade level in math and 40 percent of a grade level in science. Students whose teachers have received training in working with special populations outperform their peers by more than a full grade level.

In addition:

■ Sanders and Rivers (1996) report data from Tennessee that show that two equally performing second graders can be separated by as many as 50 percentile points by the time they reach fifth grade, solely as a result of being taught by teachers whose effectiveness varies greatly.

■ A 1996–97 study conducted by the University of Texas’ Charles A. Dana Center showed that

- Texas students perform better on state exams when their instructors are fully licensed in the subjects they teach.
- 75 percent of 3rd graders passed all parts of the 1997 state assessment when taught by fully licensed teachers in their field. 63 percent passed when fewer than 85 percent of the 3rd grade teachers were licensed. The passing rate for Hispanic 3rd graders jumped from 58.7 percent to 67.5 percent when their teachers were fully licensed in their field.
- One-fifth of Texas’ K–12 students were taught by out-of-field instructors during 1996–97.
- The needier the school, the more likely it is to have out-of-field or unlicensed teachers. In Texas, 11 percent of teachers were not licensed in those elementary schools with poverty rates above 75 percent.
- Urban and rural schools hired more unlicensed teachers. Only 49.2 percent of urban middle school mathematics classes in Texas were led by licensed math teachers in 1996–97; only 68 percent of urban high school Algebra I courses were taught by licensed teachers, compared with 78.6 percent statewide.

■ Other data and studies support the Dana Center finding. Another Texas study [Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (1998)] showed that the influence of teachers on student achievement is many times greater than any other commonly observed variable.

Content Knowledge of Prospective Teachers

A survey of teacher preparation programs across the country (Feistritzer) confirms that 62 percent of these programs require a major or the equivalent of a major in the subject area of the license and 26 percent require at least a minor or the equivalent (1999). Individuals preparing to teach subject content are prepared in the content area. Thirty eight states require a content major for high school teaching. In addition,

prospective teachers who teach specific subject matter take 70 to 80 percent of their college coursework in the arts and sciences.

NCATE Makes A Difference

■ An ETS study on 270,000 PRAXIS II test takers indicates that graduates of NCATE accredited institutions pass ETS content examinations for teacher licensing at a higher rate (91 percent) than do graduates of unaccredited colleges (84 percent) or those who never entered a teacher preparation program at all (73 percent). (*The Academic Quality of Prospective Teachers*, ETS, June 1999). NCATE accredited institutions expect candidates to know the subject matter they will teach and how to teach it effectively. ETS concludes that attending an NCATE accredited institution increases the likelihood that candidates will meet state licensing requirements (ETS, 1999).

■ The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future found that the most significant predictors of teacher quality are (1) the proportion of institutions that are NCATE accredited (the strongest predictor of the proportion of well qualified teachers in a state), and (2) hiring standards of school districts (the proportion that require full licensure, a college major or minor in the appropriate content area, and graduation from an approved teacher education program as the basis for hiring).

■ The ETS study *How Teaching Matters*, in effect, is an empirical validation of NCATE standards, as effective classroom practice and knowledge of special populations is required of candidates from NCATE accredited institutions (ETS, 2000).

What Can Be Done?

1. Expand teacher preparation programs in high-need fields.
2. Create federal and state scholarships and forgivable loans.
3. Raise standards while raising salaries, improving working conditions, and equalizing the financial ability of districts to recruit.
4. Streamline hiring procedures. (Darling-Hammond, 1999)
5. Apply truth-in-labeling to the teaching field; disclose licensing status of all teachers to parents/the public; use different title for those who do not meet licensing standards. (Wise, 1999)

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Performance-Based Accreditation: Reform in Action

by Arthur E. Wise

NCATE is not merely an accrediting agency—it is a force for the reform of teacher preparation. As institutions meet the standards of NCATE, they are reforming themselves. NCATE’s expectations for teacher preparation institutions are a radical change.

Policymakers are searching for ways to scale up school and higher education reforms that are happening in small pockets across America. The U.S. Department of Education and private foundations fund reform projects at P–12 schools and institutions; some of those reforms take hold; others disappear once the funds are gone. The hope is that reforms that make a difference in student learning will be integrated into the culture of the P–12 classroom—and in higher education. Creating lasting change is a huge challenge. The advantage of the NCATE system is that it serves to institutionalize reforms. NCATE creates new norms of behavior around reform ideas and concepts in teacher preparation.

In NCATE’s performance-based system, accreditation is based on results—results that demonstrate that the teacher candidate knows the subject matter and can teach it effectively so that students learn. In the NCATE system, it is no longer good enough for a faculty member or a teacher candidate to say, “I taught the material.” The focus is on showing that the candidate can actually connect theory to practice and be effective in an actual P–12 classroom. Subject matter knowledge may be assessed by PRAXIS or another content knowledge test, and this information will be used in the accreditation decision. But other measures of candidate content knowledge will be used as well. How well the candidate can synthesize the content to help P–12 students understand it is assessed as well.

In addition, the college must have a system in place to assess its candidates. This system must include assessments at entry, throughout the program and upon exit. Benchmarks for acceptable learning must also be set, and institutions must have evidence that candidates who are recommended for licensure have performed at acceptable levels. NCATE has established rubrics for institutions to use to help them determine satisfactory levels of performance, and will be developing additional rubrics in content areas.

Next, NCATE has provided leadership in aligning accreditation standards with licensing standards and tests. One would think that this alignment would have occurred long ago, but that is not the case. Licensing tests were not common until a decade ago, and they were initially developed by private companies with minimal input from the field. NCATE has initiated an effort that will ensure that the teaching profession’s standards are the core of licensing examinations. This alignment will play out in higher education institutions as the institutions ensure that their graduates will perform at an acceptable level. The alignment will eventually provide evidence of the common body of

knowledge that all teachers should know as the assessments are revised to reflect the profession's standards.

In addition, NCATE has provided leadership in encouraging institutions to redesign advanced master's degrees to incorporate the standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. This move is strengthening existing master's degrees as they revise their programs. New and revised programs will focus on improving teaching skills in specific subject areas. This dramatic and coming change in master's degree programs aligned with NBPTS standards means increased professionalism and competence among experienced teachers. As more teachers become acquainted with the standards of the NBPTS, more will seek Board certification.

NCATE standards also expect teacher educators to model effective teaching. The traditional lecture alone is inadequate. Teacher educators must use strategies that they expect their candidates to use. Why? Teachers teach as they are taught. Teacher educators should model expert teaching.

In addition, NCATE standards expect candidates to demonstrate that they can teach students of diverse backgrounds. Many sessions on working with diverse populations have been held at annual conferences; institutions routinely swap information on approaches to recruiting a diverse student population and a diverse faculty; and the new standards continue the expectation that candidates should be prepared to help all students learn.

NCATE standards also expect candidates to be able to use technology effectively as a teaching tool. Just five years ago, technology was on the periphery of teacher preparation; in NCATE's 1995 standards, technology began to play an important role in the standards. In the past five years, deans have been preparing technology plans for their units; regional workshops on technology integration have been held; and institutions know that technology is an essential teaching tool—it's here to stay. Now, NCATE standards expect the use of technology to be central to teacher preparation in 2000 and beyond.

The clinical program in teacher preparation is changing rapidly, and NCATE has again served to help in this area. The performance-based NCATE system requires university and P-12 school faculty to function as partners in the education of teacher candidates. The higher education and P-12 faculty must collaboratively design and implement the program for teacher candidates. The emphasis on interacting as partners is far-reaching and profound. Cooperating P-12 teachers and supervisors have traditionally been treated as peripheral in the higher education arena. Now they are expected to be central figures in the planning and implementation process. A change in culture is taking place. The movement was started by the Holmes Group as it fostered the idea of professional development schools. NCATE has integrated many of the concepts inherent in the PDS into expectations for the clinical programs at accredited institutions, and is "mainstreaming" the reform.

A powerful sign that these concepts are now embedded into the expectations of the field is that the language of the NCATE standards has been adapted and adopted as state standards in many states. Many institutions are not where they should be yet, but the direction in which they are headed is clear. Performance-based accreditation requires organizational change and development on the part of all involved.

NCATE's expectations weave many of the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s into one piece of cloth—the concepts embedded in professional development schools; the measures of effective teaching in specific subject areas through the National Board standards; the alignment of licensing examinations with teacher preparation standards; making teacher preparation a “real world” experience.

Policymakers can encourage unaccredited teacher preparation institutions to move toward meeting NCATE standards as a way to ensure better teacher quality, and develop support and incentives for institutions to achieve professional NCATE accreditation. As more institutions meet NCATE's national professional standards, more qualified teacher candidates will be available, since candidates from accredited institutions pass licensing examinations at a significantly higher rate than do those from unaccredited institutions or those with no teacher preparation. In this time of teacher shortage, encouraging schools of education to attain national professional accreditation will increase the supply of well-qualified teacher candidates who can improve student achievement.

NCATE Testimonials

NCATE receives many unsolicited letters from institutions that have completed the accreditation process. Here are excerpts from just a few of hundreds of letters NCATE has received in the past several years.

NCATE is not just an accrediting agency; it is a force for the reform of teacher preparation. I know first-hand that, as institutions work to meet the standards of NCATE, they are reforming themselves. This reform will improve the quality of teaching and learning in our nation's schools.

Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor

University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee

"The entire team reflected the ideals that are NCATE's and probed difficult issues at our college. If anything, they made us reflect on how we are preparing teachers. Since departing, their visits and comments have sparked discussions among faculty members. Overall, this visit was a great experience...once that continues to motivate us."

C. Jay Hertzog, Dean

College of Education, Slippery Rock University

Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania

NCATE has set high standards and carefully constructed procedures for the review of teacher preparation programs. Michigan intends to continue as a partnership state. The high expectations and guidance provided by NCATE have had a strong positive impact on the quality of teacher preparation across the United States.

Carolyn E. Logan, Director

Office of Professional Preparation Services

Michigan State Department of Education

NCATE's new performance-based standards will help assure that graduates of accredited programs are well prepared and highly qualified. NSBA representatives are active participants in NCATE's accreditation processes through service on its Board of Examiners. We believe that NCATE will continue to improve the quality of teachers to benefit our nation's children.

Anne L. Bryant, Executive Director

National School Boards Association

Our teacher preparation institutions and others in the education community support the work of NCATE and appreciate the cooperative and collaborative relationship

between the state and NCATE. In Kansas, we look forward to an ongoing partnership with NCATE.

Martha S. Gage, Acting Team Leader

Certification and Teacher Education

Kansas State Department of Education

“NCATE has had a positive impact on strengthening teacher education throughout the United States. At VCU, the NCATE accreditation process has provided an opportunity for the faculty of the School of Education to review their programs against sound national standards.”

Eugene P. Trani

President

Virginia Commonwealth University

“NCATE, as the national accrediting body, serves colleges and universities through its leadership in assuring that the different sets of standards are consistent and reflect the current need to professionalize teaching.”

Diane L. Reinhard

President

Clarion University

“Your accreditation efforts and your work with our Professional Standards Commission has been a vital link in ensuring that Georgia has the best teachers possible.”

Zell Miller

Former Governor, State of Georgia

“On behalf of Gallaudet University, I am pleased to indicate a strong endorsement of the work of NCATE in its commitment to quality standards in preparing professionals for the nation’s schools.”

Kendall Green

President

Gallaudet University

“I am pleased to report that the accreditation process directly contributes to the quality improvement of our teacher preparation program. The external review permits both external validation of program strength and areas of needed improvement, but also assures the public of recognized quality assurance...At a point in the history of our country when education is of most importance, and the role of competent teachers central to the continued improvement of schools, confidence in the initial preparation

of school personnel must be clearly assured. In my experience, programs participating in and recognized by NCATE provide such school personnel.”

Charles P. Ruch

President

Boise State University

“NCATE has been of inestimable value to our Teacher Education Program. We would not have the program we have, one recognized for quality, effectiveness, and excellence, if it were not for NCATE.”

Jacob C. Martinson, Jr.

President

High Point University

“Since the initial accreditation, we have benefited by the ongoing processes of self-study and review preceding the continuing accreditation visit. Once again, the accreditation process has strengthened our programs and helped us to prepare high quality teachers, counselors, and administrators in a region in which they are needed.”

Norman Adrian Wiggins

President and Professor of Law

Campbell University

Buies Creek, North Carolina

“As we at the University work to provide the citizens of Rhode Island with the best possible public education, we are always cognizant of the role you play in ensuring that we fulfill that mission. I deeply appreciate the effort your accrediting agency expends to maintain high standards. Please extend my appreciation to all the members of the Unit Accreditation Board for their dedication and collegiality.”

M. Beverly Swan

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

University of Rhode Island

Kingston, Rhode Island

“I would like to express sincere thanks and appreciation to the BOE team for its individual and collective competence, thoroughness and consummate professionalism. Those of us firmly committed to the NCATE goals, standards and processes were honored to have been visited by such an exemplary group of professional peers. Our programs, faculty, and students surely have grown and benefited from our commitment to the NCATE process.”

Fred J. Condos

Chair, Department of Education

Valparaiso University

Valparaiso, Indiana

“I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the excellent visit that we had and for the professionalism of all of the members of the BOE team. The data collection by the members of the team was thorough and the BOE report accurately reflects the findings.”

Dennis W. Sterner

Dean, School of Education

Whitworth College

Spokane, Washington

“The NCATE review was a wonderful experience for this school, its faculty, and its students. You should be proud of the wonderful preparation the team members exhibited and their general spirit of goodwill and professionalism.”

Corrine McGuigan

Dean, School of Education

Gonzaga University

Spokane, Washington

“I am writing to you because the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education five-year continuing accreditation visit ranks very high as a positive and most beneficial experience for us. I am a strong advocate of program approval, which results from thoughtful visits under the leadership of NCATE.”

Bailey W. Jackson

Dean, School of Education

University of Massachusetts—Amherst

Amherst, Massachusetts

“Niagara University values its association with NCATE and makes no hesitation to encourage other small institutions to seek its accreditation. Its value is not just in the prestige it brings to an institution. It is the direction and assistance that it gives to an institution in its pursuit of self-improvement.”

(Rev.) Daniel F. O’Leary

Dean, College of Education

Niagara University

Niagara, New York



: Making a Difference

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

From the president...



Teaching a child to read, to solve math problems, and to understand scientific concepts should not be a trial and error proposition. And it does not have to be.

In the teaching profession, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is the professional accrediting organization for schools, colleges, and departments of education in the United States. NCATE relies on outstanding educators and public members to develop rigorous standards for teacher preparation and determine which schools of education measure up to them.

NCATE is a partnership of over 30 national professional organizations, representing over 3 million Americans, that have united to ensure high quality teacher preparation. Local and state policymakers, including school board members and chief state school officers, classroom teachers, teacher educators, school administrators, and specialists are the foundation of NCATE.

This brochure provides a glimpse of NCATE's standards, focus, and effect on teacher quality and student learning. I hope that we can continue to work together to improve the quality of teachers for our nation's children.

The Effect of NCATE

from *Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence*, released by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, written by Linda Darling-Hammond

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future has conducted a number of analyses of the influence of teacher quality on student achievement. A number of teacher quality variables are strongly related to student achievement in reading and mathematics on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. According to the Commission's research, the most significant predictors of teacher quality are (1) the proportion of institutions that are NCATE-accredited (the strongest predictor of the proportion of well-qualified teachers in a state), and (2) hiring standards of school districts (the proportion that requires full certification, a college major or minor in the appropriate content area, and graduation from an approved teacher education program as the basis for hiring).

The three states that required NCATE accreditation for all schools of education during the 1980s—Arkansas, North Carolina, and West Virginia—all experienced greater than average increases in student achievement during the 1990s. The Commission's research documents how states that invested most in improving the quality of teaching over the past decade experienced the greatest gains in student performance in that period of time.

A study by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) shows that graduates of NCATE-accredited colleges of education pass ETS content examinations for teacher licensing at a higher rate than do graduates of unaccredited colleges. In fact, teacher candidates who attend NCATE colleges boost their chances of passing the examination by nearly 10 percent.

ETS profiled the academic ability of those seeking a teaching license by determining the number of candidates who passed the licensing exam, PRAXIS. ETS examined 270,000 candidates between 1995 and 1997 who took PRAXIS II in the content area they planned to teach, and who had also taken the SAT or ACT. Graduates of NCATE-accredited institutions pass ETS content examinations for teacher licensing at a higher rate (91 percent) than do graduates of unaccredited colleges or teachers who never entered a teacher prep program at all.

NCATE graduates significantly outperform both graduates who prepared at unaccredited colleges and those who never prepared but took the exam. In a time of high demand for qualified candidates, encouraging schools of education to attain professional accreditation will increase the supply of well-qualified teachers.

NCATE Accreditation: Benefits for Teacher Candidates

The new professional teacher graduating from an NCATE-accredited institution:

is trained to assume responsibility for a classroom on day one—not through on-the-job training



knows the subject matter and a variety of ways to teach it to ensure student learning



will be able to manage classrooms with students from widely divergent backgrounds



has a broad liberal arts education



is able to explain why he or she uses a particular strategy based on research and best practice



reflects on practice and changes what does not work



is able to apply effective methods of teaching to students of different backgrounds



has had a number of diverse clinical experiences in P-12 schools and studied under a variety of master teachers during a coherent program of clinical education



nurtures the growth and development of each student in his or her classes

What NCATE accreditation means for teacher candidates

Teacher candidates from NCATE-accredited institutions will be better prepared for new, more demanding initial licensing expectations in many states, and for board certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. NCATE is working with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to ensure that accreditation, licensing, and certification standards are compatible. Many states have reciprocity agreements based on graduation from NCATE-accredited schools, so graduates of NCATE-accredited institutions will generally find it easier to apply for licensure when they move out of state.

New teachers say they are well prepared: Study in Kentucky reveals that NCATE is a factor

The vast majority of Kentucky's new teachers find that their college and university education prepared them well for their jobs in Kentucky's schools, according to a study released by the Kentucky Institute for Education Research, an independent research group that evaluates the progress of the state's education reforms. The study also indicates that their principals agree.

Over 90 percent of new teachers said they were extremely well prepared, very well prepared, or moderately well prepared to: establish a positive learning environment, communicate high expectations, design instruction that is developmentally appropriate, use different teaching strategies for different instructional purposes, and communicate the core concepts of their disciplines. Over six in ten, or two-thirds, said they were extremely well prepared or very well prepared for these tasks.

In addition to the survey of over one thousand new teachers, a sample of 125 principals of these new teachers was surveyed. Seven of ten of these principals said new teachers received better preparation than when they were trained.

These findings contrast dramatically with older surveys of teachers who criticized the preparation they received as being removed from the real world.

The NCATE standards can be seen as a major factor contributing to the positive results of the study, since 83 percent of new teacher graduates completing bachelor's level programs, and 94 percent of teachers completing post-bachelor or master's programs graduated from NCATE-accredited institutions in 1996. Thus, the vast majority of new teachers in Kentucky have completed programs of study at schools of education which use national professional standards developed by the field and coordinated and implemented by NCATE. Teachers reported that they felt prepared in areas covered by the NCATE standards in effect at the time they were in college.

These findings from Kentucky help to shatter the myth that teacher preparation is not effective.

NCATE is committed to emphasizing the performance of teacher candidates in its accreditation system, since it is what a teacher knows and can do that ultimately makes the difference in student achievement and learning.

Focus on subject matter

NCATE ensures that subject matter content, and how to teach it, is a priority. NCATE standards expect the school of education to base its programs on content and teaching standards set by professional associations in each content area (for example, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics). NCATE also expects candidates to gain a firm foundation in the liberal arts. NCATE expects the school of education and the college of arts and sciences to work together to develop future teachers.

*Over one hundred
unsolicited
testimonials from
schools of education
that have completed
the accreditation
process report that
working to meet
NCATE's state-of-the-
art standards helped
institutions improve
their programs.*

Focus on candidate performance

NCATE's accreditation standards focus on candidate performance. In fact, NCATE is one of the first accrediting organizations to use candidate performance as an integral part of its accreditation system. Other accreditation agencies have consulted with NCATE on incorporating performance outcomes into their own systems. NCATE institutions are expected to use multiple sources of performance-oriented data, including actual candidate performance in the classroom, before the completion of the program and/or recommendation for licensure. NCATE wants to know—What does the teacher candidate know, and how well can he or she apply that knowledge to teach all of the students in the classroom?

Focus on research base and best practice

NCATE expects teacher candidates to work from a solid base of research and best practice. Schools of education are expected to infuse the growing knowledge base about how to teach into the curricula. Should teacher preparation programs operate as they did 40 years ago—and as some still do today—or should they incorporate new knowledge and expect graduates to base classroom decisions on it? NCATE institutions are expected to establish a conceptual framework that connects their philosophy, research, programs, and clinical practice.

Focus on diversity

Rapidly growing diversity in America's classrooms will mean that almost 50 percent of schoolchildren will be from widely divergent backgrounds by the early 21st century. Preparing teachers who are ready to teach all students is a part of NCATE's expectations.

Focus on technology

NCATE's standards expect accredited schools of education to provide adequate access to computers and other technologies, and expect faculty and candidates to be able to use technology effectively as a teaching tool.

Focus on improved clinical experiences and education

One of the enduring criticisms of schools of education has been the lack of coordination with P-12 schools to ensure that candidates gain "real world" experience. NCATE colleges and universities are expected to reach out to P-12 schools and enter meaningful partnerships with them. NCATE standards link preparation and practice more closely than ever before. The old student teaching "apprenticeship" model of clinical education is giving way to improved clinical practice in which the candidate experiences a variety of master teacher styles.

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Visit NCATE's Web site for more
information about professional
accreditation and a list of accredited
schools of education at
<http://www.ncate.org>.

NCATE is a leader in standards development

NCATE is a leader in standards development and serves as a resource to states, colleges and universities, and policymakers.

Performance-Based Accreditation

NCATE is leading specialized accrediting bodies in its development of a performance-based accreditation system.

Clinical Preparation

NCATE has produced new standards for professional development schools (PDSs). PDSs are cutting-edge partnerships of colleges and universities and P-12 schools dedicated to the clinical preparation of new teachers, P-12 student learning, and the professional development of all teachers. These standards are moving the field forward in the area of clinical preparation.

Resource to States

Many states now use NCATE standards developed through nationwide professional consensus. Increasingly, states are delegating the job of reviewing individual teacher education programs, such as math education, to NCATE, while they focus on developing performance-oriented state licensing standards and assessments. These developments parallel the relationship of other national professional accrediting bodies to the states.

The state, not NCATE, determines whether a school of education operates. States may choose to use the results of NCATE reviews to take action with regard to their institutions. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia now have partnerships with NCATE.

NCATE Performance-Based Accreditation

Teacher candidate performance—not just curriculum and other input measures—is evaluated by on-site examining teams as part of a performance-based system of accreditation in teacher education. The system is the natural evolution of several strands of development begun by NCATE in the early 1990s. It includes the following components, and places NCATE at the leading edge of practice in specialized accreditation:

- ◆ The central feature of the system is performance-based standards for accreditation. Accreditation decisions now focus on the performance of the institution and its candidates, and less on input and process measures. More emphasis is placed on the quality of candidate work, candidate subject matter knowledge, and demonstrated teaching skill. NCATE wants to know—What do candidates know and what can they do when they graduate from initial and advanced teacher preparation programs? Do they know their subject matter and can they teach it effectively? The answers play a significant role in accreditation decisions.
- ◆ Standards for accreditation are compatible with standards for P-12 education, model state licensing standards, the standards for advanced certification of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), and the standards of specialized professional associations that are recognized by NCATE. Teachers will be well prepared for licensing, National Board Certification, and most importantly, will be prepared to help schoolchildren meet rigorous new achievement standards.
- ◆ Review of the school, college, or department of education is linked closely with review of individual programs, so that subject matter/content standards play a prominent role in accreditation decisions.
- ◆ Institutions were involved at each step of the way in the development of the standards, since in a performance-based accreditation system, institutions are expected to have evidence of the assessments of candidate performance easily accessible. This expectation has driven changes in the structure of teaching and learning within teacher preparation programs. Longitudinal performance assessments will most likely become the norm, as institutions examine the progress of candidate performance more closely during their clinical preparation. This means that clinical preparation is given greater attention, as the clinical portion of candidate education is the definitive demonstration of competence in the classroom.

Close coordination with the states is needed since NCATE has partnerships with 46 states at this time. Many states are moving toward performance-based licensing systems. Standards for accreditation and licensing should be closely aligned, to assure that new teacher candidates are prepared for successful teaching of increasingly rigorous standards for P-12 student learning. Since states are requiring evidence of candidate performance on licensing examinations, those results will be one form of evidence NCATE now uses in its accreditation system.

In addition, NCATE and its specialized professional associations are collaborating to strengthen the completeness and value of assessments used in teacher preparation. Likewise, NCATE's standards that apply to advanced programs should be closely aligned with NBPTS standards for advanced certification. Linking preparation with National Board Certification requires program change at many institutions.

ARTICLES AND OP-EDS

The 10-Step Solution

Statement of Arthur E. Wise on the U.S. Department of Education Report on Teacher Quality

Solving the Teacher Shortage: A Matter of Professional Standards

Knowing How to Teach is Critical To Learning

Methods to Present the Message: Public Speaking and Communications Tools

Public Speaking

Getting speaking opportunities

Identifying potential audiences.

Who do you want or need to hear your message to achieve your goals? Be sure that you develop a thorough list of target audiences. Check your list to be sure that it is diversified: educators, administrators, principals, school board members, professional groups, governmental leaders, civic leaders, business leaders, parents, etc.

Be proactive.

Don't wait for an invitation or a crisis. Be prepared to pick up the telephone and ask for an opportunity. Submit your own session proposals to your professional organization on the national or local level. Let NCATE know of speaking opportunities in your area. Even if you are not available, let us know and we will try to find a replacement.

Send a letter.

Briefly explain what it is you want to discuss, why you believe your remarks are of special importance to this group, how much time you would like and if there is any urgency to your request. If you want to reach as many groups as possible prior to the start of the new year, say so.

Make follow-up calls.

Every letter will require a personal telephone contact. Be sure the letter arrived and be sure the recipient understood your request. If the group has considered your request, do they have a date you might mark on your calendar? If the group would like you to discuss a different topic, what might that be?

Do a great job.

Remember, the average audience will be attentive for approximately 20 minutes. Keep your remarks brief, and take questions from the audience if there is time. The highest compliment is to hear afterward that the group wanted to hear more. They can always invite you back.

How to speak effectively

Get ready.

There is no substitute for preparation. A good speech is made up of great content and delivery, style and substance. To create both takes time and effort.

Know your audience.

Who will you be addressing? How many people will be in the audience? Ask the age range, educational background, special interests and activities of the group's members, and their potential familiarity with your issues.

Arrive early.

Be there early enough to watch the room fill up. Greet people you know. This will make you feel more comfortable and keep you from being shocked by a large crowd.

Personalize your message.

The goal of the speaker is to deliver information the audience believes it needs. Your speech must have value to the audience.

Talk—don't lecture.

Aim to be understood, not to impress. Eliminate professional jargon. Use statistics sparingly. Make generous use of personal anecdotes, examples, and experiences the audience can relate to.

Tell them, tell them again, and then tell them one more time.

It is important in oral communications to repeat key points. Tell the audience what you are going to say in your opening remarks. Tell them in the body of the remarks, the details or supporting information you want them to know. And finally, in your conclusion, tell them what you just told them—review major points.

Rehearse.

Practice so that you are able to speak from notes or use an outline.

Be ready for the unexpected.

The room or crowd may not be what was promised or what you had in mind.

Dress attractively.

Wear stylish but conservative clothing so the audience is listening to your remarks, not staring at your attire.

Make the audience like you.

Establish eye contact. Share something personal about yourself—a story your listeners can relate to that leads into the issue.

Tell jokes sparingly.

Humor is nice, but be sure that it works for you.

Vary the pitch and speed of your voice.

Let your passion for the subject show. The most memorable or convincing speakers are those that speak from the heart.

Use your body.

Emphasize points with your hands, face, and upper body to bring additional animation to your remarks.

Use visual aids.

Use visual aids, but only if they add to the understanding or impact of your remarks. Dimming the lights can be negative, especially during a presentation following a heavy meal or during an evening session. Instead, have handouts ready that you might give to people as they leave the session.

Gauge your audience response.

Make adjustments accordingly. Beware of fidgeting and whispering. It is better to bring your remarks to an early halt and take questions than bore the audience.

Be brief.

In general, limit your remarks to 20 minutes. Most people, especially in the evening, have a short attention span.

Enjoy yourself.

You are prepared. You have an important message and mission. If you are enjoying yourself, chances are your audience is too.

Media Tips

Serving as a media resource

Establishing media contacts and relationships with reporters can help draw attention to the work of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. You can position yourself with the media as a resource on some of the key issues affecting education today—including education reform, and how NCATE accreditation improves the quality of teachers in our children’s classrooms. The more visible NCATE becomes, the more the media may call you for reference materials, guidance on their coverage, and your general insight.

You are an expert in the field of teacher education whom the media can use as a reliable source at the local level. Take advantage of news on topics of interest to NCATE and on improving the quality of teacher education. Let the media and community know you are part of the larger picture and that you can discuss the local impact of a national story. If a story is happening on the national level that has local impact, offer interviews, up-to-date information, and anything else that

It can be challenging to talk to the news media, present yourself as a resource, and gain coverage for NCATE. The fact is, the news media often rely on “resource people” for information necessary to do their jobs. They often want to hear from you. What’s important is knowing who to call, when, and what information to provide.

Know who’s who in every newsroom in your community

Call the news organization and ask. Sometimes the person answering the phone will have that information; sometimes you may need to ask for an editor (at print outlets), news director (at radio stations), or assignment editor (at television stations). Many stations, newspapers, and publications produce contact lists with names, titles, and phone numbers for in-house use, and may share this resource with you. Often a web site can provide this information as well. Don’t forget to check out alternative outlets such as ethnic publications and free weeklies that may be distributed in your area.

Look for people who care about education

At print outlets (newspapers and magazines), you want to start with the name of the reporter who covers education. Because of NCATE’s State Partnership program, you may also want to find out who covers local, state, and national government. Also get the name of the editor of the editorial page (you may want to request an editorial board meeting) and the editor of the op-ed page (the page opposite the editorial page). Sometimes it is the same person, but it is important to know for the submission of op-eds.

At radio stations, ask for the news director as a contact for routine news coverage and ask about any talk show the station airs that might be appropriate for a discussion of NCATE. Ask for the name of the show’s producer, when the shows are broadcast, and whether they are live or taped earlier.

At television stations, ask for the assignment editor and whether there is a reporter who covers education. Again, you may also want to get the name of the government of legislative reporter. Ask about shows that use live guests.

Make sure you get the correct spelling of every name, a direct line phone number (or a newsroom number), a fax number, and an emergency number that allows you to reach the news organization if something happens after business hours.

Print and broadcast media primer

Print media

The 1600-plus daily newspapers (“dailies”) in the United States provide an estimated 113 million individuals with their primary source of news every day. They usually cover a variety of education-related topics, including national and state education initiatives, elementary and post-secondary school education, and higher education. The better your knowledge and understanding of the kinds of education stories dailies typically cover, the more successful you will be both as a supporter of NCATE and in generating solid media and community attention for NCATE.

Daily newspapers have “editorial boards” that determine and write a given paper’s official position on various issues. Editorial board meetings provide a good opportunity to meet with editors directly, to present NCATE positions, to encourage editorial support or to discuss unfair or biased treatment of an issue. Call the editorial department to find out which editor generally covers education topics. Draft a letter to the appropriate editor that states both the issue and your interest in meeting with them. Include background information on NCATE, plus any contact names and phone numbers. Follow up with a telephone call.

Op-Ed/Opinion Page editors determine which op-eds will appear in the paper. Op-eds are the opinion pieces that run on the page opposite the paper’s editorials. They are usually 700–800 words long. Writing an op-ed is often an effective way to communicate your ideas and opinions about an issue.

Weekly newspapers are usually suburban papers, minority-focused papers, or rural papers that cover community-oriented stories or specialized topics. Most weeklies also offer a calendar of upcoming area events.

Many weeklies have a limited ability to send reporters to cover events, so often the reporters will write stories from press releases or interviews. Although the larger weeklies may have a reporter assigned to cover education issues, the paper’s editor or publisher makes most assignments.

Broadcast media

Because television demands visual presentation of your message, generating TV coverage about NCATE requires you to make your stories more “visual.”

Local stations usually have at least three scheduled news broadcasts a day: noon, late afternoon/early evening, and late evening. Morning coverage and local morning shows are gaining popularity. Generally, noon and late afternoon broadcasts report “lighter

news”—special segments and human interest stories—while the evening broadcasts focus on “hard news.”

Cable TV is an extremely effective means of reaching large local audiences. Include cable TV in your media efforts whenever possible. Public access stations may have discussions programs you can interest in featuring teacher education, NCATE, and NCATE-accredited schools.

Typically, you should deal with the station’s assignment editor. Larger stations usually have three assignment editors—one for the noon newscast, one for both evening newscasts, and a weekend assignment editor. You might also contact your station’s education reporter or any correspondent who does human interest/soft news stories.

Many communities have a local access cable channel that relies on the local community for programming. That channel may already have a local talk show or news show that could be interested in talking about teacher education accreditation. Alternatively, you could work with an NCATE-accredited school of education to develop your own local program about teacher education.

Radio talk shows and other broadcasts reach people in all aspects of their everyday lives. Using radio as a public platform can be an effective way to discuss the work of NCATE.

Radio programming offers a variety of formats for communicating to a number of distinct and different audiences. The most common radio news formats include: all-news, all-talk, news programs, talk shows, call-in shows, and public service or public affairs programs. When you mail news releases to radio stations, be sure to include a contact name and number.

The Web is probably the fastest-growing service available on the Internet. People or organizations create and maintain “pages” which users can call up on their computer screens. In your outreach efforts, mention NCATE’s web page (www.ncate.org) as a source for more information. If you have a web page, you can create a link from your page to NCATE’s page.

E-mail is an excellent way to communicate with NCATE staff. You can help put people in contact with NCATE by mentioning our e-mail address (ncate@ncate.org) to others.

Newsgroups are like bulletin boards that focus on everything from teaching to automobiles to vacationing. You can promote NCATE by posting comments to newsgroups in which you participate. Commercial services like America Online, Prodigy, and CompuServe have interfaces that make it easy to join newsgroups.

Delivering your message to the media

As an information resource to reporters, have on hand resources and information related to NCATE that will help reporters in covering stories. Information might include state and local action supportive of NCATE and teacher education accreditation, information on NCATE-accredited schools of education, summaries of standards and developmental projects work, and data on teacher education and how it affects student learning.

Be familiar with the types of stories each publication or station covers. This will help you answer their questions and prevent you from leading them in a direction that is unsuitable for their reporting style.

There are a number of ways to get your message out. The following section describes the purposes, uses, timing, and format of various media relations devices.

Media Advisory: The purpose of a media advisory is to notify the media about an event or activity. The media advisory should explain the “who, what, where, when, and why” of events and should provide just enough information to entice the media to attend. Media advisories should not be confused with news releases. Advisories are meant to persuade reporters to cover an activity before it happens.

Send advisories to your state/local media lists, which should include journalists who regularly cover education and other NCATE-related topics. If you do not have a specific name, address advisories to the “Assignment Editor” at television stations, the “News Director” at radio stations, and the “City Editor” at newspapers. Also, make sure to send an advisory to state and/or local wire services for inclusion in their “daybook” listing of events scheduled that day.

Even if you know that reporters or news organizations are not likely to attend your event—because of time limitations or other reasons—send an advisory to let them know about it anyway. They may want to schedule a one-on-one interview or contact a wire service to cover the event for them.

Because an advisory sent too far in advance may get lost in the shuffle, mail advisories at least three to five days in advance but no more than a week, unless holidays will interfere with the timing. If you do not have this lead time, hand deliver or fax the advisory to local media no later than the morning of the day before the event.

A media advisory should:

- have a brief headline describing the event
- have the words “MEDIA ADVISORY” at the top left hand corner of the page
- state the date of release, usually the day it is to be mailed
- provide contact names and phone numbers
- visually highlight the date, time, and place that the news event will occur

—give a brief description of the purpose of the event and what will take place, such as a list of speakers, and be sure to underscore any strong visual aspects so they will know if it would be wise to send a photographer or camera crew

—try to keep it to one page

—indicate the end of the page by using the universal end-symbols recognized by news organizations: “-30-” or “###”.

News release: A news release summarizes and presents important stories to the media. The release should frame your message accurately and provide background information and quotes from reputable and knowledgeable spokespersons, including yourself. A news release helps to make a reporter’s job easier, which in turn benefits your efforts.

The news release should be written with the most important information in the first and second paragraphs. Less important points and expansion of overall issues should be included in later paragraphs. As with the media advisory, news releases should be targeted to specific reporters or to the assignment editor or city editor for distribution to the appropriate reporter.

If the news release is about a specific event or time sensitive issue and the information is such that it will take reporters longer to review and interpret, send the release a few days before the event and write “Embargoed until (date)” so they know not to use it ahead of schedule. Otherwise, indicate “For Immediate Release” on your press releases.

The news release should:

—be typed on 8-1/2 x 11 letterhead

—have wide margins to allow for editor’s notes

—generally be double-spaced and single-sided

—be no longer than three or four pages, with a brief headline describing the story and key summary information in the first paragraph

—highlight the release date and provide contact names and phone numbers

—indicate page continuation by placing the word “more” in dashes at the bottom

—identify continuing pages with a one word “slug” or descriptor followed by dashes and the page number

—identify the end by placing a “—30—” or “###”.

Tips for writing a news release:

—Use short sentences and paragraphs

—Make certain that facts are absolutely accurate

—Check for proper spelling of names and places

—Avoid jargon and technical terms or explain them if they must be used

—Do not use initials without indicating what they stand for in the first reference

Opinion Editorials: Opinion editorials, or “op-eds” are submitted to daily and weekly newspapers to express the author’s position on a particular topic.

Write and submit op-eds when you want to express a policy-oriented opinion on events and activities of concern to you as a supporter of NCATE. Op-eds are good vehicles for explaining complicated issues—particularly when you are concerned that your message will not be adequately or effectively communicated through regular news coverage. An op-ed should express an opinion, but support it through facts, examples, and arguments.

Most daily papers have an op-ed review process that can take anywhere from one to 10 days. Many of the larger dailies will require “exclusivity,” meaning they will consider your piece only when they are the sole paper receiving it. Be aware of any exclusivity clauses before contacting other newspapers. It is a good idea to call the op-ed editor to see if they are interested in the topic and your perspective before investing the time in preparing the piece. During the conversation, explain why your views are important to their readers.

When there are no exclusivity issues involved, you might want to do a mass mailing to papers and include a one-page “pitch” letter explaining why your opinion should be published, why it is current and relevant, and how your information will be of interest to the paper’s readership.

A good opinion editorial should:

—have a title and indicate authorship

—be approximately 400–800 words in length. Check with papers in advance to determine their word count requirements

—be creative, but to the point. Editors like the use of vignettes and analogies, but want to first know what is new and important.

—stay focused—many op-eds are rejected because the author never delivers a clear message with facts to back it up

—include in parentheses at the end the name of the author(s), title, organization, and a brief description of NCATE.

Letters to the editor should be relied upon to respond negatively or positively to an article or editorial that a newspaper, journal, or magazine had printed on an issue or to communicate your opinion without going through the editorial approval process required for publishing op-eds.

Write letters to respond to editorials or to news coverage that is centrally linked to questions about NCATE or teacher education reform initiatives. Keep your eyes open or

opportunities that may, at first, seem to be only loosely connected. Health, nutrition, technological innovation, business, and labor affairs may all have relevance to achieving the community's goals for education and accomplished teaching.

Don't expect your letters to be printed every time. Most papers have policies on how frequently they will publish the same writer's views.

A letter to the editor should convey the most important message in the first paragraph. If you are responding to an article or editorial printed in that paper, reference the title, date, and author of the original piece in your opening sentence. The letter should be between 100 and 400 words. Pieces that are short and to the point are more apt to be printed. Remember to include your name, address, and daytime and evening telephone numbers so the paper can verify who wrote the letter.

Many newspapers will print several responses to one article on the same day. It is not unusual to see letters to the editor regarding material printed two months ago. This does not mean that you should wait to respond. Submit a letter as soon as possible—usually within a few days to a week of a story's appearance. Check several of the responses in the "letters to the editor" section in your local papers to get an idea of the newspaper's time frame for printing letters.