AASCU American Association of State Colleges and Universities

Delivering America's Promise

PREPARING TEACHERS IN TODAY'S CHALLENGING CONTEXT:

Key Issues, Policy Directions and Implications for Leaders of AASCU Universities

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Teacher preparation is at the core of most public universities' missions, providing a vital function in pursuit of states' ambitions for an educated and engaged populace. The member institutions of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) strive to continuously improve the development of teachers who will prepare future generations in their communities for success in college and careers.

In recent years, the context in which preparation programs operate has grown increasingly complex, and the improvements in practice and other innovations have been overshadowed by heavy scrutiny and shifting expectations. In 2016, AASCU established a Teacher Education Task Force and undertook a survey of presidents, provosts and education deans at state colleges and universities to gain a better understanding of the profession's current state and to inform future activities.

Experts on the task force and survey respondents identified a broad set of challenges facing teacher preparation:

- The P-12 teaching profession is being asked to do more with less, confronting growing expectations coupled with declining autonomy for teachers, low pay, constrained budgets and acute teacher shortages in certain regions and subject areas.
- University-based teacher preparation faces declining enrollment, increasing costs for education majors, difficulties recruiting diverse students and candidates in high-need fields, and shrinking budgets—all compounded by persistent criticism from policymakers, the media and others.
- External entities have created policy challenges for teacher preparation programs, including heightened federal and state accountability burdens, unproven regulatory demands, shifts in professional accreditation and burgeoning alternative and emergency certification provisions.
- As the U.S. student population continues to grow in size and diversity, the demand for quality teachers will only increase, especially in light of the challenges above. With over 50 percent of new teachers being prepared in AASCU programs, these programs will play a critical role in addressing the need.

Recommendations for Institutions

Informed by AASCU's survey of teacher education practices, the AASCU Teacher Education Task Force has articulated several relevant and practical priorities for university administrators:

1. **Help educator preparation programs bolster clinical experiences for teacher candidates.** Research supports the importance of providing preservice teachers with robust clinical practice in P-12 settings. To ease students' access to these experiences, universities may need to revisit policies related to academic calendars and financial aid. And to incentivize faculty to increase their engagement in clinical partnerships, institutions may need to adjust promotion and tenure guidelines to reduce the emphasis on research over field-based practice and service work.
2. **Ensure teacher preparation programs have strong relationships with P-12 partners.** Especially with increased expectations for clinical preparation, school-university collaboration is essential. In addition to supporting preservice teacher development, deep

partnerships can help nurture practicing P-12 teachers and administrators, keep higher education faculty current in the realm of practice, and improve universities' understanding of their incoming students from the partner communities.

3. **Step up strategic recruitment into teacher preparation programs.** Universities need to redouble efforts to identify and recruit students to become teachers, particularly in high-need and shortage fields and demographic areas. Such recruitment should target students currently in high school, community college, or early university studies who demonstrate the academic strengths and other characteristics needed in the teaching profession.

4. **Build stronger articulation agreements with community colleges.** According to the AASCU survey of education deans, 70 percent of AASCU institutions have articulation agreements with community colleges to facilitate students' transfer to the university teacher preparation programs. These transfers constitute about 32 percent of the teacher candidate cohort at those institutions and generally bring much-needed connections with local schools and perspectives from diverse communities to the universities.

5. **Help develop strategies to professionalize teacher education.** By virtue of their predominance in teacher preparation, university-based programs are positioned to lead reform efforts to help professionalize the field. Institutions should take the initiative in uniting teacher educators to articulate consensus standards for curriculum and clinical practice. In addition to elevating the overall quality of teacher preparation, such professional agreement would help counter calls for reform from both within and outside the academy.

AASCU Public Policy Priorities for Teacher Education

Public policy plays a critical role in either supporting or impeding the innovation and continuous improvement that teacher preparation programs seek to pursue. To engender constructive reforms, teacher education policy must be built on a foundation of evidence, set high standards in recognition of the importance of the enterprise, and hold all providers to consistent expectations.

AASCU submits the following goals for public policy to accompany the recommendations of its Teacher Education Task Force:

Federal Policies Regarding Teacher Preparation

- Strengthen and fund high-quality clinical experiences, and require their inclusion in all traditional teacher preparation programs and federally funded alternative programs.

- Secure dedicated funding streams to support continuous improvement of university-based teacher preparation programs.

- Ensure that any federally funded grant program supporting reform in teacher preparation programs requires a meaningful and sustained partnership with a high-need P-12 school district and a strong emphasis on clinical practice.

- Support efforts to better align Title II of the Higher Education Act and Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to strengthen the recruitment, preservice

preparation, induction and mentoring, and in-service professional development of P-12 teachers and school leaders.

- Secure appropriations to assist states in meeting the updated teacher quality requirements set forth under the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Oppose federal efforts that infringe on academic judgment or state authority in the design and regulation of teacher preparation programs.

Accountability of Teacher Preparation Programs

- Provide federal funds for research and evaluation of teacher preparation programs—including efforts to improve state P-20 data systems—such as through the linkage of teachers with student outcomes in order to inform and improve program performance, productivity and impact on student learning. Ensure that preparation programs have access to the data by which they are being evaluated.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategies

- Provide federal funds to increase the number of educators from underrepresented and nontraditional teaching populations through various incentive structures, including centers of excellence based at institutions of higher education.
- Support service-payback models to recruit students who agree to teach in targeted school districts, especially schools that are difficult to staff or where salaries are not competitive with surrounding districts. While not without flaws, the TEACH Grant program is one such model.
- Support loan forgiveness for teachers who work in high-need schools or teach in high-need subject areas.

State Policies Regarding Teacher Education

- Build strong, meaningful partnerships between state and local education agencies and institutions of higher education to support teacher education; standards, curricula and assessment alignment; and accountability.
- Develop appropriate licensure standards on the basis of valid, reliable and objective data, and align assessment of teacher preparation programs with those standards.
- Require all teacher candidates to complete and pass a performance assessment to demonstrate their readiness to effectively lead a classroom.
- Evaluate all teacher preparation providers using the same standards.

Conclusion

Although today's context for teacher preparation is characterized by myriad challenges, AASCU institutions are poised to continue providing leadership in the profession. Now is the time for the nation's public universities to build on their long-standing commitment to preparing educators by focusing on the key strategies and policies that will move the field forward. ■

AASCU TEACHER PREPARATION REPORT

With roots that go back to the earliest days of normal schools, teacher preparation in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) colleges and universities has a distinguished tradition and remains a cornerstone of many institutions' missions. Indeed, we estimate that AASCU institutions prepare more than 50 percent of all teachers certified annually in the United States. The association also proudly recognizes outstanding teacher preparation programs each year with the AASCU Christa McAuliffe Excellence in Teacher Education Award.

Today, however, teacher education is in a state of flux. Despite evidence that many social factors affect student performance in preschool through 12th grades (P-12), society seems to lay much of the blame for low student outcomes in P-12 on the quality of teacher preparation in higher education. Critics from many quarters seek improvements in teacher education, including more uniform standards for preservice curricula and preparation, teacher performance, and P-12 student learning outcomes linked back to their teachers' preparation programs. But effective, evidence-based measures of the quality of teacher preparation programs remain elusive.

Meanwhile, searching for ways to improve student learning outcomes in P-12, policymakers in the United States at both the federal and state levels have shown interest in potentially significant and costly regulatory changes concerning teacher preparation. At the same time, fewer students are enrolling in many university-based preparation programs—even as most states are experiencing teacher shortages in vital specialties, such as special education and STEM fields, and in rural areas. Another challenge is recruiting a student body for teacher preparation programs who reflects and resembles the increasingly diverse ranks of students in P-12.

With those considerations in mind, AASCU thought the time was right to assess the current state of teacher preparation programs at public colleges and universities. To that end, the organization convened a task force of experts on teacher education in 2016, charged with examining the state of teacher preparation on AASCU campuses. We had the honor of chairing this group, whose members (see page 44) have considerable experience and particularly useful perspectives on teacher preparation within the AASCU context. Our work included oversight for a survey about teacher preparation, which was conducted in the summer of 2016 among presidents and provosts of AASCU member institutions and deans of schools and colleges of education at public colleges and universities. Results from the survey provide illuminating new insights about teacher preparation, pointing to both challenges in the field and innovations that public universities are undertaking to address those challenges.

Overall, the survey underscores the need for presidents, provosts and education deans to more fully understand and support strong teacher preparation programs. Since universities offer the best hope for providing the number and quality of teachers the nation needs, the stakes are high. Quality teaching is definitively in the nation's best interest, and AASCU institutions must play a pivotal leadership role in sustaining strong, high-quality programs that prepare teachers for the generations of learners in the years ahead.

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Introduction

By virtue of their vital service to society—preparing teachers to serve across the P-12 spectrum, and to practice in a wide range of communities—teacher preparation programs embody and manifest the very essence of the mission of public universities in regional engagement. Indeed, at many institutions, teacher preparation programs have the most diverse and extensive direct connections with the communities that the university serves.

As a profession and as a discipline, however, teacher preparation is highly criticized and highly politicized. Many critics—including politicians, government officials, foundations, businesses and researchers—argue that on the whole, teacher preparation produces only mediocre results. They chastise universities for being too slow to improve teacher education programs and for using them to be little more than revenue generators for their host institutions. Meanwhile, state and federal entities alike have ramped up their accountability requirements for university-based teacher education programs, even as they seem inclined to enable new pathways to teacher preparation that are exempt from established rules.

While calls for the reform of teacher education have coexisted for some time with efforts to reform higher education on the whole, the focus has intensified on outcomes- and performance-based measures of teacher education. Critics today argue for a more evidence-based approach to teacher training, for stricter standards for teacher licensure, and for better measures of teacher quality and P-12 student learning outcomes. But there is no consensus about what measures are meaningful and proven effective based on evidence.

If these criticisms are not enough to worry about, universities also find themselves with fewer students enrolling in teacher preparation programs, even as the educator workforce is suffering serious shortages in several fields and localities. The reasons for the enrollment decline vary, but some students understandably gravitate toward other fields with higher salaries, especially as ever-rising university tuition increases their chance of graduating with debt. Others may be discouraged by the low level of respect that society ascribes to both teachers and teaching, or by what some educators perceive as an over-emphasis on student testing and test scores.

University teacher preparation programs face other significant challenges. Expectations have grown for the duration, variety and depth of the field experiences that universities help provide for teacher candidates, even as funding dwindles and institutions generally continue to prioritize research over practice for faculty promotion and tenure. In addition, teacher preparation programs are being asked to increase the academic rigor of their programs, recruit and prepare more diverse student populations, and also diversify the ranks of the professors who instruct future teachers. At some institutions, too, state funds that may have once supported teachers in pursuing master's-level credentials have evaporated.

Often overlooked in the criticism and politicization of teacher education is that, particularly over the last decade or so, university-based teacher preparation programs have avidly and actively sought to continuously improve their practices and policies, essentially pursuing reform through a constant focus on evolutionary change. Most universities now have robust and extensive partnerships with P-12 schools that support the clinical preparation of teacher candidates, including lengthy apprenticeships with teacher mentors. Teacher preparation programs have purposefully pursued channels that provide diverse clinical experiences for their teacher candidates—in both urban and rural areas, for example, and in schools with significant demographic diversity. Further, teacher preparation programs in higher education often utilize the most robust and current assessment protocols that exceed university requirements.

> "As research has shown, families and communities tend to value and respect the educators in their own schools, and to devalue and disrespect teachers and teaching in general. Also, teachers in more affluent areas and more prestigious schools tend to be highly respected, while those in poorer schools are criticized and assumed to be poor teachers. This is true in our region as in others. Overall, the criticisms of teachers that are prevalent in the country as a whole have led to a perception that teaching is not a highly desirable career." [Dean, School of Education]

The United States needs strong teachers more than ever before. The future of our democracy depends on a well-educated citizenry, and the nation's continued economic strength pivots on having a workforce educated to have the requisite skills needed to ensure worker productivity and a capacity to learn as new information, problems and technologies emerge. AASCU institutions themselves benefit from effective teaching in P-12, as it leads to greater college readiness and less need for academic remediation.

To gain a deeper perspective on the current state of teacher education in state colleges and universities, AASCU undertook a survey in the summer of 2016 that asked presidents, provosts, and deans of schools and colleges of education to share their perspectives on teacher preparation at their institutions. This report draws on both quantitative and qualitative data generated by this survey, the in-depth insights of AASCU's Task Force on Teacher Education, as well as a wide range of secondary sources. A more detailed description of the survey can be found in the appendix at the end of this report.

Context: Challenges for Profession, Preparation and Policy

The context for teacher preparation is complex, but understanding the challenges it faces is an essential prerequisite to supporting it effectively—and to making headway on needed changes. Today's context is shaped by general challenges in the teaching profession, challenges central to teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities, and challenges related to public policies that affect teacher preparation.

Challenges in the P-12 Teaching Profession

To understand the teacher education landscape in the United States, it is important to first understand some of the key challenges facing professional educators in P-12 schools today. At the center of these problems is a troubling paradox: To better meet the needs of today's students, our expectations for teachers continue to rise, while funding for schools is on the decline. Simply put, teachers today are expected to do more with less. Meanwhile, a confluence of factors—a growing P-12 student population, rising retirements, high attrition and a diminished interest in teaching among young people today—has led to a shortage of licensed teaching professionals. The effect has been a gradual and uneven lowering of the minimum requirements for entry into the profession. Combined, all of these factors represent a significant challenge to the teaching profession at large, not to mention the teacher preparation programs that have been tasked with recruiting and training the next generation of teachers.

Constrained P-12 Budgets

Recent findings by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) show that, today, most states provide less support per student for elementary and secondary schools than they did before the Great Recession, and that some states are still trimming support. Moreover, the CBPP notes, local governments, facing fiscal challenges of their own, have not been able to bridge gaps caused by reductions in state funding.[1]

Such budget constraints can create significant downstream effects across the P-12 sector. Reduced funding constricts the ability of many school districts to recruit, hire and retain high-quality teachers. Teacher layoffs, furloughs and pay cuts can become more common. Under-resourced schools sometimes find they cannot compete with wealthier schools, in not only paying teachers, but also providing the resources to address the needs of students in these schools. Tight budgets typically mean that many teachers must teach classes with more students, especially in schools located in high-poverty communities. Schools with constrained budgets have difficulty adopting and particularly maintaining new technology in the classroom as well. When schools struggle to provide basic services, innovation can be harder to achieve. Funding for teacher professional development may be curtailed. Spending for capital improvements can also be compromised: The CBPP notes, for example, that between 2008 and 2013, elementary and high schools in the United States cut capital spending by $28 billion, or 37 percent.[2]

Growing Expectations, Declining Autonomy

In recent years, teaching itself has grown more complex than ever before. Teachers today have greater responsibility for tracking and documenting their students' progress in learning, and for understanding how they might apply data about student learning to improve their work in the classroom. Like many 21st-century professionals, they are expected to be both data collectors and data analysts. Demands are higher than ever for teachers to be masters of often increasingly complicated content areas, as well as experts in emerging pedagogies and technologies, such as blended learning. They are expected to know how to teach all students, with particular knowledge of learners at very different academic levels, those with learning disabilities, and those from a wide range of cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Personalized learning, customized class modules, and assignments tailored to individual students are increasingly the norm.

In addition, new federal and state regulations put more pressure on teachers to improve student learning outcomes as defined by standardized tests. Many are concerned that those regulations also mandate curricular choices, restrict teacher freedom in the classroom, and create circumstances where educators find themselves needing to "teach to the test"—despite the efforts to get away from overtesting in the latest education law reauthorization. Indeed, over 80 percent of the AASCU survey respondents felt that teachers today have too little autonomy.

> "Teachers are so busy complying with external controls, they are unable to teach in the manner they feel is most appropriate for their respective classrooms." [University President]
>
> "The focus on standards (and standardized test results) has stripped away opportunities for creativity and independent professional discretion in many schools and has, in some cases, reduced the attractiveness of teaching as a career option." [Provost]

Low Pay

Faced with growing expectations for performance, teachers rightfully complain about not only the reduced autonomy and respect but also low pay, inadequate recognition, scant opportunities for professional development, and restricted channels for career advancement. Indeed, a theme that emerged again and again in survey respondents' open-ended responses was the fact that teaching is not as highly valued by society—and especially by policymakers and the media—as it should be.

In some geographic areas, schools find themselves essentially in a bidding war for top talent, with highly skilled teachers being wooed away by public and private schools with more resources. Teachers in high-demand disciplines, such as science and mathematics, can be tempted to jump to higher paying schools or even into private industry. Urban and rural schools, and those serving low-income populations often find it particularly difficult to recruit the teachers they need.

> "The perception of teaching as a career is pretty negative right now and the pay is not as attractive as for other fields which require a Bachelor's degree at entry." [Director of Assessment and Evaluation]
>
> "It is still a respected career, but low pay and social problems in the schools discourage some...[from pursuing] teaching." [Provost]
>
> "High performing students choose other majors. Fewer students are attracted to the teaching profession due to low pay, difficult working conditions, and lack of public support." [President]
>
> "Disparities in salaries between teaching and other careers in our high-tech-industry-heavy region make it very difficult to attract the best and brightest into STEM teaching." [Dean, School of Education]

In response to teacher shortages (discussed below), some schools—and states—have increased teacher pay. Such moves help address teacher salaries that are too low, but there is still a long way to go to close what some say is a troubling and growing gap in pay rates. A recent report found, for example, that teachers' pay in 2015 was 17 percent lower than that of comparable workers—versus just 1.8 percent lower in 1994—and that total compensation (wages plus benefits) was 11 percent lower relative to other fields.[3] It is telling that a recent article in *Forbes* about which college majors lead to the highest salaries did not mention education.[4]

Teacher Shortages

Federal data suggest that the need for elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States will increase by 14 percent between 2010 and 2021.[5] Meanwhile, many school districts already face teacher shortages, some of which can be characterized as acute. A recent report from the Learning Policy Institute identified four factors behind the current teacher shortage: a decline in enrollment in teacher preparation programs, efforts among school districts to return to pre-recession pupil-teacher ratios, increasing student enrollment and high teacher attrition (approximately 8 percent per year, which is double the rate of attrition in high-performing countries). The report noted that, while teacher availability might look balanced in some states, there nonetheless exist significant teacher shortages in regions of many states,

and in the availability of teachers prepared for instruction in such subject areas as special education, mathematics, and science. Moreover, the report stated categorically that "students in high-poverty and high-minority settings bear the brunt of teacher shortages."[6]

> "There wasn't such a teacher shortage 10 years ago. Due to the increase of demands placed on current teachers, the low salary, and additional costs it takes to maintain a teaching certificate, people are not pursuing teaching as a career." [Associate Dean of Education]

Challenges Central to University-based Teacher Preparation Programs

Today's teacher preparation programs face a daunting task: to recruit and prepare a generation of new, highly qualified, and diverse teachers who are willing to enter into a rewarding, but nonetheless embattled, profession. Given the importance of their charge, it is unsurprising that teacher preparation programs face intense scrutiny from policymakers, the media and others. This scrutiny—and the accompanying calls for transparency, accountability and reform—represent an additional challenge for today's teacher preparation programs, especially in an era of declining state support for higher education.

Nonetheless, universities have been making significant and substantive improvements in their teacher education programs, even as critics attempt to build competing narratives. Many programs have managed to forge innovative and promising paths through their complicated terrain. The AASCU Christa McAuliffe Excellence in Teacher Education Award celebrates this work, specifically by recognizing programs that have done an exemplary job of using evidence of their graduates' impact on P-12 learning outcomes to inform improvements to their preservice preparation and professional development programs. Other promising practices drawn from the AASCU survey are included below.

Christa McAuliffe Excellence in Teacher Education Award

The Christa McAuliffe award has honored exemplary teacher education programs at AASCU institutions since 2002. In 2010, the award criteria were updated to expand eligibility to professional development as well as preservice preparation programs, and to require applicants to have used evidence of their graduates' impact on P-12 learning outcomes to inform improvements to their programs. The innovations and impact realized by award winners provide inspiration for other teacher educators and demonstrate programs' commitment to continuous improvement and to serving their communities well.

Since the criteria were amended, six institutions have received the Christa McAuliffe Award:

Ball State University (Ind.) – 2016
Launched in 2009 as a partnership between Ball State University's Department of Elementary Education and the Whitely neighborhood of Muncie, Ind., the Schools Within the Context of Community program matches preservice teacher candidates with mentors who serve as cultural ambassadors for the participating low-income community and impart the community's strengths and values. Candidates participate in a variety of community gatherings, as well as integrated coursework with interdisciplinary faculty. As a result of this in-depth program, teachers are better prepared to be effective in the classroom and to be of greater service to their students and communities. During its

7-year tenure in the Whitely neighborhood, the elementary school with which Ball State works has transitioned from an "F" school to an "A" school, and scores on the state standardized test have increased from 30% to 71%.

California State University, Fresno – 2014
Fresno State's Central Valley Partnership for Exemplary Teachers advances P-12 learning through collaborative, school-based and differentiated preparation. Its primary focus is enhanced learning for students in one of the most economically challenged locations in the United States. The achievement of each subgroup for each grade level in each Partner school is tracked through a statewide data-base. Through test scores and informal assessments certain aspects the delivery model are in a continual mode of adjustment and improvement. The impressive results and growth of the partnership testify to the enduring value and urgent need for collaboratively operated, field-immersed teacher preparation programs that are better able to meet the needs of struggling schools and districts.

Hunter College (CUNY) – 2014
The Urban Teacher Residency Program at Hunter College leverages the power of school networks to build capacity across communities to make them essential partners in the collaborative training and development of new teachers. These networks provide the foundation and critical context for candidates' academic experience and skills development, emphasizing the importance of clinical experience in teacher preparation and boosting schools' capacity to serve effectively in the development process. Ongoing evaluation of UTR analyzes links between student outcomes and teacher candidate quality ratings. For example, analysis showed statistically significant correlations between student and teacher candidate outcomes related to classroom environment, including average Regents scores and Danielson's Culture of Learning and average Regents scores and course grades and Danielson's Managing Student Behavior. Analyses using predictive models also showed trends for both student grades and Regents exam scores.

Valdosta State University (Ga.) – 2013
Valdosta State University made strategic changes to its teacher preparation program in conjunction with the Valdosta Early College Academy (VECA), resulting in a positive impact on the academic achievement of the 6th–12th grade VECA students. Before the changes, VECA students demonstrated significantly higher achievement on their standardized tests in language arts and social studies in relation to their matched comparison group, but not in science and mathematics. After the university adjusted its preservice instruction and field experiences in science and mathematics, two years later VECA students scored significantly higher than their matched comparison group in all subject area standardized assessments.

Black Hills State University (S.D.) – 2011
Project PRIME (Promoting Reflective Inquiry in Mathematics Education) is a professional development program at the heart of Black Hills State University's National Science Foundation-funded collaboration with the Rapid City Area Schools. The PRIME partnership has produced significant and sustained learning gains in elementary mathematics, including with Native American students, and has led to significant changes in the university's teacher preparation and professional development programs. The project also has been a mechanism for systemic change at the elementary level, where teachers have implemented a program of instruction that includes the inquiry-based learning, active student engagement and learner-constructed knowledge called for in the research on standards-based reform in mathematics.

Western Oregon University – 2010
In response to increasing demands to document teacher candidate impact on P-12 student learning, Western Oregon University developed a web-based database interface, the Learning Gains Aggregator (LGA). The LGA is used to aggregate P-12 student learning gain scores, as described in candidates' teacher work samples, which allow a university to determine the effectiveness of its teacher preparation programs in terms of learning outcomes of P-12 pupils across a wide array of contexts and characteristics.

Fewer Students Pursuing Careers in Education

One of the most significant challenges for university-based teacher preparation programs is the general decline in undergraduate students pursuing teaching careers. Federal data show that enrollments in traditional college and university teacher preparation programs declined by 31 percent between 2010 and 2014.[7] The AASCU survey results roughly align with this figure: Among the 82 percent of deans who responded that their enrollments have declined over the past five years, the average magnitude of the decline was estimated at over 20 percent. (A few states, including California and Indiana, reported increases in their latest enrollment data, but the numbers are still down considerably overall.)[8], [9] Universities are also feeling the pinch in their graduate programs of education. Between 2003-04 and 2013-14, the overall number of graduate degrees conferred in education decreased by 6 percent.[10] Many institutions have had to shutter once viable master's-level education programs designed around teacher professional development and previously supported by P-12 schools.

As the previous section on challenges facing P-12 education makes clear, there are many reasons why today's college students are turning away from teaching, including shrinking P-12 school budgets, the lack of autonomy, increased expectations for performance, and low pay compared with other professions. Indeed, the profession of teaching has been so affected by these challenges that it has becoming increasingly common for P-12 teachers to discourage others from following in their footsteps. As one dean of education wrote in the AASCU survey, "Teachers do not recommend their career choice to others, including their own children. During recruitment events I used to find about 50 percent of the parents in the room to be teachers. Now, I'm lucky to find a single teacher in a room of 50 people. Our students report that in early practicum experiences teachers actively discourage them from joining the profession." A look at survey data on teacher job satisfaction further underscores this point; a 2013 survey by the insurance company MetLife found that teacher satisfaction declined by 23 percentage points between 2008 and 2012, from 62 percent to 39 percent reporting that they were "very satisfied" with their jobs—the lowest level in 25 years.[11]

While some analysts have said teacher preparation programs could stand to see enrollment numbers decline—citing historic overproduction of teachers—the workforce pipeline now seems hampered by an insufficient cushion. Even in today's shortage conditions, many teacher candidates end up pursuing another career after graduation. In Tennessee, only about half of teacher preparation program completers go on to enter the educator workforce in the first year after graduating.[12] Although this job-placement rate has been fairly consistent over the years and may have been tolerable when production of new teachers was high; it now seems like a costly leak in the pipeline.

> "National rhetoric, low salaries, declining benefits, and school budget cuts are just a few of the reasons young people have lost interest in teaching as a viable career option." [Dean, School of Education]

> "The last 20 years have seen steady attacks on teachers, schools, and teacher education programs. We have become a convenient scapegoat for the perceived ills of society. It is no surprise, then, that enrollment numbers have dropped." [Dean, School of Education]

The High Cost of Majoring in Education

A related issue is that more students who start in teacher preparation programs are not completing them, and are thus not going on to teach in P-12 classrooms. There are many possible reasons for this trend, but a significant one, according to the AASCU survey, has to do with the cost of majoring in education.

In contrast to students in most other majors, teacher preparation students must pay for several standardized tests over the course of their programs, as well as for background checks and fingerprinting, the cumulative costs of which can be significant. Moreover, the costs of commuting to multiple schools for their methods courses and student teaching can be prohibitive (most sites essentially require that students have cars), especially when they are compounded by the significant opportunity costs tied to clinical field experiences and student teaching. The costs, in addition to tuition that students must bear in order to meet clinical practice requirements, is a growing concern. As the university student population ages overall, a growing number of students face significant financial obligations to support families. Such factors are significant barriers that prevent would-be teachers from pursuing careers in education.

> "Sometimes students do not have funds for Praxis tests, required background checks, or other expenses beyond regular tuition costs. States do not think about this when they implement these requirements." [Dean, School of Education]

Recruiting and retaining diverse teacher candidates

Federal data show a wide gap between the ethnic composition of P-12 classrooms and that of the teacher candidate population. In 2012-13, for example, 73 percent of teacher candidates were white, in contrast to just 51 percent of P-12 students. Compared to a quarter of P-12 students, just 11 percent of would-be teachers were Hispanic or Latino. Similarly, 10 percent of enrollees in teacher education programs were black or African-American, compared to 16 percent of P-12 students.[13]

The fact that AASCU institutions educate 51 percent of all minority undergraduate students means that teacher preparation programs in AASCU universities can and must play a pivotal role in educating a diverse teacher workforce. The dozens of Hispanic-serving and Historically Black AASCU institutions are strong providers of teachers of color, but their capacity is minimal relative to overall workforce needs. Most other teacher preparation programs face obstacles in recruiting and retaining diverse teacher candidates. Respondents to the AASCU survey spoke to some of the special challenges that teacher education programs face. Some programs that would like to be more diverse are situated in demographically homogenous communities, creating a limited pool of diverse teacher candidates. In other cases, factors like testing and licensure costs—highlighted above—and GPA requirements have made it more difficult to recruit diverse students to teacher preparation programs.

Nevertheless, according to the AASCU survey, the challenges of recruiting students of color

to teacher education programs outweigh the challenges of retaining them. Indeed, only 12 percent of deans reported that they had been "very successful" in attracting students of color to teacher education, compared to 46 percent of deans who reported they had been "very successful" in retaining them. As one dean remarked, "Once they get into the program, we are successful in getting them through the program."

Teacher preparation programs clearly need to do more to recruit diverse teacher candidates—and instructors—from a greater variety of racial and ethnic identities. Apart from the imperative that those charged with educating future citizens should reflect society's population, children need to interact in schools with adults with whom they can identify. As the general population diversifies, schools are seeing a growing need, still unmet, for more teachers skilled in teaching children whose first language is not English. At the same time, all teacher candidates need a knowledge base that is well steeped in an understanding of diverse populations and should have the opportunity to develop much-needed cultural competencies.[14]

> "New regulations and costs are restricting students of color from entering and completing our programs." [Dean, School of Education]

> "We need targeted scholarship/recruitment funding to assist in diversifying candidates seeking initial licensure. Our incoming cohorts consistently misalign with the sociodemographic pupil populations most completers will serve." [Dean, School of Education]

Respondents to the AASCU survey cited a wide range of successful strategies for recruiting and retaining students of color, including high school outreach and recruitment efforts, scholarships, mentorship programs, cohort-based programs, placing an emphasis on hiring diverse faculty members and advisors, ensuring that field placements for students of color are in environments that respect and understand them, and offering test-preparation support for licensure exams. Some of these efforts are part of larger initiatives (e.g., the Call Me MISTER program) and some are supported by external grants (e.g., Teacher Quality Partnership [TQP] grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Teacher Opportunity Corps [TOC] grants from the State of New York).

Recruiting Students in High-need Areas

It continues to be a challenge to recruit students to teacher preparation programs who have a targeted interest in areas of high need in P-12, such as the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, early childhood education, special education and bilingual education. Competition with high-paying jobs in the private sector is one significant barrier. While some institutions in the AASCU survey reported greater recent success in attracting teacher candidates interested in specializing in mathematics, recruiting students with interest in other STEM fields remains a "hard sell," as one dean put it.

> "Disparities in salaries between teaching and other careers in our high tech industry heavy region make it very difficult to attract the best and brightest into STEM teaching. When new STEM majors can come out and make more than double the average starting teacher's salary…STEM teaching becomes a hard sell. We are starting to see more interest in bilingual education, but both early childhood and special education candidates are hard to come by." [Dean, School of Education]

Respondents to the AASCU survey cited several successful strategies for attracting and retaining teacher candidates in STEM fields, including recruiting students at the undergraduate level

who are already majoring in a STEM field, forming close relationships with faculty from the arts and sciences, and using grant funds to provide incentives for STEM candidates. Commonly cited grant programs included the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program from the National Science Foundation and the Teacher Quality Partnership [TQP] grant program from the U.S. Department of Education.

With regard to early childhood education, special education and bilingual education, respondents cited a range of strategies related to recruitment and retention, including dual certification programs and emergency certification programs.

Constrained Budgets

In this era of declining state support for public higher education, it is unsurprising that many of today's teacher preparation programs are facing significant budget constraints. These constraints have affected their ability to meet staffing needs, invest in programmatic improvements, and comply with an increasingly large number of demands from states, the federal government and accreditors.

With regard to staffing, 7.3 percent of respondents to the AASCU survey indicated a "critical need" for more human resources or personnel, 21.4 percent a "considerable need," 59 percent "some need," and 12 percent "no need at all." When asked to describe their staffing needs in more detail, respondents indicated a need for additional faculty members, as well as a need for additional administrative and support staff. Specifically, they would like to able to hire more tenure-track faculty members, as well as staff members who can advise students, coordinate and administer the increasingly in-depth clinical experience programs, and handle increased obligations for compliance with accreditation standards and state and federal regulations. Many respondents also cited a need for more savvy technological expertise as some programs and courses migrate to an online or hybrid format. The stressors on P-12 education mentioned earlier, including budget, staffing and regular mandates, also make it increasingly difficult to find qualified cooperating teachers to work with preservice teachers.

> "New accreditation demands are requiring additional staffing resources for the collection and analysis of data, report writing, et cetera." [Dean, School of Education]

> "We are in a perpetual struggle to find qualified field supervisors. New mandates, which require more field hours and more supervision, only add to that burden. While we have increased requirements for clinically rich teacher education, we do not have enough resources to fully engage in that level of partnership." [Dean, School of Education]

When asked to comment on the extent to which their teacher education programs need other types of resources, aside from personnel, many respondents highlighted the need for more funding to support technology in teacher preparation, including online learning, both from a standpoint of help with the technology per se and with professional development to ensure its effective use in teacher preparation. Still another need is for additional resources to meet expectations that programs do more to collect and analyze data.

> "Because of frequent changes to state requirements for teacher certification, it can be a challenge to ensure that materials and resources are kept up-to-date." [Provost]

Respondents also mentioned a desire for more funding for scholarships for teacher candidates. Recognizing the additional financial challenges that pursuing a career in education can pose,

some programs would like to be able to help defray the costs of licensing and testing. Others spoke of the need to provide better financial support for students in clinical practice—including even providing appropriate clothing for economically disadvantaged students.

Criticisms From Policymakers, the Media, and Others

Finally, no review of the challenges facing teacher preparation programs today would be complete without an acknowledgment of the persistent criticisms and public scrutiny that teacher preparation programs have experienced over recent years. Especially since the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), policymakers, the media and others have argued that admissions standards for teacher preparation programs need to be tougher, that coursework in pedagogy is often underdeveloped or not sufficiently thorough, that education students need more rigorous training in content areas, that educator programs do not offer sufficient clinical experiences for would-be teachers, and that standards for assessment and licensure of teacher candidates are uneven. In 2013, arguably angling to position itself as an arbiter of quality in teacher preparation programs, the National Council on Teacher Quality famously labelled university-based teacher education as "an industry of mediocrity," saying that it churns out first-year teachers "with classroom management skills and content knowledge inadequate to thrive in classrooms with ever-increasing ethnic and socioeconomic student diversity."[15] These criticisms have not only affected public perceptions of teaching and teacher preparation; they have also been a driving force behind an array of new and problematic standards and regulations.

> "The national media has been quite successful in denigrating the educational profession. Why would an individual who can choose any career path choose one that is not respected, that has to meet ever more rigid (not necessarily rigorous) standards, and that is held accountable for the ills of our society?" [Dean, School of Education]

Challenges in Policy Affecting Teacher Preparation

Both state governments and federal regulators are becoming more aggressive in demanding measures of the quality of teachers and of university-based teacher preparation programs. Officials are particularly eager to gauge quality based on performance outcomes, but efforts to find meaningful measures remain elusive as well as controversial. Capacity challenges also stand in the way of many accountability ideals, as tight budgets preclude investing in significant reforms. For example, the recently passed federal regulations for teacher preparation require statewide data systems to compile and compare an array of new evidence, but such systems do not exist yet in most states—and most school districts do not have the capacity to gather the data that teacher preparation programs are being asked to report.

Related activities at both state and federal levels contribute to the complexity of today's policy landscape.

Increased (but Uneven) State Scrutiny

The call for more transparency and accountability in teacher preparation—from federal officials in particular—has prompted many states to double down on their scrutiny of teacher education programs. A 2016 study by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) noted a

marked increase in state reviews of policies and practices regarding teacher preparation programs, perhaps reflecting that states are beginning to align their practices in assessing teacher preparation with directions in federal policy.[16]

One notable trend is that more states have begun to develop "report cards" to help officials assess program performance in such areas as candidate completion rates, licensure and teacher placement. States are also shifting toward including data on graduates' performance and persistence as a metric in the assessment of preparation programs, although as noted above, some of these measures have proven elusive. The "Holy Grail" among these outcome measures, according to the CCSSO report, is teachers' impact on P-12 students' success in school, and a growing number of states have implemented or are pursuing a "teacher impact indicator" as part of teacher preparation program accountability.[17] Unfortunately, a common metric for judging student achievement is their standardized test scores, but research has shown that using such scores to determine the value of teacher preparation programs lacks validity and reliability.[18, 19]

Overall, efforts in the states to develop new ways to measure teachers and teacher preparation program quality can be characterized as uneven, and to a large degree, experimental. One team of analysts recently found that new efforts in several states to assess outcomes of teacher preparation program graduates have been difficult to implement, have led in some cases to conflicting data, and generally revealed that researchers do not yet have effective ways to identify meaningful differences in outcomes of teacher preparation programs.[20]

The CCSSO findings suggest that while there is unevenness across the states in how well they measure teacher preparation programs—and a general need for better metrics and assessment processes—university programs can expect states to continue their emphasis on teacher preparation accountability, as well as their interest in using program reviews to drive continuous improvement. The CCSSO study voiced a germane warning, advocating on the one hand for "the utility and power that program performance measures can have as drivers of program change," while on the other hand also cautioning states "not to give more credence to the measures than they warrant."[21]

> "Although I fully support a strong teacher evaluation and support system, I am concerned that educators and education are so heavily impacted by the political process. As state leadership and legislative leadership changes, a whole different perspective on education and educators gets promoted. These changes often result in new systems and/or standards that teachers, schools, and the students are held accountable to, with little to no professional development to build up to the new system or an appropriately scaffolded application of the changes with students." [Dean, School of Education]

Shifts in Professional Accreditation

Another significant issue demanding attention in the teacher preparation field concerns recent changes in professional accreditation, which is provided by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Although professional accreditation is optional in more than half of the states, over a dozen others require all providers to hold CAEP accreditation in order to receive state program approval, and other states require only public institutions or other subsets of providers to be CAEP-accredited. Prior to 2013, many programs sought accreditation under either the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education or the Teacher Education Accreditation Council. In 2013, those two organizations underwent a de facto consolidation into CAEP, resulting in new standards, processes and pathways for member institutions to

navigate. Over 840 educator preparation providers are currently accredited under the CAEP umbrella, amounting to approximately 49 percent of the nation's total number of providers.

CAEP's first set of accreditation standards, fully implemented in 2016, emphasize a culture of evidence and continuous improvement, and reflect the national trend toward outcomes-based measures of quality. Although the standards require teacher education programs to meet certain "input" expectations, such as thresholds for the academic quality of their enrollees, programs also must report on outcomes such as their graduates' effectiveness as teachers and student graduation, licensure and hiring rates—and even student loan default rates.

For many in the teacher preparation community, the transition to these new accreditation standards has been the cause of some concern. In February 2015, the board of directors of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) reiterated its support for a single, unified professional accreditation system for educator preparation programs, but also voiced "ongoing, significant concern" about CAEP's capacity to fulfill its stated mission in practice, citing specific concerns from the AACTE membership about CAEP's standards, processes, costs and the representativeness of its governance structure.[22] The National Education Policy Center has also voiced concern over CAEP's standards, specifically that there has not been enough rigorous research on whether the types of measures required by the CAEP standards are actually valid measures of quality.[23] Others have complained that CAEP's Standard 3, which requires that programs abide by a set of stringent admissions criteria, would make it even harder for programs to recruit a diverse student population.

As a result of these concerns, many teacher preparation providers, including AASCU institutions, either have suspended their membership in CAEP (if their state does not require it) or face frustrations as they pursue the new requirements in an atmosphere of controversy. Further contributing to this atmosphere is the fact that CAEP has yet to be recognized as a national accrediting body by the federal government—which some institutions view as the ultimate disincentive for undertaking accreditation efforts—although it is reportedly pursuing this approval and has been nationally recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation since 2014.

Still, the educator preparation field clearly needs a professional accreditor, and CAEP holds tremendous potential in not only its pedigree but its forward-looking standards. Universities have as much reason to be hopeful as skeptical, but for now, the shifting sands are causing considerable discomfort.

New Federal Directions

Signed into law in 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA—the new version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and essentially the successor bill to the No Child Left Behind Act—includes some statutes that affect teacher education. Title II of the law, which focuses on recruiting, preparing and retaining high-quality educators, offers many allowable uses for federal funds, and leaders of university-based teacher preparation programs have been collaborating with other stakeholders to inform their states' plans.

One of the allowable uses of ESSA funds is of particular concern for universities: the Great Teaching and Leading for Great Schools Act (the GREAT Act), which permits states to authorize "academies" for preparing new teachers, principals and school leaders. The teacher education community is concerned that such academies would be similar to charter schools, potentially

replacing "traditional" preparation programs without having to meet the same requirements as university-based providers. This provision has raised concerns about a potential "race to the bottom" with regard to standards for teacher preparation programs,[24] although some are optimistic that universities themselves might seize the opportunity to pilot innovative academies—without sacrificing quality—in partnership with local districts.[25]

Alternative and Emergency Certification

According to federal statistics, nearly half a million people (499,800 individuals) were enrolled in teacher preparation programs in the 2012-13 academic year.[26] Eighty-nine percent were in "traditional" teacher preparation programs, defined as four-year undergraduate programs that "prepare candidates with instruction in pedagogy as well as the specific content area they plan to teach." Of the remaining 11 percent of teacher candidates, 5 percent were in university-based alternative programs, and 6 percent were in alternative programs not based at higher education institutions.[27]

Many alternative programs target career changers who already have a bachelor's degree and work experience in a content area. According to the U.S. Department of Education, these programs "often focus less on a specific content area and more on pedagogy." [28] Although they currently represent a small proportion of teacher preparation programs, alternative programs are growing, and with the new ESSA provisions, they can be expected to grow at an increasingly rapid rate.

The current teacher shortages are also spurring new fast-track pathways. Desperate to get teachers into their classrooms, some states are reducing the minimum standards required to be eligible to teach. To meet critical shortages of teachers in such areas as science, mathematics and computer science, for example, Utah recently decided to hire teachers who have relevant professional experience but no specific preparation for teaching.[29] Other states have followed a similar tack in changing their standards for teachers, especially for those in high-demand fields. Indeed, states are increasingly reliant on emergency teacher certifications, designed largely to attract unlicensed professionals to teaching, especially in rural and urban areas and in subjects where teacher shortages are acute.

These strategies may solve the immediate problem of teacher shortages, but at what cost? Research shows that teacher preparation programs that embed quality clinical experiences and other "powerful" practices produce teachers who stay in the profession longer than teachers who were trained in programs that do not include those elements.[30] More research is needed to determine the effectiveness of teachers who are hired under reduced or emergency certification standards, but without pedagogical preparation, these teachers represent a steep risk for students. As the Hechinger Report recently reported of alternative programs generally, they are proliferating "even as evidence is lacking or mixed on the effectiveness and long-term feasibility of these programs."[31]

> "Because of the regional shortage, school districts are looking for bodies to fill the teacher openings no matter what their background is - whether they are prepared teachers or not." [Dean, School of Education]

> "The solution [to teacher shortages] is not to create a myriad of alternative routes but to review existing requirements in light of the shifting context. Increase funding for education and reduce barriers to the profession." [Dean, School of Education]

The Case for Quality Teacher Preparation

Continuing a trajectory that dates back to the 1990s, public school enrollment increased by 3 percent between 2003–04 and 2013–14, to a total of some 50 million students. Federal analysts project that rate of increase will continue between 2013–14 and 2025–26, and that public school enrollment will reach 51.4 million students.[32] Every one of those students will need highly qualified teachers.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that between 2014 and 2024 there will be nearly 1.9 million job openings for teachers of preschool through postsecondary.[33] Filling those slots, however, will continue to be a challenge. While overall the shortage of teachers does not appear to be an epidemic, select states and school districts suffer chronic shortages, and there are acute shortages of teachers qualified to teach in vital academic disciplines, like science, mathematics, special education, English as a second language, and bilingual education. Moreover, producing diverse teacher candidates who reflect the United States' changing demographics continues to be a challenge, and teacher shortages are notably severe in many schools that serve low-income and minority students and in many rural areas. Teacher attrition is a compounding problem. In addition, the aging Baby Boom contingent of the teaching workforce means an inevitable wave of retirements is just beginning.

Clearly, demand for quality teachers will continue. Apart from merely meeting demand, of course, the broader priority is to produce high-quality teachers who can inspire young people to fulfill their potential and impart them with the skills they need to succeed in college and in the workplace. We need preparation programs that produce educators who not only understand and are able to address the diverse needs of today's school population but also can deliver and assess the skills and content that 21st-century students need to learn. If teacher preparation programs are to produce the full cadre of high-quality teachers that the nation requires, we need to ensure that every program operates at peak levels of productivity, efficiency and creativity.

Especially in the face of this demand, the labeling of all teacher preparation as "mediocre" is as unproductive as it is inaccurate. Nor is it helpful to lay sole blame on teacher education programs for poor outcomes in P-12; many factors, including deep-seated societal challenges, contribute to that underperformance. Rather, we need a less acrimonious and more productive national conversation around the quality of teacher preparation, with continuous improvement as an ongoing goal.

To that end, AASCU's Teacher Education Task Force has articulated several relevant and practicable areas of focus for improving teacher education in public universities. To accompany these recommendations, AASCU has identified a number of priorities for changes in policy that could help strengthen teacher education in public universities.

Recommendations for Institutions

Based on AASCU's survey of teacher education practices, the task force suggests a number of areas for increased attention by university administrators.

Bolster Clinical Experiences

Universities should help teacher education programs bolster the clinical experiences they provide for teacher candidates, which are essential components in the training of future teachers.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards, in keeping with long-standing research, aver that "effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions appropriate for their professional specialty field."[34] We believe these standards for clinical experiences should be intentionally ambitious. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future recommends a full year of student teaching in carefully selected placements that give teacher candidates opportunities to work both with experienced teachers who model excellent teaching and with diverse students.

Changes in university policies may be needed to smooth the pathway for students to pursue robust clinical experiences. Creative approaches to academic calendaring, for example, might be needed to help teacher candidates optimize their field experiences.

Changes in fiscal practices and policies are also warranted. Universities need to do more to recognize and ameliorate the significant financial challenges that teacher candidates face, whether in paying for tests for licensure or in the direct and opportunity costs of commuting to and spending large blocks of time in often-remote clinical practice settings. New financial aid strategies could support students in deriving the most value from critical clinical experiences. The need for these considerations will become more pronounced as institutions in general recruit older students and students from low-income families.

Still another consideration is that universities may need to do more to align compensation practices for faculty in teacher preparation programs with practices that can drive both on-going quality and continuous improvement. When close collaboration with P-12 partners is widely seen as a means of increasing program effectiveness, institutions may need to study how well they incentivize faculty to spend time working with P-12 schools. Reviewing promotion and tenure guidelines that reward teacher education faculty for their work in schools is another innovation that might help bolster the status of teacher education in universities, as well as recruit and retain top clinical educators.

Strengthen Collaborations Between Teacher Preparation Programs and Partners in P-12

Universities should ensure their teacher preparation programs have close relationships with P-12 partners. The mutual understanding and trust cultivated by such partnerships can provide powerful and reciprocal benefits for all parties. With both P-12 schools and universities facing expectations for more clinical practice time, new teacher performance assessments, and the myriad challenging contexts described previously, collaboration is especially critical to support one another's success.

We know, too, that more U.S. schoolchildren have a teacher with fewer than five years of experience than have teachers with any other number of years of experience. Moreover, the distribution of beginning teachers is concentrated disproportionately in low-income and high-minority schools.[35] At the same time, many beginning teachers say they are underprepared. There may be real opportunities for teacher preparation programs to do more to support entry-level teachers. Such work would bolster teaching while also providing valuable lessons for improving preservice preparation programs. Already, some universities are creating induction programs as extensions of their preservice teacher education programs to help address this need.[36, 37, 38]

The cross-pollination of ideas and experiences between universities and P-12 partners can

also improve other aspects of teacher preparation and higher education more broadly. For example, universities can nurture, assist and acknowledge the vital role that teacher mentors in P-12 play in helping teacher candidates and new classroom teachers to succeed; apart from playing a critical role in the professional development of teacher candidates, those mentors are a vital link in helping universities and their teacher preparation programs to understand the needs of P-12 communities. Further, by virtue of their close ties with P-12 schools through teacher education practices, universities are likely to better understand the needs of the first-year students they receive upon admission. In that sense, teacher preparation programs hold a key to understanding and developing relationships with P-12 schools that send their graduates to universities.

Step up Recruitment Into Teacher Preparation Programs

Given today's evolving demographic environment, enrollment management is a challenge for every public college and university. Within that context, however, recruitment into teacher preparation programs needs particularly close attention. Redoubled work is needed, for example, to recruit students who have the academic aptitude and dispositions needed to succeed as classroom teachers, with a focus both on teacher candidates who have already started their higher education (including in community colleges), and importantly, among students who are still in high school. Universities need to be more intentional about developing new channels that steer into teacher education programs students who can excel in the STEM areas, special education, bilingual education, and other content areas that are urgently needed in P-12. Similar efforts are needed to augment the ranks of other critical roles where there are significant shortages, including P-12 administrators and school speech-language pathologists.

Build Stronger Articulation Agreements With Community Colleges

> "We typically recommend approximately 350 candidates per academic year for certification. This year, however, we only have 12 true freshmen in our college. Virtually ALL of our teacher candidates are transfer students or career-changers." [Dean, School of Education]

Community colleges are a sometimes overlooked channel in the pipeline that feeds potential educators into teacher preparation programs, but they are a significant source of teacher candidates for AASCU institutions. According to the AASCU survey of deans of education, 70 percent of AASCU universities have articulation agreements with community colleges for their teacher preparation programs, and on average, transfer students from community colleges make up one-third (32 percent) of the teacher preparation student population. These candidates are more likely than other teacher education students to be from underserved populations and to have grown up in the local community, positioning them well to serve as an important bridge to partner schools and to become culturally competent teachers.

While many universities have articulation agreements with community colleges that may reference teacher preparation specifically, we urge every institution to review such agreements and determine whether additional steps could be taken to encourage the flow of potential teachers from community colleges. For example, could universities offer more teacher preparation courses at community colleges?

Implicit in this review should be careful analysis of the policies that govern student transfers

from community colleges to ensure that the transfer process is truly seamless and does not present barriers to the students, including those from low-income and underserved populations who have the potential to become teachers.

Participate Actively in Policy Discussions About Teacher Preparation

Discussions about the quality of teacher preparation tend to be dominated by philanthropic foundations, federal and state legislators and education officials, and researchers with an interest in education. Practitioners in universities, including faculty and administrators of teacher education programs, as well as their colleagues in institutional leadership, need to find better ways to make their voices heard in these ongoing discussions. It is imperative that this institutional perspective, with its experience and expertise in teacher preparation, have a louder voice in conversations that often have a direct impact on institutional programs.

Help Develop a Broad Strategy for Professionalizing Teacher Education

There are thousands of teacher preparation programs, but no common specific criteria for curriculum for teacher education. Development of a more standardized curricular approach—albeit one that also allows room for institutional autonomy—would help professionalize teacher preparation. Pieces of such a strategy are already implicit in the predominant approaches found in most teacher education programs, and they are reflected in teacher performance assessments, evaluation standards, and even the standards for accomplished practice articulated by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. But consolidating such activity formally, in a targeted approach that clearly defines requirements for initial preparation and licensure of new teachers, would set important parameters for the profession. Such standards would give key stakeholders, such as legislators, more faith in the ability of teacher education programs to produce the high-quality teachers that the nation needs. Such work could also encompass ongoing professional development and continuous improvement in teaching.

Deborah Loewenberg Ball, the William H. Payne Collegiate Professor in education at the University of Michigan and former dean of the school of education, has framed one version of what such standards might look like. Ball envisions standards centered on instructional practice, implemented through clinical practice and performance assessments, that would provide assurance to parents and the public that a new teacher is ready to be given initial responsibility for students' learning. While Ball's ideas may be predicated on the infrastructure and resources found primarily at research universities, they nonetheless embody principles that can apply across the range of AASCU universities.

Moving toward this type of system would not be easy. But apart from advancing the field overall, pushing for professionalization of standards for teacher preparation would help address calls for change from both within and outside the academy. This kind of change should not be led from outside. Rather, by virtue of their predominance in teacher education, we believe it is the responsibility of university-based teacher education programs to lead a major reform effort that will further professionalize teacher preparation.

AASCU Public Policy Priorities for Teacher Education

Teacher education programs at AASCU institutions continually seek ways to improve and strengthen their curricula, instruction and clinical practices. Public policy plays a critical role in setting the stage for innovation and continuous improvement in university teacher educa-

tion programs. AASCU believes that policymakers can promote high standards for educator preparation programs, and support higher education's role in developing teachers from underrepresented populations and for high-need schools, but only through evidence-based policies developed in collaboration with experts and practitioners.

A constructive conversation about changes in policy must begin with the recognition of the considerable value that university teacher preparation programs provide for their students and for the schools and communities that teacher candidates will one day serve as classroom instructors. Moreover, society as a whole needs to better recognize and reward teachers for the hard work that they undertake, and for the many challenges inherent in the vocation they have chosen. Policies are needed that both encourage high school and community college students to pursue careers in teaching and help drive constructive innovation in teacher education programs.

Overall, more measured and nuanced thinking is needed about policy reform in teacher preparation. The report, "Holding Teacher Preparation Accountable: A Review of Claims and Evidence," from the National Education Policy Center recommends that "policymakers must acknowledge and address the multiple factors—in addition to teacher quality—that influence student outcomes, including in particular the impact of poverty, family and community resources, school organization and support, and policies that govern housing, health care, jobs, and early childhood services."[39]

In addition, more effort is needed to ensure that reform of teacher preparation is constructed around a body of evidence about effective policies and practices—not just around criticisms that do not have an evidentiary basis. Fundamentally, evaluation of teacher education programs should be based on valid, reliable and objective data. Noted scholar Linda Darling-Hammond recently observed that certain factors have been shown to be associated with successful teaching outcomes, including "opportunities to learn about content and content-specific teaching methods, a focus on helping candidates learn specific practices that they apply in classrooms where they are practice-teaching alongside their coursework, carefully designed student teaching experiences, opportunities to study and develop curriculum, and performance assessments that evaluate teachers' work with students." Conversely, Darling-Hammond also notes that studies have found value-added measures of teacher effectiveness to be unstable, have "extremely wide error ranges," and "exhibit bias against teachers with classrooms with very high achieving or low achieving students." Clearly, much more research is needed to find the right ways to measure teacher quality. Moreover, as Darling-Hammond observes, "it is critically important that evidence be meaningful and that it be used judiciously, with sophistication and nuance."[40]

AASCU strongly believes that the playing field for all teacher preparation programs must be level, and that all teachers must be required to meet the same clearly articulated and consistently applied standards for adequate preparation and high performance. Program evaluations should be subject consistently to the same rigorous standards.

AASCU also supports calls for greater accountability and outcomes transparency for teacher preparation programs. Accountability measures should not politicize teacher education by assessing programs on a single attribute (such as curriculum), but rather should examine the totality of the educational cycle and experience.

In those regards, AASCU has identified the following specific goals for public policy around teacher preparation.

Federal Policies Regarding Teacher Preparation

- Strengthen and fund high-quality clinical experiences, which are essential components in preparation programs, especially when preparing teacher candidates to teach diverse students in high-needs rural and urban schools. We support such high-quality clinical experiences in all traditional teacher preparation programs and the requirement that all federally funded alternative teacher preparation programs include high-quality clinical experiences.

- Require that all teacher candidates complete and pass a performance assessment to ensure that teachers are ready for the classroom prior to becoming a licensed teacher. By passing the performance assessment, teacher candidates demonstrate that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively lead a classroom.

- Ensure that states evaluate all teacher preparation providers using the same standards.

Conclusion

The need for high-quality teacher preparation is as great as ever, and AASCU institutions are poised to continue providing leadership in the effort. Although the context for today's teacher education is complex and characterized by myriad challenges, the AASCU survey of state college and university leaders shows both the need for and the willingness to redouble efforts on behalf of strong and innovative preparation programs. Now is the time for the nation's public universities to build on their long-standing commitment to preparing educators by focusing on the key strategies and advocating for the policy recommendations articulated in this report. ■

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Appendix: Survey Results

This appendix has two main sections. The first section provides a general description of the survey instrument and survey respondents. The second section presents simple summary statistics from the quantitative portions of the survey. Absent from this appendix is an analysis of the large amount of qualitative data generated by the survey.

About the Survey

In order to better understand the current state of teacher preparation programs at AASCU institutions in particular, and public, 4-year colleges and universities in general, AASCU's Teacher Education Task Force surveyed presidents and chancellors, provosts and CAOs, and deans of education and directors of teacher preparation from across the country. The survey, using a combination of fixed-response and open-response questions, asked respondents to provide basic background information about their teacher preparation programs; discuss their program's needs, supports, and highlights; assess the state of public education in their region; and weigh in on the current federal policy landscape as it pertains to teacher preparation programs.

A brief, 22-question version of the survey was sent to presidents/chancellors and provosts/CAOs from AASCU member institutions. A more detailed 57-question version of the survey was sent to deans of education at public, four-year institutions. Each of these three groups—presidents/chancellors, provosts/CAOs, and deans of education—was comprised of approximately 400 people.

The survey participation rate was quite high, with 29 presidents, 54 provosts, and 187 deans of education responding. In a few cases, the survey was completed by individuals who did not fall into any of these three groups, such as directors of assessment at schools of education. Rather than exclude these individuals from our analysis, we opted to pool their responses together with the deans' responses. Overall, presidents/chancellors represent approximately 10 percent

of the total survey responses, provosts/CAOs 19 percent, deans of education (or their analogs) 66 percent, and other respondents 5 percent.

With one exception, all of the questions on the presidents' and provosts' version of the survey (i.e., the 22-question version) also appeared on the deans' version of the survey (i.e., the 57-question version). For clarity's sake, our summary of quantitative survey results begins with the questions that appeared on both versions of the survey, continues with the one question that appeared only on the presidents' and provosts' version of the survey, and ends with the questions that appeared only on the deans' version of the survey. To facilitate comparisons between the three groups' responses, we present presidents', provosts', and deans' responses separately. However, due to the oftentimes small sample sizes, we caution readers to avoid over-interpreting the differences between the groups, especially when the magnitude of the differences is small.

Respondents were not required to answer every question on the survey, which means that the number of responses to each question varies. In the Summary of Quantitative Survey Results, we make a note of the "n" for each question (i.e., the number of responses that were collected for that particular question).

It is important to note that this survey serves as one of several sources of data for this task force report. In addition to the survey data, the report draws on in-depth interviews with task force members and a wide range of secondary sources. Given the structure and goals of the task force report, only some of the survey results are highlighted in the report itself. This appendix offers a more detailed summary of the quantitative survey data to elicit greater conversation about how it can be used to shape AASCU's priorities with regard to teacher education in the years to come.

Summary of Quantitative Survey Results

Part 1: Survey items presented to presidents, provosts, and deans of education

Background information

What is your current position? (n=283)		
	Count	*Percentage*
President / Chancellor	29	10.2%
Provost / CAO	54	19.1%
Dean of Education, Associate Dean of Education, Director of Teacher Preparation, or equivalent	187	66.1%
Other	13	4.6%

Please indicate which types of initial teacher licensure programs your institution offers. Check all that apply. (n=276)			
	Face to Face	*Hybrid/Online*	*Online Only*
Undergraduate	89.9%	29.7%	5.4%
Post-baccalaureate licensure without a degree	58.7%	31.9%	12.0%
Post-baccalaureate licensure with a master's degree	68.1%	43.5%	18.8%

Program Needs, Supports, and Highlights

How would you describe the extent to which your teacher education program needs more human resources/personnel in order to prepare new teachers well?				
	No Need at All	*Some Need*	*Considerable Need*	*Critical Need*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	14.8%	66.7%	14.8%	3.7%
Provost / CAO (n=47)	14.9%	68.1%	17.0%	0.0%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=159)	10.7%	55.3%	23.9%	10.1%

How would you describe the extent to which your teacher education program needs other types of resources in order to prepare new teachers well?				
	No Need at All	*Some Need*	*Considerable Need*	*Critical Need*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	11.1%	66.7%	18.5%	3.7%
Provost / CAO (n=47)	10.6%	66.0%	21.3%	2.1%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=158)	4.4%	56.3%	31.6%	7.6%

General Trends in Public Education

Please rank the impact of the following issues on public schools in your region (1=most impact, 7=least impact). (n=169; responses did not vary by group)	
1	Family Poverty
2	Unequal or insufficient funding
3	Drugs and/or violence
4	Poor facilities
5	Inadequate technology
6	Low academic standards
7	Underqualified teachers

Do you believe teaching is viewed as a desirable career in your region?		
	Yes	*No*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	70.4%	29.6%
Provost / CAO (n=46)	50.0%	50.0%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=153)	41.8%	58.2%

Do you believe teaching is viewed more positively in your region now than it was 10 years ago?		
	Yes	*No*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	25.9%	74.1%
Provost / CAO (n=41)	14.6%	76.1%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=148)	11.5%	88.5%

What has been the impact of greater reliance on standardized testing in P-12 schools in your region?				
	Improved the quality of P-12 education	*Diminished the quality of P-12 education*	*Had no impact*	*Don't know*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	7.4%	51.9%	7.4%	33.3%
Provost / CAO (n=45)	6.7%	44.4%	8.9%	40.0%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=154)	8.4%	67.5%	8.4%	15.6%

Do you believe teachers have the level of autonomy appropriate for the profession?		
	Yes	*No*
President / Chancellor (n=24)	12.5%	87.5%
Provost / CAO (n=41)	22.0%	78.0%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=153)	15.0%	85.0%

Federal Practices and Policies

Have you been closely following recent regulatory efforts to require the states to rate teacher education programs?		
	Yes	*No*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	85.2%	14.8%
Provost / CAO (n=46)	69.6%	30.4%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=152)	92.1%	7.9%

Generally speaking, do you believe that graduates' employment outcomes are a reasonable indicator of an academic program's quality?		
	Yes	*No*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	55.6%	44.4%
Provost / CAO (n=46)	43.5%	56.5%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=149)	54.4%	46.6%

Generally speaking, do you believe that an academic program's quality can be measured by how long its graduates remain in their first jobs?		
	Yes	*No*
President / Chancellor (n=27)	18.5%	81.5%
Provost / CAO (n=46)	17.4%	82.6%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=152)	25%	75%

To the extent that graduates' employment outcomes can be used to rate the quality of teacher preparation programs, what types of employment outcomes do you think should be counted as positive indicators of quality?		
	Only count graduates who are employed as teachers or educators	*Count all graduates who are employed in professional positions, even those outside of education.*
President / Chancellor (n=26)	19.2%	80.8%
Provost / CAO (n=46)	37%	63%
Dean of Education (or equivalent) (n=147)	49%	51%

Part 2: Survey items presented only to presidents and provosts

Presidents' Self-Reported Familiarity with Teacher Preparation Programs (n=27)				
	Not at all	*Somewhat*	*Very Well*	*Completely*
Understanding of teacher preparation programs in general	0.0%	25.9%	66.7%	7.4%
Understanding of teacher preparation programs on their campus	0.0%	40.7%	48.1%	11.1%
Understanding of the ways in which teacher preparation is different from other majors/minors on campus	0.0%	25.9%	63.0%	11.1%

Provosts' Self-Reported Familiarity with Teacher Preparation Programs (n=45)				
	Not at all	*Somewhat*	*Very Well*	*Completely*
Understanding of teacher preparation programs in general	0.0%	31.1%	60.0%	8.9%
Understanding of teacher preparation programs on their campus	0.0%	26.7%	60.0%	13.3%
Understanding of the ways in which teacher preparation is different from other majors/minors on campus	0.0%	17.8%	57.8%	24.4%

Part 3: Survey items presented only to deans of education and their equivalents

Background Information

Does your state or institution have admissions requirements for students entering teacher preparation programs? (n=168)	
	Percentage
Yes	95.8%
No	4.2%

State GPA Requirements for Admission to Teacher Preparation Programs (n=161)	
	Percentage
Minimum GPA is between 2.0 and 3.0	51.6%
Minimum GPA is 3.0	15.5%
No minimum GPA / Other	32.9%

Institutional GPA Requirements for Admission to Teacher Preparation Programs (n=161)	
	Percentage
Minimum GPA is between 2.0 and 3.0	66.5%
Minimum GPA is 3.0	27.3%
No minimum GPA / Other	6.2%

Do you have articulation agreements with community colleges for teacher preparation? (n=162)	
	Percentage
Yes	70.4%
No	29.6%

Roughly what percentage of your current teacher preparation students transferred from a community college? (n=92)	
Proportion of Transfer Students from Community Colleges	*Percentage of Programs*
0%	1.0%
1-19%	29.3%
20-39%	30.4%
40-59%	22.8%
60-79%	13.0%
80-100%	3.2%
Average overall	32%

How many candidates did you recommend for initial licensure in AY15-16? (n=158)	
Number of Candidates	*Percentage of Programs*
5-50	10.1%
51-100	10.1%
101-200	26.6%
201-350	34.2%
351-500	12.0%
More than 500	7.0%

Program Needs, Supports, and Highlights

How well does your institution's president understand the following?				
	Not at all	*Somewhat*	*Very Well*	*Completely*
Teacher preparations on their campus, generally speaking (n=126)	7.9%	47.6%	38.1%	6.3%
The ways in which teacher preparation is different from other majors/minors on campus (n=125)	8.8%	46.4%	36.0%	8.8%
The curriculum that sets teacher preparation apart from other programs at the institution (n=126)	12.7%	54.0%	27.8%	5.6%
The fieldwork that sets teacher preparation apart from other programs at the institution (n=125)	11.2%	47.2%	35.2%	6.4%
The assessment that sets teacher preparation apart from other programs at the institution (n=126)	12.7%	53.2%	27.8%	6.3%

How well does your institution's provost understand the following?				
	Not at all	*Somewhat*	*Very Well*	*Completely*
Teacher preparations on their campus, generally speaking (n=128)	3.1%	36.7%	45.3%	14.8%
The ways in which teacher preparation is different from other majors/minors on campus (n=128)	4.7%	32.8%	39.8%	22.7%
The curriculum that sets teacher preparation apart from other programs at the institution (n=128)	6.3%	37.5%	39.1%	17.2%
The fieldwork that sets teacher preparation apart from other programs at the institution (n=127)	7.1%	39.4%	37.8%	15.7%
The assessment that sets teacher preparation apart from other programs at the institution (n=128)	8.6%	44.5%	33.6%	13.3%

In the past five years, has your teacher education program seen a drop in enrollment? (n=135)	
	Percentage
Yes	82.2%
No	17.8%

If your teacher education program has seen a drop in enrollment, by what percent has it decreased? (n=92)	
	Percentage
1-19%	39.1%
20-39%	42.4%
40-59%	17.4%
60-79%	1%
80-100%	0%
Average overall	24.2%

If your teacher education program has seen a drop in enrollment, please tell us about the primary reasons for the drop by raking the following factors in order of importance (1=most important, 7=least important). (n=83)	
1	Perception of teaching as an undesirable career
2	Test requirements for teacher candidates
3	Lack of personal/community support for teachers and/or for teaching as a career
4	Costs associated with becoming a teacher (e.g., testing costs, commuting expenses to fulfill student teaching, time requirements for unpaid student teaching)
5	Assessments of practicing teachers
6	Other state department of education requirements
7	GPA requirements

What is the racial / ethnic composition of your teacher candidate population? (n=110)	
	Average Proportion
White, non-Hispanic	72.0%
Hispanic/Latino	14.2%
African American	7.9%
Asian	3.3%
Native American	1.1%
Other	4.2%

Attracting and Retaining Students of Color (n=125)			
	Not Successful	*Somewhat Successful*	*Very Successful*
How successful have you been in attracting students of color into teacher education?	28.8%	59.2%	12.0%
How successful have you been in retaining students of color in teacher education?	1.6%	52.0%	46.4%

Attracting and Retaining Teacher Candidates in High-Need Areas (n=125)			
	Not Successful	*Somewhat Successful*	*Very Successful*
How successful have you been in attracting and retaining teacher candidates in high-need areas (STEM, early childhood, special education, bilingual education)?	8.5%	80.6%	10.9%

General Trends in Public Education

Perceptions of Teaching and Teachers		
	Yes	*No*
Do you believe the majority of new teachers in your region, regardless of where they were trained, enter the classroom ready to teach? (n=127)	63.0%	37.0%
Do you believe the majority of new teachers in your region, regardless of where they were trained, receive adequate ongoing professional development? (n=125)	63.2%	36.8%

State-level Practices and Policies

Is your teacher preparation program accredited by a Specialized Professional Association such as NCATE, TEAC, and/or CAEP? (n=128)	
	Percentage
Yes	80.4%
No	19.5%

If your program is accredited by a Specialized Professional Association, do you believe accreditation has had…(n=101)	
	Percentage
A positive impact	71.2%
A negative impact	5.9%
No impact	20.7%
Don't know	1.9%

Outcomes Assessment: Current Practices		
	Yes	*No*
Does your state use P-12 student achievement measures to assess your teacher preparation program? (n=127)	36.2%	63.8%
Do you have the capability in your teacher preparation unit to adequately analyze data about your program and its graduates? (n=125)	57.6%	42.4%
Does your state give you access to teacher evaluation data about your institution's graduates? (n=127)	35.4%	64.6%
Do you have access to employment data about your teacher preparation graduates? (n=125)	70.4%	29.6%

Does your state's department of education regularly consult with deans of education across the state on education policy (e.g., enactment of ESSA)? (n=124)	
	Percentage
Yes	59.7%
No	40.3%

How often does the state's department of education integrate input from dean of education into education policy? (n=124)	
	Percentage
Frequently	17.7%
Sometimes	48.4%
Rarely	23.4%
Almost never	10.5%

Federal Practices and Policies

If you have been closely following recent federal regulatory efforts to require the states to rate teacher education programs, do you believe the proposed changes would… (n=117)	
	Percentage
Improve programs	6.0%
Undermine programs	73.5%
Have no effect	9.4%
Don't know	11.1%

If you have been closely following recent federal regulatory efforts to require the states to rate teacher education programs, do you believe the proposed changes would… (n=116)	
	Percentage
Increase costs	85.3%
Decrease costs	0.0%
Have no effect on costs	6.0%
Don't know	8.6%

If you have been closely following recent federal regulatory efforts to require the states to rate teacher education programs, what effect would these proposed changes have on your placement practices? (n=115)	
	Percentage
They would promote placement in low-income districts	3.5%
They would discourage placement in low-income districts	40.0%
They would have no effect on our placement practices	33.0%
Don't know	23.5%

Does your state have adequate data infrastructure to track program graduates into P-12 districts? (n=121)	
	Percentage
Yes	44.6%
No	55.4%

Does someone in your teacher preparation program interact with your region's P-12 hiring authorities to determine district needs? (n=123)	
	Percentage
Yes	78.9%
No	21.1%

How frequently do you personally interact with P-12 leaders/teachers on the topic of teacher preparation? (n=123)	
	Percentage
Frequently	62.6%
Sometimes	33.3%
Rarely	4.0%
Almost never	0.0%

How frequently do teacher preparation staff members at your institution with P-12 leaders/teachers on the topic of teacher preparation? (n=123)	
	Percentage
Frequently	67.5%
Sometimes	27.6%
Rarely	4.9%
Almost never	0.0%

Do you believe it is methodologically sound to draw inferences about your teacher preparation program on the basis of the academic performance of your graduates' P-12 students? (n=125)	
	Percentage
Yes	16.8%
No	73.6%
Don't know	9.6%

How Important is the Role Played by Each of the Following in P-12 Students' Academic Performance? (n=125)				
	Unimportant	*Somewhat Important*	*Important*	*Very Important*
Teacher content knowledge	0.0%	1.6%	40.0%	58.4%
Teacher instructional ability	0.0%	0.0%	16.0%	84.0%
Teacher understanding of student learning	0.0%	0.0%	12.8%	87.2%
Teacher Understanding of student diversity	0.0%	0.8%	20.0%	79.2%
Parental involvement	0.0%	8.1%	33.9%	58.1%
Family wealth/poverty	2.4%	16.8%	28.8%	52.0%
School funding	0.0%	13.6%	43.2%	43.2%

Which of the following do you believe is a valid measure of student achievement? Check all that apply. (n=122)	
	% Answering Yes
Performance assessments	92.6%
Portfolios of student work	86.9%
Gain scores on standardized tests	55.7%
High schowol graduation rates	48.4%
College attendance	37.7%
Standardized tests	36.9%

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