

Virginia

Preparing Teachers for a New Era

What will it take to prepare a new generation of teachers who are able to work successfully with an increasingly diverse student population and help their pupils achieve new rigorous learning goals? What are the key features of teacher education programs that can provide the public schools with such teachers? And what are the implications of our best answers to these questions for state policy? For state policymakers, university leaders, and district officials charged with ensuring that all children are taught by highly qualified teachers, it is imperative to answer these questions about teacher quality. Finding the answers and acting on them require the commitment, collaboration, and coordination of a number of public and private institutions and agencies, and of multiple levels of government. Access to a high-quality teacher education program can affect teachers' productivity, the longevity of their careers, and the quality of the learning opportunities provided for their students.

Through its Teachers for a New Era (TNE) initiative, Carnegie Corporation of New York, with support from the Annenberg and Ford Foundations, is stimulating a thoughtful search for answers by supporting ambitious reforms in selected teacher education programs across the country. Drawing on the wisdom of national professional organizations, reform commissions, and the research community,

2003–2004 Snapshot

Approved Teacher Preparation Programs: 37
 Initial Teacher Certificates Issued by the State: 10,582
 K–12 Public School Teachers: 90,573

Carnegie is challenging these institutions to develop exemplary teacher preparation programs based on three design principles:

1. **Decisions Driven by Evidence.** The new teacher education programs would be guided by a culture of evidence. Program content and pedagogical practice would be based on credible evidence drawn from research literature and from the experience of their students. Program effectiveness would be determined by the impact of their graduates on K-12 pupil achievement, and these data would drive the continuous improvement of their programs.

2. **Effective Engagement of Arts and Sciences Faculties.** The education of prospective teachers would include the full engagement of faculty members in the disciplines of the arts and sciences (A&S) to ensure teachers obtained the depth of subject-matter understanding and pedagogical content knowledge needed to understand and address students' learning needs. A&S faculties would collaborate with teacher educators to ensure that prospective teachers were well prepared to teach the curricula of the public schools served by the institution.

3. **Emphasis on Teaching as a Clinical Practice Profession.** Teacher education would integrate academically rigorous experiences with immersion in clinical practice. This would entail close cooperation between colleges of education and K-12 schools, use of exemplary K-12 teachers as clinical faculty

appointed to the college of education, and support for residency programs for beginning teachers over a two-year period of induction.

With support from Carnegie, 11 institutions in 10 states are redesigning their teacher preparation programs according to these three design principles. They are critically reconsidering their use of the knowledge base, their collection and use of evidence, their curriculum and standards, and their school-based relationships in order to produce higher-quality teacher candidates. It is hoped that the accomplishments of these institutions will offer interested policymakers, university leaders, and state education officials blueprints and tools to help them develop improved teacher preparation programs. Such programs will be capable of producing the teachers we need to raise the performance of the public schools and close the achievement gaps that perpetuate social inequities.

Clearly, states have an important role to play in this work. Through leadership, policymaking, resource allocations, and oversight, state governments shape the environments in which public and private teacher preparation programs operate. They can encourage and support efforts by these programs to restructure so as to foster a culture of evidence, engage A&S faculties, and provide prospective teachers with the rich and sustained clinical experiences and support they need.

For each of the 10 states in which TNE institutions operate, CPRE has developed a policy profile that explores the interaction of state policies and programs with the core ideas and practices associated with Carnegie's three design principles. For each state, we first provide a brief description of how the TNE institution is acting on the three design principles. Then we describe the current policy context for teacher preparation and the state

role and policy strategies for improving and ensuring teacher quality. Next we explore specific policies and programs in the state related to the three design principles to identify those that are supportive, those that may need strengthening, and those that need reconsideration by policymakers, state department officials, and teacher preparation institutions. This profile focuses on Virginia, and where appropriate we offer concrete examples from the restructuring now under way at the University of Virginia (UVA), one of the 11 institutions to receive a TNE grant.

The UVA Design

UVA is the sixth largest producer of teacher candidates in the state. In 2006, UVA graduated over 160 prospective teachers through its five-year integrated teacher education program, which leads to both the baccalaureate and the Masters of Teaching degrees, and a two-year graduate program, which leads to a Master's of Teaching degree.

In 2002, UVA received a \$5 million challenge grant from Carnegie Corporation's Teachers for a New Era Initiative. Teachers for a New Era at the University of Virginia (TNE@UVA) has three major strands of work. The first focuses on the use of research to inform teacher preparation. Through TNE, UVA has established the Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) which involves faculties from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Curry School of Education in monthly assessment seminars, small- and large-scale research studies on the effects of UVA teacher education and induction programs, and the development of an integrated database to track the characteristics, experiences, and performance of teacher candidates from pre-service education through their initial years of teaching. The second strand of work addresses the engagement of A&S faculties in teacher

education through the development of new interdisciplinary survey courses, known as “Common Courses” and “Counterpoint Seminars,” and a strengthening of advising teams for teacher candidates composed of members of education and A&S faculties. The third area of focus is developing support programs to help their teacher education graduates transition to the classroom during their first two years of teaching. TNE@UVA is collaborating with two neighboring school districts in the design and delivery of an induction program to support all new teachers, restructure field experiences of Curry students, and conduct research to examine changes in classroom instruction and K-12 pupil performance. Through an online virtual community platform, UVA also provides long-distance induction resources, both material and consultative, to its graduates teaching far away.

State Context

Thirty-seven public and private institutions of higher education (IHEs) operate teacher preparation programs in Virginia. The number of new teachers falls far short of the new teachers needed each year, and nearly half of new teaching licenses are issued to individuals who completed their teacher preparation programs in another state. According to a survey of district superintendents, about 4.4% of all positions were held by unendorsed individuals or were unfilled in 2001–02, the most recent year with published supply and demand data. The top 10 critical shortage areas in 2005–06 included earth science, special education, elementary school (fifth grade), career and technical education, ESL, secondary school mathematics, history and social science, computer science, reading, and health and physical education. The severity of these shortages differs across districts, however, and Virginia, like other states, finds it difficult to attract highly qualified teachers

to its highest-risk schools. As a consequence, the focus of state policymakers is on recruiting and retaining, as well as improving the quality of new teachers, particularly in state-defined “hard-to-staff” schools.

Governance Landscape. The primary policymaking body for teacher education and K-12 education is the State Board of Education (SBE). The SBE approves teacher preparation programs at both public and private IHEs and regulates the licensure of K-12 educators. The Advisory Board for Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL), which is composed of teachers and administrators, representatives of higher education, parents, and the business community, advises the SBE on teacher licensure and teacher education program policy. The governor appoints all voting members of the SBE; the chief state school officer, who oversees the operations of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE); and a secretary of education, who serves as his policy adviser. Governor Warner, whose term ended in December 2005, was a strong advocate for improving teacher quality at both the state and national levels, and Governor Kaine has pledged to continue this focus on teacher quality.

Responsibility for teacher preparation is shared with the state’s higher education system. The state’s public senior higher education institutions are governed by individual boards, but they are subject to personnel, administrative, and operational policies that apply to all state agencies. The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) has statutory responsibility for planning and coordination, approval of new programs, and budget guidelines and formulas. The legislature, however, determines the level of public funding and tuition revenues that public institutions receive. For example, the state froze tuition rates between 1995 and 2001.

The Higher Education Restructuring Act, enacted in April 2005, will give public IHEs greater control over tuition rates and fees, capital construction, and financial, personnel, and procurement activities in exchange for accountability in meeting 11 state goals. Two of these 11 goals impact the involvement of IHEs in K-12 education:

- Offer a curriculum that addresses Virginia's needs for sufficient graduates in particular shortage areas, including specific academic disciplines and geographic regions (Goal 3).
- Work with school districts and elementary and secondary schools to improve pupil achievement, upgrade the knowledge and skills of teachers, and strengthen leadership skills of school administrators (Goal 9).

The state's major public universities, including UVA, lobbied for greater autonomy in response to declining state support for higher education. The share of the state budget devoted to higher education has been decreasing since the mid-1980s, and a severe budget deficit led the state to cut higher education funding by nearly 20% in the 2002–04 biennium. As a result, the legislature lifted the tuition rate freeze, allowing public institutions to raise tuition by 15% in 2002–03 and 2003–04. This increase, however, offset only about 75% of the budget cut. Although state funding rose in the 2004–06 biennium, and institutions were allowed to raise tuition by another 9% in 2004–05, resources are not sufficient to cover growing enrollments and operating costs. SCHEV estimates that the higher education system is underfunded by over \$370 million. UVA reported that the share of its operating budget coming from state revenues has dropped from 28% to 8% since the late 1980s.

State Role in Teacher Preparation

Teacher quality has been on the Virginia state policy agenda for the last 10 years, largely in response to the enactment of higher standards for K-12 pupils—the Standards of Learning, known as the SOLs. In 1996, the legislature established a state commission on public education that was charged with recommending strategies for improving teaching preparation and in-service training to assist teachers in learning the standards. Since that time, the state has revised both teacher licensure and teacher education program standards to link them more closely to the Virginia SOLs. Current policy recommendations would move the state even further in the direction of standards- and performance-based teacher policy and in line with the TNE principles.

Teacher Licensure. The state issued new teacher licensure regulations in 1998 that combined coursework requirements and teaching competencies linked to the state's K-12 academic SOLs. Major revisions included a large reduction in the number of endorsement areas; addition of concentrations in two of the core areas of mathematics, science, English, and history and social science for the middle education (grades 6, 7, and 8) endorsement; additional coursework requirements in language acquisition and reading for elementary, middle grades, and special education teachers; and exit expectations written as competencies and aligned with the SOLs for graduates of approved teacher preparation programs.

Virginia has a single-tier licensure system. To receive a five-year, renewable Collegiate Professional License, teachers must demonstrate that they understand the content, knowledge, skills, and processes for teaching the Virginia SOLs; complete a major in the

liberal arts and sciences; take 15 to 18 credit hours in professional studies composed of coursework in human growth and development (3 credits), curriculum and instruction (6 credits), foundations of education (3 credits), and reading and language acquisition (3 to 6 credits); receive training in topics such as gifted and talented education, the state SOLs, attention-deficit disorder, etc.; and engage in at least 300 hours of fieldwork. Elementary teachers must also take a specified number of course credits in seven subject areas. Passing the Praxis I and II examinations is also a licensure requirement, although the SBE voted in June 2005 to replace Praxis I with a more rigorous test of literacy and communications skills, the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA). Starting in 2006, elementary and special education teachers and reading specialists must pass an additional assessment of knowledge of reading instruction, the Virginia Reading Assessment (VRA). A five-year renewable Postgraduate Professional License is available to licensed teachers who hold an appropriate earned graduate degree.

Virginia has several programs designed to address teacher shortages, including two relatively small alternative certification route programs. The Career Switchers program places individuals with five years of work experience who have completed content requirements for their endorsement area and passed Praxis II into a one-year professional program, followed by a year of supervised teaching. Nonlicensed teachers hired by school districts may receive their Professional License after completing the state professional studies requirements, and content area coursework as well as passing Praxis II, the VCLA, and, as appropriate, the VRA. Either school districts or IHEs may, with state approval, offer programs of professional study for alternative route candidates. Alternative route candidates hold Provisional Licenses

until they complete all state licensing requirements.

Program Approval. The state also adopted new program approval standards for teacher preparation in 1999. These regulations, which took effect in July 2002, aligned teacher preparation programs with the new licensing regulations and SOLs. Rather than specifying required courses, program approval is based on meeting 20 standards in four categories: (1) professional education program design, (2) candidates in professional education programs, (3) faculty in professional education programs, and (4) operation and accountability of professional education programs. Teacher preparation programs must show how their students will acquire the academic content and the theoretical and practical knowledge for teaching and K-12 pupil achievement of the SOLs. They must also provide evidence of “regular and systematic evaluations” that are used to modify and improve the design of the program. At least 70% of a professional program’s candidates must pass Praxis II annually for a program to maintain accreditation. Teacher preparation programs may seek voluntary national accreditation with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) in lieu of state program approval. To date, 25 Virginia IHEs are seeking or have achieved national accreditation, 15 through NCATE and 10 through TEAC.

New Initiatives. Teacher preparation and licensure policies are under continual review, and recent initiatives are bringing state policy in closer alignment with the TNE principles. In 2001, the SBE and SCHEV established a permanent advisory body consisting of policymakers and constituent groups to develop and implement a comprehensive state plan to ensure a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. This group, the Committee to

Enhance the K-12 Teaching Profession in Virginia, issued a report in October 2002, *Stepping Up to the Plate . . . Virginia's Commitment to a Highly Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom*. The report called for the state to:

- develop a comprehensive database on teaching;
- expand recruitment and retention initiatives, including an expanded alternative certification route, a multi-tiered licensure system, and a high-quality mentoring program;
- expand model teacher education programs and create incentives for IHEs to address shortage areas; and
- conduct research on teacher quality initiatives.

These policy areas became the focus of the state's Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant and the source of recent recommendations by the SBE to revise teacher licensure regulations and program approval process.

The recommended changes in teacher licensure regulations include increasing the clock hours of supervised classroom experience from 300 to 500 hours, modifying the professional studies requirements to include three semester hours each in classroom management and instructional design based on assessment data, giving elementary and middle school teachers the option to major in an interdisciplinary program, allowing middle education 6-8 endorsement with only one area of academic preparation, and permitting teachers to add additional endorsements through testing. In addition, the proposed regulations would offer three designations on licenses—career teacher, mentor teacher, and

teacher as leader—to reflect stages in the professional development of teachers and to promote career paths of educators.

Proposed changes to the state's program approval regulations will separate the accreditation process from the program approval process. In addition to being accredited by either a national organization or the SBE, all teacher education programs will have to demonstrate achievement biennially of eight accountability measures, including their students' performance on state teacher assessments, evidence of their students' contributions to PreK-12 pupil achievement, evidence of employer job satisfaction, partnerships and collaborations with PreK-12 schools, and the number enrolled in the program.

Changes in both teacher licensure and program approval were submitted to the SBE for their review and will be available for public comment in the near future.

Developing a Culture of Evidence

The role of data in the assessment of teachers and programs has become more prominent in Virginia as the state moves towards a more performance-based teacher preparation and licensure system. IHEs must assess the performance of teacher education students at various stages in their programs, including mastery of the teaching competencies required for licensure, through multiple data sources, such as performance-based assessments and observations. Teacher education programs must also use data collected from their students, recent graduates and members of the professional community to evaluate and modify the design of their programs.

Virginia has taken a major step towards providing more comprehensive and systematic information on the preparation and

performance of the state's teachers through its new statewide Teacher and Education Licensure (TEAL) data system. Funded in part by the Title II grant, TEAL will enable the state and IHEs to track the flow of individuals through the teacher pipeline, provide information on the number and distribution of "highly qualified teachers" as required by NCLB, and eventually relate the educational and professional experiences of teachers to some measures of performance in the classroom. The VDOE's Instructional Personnel Reporting Systems and TEAL I, which were completed in July 2003, enable state officials to maintain a current record of instructional personnel data, licensed teachers to renew their licenses online, and LEA staff to conduct Web-based licensure queries. Data in the system include a teacher's assignment and years of experience, employment history, college attended, college major, teaching methods preparation, professional development activities, and endorsements.

The second component of the comprehensive data system, TEAL II, is under development through a contract with SCHEV and in partnership with four Virginia IHEs. TEAL II has four phases.

- *Phase 1:* Teacher Pipeline will allow IHEs to track student progress and outcomes through their teacher education programs (including GPA, major program credits, type of program being pursued, and test scores) and can be integrated with SCHEV's existing data on course enrollment and degree completion. This phase is being piloted in the fall of 2006.
- *Phase 2:* Teacher Education Outcomes will include data on students' assessments of their teacher education programs and teachers' assessments of their actual teaching experiences collected through surveys of teacher education students,

program completers, and employers at different points in teachers' education and careers. These data can be linked to TEAL I licensure information and to data from Virginia's Employment Commission and Department of Taxation.

- *Phase 3:* School Descriptors and Performance Data will provide data and databases on pupil and school performance and indicators of school environment using surveys of the school teaching/working environment and data from the Common Core of Data.
- *Phase 4:* Reporting and Analysis Components will offer reporting mechanisms for use by various constituent groups, including policymakers, researchers, and IHEs. It will also allow data extraction from the larger database to aid in information analysis.

Taken together, TEAL I and II will provide policymakers with better information on teacher quality and supply, including who decides to teach, where and for how long, and what individual, institutional, and contextual factors appear to influence these decisions.

IHEs face several challenges in increasing the use of evidence in improving teacher preparation. First, the state does not provide guidance regarding the kinds of assessments or data that IHEs should use for evaluating their programs or students, and teacher preparation programs cannot systematically access and use the performance of K-12 pupils taught by graduates of Virginia IHEs in these evaluations. Second, while a number of IHE leaders and policymakers would like to examine the relationship between teaching preparation and teaching skills and K-12 pupil outcomes, the state has not linked its teacher and pupil databases. The state has developed a new K-12 pupil-level Enrollment Management

Information System (EIMS) that will provide information on pupil test scores, but there do not appear to be plans to link the EIMS and TEAL data system. Virginia began testing all pupils in grades 3-8 in 2005-06 in accordance with NCLB, which could enable the development of value-added models later in the decade.

Some members of the higher education community, however, have raised concerns about the potential use of this linked database to evaluate teachers and teacher preparation programs. One concern is that new teachers and teacher preparation programs will gravitate away from working in and with “hard-to-staff” schools if they are held accountable for the absolute performance, rather than the expected growth, of the pupils in these schools. Similarly, they feel that schools of education should not be held solely accountable for decisions by their students to enter and stay in teaching when other factors, like salaries and teaching conditions, affect these decisions. A second concern lies with the use of a single measure, particularly a standardized test, to measure their students’ performance.

Until the state can link teacher and K-12 pupil databases through new policies or adjustments to current data collection practices, IHEs must either work with local districts to access pupil achievement data or administer their own assessments. Until the state can improve its state data systems, the capacity of IHEs, as a group and individually, to move towards the state vision for teacher preparation is highly dependent upon the will and capacity of districts.

As these state data systems move into place, a number of Virginia IHEs are working to develop internal capacity to generate and use meaningful data to guide teacher education

program improvements. For example, through TNE, UVA is developing an internal data infrastructure and building a culture of evidence around teacher preparation that extends across numerous faculties and includes new district partners. New data collection and archival procedures will enable faculty to chart the development of groups of teacher candidates and to study the effects of modifications to the teacher education program over time. The database contains teacher candidates’ high school and college transcripts, performance data (e.g., SAT, GRE, Praxis), survey responses at program entry and exit, and multiple classroom observations. An important advancement in defining outcomes for UVA’s teacher education program is the adoption of complementary standardized metrics for classroom observations—the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Teacher Performance Record (TPR)—which together enable UVA to track teacher performance from earliest field experiences to beginning years as a classroom teacher. The building of this new data infrastructure has also enabled UVA faculties and K-12 district partners to develop a common vocabulary for defining the outcomes of teacher preparation and to construct an ambitious research agenda that includes longitudinal questions about how particular teacher education program components affect teacher quality and, ultimately, pupil performance. Through annual end-of-year reports the CASTL staff will share emerging findings with Curry and A&S faculties responsible for teacher candidate learning. These findings aim to stimulate conversation about both the effectiveness of particular program features and teacher candidate needs. UVA’s initiatives illustrate the potential capacity of individual Virginia IHEs not only to foster a culture of evidence reflective of the state vision for performance-oriented teacher preparation, but also to take full advantage of the potential of the state’s new teacher

preparation and performance data system, TEAL I and TEAL II.

Effective Engagement of Arts and Sciences Faculty

Policymakers and educators in Virginia support the TNE principle that A&S faculties should collaborate with teacher educators to ensure that prospective teachers are well prepared to teach the curriculum of the public schools. The program approval standards call for cohesion among the general, content, and professional courses for each teaching area. Collaboration between A&S and education faculties will play out differently across the institutions, however, reflecting variations in institutional missions and culture. Virginia's policies and teacher quality initiatives are designed to recognize these differences while fostering increased participation by A&S faculties in the preparation of future teachers.

Since all teachers must complete both a program of general studies and a major in a liberal arts and sciences field, the A&S faculties are engaged with prospective teachers from their first days on campus. At many institutions, however, the A&S faculties view their role as teaching students the content and methodology of their disciplines, not covering the SOLs. It is considered the responsibility of the school of education to ensure that students have the knowledge to teach the SOLs. As one IHE member explained, "College of Education faculty have a more focused notion of what teachers should know related to SOLs, while Arts and Sciences faculty have a broader view of what students should know."

In addition, there are no policy mechanisms to ensure that data on teacher performance are fed back to A&S faculty. Under program approval standards, it is the responsibility of the professional program to ensure that prospective teachers achieve competence in

the academic content they plan to teach and have the knowledge base to teach the Virginia SOLs. Weaknesses in the content expertise of their teachers could be the result of students' not taking the right courses in their major or of gaps in the content of courses they are taking. Either situation should be addressed by increasing the engagement of the A&S faculties in the preparation of teachers.

Virginia has several initiatives designed to bridge the gap between what students learn in their liberal arts and sciences course content and the knowledge they need to teach this content. The state has awarded Standards-Based Teacher Education Project (STEP) grants to six institutions to create a standards-based education program through strong collaboration among A&S, education, and PreK-12 faculty members and administrators. The goals of the program are to strengthen the curriculum in content areas, improve the alignment of this curriculum with the SOLs, and increase the participation of content experts in the design and delivery of teacher preparation programs. The state is also supporting the development and dissemination of interdisciplinary teacher preparation curricular modules to prepare elementary and middle school teachers both in content and appropriate instructional methods. In addition, the SBE has proposed allowing elementary teachers to major in an interdisciplinary program, rather than a specific discipline. Many IHEs, however, have reacted negatively to this latter proposal, voicing concerns about the fiscal and logistical difficulties of developing an interdisciplinary major.

Through TNE, UVA has pursued a number of strategies to more deeply involve A&S faculties in the content, advising, research, and post-graduation support of teacher candidates. Faculty from both A&S and Curry education, under the leadership of the Dean of Arts and Sciences, are co-developing and delivering

two new types of courses. “Common Courses” aim to help teacher candidates with the complex task of integrating disciplinary content knowledge, and “Counterpoint Seminars” aim to help teacher candidates consider attendant multidisciplinary teaching methods for K-12 settings within a particular content area. Positive student feedback, higher enrollment levels, and increased faculty interest in designing these new interdisciplinary courses are early indicators that these strategies are not only meeting teacher candidate needs but facilitating meaningful collaboration across education and A&S faculties. Future faculty research intends to address how well these new adjustments to the teacher education pathway at UVA improve teacher candidates’ capacity to think in more synthetic ways and to apply cross-disciplinary knowledge in their classroom practice.

Furthermore, changes in UVA’s advising program for teacher candidates has benefited from increased involvement of A&S faculties. Each teacher education candidate receives specialized guidance from an advising team, each led by a college department chair or associate dean and consisting of faculty from A&S and education. This new advising program for teacher education supports all majors represented among Curry’s teacher candidates. In addition, the advising teams are reconsidering the unique curricular challenges facing teacher candidates at UVA; most recent actions have addressed gaps between course offerings and state licensure requirements and the strategic development of new Counterpoint Seminars in areas historically difficult to represent at the college level, such as world history. Efforts to expand the involvement of A&S faculties include augmenting the existing CLASS and TPR classroom observation instruments to include measures of the delivery of content knowledge.

At UVA, how to measure effective teacher preparation has become a priority at the University’s highest levels. For several years, the Provost has held monthly assessment seminars that draw faculty from both A&S and Curry schools to develop and evaluate TNE-related research. Leading thinkers in economics, sociology, psychology, and education are now drawn together to form a TNE Research Advisory Council that aims to strengthen research focused on teacher education. Together these strategies highlight the critical role of university-level leadership in defining a more expansive view of the teacher education community, one that draws from many faculties and connects teacher preparation to the university’s larger commitment to a liberal arts education for all undergraduates.

Conceptualizing Teaching as a Clinical Practice

Like TNE, Virginia’s teacher policy places great emphasis on the provision of support for teachers in their initial years of teaching. TNE takes one step further by challenging teacher preparation programs to take responsibility for the performance of their graduates during the first two years of teaching.

Virginia policymakers have authorized a variety of programs in support of beginning teachers since 1985 when the state initiated a Beginning Teacher Assistance Program. In 1996, the legislature funded 31 local education agencies to establish mentoring programs, and two years later funded 20 partnerships between local school districts and IHEs to train local mentors who worked with pre-service and first-year teachers. With the Education Accountability and Quality Enhancement Act of 1999, the legislature expanded the scope of mentoring statewide by requiring districts to provide each new teacher access to a mentor;

\$2.7 million was appropriated to help districts design and implement these programs. More recently, mentoring program funds have been concentrated on supporting new teachers in “hard-to-staff” schools. In 2003, the state provided to districts with high teacher turnover \$1 million in Title II Teacher Quality Enhancement grants to pilot research-based mentoring and induction programs. The approved programs include: Great Beginnings from Fairfax County Public Schools, Pathwise® from ETS, and the New Teacher Project, from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Because the mentor programs are administered by local school boards, there is flexibility currently built into the state’s guidelines for local mentoring programs, and there has been considerable variation in district practice. The state provides guidance to districts on the design and management of local mentor programs, selection and training of mentors, and evaluation of program effectiveness. The state guidelines do not, however, specify a role for IHEs in the mentoring process as envisioned by the third TNE principle.

A first step towards encouraging IHEs to support their teacher candidates as they transition to the classroom is to help them connect with those graduates teaching in the state. Through TEAL II, education school deans expect greater capacity to locate and track their graduates as they take teaching positions in Virginia public schools. Also through TEAL II, education schools are developing a single uniform survey to gather information about their graduates’ career choices, teaching contexts, preparation program satisfaction, and professional needs. While education schools have long sent follow-up surveys to their graduates, issues associated with tracking and low response rates have undermined their efforts. Under TEAL II, Virginia institutions hope to develop

a strong connection to their graduates and insight into their needs during the beginning years of teaching.

Through TNE, UVA is already exploring the next set of possibilities by piloting a two-year induction program to support its graduates during their first years teaching. The program is based on the Santa Cruz model, with materials revised to incorporate the Virginia SOLs. Through long-term partnerships with two neighboring school districts, UVA is delivering a series of professional supports to all novice teachers in these districts, not just its graduates. A team of 15 “teacher advisers” sponsored by UVA provide one-on-one mentoring support, which includes observing novice classrooms, team teaching classes, co-observing lessons by master teachers, reflecting on videotaped instructional episodes conducted by novices, analyzing pupil work with other novices, lesson planning, and preparing for parent conferences, among other activities. Each week advisers and novices complete Collaborative Assessment Logs which inform program planning and, in conjunction with survey data, help program staff identify patterns of need. During the year, four half-day workshops bring novices together to share experiences and further develop skills. A&S faculties participate in workshops and serve as consultants, thereby extending their connection with teacher candidates from pre-service into beginning years of teaching. Through a new database of university faculty interested in collaborating in schools the program is expanding its capacity to support the evolving discipline-based needs of novices.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the many new induction supports is well under way at UVA. During the year novices complete four surveys on demographics, self-efficacy, mentoring experiences, and teaching knowledge and skills; their classroom

practices are also observed using the CLASS and TPR instruments at multiple points during the school year. Efforts to make the program sustainable have focused on its integration with district resources. The program's evaluation will also suggest which pieces are critical or need strengthening.

To support its graduates working outside these partnership districts, UVA is piloting a system that offers novices access to online resources, such as materials, lesson plans, and "e-mentors." Through Tapped In® software, which creates a customized online communication platform for UVA, novice teachers join virtual communities to participate in small and large group discussions with A&S and education faculties and a network of master teachers. To increase awareness of this virtual resource, demonstrate its value, and build a face-to-face community before teacher candidates graduate, Curry education faculty have integrated the training and use of this online tool with required coursework and students' internship semester.

Towards Supporting, Spreading, and Sustaining TNE Reforms in Virginia

State policies in Virginia regarding teacher licensure, program standards, and induction are generally supportive of the TNE principles. To further strengthen and deepen the move towards a performance-driven system of teacher preparation and a more effective induction program, a number of issues require the attention of Virginia policymakers, state officials, IHE leaders, and stakeholder groups responsible for ensuring teacher quality in the state.

Addressing IHE Access to Appropriate Data. Teacher licensure and program approval policies as well as policymaker concerns about the supply of quality teachers are creating a demand for data about teacher, pupil, and program performance. The TEAL system is an

important step in collecting and reporting data about the preparation and distribution of teachers in Virginia. But IHEs may need additional information about teacher performance and practices, as well as outcome data regarding pupil learning, to evaluate their preparation programs. In considering this issue,

- What information about beginning teacher classroom practices and needs during the first few years of teaching would inform IHE preparation programs?
- How can evidence of K-12 pupil learning and classroom practice be used to strengthen teacher preparation programs?
- What is the fit between data available from state agencies and the data that IHEs need to pursue program improvement?
- How can the state, IHEs, and local school districts collaborate to develop a comprehensive system in support of teacher and K-12 pupil learning?

Expanding the Role of A&S Faculties in Teacher Education to Strengthen the Quality of Teacher Content Knowledge.

Virginia's licensure and program approval process are important policies for ensuring teacher content knowledge and alignment of subject-area coursework with the state's SOLs for K-12 schools. The state's teacher quality initiatives are also designed to foster increased participation by A&S faculty in the preparation of teachers. However, these cross-school communications do not necessarily lead to ongoing and in-depth professional dialogues grounded in teacher candidates' understanding of content and related pedagogy. A broader role for A&S faculty in teacher preparation could be more fully conceptualized and articulated by state leaders and Virginia's teacher preparation community. IHE leadership also is needed to ensure that A&S

involvement in teacher preparation is valued and rewarded. In considering this issue,

- How can state policy and IHE leadership promote stronger collaboration across education and A&S faculties and encourage a sense of shared responsibility for teacher quality?
- What adjustments may be needed in the IHE incentive system, such as faculty load, tenure requirements, and the university and college mission to support this strategic collaboration?

Involving IHEs in the Induction of Beginning Teachers. Virginia policymakers and state officials have long recognized the importance of supporting beginning teachers' first years in the classroom. Districts are ultimately responsible for the quality of induction. While the state has supported local programs through funding, pilot programs, and the provision of induction standards to guide local program design, it is widely acknowledged that the induction of beginning teachers across the state is highly variable and could be strengthened. IHEs appear uniquely positioned to provide a valuable contribution to supporting teachers in this transition to the classroom. However, the role IHEs might play needs to be explored with full consideration to IHE capacity and complementary with existing district programs. In considering this issue,

- What are the roles IHEs see for themselves in supporting their graduates as they begin teaching?
- How can the state promote coordination between IHE efforts to support their graduates and existing district induction programs?
- What new resources are needed to support IHEs in expansion of their responsibilities

to include their graduates' transition to teaching?

Resources for Additional Information

Teachers for a New Era (TNE)
<http://www.teachersforanewera.org>

Teachers for a New Era at the University of Virginia
<http://www.virginia.edu/provost/tneuva>

Virginia Department of Education
<http://www.pen.k12.va.us>

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)
<http://www.schev.edu>

Virginia Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
<http://www.vacte.org>

About CPRE

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE) studies alternative approaches to education reform in order to determine how state and local policies can promote student learning. Currently, CPRE's work is focusing on accountability policies, efforts to build capacity at various levels within the education system, methods of allocating resources and compensating teachers, instructional improvement, finance, and student and teacher standards. The results of this research are shared with policymakers, educators, and other interested individuals and organizations in order to promote improvements in policy design and implementation.

CPRE unites six of the nation's leading research institutions: the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, Stanford University, the University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Teachers College Columbia University.

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