

## Wisconsin

### 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 students 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 requires the commitment, collaboration, and coordination of a number of public and private institutions and agencies, and multiple levels of government. For prospective teachers, access to a high-quality teacher education program and professional development can make a great deal of difference for the quality and longevity of their classroom careers, and for their students, it can make an enormous difference in the quality of their learning opportunities and their educational attainment.

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

#### 2003-2004 Snapshot

Number of people receiving initial certification in 2002-03: 4,699  
 Number of teacher preparation programs across the state: 32  
 K-12 public school enrollment in 2003-04: 878,217

national professional organizations, reform commissions, and the research community, Carnegie has challenged higher education 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 student achievement, and this data would drive the continuous improvement of their programs.

**2. Effective Engagement of Arts and Science Faculty.** The education of prospective teachers would include the full engagement of faculty in the disciplines of the arts and sciences, to ensure teachers obtained the subject matter understanding and pedagogical content knowledge needed to understand and address students' learning needs. Arts and science faculty 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 Corporation and the Annenberg and Ford Foundations, 11 institutions in 10 states are pursuing the redesign of their teacher preparation programs according to these three design principles. The institutions are critically reconsidering their use of the knowledge-base, their institutional culture, and their school-based relationships in order to produce higher quality teacher candidates. It is hoped that the experiences of these institutions will offer interested policymakers, university leaders, and state education officials the blueprints and tools to help them develop teacher preparation programs 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, and they can encourage and support efforts by these higher education institutions to restructure their programs to foster a culture of evidence, engage arts and science faculty, 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 the three TNE 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 Wisconsin, and where appropriate we offer concrete examples from the restructuring now underway at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), one of the 11 institutions to receive a TNE grant from Carnegie.

## **TNE at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee received a five-year challenge grant from Carnegie Corporation's Teachers for a New Era Initiative in 2004 and completed its first full year of work in 2004-2005. The TNE at UWM is part of a new Academy for Teaching and Learning, designed to promote and sustain university-wide responsibility for teacher education. The Academy is housed in the University's Center for Urban Initiatives and Research and the TNE project director is also the Chancellor's Deputy for the Milwaukee Idea, a university-wide initiative to create partnerships with the Milwaukee community. The TNE project works closely with the Milwaukee Partnership Academy (MPA), a collaboration between the University, the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), and business and community organizations to improve the quality of teaching and learning for the children and youth of the city. All of the TNE design teams include faculty from the colleges of letters and sciences, arts, and education as well as educators from MPS. To address the first TNE principle, TNE at UWM created a Program Assessment team

charged with identifying measures of student content and pedagogical knowledge, developing appropriate assessment instruments, and creating a process for using the results of these assessments to modify liberal arts and education courses. A Pupil Learning Assessment Team will create and implement a value-added assessment of student achievement gain associated with teachers prepared at UWM. A second line of work is focused on engaging the arts and sciences in teacher preparation. Six design teams are developing strategies to align curriculum in related disciplines and programs with the state's and MPS' academic content standards and state licensure standards, to align the content taught in courses with the pedagogical needs of teachers, and to involve arts and sciences faculty with the professional development of MPS teachers. Finally, an Induction Design Team, which functions as a workgroup of the MPA, is developing a comprehensive system of induction to retain urban teachers and support their professional growth.

## State Context

Thirty-two public and private institutions of higher education operate teacher preparation programs in Wisconsin. The DPI issued 4,699 initial licenses in 2002-2003.

Wisconsin is considered an exporter of teachers. According to the DPI, it is estimated that at least 10% of program completers take jobs out of state although that figure may be underestimated because of the difficulty in reaching out-of-state teachers through surveys. As a consequence of the oversupply of teachers, the focus of state policymakers has been on improving the quality of new teachers and on retaining them in the profession rather than on expansion of programs or recruitment of teachers.

The primary policy-making body for teacher education (and K-12 education) is the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), which is headed by an elected state superintendent of instruction. The current state superintendent was re-elected for a second term in April 2005. Wisconsin does not have a state board of education. The DPI approves teacher preparation programs at the 32 institutions that offer such programs, and regulates the licensure of K-12 educators. It is advised by a professional standards council composed of K-12 educators and administrators, higher education faculty, school board members and parents. About one-third of the IHEs seek additional accreditation through NCATE and one is considering TEAC accreditation.

In 1995, the DPI undertook a major review of the state's teacher education and licensure policies that resulted in the promulgation of new administrative rules for teacher preparation and licensure: PI 34, the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative. PI 34, which was given legislative approval in 2000, represented a significant shift from an input-driven to a standards- and performance-based system of program approval and licensure. Program design, initial licensure and license renewal for teachers, pupil services professionals and administrators are now based on the Wisconsin Standards for Teacher Development and Licensure which are aligned with the standards set by the Inter-state New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC).<sup>1</sup>

The DPI gave IHEs four years to redesign their educator preparation programs. To receive approval, IHEs must document how their

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<sup>1</sup> As a consortium of state education agencies and national educational organizations, INTASC has developed a set of core standards for what all beginning teachers should know and be able to do. These standards are based on the premise that the teacher licensing system should be aligned with a state's student learning standards.

programs address the state teaching standards and how they assess students' mastery of these standards throughout the preparation program, collaborate with K-12 school districts and follow their graduates into their teaching careers. The state requires students to pass the Praxis I, have a minimum GPA of 2.5, and be assessed on a portfolio prior to admission to a teacher preparation program.

PI 34 creates three stages of educator licensure: (1) a nonrenewable initial educator license, which is valid for five years; (2) a professional educator licensure which may be renewed every five years; and, (3) a voluntary, renewable master educator license, which is valid for 10 years. These new requirements, which went into effect in July 2004, replaced a one stage, renewable license. The new system is designed to support the continuous learning of educators through mentoring and professional development requirements. All graduates of educator preparation programs must show an entry level proficiency in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are associated with each of the state standards for teachers, administrators, or pupil services personnel. Students document proficiency in those standards through a series of assessments of a developmental portfolio(s) and satisfactory performance on the Praxis II examinations.

School districts must provide a mentor to first year educators. Beginning teachers, as well as beginning administrators and pupil services personnel, develop a professional development plan (PDP) that will enable them to document their professional growth in two or more of the standards and the effect of that growth on student learning. This plan is developed by the initial educator and requires the goal(s) of the plan to be approved by a three-person team composed of a peer, an administrator in their district, and an individual in higher education. This team then verifies successful completion

of the professional development plan before the educator advances to a professional level license. Educators who hold professional level licenses must also complete a professional development plan that demonstrates increased proficiency in the Wisconsin educator standards as a condition of license renewal. Completion of the PDP at the professional level is verified by a three-person team of peers. Professional educators have the option to advance to a master level educator license through the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards certification or a Wisconsin process that includes a high stakes assessment of a portfolio documenting mastery of all educator standards.

PI 34 also made changes in the state's alternative certification policies. Prior to 2004, IHEs sponsored alternative certification programs through Innovative and Experimental Programs. Now alternative certification programs can be offered directly by school districts, cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs), or other organizations as well as by IHEs. These programs must be approved by the DPI if they document that assessments of their candidates assure candidates will be proficient in state standards, similar to traditional programs. Existing alternative certification programs focus on shortage areas, such as special and bilingual education, and produce small numbers of teachers compared to those prepared by traditional programs.

In addition to the DPI, other state level organizations with a stake in teacher education include the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin system which oversees the state's 13 public universities, 13 freshmen-sophomore university centers, and university extension programs; and the Wisconsin PK-16 Leadership Council, a voluntary state level partnership with representatives from the governor's office, the legislature, DPI, public

and private IHE's, major education organizations, and business groups. Both of these bodies could support the institutionalization and spread of reforms in teacher education.

Wisconsin has faced several years of deficit budgets since the economic downturn of 2001. Like many other states, Wisconsin protected K-12 spending while cutting funding in other areas, including higher education. State appropriations for higher education dropped 8% between FY 2002 and FY 2005, while state aid for K-12 education grew about 5% during that same time period. School districts were negatively impacted by both the slow growth in state aid and spending caps imposed in the mid-1990s when the state assumed a larger share of education spending.<sup>2</sup>

## **TNE Principles**

In general PI 34 provides a policy framework that is highly aligned with the three TNE principles. This means that there are few statutory barriers to implementing the TNE design at UWM. However, this does not mean that the deep reforms envisioned by Carnegie will take root in the state's 32 teacher preparation programs. How PI 34 is operationally defined through regulation and administrative procedures, and the nature of the support provided for its implementation will determine the degree to which the philosophy underlying PI 34, and the TNE principles, are fully embraced and enacted by the institutions of higher education. Given the high degree of alignment between state policy and the TNE principles, however, there is an excellent opportunity in Wisconsin to not only put these principles into practice at UWM, but also to use this experience to support the full implementation of PI 34 at other institutions.

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<sup>2</sup> The state's commitment to support 67% of state average K-12 spending was rescinded in 2003.

Because PI 34 is new legislation and represents a dramatic shift in teacher policy in the state institutions, including UWM, are just beginning to implement the key components of the new law and code. The DPI recently completed its initial review of all 32 teacher preparation programs and granted institutions approval or conditional approval based on their plans for PI 34 implementation. Many of the issues raised in these reviews are discussed in the following sections.

## **Developing a Culture of Evidence**

Use of performance data to drive decisions is central to both PI 34's performance-based teacher preparation and licensure system, and to the TNE reforms. First, data are needed to determine the success of teacher education students and teacher education programs in meeting state standards. Under PI 34 each IHE must identify performance tasks within the professional education program that will allow students opportunities to demonstrate their proficiency of each of the state's teacher, pupil services, and administrator standards. These tasks must be grounded in research on best practices in education, demonstrate proficiency of the standard, and be measurable over time. Campuses must develop a longitudinal, developmental assessment system using multiple measures so they can document how their students have met the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for each standard at different stages of the program (entrance into the program, prior to student teaching, after clinical work, and completion of program). The results of these assessments, collected into portfolios, are expected to provide valid evidence of whether students have achieved proficiency of the teaching standards—a requirement for successful completion of the teacher education

program—and to provide feedback to the program itself to identify areas needing improvement.

Second, PI 34 also requires IHEs to collect data on the performance of their graduates as teachers in order to evaluate and refine their training programs. This task is challenging for those institutions that have many graduates who take jobs out of state. Finally, both beginning teachers and veteran teachers who choose to participate must successfully complete professional development plans that demonstrate professional growth in the state teaching standards and how that growth affects student learning as a condition of licensure renewal. Evidence of growth may, but does not have to, include measures of student performance.

IHEs face several serious challenges in designing the required assessments and using student performance data to inform their teacher preparation programs. First, they must develop performance assessments to measure the knowledge, skills and dispositions required by each of the state standards. The state has given campuses wide latitude in developing these measures as they expect the knowledge, skills and dispositions to differ across areas of teaching (e.g., arts, science, and elementary education). While this gives campuses like UWM the flexibility to infuse the performance assessments with special emphases, a focus on urban education, for example, institutions need assistance in unpacking the standards and developing rubrics for performance assessment. The program assessment team at UWM, for example, discovered that different disciplines define “content knowledge” in different ways, and their first step had to be the development of a common definition of what that term means, combining both professional practice as well as disciplinary learning. This was a precursor to identifying which knowledge and skills should be assessed in

what ways at each stage of the student’s preparation program. Within IHEs, some departments have more experience with using performance assessments (e.g., the arts) than others. Developing performance assessments that are viewed as valid and significant by both arts and science and education faculties takes considerable time and investment. The institutions vary in their capacity to undertake this work.

A second challenge faced by the UWM program assessment team has been keeping faculty focused on and valuing the new performance assessments when they are working within a K-12 policy environment that is increasingly focused on standardized testing (of both pre-service teachers and K-12 students) and the use of value-added approaches. A third challenge is developing a process for using the results of student assessment, including the Praxis II content tests, to refine courses in both liberal arts and sciences and teacher education.

A fourth challenge concerns the use of K-12 student performance in assessing the quality of teacher preparation programs and/or in documenting teacher proficiency in areas of their professional development plans. One issue is the availability of data to make value-added calculations. Wisconsin only recently (Fall 2004) implemented a student-level data base that assigns each student a unique identifier. The assignment of these unique student identifiers will occur for the first time in the 2005-2006 school year, as will the administration of the Wisconsin Student Assessment System in grades 3 through 8 (and 10) to align with requirements of No Child Left Behind. Another challenge implied here is that there is currently no infrastructure for expanding upon the teacher data base or for creating the K-12/IHE data link.

In the meantime, UWM has been working with the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) to pilot a value-added project using that district's assessment data. UWM has faced technical, design, and political challenges in doing this pilot, however. First, they had to link pupils to classroom teachers, and classroom teachers to their training institutions. Second, while the director of assessment and accountability in the MPS is a member of the UWM Pupil Learning Team, the union has raised concerns about assigning value-added scores to individual teachers. Third, the pupil learning team argues that knowing the name of a teacher's training institution is of limited use. The teacher database should be expanded to include teachers' preparation experiences and level of competency in that program, teachers' classroom behaviors (are they doing in the classroom what their institution prepared them to do), and student and school characteristics. Finally, no one has addressed how UWM, and other teacher preparation programs, will pay for the continuing costs of this data collection and analysis. This kind of data would not only allow the institutions to monitor the effectiveness of their graduates and make program improvements, but also could be used by the state to simplify and strengthen the program approval process.

Concerns have also been raised at all levels of the system about a lack of quality control in the teacher licensure renewal process. The intent of PI 34 is for the educator to grow in the state educator standards and connect that growth to student learning. PI 34, however, leaves the establishment of goals and choice of performance measures to the educator. The PDP team for an initial educator only approves these goals and verifies satisfactory completion of the professional development plan.

## Effective Engagement of Arts and Sciences Faculty

Since 1971, Wisconsin has required teachers to complete a program of study that combines study in arts and science and in professional education, and most teacher education students take their content courses in arts and sciences departments. Wisconsin requires teachers to complete a program major for the early adolescence through adolescence level license (approximate ages 10-21), and a program minor for early childhood (birth-8), early childhood through middle childhood (ages birth-11), and middle childhood through early adolescence (ages 6-12 or 13) licenses. Since the passage of PI 34, the DPI no longer requires a fixed number of credit hours to constitute a minor. Colleges and universities may define the parameters of a minor although most institutions define a minor, as 24 credit hours. Teacher education programs may add additional requirements. For example, students in the elementary education program at UWM must complete two minors—one in math or science and one in language arts or social science.<sup>3</sup>

While the involvement of students in arts and science through content coursework has been a long-standing requirement in Wisconsin, PI 34 now provides the policy language that extends to the collaboration of arts and science faculty with education faculty. According to one DPI official involved in program approval, "There are many places throughout PI 34 that speak to

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<sup>3</sup> NCLB requires that all teachers must hold a state certificate/license, hold a bachelor's degree, and demonstrate subject matter competence. For new elementary teachers, subject matter competence must be demonstrated on a rigorous state test. For new middle and secondary teachers, subject matter competence must be demonstrated by either a rigorous test or major/coursework. For current teachers, subject matter competence may be demonstrated by a rigorous test, major/coursework, or through a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE).

'collaboration' and as PI 34 relates to the program approval process, one aspect of collaboration is collaboration among education faculty and letters and science." In addition, a June 2001 University of Wisconsin Board of Regents resolution requires campuses to take an all-university approach to teacher education. "The quality of learning is directly affected by the quality of teaching; therefore, institutions should assume responsibility at the all-university level for teacher quality and work in partnership with PK-12 and other postsecondary education leaders toward school renewal."

Key issues in engaging arts and science faculty in teacher preparation will be to ensure that content courses provided to prospective teachers incorporate the state's Model Academic Standards for students, that IHEs make a tighter connection between content knowledge and students' ability to teach that content, particularly in colleges where content is grounded in a "different direction," and that arts and science faculty are involved in the review of data on the effectiveness of the teacher education program. These issues might be addressed in part through the state's program review and approval processes, but they require the attention and support of leaders in the IHEs.

The four subject area design teams in the UWM TNE program have focused on two of these issues. They have aligned arts and sciences course requirements and course content with state and MPS learning targets and Praxis II coverage, an activity begun in English and the sciences under an earlier Title II grant. The design teams are now discussing the revision of existing courses and/or the development of new courses for pre-education students that will align the content and theoretical approach taught in a particular course with the theory and practice needs of teachers in training. The work underway at

UWM is addressing issues that all 32 preparation programs face under PI 34. The state might take advantage of this situation by supporting collaborative work across the 32 institutions to design new aligned content courses, by encouraging site visits to UWM, and by sharing the syllabae for these new courses with faculty in all of the institutions.

## **Conceptualizing Teaching as a Clinical Practice**

Like TNE, PI 34 places great emphasis on the provision of support for teachers in their initial years of teaching through the requirement that districts provide mentors, ongoing orientation, and support seminars. TNE calls for the participating teacher preparation programs to develop robust induction programs for their graduates that provide them with support for at least two years. The intent is to continue their engagement with arts and science faculty and provide opportunities for them to deepen their content knowledge as they progress in their career. The new state policy links with the third TNE principle in three ways. First, districts must provide a mentor to all beginning teachers. Second, the beginning teacher must convene an initial educator team that includes a representative of an IHE to approve the goals and verify the completion of the professional development plan. Third, under PI 34, teachers must proceed through stages of licensure and document their growth in the state's professional standards as a condition of advancing to a professional license and having the professional license renewed at five year intervals. These parallels with TNE offer the possibility of developing integrated induction programs that are the joint responsibility of the districts and the teacher preparation programs.

However, the limited resources available to support the mentoring requirement is viewed as a major obstacle to providing the support

new teachers need. Although the state legislature recently appropriated one million plus dollars, the primary sources of funds for mentoring are the federal Title II program and local dollars. There is \$46 million available in Title IIA funds for teacher training, hiring, and retention that is allocated to LEAs based on enrollment (20%) and poverty (80%). Most people interviewed for this profile noted that these resources are insufficient to support mentoring and professional development requirements, particularly in early years of teaching. As a consequence, there is considerable variation in the quality of the supports now being provided for beginning teachers across districts.

The implementation of this component of PI 34, which has just begun, has raised a number of other technical and policy issues. What are the characteristics of a good mentor and mentoring experience? Of a good professional development plan? Who will select, prepare, and assess the mentors? What should be the relationship between the mentor and the initial educator team? Are there sufficient teachers and university personnel to fill the mentoring and initial educator team positions? Who will pay for the time of mentors? Who will pay for university personnel involved in the induction support? What is the role of education and arts and science faculty in supporting beginning teachers through either mechanism? Who will ensure the quality of the mentoring and professional development experiences and of the teacher's portfolio? The state has provided guidance to districts on how to address some of these pressing issues through initial educator support system guides, toolkits for developing a professional development plan, and basic workshops to train PDP team members. But the thrust of PI 34 is that professional development should be under the control of teachers. Support for beginning educators might be more effectively and

efficiently addressed through the formation of collaboratives between school districts and institutions of higher education.

UWM provides one example of such a collaboration. The TNE induction team is part of the Milwaukee Partnership Academy's work group on Teacher and Principal Quality. They are creating an induction program around school-based support, rather than one-on-one mentoring. Learning Teams in each school, including literacy and mathematics coaches, will help new teachers with their professional development plans, provide mentoring, and broker the specific resources that each new teacher needs for induction.

## Summary

- PI 34 provides a policy framework that could support the scaling up of the TNE design for teacher education. Like TNE, the new law focuses on performance at all stages of teacher preparation and teacher development, rather than on system inputs.
- PI 34 gives institutions flexibility in program design and performance measurement (with only Praxis II as a check), but limited guidance regarding implementation and little financial support to make the required program changes and sustain a performance assessment and continuous improvement system.
- PI 34 requires districts to provide mentors for new teachers, but has not provided sufficient resources to ensure that the resulting support is effective.
- PI 34 also makes a flexibility/quality tradeoff in stages of licensure with PD plans.

- These actions make sense in a strong local control state, but they mean that success in implementing PI 34 and the TNE principles and the quality of teacher preparation programs will be a function of the technical and resource capacity of institutions to design truly performance-based programs.
- The pressing state policy issues are how to ensure that the institutions and districts have adequate resources, technical assistance in program design (through policy guidance, program approval rubrics, and technical assistance), and incentives to fully implement PI 34 and realize the benefits of the new law.
- UWM might play a significant role in the implementation of PI 34 by showing other institutions how to design performance-based systems; by demonstrating the value of collaboration between colleges of letters and science, arts, and education; by demonstrating the efficacy of a collaborative approach to the design and delivery of a mentoring/induction program; and by sharing lessons to be learned from their TNE experience.

## Resources:

Teachers for a New Era  
[www.teachersforanewera.org](http://www.teachersforanewera.org)

Teachers for a New Era at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
[www.uwm.edu/Org/TNE/](http://www.uwm.edu/Org/TNE/)

University of Wisconsin System Advisory Council  
[www.wisconsin.edu/pk16/](http://www.wisconsin.edu/pk16/)  
[www.uwsa.edu/acadaff/pk16/index.htm](http://www.uwsa.edu/acadaff/pk16/index.htm)

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
[www.dpi.state.wi.us](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us)

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