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EVIDENCE AND  
INQUIRY

TRANSPARENCY



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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



**Continuous Improvement. Evidence and Inquiry. Transformation.** These are the hallmarks of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) – the new single accrediting body committed to excellence in educator preparation.

CAEP has already traced a path from a conceptual idea to unify two established educator preparation accrediting bodies—each with its own philosophy and traditions—to a single organization, and now to a merging staff who are building on the best of each predecessor’s practices to create a stronger, more flexible and responsive model of accreditation.

CAEP will ultimately be judged—as are all educational organizations—by results. Educators completing their preparation with accredited providers must demonstrate their capacities to increase student learning and strengthen schools and communities. The evidence of their success must be clear and compelling. CAEP is well-positioned through its standards to be a collaborator and initiator in efforts to improve the evidentiary base for preparation through the use of trustworthy and credible measures of performance. CAEP is committed to basing its evaluations on solid evidence, drawing on an unprecedented amount of quality education data available through its accreditation work. These data are available for use in monitoring progress and accessible through student-based record systems with capability to link students and educators.

Like most annual reports, this one provides information about what we do and who we serve. In this first report, we describe where necessary what the predecessor organizations—the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)—did separately, but it is also possible to show how

CAEP will make decisions as the unified accrediting body moving forward. *Unlike* most annual reports, this one forecasts our aspirations for CAEP as a new accreditor, beginning with a detailed description of our planned path forward. In future reports, we commit to providing annual updates on trends and conditions in educator accreditation and preparation to the public, states, policymakers, and education professionals. In setting out this framework for the future, we will highlight our ongoing *CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting* that will make recommendations for improvement in CAEP’s rigorous standards and accompanying evidence in accreditation. We put forward the elements of a strategy to take advantage of new data sources, incorporating new strategies for collaborating through a networked learning community. CAEP will leverage this stronger evidentiary data base to benefit individual educator preparation providers and the field of educator preparation overall.

CAEP aims to be a valued partner in supporting innovation and improvement in the preparation of educators, and in rigorously evaluating the results of those efforts. There is an unquestioned responsibility to build the education workforce so that today’s youth can reach higher levels of achievement. CAEP eagerly accepts its role, as the newest accreditor, in addressing that responsibility and providing an accurate assessment of the degrees to which we have been successful.

**JAMES G. CIBULKA**

James G. Cibulka  
President

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



**We all want to know what the true state of educator preparation is in the United States** – is it delivering on its promises or is it failing and in crisis? Reports and commentaries from states, national accreditors, pundits, policymakers, reform organizations, and faculty and students who participate in educator preparation programs give us widely different and conflicting answers to the question.

Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended in 2008, for example, requires states to identify teacher education programs in their states that are “low performing” or “at risk of becoming low performing.” Most states, 27 in fact, have never found a single low-performing or at-risk program over the HEA’s entire history. Currently, only 37 programs, or about 2 percent of the total number of U.S. programs, are now marked as low-performing (9) or at-risk programs (28) by their states. The accreditors, like the states, deny accreditation to about the same percentage of those who have sought accreditation. Along the same lines, only about 2 percent of faculty and 3 percent of students gave ratings of *inadequate* or *barely adequate* overall to their accredited programs when surveyed.

Yet the critics, who are certain that there is a crisis and that the nation’s teacher education programs, with rare exceptions, are broken, believe it is self-evident that many more than 2 percent of the nation’s programs deserve the low performance or at-risk rating. To the limited extent that their dire conclusions are based on evidence, they are clearly seeing something in the data that is different from what the states and the accreditors have seen.

Accreditors, are uniquely placed to help resolve this puzzling discrepancy in the estimates of how many strong and praiseworthy, as opposed to truly weak, programs are currently conducting business in the nation and, in the latter case, contributing to the failure of many P-12 schools to achieve the high standards required for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Accreditors have a wealth of information about the health of the nation’s teacher education programs and this annual report is a beginning effort to share that trove of evidence

with the wider community in an effort to raise the level of public debate about how educational professionals should be prepared.

More than simply bringing new categories of accreditation data to the attention of the public and policymakers, as we promise to do in future annual reports, CAEP has pledged to raise the very standards for the evidence upon which accreditation will be based in the future. Our field is now at a point where the evidence of teaching competence, for example, can be linked to, and assessed by, the effects that teaching has on P-12 student learning. To give its assurance that graduates of accredited programs can teach effectively CAEP can now expect to see that the graduates’ own students learn something, a surer sign that true teaching has taken place than the field’s exclusive prior reliance on the content analysis of the course syllabus or cooperating teacher and supervisor ratings.

It is odd, and worth further investigation by CAEP, that those most familiar and knowledgeable about a particular teacher education program consistently come to conclusions about the graduates’ competence that differ markedly from the conclusions of those who view these same programs at a distance. It is perhaps not unlike the predictable annual polling findings that show the respondents’ own individual school, teachers, doctor, congressional representative, etc., receives a higher grade than other people’s schools, teachers, doctors, representatives, etc. in the state or nation. This leaves open the question of which is the more accurate picture. We hope that the annual CAEP accreditation report can begin to bridge this perplexing gap as it provides both an “up-close” visit and intimate review of the evidence and program with the needed measure of detached national objectivity that national accreditation also provides.

**FRANK B. MURRAY**

Frank B. Murray  
Chair, CAEP Board of Directors

**CAEP** is being created in a changing national context characterized by new expectations, new possibilities, and new financial constraints.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**D**uring 2013, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) will become the new unified accrediting body for educator preparation, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). As the accreditor for educator preparation providers, CAEP is accountable to the public, the states, policymakers, and professionals in the field of educator. This is CAEP's first annual report on the state of educator preparation. Each year, CAEP will publish information about its actions and what it is learning.

## *CAEP Forward*

CAEP, like other education organizations, will be judged by its results. It is being created in a changing national context characterized by new expectations, new possibilities, and new financial constraints. It assumes its responsibilities at a time of high interest in P-12 student performance and in the capabilities of the education workforce.

CAEP will build on a longstanding accreditation tradition in the United States with a dual function to assure quality and motivate improvement. Like all regional and specialized accreditors, CAEP's functions are based on peer standards and review, initiated by a self-study. But unlike much accreditation, national accreditation for educator preparation is voluntary. For that reason, CAEP is especially challenged to demonstrate that accreditation adds value beyond what states are able to achieve through their own reforms in preparation program approval, licensure, and improved data.

The vision of CAEP's leadership is to create a model unified accreditation system. CAEP can elevate educator preparation to the level of excellence that the public and policymakers have come to expect. It will strengthen accountability and transparency, support innovation, and rigorously evaluate the results of its own efforts. CAEP is committed to add value.

Standards serve as the basis for any accreditor's actions. As a prominent part of its initial activities, the CAEP Board of Directors established a Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting charged with transforming the preparation of educators by creating a rigorous system of accreditation that

demands excellence and produces educators who increase student learning. The standards, scheduled for completion in mid-2013, are to be “based on evidence, continuous improvement, innovation, and clinical practice.”

CAEP is ideally positioned to make use of state data that are relevant to preparation where they are available. It can provide leverage beyond what states are able to exercise themselves by sharing comparisons and benchmarks, and building consensus around data descriptors across states and classifications of providers. Through its own initiatives and in collaboration with others, CAEP is committed to raise the standards of evidence upon which its accreditation decisions will be based in three ways:

1. Creation of common standards for data to make comparisons and benchmarking possible;
2. Establishment of anchor points on commonly used assessments; and
3. Research into causal relationships between preparation and subsequent P-12 learning.

The public should expect to see progress toward a “dashboard report” of key annual data from all accredited providers on topics such as candidate progress and completion; employment of completers; teacher retention; employer satisfaction; teacher satisfaction with their preparation; and employer teacher evaluations with multiple pupil and classroom measures, including evidence of student learning.

### *The Current Accreditation Context in Educator Preparation*

The report describes the current context for accreditation in educator preparation through basic data on providers of educator preparation, through accreditation decisions that NCATE and TEAC made during 2011, and through several vignettes that ground the descriptive data with details that underscore some key features of accreditation processes.

There are 1,624 providers of initial teacher preparation (see endnote 3).

- Of these, 49 percent are accredited, enrolling 62 percent of teacher-candidates preparing to teach and 61 percent of those who pass state licensure tests.
- Another 10 percent of providers have indicated their intent to seek accreditation through either the NCATE or the TEAC process.

During the 2011 accreditation cycle, the following actions were taken:

- NCATE accredited 67 percent of providers that completed the accreditation process for the first time.
- Another 9 percent were accredited by NCATE after addressing “areas for improvement” that had previously been identified.
- 13 percent of providers with NCATE accreditation reviews in 2011 will be required to have another accreditation visit to demonstrate that they have made the necessary adjustments to fully meet accreditation standards.
- 11 percent of the NCATE accreditation actions were to defer, deny, or revoke accreditation.
- 3 percent of providers initially seeking accreditation withdrew without taking steps for NCATE accreditation review or decisions.
- TEAC accredited 23 percent of providers up for review in 2011 with no weaknesses or stipulations cited in the accreditation letter.
- 77 percent of TEAC cases received accreditation with identified areas in which their work needed strengthening and, of these, some 17 percent are in the process of addressing and documenting their efforts in anticipation of an additional review within two years.

The vignettes illustrate how accreditation worked for educator preparation providers with different missions and environmental contexts. Peer review is a core factor in each of these cases. The cases show how accreditation functions apply professional judgment responsively, forcefully, and successfully.

Together, the cases demonstrate the dual role of accreditation mentioned above—quality assurance, upon which public accountability rests, and program improvement that spurs innovation. CAEP’s challenges are twofold:

1. to transform the classic program improvement function of accreditation to a systemic process, and
2. to improve the validity and reliability of peer judgments.

Innovation processes can strengthen performance across the entire system of providers. Equally important, they can improve the knowledge base on effective preparation practices, resulting in stronger accreditation standards to drive further reforms. More powerful data will make accreditation more evidence-based. Careful selection and training of CAEP reviewers will provide a capstone for informed accreditation judgments.



# CAEP FORWARD

**D**uring 2013, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) plan to become the new unified accrediting body for educator preparation, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). This will be an historic milestone, partly because it represents an extraordinary achievement to bring together two accreditors with such different philosophies and traditions. Yet CAEP represents more than a coming together of two organizations. The design team that recommended to the respective boards the creation of CAEP as a unified accrediting body made clear its ambitions for CAEP as a change agent:

We wish to emphasize that we have not approached our task as merely unifying NCATE and TEAC with the least possible change to two accrediting systems that are already quite similar and effective. Rather, we have set a much more ambitious goal: to create a model unified accreditation system. We believe that CAEP can elevate educator preparation to the new level of excellence that the public and its policymakers expect.

Such a system would not merely stand as the traditional bar to unsatisfactory professional preparation. Instead, it would encourage and assist all institutions and other entities that prepare educators (“institutions”), even those that already exceed that bar, to go beyond it towards excellence by continuously improving the quality of their completers and programs. CAEP’s goals should be not only to raise the performance of candidates as practitioners in the nation’s P-12 schools, but also to raise the stature of the entire profession by raising the standards for the evidence the field relies on to support its claims of quality. With the great changes currently being proposed and taking place in our field, this is a unique opportunity for us to show the value we add to quality assurance, accountability and the overall performance of the profession.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and Teacher Education Accreditation Council. (2010). *Report and recommendation of the NCATE/TEAC Design Team to our respective boards of directors* (p. 3). Washington, DC: Authors.

## A CHANGING NATIONAL CONTEXT

Education reform over the past decades has ushered in changes in standards, assessment, curriculum, and teacher evaluation. Most recently, the focus has turned to teachers and to the preparation of these professionals, who are the most powerful in-school factor on student performance. While education reform is often politicized, the various sides do share considerable common ground. In the end, those vested in the topic of education reform agree that every child deserves the best teachers and education available. In this first annual report of CAEP, we explore the new expectations of educator preparation, the new possibilities afforded, the new financial constraints, and, of course, a vision for CAEP as the new accreditor.

### *New Expectations*

A constellation of mutually reinforcing influences create new expectations for CAEP:

- Policy leaders in executive branches and legislative bodies insist that teachers be prepared to raise P-12 student learning effectively and consistently.
- Policymakers also insist that educator preparation providers address the needs and capabilities of the education workforce more effectively than at present.
- The common “college- and career- ready” standards are influencing curricula and the knowledge and skills that teachers need.
- New Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) model teacher standards expressed in the Interstate Teacher and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards have or will be adopted or adapted by many states to evaluate and guide professional development of teachers.
- “Next generation” assessments are being created to monitor student progress as new standards are put into place—and that will extend the current state-of-the-art in education assessment.
- The recent CCSSO report has the potential to greatly strengthen state policies, laws, and practices in teacher and leader preparation.<sup>2</sup> The National Governors Association is collaborating in these CCSSO activities in response to similar interest from their member governors.

### *New Possibilities*

The public, government agencies, and education policymakers are insisting that education decision-making rely on extensive and continuing applications of data, especially when monitoring student learning and evaluating teachers. For example, the U. S. Department of Education, under its “Race to the Top” competitive grant programs for school reform, emphasizes use of pupil performance results along with other measures for teacher evaluation and then would judge teacher preparation providers by these measures. Each of the following developments likewise opens new possibilities:

- Findings from the Gates-funded Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project that call for more valid evaluation of teachers through a combination of classroom observations, student surveys, and pupil “value-added” data.<sup>3</sup>
- State longitudinal data systems developed in every state, with substantial U. S. Department of Education support, so that education can be improved by monitoring what happens to individual P-12 students, including information about the students’ teachers.
- Teacher preparation portfolio assessments that capture information on teaching performance, including its impact on student learning, such as the Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) created by Stanford University and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), which is being implemented in 24 states and the District of Columbia.

Access to higher quality and more useful education data has been significantly enhanced. Even for data that describe preparation—often lagging in utility—there are new opportunities for significant improvements. Among the most prominent of these changes surrounding accreditation are: new research, developing standards and assessments, teacher evaluations, and data systems and efforts to integrate them.

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<sup>2</sup> Council of Chief State School Officers. (2012). *Our responsibility, our promise: Transforming educator preparation and entry into the profession*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from [www.ccsso.org/Documents/2012/Our%20Responsibility%20Our%20Promise\\_2012.pdf](http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2012/Our%20Responsibility%20Our%20Promise_2012.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2013). *Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project's Three-Year Study*. Retrieved from [www.metproject.org/downloads/MET\\_Ensuring\\_Fair\\_and\\_Reliable\\_Measures\\_Practitioner\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Ensuring_Fair_and_Reliable_Measures_Practitioner_Brief.pdf)

These multiple efforts are happening all at once and quickly. This sweeping trajectory affords CAEP unprecedented opportunities to incorporate more and better data in its evaluation and reporting systems as it becomes the new accrediting body for educator preparation.

### *New Financial Constraints*

These policy shifts are given greater urgency by the current financial underpinnings of education. Financial constraints are being felt not only by P-12 schools but also by the programs that prepare school professionals. In many cases they are experiencing declining revenue, declining enrollments, or both. New constraints on funding necessitate more efficient ways to achieve better results.

## **SETTING A VISION FOR CAEP**

As a new accreditor, CAEP is ideally positioned to play an effective role as collaborator and initiator of changes in educator preparation that enhance the effects of widespread reforms. This report provides a starting point for dialogue with the public, the states, policymakers, and education professionals about the implementation of accreditation functions, their results, their connections with the multitude of efforts to raise student achievement, and future challenges and opportunities.

### *Building on Accreditation's Dual Mission*

CAEP will build on a longstanding accreditation tradition in the United States with a dual function to assure quality and motivate improvement.<sup>4</sup> Accrediting agencies in the United States occupy a unique institutional niche: they are independent bodies that operate on the basis of peer-review of providers and programs and make determinations about quality based on standards created by the professions and institutional sectors they represent.

This independence and autonomy provides a basis for open-ended continuous improvement rather than narrow compliance or regulation. Although the U.S. Department of Education conducts a recognition process for accreditors, accreditation is not a governmental process. Regional accreditors review colleges and universities as a whole, while programmatic accreditors review the particular preparation for such fields as law, medicine, or engineering.

All accreditors draw on peers in the field to create specific standards “. . . both to assure that providers and programs meet threshold expectations of quality and to assure that they improve over time.”<sup>5</sup> In the case of educator preparation, accreditation is centered on a self-study by the provider. This self-study presents evidence of program completers' accomplishments as reported in a variety of outcome measures, including, but not limited to, the following:

- grades in courses related to the content that the graduate will teach (for example, the mathematics major GPA for prospective high school math teachers);
- ratings of actual teaching performance by school-based personnel;
- surveys of graduates' and graduates' employers; and
- results from state-mandated licensure examinations.

The self-study and documentation of institutional support for the program is reviewed by the accreditor, confirmed in a site visit by a team of peer examiners, and evaluated by the accreditor's official decision-making body.

Educator preparation is a specialized area of programmatic accreditation with a history of more than half a century. While the common process that will be implemented by CAEP shares much with other programmatic accreditors, it also has its distinctions. National accreditation is *voluntary* within the education field – except in those states that require it – so providers who enter into the process have generally chosen to do so.

CAEP is especially challenged to demonstrate that accreditation adds value to what states are able to do through their own program approval, licensure, and data improvement policies. It can strengthen the accreditation tradition, building upon the strengths of its predecessors and becoming a model accreditation body, through its efforts to be accountable and transparent, and through standards and evidence that foster continuous improvement. CAEP's commitment to annual reporting, its efforts to develop new and rigorous standards, and its initiatives to develop more powerful evidentiary data will address this challenge.

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<sup>4</sup> Council for Higher Education Accreditation. (2010). *The Value of Accreditation* (p. 1). Washington, DC: Authors. Retrieved from [http://www.chea.org/pdf/Value%20of%20US%20Accreditation%2006.29.2010\\_buttons.pdf](http://www.chea.org/pdf/Value%20of%20US%20Accreditation%2006.29.2010_buttons.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

## Strengthening Accountability and Transparency

CAEP accreditation will hold educator preparation providers accountable for how well they address the needs of schools and help increase P-12 student learning. CAEP will hold itself to the same standard of public accountability and transparency, sharing accreditation actions through an annual report and publishing clear information including outcomes, program elements, and processes.

The annual report will be a source of information on trends and conditions in educator preparation as well as information on CAEP's actions. Recurring parts of the report will include information on:

- Accredited providers as a proportion of all educator preparation providers;
- Completers from accredited providers as a proportion of all completers;
- CAEP accreditation decisions;
- Findings of strengths and areas for improvement, weaknesses, and stipulations; and
- The status of CAEP efforts to bring about qualitative improvements in the evidence used in accreditation.

The public should expect to see progress toward a “dashboard report” of key annual data from all accredited providers on topics such as:

- Candidate progress and completion;
- Employment of completers in teaching and specifically in shortage fields and hard-to-staff schools;
- Teacher retention;
- Employer satisfaction with new teachers;
- Employer teacher evaluations with multiple pupil and classroom measures—including evidence of student learning in classrooms; and
- Teacher satisfaction with their preparation.

There will be an annual accounting from CAEP on accredited providers' efforts to correct problems and deficiencies identified through the accreditation process.

## Continuous Improvement Through Standards and Evidence

CAEP accreditation can have high leverage through its standards and in the ways it uses evidence. *Prospectively*, CAEP's claim to high leverage is founded on two of CAEP's first and most visible initiatives. One of these is developing new standards; the second is CAEP's adoption of a role in using, sharing, and creating data and research, and also intervening through its own actions and in collaboration with others to improve the quality of preparation data to be used as evidence.

### STANDARDS

Standards serve as the basis for any accreditor's reviews. In a paper<sup>6</sup> prepared for CAEP, leading accreditation consultant Peter Ewell differentiates “aspirational” standards, describing a kind of ideal program or characteristic, from more “prescriptive” ones that emerge from research. Whether aspirational or prescriptive, standards make expectations for evidence clear.

CAEP will set its standards in a public, deliberative way, seeking to achieve a broad consensus across educator preparation stakeholders, data users, and policymakers on the validity of its standards. Even though there are a growing number of entities in today's era of “big data” that produce report cards, comparison systems, ranking systems, or various reports, few vet their quality assurance standards and processes with the rigor required of accreditors.

The Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting was created in 2012 and charged with transforming the preparation of educators by creating a rigorous system of accreditation that demands excellence and produces educators who increase student learning. Specifically, the Commission was to develop – for all preparation providers – accreditation standards based on evidence, continuous improvement, innovation, and clinical practice.

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<sup>6</sup> Ewell, Peter. (2012). *Recent Trends and Practices in Accreditation: Implications for the Development of Standards for the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)*. Washington, DC: CAEP.

The Commission worked on an aggressive timetable to bring its work to the field before submitting a final report to the CAEP Board of Directors. In February 2013, the CAEP Commission released a set of draft standards (available online at <http://caepnet.org>) to the field for public comment.

## EVIDENCE

Standards without evidence are empty shells. One of CAEP's top priorities will be to strengthen the evidence upon which accreditation decisions are made.

The evidence available to make accreditation decisions has evolved over a number of decades. The appendix on page 30 summarizes those developments. Although there has been a gradual evolution toward using better evidence in making accreditation decisions, a dramatic improvement is needed. For example, performance assessments have been developed by providers over the past decade. However, these assessments have been constructed primarily by individual preparation providers and cannot be compared one with another.

Overall, data in educator preparation have long been severely limited, inconsistent, unique to each provider, underutilized in decision making, and lacking coverage of critical topics. These data, on which accreditors have been dependent as sources of evidence, need to be strengthened in at least three ways:

1. Creation of common standards for data to make comparisons and benchmarking possible.
2. Establishment of anchor points on commonly used assessments.
3. Research into causal relationships between preparation and subsequent P-12 learning.

Since the April 2010 National Research Council report, *Preparing Teachers: Building Evidence for Sound Policy*, called for “a stronger empirical basis for decisions about teacher preparation (p. 185),”<sup>7</sup> prospects for these stronger data have grown brighter:

- The U. S. Department of Education is supporting research into causal relationships between elements of preparation and subsequent learning of a candidate's P-12 students.
- The National Center for Education Statistics is beginning to consider voluntary common definitions for statistical terms associated with preparation.
- There is a noticeable trend across states to use teacher evaluation data as one factor to inform preparation programs, and in some cases, to render judgments about preparation effectiveness with these data, among others.
- The advent of the edTPA has set a stage for a more sophisticated version of portfolio assessments, with well-researched validity and reliability properties.

The CAEP interest in data that comprise evidence for accreditation is broad, including outcomes information, but also information on preparation program content or experiences. CAEP is ideally positioned to make use of state data relevant to preparation where they are available. CAEP also can provide leverage for states beyond what they are able to exercise themselves by sharing comparisons and benchmarks, and building consensus around data descriptors across states and classifications of providers. CAEP will take advantage of the following opportunities, now available, to make qualitative advances in data and evidence:

- **Collaborate to make the most comprehensive existing data sources more useful**—CAEP can undertake collaborative efforts with the U.S. Department of Education and AACTE on ways that Title II and Professional Education Data Systems (PEDS) collections can be made more consistent and complementary, and the data more accurate.

*continued on page 14*

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<sup>7</sup> National Research Council, & Committee on the Study of Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States. (2010). *Preparing teachers: Building evidence for sound policy*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.



## PROGRESS REPORT ON CREATION OF CAEP

*A brief chronology of key events describing the formation of CAEP and its governance to-date follows:*

- In May and June 2009, the NCATE Executive Board and TEAC Board of Directors adopted a resolution that called for the appointment of a Design Team to explore unification of the two accrediting organizations. A 14-member team with equal representation from each organization was appointed by NCATE President James Cibulka and TEAC President Frank Murray.
- The Design Team was charged to “report progress on . . . [eight specific tasks] and any emerging proposal(s) to the governing bodies of both organizations on a regular basis, but in any event in time to be considered individually or collaboratively in the 2009-2010 board meetings.”
- The Design Team met 10 times for two to three days each and worked in numerous additional subcommittee meetings, telephone conversations, e-mail exchanges, and online document edits. On May 3, 2010, the Design Team presented a penultimate report to their boards on their progress and promised a complete plan of consolidation and unification for the boards’ consideration.
- On October 22, 2010, at a joint meeting held in Bethesda, Maryland, the NCATE Executive Board and the TEAC Board unanimously adopted an affiliation agreement and a merger agreement leading to the unification/consolidation of NCATE and TEAC.
- Under the provisions of the bylaws approved on October 22 by the two boards, James Cibulka was appointed as president of CAEP. Frank Murray was appointed as chair of the Interim Board.
- In October 2010, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation was incorporated in the District of Columbia.
- The CAEP Interim Board, created under the aforementioned bylaws, met for the first time on December 12-13, 2010, in Washington, D.C.

### *Milestone accomplishments achieved during the transition period include:*

- A tentative organizational framework for CAEP was approved by the Interim Board. The CAEP President commissioned a structure and functionality study in 2012 to analyze the workflow in both organizations and how to build capacity within CAEP as a new organization.
- Staffing for CAEP was initiated in 2012. A CAEP Senior Vice President for Accreditation and Administration and a CAEP Senior Vice President for Engagement, Research, and Development were appointed.
- Additional positions were filled in accreditation and program review; communications; accounting, budgets, and banking; meetings and events; and related functions.
- Human resource functions were outsourced for effectiveness and efficiency. Processes for recruitment, hiring, and on-boarding were revised to align to industry best-practice.
- The Interim Board created a new option under specialty program review, building on the work of the Design Team, and following an inclusive planning process that engaged stakeholders in designing the new option. That option is being piloted in a group of states.
- A plan for developing state partnership agreements was initiated, with six states volunteering to pilot the new agreements. The State of Ohio approved the first state partnership agreement with CAEP in 2012.
- Status as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization was granted by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
- CAEP staff initiated planning for recognition of CAEP by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the U.S. Department of Education.
- A new budget planning process was initiated for CAEP, as well as a new accounting system. During Fiscal Year 2013, the NCATE and TEAC boards approved a transition budget that allocated revenues and designated expenditures to CAEP in addition to those necessary to continue NCATE and TEAC operations.
- Business functions, e.g., insurance coverage for CAEP, legal services, and accounts payable and receivable, have been consolidated in order to function as fully as possible as one organization, even prior to final consolidation.
- CAEP accreditation policies and procedures are being finalized and will be approved by the CAEP Interim Board.
- A structure for accreditation decision-making under CAEP has been developed.
- The board appointed a CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting in 2012. The Commission is scheduled to present its recommendations to the CAEP Board in summer 2013.

### *CAEP Consolidation*

- CAEP will be consolidated July 1, 2013, and will assure both a seamless transition for TEAC and NCATE cases already in the review process and continuous accreditation for all EPPs currently accredited by TEAC and NCATE.
- Under the provisions of CAEP's bylaws, the Interim Board will appoint the first post-unification CAEP Board.

*continued from page 11*

- **Collaborate in efforts to define common language for statistical descriptions of preparation**—CAEP is involved in ongoing discussions with the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Research Council (NRC) to explore the feasibility of the NRC-recommended standardization of descriptive statistics about preparation. This effort will eventually provide comparable information, across providers, that will support analyses of differing practices and setting benchmarks for best-in-class performance. When data terms have a shared meaning, providers can feel more confident about using them as a basis for judging their own progress or searching for different examples. Commonly defined data would be a direct assistance in state efforts to identify high-performing and low-performing providers.
- **Establish a networked learning community across providers that want to share information and learn from each other, and initiate a CAEP research function**—The networking will facilitate useful comparisons among providers, and the resulting data will provide a foundation for CAEP to perform an active role in research. The research function permits continuous CAEP improvement in its own procedures. It will yield new knowledge about the association of various models for preparation with their outcomes or results. It will foster validation studies into the CAEP standards, supporting continuous improvement in accreditation.
- **Serve as an active, searching user of results from educator preparation and assessment research**—There is far more research about preparation currently ongoing than over recent decades. The accumulated results of teacher preparation research need to come before all preparation providers as resources for continuous improvement.

- **Use this new research evidence on effective preparation program practices to strengthen CAEP standards**—Better evidence should create a positive chain reaction—better standards, better programs, better teachers, and improved P-12 student learning. The new CAEP standards to be completed in 2013 draw extensively from accumulating research and practice knowledge. Future generations of CAEP standards and accompanying evidence will be supported by still more robust hypotheses that associate features of preparation programs with high student outcomes.
- **Play a facilitating role in developing assessments for preparation**—CAEP can convene, encourage, and collaborate with exploratory efforts to create valid and common educator preparation tests that extend the currently limited array of formative and summative measures.

The changing landscape for educator preparation accreditation creates many points at which CAEP can be a strong partner in moving P-12 student achievement to higher levels. CAEP is more than a coming together of two organizations—it is a new accrediting body with new roles, new responsibilities, and new ways to interpret the traditional accreditation focus on preparation quality and program improvement. CAEP begins a new era in educator preparation accreditation.

# THE CURRENT ACCREDITATION CONTEXT IN EDUCATOR PREPARATION

To provide the reader with an understanding of accreditation's role in educator preparation, this section of the report includes three parts. First, the report provides a description of where education professionals are prepared and how many are prepared at accredited educator preparation providers. Second, the report describes the accreditation decisions that NCATE and TEAC made during 2011. Third, the report contains vignettes that ground the descriptive data with specifics underscoring some key features of accreditation. Throughout this section, implications for CAEP are discussed.

## ACCREDITATION'S PLACE IN THE LANDSCAPE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION

Within the United States, most educator preparation is conducted by institutions of higher education (IHEs), but there are an increasing number of organizations that sponsor alternative pathways into teaching. This report uses the term "providers" as an umbrella for both alternative and collegiate sponsors.

In addition to teachers, providers prepare superintendents, principals, school librarians, school psychologists, and other specialists. This report has extracted information about initial teacher preparation from a U. S. Department of Education data collection known as the "Title II report" (see boxed note on p.17). Educator preparation is conducted at the baccalaureate, post-baccalaureate, and masters levels.

The landscape for educator preparation described above has two important implications for CAEP:

- First, the emergence of non-higher education providers suggests that if CAEP is to be an influential voice for quality preparation, it must reach out to these new providers and include them within accreditation. Accreditation must speak to program quality, regardless of the pathway into teaching.
- Second, the fact that 51 percent of all providers, and 41 percent of IHEs, are not accredited is noteworthy. Some, but not all, of the unaccredited are arguably too weak to be accredited. If more states turn to CAEP to play a role in their quality assurance system, CAEP can help raise the overall quality of preparation programs in the education field in a way that NCATE and TEAC have not been able to do. A related challenge for CAEP is that some of the best IHEs (and strongest newer non-higher

education providers) do not seek accreditation. Through accreditation, these programs could provide leadership and create an inclusive culture of continuous improvement in the education field.

## NCATE ACCREDITATION DECISIONS IN 2011

In 2011, NCATE conducted 128 onsite visits, reviewing providers in 40 states. These review efforts involved the work of 329 volunteers from 187 higher education institutions and a number of other institutions such as P-12 schools. (Offsite reviewers or program review volunteers are not included in these numbers.) Reviews were done in conjunction with state education authority personnel. Each visit involved verification of the accuracy of the data reported in the self-study document, interviews with teacher-candidates and faculty, and the opportunity for public comment. Taken together, these kinds of evidence are used in a rigorous process to reach a judgment as to whether the educator preparation provider met accreditation standards.

To seek NCATE accreditation, a provider must meet specific **preconditions** by addressing statements that describe governance of the preparation unit, policies on admissions and exit, an underlying conceptual framework, procedures for review of specialized programs, regional accreditation, and state approval of programs.

Once the accreditor and the provider reach agreement that these basic preconditions have been demonstrated, the provider prepares a **self-study** in preparation for an accreditation visit. The self-study provides detailed data and supporting materials describing how the provider meets each of the NCATE standards:

1. Candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions;
2. Assessment system and unit evaluation;
3. Field experiences and clinical practice;
4. Diversity;
5. Faculty qualifications, performance, and development; and
6. Unit governance and resources.

During the accreditation visit, members of the NCATE **Board of Examiners** visit the provider to interview preparers, teacher-candidates, staff, graduates, and employers, and to gather additional data to evaluate the programs. The team reviews the evidence and writes a report on its findings. These reviews are guided by rubrics that delineate performance levels of **unacceptable**, **acceptable**, or **target**, the latter of which indicates that the provider is reaching aspirational levels of performance beyond the minimum needed to meet the standard.

All materials—the self-study and the visiting team’s report—are forwarded to NCATE’s **Unit Accreditation Board**, which reviews the data and makes one of the following final accreditation decisions:

- **Accredited:** professional preparation meets NCATE standards
- **Accredited, focused visit:** professional preparation fails to meet standards in one or more respects, necessitating a follow-up visit
- **Revoked:** professional preparation unit previously accredited is no longer

In NCATE actions, when the Board of Examiners visiting teams identify a number of standards for which evidence is especially strong, they indicate a strength for the provider in that area. Since the reviews are conducted against NCATE rubrics that describe “unacceptable,” “acceptable,” and “target” levels of performance, the text for recognition of strengths usually mentions some qualities of provider performance that are part of the definition for a target-level rubric.

Chart 7 summarizes the final decisions on strengths and areas for improvement (AFI) after actions by the Unit Accreditation Board in 2011. The standard on field and clinical practice is a noticeable standout for strength, while assessment and diversity are cited most frequently as areas for improvement. A provider can have more than one strength or area for improvement. For example, among the 124 providers reviewed for 2011 decisions, 51 had 82 strengths noted in the area of field and clinical experience, while 69 were cited for 149 areas of improvement in assessment systems and unit evaluation.

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<sup>8</sup> Title II reports that there are 2054 “preparation programs” in the nation. However, Title II counts preparation in higher education once for each “traditional” pathway (1458) and a second time for each higher education “alternative” pathway (430), thus double counting higher education. The count of 1624 in this report removes this double counting from the total.

Chart 1: Sponsors Of Preparation, 2009-2010

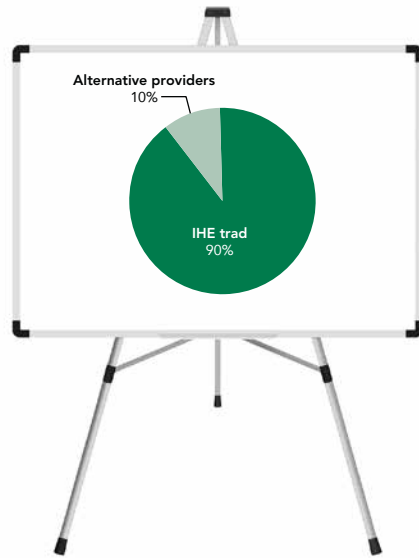


Chart 2: Enrollments, 2009-2010

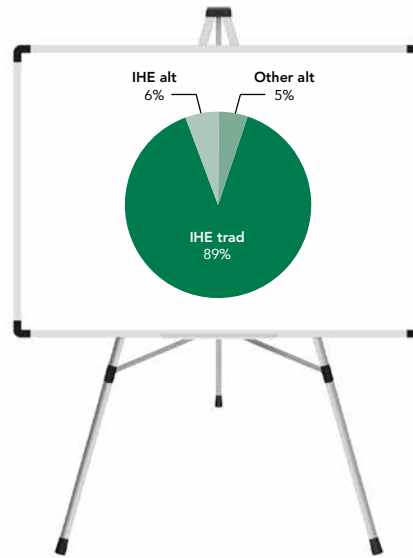


Chart 3: Program Completers, 2009-2010

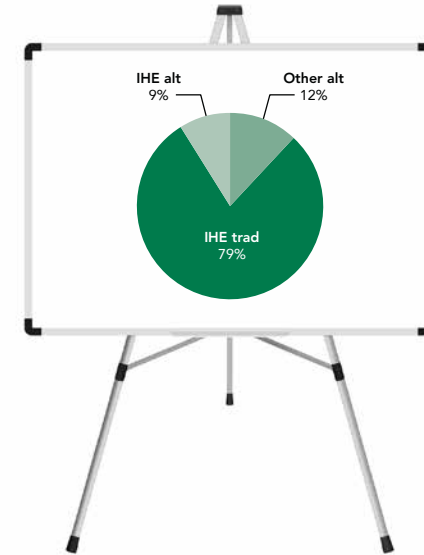
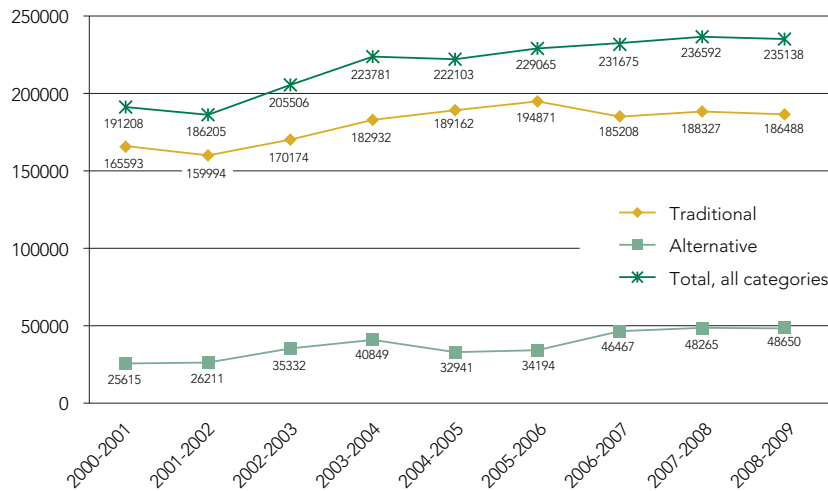


Chart 4: Trend In Total Number Of Program Completers, By Traditional And Alternative Routes



**Data source note:**

The information in this section is derived from the U. S. Department of Education data collection under the Title II teacher preparation report cards authorized in the Higher Education Opportunity Act. All institutions are expected to report their data, and they must report in order to be eligible for grant funds under the Act.

The data are for **initial teacher preparation** only, wherever it is conducted—by traditional or alternative pathway providers—and at whatever level—baccalaureate, post baccalaureate, masters, or outside of the traditional academic structure.

**Title II data<sup>8</sup>**

Ninety-five percent of those preparing to enter the teaching profession are enrolled in colleges and universities. And while eleven percent of all prospective teachers are enrolled in “alternative programs,” more than half of them are in alternative paths within institutions of higher education.

Chart 5: Accredited And Non-Accredited Providers

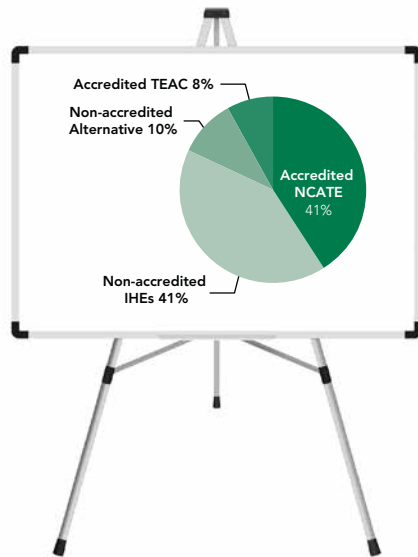


Chart 6: Enrollment In Accredited And Non-Accredited Providers

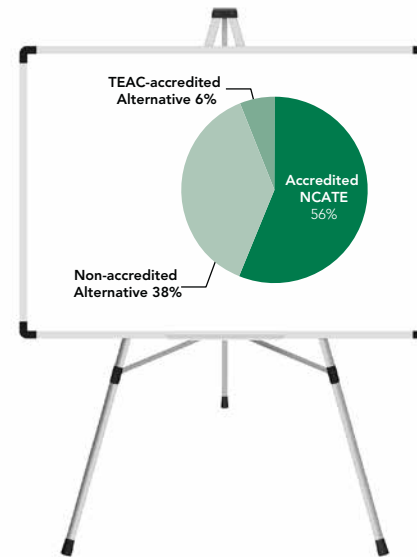


Chart 8: Program Review Actions, 2011

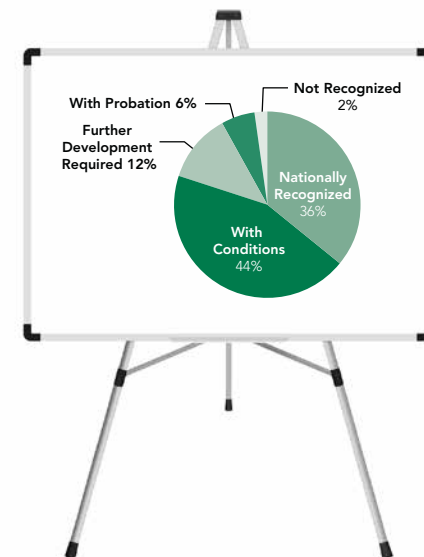
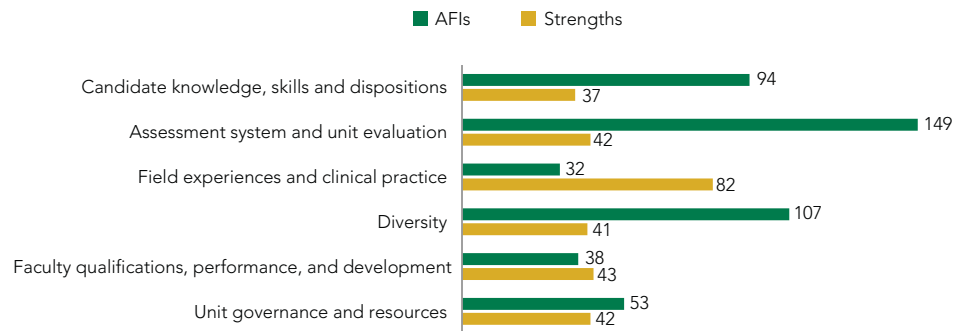


Chart 7: Number Of Times That "Strengths" Or "Areas For Improvement" Were Identified In NCATE 2011 Actions



Individual preparation programs that lead to a specific state teaching license or certificate operate with approval from state education agencies. TEAC insists that EPPs report disaggregated data by license or certificate area in the self study. NCATE's process is completed in conjunction with affiliated specialized professional associations (SPAs). This process is implemented through a cycle that is aligned with accreditation, both reinforcing of, and separate from it.

The NCATE standard on candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions is intended to recognize the critical substantive role that individual preparation programs play in accreditation. The details of the NCATE program review process depend on partnership negotiations with each state and take different forms. Some 22 states conduct their own review, and in 28 others NCATE conducts the program review in collaboration with SPAs. Program reviews are designed to gather evidence indicating candidate proficiencies in standards that SPAs write. These SPA program standards describe what teacher-candidates should know and be able to do as they complete their preparation. Providers compile information from six to eight assessments selected to demonstrate the range and depth of candidate mastery of the standards. The assessment

data address subject content knowledge, instructional knowledge and skills, and ability to apply them effectively so that P-12 students learn. In 2010, NCATE's Specialty Areas Studies Board (SASB) revised its guidelines to require SPAs to use the InTASC standards for teachers when they write new or revised standards. The Board recognized the importance of close alignment of various education reform initiatives so that the education profession speaks consistently and clearly.

Table 3 details NCATE review actions in calendar 2011, and Chart 8 summarizes the proportions. Altogether, more than 1,800 programs were reviewed. Of these, 664 were nationally recognized without further conditions.

<sup>9</sup> Some 159 providers—not noted in either the table or in Chart 5—have indicated their intent to seek NCATE (63) or TEAC (96) accreditation. This pending group represents nearly 10 percent of all providers.

<sup>10</sup> An additional four providers withdrew from NCATE as pre-candidates during 2011 without taking steps for accreditation review or decisions. Typically, these are institutions experiencing difficulties as they prepare to meet accreditation preconditions or standards. Any effort to judge the performance of an accreditor whose activities are largely voluntary should indicate these withdrawing institutions as part of the quality control function.

**Table 1: Accredited And Non-Accredited Providers; Title II Data**

	Number of providers	% of all providers
NCATE accredited	667	41
TEAC accredited	124	8
Institutions of higher education providers not accredited	667	41
Alternative providers not accredited	166	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,624</b>	<b>100</b>

Of the 1,624 educator preparation providers in 2011, 667 were NCATE-accredited providers, and another 124 were TEAC-accredited, resulting in the accreditation of 49 percent of all educator preparation providers.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 2: NCATE Accreditation Actions During Calendar 2011**

NCATE Accreditation actions	Total number of actions	% of total actions*
1. Accreditation	90	67
2. Accreditation after follow-up visit	12	9
3. Accreditation requiring future visit within two years	17	13
4. Deferred action	11	8
5. Accreditation denied or revoked	5	3
<b>ACCREDITATION ACTIONS<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>135</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Different decisions are sometimes made for initial and advanced programs so that a provider is counted with two separate actions. Additionally, a provider would be counted twice if a decision had been deferred in the spring, then taken up again in the fall.

Most of those that were not fully recognized return after revisions so that the final approval rate ranges from 82 to 94 percent over the spring and fall review cycles since 2007. Aggregating all of the program review actions currently in place—those from 2011 and from prior years—NCATE recognizes 4,979 programs in the 667 providers it accredits.

### TEAC ACCREDITATION DECISIONS IN 2011

In 2011, TEAC reviewed 35 programs at 32 providers, located in 12 states and Puerto Rico. These review efforts involved the work of 26 volunteers from 24 providers, as well as a local practitioner at each site. Reviews were done in conjunction with state education authority personnel. Each visit involved verification of the data reported in the self-study document; interviews with teacher-candidates, cooperating or mentor teachers, student-teaching supervisors, and program faculty; third-party surveys of program constituents; and solicitation of public comments. TEAC’s accreditation system is framed by a set of three Quality Principles:

- I. Evidence of candidate learning
  - 1.1 evidence of candidates’ subject matter knowledge
  - 1.2 evidence of candidates’ pedagogical knowledge
  - 1.3 evidence of candidates’ caring and effective teaching skill
  - 1.4 evidence of the cross-cutting liberal education themes (learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy, technology)
  - 1.5 evidence of valid interpretations of the evidence
- II. Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry
  - 2.1 rationale for assessments
  - 2.2 EPP decisions and planning based on evidence
  - 2.3 influential quality control system
- III. Evidence of institutional commitment and capacity for program quality
  - 3.1 evidence of institutional commitment as show through parity of resources assigned to the program
  - 3.2 evidence of capacity for program quality (including faculty, curriculum, facilities, policies and procedures, resources, student support, etc.)

**Table 3: NCATE Program Review Actions In 2011**

Program review action	Total decisions in 2011
Nationally recognized	664
Nationally recognized with conditions	810
Further development required	227
Recognized with probation	103
Not recognized	42
Total	1846

Data from NCATE program review

**Table 4: TEAC Accreditation Actions In Calendar 2011**

TEAC Accreditation decisions in 2011	Number of cases	% of total actions
Cases with no citations	7	23
Cases citing weakness and/or stipulation	23	77
· Cases with one or more weaknesses	21*	
· Cases with one or more stipulations	5*	
TOTALS—Programs Accredited	30	100

\*Note: Two programs were cited with both a weakness and a stipulation.

Each accreditation case includes submission of a draft of the *Inquiry Brief*. This is a self-study document written by the program faculty, a short research monograph supported by a series of appendices, and it includes a focused self-study of the program's quality control system. TEAC provides formative feedback on the *Brief*, accepts a final *Brief* as clear and complete for audit, then conducts a site visit in the form of an academic audit that focuses on examination of the evidence presented in the *Brief*. The final steps are review by two bodies. The Accreditation Panel (a group of five scholars and practitioners) reviews the program's *Inquiry Brief* and the audit team's report which includes any responses to findings by the program, and makes an accreditation recommendation based on its evaluation of the evidence; a Panel recommendation to accredit is based on the finding that the preponderance of evidence is consistent with the program's claim that it meets the Quality Principles. In the interest of transparency, program representatives are invited to attend and observe the deliberations of the Panel. The Panel's recommendation, and any subsequent feedback from the program, are sent to the Accreditation Committee which reviews the entire record carefully and accepts or rejects the Panel's recommendation in making the final accreditation decision.

In the process of evaluating the evidence presented by the program and audited in the site visit, TEAC's review bodies identified a number of larger and smaller issues that require attention by the provider. Two levels of problems can be cited in the system: *weaknesses*, which denote a limited area or aspect of the programs effort in need of strengthening, and stipulations, which denote more serious or extensive shortcomings for which evidence of remedy must be brought forward within two years in order for accreditation to be maintained. Failure to provide evidence sufficient to warrant removal of the stipulation results in revocation of accreditation. By clearly identifying larger and smaller problems in the accreditation decision, and by requiring that evidence of resolution be provided to maintain accreditation, the system combines the functions of public quality assurance and peer-review for program improvement. Nearly a quarter (23%) of the thirty preparation providers considered in 2011 were awarded accreditation status with no noted weaknesses or cited stipulations.

An analysis of the cited weaknesses and stipulations provides a picture of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the field.

- **Collective Strengths:** Areas of preparation for which none of the programs received citation of a weakness or stipulation are of interest as they indicate those areas for which the EPPs could uniformly provide evidence of sufficient magnitude; those areas were: *subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge*. The evidence of candidate learning in these core areas of professional knowledge met the standard in all cases. Evidence of the ability to teach effectively was cited as an area of weakness in just three cases, and it should be noted that in each of the three cases, it was the *quality of the evidence itself*—not documentation of weak candidate performance—that was cited. Indeed, the site visitors in each case found evidence of effective performance in clinical settings, making clear that the citations were for weakness in the quality of the evidence rather than inadequate candidate performance. In this, the findings reflect the current focus on the field of educator evaluation, namely identifying adequate, reliable, valid measures of teaching itself.
- **Concentration of Challenges:** Twenty-four weaknesses and five stipulations were cited in the various aspects of the TEAC Quality Principles related to the quality of evidence collected and use of evidence in program improvement.
- **The one remaining stipulation** was in the level of institutional support for one program. The specific areas in which these weaknesses and stipulations were cited are listed in Table 5.

Table 5 summarizes the number of cases for each area needing improvement at both the “weakness” and “stipulation” levels. The citation of a weakness in the TEAC accreditation review indicates that an isolated or circumscribed problem was identified—and often it was the program itself making the identification in the course of the self-study, noting it in the record. A weakness in relation to the reliability of measures typically indicates that evidence of reliability was insufficient for a particular measure—but not for all measures—used by the program. Similarly, a weakness in relationship to the program's rationale for determining what constitutes ‘successful performance’ typically indicates that the criterion of success, or the cut-score, for a particular measure was not established empirically, or had not been adequately documented. While any

**Table 5: Problems Cited In Quality And Use Of Evidence For Program Improvement In 30 TEAC Accreditation Decisions In 2011**

Area needing improvement	Weaknesses cited	Stipulations cited
Quality of evidence: reliability and validity of measures	12	1
Rationale for evidence, including justification for criteria of successful performance on its assessments and measures	5	2
Evidence that the program makes program improvement decisions based on evidence of candidate performance	3	1
Evidence of a functioning quality control system that uses evidence of candidate performance to guide improvement	4	1

such weakness is undesirable, the identification of a circumscribed weakness also indicates that the problem was not widespread or general.

Citation of a stipulation, on the other hand, indicates a more widespread or general problem in relation to the identified aspect of the quality of evidence, and therefore warrants ongoing engagement of the accreditor with the provider in relation to the issue. Five such instances related to quality and use of evidence occurred in the 30 cases summarized in Table 5. In each of those cases, a petition supported by adequate, credible evidence—evidence that will be audited by TEAC staff—must be brought forward within two years. The evidence will be considered again by both the Accreditation Panel and the Accreditation Committee, and failure to find that the Quality Principle component in question has been satisfied will result in revocation of accreditation.

## CASE VIGNETTES OF ACCREDITATION DECISIONS MADE BY NCATE AND TEAC

In this section, seven case vignettes are presented describing how accreditation was applied by NCATE and TEAC to providers with different missions, different environmental contexts, varied developmental stages, and differences in overall quality. After presenting the case vignettes, several themes are highlighted along with possible implications for CAEP moving forward.

### *Case #1: Continued Accreditation with No Areas for Improvement*

For an HBCU (Historically Black College and University) located in the Southern region of the United States, NCATE accreditation has a long history of validating the excellence of its reputation and the quality of its teacher education programs. Categorized by Carnegie<sup>11</sup> as a master's university with smaller programs, this provider graduates less than 50 teacher candidates each year. In its onsite visit in spring 2003, the provider was recommended by the Board of Examiners (BOE) as meeting all standards and having corrected the single Area for Improvement (AFI) carried over from its previous visit. The Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) concurred and awarded full accreditation for seven years, the period of accreditation required by the state, without any AFIs.

At its fall 2010 visit, the BOE remarked on the continuous improvement in the standard related to assessment system and unit evaluation because of the unit's revisions of its conceptual framework in keeping with advances in the field and its revised alignment of the assessments of its candidates. In addition, the provider engaged in updating its assessments and further developing the rubrics based on an analysis of candidate performance data and feedback.

The standard related to field experiences and clinical practice was identified by the provider as the focus of its efforts to achieve target-level performance. The BOE noted significant movement toward target-level performance based on higher expectations for candidates to demonstrate the application of pedagogical knowledge and skills during field and clinical experiences.

In its spring 2011 decision, the UAB once again determined that this provider met all standards without any AFIs. Through accreditation, the HBCU's excellence is nationally validated and its culture of continuous improvement is supported and acknowledged.

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<sup>11</sup> From The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website (<http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org>): The Carnegie Classification™ has been the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education for the past four decades. Starting in 1970, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education developed a classification of colleges and universities to support its program of research and policy analysis. Derived from empirical data on colleges and universities, the Carnegie Classification was originally published in 1973, and subsequently updated in 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005, and 2010 to reflect changes among colleges and universities. This framework has been widely used in the study of higher education, both as a way to represent and control for institutional differences, and also in the design of research studies to ensure adequate representation of sampled institutions, students, or faculty.

## *Case #2: From Unmet Standards to Target-level Performance*

This case strongly illustrates how a decision by the accreditor that threatens to revoke accreditation can lead to program improvement. This provider's leadership used the unmet standards from the accreditation process to spur reform across the board. In spring 2005, a large, research institution, graduating more than 100 teacher candidates per year, received a focused accreditation visit because the standards related to candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions and assessment system and unit evaluation were determined to be unmet for the provider's advanced-level programs. Following the focused visit, the UAB upheld the unmet standard related to assessment system and unit evaluation and cited 10 AFIs across 4 of the other 5 NCATE standards.

Over the years leading up to its accreditation visit in 2011, the unit leadership collaboratively engaged the faculty in rebuilding and systematizing its assessments of candidate performance at all program levels. Subsequently, the provider chose to participate in the pilot phase of a new Continuous Improvement pathway for accreditation that required EPPs to select a standard or standards in which it would move beyond simply the "acceptable" level to target-level performance. Unit leadership, in collaboration with faculty, selected the previously unmet standards in which to "move to target."

In its fall 2011 onsite visit report, the BOE identified multiple strengths in movement toward target, including excellence in candidate demonstration of content knowledge and in evidence of candidate impact on student learning. Other strengths were also cited but attributed to all programs, not just the advanced-level programs that were previously cited for a lack of data related to candidate performance.

In addition, the BOE identified numerous strengths, including the recommendation that target-level performance of the assessment system and use of data had been attained. The UAB decision recognized these strengths and rendered a decision that all standards were met, and it removed 9 of the 10 areas for improvement.

### Case #3 Revocation and Turn Around

This case offers an even more dramatic example of program improvement as a consequence of a negative accreditation decision. Here, accreditation was actually revoked. For a small, private college in the Mid-Atlantic region, the NCATE accreditation process had an unpleasant beginning, but a rewarding result for all, in the end. Categorized by Carnegie as a Baccalaureate college, this provider graduates 50 or fewer teacher candidates each year. A fall 2009 onsite visit resulted in the revocation of accreditation. The fall 2009 visit was precipitated by an earlier NCATE action that extended accreditation for only two years with a required full review of all standards at that time.<sup>12</sup> In 2007, the college was cited for not meeting the standards related to assessment system and unit resources and governance. In addition, the UAB determined that the college also failed to meet the standard related to candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for the education programs at the advanced level. Overall, there were 13 AFIs noted across 5 of the 6 NCATE standards.

Following an accreditation decision of revocation, in accordance with NCATE policies, a provider can ask for reconsideration of the decision by supplying the UAB with supplemental documentation. In fall 2010, the college submitted such documentation. UAB deliberations resulted in the removal of 4 of the 13 AFIs, but upheld the decision to revoke accreditation due to the remaining unmet standards.

Following revocation, an educator preparation program reverts to candidacy status for two years, during which time it can re-enter the accreditation process as if for the first time. The college's spring 2011 accreditation decision resulted in all standards met with a single AFI. Following are some of the factors related to accreditation that helped spur the EPP's turn-around:

- Further development of a comprehensive assessment system across all programs;
- Demonstrated evidence of shared rubrics, assessment, and faculty use of data for program and unit improvements, bringing greater program coherence;
- Establishment of procedures to ensure broad stakeholder input, data sharing, and analysis for unit improvements; and
- A broadening and deepening of partnerships with schools for integrated field experiences and extended clinical preparation.

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<sup>12</sup> When this action was taken in 2007, the term for such a required full review after two years was "probation," a designation no longer used by NCATE.

## Cases #4 and #5: A Tale of Two Providers and the Importance of Professional Judgment in Accreditation

Professional judgment of provider quality and performance by a group of one's peers is at the heart of the accreditation process. Sometimes criticized as the point of subjectivity, *professional judgment* is the norm for all specialized accreditors and is essential to making well-informed accreditation decisions. Although NCATE's standards, elements, and rubrics are applied across all accreditation visits, the outcomes in terms of accreditation decisions may vary in what may appear on the surface to be similar concerns. Not all identified problems carry an equal weight.

Two providers hosted onsite accreditation visits in spring 2010. Located in the Northwestern region of the United States and categorized by Carnegie as a master's university with larger programs graduating more than 250 teacher candidates each year, the first provider was cited for 7 AFIs across 5 of the 6 NCATE standards. The UAB, concurring with the recommendations of the BOE, determined that all standards were met.

Located in the Northeastern region of the United States and also categorized by Carnegie as a master's university with larger programs graduating more than 250 teacher candidates each year, the second provider was cited with 8 AFIs across all 6 NCATE standards. The UAB determined that the advanced-level programs failed to meet the assessment system and unit evaluation standard.

The difference of a single AFI in itself is not usually sufficient to award an unmet standard. However, in select instances an AFI can trigger an unmet standard:

- Standard 1 if a provider fails to meet the 80 percent pass rate on state licensure exams, OR
- Standard 2 if there is no assessment system by which candidate data are collected, analyzed, and used for improvement of programs and unit operations, OR
- Standard 4 if there is no evidence that the curriculum contains outcomes related to candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to diversity.

For the first provider in this case example, the AFIs were specifically confined to a single program or a single data point, such as a lack of graduate follow-up data. In the case of the second provider, the lack of an assessment system for the advanced-level programs triggered the unmet standard. This determination was supported by AFIs in Standard 1 related to a lack of evidence that candidates demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all P-12 students learn. In this case, the professional judgment of the UAB awarded accreditation for 7 years to the initial level programs and accreditation for 2 years with a follow-up visit focused solely on Standard 2 for the advanced-level programs.

## Case #6: A Provider Breaking New Ground in Evidence Sources

This case illustrates that innovation in programmatic evaluation can support the accreditation process, in this instance by building stronger evidence to assess graduates' effectiveness. What counts as evidence of effective teaching practice? How early can the characteristics that predict effectiveness be recognized through interactions in courses and field placements? How can a program find out *comprehensively* how its graduates are faring as teachers two, three, five years after they enter teaching—and how well they were served by their preparation?

A large, private, master's university located in a northeastern city explored these questions in its bid for reaccreditation with TEAC. The provider marshaled evidence that it satisfied the TEAC Quality Principles related to candidate performance, faculty inquiry and use of data, and institutional commitment and support. The faculty was also eager to explore the development of key intellectual values and professional dispositions in its candidates, and did so using a variety of qualitative measures. In the provider's first accreditation review, the Accreditation Panel provided some critical feedback to program representatives on the qualitative sources of evidence.

The evidence presented in the provider's new self-study included traditional measures such as grades, licensure test scores, portfolio analysis, and clinical practice ratings. The reported results, which were audited and verified by the audit team, showed that candidates' academic performance was strong (for example, content major GPAs for secondary candidates were generally higher than the major GPA of non-teaching majors), that they passed the required license exams, and that their performance in clinical settings was documented and affirmed in narrative evaluations. The faculty also undertook a focused analysis of portfolio elements related to teaching diverse populations, a matter of central importance to the program.

In addition, the faculty developed and reported two relatively novel approaches to qualitative data gathering and analysis that went beyond those brought forward previously. The first was a repeated rating by faculty of every student in every education class that evaluated candidates' progress toward meeting the unique values and dispositions related to effectiveness in urban teaching. Reviewed by all faculty members in study groups, these ratings became the basis for extensive meetings each semester in which faculty reviewed the progress of all students in the program and the degree to which courses were fulfilling their role in the program. Virtually the entire full-time faculty participated in overlapping study groups and ongoing curricular review processes.

Second, to learn more about the teaching experiences and effectiveness of its graduates, the provider initiated a series of follow-up case studies with small numbers of program completers, using a common framework that included multiple observations of teaching and interviews with colleagues and supervisors, as well as with the completer/teacher. These case studies—four to five per year—were completed by different faculty members or faculty teams each year so that, over time, both the number of cases available for analysis and the number of faculty engaged in the study grew.

The results of the comprehensive self-study showed that the close monitoring system allowed timely support for candidates, that key assignments throughout the program were good predictors as well, that evidence of completers' subject-matter and pedagogical knowledge met the expectations, and that candidates and completers were effective teachers. The Accreditation Panel recommended, and the Accreditation Committee awarded, another accreditation term, noting a minor weakness in the quality of the evidence for effective practice during internships in some program strands. The faculty continues to engage in ongoing review and self-study.

## Case #7: A Provider Whose Accreditation Evidence Includes P-12 Student Learning

One of the biggest challenges facing preparation programs is to track their graduates' impact on P-12 student learning. Accreditation provides a forum and framework for moving to this higher standard of evidence on program effectiveness. This occurred in a mid-size, master's degree-granting, public, Hispanic-serving Institution located in a mid-sized city in a western state. The institution houses an educator preparation program that serves a diverse population of candidates, as well as schools and communities. In its initial TEAC accreditation case, the EPP developed an ambitious data management system that facilitated detailed analysis and tracking. It had also sought, prior to increasing state and federal calls to do so, evidence of P-12 pupil learning from student teachers' practice.

During its initial term of accreditation, the program continued to refine both its array of measures of candidate performance and the customized data management system it used to track and evaluate that performance. The evidence brought forward in the case for continuing accreditation included several measures of candidates' knowledge of the content they would teach, including analysis of an electronic portfolio screened at program admission, GPA in content courses (which compared favorably with the GPAs of non-teaching students in the same majors), and scores on content-specific standardized licensure test scores (with an initial pass rate of 77 percent and a final pass rate of 96 percent).

Evidence of P-12 student learning based on analysis of Teacher Work Samples (TWS) completed during student teaching were also included in the evidence; in 53 percent of TWS sampled, all P-12 students instructed showed learning gains, and in 89 percent of cases, 80 percent or more of P-12 students showed learning gains. Instructional sequences sampled in the TWS are relatively brief—five to ten lessons—so knowing *which* pupils have mastered the material, and which have *not*, is a valued outcome as it directs the teacher's efforts at re-teaching or remediating. Other ratings of teaching performance and pedagogical knowledge were also included.

As a result, the program was able to analyze its data at an uncommonly fine level of detail. Analysis also examined the differential performance of candidates by a variety of demographic factors (gender, ethnicity, etc.), allowing the program to assess how well it was preparing different subgroups of its diverse candidate pool. The results showed that, in general, all candidates were prepared for success as beginning teachers. Within that generally positive finding, however, analysis also showed that some particular subgroups of elementary candidates showed weaker subject matter knowledge in mathematics. The program was able to use its data in conjunction with data from the university's data system to initiate efforts at the campus level to provide stronger instruction in mathematics for elementary teacher education candidates and to monitor the success of those efforts.

The site visit verified the accuracy of the program's data files and the various analyses that were conducted to produce the self-study report. A second term of accreditation was recommended by the Accreditation Panel and awarded by the Accreditation Committee, with no weaknesses noted and no stipulations cited.

## SOME IMPLICATIONS OF THE CASE VIGNETTES

**Variation in accreditation decisions**—These vignettes illustrate considerable variation in the kinds of accreditation actions taken, which mirror the variations in accreditation decisions described earlier. In the case of NCATE providers, two-thirds of the cases received initial or continuing accreditation. The other one-third of the cases entailed one of the following situations: a decision was rendered on a case where previously one or more standards were not met; a decision was made that will require a return visit, also because of failed standard(s); a decision was deferred because an adverse accreditation decision was intended and the provider is given an opportunity to submit a rejoinder; or a decision resulted in a revocation or denial. Similarly, TEAC decisions reflect great variability. Seventy-seven percent of cases receive cited weaknesses and/or stipulations.

Under CAEP, accreditation decisions will continue to consist of affirmation of success and excellence as well as citation of larger and smaller problems. It is likely that not every provider will be able to meet the new standards and expectations. Under the current NCATE system, the greater focus on continuous improvement has raised the prospect that many providers will have difficulty demonstrating “target-level” performance on one or more standards. These expectations for excellence will increase under CAEP. If higher performance will be expected of all providers who seek accreditation, it will be efficacious for the field. At the same time, pressures on programs to improve will accelerate, bringing into focus the tension between quality assurance and program improvement.

**Quality assurance and program improvement**—The cases also illustrate the dual role of accreditation discussed earlier—quality assurance, upon which public accountability rests, and program improvement, which spurs providers to become better and is a driver of innovation. As CAEP focuses on continuous improvement and innovation, it will partner with providers in using data to improve their programs. That expectation, combined with higher standards, will require CAEP to strengthen its focus on helping programs achieve aspirational performance levels. Capacity-building strategies, such as fostering greater research and development, building networked improvement communities, improving data quality and use, and tracking aggregate performance of accredited providers over time will become important features of CAEP.

**Peer review**—Peer review is a core process in each of these cases. The accreditation decisions reflect not formulaic assessments of quality but reasoned judgments on a complex, multi-faceted body of evidence. The challenges for peer review will increase under CAEP, as it introduces more evidence requiring technical knowledge, more focus on aspirational standards, and reviewers who are capable of fostering research and development and innovation through accreditation reviews. As in the past, professional judgment will be a critical feature of accreditation, but under CAEP it will operate in an environment of higher expectations for accreditation processes and decisions. CAEP’s challenge is to improve the validity and reliability of those peer judgments, and the quality of evidence that informs these judgments in a new data-rich environment. This shift in the context within which peer review operates also will require careful selection and training of CAEP reviewers.

# APPENDIX

## THE EVOLUTION OF ACCREDITATION EVIDENCE

Current assessment practices that make up a part of the evidence for accreditation decisions have evolved over the last ten to twelve years, and the story is one that continues. Learning and education assessment were the focus of two bellwether consensus reports from the National Academy of Sciences about a decade ago:

- *How People Learn*<sup>13</sup> codified research about the critical understandings or misunderstandings that students bring to any learning situation and that teachers must engage. It also noted students' need deep factual knowledge and a conceptual framework for facts and ideas so they can organize and retrieve knowledge, and that students must take personal responsibility for metacognitive learning, goal setting, and monitoring their own progress.
- *Knowing What Students Know*<sup>14</sup> drew on learning research to form its conclusions about the power of assessments, particularly formative assessments, as tools for learning. Assessments require that teachers be explicit about instructional goals and give their students descriptive feedback. Assessments can inform and motivate students, and they provide continuing diagnostic information for teachers about their teaching.

Beginning in 2000, NCATE shifted its standards and expectations for evidence to emphasize educator-candidate performance in general, and P-12 student learning in particular, both adaptations of the Academy consensus. Preparation providers have taken these expectations seriously, creating their own versions of assessments that demonstrate teacher-candidates' abilities to use assessment effectively in their teaching and, as part of that, to monitor learning by their own P-12 students.

CAEP has drawn from an NCATE review of 93 self-studies authored by providers accredited in 2011. Providers have created or adopted assessments, variously labeled "portfolios" or "teacher work samples" or something similar, comprised of tasks that teachers are expected to conduct daily.

<sup>13</sup> National Research Council Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning. *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School*; National Academies Press, Washington, DC, 2000.

<sup>14</sup> *Knowing What Students Know: The Science and Design of Educational Assessment*, James Pellegrino, Naomi Chudowsky, and Robert Glaser, editors, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC, 2001, p. 14

For content knowledge and skills, these self-studies report:

- 30 percent of providers use teacher work samples as sources of evidence;
- 53 percent of providers cite some form of unit planning or lesson planning and implementation; and
- a few providers have created case studies or other assessments of some aspects of preparation bearing on instructional skills.

To demonstrate that educator-candidates have positive impacts on P-12 student learning, most providers report more than one assessment, including clinical evaluations by the supervisor or cooperating teacher, portfolios, methods courses, and projects designed to demonstrate educator-candidate effect on student learning.

## PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS IN EDUCATOR PREPARATION

Many providers report some type of portfolio as the source of evidence for content or pedagogical knowledge or skill, as either a clinical or general program requirement.

Portfolios are intended to provide evidence of candidate mastery of the provider's conceptual framework or programmatic strands. They are often aligned with the Charlotte Danielson framework<sup>15</sup> for professional teaching practice, but providers frequently mention standards found in InTASC, the NCATE-affiliated SPA standards, state standards, or the unit's own conceptual framework as the basis for portfolio design.

The most frequent evidence contained in portfolios includes:

- Reflective statements;
- Lesson plans with reflections;
- Items related to unit planning;
- Student or pupil assessments and results;
- Student work;
- An education philosophy; and
- Formal or informal feedback candidates have received from cooperating teachers and supervisors.

Some less frequent components include resumes, video self-assessments, and teacher work samples.

The portfolio is a cumulative assignment with a final presentation or evaluation at the end of the program or student teaching. It is evaluated by those responsible for the preparation of educators, sometimes through a panel that might include the teacher-candidate's adviser and supervisor. Most often, the portfolio is evaluated with a rubric or scoring scale, using phrases such as "developing," "beginning," "target," "distinguished," "competent," "proficient," "demonstrated," "acceptable," or "unacceptable."

Had this report been compiled a decade ago, the information would have been quite limited. Many, but not all, providers would have been able to report licensure test scores, although probably finding little relevance in them for the purposes of a self-study. Grade point averages would have been available, as would descriptions of courses and syllabi, but linking them to standards that describe what candidates should know and be able to do was not a common practice.

Today, many states have explicit teacher standards, often based on the InTASC structure. Many institutions have been influenced by the construct that Charlotte Danielson has created for evaluation of classroom practice and that now appears in the contents of their assessments. As the information above indicates, there is wide use of teacher work sample methodology and multi-dimensional portfolio assessments. Provider reports adopt the perspective that teaching is about student learning so assessments must be designed to provide evidence of student learning.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, Charlotte Danielson, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Virginia, 1996

<sup>16</sup> This is a perspective from Del Shalock, Western Oregon University in the 1970s. A useful reference about some of the origins and developments of teacher work sampling methodology is *Connecting Teaching and Learning: History, Evolution, and Case Studies of Teacher Work Sample Methodology*, edited by Hilda Rosselli, Mark Girod, and Meredith Brodsky, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham, Maryland, 2011

Until recently, portfolio assessments have principally been created individually, making comparisons across providers difficult. Those from the Renaissance Project<sup>17</sup> and more recently the California PACT<sup>18</sup> assessment, however, have been constructed with common characteristics and scoring and subjected to rigorous validity and reliability evaluations during their development. State-of-the-art performance assessments in preparation continue to evolve. The developers of the PACT worked jointly with AACTE to develop what is now known as edTPA (Education Teacher Performance Assessment) that might become a commonly used state preparation test. The foundation for performance assessments as CAEP begins is far stronger and more promising than a decade ago.

While the example presented in this Appendix is taken from NCATE experience and provider self studies, a similar conclusion—that performance measures are stronger and more promising than a decade ago—could be reached from TEAC experience and inquiry briefs over roughly the same time period.

From its outset in 1997, TEAC required programs seeking accreditation to disclose any evidence they had in 20 specified categories about program quality, and to provide evidence of the reliability and validity of those assessments they relied on to show that their program completers were competent, caring, and qualified professionals. Those available categories were:

- grades in the teaching subject and pedagogy;
- standardized tests (admission and license);
- ratings by cooperating teachers and supervisors of teaching performance;
- surveys of alumni, faculty and employers;
- case studies, work samples and portfolios; and
- rates of graduate success in their careers.

In addition, programs often provided novel categories of evidence, such as the employment of program students as teaching assistants in arts and science courses because they knew their subjects thoroughly and could teach well, or analyses that showed that teacher education students earned the same grades in the arts and science major courses as the regular majors in those disciplines.

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<sup>17</sup> The Renaissance Partnership Project was a group of eleven institutions that formed a collaborative effort in 1997 to develop assessments and data management to “show evidence that their graduates could facilitate learning of all P-12 students.” Supported with a \$5.8 million U. S. Department of Education Title II Partnership grant, the Project included extensive validation studies. Now concluded, limited information is available at this URL: [http://www.uni.edu/itq/PDF\\_files/June2002ScoringGuide.pdf](http://www.uni.edu/itq/PDF_files/June2002ScoringGuide.pdf) and this: <http://www.uni.edu/itq/>

<sup>18</sup> The Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) is a consortium of 30 California universities, 1 district internship program, and 1 charter school network to develop and conduct a teacher performance assessment. Successful completion of that assessment will be required to earn a California Preliminary Teaching Credential.



