

As we prepare for the traditional start of school, providers are welcoming candidates back to campus and K-12 schools are looking to fill positions. The U.S. Department of Education is taking steps to make higher education more affordable for everyone, and also to diversify the teacher workforce.

The USEd has announced actions on student loans that will ease the financial burden on students and their families, which will help to increase the pool of candidates entering higher education, as well as helping those entering lower paying fields, such as teaching, to repay their loans. Additionally, the Department is providing \$8 million in grants to support teacher preparation programs at Minority Serving Institutions. One in seven CAEP accredited EPPs are Minority Serving Institutions. More information about these programs is available later in this newsletter.

I support these steps by the Department to increase access for all to higher education, while supporting EPPs to increase diversity within the profession. However, we must do more.

In some state's we are seeing a lowering of standards to try to address a crisis. Putting a warm body in front of students may seem logical, but it does not serve the needs of K-12 learners. We need to focus on the future of teaching by emphasizing recruitment of qualified teacher candidates, supporting them through their preparation and preparing these teachers to the highest standard possible.

The CAEP standards prepare candidates based on evidence of what makes a difference in a K-12 classroom. We need a single set of standards that elevates the profession and requires higher education and local K-12 districts to work together. We need to ensure that in preparing teachers we emphasize content knowledge and how to effectively work with students and families. We need to emphasize clinical practices for student teachers and support providers to effectively recruit and support candidates through their programs of study.

There is a real shortage of high-quality teachers. As a CAEP accredited EPP, or one going through the CAEP Accreditation process for the first time, you are committed to developing quality teachers. Thank you for your commitment to quality preparation.

Chris