

Why It Matters:

Policymakers are turning their attention to teacher preparation as they grapple with the challenge of ensuring that an effective teacher leads every classroom.

- Teacher effectiveness is the most important school-based factor in student achievement, and it reflects in part the training teachers receive before entering the classroom.
- There is a growing recognition that long-standing practices in traditional teacher preparation programs do not adequately prepare future teachers for the demands of the classroom, particularly in high poverty schools.
- Two divergent approaches for reforming teacher preparation have emerged:
 - Professionalization—reforming traditional teacher preparation
 - Deregulation—reducing barriers to entering the profession
- There is little definitive research that identifies best practices in teacher preparation.
- Federal and state policymakers are pursuing both approaches while also seeking to increase the accountability of all teacher preparation programs.

Quick Definition

A teacher preparation program is a state-approved course of study that leads to initial certification or licensure as a teacher. There are two types of teacher preparation programs: traditional teacher preparation programs and alternative certification programs. Traditional preparation programs are designed as major fields of study for undergraduate students at institutions of higher education and require coursework in pedagogy, content areas, and a student-teaching experience usually lasting one term (10-14 weeks).

Alternative certification programs (ACPs) typically enroll individuals who already have a bachelor's degree, and they vary in length and structure. Most ACPs are operated by institutions of higher education while other organizations such as Teach for America, school districts and others offer the remainder. ACPs at colleges and universities are similar to traditional programs: They require one or two years of study and provide both coursework and a student teaching experience and usually result in a master's degree. ACPs outside of higher education institutions often have much shorter periods of training (some as little as two weeks), but also provide mentoring, coaching, and other forms of support during the actual teaching experience.

Relevancy to Georgia

Teacher Preparation in Georgia: An Overview

There are 66 teacher preparation programs in Georgia. Forty-one are operated by institutions of higher education, and 25 are offered by alternative preparation providers.¹ Table 1 lists the number of program completers for each in recent years.²

Year	Traditional Teacher Preparation Programs	Alternative Route Program Completers at Non-IHEs	Total	Percent Alt. Route
2009-10	5,810	794	6,604	12
2008-09	6,184	1,021	7,205	14
2007-08	5,550	823	6,373	13
2006-07	5,110	716	5,826	12

The University System of Georgia is the biggest producer of teachers in the state. In 2010 the 19 teacher preparation programs in the system graduated 4,871 teacher candidates.³ Of these candidates, 3,242 completed undergraduate programs and the remainder, 1,623, completed programs that led to a masters of art in teaching or certification. The largest producers of teacher candidates were Kennesaw State University (697), the University of Georgia (658), and Georgia State University (555).

Approximately one-third of 2010 graduates majored in early childhood education, which trains teacher candidates to teach in pre-kindergarten through fifth grades. About one-fifth of system graduates were in middle grades education. The remainder were in various P-12 certification areas ranging from art to foreign languages to secondary subjects.

Like most states, Georgia produces few high school teachers in science, technology, engineering and math, often referred to as the STEM fields. In 2010, 308 graduates of the University System’s teacher preparation programs were in secondary STEM fields. The numbers of graduates in each STEM area are listed in Table 2.⁴

¹ David M. Hill, "Title II - State Report 2011 - Georgia - Section I.c Enrollment," <https://title2.ed.gov/Title2STRC/Pages/Enrollment.aspx>.

² David M. Hill, "Title II - State Report in 2011 - Georgia - Section I.f Program Completers and Teachers Certified," U.S. Department of Education, <https://title2.ed.gov/Title2STRC/Pages/ProgramCompleters.aspx>.

³ Angela Coleman, "Annual University System of Georgia Teacher Production Report," University System of Georgia, http://www.usg.edu/educational_access/documents/2010_teacher_prep_report.pdf.

⁴ Ibid.

Table 2: Secondary Math & Science Production	
Subject	Number
Earth/space science	2
Geography	5
Health science	8
Physics	3
Chemistry	22
Science (broad field)	39
Biology	56
Math	173
Total STEM graduates	308

Teacher preparation has become the focus of contentious debate. While there is growing consensus that current practices in traditional teacher preparation programs are not adequate for preparing future teachers to meet the needs of students, particularly those in high-needs urban and rural schools, there is significant disagreement about what preparation should consist of. Some believe that intensive preparation combining rigorous coursework and extensive, carefully supervised clinical experiences are essential to develop teachers with the skills and knowledge to provide effective instruction to diverse learners. These people seek the transformation of traditional teacher preparation programs and look to Finland, Singapore and other nations that have highly regarded teacher preparation practices as models for this country.⁵ This approach to reforming teacher preparation is often described as professionalization.

Conversely, there are many who believe that a core problem in recruiting and keeping effective teachers is traditional preparation programs. These people believe that requiring would-be teachers to complete extensive and expensive preparation programs sets up barriers that deter many of the most highly qualified people from pursuing teaching. They also hold that common elements of traditional preparation programs—courses in pedagogy, foundations, methods—matter far less than teachers’ subject area knowledge. They propose recruiting individuals with demonstrable subject area knowledge and moving them quickly into the classroom through alternative certification programs (ACPs). Proponents of this approach point to high profile ACPs such as Teach for America and the New York City Teaching Fellows program as models of effective teacher recruitment and preparation. In other words, teacher preparation should be deregulated.

⁵ Linda Darling-Hammond and Robert Rothman, "Teacher and Leader Effectiveness in High-Performing Education Systems," (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011).

Both traditional and alternative programs operate in Georgia, and there are efforts underway to professionalize traditional programs and to expand alternative ones.

Professionalizing Teacher Preparation

Several universities in Georgia are moving toward a more professionalized model of teacher preparation. In doing so, program leaders are responding to charges that traditional teacher preparation programs do not adequately prepare new teachers for the demands of the classroom, particularly in high-needs schools. Among the criticisms:

- Too much focus on pedagogical issues and not enough on subject-matter knowledge
- Insufficient preparation for teaching to performance standards
- Too little time in classrooms gaining hands-on experience
- Lack of responsiveness to the needs of minority and nontraditional teacher candidates.⁶

To address these concerns, advocates for professionalizing teacher preparation programs call for changes, including:

- Increasing the selectivity of programs
- Extending and improving clinical placements
- Revising curricula requirements so that there are close connections between content, theory, pedagogy and practice
- Establishing meaningful partnerships with schools and districts, which may require new roles for and relationships between school and university faculty.⁷

UTeach

One initiative that draws on these principles is UTeach, a program developed 15 years ago at the University of Texas at Austin to increase the number of teachers in math and science and improve the preparation they receive. It enables undergraduate students majoring in STEM fields to earn a teaching certificate while completing the requirements of their major. Unlike most certification programs, the UTeach framework integrates pedagogical and subject area courses so students can complete their degree in four years. It also includes “scaffolded” clinical experiences, steadily increasing time and

⁶ Education Commission of the States, "E.C.S. Education Policy Issue Site: Teaching Quality--Preparation," <http://www.ecs.org/html/issue.asp?issueID=129&subIssueID=63>.

⁷ Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning, "Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers," National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, <http://www.ncate.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zzeiB1OoqPk%3D&tabid=715>.

responsibility in classrooms supervised by and collaborating with master teachers. These master teachers are paired with program graduates to provide support during their first few years of teaching. Over 85 percent of UTeach graduates at the UT-Austin go into teaching, and 80 percent remain in teaching after five years in the field.⁸ This success had led to the program's replication across the country, including in Georgia.

UTeach is a priority for the state. The Georgia Department of Education included it in its Race to the Top application and awarded implementation funds through a competitive application process. Three universities—the University of West Georgia, Columbus State University and Southern Polytechnic State University—are in the first year of implementing the program.

Professional Development Schools

Professional development schools, which bring together university-based teacher preparation programs and schools, are seen as a mechanism to enhance the knowledge and skills of both teacher candidates and practicing teachers. They were originally popularized in the mid-1980s following the publication of *A Nation at Risk*. In 1986 the Holmes Group, a consortium of the 100 leading schools and colleges of education across the country, released a report on transforming teacher preparation by implementing professional development schools. These programs were intended to accomplish the following:

- Improve the preparation of teacher candidates through collaboration between universities and schools
- Strengthen professional development for teachers
- Undertake collaborative research that promotes learning and renewal at schools and universities⁹

Many teacher preparation programs experimented with professional development schools, and some, such as Alverno College in Milwaukee and Emporia State University in Kansas, have had success with them. More recently calls for more clinical time for teacher candidates have renewed interest in professional development schools, including two projects in Georgia.

The University of Georgia has established eight professional development schools with the Clarke County School District. A university faculty member is on site three days a week in each of the schools. Professors are able to provide closer supervision to teacher

⁸ The UTeach Institute, "Replicating Success: The UTeach Institute," University of Texas at Austin, <http://uteach-institute.org/replication>.

⁹ L. Teitel, "Looking toward the future by understanding the past: the historical context of professional development schools," *Peabody Journal of Education* 74, no. 3 and 4 (1999).

candidates than often happens in student teaching experiences. Many classes also are held in the schools enabling teacher candidates to integrate their coursework with hands-on experiences in the classroom with children. In addition, university faculty work with teachers and school leaders to help identify challenges and respond to them.

The University recently won an Innovation Fund grant from the state to develop an induction program for new teachers that will be based in the professional development schools. The Innovation Fund is supported through Georgia's Race to the Top grant.

Kennesaw State University has partnered with Cobb County Public Schools to establish seven professional development schools. As in Athens, faculty from Kennesaw and teachers work closely to provide carefully supervised, extensive clinical practice to teacher candidates. The University won a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education to support this initiative.

Atlanta Urban Teacher Residency

Teacher residency programs are another effort to reform university-based teacher preparation. The first teacher residency program, the Academy for Urban School Leadership, was established in 2001 in Chicago. It was created by the school district, a university and a nonprofit to supply Chicago's schools with highly effective teachers. Drawing on the framework of physician training, it combines rigorous coursework and extensive clinical practice in a supervised setting over a period of 12 months. It is a post-baccalaureate program. Since the Academy's founding a small number of residencies have been formed in other cities including the Atlanta Urban Teacher Residency (AUTR).

A collaborative effort undertaken by Georgia State University and Atlanta Public Schools (APS), AUTR is post-baccalaureate program. Its centerpiece is a 10-month residency in which program participants are paired with master teachers in APS and work closely with them throughout the academic year. This is supplemented with intensive coursework at Georgia State that begins in the summer before the residency and continues throughout it. With successful completion of the program, residents earn a Masters of Arts in Teaching and are provided comprehensive induction support during their first three years of teaching in APS. During the induction period, AUTR graduates are required to earn a reading endorsement and special education certification.¹⁰

AUTR, which will enroll its first cohort in the 2012-13 school year, is concentrating on recruiting and training highly qualified math teachers. It is supported by a \$2 million Teacher Quality Partnership grant from the U.S. Department of Education and builds on a small residency program Georgia State has operated with five metro Atlanta districts.

¹⁰Atlanta Urban Teacher Residency, "Overview/Program Design," Atlanta Public Schools & Atlanta Urban Teacher Residency, <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/yellow>.

Residency programs such as AUTR occupy a unique space in the debate about teacher preparation. They are regarded as alternative programs, but they have adopted central elements of professionalization.

Deregulating Teacher Preparation

Alternative certification programs have operated in Georgia since 2001. The majority of alternative certification providers in the state are Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) and school districts. These providers follow a framework—the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (GaTAPP)—which the Georgia Professional Standards Commission created in 2002.¹¹ The central element of GaTAPP is intensive mentoring provided by a support team to new teachers during their first year of teaching. GaTAPP does not require training prior to the new teacher entering the classroom, although many RESAs and districts do provide one to two weeks of training before the start of the school year.

With funding from its Race to the Top grant, the Georgia Department of Education is expanding the number of alternative preparation programs and is doing so through partnerships with two existing organizations—Teach for America and The New Teacher Project—and through the creation of a third—Teach for Georgia.

Teach for America

Teach for America has operated in metro Atlanta for several years. The organization recruits and trains high achieving graduates from selective colleges and universities across the nation to teach in low performing schools for two years. Its pre-service training component is a five-week summer institute. Teach for America also provides an array of support services to its teachers during their two years of service.

The Georgia Department of Education is broadening the role of Teach for America in metro Atlanta. From partnerships with the Atlanta and Fulton County Public Schools districts, the Department is expanding Teach for America’s operations to Clayton, Gwinnett and DeKalb Counties with Race to the Top funds. Teach for America is recruiting up to 200 new teachers in total for these districts annually through 2014.^{12 13 14}

¹¹ The Professional Standards Commission sets standards for and oversees the certification, preparation, and conduct of certified, licensed, or permitted personnel employed in Georgia’s public schools.

¹² Clayton County Public Schools, "Georgia Race to the Top: Clayton County Public Schools Scope of Work," <http://www.clayton.k12.ga.us/RT3/ScopeofWork.pdf>.

¹³ DeKalb County School System, "Georgia Race to the Top: DeKalb County School System LEA Scope of Work," [http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/documents/news-and-info/race-to-the-top/scope-of-work-\(2011-08-22\).pdf](http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/www/documents/news-and-info/race-to-the-top/scope-of-work-(2011-08-22).pdf)

The New Teacher Project

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) is a national organization that recruits and trains new teachers for hard-to-staff schools and subject areas.¹⁵ It also works with districts to redesign their human capital systems, and operates a research and policy program that has produced several influential reports on teacher quality. Most of the new teachers TNTP recruits are experienced professionals from a variety of backgrounds, and many have graduate degrees.

The state has partnered with TNTP to create the Georgia Teaching Fellows program, which will recruit and train 105-175 new teachers annually to work in six rural districts—Burke, Richmond, Chatham, Dougherty, Meriwether, and Muscogee Counties—over a five-year period.¹⁶ The program is focusing on individuals who can serve as math, science or special education teachers at the middle and high school level.¹⁷

Teach for Georgia

Teach for Georgia is based on the Teach for America model. Developed by the Georgia Institute of Technology and supported with Race to the Top funds, it seeks to recruit high achieving college graduates in STEM fields to teach in Ware and Dougherty Counties for two years. Like Teach for America, it will provide a five-week summer institute to recruits before they begin teaching. The program will also offer comprehensive induction support that includes issues related to teaching and living in rural communities. Unlike Teach for America, Teach for Georgia will also pay its teachers' salaries for the two years of their commitment.¹⁸

Accountability

The issue of effectiveness cuts across the movement to professionalize teacher preparation and the one to deregulate it. Policymakers are focusing new attention on whether all types of preparation programs are providing their graduates with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the classroom. One example of this that is

¹⁴ Gwinnett County Public Schools, "Georgia Race to the Top: Gwinnett County Schools LEA Scope of Work," [http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-mainweb01.nsf/3C3731F3705BBB3E852578480058227A/\\$file/Race_to_the_Top_SOW.pdf](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/gcps-mainweb01.nsf/3C3731F3705BBB3E852578480058227A/$file/Race_to_the_Top_SOW.pdf).

¹⁵ The New Teacher Project, "T.N.T.P.," <http://tntp.org/>.

¹⁶ "Georgia Teaching Fellows-The New Teacher Project: Scope of Services Detailed," (Georgia Department of Education, 2011).

¹⁷ Georgia Teaching Fellows, "Who We Want," <http://georgiateachingfellows.ttrack.org/AboutUs/WhoWeWant.aspx>.

¹⁸ Georgia Tech Research Corporation, "Georgia Race to the Top Innovation Fund," (Atlanta: Georgia Tech Research Corporation, 2011).

playing out in Georgia is the Teacher Preparation Program Effectiveness Measure (TPPEM), a new system the state is developing to assess preparation programs. The state is required to do so under its Race to the Top grant. The TPPEM system is to be implemented by 2014. Findings on programs' quality will be disseminated. They will not be used, however, to sanction or close poorly performing programs.¹⁹

The U.S. Department of Education has given Georgia and the other Race to the Top states some flexibility to determine the specific indicators they will use to assess the quality of preparation programs, but it requires the states to include measures of student achievement. These assessment systems have not yet received much public attention. They may, though, as states move closer to full implementation of them given their use of student achievement data. States are beginning to use these data for evaluating their teachers, a move that has been very controversial. Collecting and analyzing value-added achievement data presents many technical challenges that have not been resolved and will likely be an issue with TPPEM.

¹⁹ Edward Crowe, "Getting Better at Teacher Preparation and State Accountability: Strategies, Innovations, and Challenges Under the Federal Race to the Top Program," (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2012).

National Perspective

Historically, the federal government has had a limited role in teacher preparation. States have the authority to approve preparation programs, and membership organizations such as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accredit them. The federal government, however, is increasingly influential in teacher preparation. This reflects several factors including the perception that states have not set and held to rigorous standards for teacher preparation programs. One indicator of this is the rarity with which preparation programs are identified as low-performing or at-risk for being classified as low-performing. Table 3 lists the number of programs identified as either between 2008 and 2010.²⁰

Year	Identified Programs
2010	38
2009	28
2008	40

These are small numbers as there are over 2,000 teacher preparation programs in the country.²¹ Moreover between 2002 and 2010 more than half of all states did not identify any teacher preparation programs as low-performing or at-risk for being so. Table 4 lists the 24 states, including Georgia, as well as Puerto Rico that did report programs during this time period:

²⁰ Office of Postsecondary Education, "Preparing and Credentialing the Nation's Teachers: the Secretary's Eighth Report on Teacher Quality Based on Data Provided for 2008, 2009, 2010.," U.S. Department of Education, <http://title2.ed.gov/TitleIIReport11.pdf>.

²¹ Ibid.

Table 4: States Reporting At-risk or Low-performing Teacher Preparation Programs

State	At-risk (AR) or Low-performing (LP) ²²								
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Alabama								LP	
California							AR	AR	AR
Connecticut						LP	LP		
Florida	LP		LP	LP	LP	LP	AR, LP	AR, LP	AR, LP
Georgia	LP		+	+	AR	AR	AR		
Illinois		AR	AR	AR	AR	AR			AR
Indiana			AR	AR					AR
Iowa					LP				
Kansas	AR	AR	AR, LP	AR, LP	AR, LP	AR, LP	AR		
Kentucky			AR	LP	AR	AR, LP	AR, LP	LP	
Louisiana	LP		AR	AR					
Maine			AR		AR	AR			
Maryland		LP			AR				
Michigan						AR, LP	AR, LP	AR, LP	AR, LP
Mississippi	AR								
Missouri					AR	AR	AR		
New York	AR	AR	AR		LP	LP	LP	LP	LP
North Carolina	LP	LP	LP	LP	LP				
Ohio	AR	AR			AR	AR	AR	AR	
Puerto Rico							AR, LP	AR, LP	AR
Rhode Island									AR
South Carolina	AR	AR, LP		AR	AR		AR	AR	AR
Tennessee	AR, LP	AR	AR	AR					
Texas	AR, LP	LP			LP				AR, LP
Washington				AR		AR			
Total number of states	11	9	11	11	14	12	12	9	11

²² Ibid.

+ The state did not specify the designation of the program. The program was being restructured.

The federal government is concurrently pursuing policies that promote the professionalization of teacher preparation and seek to deregulate it. It is also attempting to establish stronger accountability mechanisms that apply to both.

Professionalizing Teacher Education

The U.S. Department of Education operates the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) program. The program provides grants to institutions of higher education that collaborate with school districts to transform pre- and post-baccalaureate teacher preparation. It is supported through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which is the federal government's primary funding source for K-12 education. During its most recent grantmaking period, 2009 to 2010, the program distributed 40 grants to colleges and universities across the country. The program's regulations include requiring both pre- and post-baccalaureate programs to provide extensive clinical experience; post-baccalaureate programs must use the residency model. As described above, Georgia State University won a \$2 million TQP grant to design and launch the Atlanta Urban Teacher Residency program in collaboration with Atlanta Public Schools. Kennesaw State University won a \$1.8 million grant to reform its pre-baccalaureate teacher preparation program by working with Cobb County Public Schools to create professional development schools.

Another effort to professionalize teacher preparation is being undertaken by the organizations that accredit preparation programs. The federal government is not involved in this initiative. Given the reach of these accrediting agencies, their efforts to reform teacher preparation through standards that draw on a model of increased professionalization has national implications.

Most states require teacher preparation programs to earn accreditation from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the Teacher Accreditation Council (TEAC), or one of six regional agencies that accredit institutions of higher education.²³ Preparation programs are accredited by NCATE in 30 states and by TEAC in 12 states; there is some overlap between them, as programs in some states may pursue accreditation from either. In Georgia, preparation programs can seek accreditation from NCATE, TEAC or the regional accrediting agency, SACS (Southern Association of Colleges). Eight states do not require accreditation.

NCATE and TEAC are in the process of merging, and the new organization is the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Given the number of

²³ These regional accrediting agencies review and accredit entire universities, not just teacher preparation programs that NCATE and TEAC review.

states that require accreditation from NCATE or TEAC and presumably will require the same from CAEP, the actions of the new organization will be influential.

Drawing on a report released by NCATE in December 2010, *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers*, CAEP will institute new standards for teacher preparation programs.²⁴ As the report's title suggests, the new standards will make clinical practice the centerpiece of teacher preparation. To use clinical models to enhance learning and practice among teacher candidates, teacher preparation programs will have to transform many current practices, including the sequence and content of coursework, the role and training of master teachers and faculty supervisors, and relationships between school faculty, district leadership and higher-education faculty.

Deregulating Teacher Preparation

The federal government has encouraged the growth of alternative certification programs (ACPs) across multiple administrations. The most notable boost came during the administration of George W. Bush with the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. NCLB required states to define a "highly qualified" teacher and ensure that all teachers would meet those qualifications. Districts and states had to move quickly to reduce the number of uncertified teachers and teachers with emergency or other temporary certificates. The U.S. Department of Education determined that alternatively certified teachers were highly qualified under NCLB. As a result many states and districts turned to ACPs to ensure that their teachers were in compliance with NCLB. In New York City, for example, the number of alternatively certified teachers entering the system increased from almost zero to more than 2,800 between 2000 and 2004. During the same period, the number of teachers carrying emergency certification, who were not considered highly qualified, declined from over 3,800 to approximately 600 in the district.²⁵

The federal government also funds ACPs. Since the early 1990s, for example, it has funded Teach for America (TFA) through the AmeriCorps program. In the late 2000s Congress earmarked funds directly for TFA, however these funds were later dropped due to budget cuts. More recently, several ACPs also won Investing in Innovation (i3) grants from the U.S. Department of Education. TFA won a \$50 million i3 grant to grow its annual placements of teachers from 7,300 to 13,500 by 2014. The New Teacher Project, mentioned earlier, won a \$20.8 million grant to increase the number of teachers it recruits

²⁴ Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning, "Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers," National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, <http://www.ncate.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zzeiB1OoqPk%3d&tabid=715>.

²⁵ Pam Grossman and Susanna Loeb, "Learning from Multiple Routes," *Educational Leadership* 67, no. 8 (May 2010).

and trains in at least four districts. Also, the Boston Teacher Residency won a \$5 million grant to expand its program.

Accountability

The U.S. Department of Education is seeking to increase the accountability of teacher preparation programs through multiple mechanisms: the Higher Education Act (HEA), Race to the Top, and the Teach program.

Higher Education Act

Since 1998 through the HEA, the federal government has required states to provide data on their teacher preparation programs. Until recently most of these data were primarily descriptive such as the number of students enrolled and licensure passage rates. They provided little information, however, about the quality of the programs. The reauthorization of the HEA in 2008 changed that. States are now required to provide more detailed information about their preparation programs such as the number of hours of student teaching required and the types of admissions criteria programs use.

The U.S. Department of Education is currently determining additional reporting requirements under the HEA. It has expressed interest in requiring programs to provide data on a variety of measures including the ability of their graduates to raise student achievement, the job placement of graduates, the training provided to supervisors of student teachers and the content of admissions criteria. The Department also wants to create a four-tier system of classifying programs by their performance. This has met with resistance from some teacher preparation programs.

Race to the Top

Race to the Top requires the 12 winning states to improve the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs by linking student achievement and student growth data to teachers and then to the teachers' preparation programs. These data must be reported publicly and used to identify and expand preparation programs that produce effective teachers.²⁶

All of the RTTT states are moving forward with implementing systems to assess the effectiveness of their teacher preparation programs, but there is little uniformity in what these systems include. Five states will report on the persistence of programs' graduates in teaching. Six will include information on job placement. As required, all 12 states will

²⁶ U.S. Department of Education. *Race to the top program: executive summary*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. November 2009.

include student outcome data in publicly disseminated information on programs' effectiveness, but only five are including these data in their accountability systems.²⁷

TEACH Program

The U.S. Department of Education has proposed linking the accountability measures required under the HEA to institutions' eligibility to participate in the TEACH program. The TEACH programs subsidizes the tuition of teacher candidates who commit to teaching in high needs fields in low-income schools for four years. The Department wants to limit TEACH subsidies to those preparation programs that are classified within the top two tiers of the proposed classification system.

The Department will release final HEA reporting requirements later this year as well as its decision regarding the TEACH program.

²⁷ Edward Crowe, "Getting Better at Teacher Preparation and State Accountability: Strategies, Innovations, and Challenges Under the Federal Race to the Top Program," (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2012).

Research Tells Us

Despite the vigorous debate between professionalizing teacher preparation and deregulating it, there is little definitive research about what works and what does not to prepare future teachers effectively. In its 2010 report, *Preparing Teachers: Building Evidence for Sound Policy*, The National Research Council described a dearth of information on teacher preparation “because there have been no systematic effort to collect the necessary data.”²⁸ There have been, however, studies that can help practitioners and policymakers understand the key issues within the field, particularly the impact of and differences between traditionally and alternatively certified teachers. Findings from research on the efficacy and retention of teachers based on their pathway to teaching are presented below.

Teacher Efficacy

While there have been competing claims about the superior efficacy of traditional teacher preparation programs versus alternative certification programs, the evidence to support either has been mixed. Teach for America (TFA) is the most-studied alternative certification program (ACP) in the country, and research findings about the efficacy of its teachers have varied over time. The most recent research suggests that TFA teachers are more effective in teaching math and science than other novice teachers, but they are less effective in teaching English Language Arts (ELA) in their first year. By their second year, however, they appear to be as effective in teaching ELA as their peers. Some researchers have suggested that the effectiveness of TFA teachers may be due more to the selectivity of the program—TFA accepts about 14 percent of applicants—than to its particular approach to training and supporting its teachers. Research on other selective programs such as the New York City Teaching Fellows, an ACP operated by the New York City Department of Education, has revealed similar findings.²⁹

Looking more broadly at ACPs, recent research has indicated that teachers who enter the profession through alternative programs taken as a group are comparably effective as their peers who come through traditional programs. This likely reflects the variations in both traditional and alternative programs: There are high quality traditional and alternative programs, and there are poor programs of both kinds. The quality of the specific preparation program that teachers complete appears to matter more than whether the program is categorized as traditional or alternative.³⁰

²⁸ Committee on the Study of Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States and National Research Council, *Preparing Teachers: Building Evidence for Sound Policy* (The National Academies Press, 2010).

²⁹ Tim R. Sass, "Certification Requirements and Teacher Quality: A Comparison of Alternative Routes to Teaching. Working Paper 64," (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research, 2011).

³⁰ Committee on the Study of Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States and National Research Council, *Preparing Teachers: Building Evidence for Sound Policy*.

As noted above, research has not yet definitively identified essential practices in teacher preparation. There are, however, emerging promising practices.

Preparation programs that provide careful oversight of clinical experiences have been shown to produce graduates that are more effective.³¹ In addition, those that require a capstone project also appear to produce teachers who are more effective than their peers without this experience.

Teacher Retention

A persistent issue in the teaching profession has been retention—how long teachers stay in the classroom. Much attention has been paid to the retention rate of alternatively certified teachers. In general these teachers have lower retention rates than traditionally certified teachers, but many teach in high-poverty schools, which have lower retention rates than low-poverty schools.

Again turning to TFA, the evidence on retention is mixed. About 60 percent of TFA teachers stay longer than their two-year commitment, but only about 27 percent are still teaching at five years.³² This is lower than the 50 percent retention rate of new teachers in all types of schools. It is not clear how TFA's five-year retention rate compares to other novice teachers in high-poverty schools. Other selective ACPs have higher retention rates, including the NYC Teaching Fellows, which reports a 50 percent five-year retention rate, and the Boston Teacher Residency, which reports an 80 percent rate.³³ TFA's low rate may reflect primarily the two-year commitment of its teachers, who are more likely to view teaching as temporary rather than teachers who enter through other ACPs or traditional programs.

Looking more broadly at teacher preparation programs, two practices have been associated with high retention rates: selectivity and the alignment between preparation and the context in which teacher candidates will teach. Graduates of programs that select participants based on their disposition and commitment to teaching have been shown to have higher retention rates. In addition, programs that focus coursework, mentoring and

³¹ Marilyn Cochran-Smith et al., "Teachers' Education, Teaching Practice, and Retention: A Cross-Genre Review of Recent Research," *Journal of Education* 191, no. 2 (2000).

³² Morgaen L. Donaldson and Susan Moore Johnson, "T.F.A. Teachers: How Long Do They Teach? Why Do They Leave?," *Education Week*, http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/10/04/kappan_donaldson.html.

³³ Boston Teacher Residency, "BTR Impact: Boston Teacher Residency," Boston Teacher Residency, <http://www.bostonteacherresidency.org/btr-impact/>.

clinical experiences on the specific environment in which teacher candidates will work have higher retention rates.³⁴

³⁴ Cochran-Smith et al., "Teachers' Education, Teaching Practice, and Retention: A Cross-Genre Review of Recent Research."

For More Information:

National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education.

www.ncate.org

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is the profession's mechanism to help establish high quality teacher preparation. Through the process of professional accreditation of schools, colleges and departments of education, NCATE works to make a difference in the quality of teaching and teacher preparation today, tomorrow, and for the next century.

National Council on Teacher Quality

www.nctq.org

The National Council on Teacher Quality advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state and local levels in order to increase the number of effective teachers. The Council has developed a research agenda that seeks to develop compelling evidence for change and has direct and practical implications for policy.

American Association for College of Teacher Education

www.aacte.org/

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is a national alliance of educator preparation programs dedicated to the highest quality professional development of teachers and school leaders in order to enhance PK-12 student learning.

The New Teacher Project

<http://tntp.org/>

The New Teacher Project is a national nonprofit committed to ending the injustice of educational inequality. Founded by teachers in 1997, TNTP works with schools, districts and states to provide excellent teachers to the students who need them most and advance policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom.

National Association for Alternative Certification

www.alt-teacher-cert.org/

The National Association for Alternative Certification (NAAC) is the professional organization that advocates for standards-driven nontraditional educator preparation leading to effective school staffing.

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