

Recommendations

from the UNC Board of Governors Subcommittee

on Teacher and School Leader Quality

Preparing more, higher quality teachers and school leaders for North Carolina's public schools is one of the University of North Carolina's highest priorities and is central to the mission of the University. The UNC Board of Governors Subcommittee on Teacher and School Leader Quality makes the following recommendations in order to strengthen; focus; and, if necessary, redesign UNC's educator-preparation programs in order to produce a world-class educator workforce for North Carolina.

During the past year, the Subcommittee has met with the education deans of UNC's fifteen Schools of Education, faculty, public school personnel administrators, superintendents, legislators, policy makers, and others to better understand the improvements that are needed, as well as the complexity and challenge involved with opportunities for improvement. While there are no simple answers to strengthening and improving our programs, it is clear that collaboration and communication between UNC Schools of Education and PK-12 schools is essential to our future success.

The UNC Board of Governors places a premium on teacher and school leader preparation and seeks to advance this priority in the UNC System through the Office of University-School Programs at UNC General Administration, which oversees PK-16 initiatives throughout the University. The Board seeks to further elevate this priority and fulfill its commitment through the following key recommendations:

1. Ensure greater public accountability through development of a UNC teacher quality dashboard

to monitor and measure the performance of UNC's fifteen nationally accredited teacher education programs. The dashboard will serve as a public, interactive, web-based tool used for analyzing and displaying data about UNC teacher preparation programs. It will contain performance indicators and other information at the system and campus levels across a range of factors. Those factors include recruitment, selection, preparation, employment, and induction. Indicators will include the impact of teacher preparation program graduates on PK-12 student learning, including early learning where possible, measures associated with national accreditation, and other outcome-based indicators from the University's teacher quality research efforts.

Note: SAS has agreed to work with UNC General Administration to accomplish the goal outlined in this recommendation.

2. Accelerate collaboration among UNC Colleges of Education and Arts & Sciences in a more formalized process that emphasizes alignment of academic expectations, embraces data and evidence of effective practice, and promotes innovation in teaching and learning.

Closer alignment in these areas will promote rigor, excellence, and greater consistency in preparing educators across the University system. The discussion and work should focus on assuring deeper content knowledge, how best to present the content, and modeling effective teaching practices by university faculty. Conducting this work in a systemic approach and as a shared responsibility across academic units will promote programmatic improvements and innovation while also establishing a foundation upon which to build instructional resources.

3. Strengthen and align partnerships between colleges of education and PK-12 schools to achieve meaningful and mutually beneficial collaboration.

Formal partnership agreements should align with statewide priorities; address regional supply and demand; use research and evidence-based practices aimed at PK-16 student success and program improvement; create and implement innovative models to support clinical preparation and placement needs; and offer support for beginning teachers that is focused on teaching quality and retention while ensuring that all new teachers are supported, monitored, and mentored in their first three years of service.

4. Improve teacher preparation by taking the following actions:

- **Expand high-quality, clinical practice** as a core, year-long, job-embedded experience in UNC teacher preparation programs so that candidates develop the knowledge base and skills necessary to meet the needs of students. The expansion should meet or exceed the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP) standards by addressing partnerships for clinical preparation, clinical educators, and clinical experience. This work should be conducted collaboratively with PK-16 educators (at both public schools and UNC institutions) to better ensure consistency and alignment with standards and expectations. The UNC Board of Governors will work with the General Assembly and Governor's Office to obtain the resources needed to implement and facilitate this work.
- **Use research-based evidence to guide measurable improvement in teacher preparation programs** and to better align programs, standards and best practices across the University. This work will be facilitated by UNC General Administration and the UNC Council of Education Deans.
- **Link candidate performance with valid and reliable performance assessments that are data- and evidence-based.** We believe this can be accomplished by adopting the Ed Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) as a system-wide best practice and expanding the current UNC pilot initiative. EdTPA is a rigorously developed and widely accepted tool used for performance assessment to inform teacher candidates and programs. UNC's edTPA pilot is helping participating institutions 1) generate accurate and useful feedback to guide improvement of student teachers' performance over time; 2) accurately predict their later on-the-job performance, as measured by academic, value-added measures; 3) provide a basis for faculty to make improvements in teacher education programs; and 4) contribute to decisions on the preparation, development, and recommendation of student teachers for licensure. For institutions seeking an alternative to edTPA, options may be considered for other instruments that link performance with valid and reliable performance assessments. The UNC Board of Governors will work with the General Assembly to obtain the resources needed to implement and facilitate this work at scale.

5. Improve the selection process and criteria for entry into principal preparation programs, redesign programs where necessary, and scale best practices in evidence-based models for school leadership preparation and development.

It is crucial for North Carolina to select and prepare high-quality leaders for our PK-12 students, and provide the regular support, development, and evaluation of school leaders that enables them to establish and maintain student success. UNC school leadership preparation programs will use research-based evidence to guide improvements in developing rigorous, highly selective processes for entry into programs for principals and other school-based leaders prepared for North Carolina public schools. The redesign and strengthening of principal preparation programs will be rooted in the skills and knowledge required of 21st-Century school leaders; include an emphasis on evaluating and coaching teachers; and promote longer-term, more structured internships with proven master principals. In implementing these changes, partnerships between school districts and universities to determine needs and assessments, designing rich clinical programs, and mentoring will all be essential.

- 6. Strengthen recruitment and selection criteria (both academic and non-cognitive) for prospective teacher candidates** seeking to enter UNC teacher preparation programs by taking the following actions:
- **Establish a public-private teacher scholarship program** that is merit-based and targeted to attract the very best prospective candidates who are preparing to teach in North Carolina's highest need licensure areas (science, mathematics, special education, and middle grades), as well as in high-need districts and schools across the state. The UNC Board of Governors will work with the General Assembly and Governor's Office to seek funding to establish this scholarship program.
 - **Support a pay differential for North Carolina public school teachers with in-field advanced degrees.** The UNC Board of Governors will work with the General Assembly, Governor's Office, and the State Board of Education in support of the necessary legislative and policy changes.
 - **Develop campus-based recruitment plans that reflect current market research and regional school district needs** to ensure that UNC campuses are individually and collectively responding to the state's need for high-quality teachers and school leaders. The recruitment plans should be linked to projections of enrollment growth for individual education programs and focused on increasing the supply of new, initially licensed teachers. Plans should place an emphasis on North Carolina's highest-need licensure areas: science, mathematics, special education, and middle grades. All UNC teacher education programs will be held accountable to this expectation.
- 7. Improve support for early-career teachers by adopting and expanding statewide the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program,** an induction program that supports beginning teachers in their first three years of service. Recently receiving initial funding by the North Carolina General Assembly in the 2014 legislative short session, this program has had early success in reducing North Carolina's teacher-quality gaps by focusing on retaining teachers in high-need schools and ensuring that teachers who remain in the profession produce substantive student achievement gains. In keeping with the resources outlined for this initiative in the UNC Board of Governors' strategic plan, the Board will work with the General Assembly and the Governor's Office to obtain the resources needed to implement this program and expand it to scale. In addition to increased state support, statewide expansion will require a shared business model with participating school systems to facilitate replication.