

Editor's Introduction: Policies and Practices— Preparing the Next Generation of Teachers

We at *Teacher Education Quarterly* are proud to present a special, editor-invited issue, "Policies and Practices: Preparing a New Generation of Teachers," a rich collection of intellectually challenging perspectives on both policy initiatives and innovative teacher education practices currently underway in California and nationally. The authors contributing to this special issue include university researchers, teacher education practitioners, and representatives from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the California Department of Education.

On December 6, 1999, The Teacher Education Summit of California College and University Presidents was convened on the campus of Stanford University to discuss and develop strategies aimed at reconceiving the role and responsibility of higher education in the preparation of the state's teachers. The featured presenter at the Summit, Linda Darling-Hammond, shared her report, co-authored with Jeannette LaFors and Jon Snyder, entitled, "Educating Teachers for California's Future," which addressed recommendations toward helping re-shape how teacher education is perceived and practiced on California university and college campuses. What emerged from this conference was the "Joint Statement of California's College and University Presidents and Chancellors," which appears as a preface policy document in this issue. The Joint Statement highlights conference participants' agreement to make a commitment to place new emphasis on the education of teachers as a central component to the higher education mission, and as Darling-Hammond states, "the profession on which all other professions depend."

Editor's Introduction

Soon after the Summit, Linda contacted Carol A. Bartell, Dean of the School of Education at California Lutheran College and then president of the California Council on the Education of Teachers, and myself about our interest in publishing in *Teacher Education Quarterly* a revised article based on her report. Carol and I agreed that Linda, Jeannette, and Jon's article would make a significant contribution not only to our journal, but to the growing dialogue about the necessity of the teacher education profession taking a stronger and more active political agenda forward into the policy making arena. As we talked, it seemed clear that here was an opportunity for *Teacher Education Quarterly* to take a leading role in providing the setting for a more in-depth dialogue. The results of our conversation led us to begin planning for an invited special issue devoted to the teacher education profession's response to both policy initiatives and governor-supported legislation intended to strengthen teacher preparation processes in California. The authors whose work appears in this special issue represent a diverse group of scholars, policy makers, and practitioners. I believe that the ideas embedded in this work will serve to promote serious consideration of our role in shaping future educational policy.

Darling-Hammond, LaFors, and Snyder open the issue with "Educating Teachers for California's Future," an in-depth analysis of current teacher education practices in relationship to the need for more highly prepared credentialed teachers for our state's schools.

Jeannie Oakes follows with "The Governor's Teacher Scholar Initiative: Can University of California Bring Highly Qualified Teachers to the State's Poorest Children?" In this article, Oakes describes programs focusing on "preparing and retaining highly qualified teachers in schools serving the state's most vulnerable children . . . which have emerged as a result of the commitment from both Governor Gray Davis and University of California President Richard Atkinson to address teacher quality and teacher shortage issues in primarily urban and rural schools.

In "A Decade of Policy Support for California's New Teachers: The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program," Margaret Olebe traces the past dozen years of efforts designed to both support and retain teachers in their early years. From the California New Teacher Project to the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program, Olebe reveals the powerful nature of the teacher education profession in its ability to address the challenges and needs of beginning teachers.

Andrea Whittaker, Jon Snyder, and Susan Freeman in "Restoring Balance: A Chronology of the Development and Uses of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession" detail a rich, often controversial, historical review of research and policy developments resulting in the adoption of the CSTP.

In "Quality Induction: An Investment in Teachers," Ellen Moir and Janet Gless reinforce the notion that student achievement is directly related to teacher quality. The authors outline a number of essential components identified with effective induction programs.

Andrea Maxie, in "Developing the Early Field Experience In a Blended

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Teacher Preparation Program: From Policy to Practice,” provides a contextually situated case study focusing on the critical nature of early field experiences in teacher preparation. This is an especially important article which describes an exemplar program at California State University, Los Angeles focusing on a blended program in preparing secondary school science teachers.

Michael D. McKibbin argues in “One Size Does Not Fit All: Reflections on Alternative Routes to Teacher Preparation in California” for continued support and expansion of both university and district intern programs in helping meet the demands of California’s teacher shortage.

In “Student Mathematics Achievement Test Scores, Dropout Rates, and Teacher Characteristics,” Mark Fetler of the California Department of Education discusses research which strongly suggests a direct relationship between the quality of teacher preparation and student achievement. Fetler argues that “teachers who are more thoroughly prepared to meet the specific needs of schools will persist longer in their jobs.”

Gregory J. Fritzberg turns our focus to national policy and practice, suggesting key recommendations for consideration in the context of standards-based reform in “From Rhetoric to Reality: Opportunity-to-Learn Standards and the Integrity of the American Public School Reform.”

In “Bridging the Disconnect Between Policy and Practice in Teacher Education,” Carol A. Bartell makes a passionate argument for the teacher education profession to become more politically active. As policy initiatives affect teacher education in ever-significant ways, Bartell suggests mobilizing the profession in providing the expertise and leadership in the field we know best. She concludes with some important recommendations for action.

Concluding this issue is “Success for English Language Learners: Teacher Preparation Policies and Practices,” a position paper of the California Council on the Education of Teachers, the California Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, the State of California Association of Teacher Educators, and the Independent California Colleges and Universities Council on the Education Teachers, prepared by the Joint Policy Committee of those organizations. This is a prime example of what Bartell calls for as teacher educators engage in shaping the policy agenda, “providing input to the dialogue and discussion, conducting the research, and taking positive, proactive steps to reach out to all stakeholders.”

I hope that this issue will help invigorate continuing dialogue about the role teacher educators play in policymaking processes and in the implementation efforts of legislative initiatives. As always, we welcome your thoughts and comments. Please visit us at our new *Teacher Education Quarterly* website <www.teqjournal.org>.

—**Thomas Nelson**
Editor