

**Teacher Supply and Teacher Quality:
Effective Policies and Strategies**

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**Guaranteeing
an Adequate Supply of
Highly Qualified Teachers:
Two Blueprints**

**National Commission on
Teaching and America's Future:
What Matters Most?**

- A blueprint for providing excellent teachers in all of America's schools.
- At the heart of school improvement lies the recruitment, preparation, and retention of good teachers.
- School improvement must focus on creating conditions that allow teachers to teach well.

NCTAF: What Matters Most?

Goals:

- Teachers must have knowledge, skills, & commitment
- Teacher Ed programs must be accredited
- Teachers must have high quality professional development
 - Teachers meet professional standards of practice
- Salaries must be based on knowledge and skills
- Quality teaching must be the central investment of schools

NCTAF: What Matters Most?

Strategy for meeting these goals:

- Get serious about standards for both students and teachers
- Upgrade teacher preparation and professional development
- Improve recruitment and put qualified teachers in every classroom
- Encourage and reward teacher knowledge and skills
- Create schools organized for student and teacher success

No Child Left Behind

NCLB mandate of having a "highly qualified" teacher for the core content subjects no later than the end of the 2005-2006 school year . This mandate will only increase the demand for more special education teachers.

No Child Left Behind

Highly Qualified means:

- Full state certification as a teacher or
- Pass state teacher licensing examination

Teachers of Core Academic Subjects

- Pass subject knowledge test or, for middle and secondary school teachers, have majored in the subject area they teach

No Child Left Behind

What matters most, according to NCLB?

- Preparation in content knowledge

Strategy

- Provide training alternatives
- Streamline preparation
- Develop and apply standards for verbal ability and content

NCTAF versus NCLB

Similarities

- Concern about staffing in high poverty urban and rural schools
- Emphasis on holding schools responsible for the success of every student
- Insistence on hiring only qualified teachers
- Recognition that teachers are poorly paid

NCTAF versus NCLB

Differences

- NCTAF emphasis on creating conditions in schools that support teachers' work
- NCTAF emphasis on improving teacher preparation (instead of circumventing or minimizing it)
- NCTAF emphasis on teachers' knowledge and skills (instead of student outcomes)
- NCLB emphasis on strong content preparation
- NCLB emphasis on alternatives to traditional teacher preparation

NCTAF versus NCLB

Quantity Problem: "an adequate supply"

- NCTAF: Improve the Job of Teaching
 - Professionalize teaching
 - Improve the quality of the workplace
 - Support retention through mentorship and induction
 - Base teachers' salaries on knowledge and skills
- NCLB: Provide More Entry Paths to Teaching
 - Streamline training
 - Provide options to traditional campus-based teacher preparation

NCTAF versus NCLB

Quality Problem: "... of highly qualified teachers"

- NCTAF: Improve Training
 - Require all teacher education programs to be accredited
 - Improve the quality of teacher education
 - Require teachers to meet rigorous professional standards
 - Encourage continued professional development
- NCLB: Recruit Better Trainees
 - Recruit individuals with high verbal ability
 - Recruit individuals who demonstrate mastery of an academic discipline

Should I Stay or Should I Go Now?

Why Are Beginning Teachers More Vulnerable?

- Less likely to be fully-certified
- Struggle with demands of teaching
- Greater isolation from colleagues
- Insufficient curricular and technical resources
- Role issues
- Poor school climate
- Lack of professional growth opportunities

The Quality versus Quantity Tension

Chronic shortages make focusing on quality difficult:

- Special education has the greatest teacher shortage (AFT, 1999).
- 98% of nation's school districts report shortages of special educators (ERIC, 2001; Fideler, Foster, & Schwartz, 2000).
- 135,000 more teachers will be needed between 1998 and 2008 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1999).
- Shortages are worse in our nation's poorest schools (Ingersoll, 2001).

Teacher Attrition: Increasing Demand and Reducing Quality

- 6.1% of special educators and 5.7% of general educators left the classroom
- 7.4% of special educators transferred to general education
...whereas only 0.7% of general educators transferred to special education
- Net loss of special educators is 13.5% compared to 6.4% of general educators (Boe, Bobbitt, Cook, & Barkanic, 1998)

Factors contributing to shortages in special education

High attrition in special education

- Lack of experience/age
- Role issues
- Inadequate support
- Poor working conditions--climate, salary, admin support
- Lack of quality preparation
- Stress/dissatisfaction

Factors contributing to shortages in special education

- Increase in students identified with learning disabilities
 - During the 1990's, increase of 20.3% (McLeskey, Smith, Tyler & Saunders, 2003)
- Supply and demand--Traditional preparation programs have not kept pace with the need for special education teachers
 - In 1998, 22,250 newly certified teachers graduated to fill the 30,000 special education vacancies

(USDOE, 1998)

Reasons Why Quality Special Education Teachers Stay

- Teachers have the content knowledge and skills to work effectively with their students
- A climate of support is in place and fostered particularly at the beginning of their careers
- Time is given to allow them to reflect and teach more effectively
- Compensation is fair and working conditions are supportive
- Paperwork is kept to a manageable amount and intrusions are kept at a minimum
- Their voices are heard and opinions are valued

Key Strategies for Recruitment and Retention: What Works

- Aggressive recruitment strategies
 - Competitive salaries, web-based recruitment
- Well designed state policies
- Build strong induction programs coupled with strong mentoring
- Supportive school climates and effective leadership

Effective Recruitment Strategies

The Power of Financial Incentives

The Power of the Internet

- Survey conducted by Oregon Special Education Recruitment and Retention Project in 2002 revealed 1/2 of newly hired special education professionals found their jobs over the Internet
- 60% of the out of state hires were experienced special educators
- Clark County School District in Las Vegas
 - Innovative recruitment site

Strategies for Increasing Supply: What Works? The Case of Connecticut

- The Power of Integrated State Policy Context:
 - Aligning high standards for teachers and students
 - Three-tiered certification system
 - Low stakes student assessment drives the system
 - High quality induction program
 - Salary increases and other incentives

Teacher Induction Programs

Why are they needed?

- Teachers participating in high quality induction programs are less likely to leave. Lack of professional support is often cited as primary reason why teachers leave the field. (Billingsley and Cross, 1991)
- Quality induction programs reflect environments that promote learning communities.

Induction Programs

- Formal support
 - Fostering teacher learning
- Informal support
 - Creating a positive work climate

Characteristics of Quality Induction Programs

- Clear goals and purpose
- Culture of shared professional development
- De-emphasized evaluation
- Rich content responsibility
- Continuum of
 - Instructional content
 - Pedagogical content
 - Personalized content promoting reflection
- Fiscal and political support

Effective Induction Programs

- *The Connecticut Beginning Teacher Support Program*
- *California's Beginning Teacher Support & Assessment Program*
 - *New Teacher Center at the University of California Santa Cruz*

Induction and Mentoring: Connecticut's BEST Program

- Highly structured portfolio consisting of lesson logs, videos, commentaries, and student work
- Mentors meet regularly with novices
- Content-specific seminars (25-30 hours)
- Portfolios reviewed by two trained assessors
- Initial pass rate of 85-92%
- Cost \$3.6 million for 2,800 teachers or about \$1,400 per new teacher

Induction and Mentoring: California's BTSA Program

- Daily (on-site) support from a trained mentor
- Monthly formative assessments
- Individual induction plan
- 96% retention rate (1st year)
- \$3,375 per beginning teacher per year with a \$2,000 in-kind district match
- Only fully credentialed new teacher can participate, leaving 42,000 under-prepared novices without this type of support

Design Considerations for Special Education Induction Programs

- Individual concerns
- Demands of the teaching context

Effective Features of the Mentoring Component in Special Education

- Frequent contact between mentor and mentee
- Non-evaluative role of the mentor
- Formal and informal support (meetings in the hallways)

Effective Features of the Mentoring Component in Special Education

- Mentors specific to special educators
- Content
 - Importance of emotional support
 - Materials/resources
 - System information (district & special education)

The Role of Leadership in Retention

Establish a climate of collaboration and support by:

- Fostering ongoing teacher learning
- Buffering teachers from tasks that interfere with teaching
- Promoting helping relationships among staff
- Facilitating shared decision-making
- Establishing common goals
- Providing extra support for beginning teachers

Alternative Routes to Certification in Special Education

What's an ARC?

(a.k.a. **Alternative Routes to Certification**)

Different from no certification and license

Different from traditional programs

- Length and structure of program
- Delivery mode
- Candidates

The Proliferation of ARs in Special Education

- Persistent shortages of qualified personnel
- Acute need for minority teachers
- Dissatisfaction with educational establishments hold on entry to the profession

Typical ARCer

- Does not have a background in general or special education
- Does not have a degree in education if they have a degree at all
- Over 25 years old
- Have business, military, or industry experience
- More diverse—ethnic and multicultural

ARC Controversy

- Lack of consistent definition
- Shortage of high-quality research
- Lack of explicit professional standards in ARC programs
- Developing and maintaining a sense of profession and professionalism

Concerns of ARC

- Programs vary in their content—depth and length
- Attrition is much higher for ARC graduates—some see it as a job, not a career
- Sell out of the teacher education community by endorsing ARC. Lessens and “de-professionalizes” the field

ARC in Special Education

- Only 7 Data-Based Studies
- Indicators of Effective AR Programs
 - Meaningful IHE/LEA collaboration
 - Adequate program length
 - Variety of learning activities
 - IHE supervision and building-based mentorship

ARC in Special Education

AR Unknowns: The Iceberg Below the Surface

- The shortage of high quality research
- The extent and scope of AR programs
- The lack of explicit standards in AR programs
- The sense of profession and professionalism
- Generalization from general to special education

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Next Steps

- The Murky Landscape of AR
- The Temptation to Cut Corners
- COPSSE Agenda

But is it a vegetable?

Condiments
And
Icebergs