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ABSTRACT

An analysis of issues concerning the certification of teachers and the accreditation and approval of teacher education institutions is presented. In the first part, generally accepted definitions of certification, licensure, program review, and accreditation are clarified. A brief historical overview is presented of the state's role in controlling licensure, and the growth of the National Education Association (NEA) and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is described. Key issues regarding certification and accreditation guide the discussion of major strategies for improvement in the second part: (1) certification based on approved programs or qualifying examinations; (2) specific rules governing college programs and general certification; (3) renewal of teaching licenses; (4) incompetent teachers or low-quality programs; (5) rule-making process; (6) attraction of more academically able students; (7) social needs to recruit people from protected groups; (8) five year or longer teacher education programs; (9) teacher supply and demand; and (10) duplicate and redundant program review standards or procedures. The paper's third part offers recommendations and conclusions concerning general teacher education standards, identification of teacher competence, examination of entry-level teachers, teacher internships, certificate renewal, redundancy of NCATE and state agency program-approval, restructuring of NCATE process, and elimination of substandard teacher education programs. (JD)

CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION:

BACKGROUND, ISSUE ANALYSIS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Prepared for the National Commission on Excellence in Education

(August, 1982)

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Preface

The purpose of this paper is to provide the National Commission on Excellence in Education with appropriate background information and an analysis of issues concerning the certification of teachers and the accreditation and approval of colleges and universities which prepare them. In preparing this paper, we reviewed the relevant literature, conducted a number of very useful discussions with colleagues at our own and other universities, and drew upon our experience as participants in the process of teacher education.

The paper is organized in a manner designed to be most helpful to the Commission. First, we will provide background information and define some of the key terms we will be using in our discussion. In Part II, we will examine each of the three major strategies for improving teacher education through state or national regulation. In the final section of our paper, we present our recommendations for consideration by the Commission. We had originally intended to present papers under separate authorship on the major topics of our assignment (certification, licensure, and accreditation). As our work progressed, however, we found the processes with which we were concerned to be inseparable. Hence, we decided to prepare one paper with an integrated discussion.

PART I

Background Discussion

DEFINITIONS

Certain of the words used in this discussion have a technical (or semi-technical) meaning and, to avoid confusion, need a brief word of explanation.

Certification is the process of legal sanction which authorizes the one certified to perform specific services in the public schools of the state. The certification process is under control of each of the states. Primarily, the process is applied to people entering the profession, although in recent years teachers have increasingly been enjoined to acquire new certification if they wish to add a new teaching field to their certification. In recent years, also, many states have mandated that teachers could not hold certification for life but must take additional work to be recertified.

Licensure is the legal process of permitting a person to practice a trade or profession once that person has met certification standards; through licensure a profession controls the quality of its membership and its efficacy as a profession. The right to license members of a profession is generally regarded as a clear sign of professional autonomy and the acceptance of responsibilities by a professional group (proper assignment and deployment of practitioners; protection of the public by the profession). Although several of the states currently issue "licenses" rather than "certificates," education professionals

(e.g., the organized teaching profession) do not have control over entry to the profession (e.g., have the right to admit to practice) in the same sense as the examiners in law or medicine. Thus, "education presents the anomaly of a profession without licensure" (Kinney, 1964, p. 131).

Many states engage in program reviews of curricula offered by colleges and universities. Usually, the college programs are developed to meet the rules, codes, or guidelines of the state education agency. Most often the process is under the control of the chief state school officer (e.g., the state commissioner or superintendent of schools). In several states (e.g., Oregon, Minnesota, and California) certification and state approvals are controlled by teacher licensure boards which are not part of the state education agency. If a program is reviewed and approved by a state, usually the state will certify any graduate of the program and/or issue a license to teach. This is not the case in fields such as law or medicine where fledgling professionals must pass an entry examination after completing a training program and before winning the right to practice.

Accreditation is a private, voluntary process through which an institution is recognized as having met certain criteria and standards. Accreditation refers to the peer-based recognition and improvement process for schools, colleges, and departments of education. Accreditation is usually seen as both developmental and regulatory, that is, its purposes are both to provide counsel as to how an institution's programs can be improved and to provide a device for quality control and consumer protection. In teacher

education, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is generally recognized as the national accreditation agency. Accreditation is also provided through regional associations such as the Southern Regional Education Board, and program reviews by states are sometimes referred to as an accreditation process.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Until the middle of the last century the appointment of teachers was largely a local affair with a school committee interviewing candidates and making selections according to personal and local criteria. Increasingly, however, teacher certification became centralized, initially at the county level with county examiners and oral or written examinations administered to anyone wishing to gain approval to teach in a particular county. Examinations emphasized subject matter rather than pedagogy. During these same years, normal schools were being established to prepare elementary teachers, and some attention began to be given in regular four-year colleges and universities to the special needs of secondary teachers. However, even well into the twentieth century programs designed to prepare a college student for a career as a teacher supplied only a small fraction of the total teaching force. Most teachers established their qualifications by passing a county examination and obtaining a credential.

During the mid to late nineteenth century, the medical, engineering, dental, pharmaceutical, and architectural professions formed national organizations to establish standards and lobby for protective legislation. The National Teachers Association, which

eventually became the National Education Association, was organized in 1857. Unlike the other national associations, however, the NEA did not in its early years give attention to setting quality standards or protecting the public and the profession from the unqualified. This may have been because teaching was part time, teachers were poorly paid and carried little status or prestige, and working conditions were such that professional competence was less important than the ability to control the students and allegiance to local mores.

Problems associated with static teacher examinations and the great diversity among the multitude of county systems prompted a push toward state certification of teachers. The county examination sometimes consisted of only a few questions requiring the naming of capital cities or citing certain grammatical rules. As the curriculum expanded and new subjects were introduced, the exams became less and less relevant to what was taking place in schools. In addition, the position of chief state school officer was created in most states in the mid 1800's, and these elected officials began gradually to assume power over and responsibility for teacher certification. The creation of educational bureaucracies at the state level created the mechanism for state regulation of teachers. After 1900 county examinations were gradually replaced by standards based on college or university credits, certification became almost solely a state function, the general credential was replaced by a multiplicity of very restrictive credentials specifying what subjects the holder is permitted to teach and at what level, and many nonteaching positions (administrators, librarians, etc.) in schools came to require a credential. The assumption has been made that it is unnecessary to examine a student over material taken as

part of a college course, so certification standards have been written in terms of college courses completed successfully.

This statement made by the Council of Chief State School Officers in the 1950's indicates the extent to which control of teacher education and certification had come to reside at the state level:

> "The role of the state department in teacher education is an outgrowth of its responsibility for assuring all children and youth of school age the best possible educational opportunity. The state department of education, therefore, must be concerned directly with all factors which influence the number of members in the teaching force and their quality. This role includes the following major responsibilities:
>
> 1. Education of professional school personnel.
> 2. Legal accreditation of institutions and programs for the education of teachers.
> 3. Certification of professional school personnel (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1954, p. iii).

States have obviously differed in the way they implemented this broad mandate. It is clear, though, that each of the 50 states sees its responsibilities for education as including the control of teacher certification and teacher education programs.

The movement toward strengthening state certification has been accompanied during the past thirty years by a parallel development of a national accrediting agency. In 1952 the National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education was organized, the first body that

developed and applied national standards for teacher preparation programs. NCATE was a key part of the effort after 1945 by NEA to initiate a professional standards movement within education. This represented a new self-consciousness on the part of the teaching profession and challenged the control exercised by school administrators, university faculty, and the staff of state departments of public instruction.

These developments put in place the major elements that for the past two decades have been central to certification and accreditation and certification in professional education. The one significant exception is the retention by a few of the largest cities of the power to examine and certify teachers to work in a particular city school system.

TEACHING IN AMERICA: A COMMENT ON THE PROFESSION'S STATUS

As David Tyack has noted, teacher education has been the subject of intense controversy since the earliest times, and this controversy has tended to mask the fact that "any adequate education of teachers is a recent adventure" (Tyack, 1967, p. 412). Before 1900 most teachers in the U.S. had only an elementary school education. Only 10% of elementary teachers had graduated from college in 1931, and a majority had not done so even by 1950. The major efforts to raise standards of teachers, clearly, were mid-twentieth century movements.

Equally clear is the fact that the status of teaching as a profession in the United States has traditionally been low. Throughout most of our history, teachers have been recruited from among the lower middle class (traditionally a less well-educated group), paid a low

wage, if not at the poverty level, subjected to considerable (and at times enormous) social and political pressure, and allowed no job security. To quote Tyack again, America has probably had "better teachers than it had any right to expect, when one considers their pay and conditions of work" (Tyack, 1967, p. 412).

The early and middle twentieth century movements toward better education and training for teachers have altered the earlier condition to some degree, and the profession is no longer as closely associated with poverty, insecurity, and careful supervision of the social and political lives of teachers. Fueled by the expanding postwar economy, the baby booms and boomlets of the 1950's and '60's, and the central position of education as a vehicle for social reform (especially in the Kennedy-Johnson years), the lot of teachers improved demonstrably. Salaries were higher, tenure developed real meaning, and, for one brief shining moment, teachers seemed to be very important to the nation, the object of great attention, and the subject of nationally supported training programs.

The events of recent years, though, have deadened whatever glow remained around teaching, and, indeed, it seems that the joy has largely dissipated. Much like auto workers and garbage men, teachers now go on strike, demanding higher pay and shorter hours. This tends to raise questions in the public mind about the dedication of people who would interrupt the learning of children. In many of our leading communities--towns and cities which built "light house" systems in the 1950's and '60's--enrollment has decreased to the point where teachers of 10, 15, or even 20 years' seniority are made redundant. Discipline problems increase, and some (perhaps many) schools appear to be out of

control. Test scores slide and teachers are identified as the primary cause. Presently, the profession appears to be disillusioned and dispirited; while dedication is still spread widely throughout the ranks of teachers, uncertainty and a degree of hopelessness appear to be increasing.

This situation needs to be considered as background in any analysis and discussion of certification and licensure. For a variety of reasons, it is doubtful that even substantial improvement in these processes will affect the status of teachers very much. Teacher education has rarely been in a position to select a relatively small number of candidates from among a large number of applicants.

Recent evidence would suggest that this low-status profession attracts a less able cohort than other professions and less than needed, perhaps, by the nation's children. Since no national data base exists on the characteristics of those people who actually become teachers, claims made about academic qualifications of teachers will always be subject to challenge. On the basis of the fragmentary evidence available, it is probably safe to conclude that (1) the well-publicized decline in test results among high school students taking college entrance exams is naturally reflected in the performance of teacher education candidates, (2) substantial differences exist in the ability levels of teacher education candidates enrolled at various institutions (due, of course, to the fact that only those students who meet the entry requirements of the college or university can find their way into teacher education), (3) differences probably exist as well along regional lines (although the data base to support such a conclusion is as yet weak), and (4) on the whole the academic qualifications

of those who enter teaching are not as high as those who enter law, medicine, engineering, or the graduate schools in the liberal arts.

There are powerful reasons for this condition. Consider the situation faced by a young person mildly intrigued by teaching as a career. The popular press chronicles tales of social malaise in education, with many of the problems laid at the feet of teachers. While schools and teachers are excoriated for their inability to deal with the tasks presently before them, society, legislatures, and the courts continually charge them with yet a fuller mission. Despite improvements in salaries over the last two decades, the beginning teacher looks forward to a nationwide average annual salary of less than $17,800 (NEA, 1981). Small wonder that other professions and more glamorous occupations provide sharp competition with teaching for the brightest and the best. It is unlikely that higher certification standards or an improved accreditation process will alter this condition drastically, at least in the short range.

It should be noted, however, that in general teachers are better prepared now than at any time in our history. On the average they have more college degrees and have taken more course work in the subject matter they teach, as well as in pedagogy. At the same time the students they teach, the communities in which they function, the subject matter they teach, and the parents they respond to are very different and apparently much more difficult to cope with than ever before.

In even so inconclusive a picture, there is probably cause for more pessimism than optimism regarding the intellectual pool from which teachers are drawn. especially when one looks ahead. While the

current picture is probably not as bleak as some observers paint it, there is little in the short- or medium-range future that would operate to encourage a large number of more able students to enter teaching. And there is even less which would work to encourage them to make it a career, to become the dedicated professionals who strive to perfect their knowledge of the subjects being taught and the pedagogical skills needed to function as master teachers.

ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING THE SHORT-RANGE FUTURE

These background views suggest that a number of assumptions will hold true for the years immediately ahead.

1. The 50 states have always passed the clear constitutional right to regulate all aspects of teacher education and certification (including the approval of institutions of higher education, the adoption of certification rules, and the processes of certification and licensing), and there appears to be no political threat to these rights at present. Very serious economic conditions could cause states to diminish their regulatory activities, but the bureaucracies in control currently, whether executive state agencies or autonomous teacher licensing boards, are firmly entrenched and will continue. Therefore, it is safe to assume that states will at least consolidate, if not enhance, their power in this area and that any scheme to change these processes must center around the state agencies.

2. Given that virtually all professions have some kind of national accreditation, the mobility of teachers and the need for standards that transcend state lines, the strong support for accreditation from national organizations (NEA and AACTE), there is strong

likelihood that national accreditation in some form will persist into the short-range future at the very least. It should be noted, however, that a sharp increase in certification by examination rather than on the basis of completing an approved program would reduce the importance of national accreditation. Also the strong movement on the part of the states to review and control teacher education will create pressure to change the nature of national accreditation.

3. Schools will continue to face many serious problems under the impact of demographic, economic, and social changes, and the public will continue to exhibit great concern over these problems. One of the major causes of these problems will be seen as related to the quality of teaching and the qualifications of teachers.

4. The policy of seeking to improve teacher education through the imposition of increasing numbers of rules, regulations, and standards is unlikely to produce changes in quality of teachers and teaching. Regulation and review are necessary but not sufficient; they protect the public from rank incompetence but do little to guarantee positive change. That must take place in different ways and be stimulated by other motives. It is unlikely that increased regulation of teacher education or requiring more or different college courses for teacher certification will make the pursuit of a teaching career more attractive to academically able young people. Factors such as the reward system, the social status and working conditions of teachers must be changed if teaching is to become more attractive as an occupational choice.

5. While it is useful and informative to examine the licensing and accreditation practices in other occupations such as law,

medicine, or architecture, it is not appropriate to emulate those practices in professional education. In fundamental respects (e.g., the nature of the occupation, the numbers of people involved, and public as well as self perception), teaching differs significantly from the others.

The preceding discussion illustrates a number of the key issues regarding certification and accreditation. These issues in turn will guide the discussion in Part II.

ISSUES

1. Should states continue to certify based exclusively on approved programs? Or should they shift to a system of teacher examinations? Or to a system patterned after other professions, e.g., law, in which a qualifying examination becomes the basic criterion for entry following completion of an approved program in higher education?

2. Are the current rules which govern college programs too specific, too detailed, too atomized? Should certification be more general? Should an individual be certified to teach science, or language arts, or social studies rather than chemistry, or speech, or sociology?

3. Should states demand that all teaching licenses be renewed periodically rather than grant licensure for life?

4. Can state licensure help protect the education consumer from incompetent teachers or low-quality programs?

5. What groups should be involved in the rule-making process at the state level? Should the process be depoliticized? Can it be?

6. Is it possible to use the credentialing process to attract large numbers of very able students into teaching? If not, how can teaching be made more attractive to academically able students?

7. How can we balance the need to recruit larger numbers of able students and establish higher entry standards into teaching with the social need to recruit into teaching increased numbers of people from protected groups?

8. Should the required period of preparation be increased to five years or more? If so, should the additional preparation period be added to the undergraduate program or taken after a person has taught for a period of years?

9. How can or should states cope in the short range with the changes in the supply-demand situation in teaching? Should the emergency or provisional certificates issued when qualified people are not available in a given specialty be eliminated?

10. In what ways should states and national agencies move to reduce the duplication and redundancy in the program review standards or procedures? What is the appropriate role for national accreditation? What changes, if any, should be made in NCATE to realize this role?

PART II

Major Strategies for Improvement: A Discussion

Discussions of strategies to improve teacher education most frequently deal with changes in the structure and content of college teacher education programs. At times, however, the processes of certification and licensure are mentioned as targets of reform. More specifically, reformers will propose strategies like qualifying exams for entering teachers or extending college programs as a way of providing the time necessary for improving the teaching performance of beginners. In Part II, we examine and discuss each of the strategies most frequently proposed for improving teacher education candidates and programs.

CREDENTIALING/LICENSING

The Process

Virtually all individuals who apply for teacher certification and who are subsequently licensed have completed a state-approved collegiate program designed to prepare teachers. Upon making the request to be granted certification, the applicant's college or university transcript of grades and credits is reviewed to determine whether or not the applicant has completed the courses and other experiences required by that state. If the applicant has completed a state-approved teacher education program, certification is essentially automatic by virtue of having completed the approved program. If the applicant has completed a comparable academic program outside the

state, the transcript may be reviewed to determine if the required work has been completed or the applicant may be automatically approved based on a reciprocity agreement between the two states. An individual may be certified to teach more than one subject or one age group. While licenses have often been valid for the life of the recipient, increasingly that has been replaced by licensure for a specific term of years. Renewal usually requires some evidence of additional professional training or some beneficial experience that enhances professional competence.

Analysis and Critique

Since 1945 the credentialing process in the several states has become far more detailed. The number of different credentials available has increased substantially, and the requirements for each credential have become quite specific and extensive. Students typically take "heavier" majors and face increased requirements in education (e.g., courses in human relations, multicultural education, and special education have recently been added). These statements of requirements for credentials determine in large measure the preparation programs offered by colleges and universities, and their specificity in some states sharply curtails the possibility of experimentation and innovation on the part of higher education. Within a given state, for example, a college has to provide a program that meets state standards for a credential to teach chemistry or a student cannot be certified to teach that subject in that state. While this assures the public that any teacher of chemistry has met the same state standard, these standards are difficult to change once in place, and changes in a

subject area or in the needs of the schools are often slow to be reflected in the standards.

In addition, the certification process tends to dictate the assignment of staff in schools. Because the credentials are so specific, local administrators and school boards have little flexibility in assigning their employees. In effect the state licensing system does the assigning. While this provides the public assurance that a qualified person fills every position, it may create inefficiencies or unduly curtail a school curriculum.

Far more than for other professions requiring state licensing, state control of certification in professional education has taken on what could be called a "civil service" dimension rather than a "professional" dimension. In other fields the profession is responsible for establishing and monitoring preparation standards. Typically for other professions the colleges have the responsibility of developing training programs, and a board or boards of the profession review and accredit programs, screen candidates, and enforce standards. While these conditions now exist to a limited degree in a few states, generally the certification procedure for education is different than for fields such as medicine, law, and pharmacy.

Professional licensure usually signifies that an individual is qualified to practice in a broad category of activities identified by such terms as "architecture" or "dentistry." But certification in education does not qualify one to teach--just to teach a certain subject or subjects to students of certain ages. It falls short of being a badge of membership in a profession. In addition, in most states the agency in charge of the certification process isn't

responsible to the profession. State legislatures really are in control of teacher certification although a state department of public instruction may be the agent that carries out the legislative mandates. Acts of legislation, once in place, are very difficult to remove or change.

As a consequence of these factors, we believe that certification in professional education is more akin to the civil service system than it is to professional licensure. It is designed to establish and maintain standards for preparation and employment of public school personnel, not to screen candidates for admission to a profession. While it is easy to point out problems inevitably associated with state legislatures controlling the specifics of teacher certification, it must also be recognized that public education is a vital state function of great import for the citizens of any state. It is not something that legislators will ignore, particularly if the public perceives that teachers are ineffective or schools are not functioning well.

Many states which have one or two medical or law schools preparing doctors and lawyers have twenty to forty schools, colleges, or departments of education which prepare teachers. Many of these are the strong universities, private a well as public, but, unfortunately, many teacher preparation programs are located in the academically weak institutions. Our diverse system of higher education makes it possible for virtually any high school graduate to attend college. Those colleges that enroll the least able students often have teacher education curricula. Because grades and other measures of academic achievement are always relative to the prevailing academic standards on a

given campus, the fact that students on these campuses complete programs meeting state or national standards means little.

As noted, many of the academically most rigorous institutions also prepare teachers, but on paper their graduates look the same as those from any other campus. Certification requirements are usually stated in terms of courses taken and passed, clinical experiences completed, and distribution of credits. The quality of those experiences and their academic level cannot be determined from a transcript or even letters of recommendation. The current drive to "raise standards" will accomplish little if it is limited to adding more course requirements, increasing the semester hours needed, or setting some arbitrary grade point average standard for students in teacher education. If one institution that draws most of its students from the bottom half of the high school graduating class prepares many of the teachers in a state while the campus that limits admission to the upper quartile of the graduating class prepares few teachers or does not offer the program, raising standards will do little to improve the quality of teachers and teaching. To date, the processes of national program accreditation and state teacher certification have done little to address this problem.

It should be noted that among professional educators the problems that have just been described have been a concern for many years. In the 1950's the state of California attempted to address them through a sequence of special committees and eventually legislative action. The 1955 Progress Report of a committee of the California Council on Teacher Education included the following summary of the inadequacies of the credentialing process:

1. There is a multiplicity of teaching credentials. At the present [1957] there are 57 different credentials. This multiplicity has led to such undesirable results as (a) an undue burden on institutions for teacher education in developing specific programs; (b) discouragement of gifted candidates who, having prepared in a highly specialized field, cannot find employment.

2. There is a high degree of specificity in credential requirements. This specificity restricts institutional experimentation and initiative in developing more effective programs.

3. There is a high degree of specificity in authorization for practice. This results in: (a) removal of responsibility for staff assignments from local school authorities; (b) arbitrary restriction of staff assignments without regard to size and resources of school districts; (c) deeply specialized interests and concerns among specialized groups which may be discouraging to cooperative planning of curriculum.

4. There are definite shortcomings in current requirements and procedures in issuing credentials on direct application. This applies not only to certification of candidates prepared out-of-state. By opinion of the Attorney-General, an individual prepared in California institutions has the same privilege of presenting an accumulation of course credits to meet certification requirements. As a result: (a) the carefully designed

programs of preparing institutions may be bypassed by direct application; (b) there are no adequate procedures to guarantee personal and physical fitness equivalent to the guarantee provided by institutional procedures (Committee on Revision of the Credential Structure in California, 1955).

Unfortunately, as so often has occurred when changes in the credentialing process have been proposed, various segments of the profession were threatened by these statements and additional committees examined the matter. When legislation was finally developed and approved a decade later, it failed to respond to most of the concerns set forth in the 1955 Report. If anything, the conditions cited then as problems needing attention have grown worse in the intervening years.

While the media have given considerable attention to the quality of teachers and teaching in the past few years, among professional educators and within colleges and universities it has been a concern for decades. Following World War II a former president of Harvard, James Conant, focused attention on the matter through a series of widely read books and articles. Again, following the launching of Sputnik, schools and teachers were widely held responsible for the perceived lack of development in the fields of science and mathematics. In the 1970's the issue rose to the surface again in connection with declining test scores, the ineffectiveness of inner-city schools in coping with the special needs of minority students, concern for the state of discipline and the values being promoted in schools, and the general loss of confidence in the public school system by a large

segment of the public. In very recent years the concern over the quality of teachers has centered on the claim that test scores of high school students planning to teach have apparently declined and on the possibility that many of the brightest teaches leave the profession after only a few years. Surely, the public has come to believe control of teacher education and who becomes a teacher are keys to addressing this problem. Unfortunately, equal attention is not being given to other social and economic factors that have contributed to the current situation in the schools.

It is important to recognize that "the public" is not of one voice in these matters. The multitude of special interest groups that are now such important voices of differing social, political, and religious viewpoints in this country want very different things of teachers and schools. Control of teacher certification is obviously one means for influencing what takes place in schools. Further complicating the picture is the fact that professional educators--classroom teachers, administrators, college and university faculty who prepare teachers, counselors and other education specialists--also have sharp disagreements about professional education and certification.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION*

For about 30 years, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has accredited programs in teacher education in the United States. While other agencies accredit school-connected programs in several specialties, the generic accreditation offered by NCATE has prevailed and the Council recognized by the regulatory agencies of the federal government (the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and its precursors) as the responsible agency in teacher education.

In the beginning, NCATE was produced by a coalition representing the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), the National Education Association (NEA), and the chief state school officers. These agencies began to act collectively to promote quality standards and attempt to protect the integrity of teacher education through a process of "peer" assessment and self-regulation.

While the number of institutions accredited for teacher education has increased steadily, a minority of schools, colleges, or departments of education belong to NCATE. About 40% of the total number of teacher-preparing institutions have volunteered for NCATE accreditation. Included in the group accredited by NCATE are a majority of the larger institutions; probably as many as 80% of the people entering teaching complete programs approved by NCATE.

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*Portions of the section on accreditation were previously given as an invited paper to a Symposium on Program Evaluation in Teacher Education sponsored by the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, Austin, Texas, April 21-23, 1982.

In several critical ways NCATE is dissimilar from accrediting agencies in the more prestigious professions like law and medicine. In virtually all states a prospective practitioner cannot sit for the state examination without first completing a program at an accredited law or medical school. In education that is simply not the case, a fact which greatly diminishes the significance of NCATE actions. Further, in other professions control of the accrediting process is firmly in the hands of practitioners. While law school professors or medical school deans, for example, may be part of the accreditation scene, it is clear that control is in the hands of the "bar" or the medical examiners. Only in the most exaggerated definition of the terms "control" or "practitioner" could NCATE be considered under the control of the profession. Rather, governance of NCATE bears some resemblance to a parliamentary government with several equal-sized factions; in NCATE's "parliament" there are three factions (AACTE, NEA, other constituent organizations, e.g., National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Association of School Psychologists). The passage of policy or the making of accreditation decisions depends upon some coalition between and among the members of the three groups.

NCATE differs in some degree from other accrediting agencies also in terms of its basic purpose. While accrediting agencies are both "developmental" in the sense that they attempt to help an institution improve its programs and "regulatory" in that they try to drive out inferior programs, accrediting agencies in many other fields tip the scale toward the regulatory end. They do have the power to control entry into the profession because graduates of nonaccredited institutions cannot practice. NCATE has operated until quite recently under

what could be called a policy of "watchful stimulation"; the Council sought to aid the cause of teacher education by pointing out weaknesses in programs but allowing provisional accreditation to be awarded pending changes in the program. This policy has changed in the last few years, and the Council is now far more aggressive. It has declared itself to be the "standard bearer" for the consumer, abolished provisional accreditation, toughened its evaluative criteria, and increased substantially the percentage of negative accreditation decisions. It should be borne in mind that NCATE is not effectively linked with the process of certification and licensing in states and, hence, is a weak accreditation process compared to law and medicine. Nonetheless, these recent changes have been dramatic and not without serious consequences for colleges and universities. The fact that NCATE is basically "toothless" does not remove serious embarrassment and/or public relations problems for institutions denied accreditation.

The recent surge of self-consciousness and muscle flexing by NCATE was accompanied (and perhaps caused) by a nationwide increase in the institutional approval activities of state governments. The states, of course, have always possessed the legitimate power reserved for them to regulate higher, and hence teacher, education. But until very recently, the policies of state departments toward teacher education could best be described as one of benign (albeit in some instances, malevolent) neglect. Within the past decade, however, most of the 50 states have established review processes to evaluate both institutions and programs in teacher education. Whether conducted through the state bureaucracy (the department of public instruction or state departments of education) or through teacher-dominated licensing

boards, these efforts bear an amazing similarity to what NCATE does in that they employ similar evaluative processes and standards. It is true that state approval processes are mandatory and exist mainly for purposes of consumer protection, while NCATE is voluntary and, as noted before, has both developmental and regulatory goals. Nonetheless, the NCATE process and those of the various state agencies constitute the primary external influences on programs in teacher education.

It is a contention of this analysis that both processes, state and national, can be beneficial to teacher education and its clients, but that they contain serious flaws that threaten their integrity and, hence, diminish their contributions to quality control in teacher education.

NCATE's Process of Evaluation

The process employed by NCATE involves a maximum of five steps.

1. An institution decides to apply for accreditation and prepares an institutional report (IR) that covers each program presented for accreditation. The IR explains and describes the program in some detail, indicates how the institution attempts to meet all of the NCATE standards, and provides a set of baseline data about the programs and the institution.

2. The NCATE office appoints a team chair who leads an evaluation team to campus for no more than three days. During the visit the team conducts interviews, examines records and other documents, interviews students and faculty in an attempt to "validate" claims made by the institution in the IR. Before the team leaves

campus, it determines by consensus whether the institution meets or does not meet each of the NCATE standards and whether the institution has strengths or weaknesses in any of them.

3. Under the leadership of the team chair, the Visiting Team prepares a written report containing the results of the Team's consensus on the standards and its analysis of the quality of the programs at the institution. The institution receives a copy of this report and may file a rejoinder presenting evidence that the team may have overlooked or challenging interpretations or criticisms made by the team.

4. At two of its three regular annual meetings, the Council takes up accreditation cases and decides whether each institution's programs are accreditable or not. Audit committees composed of three Council members are formed to review materials from the several team visits and prepare recommendations to the Council based upon their audit. Institutions are quickly informed as to the action taken by the Council in regard to their programs.

5. Institutions which are denied accreditation may have Council decisions reviewed by an appeals board. The appeals board may rule in favor of the institution or it may reaffirm the Council's decision. In either case, the appeals board makes a recommendation to the Council, which then takes final action.

The Standards

The process just described is intended to assess whether an institution has met NCATE standards. These standards are of two types, one at each degree level. In NCATE terminology, for example, "Basic

Standards" are those applied to entry-level programs while "Advanced Standards" are applied to graduate or postbaccalaureate programs. The two sets follow similar formats and have similar content, although there are some minor differences reflecting the needs that apply to one or another of the levels.

Each set of standards is organized in six broad categories, reflecting a conventional curriculum concern. Institutions are to determine objectives, decide who the students will be or describe who they are, collect appropriate faculty and physical resources to support the program, and evaluate the results in a systematic fashion. In addition, the entire enterprise must be under the control of a "designated unit" of the faculty. Basically, then, the standards are concerned with the governance of teacher education, its curriculum, the way an institution selects and utilizes faculty and students, the physical resources devoted to teacher education, and its evaluation.

The process for revising standards or adopting new ones is relatively easy. The Council revises or adopts by a two-thirds vote at a regular meeting, assuming that the proposed change has been "disclosed" for a four-month period. This ease of revising encourages frequent changes in standards, and there has been a marked increase in detail and number of standards in the past two decades. In 1960, for example, the statement of standards contained about 4,000 words, while the current ones are more than 50% longer and the 1970 standards midway between the other two. At the present time, there are more than 25 standards in each set compared with 22 in 1970 and only 7 in 1960 (Tom, 1981).

With only a few notable exceptions, the standards are "process" rather than "product" oriented. That is, they mandate that institutions have a given process in place instead of demanding that students acquire competencies in certain prescribed areas. The standards dealing with admission, retention, and advising of students, for example, ask only that a procedure exist for each of these functions rather than describing the desired characteristics of students at entry or exit from the program. Likewise, the curriculum standards mandate that programs be designed to elicit certain behaviors linked to an institution's conception of the teaching role; it does not demand that a given set of objectives be adopted for the program.

How are these standards validated? As noted above, standards are adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council. Since the voting membership of the Council is made up of its three largest constituents in equal proportion, it is clear that a new standard must be acceptable to more than one of the constituent groups. The NEA or the AACTE alone simply does not have the votes to pass a new or revised standard. All standards, then, could be said to possess a kind of "political" validity in that they must be produced through compromise, lobbying, or horse trading. Several standards have an obvious "construct validity." One of the canons of good educational practice, for example, is that all faculty have appropriate educational credentials and be assigned to work in their areas of expertise; few would quarrel with this construct or principle as a criterion for a teacher education program. Other standards lack construct validity, in which case they probably represent a kind of consensus feeling among members of the Council that a given topic or issue (e.g., multicultural

education or education of the handicapped) or that a given procedure (e.g., including students in decision making) must be present in good educational programs for future teachers.

As a group, NCATE standards are most accurately described as broad process goals that outline some desirable directions for teacher education. Clearly, they are not criteria containing operational definitions. On the whole, the standards have questionable validity in the classical meaning of that term and, hence, there is a serious concern among some observers about the reliability of the judgments made using the standards.

The Visiting Team

These standards are applied to the teacher education programs of institutions by the Visiting Teams described earlier. In the last analysis, the Visiting Team Report (VTR) is the major determinant of the Council's accreditation action. As noted, the Council does have other data on which to base its decision (e.g., the IR, the institutional rejoinder to the VTR), and at times the Council overturns the findings of the team. But exceptions here merely prove the rule; a well-written, convincing VTR is very persuasive with the Council. The key team role obviously is that of the chair. The chair sets the tone for the team, plays a major role in assigning and directing the evaluation activities of team members, and has the major responsibility for writing the VTR and for being the liaison between NCATE and the institution for all accreditation matters.

In a typical year, NCATE teams will range in size from about 5 to 16 (with a mode of 9), depending on the size and complexity of the

programs being examined. Because teams are appointed with regard to the need for approximately equal representation from the various constituencies in the NCATE family, assembling an NCATE team is an exercise demanding solomonic wisdom and considerable conceptual dexterity. A typical team will contain representatives of AACTE, NEA, and the specialty constituent organizations in roughly equal proportions and will include as well women, minorities, and students. Typically a team will contain no one who, before the visit begins, knows anyone else on the team, and it would be extremely unlikely that anyone on the team would do another team visit during the same year.

The NCATE schedule most often calls for the team to arrive on a campus on Sunday evening, do its validation and evaluation work on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday morning, and depart Wednesday afternoon following an exit visit at which team judgments are made known to the institution. Deviations from this schedule are rarely made, even when an institution has a full range of graduate and undergraduate programs up for accreditation. Accommodation to the size, complexity, or special needs of a given irstitution is made by expanding the size of the team and/or designating a person as an assistant chair.

Problems with the NCATE Process

All systems of evaluation have problems, and NCATE is no exception. One of its basic problems flows from the fact that teacher education in the United States is a huge enterprise. There are some 1350 institutions with state-approved programs in teacher education. These include some of the most prestigious, the richest, the largest, the weakest, the poorest, and the smallest in the land. Although a

minority of the nation's teacher preparation programs are accredited by NCATE, the magnitude of the task dwarfs that of any other accreditation agency, not to mention the resource base of NCATE. Of the 530 or so institutions accredited by NCATE, each is on a seven-year cycle; thus, about 75-80 institutions must be visited by NCATE teams each year. This number will be increased to some degree by the fact that some institutions typically request accreditation for new programs or for program additions on an "off-cycle" basis. Since NCATE meets only twice a year to consider accreditation decisions, at each of those meetings the Council on the average must act on the applications of 35 to 40 institutions during the two-day meeting. The raw material for the Council's actions is supplied by different teams for each of the institutions, teams that include more than 700 individuals drawn from diverse populations--deans and professors (primarily education but including the liberal arts as well), teachers, administrators, and students. Such accreditation teams, melded from disparate groups, contain people who are professionals in their respective fields, but who are basically unskilled in program evaluation, partially trained, part-time volunteers.

The sheer size and complexity of the problem, then, raise questions about the validity of assessments made for NCATE. Can the Council's criteria and standards have similar meanings and be applied equally and fairly across all of the institutions visited?

Such a question could more easily be answered affirmatively if the standards were uniformly clear and unambiguous. Such does not appear to be the case. Each standard does ask institutions to indicate how a given task or function is performed. For example, the practicum

standard of NCATE (2.3.4) requires that the institution provide its students with "direct, substantial, quality participation in teaching over an extended period of time." While this seems clear, this standard, like all the others, also contains requirements that the program demonstrate somewhat more. As Wheeler notes, "On one level the basic requirements are straightforward and general: a task or function must be performed. But in each component of every family of standards there are requirements that call for the program to demonstrate a high level of performance" (Wheeler, 1980, p. 22).

Wheeler claims the difference between evaluations at the two levels is really the difference between, in his terms, the "presence and absence approach as opposed to the indepth approach." The former places heavy emphasis on whether a task or a function contained in the standard has been performed at all while the latter is concerned fundamentally with how well it has been performed. His observation and analysis indicate that some Teams use only the "presence and absence" while others probe more deeply into the qualitative dimensions of the program.

The point is that the standards contain a host of interrelationships and subtleties. Teams likely interpret these standards differently and, hence, provide differential evaluations. This situation constitutes the insidious "rubber ruler" so graphically described by deans of institutions denied accreditation.

Another problem with NCATE standards involves what has been described as "the implementation of wishes and dreams." This is the tendency to write standards that embody noble goals but make demands

far beyond the limit of our knowledge about teaching or teacher education.

A proposed rule governing bilingual teacher education in one state, for example, enjoins institutions to "apply teaching methods to different ways of learning taking into consideration how differences in culture affect learning." Such a requirement ignores the fact that there is only a very limited descriptive literature pointing to the interaction of culture and learning and that literature is not sufficiently developed to provide a basis for making the kind of diagnostic, clinical assessments called for in the rule. Several NCATE standards share this characteristic. The standards on multicultural and special education (among others) call for institutions to develop competencies in their students that are not well specified and/or that exceed the existing knowledge base. Without taking issue with the intent of these rules or their status as laudable goals for American schools, it must be noted that our knowledge base is simply not powerful enough to enable us to work the kinds of miracles these standards require. Except in the most general sense, we do not have the knowledge and skill needed to make prescriptive, clinical judgments.

Still another major problem is the composition and quality of the Visiting Teams. The process of appointing NCATE teams avoids some and perhaps most of the fallacies usually encountered in establishing teams of assessors (e.g., institutions cannot use a veto to build a "sweetheart" team). But as Scriven notes, the basic fallacy in selection of panels is "supposing that subject matter expertise in some traditional discipline is the only kind of expertise needed for evaluation" (Scriven, 1980, p. 107).

Typically, NCATE team members are chosen with more regard for their professional associations, gender, and race than for their ability to apply the tools of evaluation. NCATE does conduct training sessions of a few hours duration for both team members and chairs, but the sessions are generally anecdotal in nature.

This section has been sharply critical of NCATE, its standards, and process of evaluation. We do need to stress that NCATE evaluation has many strengths and that the organization does much good work (see, e.g., comments by Wheeler, 1980). It is also true that most of the problems with NCATE which lead to the several flaws noted previously are not unique to that organization but are shared with accrediting agencies in the other professions.

The basic question, though, is whether NCATE can become a powerful force for quality assurance in teacher education. The answer is probably not, at least as NCATE is presently constituted and situated. One problem which is unique to NCATE is the tremendous scope of its activities; it attempts to apply its standards over a very large number of diverse institutions, a task which exceeds its resource base by a considerable margin. Of course, some changes can be made to strengthen NCATE's hand. One key change would be to make national accreditation mandatory through new requirements that only graduates of accredited institutions would be granted certification by states. This would immediately enhance the status of NCATE and allow the organization to insist on conditions for teacher education similar to those of other professional schools (e.g., more "clinical" training, a better resource base, more functional relationships with practitioners). Moving in such directions cannot be accomplished by

NCATE alone; a number of influential groups would have to join such an effort because mandatory accreditation must be accepted by the individual states before it could become a reality.

State Program Review

In addition to the program reviews involved in NCATE accreditation, most teacher education programs are also subject to review by the several states. The state educational agencies typically require that individuals have completed an approved collegiate program in teacher education before they can apply for a teaching credential or license. The practices among states in this regard vary widely. In some states the program requirements and review process are so inconsequential as to be insignificant as controls over teacher preparation. Increasingly, however, state agencies are developing and implementing very detailed program standards and conducting site visits similar to those of NCATE. These reviews tend to be mandatory, and, unlike NCATE, a program cannot continue to operate without state approval. At this point it is an accepted fact that states have the power to deny certification to anyone who has not completed a state-approved program, and that is a very powerful tool in shaping and controlling college and university programs.

Because the review procedures are similar to those of NCATE, the problems and weaknesses are similar. The number of programs to be reviewed is more manageable, of course. There is a definite trend toward very specific, lengthy requirements for each teaching field such as mathematics, social studies, and elementary education. This specificity produces collegiate programs that are more and more alike.

While this provides some degree of consumer protection, it also limits experimentation and the ability of a given institution to build programs utilizing whatever is unique in that institution. For example, rather than specifying that 36 semester hours of college-level mathematics will be required for a teacher of secondary school mathematics, a state may require that those 36 hours include a course in elementary matrix and linear algebra, one in college geometry, one in the history of mathematics, one in elementary number theory, and so on.

As might be imagined, considerable controversy is often associated with how and by whom state program standards are established. Traditionally university professors played the dominant role. More recently classroom teachers, lay persons, and personnel employed by state agencies have been involved and in some cases have taken over the development of program criteria and content. In some states the state program reviews so closely resemble the NCATE reviews that they appear to be redundant or duplicative. Each requires the preparation of hundreds of pages of descriptive material, and direct and indirect costs may run as high as $100,000 for a review of all programs at a large, complex university. The results probably do not justify repeated expenditures of time, energy, and resources of this magnitude.

TEACHER EXAMINATIONS AND TESTING TO ASSESS TEACHER COMPETENCE

A century ago many school districts, counties, and larger cities used written examinations to screen teacher applicants. The

college preparation an individual had acquired was less important than how the individual performed on a test. For reasons outlined earlier in this paper (the tests were too often developed and applied without political goals in mind), the practice was attacked by bureaucratic forces and declined. By the 1940's the testing process had largely disappeared, except in a few large city school systems that still screened and licensed their own teachers. In recent years teacher examinations have come back into vogue and have been reintroduced at the state level as part of the certification process and by some colleges as an indicator of teacher competence. Because this is so, it is important to consider whether or to what extent such examinations are an adequate measure of teacher competence.

The most widely used teacher examination is the National Teacher Examination (NTE) developed by the Educational Testing Service. The several versions of the examination consist of items from the subject area to be taught (such as mathematics or history) and the field of pedagogy. The test items meet contemporary requirements of scientific testing practices with regard to validity and reliability. However, the basic weakness is a rather obvious one that applies to all paper-and-pencil tests of teacher competence. The tests determine if the applicant has learned the essentials of the subject to be taught and certain aspects of pedagogy such as human learning or the history and philosophy of education, but the test scores do not tell us if the applicant is or will be an effective teacher. Knowing certain principles of human learning and being able to implement them in a fifth-grade classroom are very different things. Likewise, knowing set theory in mathematics is not the same as teaching rudiments of set

theory in an effective manner to a group of fifth-grade students. But such principles and knowledge cannot be implemented unless they are known to the teacher. In both cases it would be comforting to know the prospective teacher has acquired the knowledge base necessary for teaching mathematics to fifth graders. Without that knowledge the individual would be very unlikely to be an effective teacher. So the typical teacher examination provides us useful information about a teacher applicant but not nearly enough to permit a confident prediction about future success as a teacher.

Does this fact mean teacher examinations should be abandoned? Clearly the Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools of the Southern Regional Education Board and the several states that have begun using the tests think not. The 1981 Task Force Report stated the following conclusion:

> "There is criticism that tests measure only content and not the ability of the teacher to transmit that content to students. However, teachers cannot teach what they do not know. If tests can be devised to measure the ability to teach as well, these too would be useful. In the meantime, it is important to determine the extent of mastery a prospective teacher has of a subject area."

There is a particularly troubling implication in this statement. Few people today take the NTE or a similar teacher examination unless they have completed a collegiate major in the subject field being examined plus some courses in pedagogy. But apparently it is necessary to determine if English literature majors have acquired a knowledge of English literature, history majors a knowledge of history,

chemistry majors a knowledge of chemistry, and so on. To the extent they have not, it is an indictment of the entire undergraduate instructional program for the colleges and universities these individuals have attended. As discussed elsewhere in this document, in the United States there is a college or university that will admit almost everyone, but perhaps not all those institutions should be permitted to prepare teachers. It is the case, for example, that in one state sixty or seventy percent of the graduates of some colleges fail to achieve a score on the NTE which was identified as acceptable by the state agency, while less than five percent of the graduates of other colleges fail to achieve that score. Perhaps that fact is the most compelling argument in favor of teacher examinations.

It is important, however, that the public understand the limitation and pitfalls of teacher examinations. They were largely abandoned decades ago for very good reasons and, despite advances in the science of testing, they must be used with care today. Does such a test, for example, assess the essential competencies a teacher should possess? This obviously requires consensus as to what those competencies are, no easy chore. Neither state accreditation procedures nor the NCATE accreditation process give any attention to the assessment of such fundamental skills. And what level of competence should be expected from a novice as compared to a ten-year veteran teacher?

If testing is to be used as part of the certification process, there is need for considerable research and experimentation. While we have assumed that little can be learned about teaching effectiveness in a testing situation, the use of video tapes to present

classroom or other teaching situations for analysis may change that. Intensive efforts are now under way to examine the feasibility of increasing our ability to assess teacher competence, and these should be encouraged and supported. An alternative to the development of a standardized testing situation would be assessment of competence on the job. This, of course, is not only expensive but has a number of other serious problems. Who will make such judgments? On what criteria? On what legal basis will individuals be judged as poor teachers and denied the right to teach? Teacher unions have a great interest in these questions, as do school boards and parents. Traditionally school boards determined who was a competent teacher, but that is now a shared decision with the bases for judgment quite controversial.

If paper-and-pencil tasks become the primary basis for licensing teachers, the relative importance of national accreditation and state program approval will diminish. The reputation of college and university programs preparing teachers will be based largely on the success rate of graduates who take the tests. As always, of course, the subject matter actually covered by the individual test items will influence what prospective teachers study and the elements built into programs offered by colleges and universities. The tests will become the critical element in the entire teacher preparation/certification process, not the standards set by a state, by NCATE, or by professional organizations.

At this point in time the only "test" we have of teaching effectiveness is extended observation of an individual actually teaching. Rarely has any group or agency taken responsibility for this task--not even school districts who employ teachers and presumably have

the most to lose if they continue to keep ineffective teachers on their staff. It may be time to spend the money and develop the teams of trained observers to perform this function as a part of the teacher licensing process.

EXTENDED TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

A few states and universities have mandated that preservice teacher preparation shall go beyond the normal four-year undergraduate program and extend to five or six years. The pros and cons of such programs have been presented extensively in the literature, and the arguments will not be repeated in detail here. Probably the primary pressures for this have been created by the proliferation of requirements for teacher certification, the increasing demands placed upon teachers by increasing state and federal regulation (e.g., "mainstreaming"), and the belief that a longer period of supervised practice as a teacher was desirable. Proponents of extended programs would argue that the prospective teacher needs more time to learn the subject or subjects to be taught as well as more time to develop teaching skills.

Despite the considerable attention given the desirability of a five- or six-year program for well over a decade, few have been implemented. The obstacles are substantial, particularly for the large number of four-year colleges preparing teachers. The relationship between the cost of a college education and teachers' salaries is an obvious factor; it is unlikely that large numbers of capable people will choose to spend five years preparing to teach with earning

prospects as poor as they are now. The same is true for minorities and the poor, both of which have serious financial problems in attending college for four years. It is difficult to devise a fifth-year program that meets the needs of the student, the supervising teachers, the school system, and the college or university. The fact that most plans cost some or all of these involved parties money beyond that needed for the traditional four-year program is a substantial barrier to change.

Frequently changes in certification and licensing are a part of an extended teacher preparation plan. Upon completion of the initial four years of undergraduate study, a student may, for example, be given a temporary teaching certificate entitling the individual to engage in an intensive year or more of clinical teaching under the supervision of a experienced teacher or a team made up of a teacher, an administrator, and a college professor of education. Many variations of this scenario have been used or proposed. Full certification and the issuing of a license to teach under such systems come only after completing the fifth or sixth year and being recommended by the supervisor or supervisors.

If all parties to such a plan had the time, dedication, and skill to carry it out effectively, the advantage over the traditional four-year program could be substantial. Properly conducted clinical practice is, however, costly, and to this point few states are prepared to pay the price for preparing more effective teachers. In general, individuals are certified to teach, given a license, and sent out to sink or swim with little assistance from anyone. Many college faculty and experienced elementary and secondary teachers would welcome the opportunity to provide assistance if their workloads permitted it.

If extended teacher preparation programs and altered certification and licensing regulations related to them are to have a substantial positive effect on teacher quality, such programs must be more than another year of the traditional pattern of course work. Perhaps an ideal scheme would postpone a "fifth year" until a new teacher has taught as an apprentice for at least two years and knows areas of personal weakness both in subject matter mastery and pedagogical skill. In any case, simply requiring the current group of undergraduates in teacher education programs to attend college five years instead of four and delaying certification one year holds little promise of positive results. If, however, the development of a preservice program extending beyond four academic years provides the stimulus for a fundamental revamping of teacher preparation that enhances program quality, it is well worth the effort and is to be encouraged.

Proposals involving five- or six-year preparation programs have often included the provision that certification and licensure occur only after the prospective teacher has demonstrated over a considerable period of time the ability to perform effectively in a real classroom. The traditional few weeks of part-time apprenticeship with a regular teacher is replaced by as much as a year of teaching in a regular school under the close scrutiny of one or a team of experienced individuals. This suggests that certification to teach should occur <u>after</u> reasonable assurance has been given that the applicant can indeed teach effectively. Historically, certification has typically provided the opportunity to search for a job and see whether or not you could be successful as a teacher.

In addition, extended preparation programs are recognition that teaching in the elementary and secondary schools today is a very complex task requiring greater knowledge of subject matter than ever before, the ability to work with students of varying social and ethnic backgrounds as well as physical, mental, and emotional characteristics, and in a society that appears to lack a high degree of consensus as to the purposes of schooling and the values to be fostered in schools. Should a license to teach signify that an individual has demonstrated mastery of all these facets of teaching? It certainly has not in the past, but increasingly questions are being raised concerning the level of skill and competence that should be expected of someone holding a teaching license. Proposals for extended training programs are one manifestation of that concern.

PART III

Recommendations and Conclusions

In this paper we have discussed and analyzed the major issues involved in the certification and licensure of teachers and in the accreditation and approval of colleges and universities to offer programs in teacher education. Most of this discussion and analysis has centered on the relationship between these processes and the quality of the teaching cadre in the United States. Our analysis has led to the basic conclusion that the processes of program accreditation and teacher certification have only limited value in addressing the current concerns about teacher quality.

While statements of standards are essential to define the nature of the teaching field and the competencies desired, they do not in themselves assure a high level of performance by classroom teachers. They can be very helpful in eliminating obvious incompetence, and in some states changes are needed to assure that that occurs. On the other hand, increasingly detailed sets of qualifications for teaching appear to have little relationship to the quality of teaching. Training programs are obviously important, and an essential factor is the quality of those attracted to teaching, the relative academic and personal attributes of those individuals compared to the general population. Teacher education programs must be selective, within realistic limits, but standards cannot be set at a level which limits access to teaching to only the "best and the brightest." The size of the teaching cadre alone (there are about two million teachers in the United States) prohibits limiting admission to only those who score in

the extreme upper limits of the college entrance exams. It is simply the case that teaching is a mass occupation which must be nourished by drawing from a fairly wide spectrum of the American population, socially and economically, as well as intellectually. Nonetheless, teaching must be made attractive to a significant number of the best and the brightest young people from each generation. Teaching must draw from a range of abilities, and the upper end of this range must certainly be maintained. Whether this is possible will depend increasingly on whether or not teachers are highly valued and their salaries, status, and working conditions become competitive in the job market.

Certainly, as well, those young people who choose teaching as a career must be well trained. Teacher education programs must be more conscious of findings of research on good teaching and adjust their programs accordingly. Increased effort should be directed at assessing the quality of the prospective teacher at the time of exit from the program; this would entail more extensive practice in teaching under very careful supervision, and improved linkages between higher education and the schools.

While we believe that changes in certification and accreditation processes alone will not make fundamental improvements in the quality of teachers and teacher education, alterations in these processes are necessary if movement is to be made toward the basic goals. Our analysis leads us to recommend the following.

1. The tendency in recent years to increase the specific course requirements that must be met by prospective teachers should be halted. General standards that require a reasonable level of academic

accomplishment in both general education and pedagogy are needed to eliminate the incompetent. Beyond that there is no evidence that extremely elaborate and restrictive sets of requirements contribute to teacher effectiveness in the classroom.

2. Attention must be given to the identification of teacher competence and how it may be assessed. Evaluation specialists should be encouraged and supported in efforts to develop more appropriate and reliable assessment instruments and processes than now exist.

3. The states should seriously consider requiring an examination of all entry-level teachers, covering both their subject matter preparation and the principles of pedagogy. This examination should be normed on a national population so comparisons may be made between and among states. Such tests could be constructed by an individual state, or the National Teacher Examination could be used.

4. Should also consider seriously requiring an internship experience of at least one full year of teaching under the careful supervision of college supervisor and master teacher. Such a requirement is not likely to be effective unless the intern has time to learn (e.g., reduced teaching responsibilities), and provision for same should be included.

5. States should consider putting all certification under a "sunset" arrangement; that is, issue an initial certificate for a short period of time and, at the end of that period, issue a subsequent license only upon demonstration of competent teaching.

6. Overlap and redundancy now exist between state approval of schools, colleges, and departments of education and their programs and NCATE accreditation. Both state agencies and NCATE approve or

accredit programs or categories of programs, as well as the institutions. This redundancy should be eliminated and/or greatly reduced by focusing NCATE accreditation on institutional characteristics rather than the specifics of program evaluation and encouraging state agencies to focus their efforts solely on programs.

7. The NCATE process should be restructured so as to provide rigorous evaluation of teacher education units (schools, colleges, or departments of education) based upon five basic characteristics: (1) the financial commitment (or other data indicating a solid resource base) made to teacher education by the college or university; (2) the preparation, quality, and vigor of the faculty in teacher education; (3) the quality (e.g., entry characteristics) of the students who are accepted into teacher education; (4) the characteristics of students as they leave the program with particular attention to both knowledge of subject and pedagogy and practical abilities in teaching; and (5) the nature and quality of the linkage between the teacher education program and the schools.

8. This rigorous evaluation should be used to eliminate mediocre or substandard teacher education programs (e.g., those programs that cannot meet the criteria necessary to mounting and sustaining a quality program).

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