

# **Teacher Preparation and Development**

**Edie Harding  
Barbara McLain  
with  
Sue Anderson**

**August 1999**

Washington State Institute for Public Policy  
110 East Fifth Avenue, Suite 214  
Post Office Box 40999  
Olympia, Washington 98504-0999  
Telephone: (360) 586-2677  
FAX: (360) 586-2793  
URL: <http://www.wa.gov/wsipp>  
Document No. 99-08-2901

# WASHINGTON STATE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY

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Additional reports on teacher preparation and development are available from the Institute:

The following information in this report, including case studies and detailed appendices, are available in expanded versions:

- State Policies to Assure Teacher Quality
- Pre-service Teacher Preparation
- Beginning Teacher Assistance
- Professional Certification

Separate reports on teacher preparation and development include:

- Alternative Certification Programs in Washington and Across the Nation
- Survey Responses from Beginning Teacher and Principal Questionnaires

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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An **Ad Hoc Committee** comprised of the following members served as advisors to the Institute staff in their research:

- Dr. Nick Brossoit, Superintendent of the Tumwater School District
- Ms. Carolyn Busch, Education Policy Advisor to the Governor
- Dr. Pamela Grossman, Faculty, College of Education at the University of Washington
- Ms. Georgia Lindquist, Professional Development Coordinator at Lake Washington School District
- Dr. Luetta Monson, Faculty, Center for Teaching and Learning at Central Washington University
- Dr. Gene Sharratt, Superintendent of Educational Service District 171
- Dr. Dennis Sterner, Dean School of Education at Whitworth College
- Dr. Kathe Taylor, Research Associate for the Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Ms. Susan Trimmingham, Chair Washington Advisory Council for Professional Teaching Standards
- Ms. Sarah Tronvig, Student and PEAB member at St. Martin's College
- Dr. Michael Vavrus, Director of the Master's in Teaching Program at The Evergreen State College

### **Research Contributors to this Study:**

- Dr. Ted Andrews, retired Director of the Office of Professional Education and Certification, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Dr. Bev Kooi, Education and Community Consulting, Olympia Washington
- Mr. Gary Burris, Administrative Coordinator for the Center for Educational Improvement at The Evergreen State College

### **Survey Assistance:**

- The Social and Economic Sciences Research Center at Washington State University

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### Overview

The 1993 Washington Education Reform Act set high expectations and high stakes for improving student learning. Washington, like most other states, has relied on three strategies to implement education reform:

- **Statewide standards:** performance goals for students have been defined;
- **Statewide performance assessment:** students are tested in 4th, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10th grades; and
- **Accountability:** students who do not achieve the 10th grade certificate of mastery will not receive their high school diplomas; school districts are responsible for improving student learning.

The high stakes associated with education reform raise questions about how students are being taught. Teachers are charged with helping students meet the state's academic standards. There is no clear evidence that current teachers are poorly prepared or unqualified, but the state has established very high expectations for student learning. Is the state ensuring that teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet the new academic standards?

In the spring of 1998, the Board of Directors for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) directed staff to undertake a study of teacher quality in light of the high stakes of education reform.

### Institute Study: Teacher Quality and Three Early Stages of a Teacher's Career

The Institute examined three teacher preparation and development programs covering the early stages of a teacher's career:

- Pre-service Teacher Preparation (Residency Certificate)
- Beginning Teacher Assistance
- Professional Certification

The Institute obtained information on the three programs through case studies, surveys, and interviews. All new teachers who were hired by public schools between 1996 and 1998 were sent written surveys along with all public school principals. We also reviewed the history of teacher preparation and development in Washington and research literature on teacher quality, analyzed data on certification and employment of teachers in Washington's public schools, and summarized activities related to teacher quality in other states.

## **State Policies to Assure Teacher Quality**

**Washington State.** Many different entities are involved in overseeing policies for the various stages of a teacher's career. These entities include the legislature, the State Board of Education (SBE), universities, professional associations, school districts, and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Because there are so many participants, it can be difficult to develop a consensus about common principles to guide policies for teacher preparation and development. Washington is a state with a strong tradition for maintaining accountability at the local level through the colleges of education and local school districts.

**State Policy Tools to Influence Teacher Quality.** Across the country, education reform has generated new interest in teacher quality. States rely on a number of policy tools to influence teacher quality, including standards for knowledge and skills, statewide assessments or tests, accountability for teacher preparation, beginning teacher assistance, recruitment and retention, alternative certification, teacher evaluation, teacher professional development, and teacher salaries. With the exception of statewide assessments, Washington has used all these policy tools, although not all are currently in use statewide, such as minority recruitment and alternative certification.

**Research.** Educational research has tried to identify indicators of teacher quality that have an impact on student achievement. Most studies have mixed findings regarding the impact of a teacher's education degree level, subject matter major, length of experience, or teacher performance on tests. However, recent studies in Tennessee and Texas found that an effective teacher can make a difference on test scores of individual students.

**The strategies to improve student learning are statewide standards, statewide performance assessments, and accountability. These strategies could also be used in Washington for teacher preparation and development in order to encourage effective teaching.**

## **Pre-service Teacher Preparation (Residency Certificate)**

In 1997-98, SBE revised the standards and subject matter endorsements for candidates in teacher preparation programs. These changes are being phased-in over a three-year period. The major premise in the new standards is that teacher candidates must show they can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning. Teacher preparation programs have until August 2000 to submit their revised programs for SBE approval under the new standards.

The Institute found that the 22 teacher preparation programs in Washington are changing to meet the challenges of education reform. They have incorporated state learning goals into class work, and they have expanded field experiences. Overall, 60 percent of beginning teachers and principals report teacher preparation programs met or exceeded their expectations in preparing teachers for today's classrooms.

Regarding teacher candidates and recent graduates, the Institute found:

- The average grade point average (GPA) in 1998 of undergraduates entering teacher preparation programs is higher than the average GPA of all undergraduates at public institutions.
- Eighty-eight percent of program graduates in Washington State in 1996-97 went to work as teachers or substitutes.
- Twenty-seven percent of the new teachers reported teaching outside their endorsement area part of the time.

However, the Institute also found that the basic skills requirements set by the legislature for entry into teacher preparation programs are broad enough for almost anyone to pass. It is unclear whether the basic skills tests or proficiencies currently used for admission to teacher preparation programs are adequate to test the basic skills required for all students under Washington's Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). There are no statewide assessments to determine whether teacher candidates meet the standards for a residency certificate. Over 75 percent of principals and new teachers surveyed by the Institute favored testing candidates for basic skills, subject matter, and pedagogy.

Some challenges remain for teacher preparation programs:

- Improving instructional strategies for at-risk and special needs students;
- Using a variety of assessment techniques to monitor student progress;
- Finding and supporting high quality student teacher placements; and
- Measuring positive impact on student learning.

There is no clear process for how SBE would determine that a teacher preparation program is out of compliance with the new state standards for program approval.

**Increased consistency across teacher preparation programs is needed to ensure teacher candidates meet common minimum levels of performance.**

## **Beginning Teacher Assistance**

Parents and the public have the same expectations for teachers regardless of how long they have been teaching. Research shows that beginning teachers need support to prevent burnout from stress and assistance with basic teaching skills to become more effective teachers. Washington has provided state funds for mentors, training, and release time for observations since 1985 through the Teacher Assistance Program (TAP).

The Institute found that for 1997-98, state TAP funds covered 80 percent of first-year teachers. Although the 1999 Legislature more than doubled the appropriation for the TAP program, the increased funding for 1999-2001 may still not reach all new teachers because state funds are distributed before all teachers are hired. School district programs, mentors, and training tend to focus on issues of emotional support and basic teaching skills for first-year teachers. Half the beginning teachers and three-quarters of the principals surveyed by

the Institute said these programs made a difference in helping new teachers get through their first year.

However, the Institute also found that principals and beginning teachers were less positive about whether assistance programs made a difference in improving specific knowledge and skills, such as classroom management or incorporating the state's learning standards into curriculum and lesson plans. Most assistance programs rely on mentors with full-time teaching loads, and arranging time to work specifically on building knowledge and skills of new teachers can be difficult. Beginning teachers report limited opportunity for mentors to observe them teach. The state has not set expectations for what assistance programs are intended to accomplish. Reports from school districts, principals, and beginning teachers are mixed on whether such expectations are set locally.

**The state beginning teacher assistance program has not been changed to reflect increased expectations for improved student learning under education reform.**

## **Professional Certification**

SBE has changed requirements for ongoing certification of teachers from input-driven (45 quarter college credits and one year of experience) to performance-based (demonstration of knowledge and skills and positive impact on student learning). Teachers graduating after August 2000, and having two years of experience, will have to enroll in a program developed collaboratively by a university and school districts to obtain a professional certificate. Certificate programs have been pilot-tested since 1997 with 75 teachers.

The Institute found that the pilot projects focused on practical knowledge and skills teachers could readily apply in their classrooms to improve student learning. Active involvement of both universities and school districts in the projects appeared to be a main factor in maintaining this practical focus. The course work in the pilot projects was different from course work current teachers typically take for continuing certification.

However, the Institute also found that the collaboration between universities and school districts in the pilot projects is not feasible or affordable on a statewide basis for the more than 1,500 candidates expected to enroll annually. The level of performance from candidates in the pilot projects may be too rigorous to expect from all teachers. It is not clear how SBE will determine that a program's candidates have met the standards for professional certification in a consistent and fair way. It is also not clear, based on the pilot projects, how certificate programs will deal with ensuring access, enrolling teachers who have advanced degrees and experience, or providing mentoring and assistance to candidates.

**The professional certificate is not ready for statewide implementation. Increased oversight is needed to ensure candidates demonstrate common minimum levels of performance. Alternatively, the state could consider developing a state-administered assessment of teacher performance.**



## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

In Washington, reliance on statewide standards, statewide performance assessments, and clear accountability for assuring teacher quality varies depending on the stage of teacher preparation and development. There are no consistent statewide standards for what teachers should know and be able to do that address each stage of a teacher's career. No statewide assessments measure the knowledge, skills, and performance of pre-service, beginning, or professional-level teachers, although numerous proposals have been made by SBE. Accountability for ensuring teacher quality is largely a local rather than a state responsibility, resting with individual colleges of education or local school districts.

Washington's long tradition of local control has influenced policy choices. There has been limited interest in strong state oversight for teacher preparation and development. However, education reform represents a new level of state involvement in education. The state has set high expectations for improved student learning. If the state wants to ensure teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet the new academic standards, it could also consider a new level of involvement in teacher preparation and development.

### **Statewide Standards**

- Consistent statewide standards of performance for teachers could be developed, with benchmarks for the stages of a teacher's career. The standards could be developed with statewide participation of teachers, higher education faculty, school district personnel, and the public.
- The standards could then be used in all pre-service programs, beginning teacher assistance programs, principals' evaluations of teachers, and professional certificate programs.
- The statutory criteria for principals' evaluations of teachers could align with the new statewide performance standards. (Requires legislative action.)

### **Statewide Performance Assessments**

- All future teachers could take a statewide basic skills test prior to entry into pre-service programs. All teacher candidates could be assessed for content knowledge, and possibly pedagogy, prior to receiving a residency certificate to begin teaching. (Requires legislative action.)
- Beginning teacher assistance programs should incorporate informal performance assessments to encourage beginning teachers and their mentors to work on building knowledge and skills.
- Additional steps could be taken to ensure that performance assessments for professional certification are consistent and fair across certificate programs. Alternatively, a state-administered assessment process could be considered.

## **Accountability**

- There could be clear and explicit criteria to determine that pre-service and professional certificate programs meet state standards for program approval, including periodic follow-up and review of programs and candidate performance. Positive impact on student learning could be clearly defined to ensure it is measured in a consistent way across candidates and programs.
- State funding for beginning teacher assistance programs could be conditioned on a program's use of performance standards and informal performance assessments. State funding for TAP could cover all beginning teachers.
- Issues such as relevance, fairness, and statewide feasibility could be addressed in state approval of professional certificate programs. Alternatively, a state-administered assessment process could be considered.

# I. INTRODUCTION

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In light of the high stakes of education reform, is Washington State ensuring that teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet the state's new academic standards?

States, including Washington, rely on a number of different policy tools to influence teacher quality. Recent research shows that effective teaching practices of individual teachers can increase student learning. Washington could use statewide standards, statewide performance assessment, and accountability to impact effective teaching.

This study reviews state policy tools that influence teacher quality and presents an in-depth review of the early stages of a teacher's career in Washington: pre-service teacher preparation, beginning teacher assistance, and professional certification. How do these programs build knowledge and skills for teachers? How do they incorporate statewide standards, statewide performance assessment, and accountability?

## Overview

The 1993 Washington Education Reform Act set **high expectations** for improving student learning. Washington, like most other states, has relied on three strategies to implement education reform:

- **Statewide standards:** performance goals for students have been defined;
- **Statewide performance assessment:** students are tested in 4th, 7th and 10th grades; and
- **Accountability:** students who do not achieve the 10th grade certificate of mastery will not receive their high school diplomas; school districts are responsible for improving student learning.

The **high stakes** of education reform raise questions about how students are being taught. Teachers are charged with helping students meet the state's academic standards. There is no clear evidence that current teachers are poorly prepared or unqualified, but Washington State has established very high expectations for students. Is the state ensuring that teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet these new academic standards?

## Institute Study: Teacher Quality and Three Early Stages of a Teacher's Career

In the spring of 1998, the Board of Directors for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) directed staff to undertake a study of teacher quality in light of the high stakes of education reform. The following research question was posed:

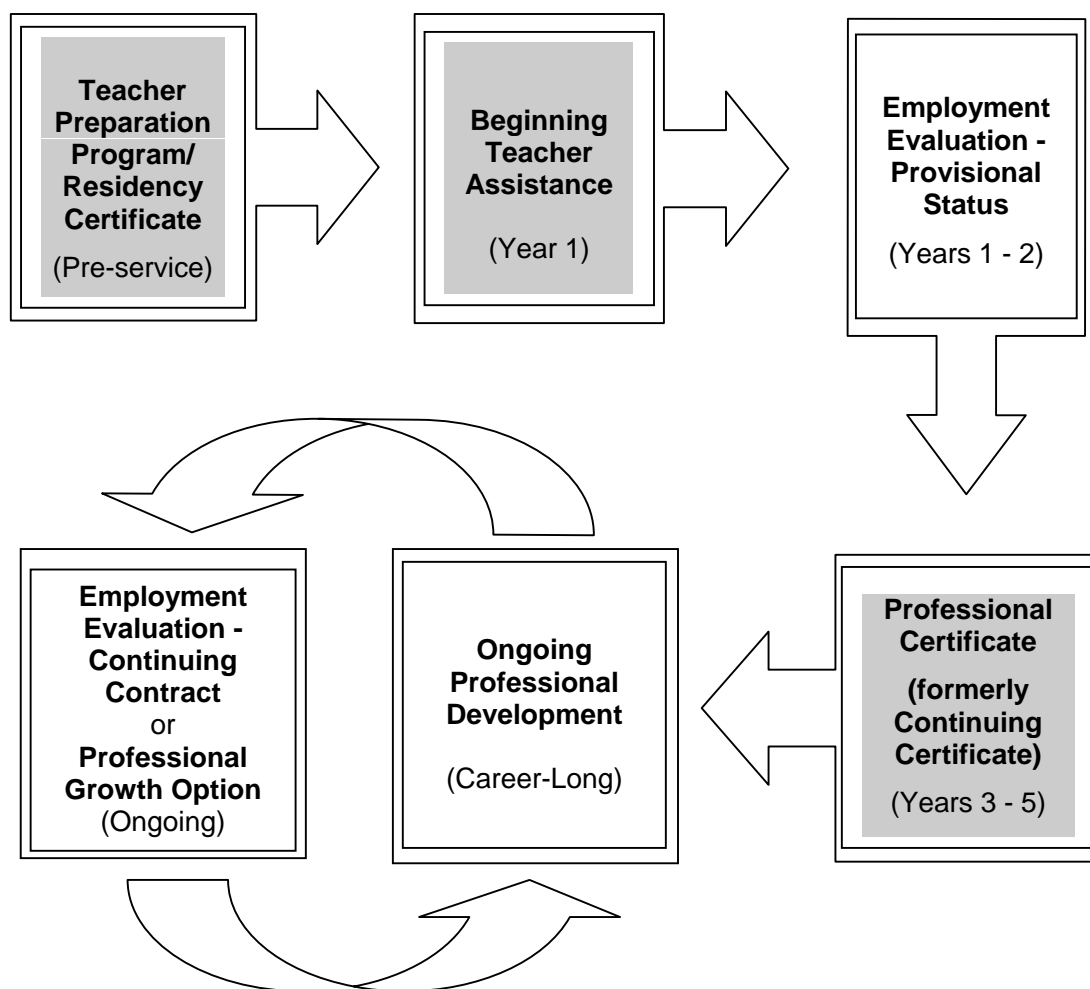
***Are teachers obtaining the knowledge and skills they need to help students meet the state's new academic standards?***

**Study Focus.** Section II of this study provides background on initiatives to improve teacher quality in Washington State as well as at the national level, in other states, and in the academic literature.

As illustrated in Exhibit 1, the Institute examined three teacher preparation and development programs in Washington State, covering the *early* stages of a teacher's career:

- Pre-service Teacher Preparation (Section III);
- Beginning Teacher Assistance (Section IV); and
- Professional Certification (Section V).<sup>1</sup>

***Exhibit 1***  
***Stages of Teacher Preparation and Development in Washington***



<sup>1</sup> An expanded version of each of these sections is available from the Institute.

The Institute gathered information about how these programs build teachers' knowledge and skills. The Institute also identified whether statewide standards, statewide performance assessment, and accountability for assuring teacher quality are part of the programs.

**Methodology.** Institute staff conducted case studies and a number of different surveys to obtain information on Washington's teacher preparation programs, school district beginning teacher assistance programs, and the State Board of Education's (SBE) pilot professional certification projects. Furthermore, all new teachers hired in public schools between 1996 and 1998 and all principals in public schools were surveyed with the assistance of the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center at the Washington State University.<sup>2</sup>

To provide a context for teacher quality issues, the Institute also reviewed a history of teacher preparation and development in Washington;<sup>3</sup> examined research literature on teacher quality;<sup>4</sup> analyzed data on certification and employment of teachers in Washington's public schools;<sup>5</sup> and summarized activities related to teacher quality in other states.

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<sup>2</sup> 3,626 new teachers were surveyed with a response rate of 54 percent; 1,825 principals were surveyed with a response rate of 65 percent.

<sup>3</sup> Ted Andrews, *Teacher Preparation and Development 1983-1998: A Historical Perspective*, (Olympia, WA, 1999). This research paper is available from the Institute.

<sup>4</sup> Beverly Kooi, *Effective Teacher Preparation for Educational Reform in Washington State*, (Olympia, WA, 1999); Gary Burris, *The Impact of Teaching, Learners and Schools on Student Achievement in a Standards Based Environment*, (Olympia, WA, 1999). These research papers are available from the Institute.

<sup>5</sup> Data from 1988-1998 on certificated staff provided by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

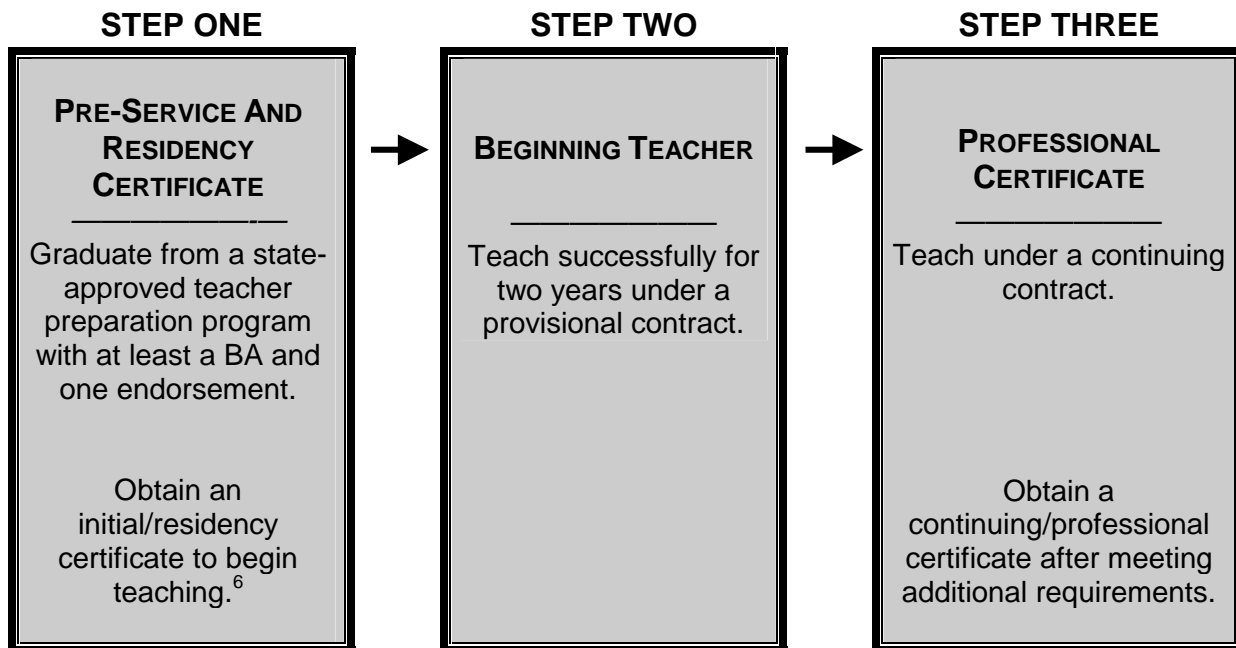


## II. STATE POLICIES TO ASSURE TEACHER QUALITY

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### The Basic Steps to Become a Teacher in Washington

To become a teacher in Washington State, three basic steps are required:



The state's primary interest in teacher preparation is to ensure that teacher candidates meet certain minimum qualifications and that the students they teach have the opportunity to learn in a safe environment.<sup>7</sup> For these reasons, the State Board of Education (SBE) has the authority<sup>8</sup> to approve all college teacher preparation programs and to license all teachers who teach in Washington. This license is referred to as a teaching certificate.

Recently, SBE changed its standards for approving pre-service teacher preparation programs and made changes to the residency certificate and professional certificate. See "Appendix A: Teacher Admission and Certification Standards" for a detailed comparison of these changes, which are also discussed in greater depth in later sections of this report.)

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<sup>6</sup> See WAC 180-79A-205 for certification rules for out-of-state candidates which require an appropriate degree and credit hours from a regionally-accredited college or university or an appropriate certificate issued by another state, as well as other requirements.

<sup>7</sup> The legislature has requirements for finger print background checks for teachers.

<sup>8</sup> RCW 28A.410.010. SBE regulations for college of education teacher preparation programs are found in Chapter 180-78A WAC; regulations for teacher certification are found in Chapter 180-79A WAC; regulations for teacher endorsements are found in Chapter 180-82 WAC.

## History of Teacher Preparation and Development Policy in Washington State

Exhibit 2 provides a brief chronology of major state policy changes in teacher preparation and development over the last 40 years.

### *Exhibit 2* **Chronology of Teacher Preparation and Development: Policy Changes in Washington State**

DECADE	MAJOR ACTIONS
<b>Before 1960</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBE specified the number of credits and types of courses in teacher preparation programs.</li> </ul>
<b>1960-1969</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBE implemented a statewide program approval process for teacher preparation programs with an emphasis on general competencies.</li> </ul>
<b>1970-1979</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SBE defined statewide minimum standards of general skills and competencies teacher candidates must acquire.</li> <li>SBE created local oversight committees (now called Professional Educational Advisory Boards or PEABs).<sup>9</sup></li> <li>The legislature developed evaluation criteria for teachers to be used by principals as a part of the review of their job performance.</li> </ul>
<b>1980-1989</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The legislature assumed statewide control over teachers' salaries and began to fund salaries based on education and experience (staff mix).</li> <li>SBE created a standard list of subject area endorsements and assumed control of teacher assignments outside of endorsement area.</li> <li>The legislature created minimum admission requirements for basic skills, scholarships for certain types of teacher candidates (no longer funded), and a requirement for a master's degree (later rescinded). They also provided credit on the salary allocation schedule for in-service training.</li> <li>The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) started a beginning teacher assistance program with funding from the legislature.</li> </ul>
<b>1990-1999</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The legislature debated statewide performance assessments during several legislative sessions, but no authorization was provided to SBE.</li> <li>The legislature increased child safety requirements for certificate applicants, created student teaching centers in Educational Service Districts, established a grant program to recruit potential teachers, and provided funds to train classroom teachers to implement education reform.</li> <li>SBE developed new program approval standards that all 22 teacher</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> PEABs provide feedback to the teacher preparation programs and are comprised of staff from local school districts and faculty from the higher education institutions.



DECADE	MAJOR ACTIONS
<b>1990-1999</b> <i>(continued)</i>	<p>preparation programs must comply with by August 31, 2000, with an emphasis on teacher candidate performance and alignment with education reform. (1997)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SBE modified the requirements for the residency certificate (formerly the initial certificate), changing the time limits permitted for holding a residency certificate. (1997)</li> <li>• SBE changed the requirements of the professional certificate (formerly continuing certificate) to focus on candidate performance. Pilot projects were funded to field test the professional certificate. (1997)</li> <li>• SBE reduced the number of subject area endorsements and aligned them with education reform goals and requirements. (1998)</li> <li>• SBE returned responsibility for out-of-endorsement teacher assignments to local school districts to enhance their flexibility under education reform. (1998)</li> <li>• The legislature provided for teachers to obtain master's degrees (with a preference for math and science teachers), and financial incentives were provided to assist teachers to obtain National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification. (1999)</li> </ul>

In Washington, many different entities are involved in overseeing policies for the various stages of a teacher's career. These entities include the legislature, SBE, universities and colleges, professional associations, school districts, and OSPI. Washington has a strong tradition for maintaining accountability at the local level through the colleges of education and the school districts. (Appendix B details the responsibilities of each of these entities for teacher preparation and development at the different stages of a teacher's career.)

## Teacher Quality Policies

**National.** There is renewed interest at the national level to address issues of teacher quality through national standards for teachers and professional development. Congress has required more accountability from colleges of education and provided grants to states to strengthen state certification standards.<sup>10</sup> The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) have worked with states to create teacher standards.<sup>11</sup> Other national organizations, such as the Thomas Fordham Foundation, argue against national standards and propose that states should "deregulate" and hold schools accountable for results based on increased student achievement.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Act Title II.

<sup>11</sup> For more information on these national organizations and Washington's role in them, see Appendix C.

<sup>12</sup> Marci Kanstoroom and Chester Finn, *Better Schools, Better Teachers*, (Washington DC: Thomas Fordham Foundation, July 1999).

SBE has integrated NCATE and INTASC criteria into their knowledge and skills standard for teacher preparation programs. In the spring of 1999, Washington received a grant from the Stuart Foundation to enter into a partnership with NCTAF to conduct a gap analysis between NCTAF recommendations to improve teacher quality and current policies in Washington for teacher preparation and development. In July 1999, the U.S. Department of Education awarded Washington a three-year grant for \$3.3 million to improve teacher quality.

**State Policy Tools.** Nationwide reforms in education have caused many states to look closely at issues of teacher quality. State policy tools that influence teacher quality include:

- Standards for knowledge and skills for different levels of teacher preparation;
- Statewide assessments or testing for different stages of teacher preparation;
- Oversight accountability of teacher preparation programs or candidates;
- Beginning teacher assistance;
- Recruitment and retention (including alternative routes to certification);
- Teacher evaluation;
- Teacher professional development; and
- Teacher salaries.

With the exception of statewide assessments, Washington has used all of these policy tools. Some, such as minority recruitment, have been discontinued. Others, as discussed later in this report, could be strengthened to increase their effectiveness. The legislature has been primarily concerned with safety issues, basic skills, and financial incentives to provide staff development. SBE has revised its policies on performance standards for teachers and teacher assignment several times over the last 25 years. Since the mid-1980s, SBE has requested statewide teacher assessments but has not gained legislative support. In recent years, SBE has sought to align teacher preparation and development with K-12 reform efforts. SBE has created standards and a program approval process that are intended to focus on teacher performance: ensuring that teachers can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning. (Appendix D examines state policy tools to influence teacher quality in more detail.)

**Literature Review.** “Teacher quality is a complex phenomenon and there is little consensus on what it is or how to measure it.”<sup>13</sup> Research literature has focused on five primary aspects of teacher quality that affect student achievement:

- Degree level;
- Subject expertise;
- Length of experience teaching;
- Teacher performance on tests; and
- Teacher practice in the classroom.

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<sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualification of Public School Teachers*, (Washington, DC: NCES 1999-080, 1999), 1.

There are other important factors that affect student achievement such as student motivation, school organization, and student socioeconomic background,<sup>14</sup> but these are not included within the scope of this research. (For more detail on the Institute's literature review, see Appendix E.)

Based on a review of the literature, we found that most of the studies that attempt to link teacher quality with improved student test scores have mixed findings regarding the impact of a teacher's education degree level, subject matter major, length of experience, or teacher performance on tests. However, recent studies in Tennessee and Texas found that an effective teacher can make a difference on test scores of individual students. (See Appendix E, page E-3.)

**Strategies to Encourage Effective Teaching.** How should the state encourage effective teaching throughout a teacher's career? Based on the literature review, one of the most promising strategies is to concentrate on effective teaching practices. Effective teaching practices can be identified through standards for teacher knowledge and skills. If the standards include benchmarks for different levels of teaching experience, they can serve as a tool to develop and measure a teacher's proficiency over his or her career. An example of a developmental standard for teacher knowledge and skills is illustrated in Exhibit 3. In this example, indicators for "Assessing Student Learning" become increasingly complex as the teacher develops from unsatisfactory to distinguished levels of proficiency.<sup>15</sup> Each subsequent level of proficiency builds sequentially on the knowledge and skills from the previous level. Several of the teacher preparation programs in Washington State use this framework to assess the progress of their teacher candidates. Similar frameworks were developed by pilot projects for the new professional certificate.

**Exhibit 3**  
**Example of an Effective Teaching Standard<sup>16</sup>**

ELEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
<b>ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING</b>	The assessment results affect planning for students minimally.	Teacher uses assessment results to plan for the class as a whole.	Teacher uses assessment results to plan for individuals and groups of students.	Students are aware of how they are meeting the established standards and participate in planning the next steps.

<sup>14</sup> See Gary Burris' paper for information on this topic area.

<sup>15</sup> Charlotte Danielson, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*, (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1996), 60, 120-128.

<sup>16</sup> Danielson, *Enhancing Professional Practice*, 78.

Similar standards for effective teaching practices are part of Washington State's new knowledge and skills requirements for candidates graduating from teacher preparation programs and candidates seeking professional certification. However, Washington's standards for knowledge and skills vary at each stage of teacher preparation and development. The standards do not build sequentially from pre-service preparation to beginning teacher to professional certification and beyond. (See Appendix F for Washington State standards for teacher preparation and development.)

## Summary and Conclusions

**Involvement of Multiple Entities.** Many different entities are involved in determining the standards Washington State teachers need to meet throughout the stages of their teaching career. These entities include the legislature, SBE, universities, professional associations, school districts, and OSPI. Because there are so many participants, it can be difficult to develop a consensus about common principles to guide policies for teacher preparation and development.

**State Policy Tools for Teacher Quality.** With the exception of statewide assessments,<sup>17</sup> Washington has used all of the policy tools typically available to states to address teacher quality. Some policies, such as minority recruitment, have been discontinued. Others, as discussed later in this report, could be strengthened to increase their effectiveness. In recent years, SBE has sought to align teacher preparation and development with K-12 reform efforts. SBE has created standards and a program approval process that are intended to focus on teacher performance: ensuring that teachers can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning. Washington has maintained most of its accountability oversight for teachers at the local level through colleges of education and school districts.

**Research.** Recent research shows that effective teaching by individual teachers can make a difference in improving student learning.

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<sup>17</sup> Since the mid-1980s, SBE has requested statewide teacher assessments but has not gained legislative support.

### III. PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION

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Washington's strategy for ensuring teacher quality at the pre-service level has been through the State Board of Education's adoption of new standards for the 22 teacher preparation programs in 1997. The new program standards have reduced the number of inputs (such as course hours) required. These standards require that candidates have a positive impact on student learning. However, there is no way to determine on a statewide basis that teacher candidates meet common minimum levels of performance. It is up to each pre-service program to make that determination. The State Board of Education rules do not have a defined process for determining a program's compliance with the new standards. There is limited alignment between the pre-service standards and standards for other stages of teachers' careers.

The Institute found that the 22 teacher preparation programs are changing to meet the demands of education reform. They have incorporated the new state learning goals into class work, and they have expanded student teaching field experiences. The majority of new teachers and principals surveyed report that teacher preparation programs met their expectations for learning knowledge and skills needed in today's classrooms. Some additional areas that programs should emphasize include adapting instructional strategies for at-risk and special needs students and using a variety of assessment techniques to monitor student learning.

#### Overview

In 1997, SBE created new standards for candidates in teacher preparation programs that are being phased in over a three-year period. These new standards require teacher candidates to show they can demonstrate a positive impact on student learning. Washington and Oregon are the only states that require a demonstration of positive impact on student learning as part of their state standards for teacher preparation programs. In 1998, SBE revised the endorsements (an endorsement is a subject area specialty such as math) that a teacher must have to obtain a teaching certificate. Changes include a greater alignment with EALRs and more hours of academic course work.

#### What Standards Ensure Teacher Quality in Washington State's Teacher Preparation Programs?

**Program Standards.** In 1997, SBE adopted rules<sup>18</sup> implementing performance-based approval standards for teacher preparation programs based upon recommendations from the Washington Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (WACTE). WACTE received a grant from OSPI to create the new approval standards. Under the new rules, programs are expected to "require the candidate to demonstrate in multiple ways, over time, specific

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<sup>18</sup> WAC 180-78A.

state board of education required standards, criteria, knowledge and skills including where appropriate, evidence related to positive impact on student learning.”<sup>19</sup>

These new standards have been significantly streamlined from previous program approval standards. Specific input requirements, such as the number of field experience hours or what type of faculty must teach certain classes, have been removed. New requirements were added to emphasize an output goal for teacher candidates to demonstrate the positive impact on student learning. The five major standards (seven standards previously) are:<sup>20</sup>

- Professional Educational Advisory Board (PEAB);
- Accountability;
- Resources;
- Program Design; and
- Knowledge and Skills.

(For a detailed summary of the new standards and how they compare to the old standards, see Appendix G.)

In keeping with past state practices, SBE has adopted rules for minimal oversight of these standards. After initial approval, each teacher preparation program keeps SBE informed of its compliance with the state standards through a short annual report. Staff from the Office of Professional Education Certification (OPEC) are available for technical assistance but do not conduct in-depth reviews due to limited resources. A more rigorous process of review would require additional staff.

Under these new standards, it is up to an individual university or college teacher preparation program to determine the performance of its candidates in showing a positive impact on student learning. In the Institute’s case studies of teacher preparation programs, the interpretation of how to assess positive impact on student learning varied significantly.<sup>21</sup>

The knowledge and skills standards for pre-service do not align with the knowledge and skills standards for professional certification (although there are some common elements). For example, under the pre-service standards, teacher practice must address the needs of students with disabilities whereas the professional certificate standards do not mention students with disabilities. In many cases, when the standards are similar, there is no way to show that the knowledge and skills should be different based upon different levels of a teachers’ career. (See Appendix F for a comparison of the different knowledge and skills standards for teachers.)

**Endorsements.** An endorsement specifies the subject matter and grade level(s) for which a teaching certificate is valid. Washington does not require teachers to have an academic major other than education (although many undergraduate teacher preparation programs do offer an academic major). Every candidate in a teacher preparation program must have one or more endorsements. Each endorsement specifies the number of credits a teacher must have in that particular content area.

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<sup>19</sup> WAC 180-78A-010 (7).

<sup>20</sup> WAC 180-78A-250-270.

<sup>21</sup> See “Appendix H: Summaries of Case Studies on Teacher Preparation Programs.”

SBE rules have increased the academic requirements for endorsements over the last 12 years. Before 1987, there was no standard set of endorsements. In 1987, a list of over 40 endorsement areas was created. There were two types of endorsements: primary and supporting. A primary endorsement required 45 quarter credit hours<sup>22</sup> and a supporting endorsement required 24 quarter credit hours. The teaching certificate did not distinguish between the two types of endorsement, so a teacher with 24 credits in an academic field was not distinguished from a teacher with 45 credits.

In 1998, SBE revised its rules<sup>23</sup> to:

- Align requirements for endorsements with the state's learning goals and EALRs;
- Require pedagogy (i.e., how students learn) specific to the endorsement;
- Streamline the number of endorsements from 43 to 33;
- Specify on the certificate which endorsements are primary or secondary;
- Require more credits in most of the endorsement areas; and
- Require all endorsements to be obtained through an approved college or university program.

After August 31, 2000, all endorsements must be obtained under the new rules.<sup>24</sup> Most endorsements now require 45 quarter credit hours. Several of the broader subject areas (English, science, and social studies) require 60 quarter credit hours. The increased credit hours for endorsements still do not equal an academic major for many undergraduate programs, which require between 60 and 100 quarter credit hours.

## Washington's Teacher Preparation Programs

Washington State has 22 teacher preparation programs; 14 are located in private (independent) institutions, and 8 are in public institutions (see Exhibit 4). Although there are more private than public teacher preparation programs, two-thirds of the candidates graduate from public institutions. The total number of graduates who received initial teaching certificates for 1996-97 was 3,160.<sup>25</sup>

**Exhibit 4**  
**Graduates in Washington State With Initial Certification in 1996-97**

TYPE OF INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS	NUMBER AND PERCENT OF GRADUATES
PUBLIC	8	1,960 (62%)
PRIVATE (INDEPENDENT)	14	1,200 (38%)
TOTAL	22	3,160 (100%)

<sup>22</sup> Forty-five quarter credit hours is equivalent to 30 semester credit hours and 24 quarter credits equals 16 semester credits.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.inform.ospi.wednet.edu/CERT/newendsys.html>. The rules are under WAC 180-82.

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix I for endorsement requirements under the new rules.

<sup>25</sup> OSPI Annual Report 1997-98 Certificates Issued and Certificated Personnel Placement Statistics, (Olympia, WA).

To obtain an initial (residency) teaching certificate, a prospective teacher can attend one of three different types of programs:

- Undergraduate;
- Post baccalaureate; or
- Master's in Teaching (MIT) or Master's in Education (MED).

The length of the programs varies from ten months to 2.5 years. Approximately half of the candidates are pursuing teaching certificates through undergraduate programs. Over the last ten years, the number of MIT programs has grown from one to 17. (See "Appendix J: Type of Teacher Preparation Program by Institution" for more detail.)

There are significant differences among the 22 programs based on the level of degree offered (undergraduate, post baccalaureate, or graduate) as well as the courses and field work required.<sup>26</sup>

**Basic Skills.** The basic skills requirement set by the legislature<sup>27</sup> for candidates to enter teacher preparation programs is broad enough to allow most people to pass the proficiency requirements.

To demonstrate a proficiency in basic skills, four options exist:

- Successful completion of an exam in the basic skills of oral and written communication;
- Completion of a bachelor's degree or graduate degree;
- Two years of college level work and a written essay; or
- Scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) that are higher than the statewide median for those tests from the prior school year.

Five post baccalaureate programs do not require any basic skills test. The most common basic skills tests used are the SAT and ACT for undergraduates and the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) for graduates. One college of education is now using a Praxis test for basic skills that many states require of all their teacher candidates. (For more detail on common teacher assessments, see Appendix K.)

In the Institute's surveys, 76 percent of the beginning teachers and 91 percent of the principals reported there should be some kind of basic skills test for teachers.<sup>28</sup> Currently, 36 states require a basic skills test.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to tests, some programs require certain courses or demonstrated proficiencies in math and written and oral communication as well as experience with children or working with diverse populations. The trend has been to increase these types of requirements over the last five years. Some schools focus on a written essay; others consider the interview a

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<sup>26</sup> The expanded version of this report contains an appendix with the entry requirements for all 22 colleges compiled from the college catalogs and checked for accuracy with each institution, as well as case studies on four preservice teacher preparation programs.

<sup>27</sup> RCW 28A.410.020 Requirements for admission to teacher preparation programs.

<sup>28</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999 and Principals Survey 1999.

<sup>29</sup> See "Appendix L: Teacher Assessment in Other States" for details on types of tests used.



very important part of the process in determining a candidate's interpersonal and oral communication skills.

It is possible under current state guidelines that candidates entering teacher preparation programs have not had college-level classes or demonstrated proficiency in basic skills such as math, writing, oral communication, and English. It is unclear whether the basic skills tests and course work used for entry are adequate to test the basic skills required for all students under Washington's EALRs.

**Grade Point Average (GPA).** SBE has recently adopted new rules to eliminate the requirement of a 2.5 GPA under the new performance-based program approval standards. However, teacher preparation programs have their own GPA requirements. The majority of undergraduate (69 percent) and graduate (77 percent) programs have GPA requirements above the former state minimum. Many of the programs make exceptions for certain individuals who have the potential to become good teachers but who do not meet the GPA entry requirements. However, these individuals are expected to meet the program's GPA requirements for graduation.

## **How Are Teacher Preparation Programs Changing in Response to Education Reform?**

**Changes in Courses.** Higher education institutions are changing to meet the demands of education reform. In a survey of the colleges of education and through four case studies, the Institute found that EALRs are addressed in *all* teacher preparation programs. Many programs have done considerable work on the issues of assessment (71 percent) and creating a framework for examining positive impact on student learning (35 percent). Yet the approaches to assessment and developing a framework on positive impact on student learning remain very diverse across campuses. Most programs are making efforts to expand their field-based opportunities through the use of professional development schools,<sup>30</sup> field-based programs, or expanded student teaching opportunities beyond the traditional quarter or semester.

**Challenges.** Based on the case studies<sup>31</sup> and survey information, some challenges continue.

At the undergraduate level:

- Many evaluation forms for student teaching have not been updated to reflect the student learning required under education reform.
- It is difficult to find high quality student teaching placements.
- Yearlong student teaching opportunities are still nominal.
- Discussions between the colleges of arts and sciences and the colleges of education on issues of how to address education reform in the curriculum are just beginning.

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<sup>30</sup> Professional development schools are a collaborative effort between teacher preparation programs and one or more K-12 schools to enhance the training and knowledge of both teacher candidates and the K-12 school and university staff.

<sup>31</sup> Appendix H provides a summary of the pre-service preparation program case studies.

At the graduate level:

- It is difficult to attract minority candidates.
- It is a challenge to find quality student teaching placements.

Student teaching remains the highlight for most teacher candidates. In the Institute's survey of beginning teachers, mentor teachers who shared their classrooms were rated excellent by 71 percent of their student teachers whereas college supervisors were rated excellent by 42 percent of their student teachers.

## **What are the Qualities of Washington State's New Teachers?**

In Washington, there is no statewide assessment or test to determine the quality of teachers produced; however, the indicators below provide some rudimentary information on the knowledge and skills of Washington's teachers:

**Basic Skills.** Each teacher preparation program has different ways of assessing basic skills. Although five programs do not require any basic skills tests for program admission, there is an assumption that if a teacher has a BA degree, they have met basic skills requirements.

**Content Skills.** Many of the content courses are located in colleges of arts and sciences rather than in the teacher preparation programs. Individual programs do require a certain GPA in all course work to continue to participate in teacher preparation programs.

**Grades.** The weighted GPA of candidates entering teacher preparation programs in 1998 was 3.31 for undergraduate and masters' programs and 3.24 for post baccalaureate programs. The average GPA for undergraduates entering pre-service programs in 1998 was higher than the average for all undergraduates who were finishing their sophomore year.<sup>32</sup>

**College Major.** Thirty-six percent of the beginning teachers between 1996-98 had an undergraduate major in education.<sup>33</sup>

**Education Level.** Of the new teachers who attended Washington teacher preparation programs and became employed between 1996 and 1998 in Washington public schools, 29 percent had masters' degrees, 16 percent had post baccalaureate degrees, 52 percent had undergraduate degrees, and 3 percent had some other degree.<sup>34</sup>

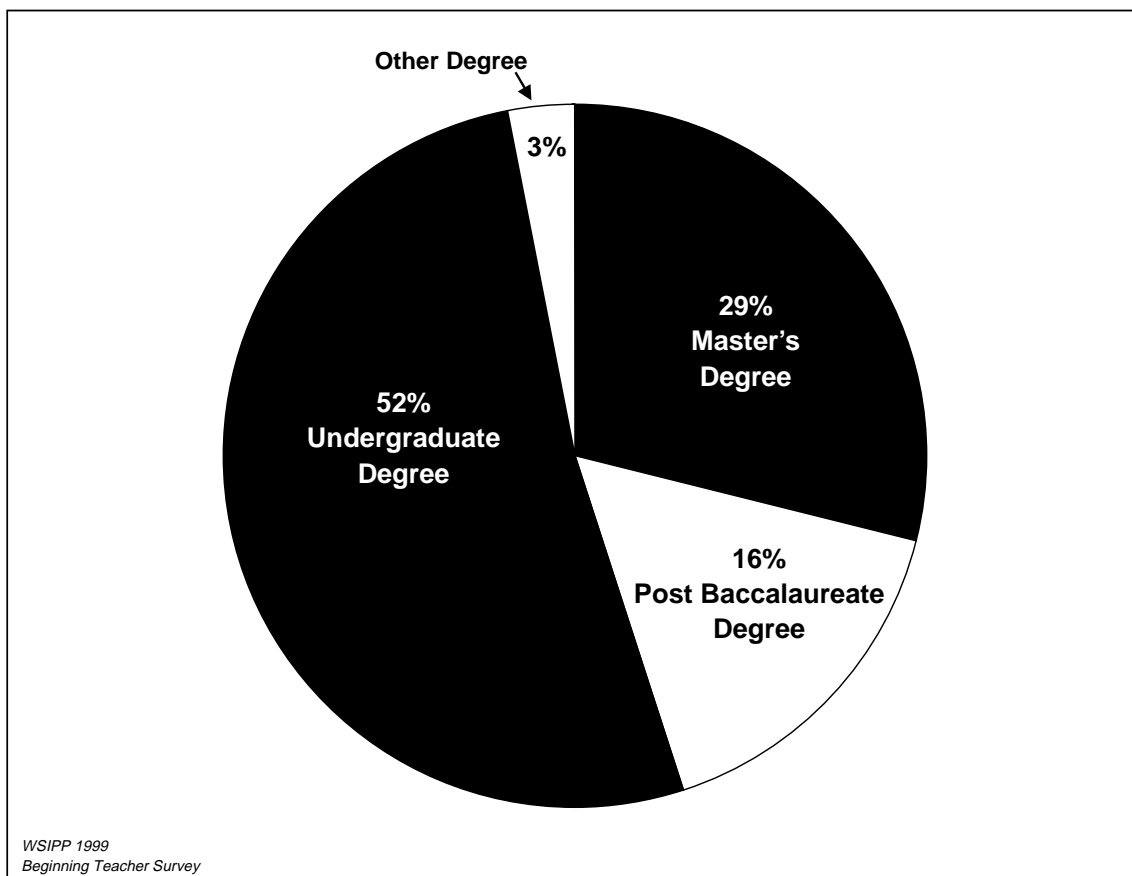
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<sup>32</sup> WSIPP Colleges of Education Survey 1999.

<sup>33</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

<sup>34</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

**Exhibit 5**  
**Degrees of Washington State Teachers Who Graduated Between 1996-1998**



**Diversity.** The proportion of all minority teachers in public schools has increased from 5 to 10 percent over the last ten years.<sup>35</sup> However, teacher preparation programs on most campuses have lower percentages of minorities than other campus programs.<sup>36</sup>

**Knowledge and Skills.** The majority of new teachers and principals reported that Washington's teacher preparation programs met or exceeded their expectations for the knowledge and skills taught.<sup>37</sup> Principals tended to be more critical than their new teachers of the training received as shown in the comparison of Exhibits 6 and 7. Some areas for improvement are instructional strategies for at-risk and special needs and a variety of assessment techniques to monitor student progress. In terms of content, principals felt teachers were well prepared in the basic skills of reading and math. Both elementary and secondary principals wanted teachers with more special education background.<sup>38</sup>

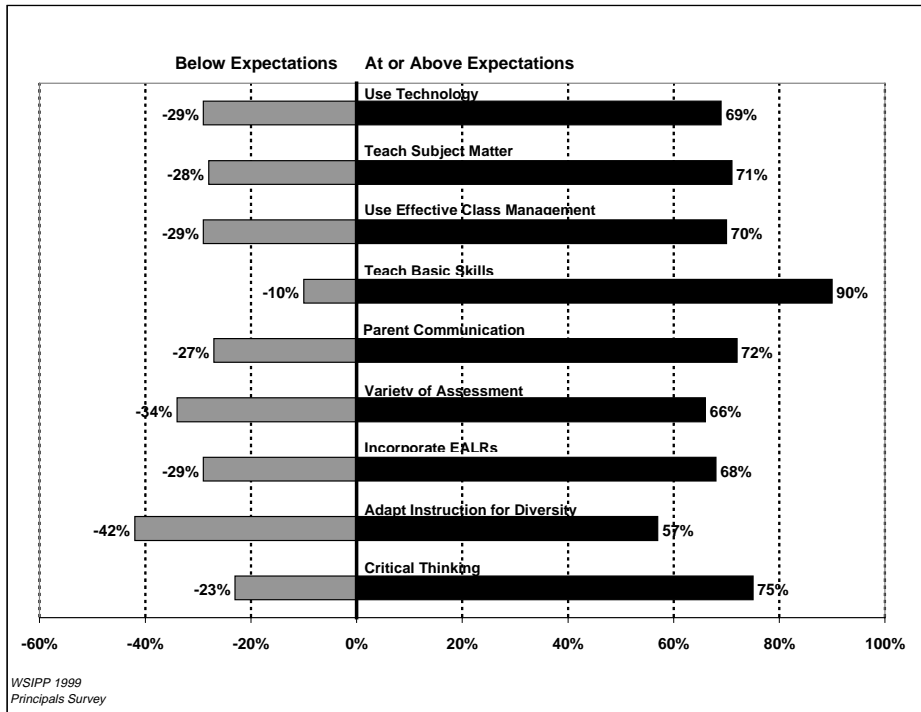
<sup>35</sup> OSPI Certification and School Employment Data 1988-99.

<sup>36</sup> WSIPP Colleges of Education Survey 1999.

<sup>37</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999 and Principals Survey 1999.

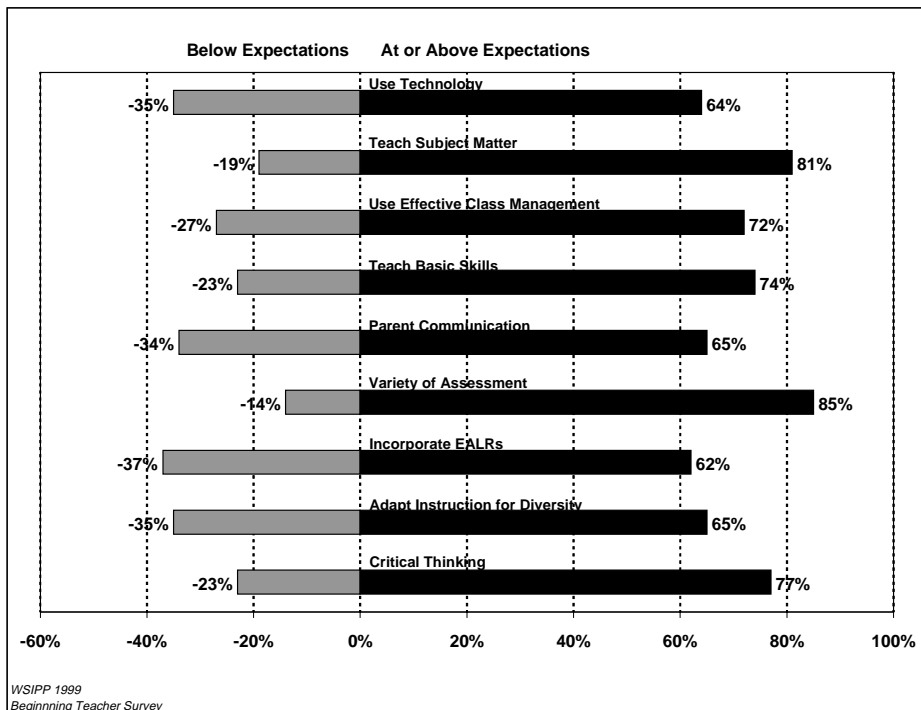
<sup>38</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999 and Principals Survey 1999.

**Exhibit 6\***  
**Most Principals Reported Teacher Preparation Programs Met or Exceeded Their Expectations for New Teachers**



\*Percentages do not always add to 100 percent due to the response selection of "I don't know."

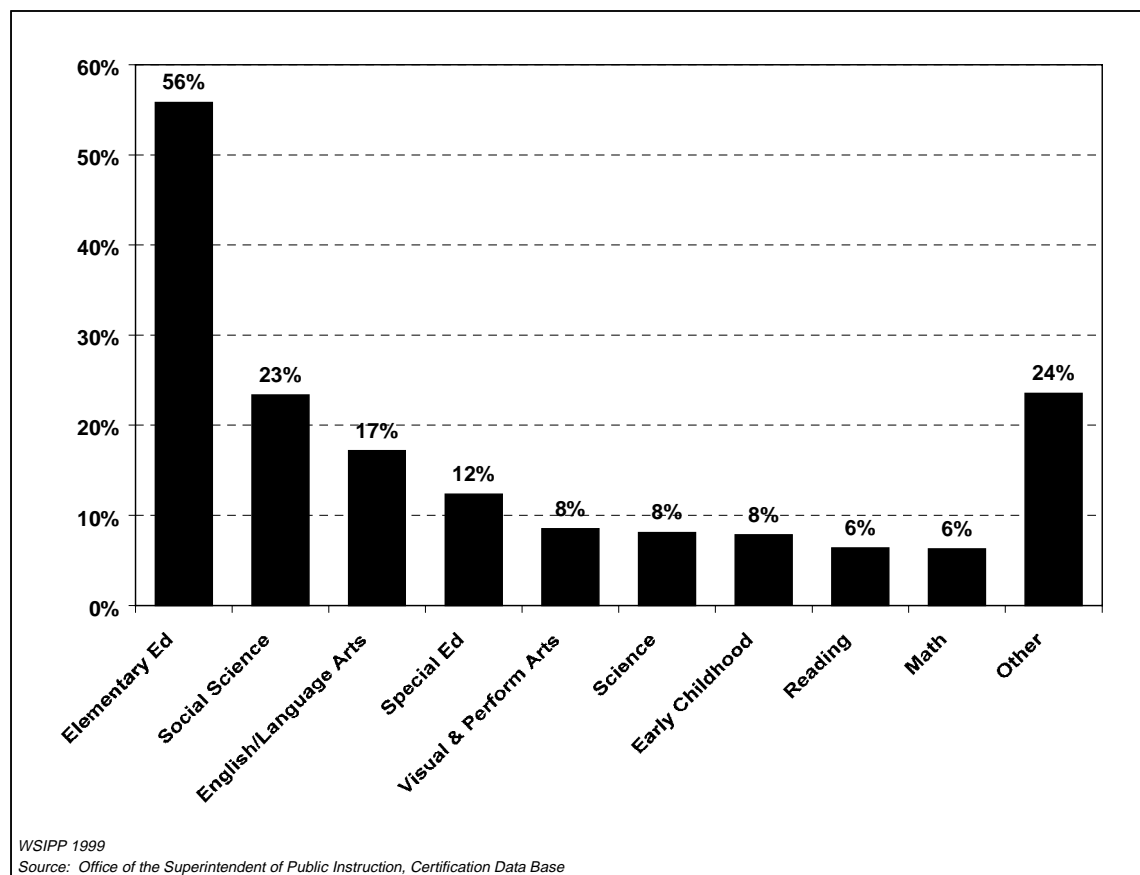
**Exhibit 7\***  
**Most New Teachers Reported Teacher Preparation Programs Met or Exceeded Their Expectations**



\*Percentages do not always add to 100 percent due to the response selection of "I don't know."

**Endorsements.** From 1988-98, 56 percent of teachers obtained an elementary education endorsement. The other top two endorsements acquired were social science (23 percent of teachers) and English/language arts (17 percent of teachers).<sup>39</sup> A majority of the teachers over the last ten years have received more than one endorsement at the time of initial certification.<sup>40</sup>

**Exhibit 8**  
**Endorsement Received by Teachers At Initial Certification, 1988-98**



In the Institute's survey of beginning teachers, 27 percent reported they taught outside their endorsement area part-time.<sup>41</sup> Teachers in middle school or combination middle/high school taught outside their endorsement area more frequently than other grade levels. SBE received 89 waiver requests from school districts for teachers to teach outside their endorsement areas in 1997-98.<sup>42</sup> The most common out-of-endorsement assignments are math, physical education, and special education.

**Feedback From Graduates and Their Employers.** SBE requires the teacher preparation programs to survey their graduates and graduates' employers. Placement information from

<sup>39</sup> OSPI Certification Data 1988-1998.

<sup>40</sup> OSPI Certification Data 1988-1998.

<sup>41</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

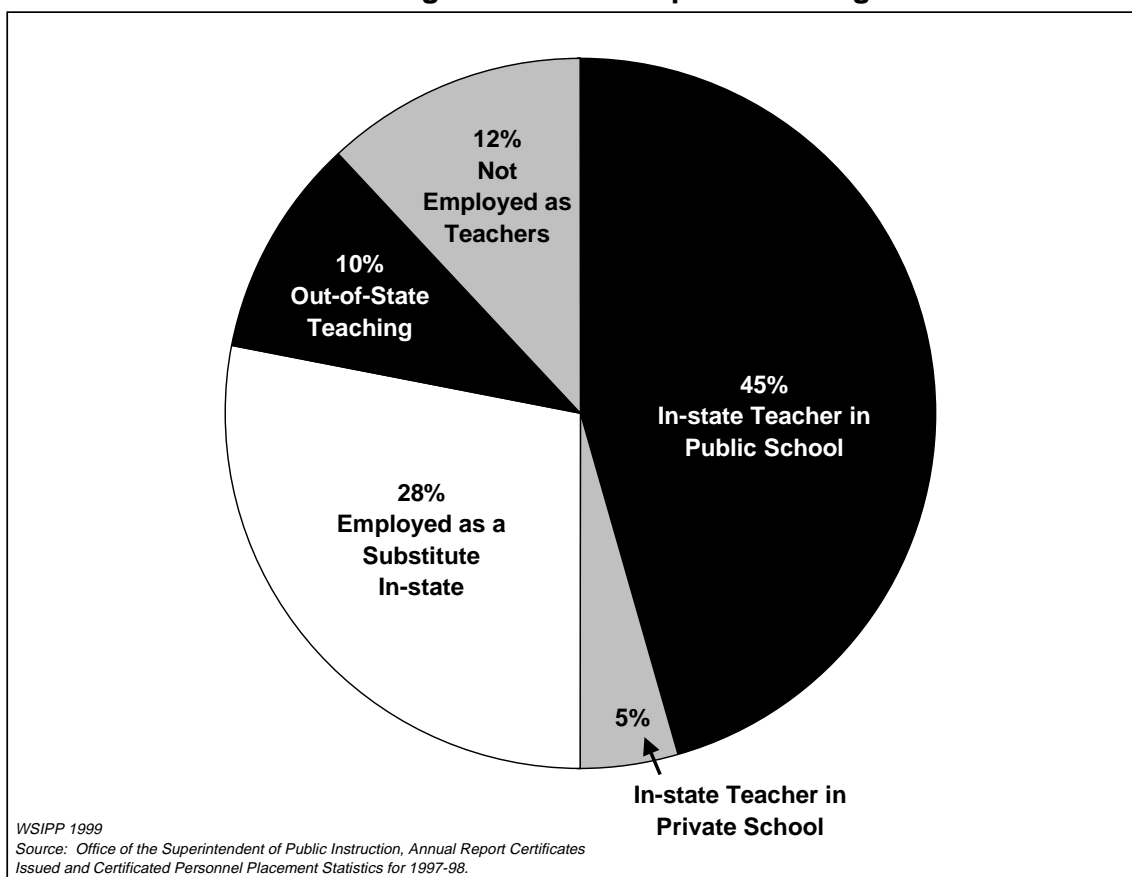
<sup>42</sup> SBE information on out-of-endorsement assignment for 1997-98 school year.

the surveys is sent to OSPI for compilation. It is up to the programs to determine how they use the information. One teacher preparation program from the case studies had a faculty member visit each site where their first year graduates were employed to interview the employer and graduate. In the Institute's Principals' survey, only 28 percent of the principals reported that the teacher preparation programs had contacted them for recent information on their graduates.

## What Are the Career Patterns of Washington's Graduates?

**Placement Upon Graduation.** As Exhibit 9 shows, 88 percent of all teachers graduating from Washington State teacher preparation programs are employed in teaching jobs or working as substitutes immediately after graduation. Forty-five percent teach in public schools.<sup>43</sup>

**Exhibit 9**  
**First-Year Employment Status of 1996-97 Graduates**  
**From Washington Teacher Preparation Programs**



**Placement Within Three Years of Graduation.** The placement patterns for graduates from Washington teacher preparation programs in Exhibit 10 shows a gradual increase in

<sup>43</sup> Data from teacher preparation programs' follow-up graduate surveys and OSPI Office of Professional Education and Certification's Annual Report of Certificates Issued and Certificated Personnel Placement Statistics (1997-98).

the percentage of teachers employed permanently in Washington public schools within the first three years of graduation. As shown in Exhibit 9 above, a large percentage of graduates (almost one-third) substitute during their first year after graduation and then find permanent jobs as teachers in the second or third year.

**Exhibit 10**  
**Percent of Washington Teacher Preparation Graduates Working as Teachers in Washington Public Schools During the First Three Years After Initial Certification**

	FIRST YEAR AFTER GRADUATION	SECOND YEAR AFTER GRADUATION	THIRD YEAR AFTER GRADUATION
1991	39%	56%	61%
1992	43%	58%	63%
1993	38%	52%	57%
1994	34%	47%	55%
1995	31%	48%	56%

Source: OSPI Certification Data 1988-98

## Summary and Conclusions

**Knowledge and Skills for Teaching.** Higher education institutions are changing to meet the demands of education reform. The majority of new teachers and principals reported that teacher preparation programs met their expectations for providing knowledge and skills needed in today's classrooms. Some additional areas programs should emphasize include: adapting instructional strategies for at-risk and special needs populations and using a variety of assessment techniques to monitor student learning. Challenges for the programs include finding and supporting quality student teaching placements and measuring a positive impact on student teaching.

**Revised Standards for Teacher Preparation.** SBE has created a new set of performance standards for its approval of teacher preparation programs. These standards incorporate requirements for the knowledge and skills teachers need to address education reform. The new program approval standards provide no statewide assurance that teacher candidates meet common minimum levels of performance. It is up to an individual pre-service program to make that determination. There is limited alignment between the pre-service standards and standards for other stages of teachers' careers.

**Assessment of Candidates and Graduates.** Assessment of candidates is the responsibility of the colleges of education and the colleges of arts and sciences (for undergraduate majors other than education). SBE requires feedback surveys on graduates for each teacher preparation program. Washington has no statewide tests or assessments of individual pre-service candidate performance either for entry into teacher preparation programs or residency (initial) certification. In the Institute's surveys, over 75 percent of the new teachers and principals favored testing for basic skills, subject matter, and pedagogy.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999 and Principals Survey 1999.

**Accountability.** SBE rules lack a defined process for determining a program's compliance with the new standards. Oversight occurs at each teacher preparation program through its PEAB, which is comprised of a majority of classroom teachers, and through surveys of graduates and their employers.



## IV. BEGINNING TEACHER ASSISTANCE

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Since 1985, Washington has provided state funds for beginning teacher assistance programs through the Teacher Assistance Program (TAP). Although the 1999 Legislature more than doubled the appropriation for TAP, the increased funding may still not cover all new teachers because state funds are distributed before all teachers are hired.

School district assistance programs, mentors, and training tend to focus on issues of emotional support and basic teaching skills for first-year teachers. Half the beginning teachers and three-quarters of the principals surveyed by the Institute reported the programs made a difference in helping teachers get through their first year. Beginning teachers and principals were less positive about whether assistance programs made a difference in improving specific knowledge and skills. There are no statewide expectations for what programs are intended to accomplish.

The state beginning teacher assistance program has not been changed to reflect increased expectations for improved student learning under education reform.

### Overview

Washington has provided state funds for the Teacher Assistance Program (TAP) for first-year teachers since 1985. Local assistance programs are administered by school districts or Educational Service Districts (ESDs) and include assignment of an experienced mentor teacher, training for mentors and beginning teachers, and release time for participants to observe other classrooms.

Over the years, the legislature has changed the administration, allocation of funds, and level of funding for the TAP program. Until 1999, the funding available per beginning teacher had steadily declined. For the 1999-2001 biennium, the Legislature more than doubled the TAP appropriation.

The TAP program was created before the state's education reform and has not been altered. State law describes TAP solely as a set of inputs: mentors, training, and release time. No evaluation has been completed on the TAP program since 1990, and limited information is collected about the activities that state or local funds support.

### Why Provide Assistance to Beginning Teachers?

Parents and the public have the same expectations for teachers regardless of how long they have been teaching. But even the best teacher preparation programs provide only a foundation of knowledge and skills that teachers will need to build upon throughout their careers.<sup>45</sup> First-year teachers frequently mention problems dealing with basic issues such

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<sup>45</sup> Sandra Odell, "Teacher Induction: Rationale and Issues," ed. Douglas Brooks, *Teacher Induction: A New Beginning*, (Reston: Association of Teacher Educators, 1987), 69.

as discipline, motivating students, communicating with parents, accessing instructional resources, and planning and organizing class work.<sup>46</sup> Studies also report that beginning teachers feel disillusioned by the reality of their first teaching job. New teachers report feeling isolated due to lack of support from parents, school administrators, and colleagues.<sup>47</sup>

In part, interest in assistance programs stems from concern about high rates of attrition among teachers with less than five years of experience. One recent summary of multiple studies conducted in various states and school districts across the country concluded that attrition rates for new teachers range between 30 and 60 percent.<sup>48</sup> Some studies suggest the quality of the first teaching experience is the most heavily weighted factor influencing teacher retention.<sup>49</sup> In creating assistance programs, state and school district officials hope to ease the stress of the first year and reduce the number of teachers who leave the profession due to burnout or frustration.

In addition, state and school district officials hope that assistance programs make participants better teachers. Some researchers have concluded that the first year of teaching is so chaotic, most new teachers focus on controlling student behavior rather than on fostering student learning.<sup>50</sup> Other researchers point out that teachers progress through distinct stages of professional development while gaining competency.<sup>51</sup> Assistance programs are intended to hasten new teachers' progress through these developmental stages and steadily build their proficiency in complex teaching strategies that support student learning. The increased expectations for improved student learning under education reform also increase the importance of having Washington's new teachers quickly become effective teachers.

## **What Is Washington's Beginning Teacher Assistance Program?**

Washington's Beginning Teacher Assistance Program (TAP) began on a pilot basis in 1985 with 100 teachers. State law sets out the basic inputs of the program:<sup>52</sup>

- Assistance by experienced mentor teachers;
- Stipends for mentors and beginning teachers;
- Training workshops for mentors and beginning teachers; and
- Use of substitutes to allow mentors and beginning teachers to jointly observe different teaching situations and allow the mentor to observe the beginning teacher.

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<sup>46</sup> Simon Veenman, "Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers," *Review of Educational Research* 54(2) (1984), 154.

<sup>47</sup> Simon Veenman, "Perceived Problems of Beginning Teachers," 154; and Yvonne Gold, "Beginning Teacher Support: Attrition, Mentoring and Induction," ed. John Sikula, *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* 2nd edition, (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan: Association of American Teachers, 1996), 548-594.

<sup>48</sup> Douglas Mitchell et al., *The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program: A Statewide Evaluation Study*, (Sacramento, CA: California Educational Research Cooperative, 1997), 7.

<sup>49</sup> Gold, "Beginning Teacher Support," 554.

<sup>50</sup> Eugene Schaffer et al., "An Innovative Beginning Teacher Induction Program: A Two-Year Analysis of Classroom Interactions," *Journal of Teacher Education* 43(3) (1992): 181.

<sup>51</sup> Mitchell, *The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program*, 4.

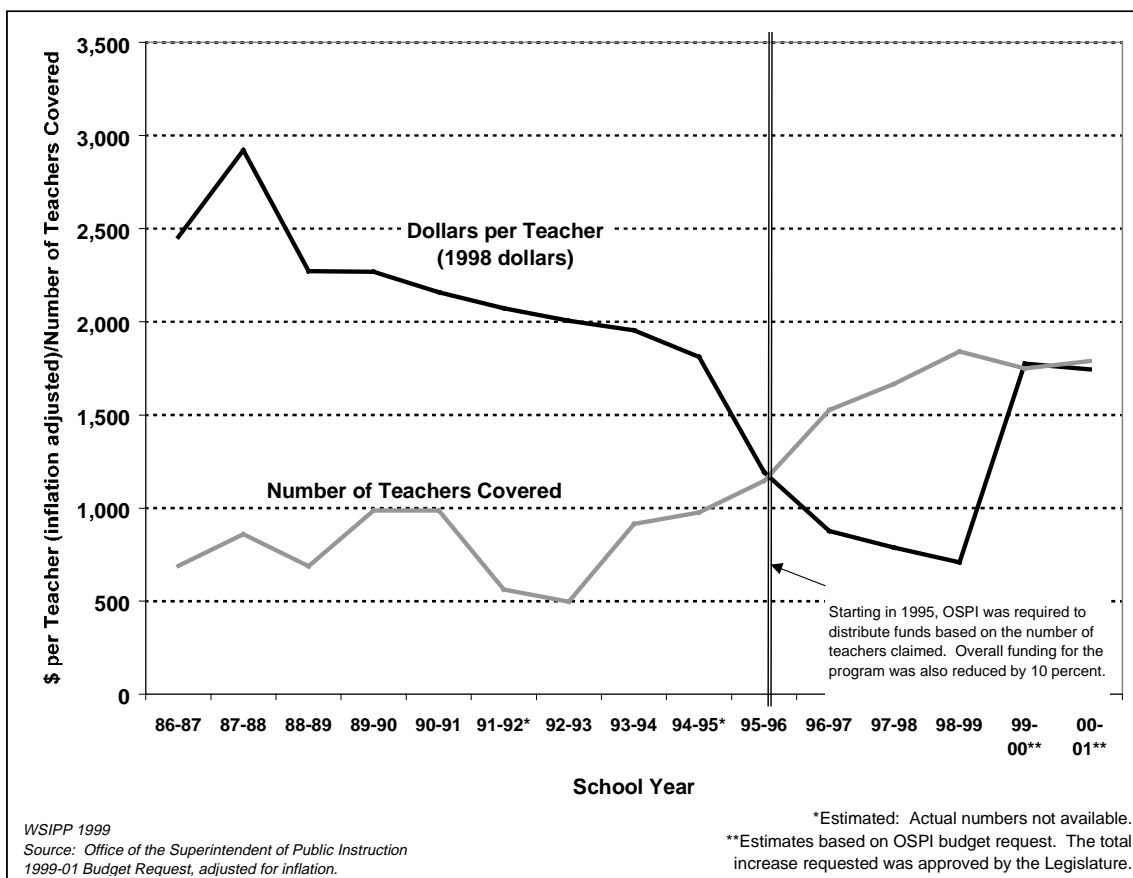
<sup>52</sup> RCW 28A.415.250.

A beginning teacher is defined by OSPI as someone with fewer than 90 days teaching experience. Mentor teachers are specifically prohibited from being involved in performance evaluations conducted by principals.

Starting in 1986-87, \$1.4 million was appropriated to expand the program on a statewide basis. OSPI allocated funds on a first-come, first-served basis and the program usually covered between 60 and 75 percent of eligible teachers.<sup>53</sup> In 1995, school districts were given the option to receive funds directly to operate their own programs. For districts that do not select this option, proportional funding goes to the ESD to coordinate services for their teachers. As the number of teachers claimed by districts has increased, the amount of funding available per teacher has declined.

This downward trend was reversed by the 1999 Legislature, which more than doubled the biennial appropriation for the program to \$6.2 million. However, when inflation is taken into account, the estimated per-teacher allocation for Fiscal Year 1999-2000 will be about 39 percent below the program's highest allocation per teacher in 1987-88 (see Exhibit 11).

**Exhibit 11**  
**TAP Funding History: 1986-2001 (Adjusted for Inflation)**  
**Per-Teacher Allocation and Number of Teachers Covered**



<sup>53</sup> Between 1991-92 and 1994-95, coverage by TAP dropped to between 30 and 60 percent of beginning teachers due to a budget reduction to the program for the 1991-93 biennium.

## How Do Other States Assist Beginning Teachers?

In 1984, eight states had beginning teacher assistance programs. By 1999, that number had grown to 27.<sup>54</sup> The purpose, organization, funding, and coverage of programs differ from state to state. (See Appendix M for a chart comparing programs in all 27 states.)

**General Program Information.** Twenty states require beginning teachers to go through an assistance program. Ten states at least partially fund this requirement. Seven states, including Washington, have optional programs with either partial or total state funding.

**Mentors and Training.** All 27 states rely on mentors to assist beginning teachers. In seven states, the mentor is just one member of a support team that may include a school administrator, a college faculty member, or an assessor. In 13 states (Washington included), both beginning teachers and mentors receive some training.

**Evaluation of Beginning Teachers.** In seven states, beginning teachers are evaluated within the assistance program for purposes of making employment decisions. State certification decisions are made within the assistance program in 12 states. Other states, such as Washington, clearly separate their assistance programs from formal performance evaluation out of concern that non-judgmental support and high-stakes performance assessment cannot be successfully combined.

**State Cost.** For 1996-97, states spent from \$143 to \$2,000 per beginning teacher. Washington's TAP allocation in 1996-97 was \$854 per beginning teacher. Programs in California, South Carolina, and Washington have since received very large increases in their budgets for beginning teacher assistance, and significant new funding has been proposed in Texas and North Carolina. All mentors are paid for their work, with state-established stipends ranging from \$225 to \$4,000. Nineteen states allow districts to determine the amount of the mentor stipend.

## What Assistance Is Provided to Beginning Teachers in Washington?

The Institute collected information about district and ESD assistance programs during the 1997-98 school year. In that year, 158 school districts received \$782 for each of 1,667 beginning teachers they reported to OSPI. Teachers hired after the September 15th reporting date were not covered by TAP funds. Sixty-five percent of the districts accepted the TAP allocation directly and ran their own programs. Small and some medium-sized districts were more likely to utilize ESD services.<sup>55</sup> Five of the nine ESDs participated in TAP programs in 1997-98, serving a total of 188 teachers.

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<sup>54</sup> This summary includes beginning teacher assistance programs that are mandated or funded (or both) by a state.

<sup>55</sup> For purposes of the study, districts were grouped by the following sizes based on their 1997-98 student enrollment: small (up to 1,999), medium (2,000 to 9,999), large (10,000 or more).

The Institute used several surveys, along with interviews in selected school districts, to answer the following questions about beginning teacher assistance programs in Washington:<sup>56</sup>

- Who provided assistance to beginning teachers?
- What type of assistance was provided? (Mentors, training, observations, reduced workload/extra time, principals, program structure.)
- What topics were the focus of assistance for beginning teachers?
- What accountability is associated with assistance programs?
- What did districts spend to assist beginning teachers?

**Who Provided Assistance to Beginning Teachers?** Of the districts surveyed, 80 percent offered programs for beginning teachers in 1997-98, but 95 percent of the districts reported they had beginning teachers that year.<sup>57</sup> Forty-one percent of the surveyed districts reported having more beginning teachers than the number covered by the TAP program.<sup>58</sup> The difference ranged from one or two teachers per district up to 20 or more. Statewide, OSPI estimated that about 20 percent of beginning teachers were not covered by TAP.<sup>59</sup> Not all teachers are hired by the September 15th deadline for claiming TAP funding. The presence of only a few new teachers and the relatively small amount of funding to support them may not catch the attention of district administrators.

**What Type of Assistance Was Provided?** The most frequently reported type of assistance provided by school districts was assignment of a mentor teacher (see Exhibit 12). School districts were least likely to include a reduced workload for beginning teachers as part of their assistance program. Large districts were able to provide more types of assistance than medium or small districts.

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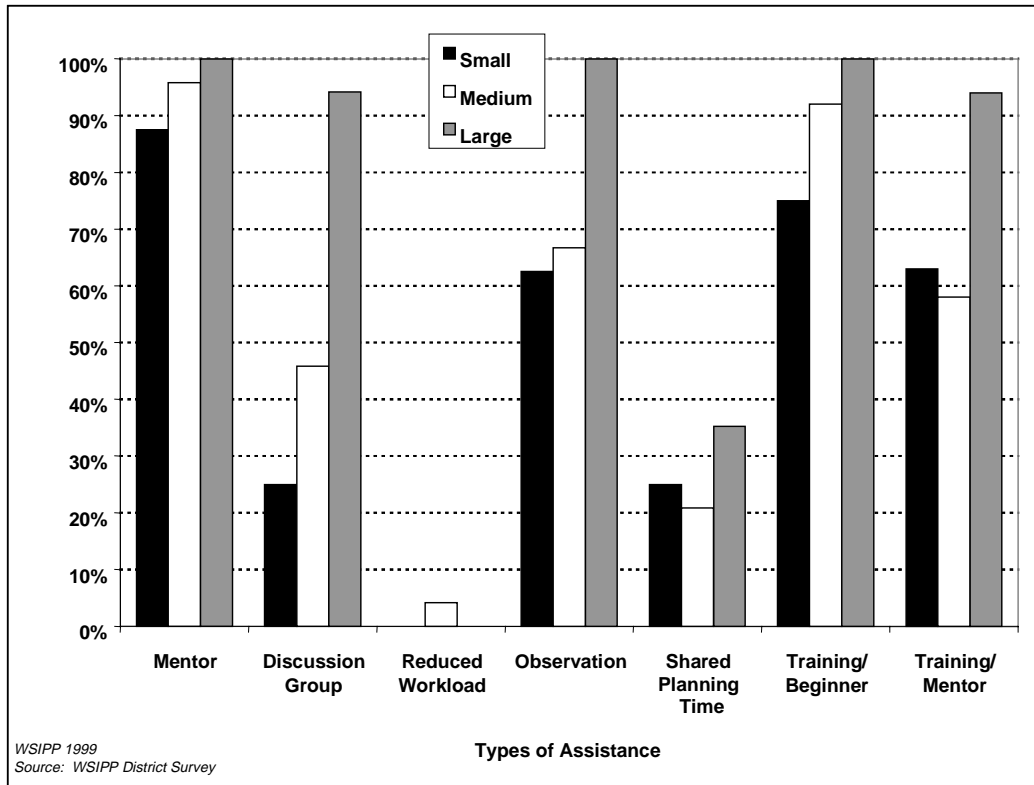
<sup>56</sup> The Institute surveyed 3,600 teachers who started working in Washington public schools between 1996 and 1998, 1,800 public school principals, and a stratified random sample of 100 school districts. Response rates were: 54 percent (beginning teachers), 65 percent (principals), and 61 percent (school districts). The responding school districts employed 34 percent of the teachers in the state and 48 percent of the TAP-funded beginning teachers for 1997-98.

<sup>57</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>58</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>59</sup> OSPI Budget Request 1999-01, Decision Package BB. For 1997-98, OSPI reported 1,992 beginning teachers compared with 1,667 covered by TAP.

**Exhibit 12**  
**Assistance Most Frequently Reported: Mentor Teacher (96 Percent of Districts)**  
**Assistance Least Frequently Reported: Reduced Workload (2 Percent)**



- **Mentors.** Most districts (70 percent) relied on a model of mentoring where a senior teacher is hired on a supplemental contract to serve as a mentor in addition to full-time teaching. However, 30 percent (typically larger districts) utilized part-time or full-time professional development staff, sometimes in combination with mentors on supplemental contracts.<sup>60</sup>

Mentors were usually in the same building (76 percent) and taught the same subject and grade level (77 and 72 percent, respectively) as the beginning teacher. The two were usually able to meet regularly: 45 percent of beginning teachers reported meeting with their mentor on a weekly or daily basis, and another 34 percent reported meeting once or twice a month.<sup>61</sup>

However, surveyed teachers also expressed strong concerns about lack of time to meet their classroom responsibilities, let alone time to meet with mentors. Mentors with supplemental contracts not only have their own teaching loads, but often lead other school activities.<sup>62</sup> Some research suggests that frequent, casual contact provides

<sup>60</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>61</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

<sup>62</sup> Terry Wildman et al., "Teacher Mentoring: An Analysis of Roles, Activities and Conditions," *Journal of Teacher Education* 43(3) (1992), 211.

support to beginning teachers, but mentors and beginning teachers also need to set aside time specifically to work on improvement of teaching strategies.<sup>63</sup>

- **Training.** A wide range in the amount of training specifically for beginning teachers was reported by surveyed teachers (see Exhibit 13).

**Exhibit 13**  
**Attendance at Training for Beginning Teachers**

NONE	UP TO 9 HOURS	BETWEEN 10 AND 18 HOURS	19 HOURS OR MORE
25%	36%	20%	19%

*WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999*

Small (63 percent) and large districts (94 percent) were more likely than medium-sized districts (58 percent) to have training for both beginning teachers and mentors. This is probably due to small districts' reliance on ESD-run programs, which offer training for both.<sup>64</sup>

Beginning teachers also have training opportunities beyond those offered through an assistance program. The majority of those who attended training for beginning teachers (59 percent) reported that it represented less than a fourth of the total training they encountered in their first year as a teacher.<sup>65</sup>

- **Observations.** It is unclear how effective a mentor could be as a coach or advisor without watching the beginning teacher in his or her classroom. Beginning teachers also often request the opportunity to watch experienced teachers to learn how they engage their students, pace the lessons, and solve problems.<sup>66</sup> However, observations are difficult to arrange.

Most beginning teachers reported that their mentors either never had the opportunity to watch them teach or did so only once or twice during their first year of teaching (see Exhibit 14). Beginning teachers reported slightly more opportunity to observe other teachers. Thirty-seven percent of beginning teachers observed other classrooms once or twice during the first year, and 19 percent did so three or four times.

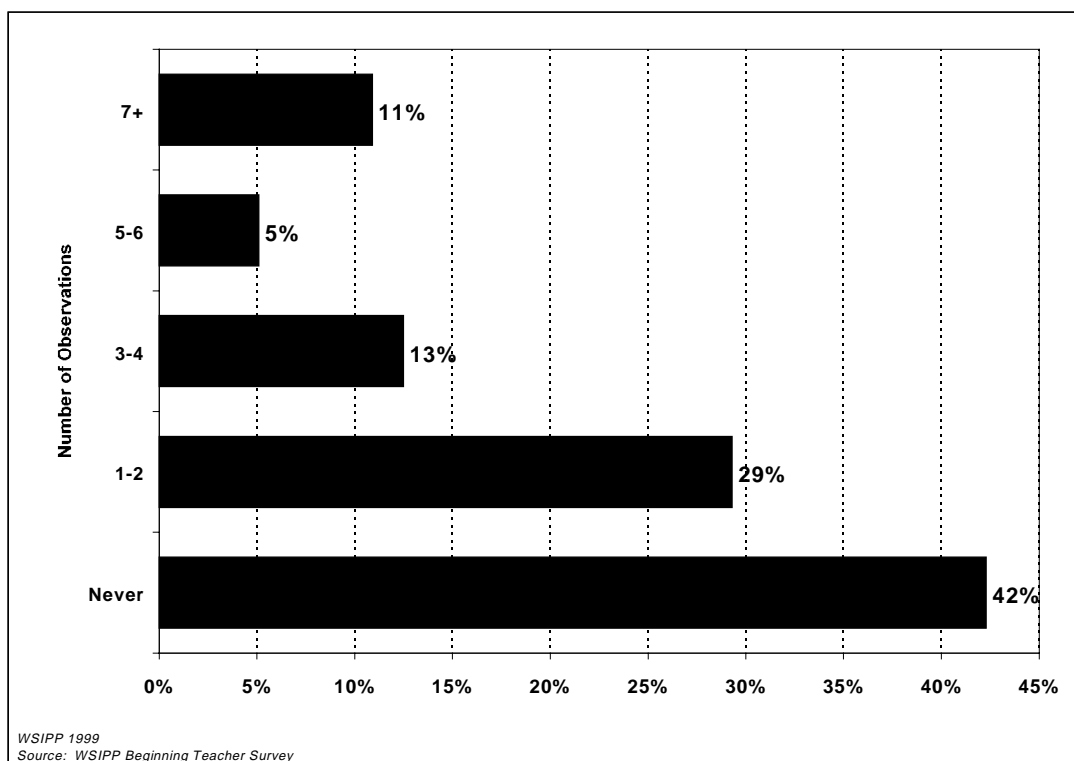
<sup>63</sup> Gold, "Beginning Teacher Support," 574.

<sup>64</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>65</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

<sup>66</sup> Katherine Perez et al., "An Analysis of Practices Used to Support New Teachers," *Teacher Education Quarterly* (Spring 1997), 49.

**Exhibit 14**  
**Most Mentors Rarely Observed Beginning Teachers**



Most districts (64 percent) provided one day or less of release time for beginning teachers through their assistance program. Twelve percent provided none. Fifty-four percent provided one day or less for mentors, with 20 percent providing none.<sup>67</sup> However, in some districts, providing release time is a building decision made by the principal or site council. In other districts, use of the time is left to the discretion of the team who could attend a training or conference or use it for observations.

- **Reduced Workload/Extra Time.** Some studies have found that beginning teachers are more likely to be placed in assignments outside their area of expertise or assigned more difficult situations, such as teaching multiple subjects or grade levels or not having a permanent classroom.<sup>68</sup> Forty-two percent of the new teachers surveyed by the Institute reported their assignment was more difficult than others in their school.<sup>69</sup>

Compared to district-run assistance programs, principals were more likely to offer a reduced workload or extra time informally to new teachers in their building (see Exhibit 15).

<sup>67</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>68</sup> L. Huling-Austin, "Teacher Induction: Rationale and Issues," in D. Brooks, ed., *Teacher Induction—A New Beginning*, (Reston, VA: Association of Teacher Educators, 1987), 5.

<sup>69</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.



**Exhibit 15**  
**Principals More Likely Than Districts to Arrange Reduced  
 Workload and Planning Time for Beginning Teachers**

DOES YOUR DISTRICT PROVIDE:	PRINCIPALS RESPONDING "YES"	SCHOOL DISTRICTS RESPONDING "YES"
REDUCED WORKLOAD FOR BEGINNING TEACHER?	16%	2%
EXTRA OR SHARED PLANNING TIME WITH MENTOR?	40%	27%

*Source: WSIPP District Survey 1998 and Principal Survey 1999*

- **Principals.** Although principals are not identified in statute as participants in TAP programs, they play a key role in a teacher's first year on the job. New teachers want their principal to be an educational leader, clearly convey the rules, expectations, and norms in the school, and provide feedback and guidance on their teaching.<sup>70</sup> Some researchers suggest that too little attention has been paid to the principal's role in assisting beginning teachers.<sup>71</sup>

In Washington, principals are required to observe teachers at least twice during the school year for formal evaluation purposes. The criteria and procedures for evaluations are set by state statute and local collective bargaining agreements. The evaluation criteria have not been changed since 1976.<sup>72</sup>

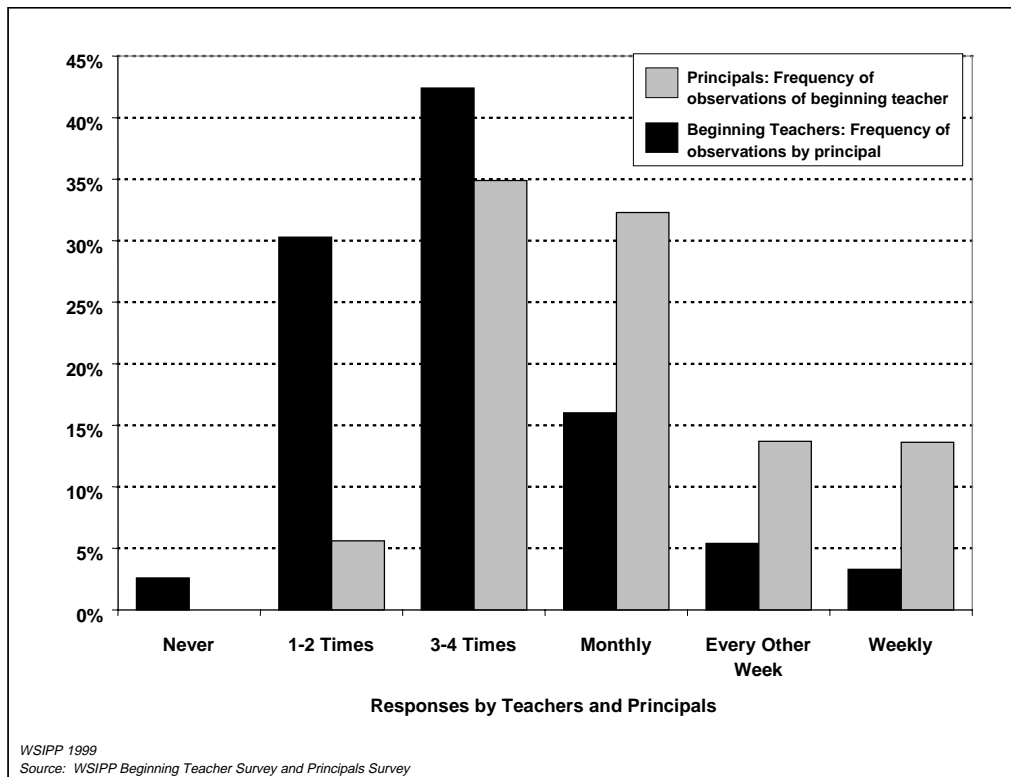
Beginning teachers and principals did not agree how often principals either formally or informally observe new teachers (see Exhibit 16). The most agreement (42 percent of beginning teachers and 36 percent of principals) was that observations tended to occur three or four times a year. However, another 30 percent of beginning teachers reported their principals only met the minimum standard of two observations. In contrast, the other large group of principals reported they came into beginning teachers' classrooms on a monthly basis (32 percent).

<sup>70</sup> Barbara Brock and Marilyn Grady, *Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*, Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the National Council of Professors in Educational Administration, August 6-10, 1996, ERIC Document 399 631, 7.

<sup>71</sup> Brock and Grady, *Beginning Teacher Induction Programs*, 3.

<sup>72</sup> See Appendix F for a comparison of the evaluation criteria and other standards for teacher performance.

**Exhibit 16**  
**Different Perceptions of How Often Principals Observe Beginning Teachers (Formally or Informally)**



Thirty-eight percent of beginning teachers found their principal's assistance very helpful, and 28 percent found it somewhat helpful.<sup>73</sup> The more time principals spent observing or monitoring their progress, the higher beginning teachers rated their helpfulness.

- Program Structure.** Districts organize their assistance programs in very different ways. For example, monthly discussion groups might be held after school for beginning teachers, led by mentor teachers, on topics chosen by the group. In a few districts, full-time professional development staff provide assistance to improve knowledge and skills, but each building also assigns a "partner" teacher to serve as a resource and provide emotional support. In several programs, the team of beginning teacher and mentor create their own plan for use of the TAP allocation, which might include substitute time, workshop fees, or per diem pay to attend weekend training. One district has a mentor cadre released one day a week to work with beginning teachers throughout the district. For a more in-depth picture of assistance programs in four school districts, see Appendix N.

**What Topics Were the Focus of Assistance for Beginning Teachers?** The primary focus of assistance programs appears to be on general support and basic teaching skills for beginning teachers. "Overall Orientation" and "Emotional and Psychological Support" were

<sup>73</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

most frequently selected by districts as the top two objectives of their programs.<sup>74</sup> This is consistent with most of the research on beginning teacher assistance, which has found that gaining competency in the day-to-day managing of a classroom, scheduling and organizing lessons, finding resources, and dealing with parents occupy much of a first-year teacher's attention, and, therefore, are frequently a primary focus of assistance programs.<sup>75</sup>

Beginning teachers were also most likely to spend time on these two topics in training or with their mentor. Eighty-five percent reported receiving training for orientation purposes, and 80 percent reported spending time with their mentors on issues of emotional and psychological support.<sup>76</sup> Classroom management was the next most frequent topic of attention in training and mentoring according to both school districts and beginning teachers.<sup>77</sup>

Less emphasis was given to increasing a new teacher's depth of knowledge about how to teach particular subjects, incorporating EALRs into curriculum and teaching, or effective teaching of diverse students. These are more complex issues that might be addressed through training or workshops for all teachers or may be covered in later stages of professional development. However, some researchers also suggest that too much time is spent in assistance programs on the "mechanics" of teaching and not enough on developing complex teaching strategies.<sup>78</sup>

**What Accountability Is Associated With Assistance Programs?** Accountability is a recurring theme of education reform. There is limited fiscal accountability associated with the TAP program. The total state appropriation for TAP is fixed over a biennium and does not change to reflect an increasing number of new teachers. All state funds for the year are distributed based on the number of beginning teachers hired as of September 15th. There is no funding mechanism to recognize that districts may need to hire additional beginning teachers later in the school year or that some beginning teachers may leave. School districts and ESDs returned nearly \$128,000 of unused TAP funds for 1996-97. These funding issues are not addressed by the increased state appropriation approved by the 1999 Legislature.

There is also limited program accountability with TAP. There are no statewide standards or objectives for what TAP is intended to accomplish. The parameters of the program are described in statute solely as inputs: stipends for mentors, training, and substitutes for observations. The Institute found a mixed response regarding whether expectations or objectives were established at the local level in district assistance programs. Eighty-one percent of school districts and 61 percent of principals reported setting expectations for what beginning teachers should gain or accomplish through an assistance program.<sup>79</sup> However, only 27 percent of the teachers reported that expectations had been set by either principals or school districts. Just under half of the beginning teachers (49 percent)

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<sup>74</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>75</sup> Odell, "Teacher Induction: Rationale and Issues," 72.

<sup>76</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

<sup>77</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999 and District Survey 1998.

<sup>78</sup> Gold, *Beginning Teacher Support*, 562 and Sharon Feiman-Nemser and Michelle Parker, "Making Subject Matter Part of the Conversation in Learning to Teach," *Journal of Teacher Education* 41(3) (1990), 33.

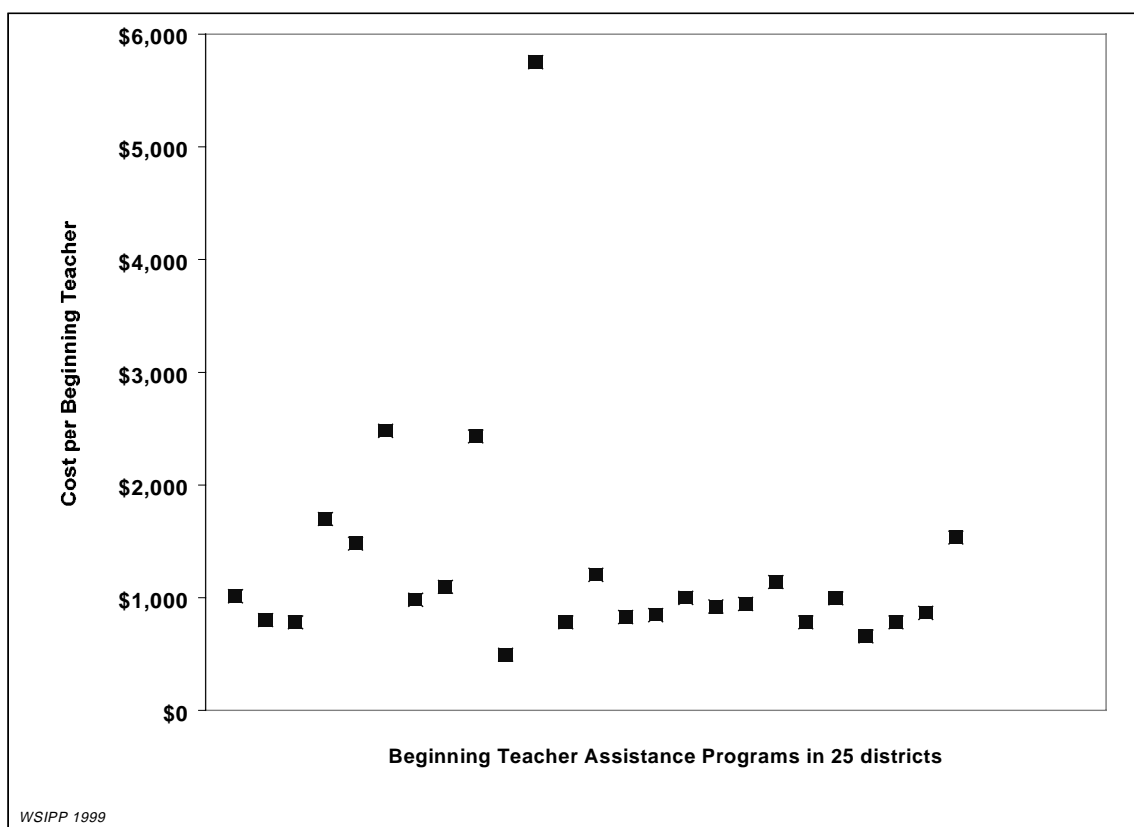
<sup>79</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998 and Principal Survey 1999.

reported they established objectives with their mentors for what they wished to accomplish together through the year.<sup>80</sup>

**What Did Districts Spend to Assist Beginning Teachers?** The Institute obtained budget information on assistance programs in 1997-98 from 25 school districts, which included the four case studies and 21 respondents to the district survey.<sup>81</sup> School districts varied in how much they spent per beginning teacher in 1997-98: from less than \$500 to more than \$5,700 (see Exhibit 17).

However, this comparison hides significant differences among programs based on the size of the district and number of teachers served. The districts whose costs were lower tended to serve relatively few teachers. The weighted average cost to assist the 540 beginning teachers in these 25 districts was \$1,609 per teacher compared with \$782 per teacher available from the state for 1997-98.

**Exhibit 17**  
**Variation in Expenditures Per Teacher Across Districts**



<sup>80</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

<sup>81</sup> The sample of 25 included six small, ten medium, and nine large districts. They provided programs for 540 beginning teachers in 1997-98, or just over 25 percent of the total. We also included a variety of locations across the state and both district-run and ESD-run programs in the sample.

Payments to mentors were the largest cost in program budgets, representing 57 percent of the weighted average cost per teacher (see Exhibit 18). When mentors were paid through a supplemental contract, the median stipend was \$435. The median stipend for beginning teachers was \$108.

**Exhibit 18**  
**Mentors Represent the Largest Cost in Program Budgets**

PROGRAM COMPONENTS	PER BEGINNING TEACHER	
	WEIGHTED AVERAGE COST	PERCENT OF TOTAL
MENTORS	\$911	57%
TRAINING/RELEASE DAYS	\$511	32%
BEGINNING TEACHERS	\$87	5%
OTHER*	\$100	6%
TOTAL	<b>\$1,609</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Administration, coordination, and direct assistance (training or mentoring) by program coordinators.

## How Effective Is Assistance for Beginning Teachers?

**What Is the Impact of Programs on Retention?** One recent study stated that 40 percent of beginning teachers resign during their first two years of teaching.<sup>82</sup> Similar statistics are frequently used as a justification for state and national efforts to improve support programs for beginning teachers.<sup>83</sup>

The Institute analyzed the work history of teachers in public schools based on when they received their initial teaching certificates. Of teachers who received their initial certificates between 1988 and 1994, an average of 18 percent left the public schools in their first two years of teaching. However, about 5 percent later returned to teach in public schools within

<sup>82</sup> Leslie Marlow et al., "Beginning Teachers: Are They Still Leaving the Profession?" *The Clearinghouse* 70(4) (1997), 211.

<sup>83</sup> Panel for Texas Novice Teacher Induction Support System, *Final Report*, (Austin: Texas, 1998); Linda Darling-Hammond, *Doing What Matters Most: Investing in Quality Teaching*, (New York: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1997), 21.

the time frame of the Institute's study (see Exhibit 19).<sup>84</sup> This pattern was relatively stable over the six-year period, with a slight upward trend in the percentage of teachers who leave and do not later return.<sup>85</sup>

**Exhibit 19**  
**About 18 Percent of Teachers Leave Public Schools in the**  
**First Two Years, But About 5 Percent Later Return**

<b>YEAR CERTIFICATE ISSUED</b>	<b>LEFT PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN FIRST TWO YEARS</b>	<b>LATER RETURNED TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>	<b>DID NOT RETURN TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>
<b>1988</b>	18%	7%	11%
<b>1989</b>	18%	6%	12%
<b>1990</b>	17%	6%	11%
<b>1991</b>	17%	4%	13%
<b>1992</b>	18%	5%	13%
<b>1993</b>	19%	5%	14%
<b>1994</b>	19%	4%	15%

*Source: OSPI Certification Data and School Employment Data (F-196)*

About half the beginning teachers (52 percent) reported it was very unlikely they will leave the teaching profession in the next five years.<sup>86</sup> A strong majority said having mentors and training in their first year made slight to no difference in their decision to stay in teaching (72 percent). Forty-three percent cited salary as the top reason that might cause them to leave teaching in the future (see Exhibit 20).

<sup>84</sup> Data from more recent years is not reliable for this particular analysis because not all teachers start work immediately after obtaining their certificates and not enough time has elapsed to evaluate their work histories. However, preliminary data obtained from the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program (LEAP) shows a similar pattern. LEAP analyzed whether an FTE teacher who worked in one year returned to work the following year. Between 1988-89 and 1997-98, an average of 11 percent of first-year teachers did not return the following year. There was a slight upward trend over the period, from 9 percent in 1988-89 to 13 percent in 1997-98. This does not reflect later returns.

<sup>85</sup> Using the Institute's analysis, a 1 percent increase in the number of teachers who leave and do not return represents about 30 teachers.

<sup>86</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

**Exhibit 20**  
**Main Reason to Leave Teaching in the Next Five Years**

REASON	PERCENT
SALARY LEVEL	43%
FAMILY	15%
LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAREER GROWTH OR OTHER CAREER INTERESTS	14%
LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	11%
STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS	10%
HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE	4%
ISOLATION FROM COLLEAGUES	3%

*Source: WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999*

Some have argued that comparatively high retention rates and high career satisfaction are indicators of the impact of assistance programs,<sup>87</sup> but the Institute could not verify the TAP program's impact on retention of beginning teachers.

**What Is the Impact of Programs on Improved Teaching?** A second major objective of beginning teacher assistance programs is improvement of teaching. Seventy-three percent of principals and 51 percent of beginning teachers reported that assistance programs made some or a big difference in helping teachers get through their first year.<sup>88</sup> Getting through the first year means increasing beginning teachers' confidence in their ability to manage the basics: scheduling and organizing the day, accessing resources, dealing with students and parents, and juggling time and responsibilities.<sup>89</sup>

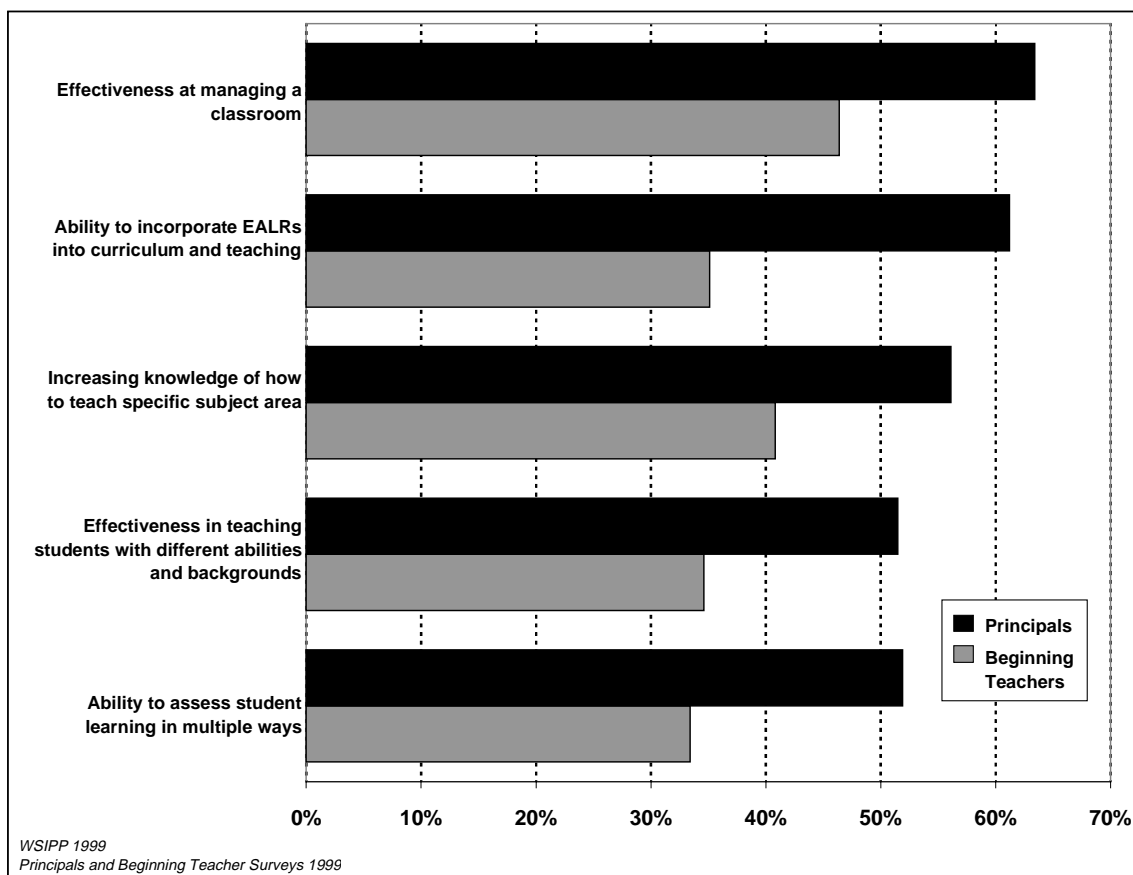
Responses by principals and beginning teachers are somewhat less positive on the impact of assistance programs on improving beginning teachers' knowledge and skills in five specific areas (see Exhibit 21).

<sup>87</sup> Mitchell et al., *The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program*, 7.

<sup>88</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999 and Principals Survey 1999.

<sup>89</sup> Odell, "Teacher Induction: Rationale and Issues," 75.

**Exhibit 21**  
**Principals and Beginning Teachers Who Reported Assistance Programs Improved Beginning Teachers' Knowledge and Skills in Five Areas**



Beginning teachers were more likely to credit mentors than training in improving their effectiveness (see Exhibit 22). Teachers who reported that mentors made a difference in improving their effectiveness were also more likely to say that assistance programs helped them get through the first year.

**Exhibit 22**  
**Beginning Teachers Credit Mentors More Than Training in Improving Their Effectiveness**

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	NO OR SLIGHT DIFFERENCE	SOME OR BIG DIFFERENCE
MENTOR	43%	57%
TRAINING	65%	35%

*WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999*



## How Could Assistance Programs Be Aligned With Education Reform?

**More Assistance.** School districts, teachers, and principals were asked whether additional assistance would improve the effectiveness of beginning teachers. The highest priority for beginning teachers was more time with a mentor (54 percent said this would make “a lot” of difference in improving their effectiveness).<sup>90</sup> Principals were more likely to report additional training would make the greatest difference.<sup>91</sup> Over 70 percent of school districts gave high rankings to additional observations of other teachers and extra planning time. Over 62 percent of districts raised the issue of increasing the overall funding level for the program.<sup>92</sup>

**Fiscal Accountability.** About a fourth of the school districts (26 percent) mentioned the need to improve the timing and stability of state funding so that all beginning teachers could be covered with a predictable amount of money.<sup>93</sup> OSPI could change the way the current annual funding is distributed to try to cover more teachers. Alternatively, the legislature could establish a fixed amount of funding for each beginning teacher and adjust the biennial appropriation based on the number of beginning teachers hired over the school year.

**Standards and Assessment.** Seventy-three percent of school districts reported that having performance goals associated with assistance programs would improve program effectiveness. A smaller number (64 percent) supported having both performance goals and performance evaluations in assistance programs, but opinions on this idea were more divided.<sup>94</sup>

It is possible to combine both non-judgmental support and standards-based performance assessment. For example, assistance programs in California are based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and include a variety of performance assessment methods such as observations, individual growth plans, portfolios, and a guided series of exercises that beginning teachers and their mentors work on together. The mentor provides constructive feedback but is not involved with formal evaluation of the teacher. Beginning teachers, mentors, and principals in California found these assessment activities both fair and effective in assisting the teachers’ professional development.<sup>95</sup> (See Appendix O for a summary of beginning teacher assistance in California.)

## Summary and Conclusions

**Support for First-Year Teachers.** Washington has provided state funds for beginning teacher assistance programs since 1985. The 1999 Legislature more than doubled the amount of state support for the TAP program for the 1999-2001 biennium. School district programs, mentors, and training tend to focus on issues of emotional support and basic skills for first-year teachers. Beginning teachers and principals report the programs made a difference in helping new teachers get through their first year.

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<sup>90</sup> WSIPP Beginning Teacher Survey 1999.

<sup>91</sup> WSIPP Principals Survey 1999.

<sup>92</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>93</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>94</sup> WSIPP District Survey 1998.

<sup>95</sup> Mitchell et al., *The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program*, 36.

The impact of assistance programs on retention of new teachers was less clear. Statistics for retention of teachers in the first two years in Washington compare favorably with statistics frequently cited in other research supporting beginning teacher assistance programs.

**Improvement of Knowledge and Skills.** As reported by principals and beginning teachers, assistance programs could have a greater impact on improving specific knowledge and skills of new teachers, such as classroom management or incorporating the state's learning standards into curriculum and lesson plans. Beginning teachers credit mentors more than training in improving their effectiveness, but increasing the amount of time mentors and beginning teachers spend in observations or working together is difficult when mentors have full-time teaching loads.

**Statewide Standards and Performance Assessment.** There are no statewide standards for what assistance programs are intended to accomplish and reports are mixed on whether expectations are set locally by districts or principals. The experience of California suggests that support and assessment can successfully be combined in an assistance program if performance assessment is used as a professional development tool by mentors and beginning teachers.

**Accountability.** If beginning teacher assistance programs support an important stage of teacher preparation and development, then state funds should cover all beginning teachers. The increase in funding approved by the 1999 Legislature will not entirely address the issue that state TAP funds cover only 80 percent of first-year teachers.

State funding for beginning teacher assistance programs could be contingent on programs agreeing to use statewide standards and informal performance assessment. Education reform, with its high stakes for improving student learning, provides a new impetus for assistance programs to focus on improving the knowledge and skills of beginning teachers. State policies to introduce additional accountability in beginning teacher assistance programs should also allow district flexibility in designing programs and avoid imposing unnecessary administrative burdens on school districts or ESDs.

## V. PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

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By requiring teachers to demonstrate a defined set of knowledge and skills and a positive impact on student learning, Washington's proposed professional certificate represents a significant change from the current continuing certificate. It is also different from new state-administered performance assessments being developed in some other states.

Seven pilot projects conducted field-tests of professional certificate programs with 75 teachers between 1997 and 1999. The pilot projects focused on knowledge and skills that teachers could readily apply in their classrooms to improve student learning. However, active collaboration between universities and school districts in implementing certificate programs is not affordable or feasible on a statewide basis. The professional certificate standards for knowledge and skills of teachers are not aligned with pre-service standards. It is also unclear how SBE will determine that certificate programs ensure teachers meet the standards for professional certification in a consistent way.

The professional certificate, as field-tested and currently described in SBE rules, is not ready for statewide implementation.

### Overview

Currently, teachers with initial teaching certificates must accumulate a certain number of college credits to obtain a continuing certificate. After August 31, 2000, all teachers who graduate from a teacher preparation program with a residency certificate will be required to obtain a professional certificate in order to continue teaching. Instead of accumulating credits, teachers will have to demonstrate a defined set of knowledge and skills and a positive impact on student learning by enrolling in a state-approved professional certificate program offered through a college or university.

This approach to teacher certification was tested between 1997 and 1999 through seven pilot projects. Difficulties with the field tests began to surface within the first year, raising questions about the feasibility of implementing the professional certificate on a statewide basis by 2000. An advisory committee is discussing possible rule changes for SBE's consideration in October 1999.

### What Is the Professional Certificate?

In 1995, SBE charged a 13-member advisory group of teachers, district administrators, and deans of education<sup>96</sup> with developing a new level of teacher certification to replace the continuing certificate. Currently, teachers must have one year of teaching experience, at least 45 quarter credits of post-baccalaureate study, and two subject-area endorsements to obtain a continuing certificate. In 1997, 32 percent of teachers in public schools already

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<sup>96</sup> This group is the Washington Advisory Council for Professional Teaching Standards or WACPTS.

had a master's degree when they started teaching and were not required to take additional credits for their continuing certificate.<sup>97</sup>

SBE wanted teachers to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and a positive impact on student learning (outcomes) rather than accumulate time on the job and a specified number of credits (inputs). (See Appendix A for a comparison of requirements for continuing versus professional certification.)

The advisory group recommended the professional certificate have the following features:

- **Standards-Based.** The advisory group recommended that teacher performance be assessed against a set of 18 criteria, organized around three overall standards : effective teaching, professional development, and leadership.<sup>98</sup> The criteria are intended to define performance of a fourth- or fifth-year “professional-level” teacher.
- **Collaboratively Developed, State-Approved University Program.** The advisory group was concerned about cost and legal defensibility of high-stakes performance assessments for practicing teachers.<sup>99</sup> SBE did not receive any state funds to develop or implement the professional certificate. The advisory group also recognized that the state salary allocation schedule provides an incentive for teachers to pursue a master's degree. Therefore, the group recommended that universities and school districts collaboratively develop university-run certificate programs, funded through tuition. A teacher's performance will be assessed through a state-approved certificate program, rather than by the state, using a team with representatives from the university and district and an advocate of the teacher's choice. If course work is at a graduate level, teachers can still simultaneously pursue master's degrees. The estimated future enrollment in certificate programs is more than 1,500 teachers per year.
- **Individual Professional Growth Plan.** According to SBE rules, teachers who are enrolled in professional certificate programs will complete pre-assessments of their knowledge and skills and then develop individual professional growth plans. The growth plans can include instruction from a variety of sources and on-site assistance, such as mentoring, designed to help them achieve and demonstrate competency. The professional growth plan is intended to allow certificate programs to adapt to the diverse backgrounds, experience, classroom assignments, and interests of teachers.<sup>100</sup>
- **Multiple Forms of Assessment.** The advisory group did not propose a “test” of teacher performance. They wanted evidence of sustained demonstration over time and in the classroom of relevant knowledge, skills, and an impact on students.<sup>101</sup> Teachers

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<sup>97</sup> Institute analysis of OSPI Certification Data and School Employment Data. Twenty-eight percent of teachers prepared in-state and working in public schools have a master's degree at initial certification; 40 percent of out-of-state teachers working in public schools have a master's degree at initial certification.

<sup>98</sup> See Appendix F for a list of the knowledge and skills standards for professional certification compared to other teacher standards in Washington.

<sup>99</sup> WACPTS Initial Recommendations, January 1996, 9.

<sup>100</sup> OSPI Office of Professional Education and Certification, *Washington: Teacher Certification for the 21st Century*, (June 1996), 6.

<sup>101</sup> WACPTS Initial Recommendations, January 1996, 5.

are expected to collect multiple forms of evidence such as videos, samples of student work, observation reports, and student test scores.

- **Distinguish Between Employment and Certification.** The advisory group wanted to distinguish between decisions on a teacher's performance made by local school districts for employment purposes and decisions made by the state for certification. Therefore, teachers may not enroll in professional certificate programs until they have completed their two-year provisional status and have a continuing contract. However, teachers with a continuing contract have a certain legal standing. Changes to state certification requirements that could potentially result in removing a teacher's certificate or affecting an employment contract are more legally complex than changes to requirements for granting a teacher's first certificate.<sup>102</sup> The criteria used by school districts to evaluate teachers are governed by state statute and have not been changed since 1976.<sup>103</sup>

## How Does the Professional Certificate Compare to Other States?

There is growing interest by states to make ongoing certification of teachers performance-based rather than input-driven.<sup>104</sup> The professional certificate represents Washington's participation in this trend. Other states and testing companies have been working on a new generation of statewide performance assessments for new teachers. Assessments developed during the 1980s came under criticism for focusing on easy to measure, but trivial, behaviors of teachers without regard to the quality of their interaction with students, the content or grade level of the lessons, or whether the students were learning.<sup>105</sup>

The new performance assessments have the following features:

- **Standards-Based.** States, including Washington, have adopted broad principles that describe what teachers should know and be able to do rather than a checklist of behaviors.
- **Require Demonstration of Complex, Relevant Skills.** Similar to Washington's professional certificate, the assessments use such tools as videotapes, samples of teacher and student work, direct observation by a trained rater, and interviews or journals to capture the breadth of a teacher's actual practice in the classroom.<sup>106</sup>
- **Combine Support and Assessment.** The new assessments typically occur in the first or second year of teaching. Mentoring and skill development in preparation for the

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<sup>102</sup> Diana C. Pullin, "Reforms in Standards-Based Teacher Education, Certification and Licensure: Legal Issues in Implementation," Paper prepared for Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, 1998, 11.

<sup>103</sup> RCW 28A.405.100.

<sup>104</sup> See Appendix P for a chart describing performance-based certification in other states.

<sup>105</sup> L. Darling-Hammond, A. Wise, S. Klein, *A License to Teach: Raising Standards for Teaching*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 64.

<sup>106</sup> A. Milanowski, A. Odden, and P. Youngs, "Teacher Knowledge and Skill Assessments and Teacher Compensation: An Overview of Measurement and Linkage Issues" *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education* 12(2) (1998): 83-101.

assessments is often provided through a beginning teacher assistance program. Washington's professional certificate will be granted to a fourth- or fifth-year teacher. Assistance will be provided through the certificate program, which is not connected to beginning teacher assistance programs currently in schools.

- **Require Professional Expertise.** Because the new assessments and the knowledge and skills they attempt to measure are complex, raters must exercise professional judgement about the quality of a teacher's performance. Most raters in other states are experienced teachers who receive extensive training. One state estimates that 40 percent of its teaching force is involved with the new assessment system as mentors, raters, or trainers.<sup>107</sup> In contrast, if Washington's capacity to develop and assess effective teaching is built largely in university certificate programs, the professional certificate will involve fewer practicing teachers.

The new performance assessments are still under development. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has completed Praxis III, but only Ohio has adopted it for licensing purposes starting in 2002. Beginning in 1994, a group of states began working with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) to develop a portfolio assessment process based on the INTASC standards for beginning teachers.<sup>108</sup> Connecticut has been a leader in this effort and has been phasing in required portfolios from all second-year teachers since 1996.<sup>109</sup> (See Appendix Q for a summary of Connecticut's activities.) The Institute estimates that at least ten states are considering, developing, or implementing the type of performance assessments described above.<sup>110</sup>

Two issues of concern with the new assessments are legal defensibility and cost. High-stakes assessments must meet certain standards for validity and reliability.<sup>111</sup> INTASC, ETS, and states have invested in extensive studies and reviews to ensure their assessments will be legally defensible. In Washington, SBE rules allow each certificate program to define what performance meets the standards. SBE has no procedures for assuring validity or reliability of assessments that occur in certificate programs.

States have had to provide resources for their new assessment systems. One official in Connecticut estimated that it cost approximately \$1 million over a three-year period to develop, pilot-test, and conduct reliability studies for their portfolio system, and more work is needed.<sup>112</sup> The annual cost of training and certifying raters and scoring portfolios for 2,000

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<sup>107</sup> R. Pecheone and K. Stansbury, "Connecting Teacher Assessment and School Reform," *Elementary School Journal* 97(2) (1997): 163-177.

<sup>108</sup> INTASC is a group of state education agencies, higher education institutions and national educational organizations formed to reform educational licensing. INTASC has developed core standards used by many states.

<sup>109</sup> Connecticut State Department of Education, *A Guide to the BEST Program for Beginning Teachers and Mentors* (August 1997), 3.

<sup>110</sup> See Appendix P.

<sup>111</sup> A. Porter, P. Youngs, and A. Odden, (forthcoming) "Advances in Teacher Assessments and Their Uses," to appear in Richardson, ed., *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, 66. Broadly defined, validity is an issue of whether the assessment measures what it is supposed to measure: the skills, knowledge, or ability required for successful performance on the job. Reliability refers to consistency of measurement: do two people with the same performance receive the same rating?

<sup>112</sup> Porter et al., "Advances in Teacher Assessments," 66.

teachers was estimated at \$485,000.<sup>113</sup> In comparison to development and administration costs, the larger costs of the new assessment systems appears to be mentoring, training, and assistance provided through expanded beginning teacher programs. Connecticut spends over \$3 million a year on support and training for teachers to help them prepare for the performance assessment, and this figure does not include costs paid by local school districts. In Washington, all costs for professional certification are assumed to be paid through candidate tuition.

## How Did Certificate Programs Compare in the Field Tests?

OSPI approved the use of \$691,871 in federal Goals 2000 funds to support a series of field tests of the professional certificate. Five projects were awarded grants based on Request for Proposals (RFPs) submitted in October 1996. In May 1997, these projects applied for and received a second round of funding, and two projects were added specifically to serve rural school districts.

**Participants.** Exhibit 23 lists each pilot project and its participants. A total of 75 candidates have participated in pilot projects.<sup>114</sup> In October 1998, 28 candidates from three of the projects received professional certificates from SBE.

**Exhibit 23**  
**Professional Certificate Pilot Projects**

PROJECT TITLE	UNIVERSITY	SCHOOL DISTRICTS	GOALS 2000 GRANTS	TOTAL CANDIDATES
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTERS	Washington State University (WSU)	Spokane	\$97,178	28*
CERTIFICATION MODELS PILOT	University of Washington - Tacoma (UWT); Pacific Lutheran University (PLU)	Sumner, Bethel, Tacoma, Cascade Christian Schools	\$115,040	14
SEASHORE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PILOT PROGRAM	Seattle University (SU)	Shoreline, Northshore, Everett	\$128,520	6
CERTIFICATE FIELD TEST	Seattle Pacific University (SPU)	Mukilteo, Edmonds, King's Schools	\$101,800	15*

<sup>113</sup> Porter et al., "Advances in Teacher Assessments," 36.

<sup>114</sup> Teachers who completed the pilot projects will be referred to as "candidates." The term "participants" will refer to representatives from school districts and universities. "Universities" includes both colleges and universities. The projects will be referred to by their lead coordinating partner: WSU, UWT/PLU, SU, SPU, NWC (NW Consortium), ESD 123 and ESD 112.

PROJECT TITLE	UNIVERSITY	SCHOOL DISTRICTS	GOALS 2000 GRANTS	TOTAL CANDIDATES
<b>NORTHWEST CONSORTIUM (NWC) FOR TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL GROWTH</b>	Western Washington University (WWU)	Ferndale, Bellingham, Blaine, Mt. Vernon**	\$113,520	11
<b>ESD 123 PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION FIELD PROJECT</b>	Walla Walla College	ESD 123 and Blue Mountain Schools Consortium***	\$61,000	3
<b>RURAL PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION NETWORK</b>	None^	ESD 112 and rural districts in Klickitat, Wahkiakum, and Pacific Counties	\$74,813	0^

\*WSU figures include two groups of candidates.

\*\*The Consortium also includes ESD 189 and the local WEA Uniserv Council.

\*\*\*Participating teachers are from Finley and Touchet School Districts.

^ESD 112 was unable to create a partnership with a university or recruit candidates for the pilot project.

**Project Comparisons.**<sup>115</sup> Each project implemented its professional certificate program differently.

- **Instruction.** All projects relied exclusively on university courses for instruction. All courses counted toward a master's degree at the participating university. Most programs were based on approximately 20 quarter hours of credit, although Walla Walla College developed a new Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) for the ESD 123 project.

The pilot projects did not test the type of instruction described by SBE rules. Specifically, they did not test a program that included instruction from a variety of possible sources, tailored to an individual's background and experience. Universities maintain that a planned program of study offers better professional development than separate courses and have traditionally been reluctant to recognize non-university courses for graduate-level credit.

- **Assistance.** Participants continually emphasized the importance of assisting teachers as they work toward professional certification but found this aspect of a certificate program challenging to implement. Only two of the projects arranged for a mentor teacher in the district to be assigned to each candidate (SPU, NWC). Part of the reason not all programs utilized mentor teachers was lack of a clearly defined role for them. Other projects relied on district professional development staff, adjunct faculty advisors, or principals to provide assistance to candidates. Several participants suggested that

<sup>115</sup> Information for the comparisons came from Goals 2000 applications, written materials such as course syllabi and handbooks, and interviews with participants and candidates from each project. The field test by ESD 112 is not included in these comparisons. Case studies on each pilot project are available in the expanded version of the Institute's review of Professional Certification.



assistance programs for beginning teachers should be strengthened to prepare candidates for entry into professional certificate programs.

Only one project provided funding and arranged for release days for candidates as part of the project grant. NWC included eight days each for mentors and candidates over the duration of the program. In three other projects, districts contributed release time for candidates from their own funds. In the SU project, each district contributed ten days over a two-year period.

- **Assessment.** All but one of the projects (SU) chose a portfolio as the primary vehicle for candidates to collect and display documentation of their performance. Documentation included samples of student work, lesson and unit plans, and action research projects. All but one (SU) required candidates to demonstrate performance on each of the 18 criteria.

Most projects used some form of a multi-party team to assess candidate performance, as specified in SBE rules. The purpose of having an advocate on assessment teams was unclear in the pilot projects. Participants were reluctant to impose an assessment role on individuals whose primary role was to provide support.

No additional guidance is provided in SBE rules for what *level* of performance should be considered a successful demonstration of the standards and criteria. Most of the pilot projects developed some form of assessment framework, with different levels of detail, to guide both candidates and evaluation teams. An example of the framework used in the UWT/PLU project is shown in Exhibit 24.

**Exhibit 24**  
**Framework for Proficient Teaching and Student Learning (Excerpt)<sup>116</sup>**

<b>PERFORMANCE STANDARD I - EFFECTIVE TEACHING</b> <b>Criterion B: Using Assessment to Monitor and Improve Instruction</b>				
<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>RUDIMENTARY (Pre-service)</b>	<b>EMERGING (Beginning Teacher, Years 1 - 3)</b>	<b>PROFICIENT (Professional Certificate, Years 4 - 5)</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF PERFORMANCE</b>
<b>Uses a Variety of Effective Assessment Techniques For Different Purposes</b>	Teacher uses assessment only for grading purposes	Teacher assessment used for instructional feedback and grading, but not for diagnosis of student learning needs	Teacher consistently uses assessment of student learning for the purposes of diagnosis of student learning needs, instructional feedback, and grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lesson and Unit Plans</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Work Samples Showing Growth</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Portfolio Showing Growth</i></li> <li>• <i>Classroom Observations</i></li> </ul>

<sup>116</sup> Reprinted from *Framework for Proficient Teaching and Student Learning: Certification Models Pilot*, Sumner, Tacoma, Bethel, Cascade Christian School Districts, University of Washington-Tacoma, and Pacific Lutheran University, December 3, 1997.

With a wide range of interpretations among the field tests, it is unclear how SBE will determine that certificate programs assure their candidates meet the standards in a manner that is consistent and fair across programs.

- **Positive Impact on Student Learning.** Documentation of positive impact on student learning also varied considerably by project. For example, WSU candidates selected five students, representative of the diversity in their classroom, and included samples of their work over time in the portfolio to show growth in learning. UWT/PLU candidates prepared a unit work plan outlining a four- to five-week course of instruction on an EALR and then prepared an impact evaluation plan for the unit including evaluation questions, baseline data, data collection, and analysis of results. This process was repeated using different approaches to instruction and assessment.
- **Selected Costs.** This study did not review expenditures of the pilot projects in detail. Projects incurred costs they would not expect to duplicate in the absence of grant funds. The programs are also not very comparable because the cost of different models varied greatly. Direct costs for assistance, assessment, and coordination ranged from about \$800 to over \$3,000 per candidate. Tuition ranged from \$2,000 to \$8,235.

## **How Does the Professional Certificate Compare to Evaluation Criteria?**

Comparisons of various components of the professional certificate are useful but leave important questions unanswered. Is it feasible to implement the professional certificate as it was field-tested? Should candidates in different programs be expected to meet a similar standard of performance before gaining professional certification? The Institute drew from multiple sources to create a list of criteria to evaluate the professional certificate based on the experience of the pilot projects.

Some of the criteria represent important issues of concern to state policymakers (cost, access to higher education). Other issues are raised by SBE rules for certificate programs (feasibility of collaboration between universities and school districts, relevance of programs for individual professional growth of teachers). The research literature suggests that performance assessments for state certification should be valid (measure knowledge and skills relevant for being a successful teacher) and reliable (measure performance consistently across candidates). The professional certificate is also intended to align preparation of teachers with Washington's standards for student achievement.

Exhibit 25 shows the list of criteria the Institute used to evaluate the professional certificate.

**Exhibit 25**  
**Criteria for Evaluating the Professional Certificate**

<b>AFFORDABILITY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is affordable for candidates</li> <li>• is affordable for districts</li> <li>• is affordable for universities</li> </ul>
<b>FEASIBILITY STATEWIDE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expects reasonable collaboration between universities and districts</li> <li>• can be accessed equitably across the state</li> </ul>
<b>RELEVANCE</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focuses on necessary knowledge and skills</li> <li>• provides for individual professional growth</li> </ul>
<b>FAIRNESS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describes a clear standard of performance</li> <li>• requires a consistent level of performance to meet the standard</li> </ul>
<b>ALIGNMENT WITH REFORM</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fits within the professional development system for teachers</li> <li>• supports Washington's student learning goals and improved student learning</li> </ul>

For this evaluation, the Institute conducted interviews with participants and candidates in each pilot project. Questions were asked to solicit their opinions, based on the field test experience, of how the professional certificate compared with the above criteria.<sup>117</sup>

### **Affordability**

- **For Candidates.** Based on the pilot projects, a possible range of tuition for a 20-credit program could be \$2,000 to \$6,600, and more for a full master's degree. Most participants consider the professional certificate affordable for candidates only if there is a financial incentive for completion, such as progress toward a master's degree or a new incentive on the salary schedule. However, a recurring concern was that the time and effort candidates put into the pilot programs were too rigorous for the state to expect from all teachers.
- **For Districts.** Release time for candidates, assistance from mentors, meetings of each candidate's evaluation team, and program coordination were all supported in the pilot projects by grant funds or temporary contributions from participating districts. There was unanimous agreement that active school district participation in certificate programs would be unlikely without additional resources.

<sup>117</sup> Institute staff also attended several day-long meetings with participants as they discussed their collective findings. In addition, the Institute had access to evaluation reports from four of the projects and a strategic plan prepared for OSPI in December 1998 regarding implementation of the professional certificate.

- **For Universities.** Most university participants believed they could afford to implement a certificate program only under certain conditions: if programs were based on approximately 20 credits and collaboration with school districts was significantly less intensive. However, the pilot projects were more applied and less theoretical than a typical master's program for practicing teachers. Universities may need to consider different configurations of staff (adjunct faculty, advisors) with different areas of expertise. Capacity will be needed for more than 1,500 enrollees a year.

## Feasibility Statewide

- **Reasonable Collaboration.** There was also unanimous agreement that a program requiring periodic meetings of a university representative, a district representative, a candidate, and an advocate chosen by the candidate is not feasible on a large scale. Participants frequently cited "time" as the most significant barrier preventing these meetings (closely followed by its corollary: "cost"). In addition, universities argued that they are accountable to the state to offer approved certificate programs and should also be solely accountable for decisions about candidate performance. However, most participants and candidates also agreed that both universities and school districts needed to be involved in developing and offering certificate programs because the absence of either entity would limit the programs' value in improving and assessing teachers' actual classroom performance.
- **Equitable Access.** The experience of the pilot projects raises questions about district resources to support teachers enrolled in certificate programs, university capacity to offer a new program to 1,500 teachers each year, and the feasibility of large-scale collaboration between universities and school districts. These challenges become even more daunting when the wide variety of school district sizes, levels of funding, and geographic locations are taken into account. Possible roles for ESDs as brokers of courses, resource and referral for candidates, and coordinators for small districts were largely untested. Distance learning has potential to improve access but was not tried in the field tests.

## Relevance

- **Necessary Knowledge and Skills.** Overall, most participants and candidates agreed that the three standards and 18 criteria captured the important aspects of being a competent, professional teacher. However, most also believed they should be simplified and reduced in number. All considered the criteria grouped under the "Effective Teaching" standard the most important and most relevant. According to candidates and district participants, the most valuable aspects of the programs were a strong focus on effective teaching, student assessment, and improvement of skills readily useable and demonstrated in teachers' classrooms.

The "Professional Development" and "Leadership" standards were considered important attributes for teachers, but there was no agreement on whether they should be demonstrated as part of professional certification. Some participants and candidates

believed these standards should be assessed by school districts rather than through university course work, or were better addressed in later stages of a teacher's career.

- **Individual Professional Growth.** Participants and candidates found that using individual professional growth plans increased the relevance of the program because course assignments and documentation for the portfolio were based on the subjects, grade levels, and students the candidates were teaching. However, none of the pilot projects altered course requirements based on a candidate's pre-assessment or growth plan. Several candidates expressed frustration that pursuit of subject-area expertise was not part of the certificate program or that instruction was not directly applicable to their personal goals or teaching experience.

## Fairness

- **Clear Standard of Performance.** The assessment frameworks developed by most pilot projects helped describe the performance expected from candidates. However, some candidates and participants continued to express concern that assessments were too subjective and that expectations for candidates needed to be more clearly defined.
- **Consistent Level of Performance.** Half the university participants and all but one of the district participants strongly stated that for statewide implementation, increased consistency across programs will be necessary to assure fair assessment of candidates. All but one candidate expressed concern about possible unequal interpretation of the criteria, and all expressed a desire for a common minimum standard for state certification. When a candidate with a continuing contract challenges a decision about the assessment of his or her performance, it will be even more important to have a clear, common standard applying to all candidates. Other district and university participants were reluctant to impose a common assessment framework, in part because higher education institutions have a strong tradition of academic freedom.

## Alignment With Reform

- **Alignment With Professional Development System for Teachers.** The professional certificate is not well aligned with current pre-service preparation, beginning teacher assistance programs, teacher performance evaluations by principals, or master's programs for practicing teachers.<sup>118</sup> The standards for professional certification, pre-service preparation, and performance evaluations by principals do not build knowledge and skills sequentially over a teacher's career. There are no standards associated with the beginning teacher assistance program.

Both participants and candidates reported there was not a good fit between master's degree programs and the professional certificate programs. Over time, universities will be able to realign their course schedules. However, the basic philosophies of professional certificate and master's degree programs for practicing teachers differ: one focuses on application and skills, the other on research and theory. The state salary

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<sup>118</sup> See Appendix F for a comparison of various Washington standards for teacher knowledge and skills.

allocation schedule continues to provide an incentive for teachers to seek a master's degree. Graduates of Masters in Teaching programs are not now required to take additional course work to obtain a continuing certificate and would have to enroll in a new program to obtain a professional certificate.

- **Support Improved Student Learning.** Some programs made demonstration of a positive impact on student learning an integral part of the entire certificate program and placed continuous emphasis on integrating student assessment into all aspects of teaching. Candidates in these programs appeared more likely to report that demonstrating a positive impact on student learning had a significant impact on their teaching. Where demonstration of positive impact was less well defined or integrated into the program, candidates seemed more likely to consider it merely an exercise in compiling samples of student work. Some participants also suggested additional state guidelines for demonstrating a positive impact on student learning.

## How Does the Professional Certificate Compare With the Current Continuing Certificate?

The Institute conducted a survey of teachers who recently completed continuing certificates to provide a comparison of their experiences with the experiences of candidates in the professional certificate pilot projects.<sup>119</sup>

**Affordability.** Seventy-nine percent of teachers surveyed needed additional university credits to obtain their continuing certificates; 21 percent did not.<sup>120</sup> Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) enrolled in master's programs and reported they spent between \$7,000 and \$10,000 for tuition, on average. The remaining teachers took a combination of courses and reported spending an average of \$2,000 to \$5,000 on tuition, largely because they enrolled in fewer total credits.<sup>121</sup>

It appears that if professional certificate programs involve fewer than 45 credits, they will be less expensive than the current course work requirements for continuing certification. However, if teachers continue to enroll in master's programs to obtain their professional certificates, they will not experience any cost savings. Required enrollment in a certificate program represents a new cost for teachers who already have a master's degree. The state salary allocation schedule recognizes education beyond a master's degree only after 45 additional credits have been accumulated.

**Feasibility Statewide.** The survey revealed that ease of access to college or university course work is already a concern for practicing teachers and is not unique to the professional certificate (see Exhibit 26). However, the most significant barrier to obtaining additional education was "finances."

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<sup>119</sup> The Institute surveyed a random sample of teachers who received continuing certificates from July 1, 1998 to December 31, 1998. Out of 834 teachers, 468 were surveyed and 214 responded (46 percent).

<sup>120</sup> Statewide, 28 percent of in-state teachers in 1997 already had a master's degree when they received their initial teaching certificates. This indicates some error in the survey. WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999.

<sup>121</sup> WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999.

Distance learning is still not widely used by colleges and universities for teacher education, but opportunities are growing. Forty-eight percent of survey respondents reported they could have taken courses for their continuing certificate via distance learning. Over half (54 percent) of those did take some distance learning courses.<sup>122</sup>

**Exhibit 26**  
**Barriers to Obtaining Course Work for Continuing Certification**

TO WHAT EXTENT WERE THE FOLLOWING A BARRIER TO GETTING NECESSARY COURSE WORK?	RESPONDED "MEDIUM" OR "A LOT"
FINANCES	70%
AVAILABILITY OF COURSES ON TOPICS OF INTEREST	49%
TIME OF YEAR COURSES WERE OFFERED	46%
TIME OF DAY COURSES WERE OFFERED	46%
DISTANCE TO WHERE COURSES WERE OFFERED	36%
INFORMATION ON CLASSES OFFERED IN MY AREA	27%

*WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999.*

**Relevance.** Surveyed teachers were asked to what degree their course work focused on the criteria for professional certification. If the 18 criteria represent what teachers should know and be able to do, then professional certificate programs will require teachers to focus on some topics that are covered by current course work only in a limited way (see Exhibit 27).

Many surveyed teachers reported that their courses and programs focused on expanding their subject-area knowledge and knowledge of how to teach specific subjects, which are not criteria for professional certification.<sup>123</sup> Professional certificate programs may provide teachers with less opportunity to pursue subject-area expertise than current course work.

<sup>122</sup> WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999.

<sup>123</sup> WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999. The description of "enhancing professional development" included "remaining current in research." Master's degree programs have a strong research focus.

### Exhibit 27

## Knowledge and Skills in Course Work for Continuing Certification

70% or more reported these areas received “Medium” or “A Lot” of focus:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhancing professional development</li><li>• Effective teaching practices</li><li>• Expanding subject-area knowledge</li><li>• Creating a student-focused learning environment</li></ul>
50 to 70% reported these areas received “Medium” or “A Lot” of focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhancing leadership</li><li>• Knowledge of how to teach specific subjects</li><li>• Designing and adapting curriculum</li><li>• Using assessment to inform instruction</li></ul>
Less than 50% reported these areas received “Medium” or “A Lot” of focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Using information on student performance</li><li>• Demonstrating cultural sensitivity</li><li>• Integrating technology into instruction</li><li>• Involving parents</li></ul>

*WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999*

Only 38 percent of surveyed teachers reported their course work for continuing certification was “very” valuable in building the skills and knowledge to make them a more effective teacher. Another 40 percent reported the courses were of “medium” value.<sup>124</sup>

**Alignment With Reform.** Sixty percent of teachers reported little or no focus in their course work on knowledge and skills necessary to teach the EALRs. About half (51 percent) reported they demonstrated a positive impact on student learning only “a little” or “not at all.” These are expected to be areas of emphasis in professional certificate programs.<sup>125</sup>

## What Is the Current Status of the Professional Certificate?

Difficulties with implementing the professional certificate began to surface late in 1997.<sup>126</sup> In October 1998, SBE and WACTE created a task force to summarize lessons learned from the pilot projects. In response to their recommendations, SBE’s advisory group began in May 1999 to draft rule changes that: (1) reduce some of the required collaboration between school districts and universities and make universities solely responsible for assessing candidate performance, (2) specify the type of courses expected in a certificate program,

<sup>124</sup> WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999.

<sup>125</sup> WSIPP Continuing Certificate Survey 1999.

<sup>126</sup> Memo to Professional Certificate Discussion Group from Ted Andrews, Director, Professional Education and Certification, OSPI, November 13, 1997.



and (3) delay statewide implementation until September 2001.<sup>127</sup> A small group of university participants in the pilot projects are drafting a common assessment framework for possible use by certificate programs.

As field-tested and currently described in SBE rules, the professional certificate is not ready for statewide implementation. As of July 1999, SBE has not had the opportunity to address issues raised by the field tests.

## Summary and Conclusions

**Significant Change.** Washington's proposed professional certificate for teachers represents a significant change from the current continuing certificate. After 2000, all new teachers with at least two years of experience will be expected to enroll in a state-approved certificate program developed collaboratively by a university and local school districts and document both positive impact on student learning and performance on statewide standards. This approach to performance-based certification of teachers is also different from recent efforts in other states to develop state-administered performance assessments that occur in the first two years of teaching, provide assistance through beginning teacher programs, and involve large numbers of practicing teachers in the assessment process.

**Feasibility.** The experience of seven pilot projects that have field-tested Washington's professional certificate since 1997 raises questions about the feasibility of implementing certificate programs on a statewide basis.

**Statewide Standards for Teacher Preparation and Development.** The experience of the pilot projects strongly suggests that consistent statewide standards for teacher performance, with benchmarks for different stages of a teacher's career, are necessary to align professional certification with other programs for teacher preparation and development. Making the criteria for evaluation by principals align with the statewide standards for teacher performance will require legislative action.

**Statewide Performance Assessment.** It is unclear how SBE will determine that future certificate programs assure their candidates meet the standards for professional certification in a fair and consistent way.

**Accountability of Professional Certificate Programs.** It is also unclear how certificate programs, when fully implemented, will avoid costly duplication for teachers who enter programs with advanced degrees or out-of-state experience. The pilot projects did not address issues regarding access, use of distance learning, or roles for ESDs. SBE may need to define minimum expectations for assistance, including roles of mentors and candidate advocates in approved certificate programs. The less school districts are involved in providing assistance, participating in instruction, and monitoring teachers' progress, the more certificate programs are likely to resemble current master's degree or continuing education courses. More work is needed to estimate the likely costs of certificate programs.

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<sup>127</sup> Memo to WACPTS from Lillian Cady, Director, Professional Education, OSPI, June 16, 1999.

SBE does not typically address these types of implementation issues in its approval of pre-service teacher preparation programs. However, unlike students in pre-service programs, candidates for professional certification will have legal rights as holders of continuing teaching contracts. More rigorous oversight by the state may be warranted. A more active role in program oversight would require additional resources for OSPI or SBE.

**Alternative: State-Administered Assessment.** As an alternative to mandating enrollment in a state-approved professional certificate program, SBE could consider developing a state-administered assessment process similar to that being developed in other states. A state-administered assessment process would clearly focus state certification of teachers on outcomes (a common, standards-based assessment of performance) rather than inputs (university or program credits). A larger proportion of the K-12 teaching workforce could be involved in encouraging and facilitating standards-based teaching by participating as trainers, mentors, local and regional assistance providers, and assessment raters. Issues of fairness and legal defensibility could be addressed in a consistent fashion across the state.

However, the state would have to invest in a comprehensive training and assessment system, which represents a shift in responsibility for paying the cost of professional certification from candidates to the state. The process would not be aligned with the salary allocation schedule incentive to pursue a master's degree unless universities create new types of degree programs.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Washington's education reform is creating a system of statewide standards, performance assessment, and accountability for student learning from K-12. For teacher preparation and development in Washington, reliance on statewide standards, statewide performance assessments, and clear accountability for assuring teacher quality varies depending on the stage of teacher preparation and development. Appendix R illustrates this variation.

This variation is primarily due to the decentralized oversight of the different stages, with no common principles to guide consistent and comprehensive policies. SBE, the legislature, OSPI, colleges of education, and local school districts each have roles in setting and implementing policies regarding teacher preparation and development. Washington's long tradition of local control has influenced policy choices. There has been limited interest in strong state oversight. OSPI and SBE have a small staff to address teacher preparation, and limited state funds have been provided for new policies.

However, the 1993 Washington Education Reform Act represents a new level of state involvement in education. The state has set high expectations for improved student learning. If the state wants to ensure teachers have the knowledge and skills to help students meet the new academic standards, it could also consider a new level of involvement in teacher preparation and development.

### Statewide Standards

There are no consistent statewide standards in Washington for what teachers should know and be able to do that address each stage of a teacher's career. Each time a teacher's performance is assessed, different standards are used.

The research literature provides evidence that a focus on effective teaching practices is a promising strategy to support teacher quality throughout a teacher's career.<sup>128</sup> A framework of standards for effective teaching would describe knowledge, skills, and effective teaching practices for teachers at different stages in their careers. A number of Washington teacher preparation programs, and most of the professional certificate pilot projects, have adopted a framework of standards for their particular programs, but no common framework is in use across the state and across all stages of a teacher's career.

### Recommendations:

- Consistent statewide standards of performance for teachers could be developed, with benchmarks for the stages of a teacher's career. The standards could be developed with statewide participation of teachers, higher education faculty, school district personnel, and the public.

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<sup>128</sup> For a more thorough review of national information on effective teacher practice, see Kooi's report, *Effective Teacher Preparation for Educational Reform in Washington State*.

- The standards could be used in all pre-service programs, beginning teacher assistance programs, principals' evaluations of teachers, and professional certificate programs.
- The statutory criteria for principals' evaluations of teachers could align with the new statewide performance standards. (Requires legislative action.)

### **An Example of a Standards Framework**

#### **Framework for Proficient Teaching and Student Learning (Excerpt)<sup>129</sup>**

<b>PERFORMANCE STANDARD I - EFFECTIVE TEACHING</b> <b>Criterion B: Using Assessment to Monitor and Improve Instruction</b>				
<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>RUDIMENTARY (Pre-service)</b>	<b>EMERGING (Beginning Teacher, Years 1 - 3)</b>	<b>PROFICIENT (Professional Certificate, Years 4 - 5)</b>	<b>EVIDENCE OF PERFORMANCE</b>
<b>Uses a Variety of Effective Assessment Techniques For Different Purposes</b>	Teacher uses assessment only for grading purposes	Teacher assessment used for instructional feedback and grading, but not for diagnosis of student learning needs	Teacher consistently uses assessment of student learning for the purposes of diagnosis of student learning needs, instructional feedback, and grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lesson and Unit Plans</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Work Samples Showing Growth</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Portfolio Showing Growth</i></li> <li>• <i>Classroom Observations</i></li> </ul>

### **Performance Assessment**

Washington does not currently require any statewide assessments of teachers on basic skills, subject matter, or pedagogy. Currently, 43 states and the District of Columbia use statewide assessments at some point in the initial licensure of their teachers. SBE has recommended implementation of such assessments for the last ten years.

Once teachers receive initial certification, additional assessments of their performance vary. Beginning teacher assistance programs are prohibited from being associated with formal performance evaluations but could use informal self-assessment as a developmental tool to help new teachers. The statutory criteria for formal evaluations of a teacher's performance have not changed in over 20 years. Without additional state oversight, there is no assurance that performance assessments conducted for the new professional certificate will be consistent across candidates, certificate programs, or the state.

### **Recommendations:**

<sup>129</sup> Reprinted from *Framework for Proficient Teaching and Student Learning: Certification Models Pilot*, Sumner, Tacoma, Bethel, Cascade Christian School Districts, University of Washington-Tacoma, and Pacific Lutheran University, December 3, 1997.

- All future teachers could take a statewide basic skills test prior to entry into pre-service programs. All teacher candidates could be assessed for content knowledge and possibly pedagogy<sup>130</sup> prior to receiving a residency certificate to begin teaching. (Requires legislative action.)
- Beginning teacher assistance programs could incorporate informal performance assessments (formative) to encourage beginning teachers and their mentors to work on building knowledge and skills.
- Additional steps could be taken to ensure that performance assessments for professional certification are consistent and fair across certificate programs. Alternatively, a state-administered assessment process could be considered.

### **Opportunities to Introduce Performance Assessment**

<b>RESIDENCY CERTIFICATE  (PRE-SERVICE)</b>	<b>BEGINNING TEACHER ASSISTANCE  (YEAR 1)</b>	<b>EMPLOYMENT EVALUATION  (YEARS 1-4 AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION)</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE  (YEARS 3 - 5)</b>
Basic skills assessment (prior to entry into program)  Content knowledge and teaching skills assessments (prior to residency certificate)	Assistance programs use informal performance assessments as a tool for professional development	Evaluations based on new performance standards	SBE ensures consistent and fair assessments in certificate programs  or  State considers developing a state-administered assessment process

### **Accountability**

Accountability is a recurring theme in education reform. In Washington, accountability for assuring student achievement or teacher quality has primarily been a local rather than a state responsibility. However, under education reform, the state has taken a far larger role in defining standards and measuring performance for K-12 students. SBE has begun to define standards and focus on performance for state certification of teachers. However, it is unclear how SBE will hold state-approved programs for residency or professional certification accountable for ensuring teacher quality and demonstration of a positive impact on student learning. Other entities, such as the legislature, OSPI, colleges of education, local school districts, and local employee associations are also responsible for assuring

<sup>130</sup> There is no definitive research that says pedagogy tests relate to effective teaching.

teacher quality in Washington. The degree of state oversight over different stages of teacher preparation and development varies.

### **Recommendations:**

- There could be clear and explicit criteria to determine that pre-service and professional certificate programs meet state standards for program approval, including periodic follow-up and review of programs and candidate performance. Positive impact on student learning could be clearly defined to ensure it is measured in a consistent way across candidates and programs.
- State funding for beginning teacher assistance programs could be conditioned on programs' use of performance standards and informal performance assessments. State funding for TAP could cover all beginning teachers.
- Issues such as relevance, fairness, and statewide feasibility could be addressed in state approval of professional certificate programs. Alternatively, a state-administered assessment process could be considered.

### **Opportunities to Introduce Accountability**

<b>RESIDENCY CERTIFICATE</b>	<b>BEGINNING TEACHER ASSISTANCE</b>	<b>EMPLOYMENT EVALUATION</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE</b>
<b>(PRE-SERVICE)</b>	<b>(YEAR 1)</b>	<b>(YEARS 1-4 AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION)</b>	<b>(YEARS 3 - 5)</b>
<p>Explicit procedures and criteria to determine programs meet state standards</p> <p>Clear and consistent definition of demonstration of a positive impact on student learning</p> <p>Periodic review of programs</p>	<p>As a condition of receiving state funds, assistance programs focus on performance standards and use informal assessments</p> <p>State funding to cover all beginning teachers</p>	<p>Evaluations based on new performance standards</p>	<p>Explicit procedures and criteria to determine programs meet state standards</p> <p>Clear and consistent definition of demonstration of a positive impact on student learning</p> <p>Periodic review of programs</p> <p>or</p> <p>State considers developing a state-administered assessment process</p>

## **APPENDICES**

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- Appendix A: Teacher Admission and Certification Standards**
- Appendix B: Responsible Entities for Teacher Preparation and Development**
- Appendix C: National Standards Boards for Teacher Education**
- Appendix D: State Policy Tools to Influence Teacher Quality**
- Appendix E: Literature Review on Teacher Quality**
- Appendix F: Washington State Standards for Teacher Preparation and Development**
- Appendix G: New Pre-service Program Standards**
- Appendix H: Summaries of Case Studies on Teacher Preparation Programs**
- Appendix I: Endorsements**
- Appendix J: Type of Teacher Preparation Program by Institution**
- Appendix K: Nationally Available Teacher Assessments**
- Appendix L: Teacher Assessments in Other States**
- Appendix M: States' Beginning Teacher Assistance Programs**
- Appendix N: Case Studies of Four Beginning Teacher Assistance Programs in Washington**
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- Appendix P: Performance-Based Teacher Certification in Other States**
- Appendix Q: Beginning Educator Support and Training in Connecticut**
- Appendix R: Alignment of Washington State Teacher Preparation and Development With Strategies to Implement Education Reform**
- Appendix S: Assessment Options for Washington**