

Archived Information

Objective 1.4: A talented and dedicated teacher is in every classroom in America.

National Need

National Concerns. Good teaching is the key to student achievement. Teachers are being asked to know and do more than ever before to meet the demands of the public and of policymakers for increased accountability and student achievement. Their knowledge and skills make a crucial difference in what students learn; recent research demonstrates that teacher effectiveness is the most important in-school factor in increasing student achievement.

We face numerous national challenges as we seek to ensure effective teaching in all our classrooms. Challenges in quantity loom as specific types of teacher shortages are felt across the Nation. These concerns about quantity in turn affect issues of quality, as school districts, in the face of shortages of qualified teachers, hire individuals without sufficient knowledge and skills. We are also faced with equity issues, as students in high-poverty areas—those who need the best teachers—often are taught by those who are least qualified.

States and school districts across the Nation are responding to the public’s demand for better schools by reforming school programs, implementing new content standards and assessments, and developing new curricula and uses of technology. These and other efforts to increase student achievement will fail, however, without talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teachers in every classroom.

Our Role. The Administration’s bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act would assist state, school districts, and institutions of higher education in providing teachers and administrators across the country with access to sustained, intensive, high-quality professional development. The role of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) is to support and encourage state and district efforts to improve teaching in the United States. ED addresses this objective through six strategies:

- Improving the recruitment, preparation, and retention of new teachers through programs such as the Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant programs of Title II, Higher Education Act (HEA) and the Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers to Use Technology program
- Supporting rigorous standards for new and experienced teachers through support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and through state grants under Title II HEA
- Strengthening professional development through the Teaching to High Standards program, the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development, and other programs such as Reading Excellence
- Strengthening school leadership through a proposed new initiative
- Conducting research and disseminating information on teacher quality and accountability, through such means as the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy and the newly mandated Title II HEA Accountability Reports on teacher preparation and licensing
- Building public awareness of and measuring our progress on teacher quality issues, through speeches, conferences, and measures such as the Title II HEA Accountability Reports and the Biennial National Report on Teacher Quality

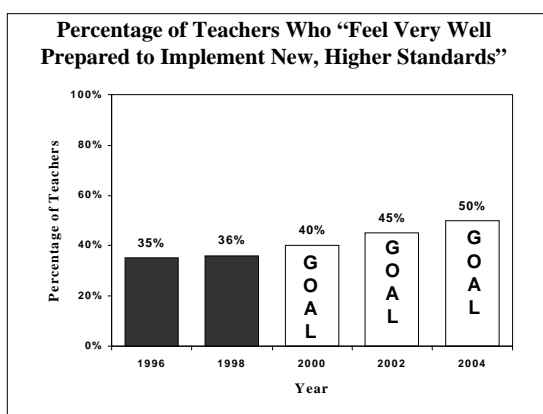
Our Performance

How We Measure. The six performance indicators in the Strategic Plan for Objective 1.4 focus on key outcomes regarding the quality of the teaching force and the policies that affect the teaching force.

Indicator 1.4.a. The percentage of teachers who feel very well prepared to implement new, higher standards will increase annually.

Assessment of Progress. No significant change between 1996 and 1998. No 1999 data available because data are collected every 2 years. Related data released from the Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change (LESCP) in Title I schools demonstrate a challenge to achieving this target. In the 1998 LESCP, among a sample of 71 high-poverty schools receiving Title I funds, slightly less than half of teachers were “very familiar” with the content and performance standards of their state or district in mathematics and reading. No 2001 goal has been set because the next data collections will be in 2000 and 2002.

Figure 1.4.a.1



Source: Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS). *Frequency:* Every 2 years. *Next Update:* 2000. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by NCES’s review procedures and *NCES Statistical Standards*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** Indicator is based on teacher self-reported data. In addition, the exact question differed across the 2 years of data collection: in 1996, teachers reported how well prepared they were to implement “new, higher standards”; in 1998, teachers reported how well prepared they were to implement “state/district standards.” In 2000, teachers will report how well prepared they are to implement “state/district standards.” This indicator is intended to be a measure of teachers’ readiness to implement standards. However, in some cases, it may inadvertently only measure whether a teacher is aware of the standards.

Indicator 1.4.b. By 2002, 75 percent of states will align initial teacher certification standards with high content and student performance standards.

Assessment of Progress. Positive trend toward target. According to data from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) in 1999, 19 states were in the process of aligning their initial teacher certification standards with their content standards and performance standards for students. However, ED will not know fully if it is on track to achieve targets until states’ self-reported baseline data are submitted in early 2001 through the State Report Cards. ED’s evaluation of the programs authorized under Title II HEA will provide high-quality followup data in 2003 on this indicator. No chart is provided.

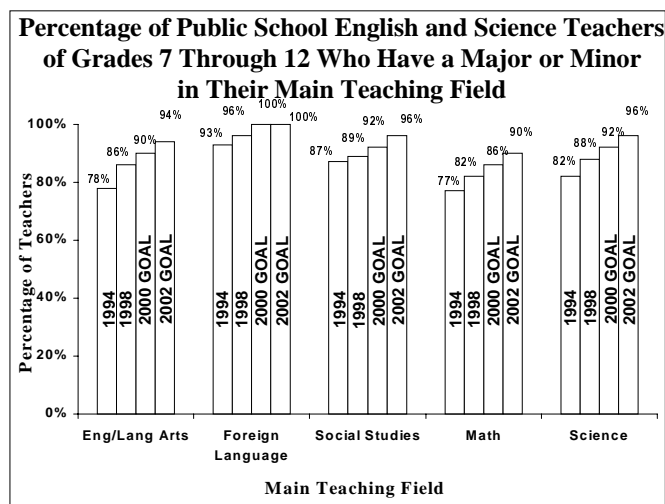
Source: State Report Card on the Quality of Teacher Preparation, as mandated in Sec. 207 of Title II. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* October 2001. An independent review of states’ standards for initial teacher certification provided through ED’s evaluation of the state grant program of Title II. *Frequency:* One time. *Next Update:* 2003. **Validation procedure:** State Report Card: Data validated by NCES and *NCES Statistical Procedures*; Independent review: Data supplied by review panel; data are corroborated by ED’s evaluation of state grantees’ activities and progress. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** There are several data limitations. First, currently there are no data sources that directly report whether states are aligning initial teacher certification with student content and performance standards. A proxy data source is

whether states have adopted the standards established by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). INTASC includes the alignment of teacher certification with student performance and content standards as one of its core standards. In October 2001, complete data on this indicator will be available from the State Report Card.

Indicator 1.4.c. Throughout the Nation, the percentage of secondary school teachers who have at least a minor in the subject they teach will increase annually.

Assessment of Progress. Target met for 1998. No 1999 data available because data are collected every 2 years. Increasing percentages of teachers in English, foreign language, math, and science have a major or minor in their main teaching field from 1993-4 to 1998. The percentage of English teachers with a major or minor in English increased the most, by 8 percentage points.

Figure 1.4.c.1



Source: Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS); and Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS). *Frequency:* SASS: Every 6 years; FRS: Every 2 years. *Next Update:* SASS: 2000; FRS: 2000. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by NCES's review procedures and *NCES Statistical Standards*.

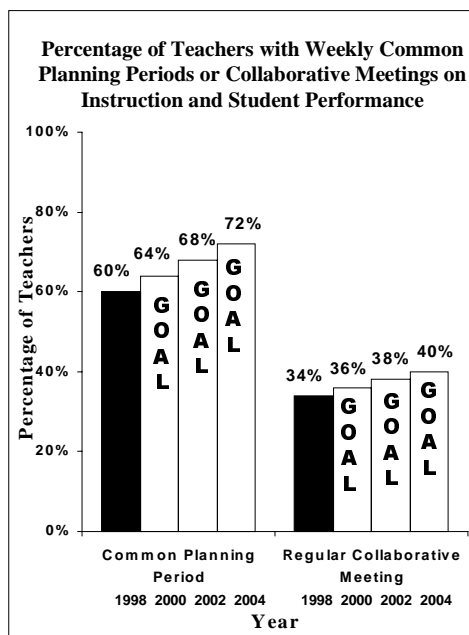
Limitations of data and planned improvements: Some teachers report that, although they may not have a major or minor in their main teaching field, their schools or districts require them to take additional courses in their main teaching fields. Thus, in some cases, teachers who do not have a major or minor in their subjects may be adequately prepared to teach in those subject fields. In addition, these data do not account for teachers who teach without a major or minor in a field that is not their main teaching assignment.

Supporting data from the report *Key State Education Policies on K-12 Education*, by the Council of Chief State School Officers, reveals that in 1998, 21 states had a policy requiring teachers to have a major in their field of teaching, and 31 states required either a major or a minor. This is an increase from 1995, when 19 states required teachers to have a major in their field of teaching, and 28 required either a major or a minor. No 2001 goal has been set because the next data collections will be 2000 and 2002.

Indicator 1.4.d. Increasing percentages of teachers will have weekly, common planning periods or weekly collaborative meetings with other teachers to improve curriculum, teacher knowledge, teaching skills, and student performance.

Assessment of Progress. Unable to judge progress for this indicator because only 1998 baseline data are currently available. Next data collection will be in 2000 and 2002. Currently, 60 percent of teachers report having weekly common planning periods and 34 percent report having regular collaborative meetings.

Figure 1.4.d.1



Sources: The Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS) and the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). *Frequency:* FRS: Every 2 years; SASS: Every 6 years. *Next Update:* FRS: 2000; SASS: 2000. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by NCES's review procedures and *NCES Statistical Standards*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** The main source of data for this indicator is large-scale surveys of teachers; this kind of survey will not provide in-depth data on the quality, content, and productivity of this collaborative time. For example, in 1998, although 60 percent of teachers indicated they had a common planning period, it is possible that some of these planning periods are short in duration and occur infrequently.

Indicator 1.4.e. Increasing percentages of teachers will participate in a formal, high-quality induction program during their first year of teaching.

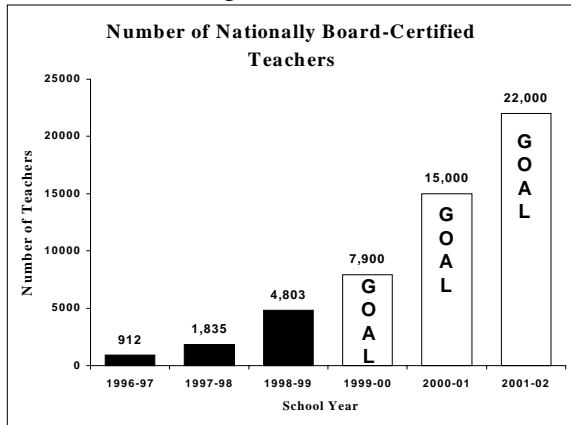
Assessment of Progress. Unable to judge. Next data collections will be in 2000 and 2002. No chart is provided, but future source is listed below.

Source: Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS); Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). *Frequency:* FRS: Every 2 years; SASS: Every 6 years. *Next Update:* FRS 2000; SASS: 2000.

Indicator 1.4.f. The number of Nationally board-certified teachers will increase annually.

Assessment of Progress. Positive trend toward target. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) establishes rigorous standards and assessments for certifying accomplished teaching. The number of Nationally board-certified teachers increased more than five-fold between 1996-97 and 1998-99, from 912 to 4,799 teachers. NBPTS aims to certify approximately 100,000 teachers by 2006; if this goal is achieved, there would be the equivalent of one certified teacher for every school in the Nation. NBPTS offers assessment packages and certificates in 16 teaching fields, giving approximately 82 percent of the teaching workforce access to National Board certification. When a total of 25 certificates are available, 95 percent of the teaching population will have access to National Board certification. Thirty-eight states now offer at least one incentive to candidates for National Board certification. Thirty-one states offer multiple incentives, including fee support for candidates and salary increases for teachers who achieve National Board certification.

Figure 1.4.f.1

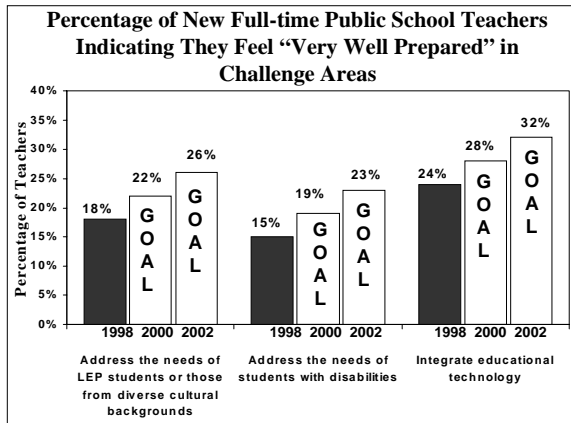


Source: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). **Frequency:** Annual. **Next Update:** Fall 2000. **Validation procedure:** Data supplied by NBPTS. No formal verification or attestation procedure applied. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** This indicator does not fully capture the impact of the NBPTS. For example, the work of the Board has influenced the development of teacher standards in states and districts and is currently bringing about changes in curriculum or program structure at 39 teacher-training programs across 21 states.

Indicator 1.4.g. There will be an increase in the percentage of new teachers who feel very well prepared to (1) address the needs of students with limited English proficiency; (2) address the needs of students with disabilities; and (3) integrate educational technology into the grade or subject they teach.

Assessment of Progress. Unable to judge. ED currently only has baseline data from 1998, so we are unable to measure whether there has been an increase. Data will be collected in 2000 and 2002.

Figure 1.4.g.1



Source: Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS). **Frequency:** Every 2 years. **Next Update:** 2000. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by NCES review procedures and *NCES Statistical Standards*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** The 1998 Fast Response Survey asks teachers whether they are prepared to address the needs of students with limited English proficiency or those from diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it did not obtain separate measures for these two different populations. The 2000 FRS will limit this question by asking how well prepared teachers are to address the needs of students with limited English proficiency only.

Indicator 1.4.h. Increasing numbers of states will require as part of the process of certification and licensure of new teachers a performance-based assessment of subject matter expertise and teaching skills.

Assessment of Progress. Unable to judge. According to 1998 data submitted by states in the State Report Card, two states—Connecticut and Ohio—require a performance assessment of new teachers for initial certification and licensure. These performance assessments include either classroom observation,

portfolio evaluation, or both. Beginning in 2001, high-quality annual data will be collected. This is a new indicator to the fiscal year 2001 Plan.

Source: State Report Card on the Quality of Teacher Preparation. *Frequency:* Annual. *Next Update:* October 2001. **Validation procedure:** Data supplied by states using definitions and uniform reporting methods developed by NCES. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** Baseline data from the Initial Report are limited in three ways. First, the data provided are only those that states had readily available. Second, there are no uniform definitions used by states in reporting information. Third, not all states submitted responses. These limitations will be corrected in future reports, as states will be required to provide information in a timely and uniform manner.

Indicator 1.4.i. Increasing percentages of teachers will report that their principal (a) has structured teachers' workload so teachers have regularly scheduled time to work together and (b) routinely engages the faculty in conversations about how to improve instruction.

Assessment of Progress. Unable to judge. This is a new indicator to the fiscal year 2001 Plan, and no data are currently available. Data will be collected in 2000 and 2002. Beginning with the 2000 Fast Response Survey (available in January 2001), ED will collect high-quality data on this indicator.

Source: Teacher Quality Fast Response Survey (FRS). *Frequency:* Every 2 years. *Next Update:* 2000. **Validation procedure:** Data validated by NCES's review and *NCES Statistical Standards*. **Limitations of data and planned improvements:** These data will be collected for the first time in 2000.

How We Plan to Achieve Our Objective

How ED's Activities Support the Achievement of this Objective. In supporting state and local efforts to ensure high-quality teaching, ED has organized its work around six strategies. The first three address the phases of the continuum of a teacher's career: recruitment, preparation, and support for new teachers; standards for entering and advancing in the profession; and professional development for current teachers. The fourth strategy, focused on school leadership, reflects the critical importance of school principals and administrators in ensuring support for good teaching. The fifth and sixth strategies—concerning research, outreach, and measures of our progress around teacher quality—provide a foundation for our work in the other areas.

In addition, we have made tremendous progress in coordination within ED regarding teacher quality—an issue that is addressed by most of the offices in the Department. ED's cross-office Professional Development Team will continue to improve the coordination of ED's programs that support good teaching by sharing information and strategies across programs. The team is also coordinating with the Math and Reading Initiatives to develop an awards program for outstanding teacher training programs in elementary education and secondary math.

■ **Improve the recruitment, preparation, and retention of new teachers.**

- Support the three Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant programs in Title II of the HEA (\$98 million requested for fiscal year 2001). The Partnership program supports fundamental improvements in teacher education at institutions of higher education, the Teacher Recruitment program supports new strategies for reducing shortages of qualified teachers in high-need areas, and the state program supports reforms for holding teacher preparation programs more accountable for the quality and skills of their teacher graduates. These three programs represent the first major Federal investment in preservice teacher education in 30 years.

- Create a National Job Bank and Clearinghouse on Teacher Recruitment.
 - Support the Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology program to build capacity at teacher preparation institutions to prepare new teachers to integrate technology effectively into curriculum and instruction (\$150 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
 - Create a National Awards Program for Effective Teacher Preparation to highlight and disseminate information about teacher preparation programs (both traditional and alternative) that produce elementary teachers and secondary math teachers who have outstanding content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Impact on student achievement will be a major criterion for determining awards.
 - Host a series of nationwide conferences on teacher quality, following up on the Presidents' Summit on Teacher Quality and focusing on how institutions of higher education can improve K–12 education through teacher quality initiatives.
 - Implement a new Transition to Teaching program (included in ED's ESEA reauthorization proposal) that would expand the successful Troops to Teachers program to recruit both military personnel and other mid-career professionals by providing scholarships and other support to recruit, train, and place them in high-poverty schools and high-need subject areas (\$25 million requested for fiscal year 2001). Three additional programs proposed for 2001 that aim to recruit and retain high-quality teachers are Hometown Teachers; Higher Standards, Higher Pay; and Teacher Quality Incentives.
- **Develop and support rigorous standards for teachers.**
- Support the State Grant program in HEA Title II, which supports comprehensive state efforts to improve teacher quality, including strengthening licensing systems for new teachers.
 - Provide ongoing support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). INTASC, a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, is dedicated to developing performance-based licensing systems for new teachers. NBPTS establishes rigorous standards and assessments for certifying accomplished teachers.
 - Support the National Academy of Sciences' study that will analyze the current state of teacher testing, recommend ways to improve existing tests, and suggest viable alternatives. The first report will be released in spring 2000, and the second in November 2000.
 - Support state efforts to improve the licensing, hiring, supporting, evaluating, and rewarding of teachers and principals through ED's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Teaching to High Standards proposal (\$690 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
- **Strengthen professional development.**
- Through the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development, continue to promote results-oriented professional development that focuses on improving student achievement. In collaboration with the National Staff Development Council and the Regional Laboratories, ED will aggressively disseminate the Principles of High-Quality Professional Development and summaries of award-winning professional development programs through mailings, conferences, the Internet, and technical assistance.
 - Continue to support intensive, high-quality professional development aimed at ensuring that all teachers have the expertise needed to prepare their students to meet high standards. (The Administration's ESEA reauthorization bill proposes a new High Standards to the Classroom state grants program that would replace the Eisenhower Professional Development state grants program and focus more strongly on professional development that is collaborative, intensive, sustained, and content-based.) The program has adopted a results-based reporting system.

- Support high-quality professional development in reading through the Reading Excellence program's grants to states (\$286 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
 - Continue to support Bilingual Education Professional Development to help meet the critical need for qualified bilingual education and ESL teachers, including a new \$16 million program designed to address the training of mainstream teachers whose assignment includes teaching limited English proficiency (LEP) students (\$100 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
 - Increase support for the IDEA State Improvement grant program, which is designed to assist states in addressing their needs for personnel to improve outcomes for children with disabilities (\$45.2 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
 - Increase support for the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund to help states and local districts provide educators with sustained, high-quality training in the effective use of educational technology (\$450 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
 - Continue to support the Special Education Personnel Development program to prepare personnel to work with children with disabilities.
- **Strengthen school leadership.**
- Support a proposed new School Leadership program to assist centers that would help states and districts create innovative approaches to the recruitment, preparation, and support of current and prospective superintendents, principals, and assistant principals as instructional leaders through ED's ESEA proposal (\$40 million requested for fiscal year 2001).
- **Support research, development, and dissemination of information on teacher quality and accountability.**
- Produce annual reports on teacher quality, such as the *State Accountability Report on the Quality of Teacher Preparation* (to be released in October 2001) and the second biennial national report on teacher quality (to be released in January 2001), which will follow *Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teachers*. The second *Teacher Quality* report provides the results of a new national profile of teacher quality, specifically focused on teachers' qualifications and learning opportunities (both pre-service and continued), and the environments in which they work.
 - Continue support for a 5-year national research center, the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, to study the most effective ways to design and implement strategies to improve teaching at the state, district, and school levels.
- **Measure our progress and increase public awareness.**
- Raise awareness of the importance of teacher quality through high-level speeches by the Secretary and by prominent education organizations such as the Chief State School Officers and the Education Commission of the States.

How We Coordinate with Other Federal Agencies

ED develops relationships with other agencies and organizations whenever their work in teacher quality issues provides opportunities for us to learn from them and to inform their efforts.

- **Improving mathematics instruction and achievement.** ED and the National Science Foundation are implementing the ED-NSF Action Strategy to improve mathematics instruction and achievement.
- **Strengthening preservice teacher training and in-service professional development.** ED is coordinating with the National Staff Development Council, which is linked to the educators we are trying to assist, in the dissemination of information about the lessons from the award-winning sites from the National Awards Program for Model Professional Development. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is also working with ED to help strengthen ED's Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant program and to effectively design nationwide summer institutes with a particular focus on collaboration between arts and sciences and education in teacher education.
- **Improving teacher recruitment.** ED is working closely with the Department of Defense's Troops to Teachers program to expand it and to reauthorize a new, broader program that would be administered by the Department. ED is also partnering with the Department of Labor and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to change current policies that are barriers to the hiring of foreign teachers in shortage areas.
- **Research in teacher quality.** ED is collaborating with the National Science Foundation and the National Institute for Child Health and Development on the jointly funded Interagency Education Research Initiative that focuses on improving the content and pedagogical skills of reading, math, and science teachers.

Challenges to Achieving Our Objective

More than two million teachers will need to be hired over the next decade because of normal teacher turnover, increases in student enrollment, and the retirement of veteran teachers. The pressure to hire large numbers of new teachers will make it difficult for states and districts to maintain their current standards for initial teacher certification and will work against states' efforts to elevate those standards. The issue of teacher certification is becoming increasingly prominent as groups like the Fordham Foundation call for the elimination of certification requirements. Others argue that while the current standards are inadequate, states should reform them rather than eliminate them altogether.

In addition, the strong economy and low unemployment rates mean that many teachers and teacher candidates can easily find higher paying career opportunities outside education. As more highly skilled people are drawn to higher paying fields, education may be attracting workers with relatively weak academic skills. For example, in Massachusetts in the spring of 1998, 59 percent of prospective teachers failed a new test for initial teacher certification. Although questions remain about the rigor and validity of the test, the high failure rate suggests the existence of a gap between the content and rigor of the teacher preparation programs and the knowledge and skills expected of new teachers.

Because the Nation's attention is focused increasingly on the issue of teacher quality and schools will be hiring so many new teachers in the coming years, ED has a tremendous opportunity now to address the quality of teaching in America.