

**PRESENTATION TO THE
ARIZONA STATE BOARD OF REGENTS
THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 2003**

Mr. President, and members of the Board of Regents.

The agenda says that I am to describe the requirement of the *No Child Left Behind Act* to have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. Not wishing to be dull or boring, I will say some things that are controversial. I want to make it clear at the outset that these are statements that will be made in the spirit of wanting to work together to make the needed changes. I have not taken the path of my predecessor, Lisa Graham Keegan, who has testified that students learn nothing at schools of education, and that they should be abolished; but I have received a great deal of input that is similar to the input that she received. My reaction was to then meet with deans of the schools of education or their designees to talk about the changes needed. In addition to individual meetings, we have had two meetings of a group we call the NCLB Working Committee. Before I get to the controversial, and perhaps more interesting parts of my presentation, let me give you some factual descriptions of some of the requirements of federal law out of the *No Child Left Behind Act*.

The most important of these is that, beginning the year after next, there must be a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. The requirement is already in effect for new hires of Title I schools.

There are two essential elements to a highly qualified teacher. First, in the traditional public schools (not including charter schools) the teacher must have a full certificate. Presently, we have 3,263 teachers in Arizona on emergency certificates. This will no longer be permitted.

The second requirement applies to charter schools as well as traditional public schools. It is based on the conclusion that subject matter knowledge is a key to good teaching. In middle and high school, the teacher must have 24 credit hours in the subject matter to be taught, or

pass a subject matter test. This has caused considerable panic in the middle schools where teachers often teach more than one subject.

For existing teachers, the federal government permits modification under a highly objective uniform state standard of evaluation ("HOUSSE"). A draft of the proposal that will go to the State Board of Education is at page six of your materials. To be highly qualified, a teacher must have at least 100 points. Up to 50 of those points can be for experience, which is the maximum permitted under federal law. Additional points can be obtained from pro rata credit for college course work in the content area if the teacher has less than 24 hours, professional development, service related to the content area, and awards, presentations and publications related to the content area. New teachers must meet the more strict standards independent of HOUSSE.

The need to comply with this law creates a major crisis for our state. There are areas where schools cannot obtain certified teachers, much less highly qualified teachers. Yet, the federal government says we must have a highly qualified teacher in every classroom the year after next. We need a vast increase in the number of teachers in training in the pipeline. While there are other institutions in the state, besides the state universities, that can participate in this, we certainly hope that the universities will play a role. To do so requires major changes, quickly.

In our discussion today, we need to make a clear distinction between the need to improve the quantity of teachers, and the need to improve the quality of teachers. These two needs stem from different parts of the federal law than from different needs that we would experience independent of federal law. But they are also related to each other.

Let me give you an example. When a school is underperforming, it must hold a public hearing. As one of these, I first had dinner with the teachers, and then I spoke at its public hearing. One of the teachers told me about a teacher next to her who had no control of her classroom. The out-of-control students were calling next door on the intercom, and this was bothering the first teacher. I asked why the principal or department chair was not doing something about the teacher who had no control. The response was "even if they could get rid of the teacher, they don't know if

they could find someone to replace her.” This shows how quality is dependent on quantity. There is no opportunity to choose the better teachers, and weed out the worse ones if there are barely enough teachers available to fill the available positions. To be able to select quality, there must be a sufficient quantity available.

At pages 10 to 12 of your materials, you have an executive summary of the Morrison Institute Report. At page 11, it projects that there will be 1.2 applicants for each new teacher position. Considering the need for quality, this is a major shortage. The report itself points out that there are major shortages in certain geographic areas and specialties. But considering the need for quality, there is a major shortage throughout. When you add the requirements of the new federal law, the teacher in every classroom be a well-qualified teacher, we are in a major crisis, and drastic action is needed.

My thinking on this topic divides into three areas: (1) undergraduate education; (2) post- baccalaureate; and (3) making sure that the course time required of future teachers is well used.

First, under-graduate education. We need to attract into teaching much larger numbers of students who are majoring in substantive areas. This involves breaking down artificial barriers to their entry into teaching. I spoke with some students, who were majors in substantive areas, and said, “Why don’t you use some of your electives to take pedagogy courses, so you can take the teacher certification exam if you decide you want to go into teaching at graduation?” The response was “Oh that’s impossible. You have to be admitted into the Department of Education, and that’s very difficult.” Their image was that was a barrier there that was not practical to get around. This is the precise opposite of what we should be doing. Students in substantive areas should be encouraged in every way to take pedagogy courses and prepare themselves to be teachers, if that’s what they decide ultimately to do.

I’m distinguishing here between artificial barriers and rational barriers. Minimum SAT scores or GPAs as prerequisites, to be sure we are getting students with the skills necessary to become good teachers, are rational. It is only the artificial barriers that I’m seeking to destroy.

The Morrison Report recommendations to increase the number of teachers in the pipeline are at page 11 of your materials. The third bullet point is "Remove and/or streamline certification requirements." I do not favor removing certification requirements, but I do favor streamlining them.

Soon after I took office, ASU's Dean Garcia met with Margaret Garcia-Dugan (apparently no relation), my Associate Superintendent for Academic Achievement, and myself. He made some proposals that we were both very enthusiastic about, and which I have been referring to as the Garcia Plan, without specifying which Garcia I am talking about.

Like us, he expressed the desire that students in substantive majors should be able to prepare for careers as teachers without sacrificing their major subject. He said that he would be talking to the deans of other colleges about reducing the requirements for the major; my part would be to ask the State Board of Education to reduce the pedagogy requirements; and between the two reductions we would make room for it to be practical for a student to be a major in a substantive area, and still have the pedagogy courses necessary to take the teacher certification exam upon graduation.

The current pedagogy requirements as a prerequisite to take the certification exam, is 30 hours for high school teachers and 45 hours for elementary school teachers, in addition to the 24 hours of subject matter course work for each subject in which the teacher will be teaching. While the decision to reduce the number of pedagogy hours required (to "streamline certification requirements" in the words of the Morrison Report) is a decision for the State Board, rather than for this group, I wanted to include the schools of education in the deliberations before I made a recommendation to the State Board.

The second topic is the post-baccalaureate teacher training. Historically, there were huge economic barriers to people making mid-life career changes to teaching, because they had to be able to afford two years of additional education without another income coming in. There are already a lot of good developments occurring in this area, where most

schools have gone to accelerated programs that can be completed in ten months.

The third topic is making sure that the time that is spent in required course work is well used. Other aspects of *No Child Left Behind*, summarized at pages 1-3 of your materials come into play here. We live in an era of standards and accountability. We are determined that 100% of the students will become proficient in reading and mathematics and will reach their potential in all of the academic areas. The most important factor to reach these goals is highly qualified teachers. A good program will not work if the teacher is not highly qualified, and good teachers often can make bad programs work well. The key is the quality of the teacher and the principal.

This is where it gets controversial, or interesting, depending on your point of view. Numerous people have told me about pedagogy courses that were largely a waste of time, that did not prepare them for teaching, or that five or six courses could easily have been compressed into one.

The most consistent theme appears to be that the most valuable courses are those, usually taught by master teachers, where the teachers model the skills to be acquired. The less useful ones appear to be theoretical courses, taught by research professors, which do not prepare the students for actually performing as teachers. Sometimes, these courses emphasize what the professor would view as a philosophy, but what some students regard as a political point of view. I am a product of a liberal arts education, and I would never argue against the professor's right to teach a course with a point of view with the professor's academic freedom respected. But what we cannot continue to do is use the power of the state to tell students that they are required to take such courses as a prerequisite to taking the certification exam. Whether we are talking about undergraduates, whose time is limited because they must acquire content knowledge, or post-baccalaureate students who are under economic pressure to acquire they certification as quickly as possible, we must be sure that every required hour has 60 minutes of distance run in acquisition of skills that the teacher will need to be an effective teacher.

I discussed these criticisms in a joint meeting between the State Board of Education and the deans of the education schools in January. Dean Garcia gave me what I regarded as a brilliant response. He said "We've been hearing these criticisms elsewhere, and we are determined to change things." The changes being brought at ASU by President Crow and Dean Garcia are hopeful and exciting.

I want to tell you about a meeting that was held between professors at one of the colleges of education, and K-12 people, including school superintendents. I've agreed not to identify which university, in the interests of comity.

In one of the meetings, a superintendent stated that the students graduating from the school of education were not well prepared with the skills that they would need as teachers in the schools. One of the professors responded "We are not here to provide job training." Translated, that statement means "our primary goal is not to give the students the skills that they will need to be effective teachers in the classroom." If that were true of our schools of education, one would have to raise the question of what institutions are there to provide our young teachers with those skills. I am assured that that statement did not reflect the views of all of the tenured faculty. But the fact that this view does exist with some professors raises the question of what courses will be required, by the police power of the state, to be taken before a teacher can be licensed.

I have been asked many times by people in the press and media why Arizona scored last, or close to last, in the National Assessment Of Education Progress. I have always changed the subject, and emphasized what we are doing to improve. But one question we have to ask ourselves is whether the training of teachers in Arizona has played a role.

The really hopeful element in all of this is that the leadership at all of our institutions are committed to the kinds of change that I have been advocating. We know from experience that there will be internal resistance to this change. The more that these crucial issues are public, the better chance we have of giving good support to the leaders who are bringing about change.

At page of your materials, under the heading Quality, is a list of three subcommittees that we have established for the schools of education and the Department of Education to work together to increase student achievement. In preparation for my speech today, I met yesterday with some professors from each of the three universities. Out of that meeting arose the need for a fourth committee. Its task will be to develop specific proposals that I can bring to this Board of Regents to improve the quality and quantity of highly qualified teachers being graduated. This will have some budget implications.

Returning to the three subcommittees that are being referred to in your materials, the first is to write standards for a quality teacher preparation program. Second, one of the most important parts of the education of a teacher is what is learned student teaching and during induction and mentoring programs. We will jointly identify successful programs, and hope to replicate them statewide. The third is my olive branch to the research professors: we want to undertake a joint project along the lines of a study that was done in Tennessee. The Tennessee study measured students' knowledge before and after taking courses, so that the value added by the teacher could be measured. This helps in judging schools, identifying teachers who need help, and identifying which schools of education produce the best teachers, in a way that is far more fair than absolute scores, which are partially a measure of the economic background of the students.

The Tennessee model has been criticized for not using sufficiently scientific techniques. If we can develop a technique that works, we can become a national leader in research and implementation of one of the most crucial components of school improvement.

And that is symbolic of our overall goal. By facing up squarely to our problems, and working hard together to overcome them, we can strive to become a national leader in teacher education and in the education of all of our students.