Making the Commitment

Guaranteeing the Quality of Future Educators

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

ORIGINS

The Georgia P-16 Initiative was established in 1995 during Governor Zell Miller's administration. This initiative joined together the University System of Georgia, the State Department of Education, the Office of School Readiness, the Professional Standards Commission, and the Department of Technical and Adult Education to work on shared goals. The goals of P-16 are to create seamless educational opportunities for students from pre-school (P) through completion of some form of post-secondary education (16); and to prepare teachers who are able to help students in the schools to achieve at high levels.

The Georgia P-16 Initiative includes a statewide council; 15 regional councils based at teacher preparation institutions; a P-16 Network for linking together work at the state and local levels and for sharing lessons learned among local councils; and a state-wide supplemental program, called PREP, to help 7-12th grade students in at-risk situations prepare for post-secondary education. The Georgia P-16 Council reports to the Governor and is co-chaired by the Executive Director of the Office of School Readiness (administers Pre-K program), State Superintendent of Schools, Commissioner of Technical and Adult Education, and Chancellor of the University system. Key legislators, business and educational leaders are also members of the state council.

In 1996, the Georgia P-16 Council targeted teacher quality as a priority. A P-16 Teachers and Teacher Education Sub-Committee was appointed to 1) assess what needed to change in Georgia in order to improve

teacher quality; and 2) develop recommendations for change. During the early work of this sub-committee, Georgia became a partner state with the *National Commission on Teaching and America's Future*. The Teachers and Teacher Education Committee became the Council's action arm for carrying out Georgia's participation as a partner state with the *National Commission*.

Early work of the Teachers and Teacher Education Sub-Committee resulted in:

- An over-all framework for change;
- Recommendations to increase the availability of alternative teacher preparation programs and to strengthen traditional programs;
- Completion of The Status of Teaching in Georgia, a state report on the status of each of the following recommendations of the *National Commission*:
  1. Establish standards for both students and teachers;
  2. Enhance teacher preparation and professional development;
  3. Put a qualified teacher in every classroom;
  4. Encourage and reward knowledge and skills;
  5. Create schools that are genuine learning organizations.

The Professional Standards Commission and Board of Regents took immediate action on these recommendations. In 1998, the Professional Standards Commission put standards in place to expand alternative teacher preparation programs. The Board of Regents adopted a 1998 Policy on Teacher Preparation to be phased-in at all public universities that prepare teachers by 2002.

WHY THE COMMITMENT?

High-quality teaching fosters student success, and every Georgian wants successful students who will be productive and responsible citizens. The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia adopted a set of Principles (April 1998) and Actions (July 1998) for the Preparation of Educators for the Schools. This bold policy will strengthen all educator preparation programs at the fifteen public Universities that prepare educators in Georgia. These ten principles address the challenges of teacher recruitment, teacher quality, school leader quality, and the redefinition of educator preparation programs.

The overall direction of this policy is to shift from a primary focus on "inputs" (courses, credit hours, number of clock hours of student internships in schools) to "results" (teacher, counselor and administrator candidates able to

All those recommended for teacher certification must be able to demonstrate success in bringing students from diverse groups to high levels of learning.

show accomplishment in bringing about increased learning of children in the schools). Inputs and teacher or administrator performance are important enablers of effectiveness. Therefore, parts of this policy emphasize courses and credit hours required, as well as what a teacher, counselor, or administrator candidate must know and be able to do. The primary focus is: all those recommended for teacher certification must be able to demonstrate success in bringing students from diverse groups to high levels of learning.

Research is very clear that well-prepared educators working in positive school environments are more successful in bringing students to high levels of learning. Georgia has many excellent educators and this new policy is about ensuring that all educators can reach the same high standards they would expect from students.

THE PRINCIPLES

The principles are organized into three categories: 1) Quality Assurance; 2) Collaboration; and 3) Responsiveness. The principles emphasize the knowledge and skills educators need to teach, support, and administer effectively, and they call on universities to assure that their graduates can integrate and apply the knowledge and skills to advance student learning before they are recommended for certification.

Quality Assurance

1. The University System will guarantee the quality of any teacher it graduates.
2. The University System will guarantee that all of its graduates in early childhood education can demonstrate accomplishment in teaching children to read and to do mathematics.
3. Graduate programs for teachers will adhere to the general principles of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
4. The University System will assure that graduates of its programs for school leaders and counselors are able to create learning environments that support teacher success in bringing students from diverse groups to high levels of learning.

Collaboration

5. Teacher preparation programs will be the shared responsibility of education faculty, arts and science faculty, and classroom teachers in the schools.
6. Through partnerships with P-12 schools, universities that prepare teachers will have an ongoing responsibility to collaborate with schools in mentoring, induction, and professional development programs for classroom teachers and school leaders.

Responsiveness

7 All teacher preparation programs will implement aggressive recruitment policies to increase the numbers, to raise the caliber, and to expand the diversity of teacher candidates, and to balance supply and demand.

8 The University System will expand the number of teacher certification programs offered to individuals who already hold bachelors' degrees from accredited colleges in order to increase opportunities for individuals seeking second careers in teaching.

9 The University System will work with the Department of Education and the Professional Standards Commission to bring an end to out-of-field teaching in Georgia.

10 The University System will encourage institutions that prepare teachers to give added emphasis to policies that:

- support the efforts of faculty to model effective teaching.
- support the efforts of faculty to focus their research on ways to improve classroom teaching and student learning within P-12 schools.
- support increased participation of teacher preparation faculty in the public schools.

QUALITY & DIVERSITY

PRINCIPLE #1 *The University system will guarantee the quality of any teacher it graduates.*

PRINCIPLE #7 *All teacher preparation programs will implement aggressive recruitment policies to increase the numbers, to raise the caliber, and to expand the diversity of teacher candidates, and to balance supply and demand.*

PRINCIPLE #8 *The University System will expand the number of teacher certification programs offered to individuals who already hold bachelors' degrees from accredited colleges in order to increase opportunities for individuals seeking second careers in teaching.*

A qualified teacher knows all of the subjects he/she teaches and is successful in helping students from diverse groups achieve at high levels.

Based upon research from the *National Commission on Teaching and America's Future*, the quality of teaching has a greater effect on student achievement than all other variables. A qualified teacher is one who knows all of the subjects he/she teaches and is successful in helping students from diverse groups achieve at high levels. One way to ensure the quality of any teacher graduating from a University System institution is the "guarantee." (This holds true for teachers obtaining graduate degrees and/or administrative degrees.) The university that awarded the degree will assure that its graduates:

- Have sufficient subject matter knowledge in all areas included on their teaching certificates.
- Can demonstrate success in bringing students from diverse cultural, ethnic, international, and socio-economic groups to high levels of learning.
- Are able to use telecommunication and information technologies as tools for learning.
- Can manage a classroom effectively during the internship.
- (In early childhood programs) Can demonstrate success during the internship in diagnosing difficulties in reading and mathematics and helping students show improvement.

In addition to the guarantee:

- All institutions will have admission standards in place that result in students majoring in teacher preparation programs having academic achievement at or above the institutional/system average.
- Programs will be developed to market teaching as a profession to sophomores in high school who score well on the PSAT.
- A "Business to Teaching" program will be designed and implemented for individuals that hold a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in a subject they intend to teach in schools. Preference will be given to areas of teacher shortage.

ACCOUNTABILITY

PRINCIPLE #1 *The University System will guarantee the quality of any teacher it graduates.*

PRINCIPLE #2 *The University System will guarantee that all of its graduates in early childhood education can demonstrate accomplishment in teaching children to read and to do mathematics.*

PRINCIPLE #3 *Graduate programs for teachers will adhere to the general principles of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.*

PRINCIPLE #9 *The University System will work with the Department of Education and the Professional Standards Commission to bring an end to out-of-field teaching in Georgia.*

The guarantee will hold for all candidates recommended for certification who are assigned to teach or work in-field and at grade level (on certificate) in Georgia's schools.

Not only will each graduate receive the "guarantee," each will also be provided support, assistance, and professional development during their first two years of teaching. An employing school district will be able to seek additional training for a graduate who is not meeting the school's expectations. The training will be individualized and agreed upon between the school district and the university. The training is provided at no cost to the graduate or the school district. The University is obligated to provide the additional training only during the first two years of teaching.

Teachers who complete graduate degrees in teacher education will be guaranteed to bring about student learning; to know their subjects and how to teach them; to assess the progress of individual students plus the whole class; to reflect on their practice and learn from it; and to work together for the betterment of the student and school.

Teachers must know the subjects they will teach in order to be held accountable. Program requirements will change in many areas:

- Early childhood majors will complete at least two 12-15 hour concentrations in reading and mathematics and be prepared in all subjects in the elementary school curriculum.
- Middle grades majors will complete at least two 12-15 hour concentrations in two of the following: language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.
- Secondary majors must meet the requirements for a major in the arts and sciences for each subject to be taught or, for broad-field certification in science and social studies, meet requirements for a major in one field and at least a 12-15 hour concentration in each of three other fields included under broad-field.

OUTCOMES FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

PRINCIPLE #4 *The University System will assure that graduates of its programs for school leaders and counselors are able to create learning environments that support teacher success in bringing students from diverse groups to high levels of learning.*

The Regents' Principle #4 relies upon school leaders that understand why and how learning and teaching must and can improve. Graduates of educational leadership programs (principles and administrators) and school counseling programs are guaranteed to be able to create environments in which teachers:

- **Continue to learn**—one sign of a good teacher is the ability to show students that learning is a life-long endeavor.
- **Participate in shaping school policies and goals**—administrators must create a vehicle for teachers and other school personnel to interact professionally in order to create useful school improvement plans and positive school climates to help students reach maximum achievement goals.
- **Become more effective in bringing students from diverse groups to high academic standards**—to help teachers come to the belief that ALL students can learn, school leaders must first have that belief.
- **Work closely with parents**—parents must be partners.
- **Provide environments for students that are well disciplined and safe**—just do it!

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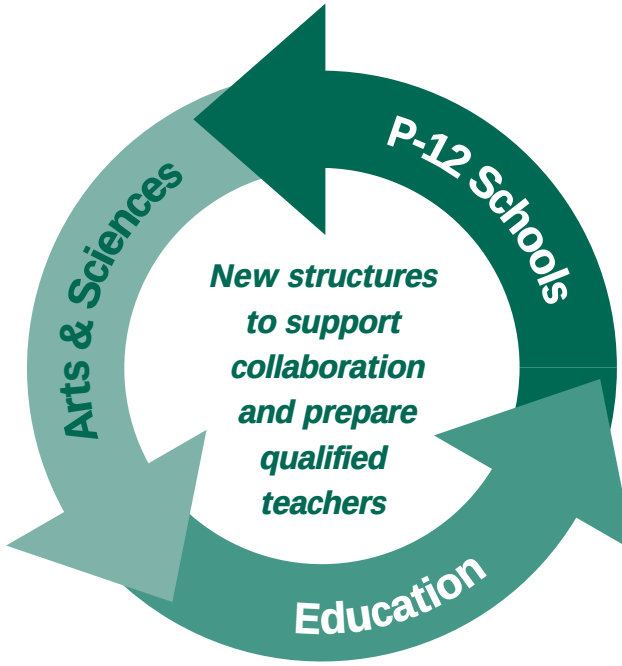
3-WAY COLLABORATION

Teacher preparation is often the responsibility of colleges of education, with the arts and sciences only delivering courses; not integrated programs. The P-12 schools accept student teachers and a student may be the only student teacher in the school. Principles #5 and #6 will change the "old way" of doing things.

PRINCIPLE #5 *Teacher preparation programs will be the shared responsibility of education faculty, arts and science faculty, and classroom teachers in the school.*

PRINCIPLE #6 *Through partnerships with P-12 schools, universities that prepare teachers will have an ongoing responsibility to collaborate with schools in mentoring, induction, and professional development programs for classroom teachers and school leaders.*



1. A group of faculty from education, arts and sciences, and the P-12 schools called a “functional unit” will share the responsibility for teacher preparation and ensuring that the Regents’ Principles and Actions are carried out at an institution. Each institution will redesign teacher preparation programs integrated among the three components. This partnership is designed to strengthen not only the initial preparation of a teacher, but also the induction period of a new teacher and provide professional development of established teachers and administrators. Collaboration is the key to creating and keeping a quality teacher.

2. The role of a P-12 school in the traditional student teaching experience will be strengthened through this partnership role. In addition, the partner school concept will be developed across Georgia. A partner school is a regular P-12 school, with no change in mission and governance, that chooses to enter into partnership with a university to work on at least four goals:
    1. Preparation of new educators (teachers, counselors, administrators, etc.) for the schools.
    2. Professional development for school and university personnel.
    3. Full support for increased student learning.
    4. Research on best practices that improve both schools and educator preparation.

3. Three University System institutions are piloting the Standards-Based Teacher Education Program (STEP) with the Council for Basic Education and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, as part of the Georgia P-16 Initiative. STEP is designed to align the content requirements for prospective teachers with the academic standards in P-12 schools, and to ensure that future teachers have sufficient content knowledge to bring the P-12 students to high academic standards.

GENERAL INFORMATION

What does this policy mean for the universities?

The fifteen teacher preparation institutions in the University System are responsible for meeting the full intent of the 1998 Board of Regents' Principles and Actions. A group of faculty at each institution from education, arts and sciences, and the P-12 schools will be responsible for overseeing successful implementation of the policy.

What does this policy mean for the P-12 schools?

The educators hired from University System institutions will come with a written guarantee concerning their qualifications. P-12 schools will work with universities to create a partnership that will provide professional development for the schools' teachers and better field experiences for teacher/leader candidates.

How will these principles help a child?

The educators prepared today have a new charge: to succeed in bringing students from diverse cultural, ethnic, international and socio-economic groups to high levels of learning. Today's teachers must reach more students than ever before and expect all students to succeed in ways that were previously unexpected. These ten principles address the new charge and will assist universities and colleges in creating better-prepared and qualified educators.

When will the principles go into effect?

The principles' actions are being phased in with full implementation by the year 2002.

What scholarships/special programs will be available?

The HOPE Promise Scholarship is available to any education major during their junior year with a 3.6 GPA or higher. Funding is being sought to implement one or more academies for the initial preparation of school leaders and to create a "Business to Teaching Program" for individuals who seek second careers as teachers. The HOPE Teacher Scholarship Program provides forgivable loans to individuals seeking advanced education degrees in critical shortage fields of study.

How does this policy affect current teachers/administrators?

Professional development opportunities will be increased through established school-university partnerships.

What is out-of-field teaching?

Out-of-field teaching is defined in multiple ways. The Board of Regents recommended definition is: out-of-field teaching occurs when a teacher is teaching any subject with less than an academic concentration of 12-15 semester hours in that field.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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