



Educating the Next Generation of Massachusetts Teachers

*Building Effective Partnerships
in Preparation and Support*

Introduction

Educator quality is perhaps the most important in-school determinant of student success. Approximately 60 percent of a school's total impact on student achievement has been estimated to result from instructional leadership and teacher effectiveness.¹ The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in response to such evidence, has established an aggressive plan for improving district and school leadership and teacher excellence. Notably, the state's *Race to the Top* plan includes specific strategies for attracting and retaining a quality workforce, instituting a new statewide framework for teacher evaluation, ensuring high-quality educators in high-needs districts, and aligning instruction with data systems and assessment results.²

Achieving these goals begins by ensuring all teachers enter their classrooms prepared to succeed with a strong foundation in both theoretical and applied practice to support high-quality instruction and continuous improvement in craft. Unfortunately, too many teachers receive their training far removed from the schools in which they will eventually teach. Too little attention is given to preparing candidates for the intense pressures of working in today's classrooms, where they must help students meet rigorous accountability standards, despite significant challenges that often extend beyond schoolhouse doors.

A national survey of professors in education at four-year colleges in the United States found that only 24 percent of those who train teachers believe it is "absolutely essential" to produce "teachers who understand how to work with the state's standards, tests and accountability systems," and only 37 percent believe it is "absolutely essential" to focus on developing "teachers who maintain discipline and order in the classroom." Fewer than two in five believe it is "absolutely essential" to "create teachers who are trained to address the challenges of high-needs students in urban districts."³ These responses suggest teacher preparation programs have become disconnected from the realities of working in schools.⁴

In this policy perspective, the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy, with generous support from the Trefler Foundation, presents a new three-year model for post-baccalaureate teacher preparation and development aimed at improving the quality of the educator workforce statewide. This model promotes activities and strategies with strong evidence of improving teacher preparation and/or practice. At the heart of our proposal is the conviction that we must move away from programs that prepare teachers in isolation, where they are removed from the practical experiences and intense pressures that come with working in a school. Improving student learning is a daunting challenge, and providing teachers with a limited, piecemeal approach to acquiring knowledge and skill undermines this work. Strong partnerships between teacher preparation programs, particularly those at institutions of higher education (IHEs), and school districts provide teacher candidates with opportunities to engage in the theory and practice of teaching in context, leading to more effective and satisfying classroom experiences.

Equally important, reforming traditional approaches to teacher preparation may provide lasting benefits to our larger public education system. Despite increasing attention paid to alternative certification programs by policymakers, educators, and the public, approximately 90 percent of teachers trained in Massachusetts attend university-based programs. Establishing more formal connections between IHE programs and the work of local districts—and aligning such efforts with state level reforms—is necessary to achieve large-scale changes in the way most teachers are prepared and continuously supported.

Increased Focus on Improving Teacher Preparation Programs

Momentum to overhaul teacher preparation programs has been building for the past two decades. As calls for greater accountability of program outcomes have become louder, teacher preparation programs have steadily moved toward longer and more intense field-based experiences. The Obama Administration has made the improvement of teacher preparation programs a top priority, committing part of one hundred billion dollars in stimulus funding to this purpose. The United States Department of Education's (US ED) competitive *Race to the Top* (RTTT) grant program specifically asked states to develop or expand programs "that are successful at producing effective teachers"⁶ and evaluate all programs through more rigorous teacher education accountability mechanisms, including: using student achievement and student growth data to measure teacher effectiveness; linking teacher performance data to in-state programs that prepare teachers; publicly reporting data on teacher preparation program effectiveness; and expanding teacher-education and teacher-credentialing programs that produce effective teachers.⁷

In September 2011, US ED released *Our Future, Our Teachers: The Obama Administration's Plan for Teacher Education Reform and Improvement* and, in doing so, announced its intention to revise teacher preparation program standards and accountability systems. The report described regulations that will, in time, require teacher preparation programs to survey graduates and their principals to gauge teacher and employer satisfaction, as well as report on job placement and retention rates and the growth of students taught by program graduates. These new regulations are expected to insist on better "state identification of low-performing teacher preparation programs...through focusing reporting on improved measures of program quality."⁸

Paralleling federal action, national organizations have turned their attention to improving teacher preparation programs. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education,⁹ the National Association of State Boards of Education,¹⁰ Education Commission of the States,¹¹ and the Center for American Progress¹² have issued reports calling for increased in-district experiences, tighter alignment between teacher preparation coursework and state PreK–12 standards, and higher levels of accountability.

Adherence to new and emerging principles for training teachers will require teacher preparation programs, especially those at institutions of higher education (IHEs), and school districts to work together in new ways. In Massachusetts, several recent reform initiatives have cleared the way—and made more urgent—the need for deeper levels of collaboration between districts and preparation programs than ever before:

- **Creation of the Executive Office of Education.** In March 2008, the State Legislature established the Executive Office of Education. Its purpose is to oversee a truly seamless education system from birth through adulthood, including greater coordination among the Department of Early Education and Care, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Department of Higher Education, allowing for deeper partnerships between IHEs, school districts, and early education and out-of-school community programs. In May 2012, the Executive Office of Education established an Educator Preparation Advisory Council with the overarching goal of developing a new vision and strategic plan for enhancing the quality of educator preparation programs across the Commonwealth.
- **Race to the Top Reforms.** Massachusetts' RTTT and RTTT–Early Learning Challenge plans include strategies for improving educators' preparation throughout the birth to college education continuum.^a Specific to K–12 teachers, three accountability indicators have been identified for developing accountability systems to monitor teacher preparation programs: effectiveness, as measured by state achievement tests; persistence rates in teaching; and placement in hard-to-staff subjects.¹³

a The model depicted on page 6 applies to educators working in K–12 classrooms. Our decision to focus on a specific set of educators within the larger educational continuum that runs from birth through adulthood is based on two factors. First, we strongly desire our model be based on evidence of effective practice, and the literature on the preparation of teachers in K–12 settings is markedly more expansive than for other educators. Second, our model requires significant changes in faculty and staff roles within two large systems—institutions of higher education and public school districts. Coordinating this work with providers in the early education sector is not realistic at this time, and could potentially undermine the entire process.

While there are many beacons of excellence, unfortunately some of our existing teacher preparation programs are not up to the job. They operate partially blindfolded, without access to data that tells them how effective their graduates are in elementary and secondary school classrooms after they leave their teacher preparation programs.

— Arne Duncan,
US Secretary of Education⁵

- **Enhanced data systems.** In 2010, Massachusetts launched its Growth Model to measure yearly changes in students' learning relative to their peers. Information on students' academic performance may be linked to their teachers and used to develop measures of teacher effectiveness. Teacher preparation programs may soon be able to capitalize on this information to track their graduates' performance and analyze their role in improving student learning.¹⁴
- **Approval of new regulations for educator evaluation.** In June 2011, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved a statewide rating scale for all educators. The rating scale includes categories that may be used to assess educators' performance, including:
 1. Multiple measures of student learning, growth, and achievement;
 2. Products of practice, including unannounced observations;
 3. Additional evidence relevant to performance standards, such as contributions to professional growth and culture and family engagement efforts; and
 4. Feedback from students, staff (for administrators only), and potentially parents, by 2013.¹⁵

As school districts work to comply with these regulations, they will be able to assess the effectiveness of both in-service teachers and teachers in training. The new evaluation regulations may also be used by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Higher Education, as well as teacher preparation programs themselves, to hold programs accountable for the outcomes of their graduates.

- **Development of New Teacher Performance Assessment.** Massachusetts, along with 24 other states, is working with the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education to develop a subject-area specific performance-based assessment for pre-service teacher candidates, which will lead to a body of evidence about teaching and teacher preparation programs. States, school districts, and teacher preparation programs will share a common framework for defining and measuring a set of core teaching skills. This new instrument will be made available to all states and teacher preparation programs in academic year 2012–2013.¹⁶
- **Proposed regulations for teacher preparation program approval.** In April 2012, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reviewed new regulations for programs that prepare teachers to be certified as public school teachers by the Commonwealth. These new regulations include reporting requirements to support a new accountability system for all teacher preparation programs, increase the number of hours in field-based experiences, ensure that pre-service educators have an opportunity to work with effective educators, and place an increased emphasis on partnerships between districts and the program providers through incentives for collaboration.¹⁷

In sum, there are efforts at the federal level, across states, and in Massachusetts to develop a unified educational system that effectively tracks and shares data across all stages of student learning and recognizes that high-quality teaching must be developed and sustained at all points. These efforts present an unprecedented opportunity to establish more effective teacher preparation programs based on strong partnerships between the places where teachers are trained and where they later work.

The Legacy of Professional Development Schools

The idea of establishing strong partnerships between teacher preparation programs and districts and schools is not new. Most notably, it builds on the established model of Professional Development Schools launched in the late 1980s.

What are Professional Development Schools?

Professional Development Schools (PDSs) are partnerships between teacher preparation programs and schools designed to produce continuous improvement in all settings invested in developing high-quality teachers. At their best, PDS programs provide opportunities for teacher candidates to engage in the theory and practice of teaching in classroom settings. They establish a professional learning continuum for teachers across educational settings where responsibility for effective practice is shared by

partnering institutions, leading to the simultaneous improvement of teacher preparation programs and schools where teacher candidates ultimately work. Unlike traditional “student teaching” placements, PDS teacher candidates are integrated into the life of a school and experience the full range of school year activities, such as parent conferences, setting up classrooms, team-teaching, faculty meetings, conducting school-based research, and receiving additional training for working with special student populations.

What evidence supports the PDS model?

Evidence suggests that teachers trained within preparation programs structured as Professional Development Schools persist in the field longer than traditionally-trained teachers and tend to perceive their entry into teaching as a long-term career rather than a short-term job.¹⁸ They are more likely to view their preparation experience positively, have a greater awareness of systemic issues facing public education, and are often given higher ratings by their supervisors.¹⁹ Teachers trained in these practice-based programs with greater alignment between university coursework and district-based field experiences have a greater impact on student learning outcomes, particularly during a teacher’s first year as a teacher-of-record.²⁰ Finally, some studies report that students educated in PDSs exhibited greater growth in math and English than students in non-PDS schools.²¹

What are the barriers to establishing PDSs in Massachusetts?

Previous efforts to establish Professional Development Schools in Massachusetts were unable to overcome the challenges of meaningful collaboration, some of which include: failure of district and university partners to establish and work toward a shared vision; lack of time allocated for collaboration and planning; disagreements about pedagogy; inability to take joint ownership of teacher candidates’ effectiveness and measured outcomes; and power struggles related to establishing new roles for university instructors and district leaders. A lack of sustained funding for IHE and district partnerships also presented a substantial barrier.²² Lee Teitel, Director of Harvard Graduate School of Education’s School Leadership Program, has studied PDSs for two decades and observed, “Even in colleges and universities with long-standing and apparently thriving PDS collaboratives, most are still alternative models with relatively little security, influence, and degree of permanence, surviving largely on the donated labor of fiercely dedicated professors, teachers, and administrators.”²³

Why is the PDS model worth reconsidering now?

While partnerships between schools and institutions of higher education are bound to present challenges, there are three main reasons why lessons gained from the PDS model may be more effectively applied today and at a larger scale. First, previous PDS partnerships existed in a policy environment in which preparation programs—particularly those at IHEs—and districts and schools were not held accountable for their students’ outcomes. As policymakers tighten accountability requirements for schools, educators, and teacher preparation programs, all actors within the education system now have increased incentives to work closely together to improve outcomes.

The second, related reason is growing policy interest in using data on teacher preparation program graduates to inform accountability and oversight of publicly-funded teacher preparation programs. States like Louisiana have already established statewide systems to analyze the outcomes of teacher preparation programs and hold them accountable.²⁴ Massachusetts’ new educator evaluation regulations aim to measure individual teachers’ impact on students’ growth, thereby allowing teacher preparation programs to make more informed decisions about program design and analyze program effectiveness.²⁵ As pressure grows for teacher preparation programs to prove their effectiveness, deep partnerships with school districts may have a larger role to play in ensuring graduates are well-prepared and effective in meeting the needs of the schools in which they work.

Finally, some states, Massachusetts included, are now approving teacher preparation programs that are not affiliated with institutions of higher education. In March 2012, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education approved the Charles Sposato Graduate School of Education, an independent institution that prepares candidates enrolled in the MATCH Teacher Residency.²⁶ The emergence of the Sposato could be an indication of a new era of teacher preparation in which universities will not be the

primary providers, but will have to compete for teacher candidates with other organizations, some already closely aligned with school districts. IHEs may face increased pressure to prove their effectiveness at preparing high-quality teachers, creating additional incentives for working closely with school districts.

Expanding Beyond Professional Development Schools

Despite some evidence of collaboration between teacher preparation programs and schools engaged in the PDS model, most examples are still limited by a narrow focus on teaching candidates' field experiences. Partnerships may be developed with individual schools, but the benefits of those programs are not realized throughout the larger system. True comprehensive partnerships are needed at the district level to foster consistent and sustainable relationships that span pre-service training, induction, and in-service professional development. In 2010, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) released the report *Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning* that noted the need to achieve large-scale reform in teacher candidates' clinical, field-based experience; deeper partnerships with PDSs; and a stronger overall focus on student learning.²⁷ Ten states have committed to working to realize these recommendations, and in November 2011, NCATE outlined a framework to help guide the states' work. The framework offers five priority areas for state partnerships:

- **Priority 1** is the identification, adaptation, and testing of specific clinical strategies across sites.
- **Priority 2** is a focus on the preparation of both clinical faculty and district teachers and coaches.
- **Priority 3** is the identification, further design, and development of prototypical PDSs.
- **Priority 4** is the further design and development of hybrid PDSs which serve not only as models for the preparation of prospective teachers but as prototypes of new kinds of schools.
- **Priority 5** is improving the assessment of teacher preparation programs and especially their core field-based components.²⁸

Pursuing these priorities through strong partnerships between all teacher preparation programs, particularly those at IHEs, and school districts holds the promise of a win-win relationship in which all stakeholders committed to improving teacher practice are engaged in a continuous cycle of improvement.²⁹

New Partnership-based Model for Massachusetts Teacher Preparation

In early 2011, the Rennie Center embarked on research to answer the question: What elements of teacher preparation programs are supported by empirical evidence indicating their graduates persevere in the teaching profession and achieve better outcomes for the K–12 students they teach? We reviewed and analyzed national research to develop a model incorporating key components of effective teacher preparation. What sets our model apart from most others, however, is the idea that teacher preparation programs and school districts need to share responsibility for teacher training and ongoing development across a candidate's initial field experience year and through two full induction years as a teacher-of-record (see Figure 1).

The model proposed here shares many of the characteristics of current practice-based and Professional Development School-style preparation programs, but focuses on partnerships at the district level to achieve joint accountability for the training of a majority of teachers working in the Commonwealth. The model itself is built from the Rennie Center's analysis of elements of university-based teacher preparation programs that show positive outcomes. (For a summary of the research used in the model, see Appendix A.) Based on this analysis, the proposed model may serve as a framework for preparation programs in the state through which all teacher candidates can train.

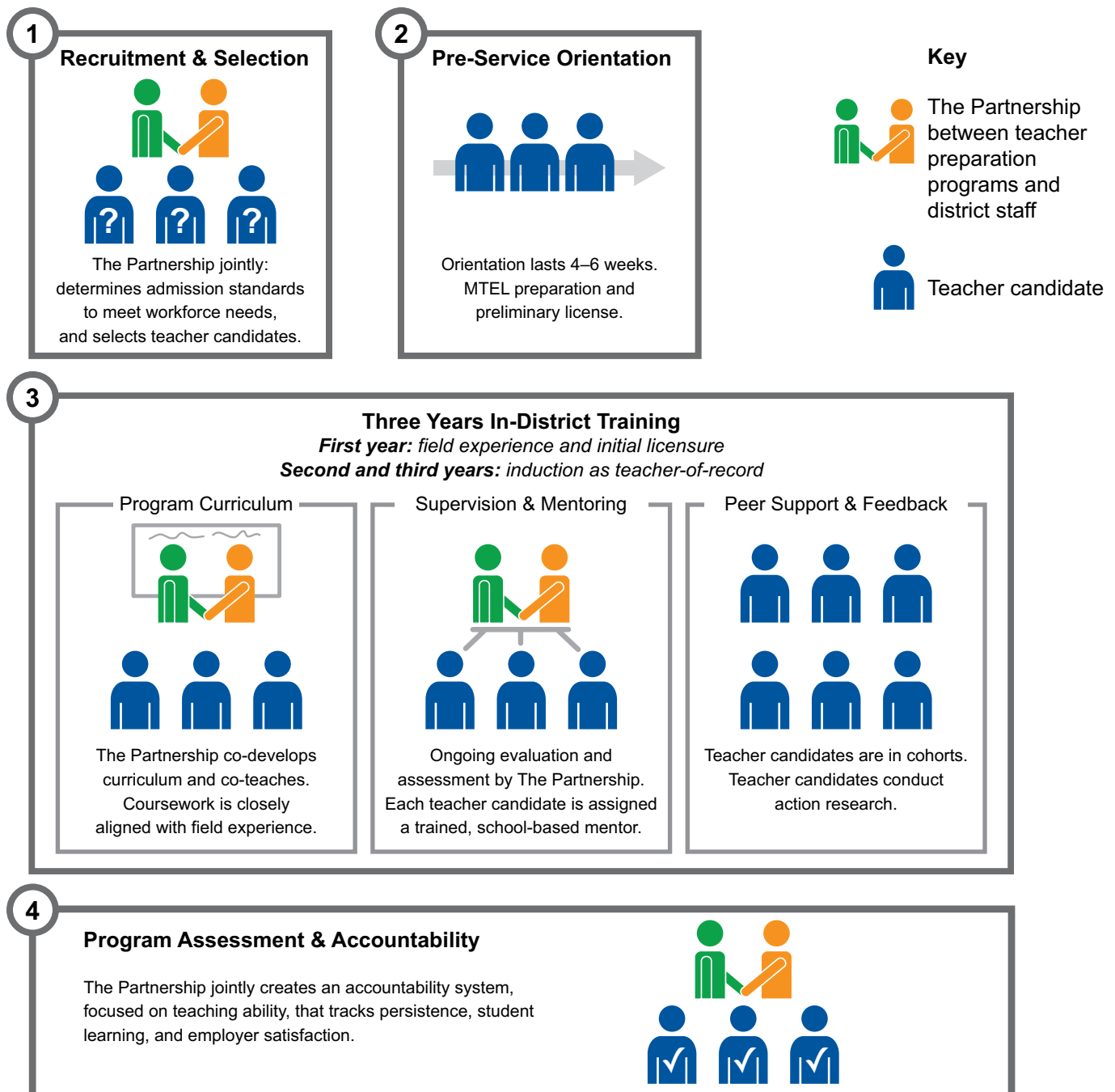
Figure 1: New Partnership-based Model for Massachusetts Teacher Preparation

This model is built on evidence-based practices in teacher preparation and development. It focuses on strong partnerships between post-baccalaureate teacher preparation programs—particularly those at institutions of higher education—and school districts, emphasizing joint accountability.

At the core of this model is a three year in-district training experience for each participant:

- One year of field experience that fulfills licensure requirements
- Two years of induction as a teacher-of-record with full classroom responsibilities, with continued supervision and support

School districts and preparation programs share responsibility for teachers' ongoing learning and development during this three-year period.



Core Elements of the Partnership-based Model

Recruitment and selection

- **Partners (program and district staff) work collaboratively to recruit and select teacher candidates to meet workforce needs.** Admission standards are jointly developed and designed to attract candidates that meet regional and district workforce needs (e.g. content knowledge, cultural competencies, training with high-needs populations). Particular attention is paid to improving the pipeline of high-quality candidates to high-needs schools and hard-to-staff subject areas.

Pre-service orientation

- **Teacher candidates receive a four to six week pre-service orientation prior to their field experiences.** Successful programs require an investment of time prior to the field experience to ensure that:
 - teacher candidates, mentors, and IHE advisors are adequately matched;
 - there is a clear understanding of the program sequencing and expectations;
 - teacher candidates have time to build strong relationships with peers and mentors; and
 - teacher candidates are oriented to the culture of the districts and schools where they work and the needs and characteristics of the students they will eventually teach.

Note: if district and preparation program partners determine that passage of the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) is a component of the program rather than a condition of entry, this period provides an opportunity for candidates to prepare to take the MTEL required for preliminary license, if they have not already done so.

Three years in-district training

- **Teacher candidates have an initial field experience of one academic year.** Field experiences lasting at least one year have been linked to a variety of positive teacher outcomes, including: high persistence rates; high ratings of new teachers by principals, mentors, and IHE supervisors; and positive ratings by teachers of their preparation experience and efficacy as educators. This fulfills Massachusetts' pre-practicum and practicum (field experience) requirements for initial licensure.
- **District and program partners evaluate teacher candidates' development during field experience.** A critical piece of the field experience is ongoing evaluation of teacher candidates as they take on more classroom responsibilities during their first year in the classroom. Effective evaluations include the following:
 - observations and regular three-way meetings with candidates, mentors, and program supervisors;
 - formative assessments, including the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's required Preservice Performance Assessment; and
 - documentation of candidates' field experiences, including descriptions of activities, reflective journals, and evidence of unit and lesson planning.

Evaluations may be used to inform decisions about the level and type of additional supports for ongoing development, whether or not candidates continue in the program, and school placement after initial licensure.

- **Field experiences provide the skills and knowledge necessary for future workplace success.** Evidence suggests that tight alignment between the knowledge a candidate gains during his or her field experience and the skills needed as a teacher-of-record has a positive impact on student achievement. Key components of a successful field experience include:
 - program curriculum developed jointly by district and IHE faculty;
 - mentoring and supervision from both school and IHE faculty;
 - IHE schedules that accommodate candidates' fieldwork;
 - course assignments that are tightly aligned to field experiences;
 - opportunities for peer support;

- opportunities to translate research into practice;
 - feedback and reflection; and
 - data collection that links preparation activities to student learning outcomes.
- **Ongoing support and supervision across two-year induction as teacher-of-record.** After the first year of field experience, teacher candidates are professionally licensed as teachers-of-record. The next two years of in-district training serve as induction years with continued supervision and support from district and IHE partners. There is a growing body of empirical evidence that comprehensive induction programs sustained over time can have a positive influence on teacher candidates' job satisfaction, retention, and efficacy. Effective, comprehensive induction builds on practices included in candidates' successful field experiences including mentoring, collaboration among a cohort of new teachers, and ongoing inquiry into practice. When offered in combination, these activities are positively associated with persistence in the field and perceptions of new teacher efficacy.

Collaborative supervision and mentoring

- **There are clear roles and expectations among program and district mentors, teacher candidates, and other partnership participants.** Successful mentoring programs pay close attention to relationship-building and establish clear roles, expectations and support among mentors and candidates. Partnerships that provide structured opportunities for district mentors to coach and direct candidates, collaborate with program faculty, and engage in both IHE and school-based activities related to curriculum development and instructional practices have been linked to positive teacher and student outcomes.
- **School and program faculty are jointly responsible for mentoring and supervision of candidates.** Collaborative models of mentoring and supervision within district-IHE partnerships have been linked to higher teacher persistence rates, improved professional growth for both mentor and mentee, enhanced school-wide collaboration, and increased ability to raise student achievement during new teachers' early years in teaching.
- **Teacher candidates are assigned to a school-based mentor in the same field, and that mentor is released from classroom responsibilities.** Having a mentor who is in the same discipline as the candidate and who is released from classroom duties to focus on mentoring and other teacher preparation activities has been linked to higher retention rates among new teachers.
- **Mentors are carefully selected and well-trained.** Attention to mentor selection and training has also been linked to positive teacher and student outcomes, including persistence in the field, satisfaction in the preparation program, positive ratings of candidates by supervisors, and higher levels of student achievement. Potential selection criteria include years of experience, professional licensure, recommendations from supervisors, and expertise in an area that is an identified school or district need.

Co-developed and co-taught program curriculum

- **Coursework is co-developed by program faculty and district leaders.** One of the key elements of effective partnerships is the tight integration between coursework and field experience that can only be achieved when program faculty and school district personnel collaborate to develop curricula.
- **Coursework is aligned and sequenced with field experiences.** Coursework should be sequenced so that teacher candidates learn about a teaching theory or practice and then have the opportunity to apply it in their K–12 classrooms, under the supervision of their district and program mentors. Tight integration of coursework and field experiences, research suggests, results in positive outcomes for candidates, including higher retention rates and positive perceptions of their preparation experience. Aligned coursework has also been found to have a positive impact on student achievement during a teacher's first year of teaching.
- **District-based faculty co-teach coursework with program faculty.** When coursework is co-developed and co-taught by school faculty on site, candidates and school staff experience improved communication, reflective thinking, risk-taking, and collaborative learning. Co-teaching allows for the integration of high-quality IHE coursework with applied practical knowledge of teaching.

Peer support, feedback, and reflection

- **Establish process for communication between IHE and district faculty.** Strong IHE and district partnerships will allow for deeper levels of feedback and reflection, and more effectively address the struggles many teachers encounter in transitioning from a university to a school setting. Establishing and maintaining communication requires building relationships that expand beyond traditional “student teaching” field experiences, which last only 13 weeks on average.
- **Place candidates in cohorts for mutual support.** Cohort models place several teacher candidates in the same school and/or district and aim to reduce isolation and increase peer support. Empirical evidence suggests structured opportunities to take part in common planning, reflection, and feedback as a peer network has a positive impact on new teacher retention, supervisor ratings, teacher candidate perceptions of preparation programs, and readiness to teach. There is also evidence that building strong networks among candidates during preparation and extending into the first years as a teacher-of-record is particularly effective in improving retention and effectiveness within high-needs schools.
- **Have candidates examine their practice by integrating action research across all three years of the recommended preparation program.** Action or practitioner research involves the systematic and intentional inquiry of classroom practice by teachers. Building action research projects into teacher education programs is an effective way to enhance collaboration, professional learning, and reflection among new teachers. Studies have found that requiring candidates to complete action research projects results in teachers who have a greater impact on student learning during their first year of teaching. Research also shows Professional Development Schools that provide inquiry-based training produce teachers with higher average ratings compared to non-inquiry trained teachers across four areas: learning environments, planning instruction, assessment, and reflective practice.

Program assessment and accountability

- **Build accountability systems focused on how well teachers are teaching.** Increasingly, accountability structures for teacher preparation programs—including state certification and licensing policies, teacher testing protocols, and state and national program approval and accreditation standards—are seen as weak and ineffectual. A recent report argued, “Real quality control will hold programs responsible for how their graduates perform in classroom teaching. It will use empirically based indicators to show that students are learning from their teachers, that program graduates stay in the profession, and that they teach in the hard-to-staff schools that badly need them.”³⁰ Deep partnerships provide an opportunity for the development of stronger measures of program effectiveness that can be used for program accountability and to promote continuous improvement.
- **Districts and preparation programs, including university partners, co-develop and jointly utilize a robust accountability system.** Schools, districts, and preparation programs should work collaboratively to develop accountability systems that track program graduates and measure their effectiveness in the classroom. Based on a review of recent literature and in line with both federal regulations proposed by US ED and new regulations under review by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education,³¹ we propose that district and preparation programs collect the following information:
 - **Teacher persistence:** track retention rates of program graduates in the field through at least five years as teachers-of-record.
 - **Teacher performance in the classroom:** measure the professional growth of teacher candidates through demonstrations of defined skills and content knowledge and portfolio reviews of candidates’ work with students.
 - **Student learning and growth:** record outcomes for students in teacher candidates’ classrooms following their placement in schools. This aligns with new Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations for Educator Evaluation, which require that educators be evaluated based on evidence of growth in their students’ learning.³²
 - **Opinions on program effectiveness and graduates’ performance:** survey program graduates and their employers, as well as graduates’ K–12 students and parents, where appropriate, to track perceptions of overall program effectiveness.

Key Roles to Ensure Effectiveness of Partnership Model

Research suggests that there are three systemic problems with current approaches to supporting new teachers-of-record:

1) there is a narrow vision of the induction process as merely a year-long *orientation* rather than part of a broader *continuum of professional learning*; 2) there is an over-reliance on mentors without a clear direction and coherent strategy linked to specific developmental goals for new teachers and ongoing training for mentors; and 3) there are constraints within schools and districts themselves, including limited resources and capacity, staffing needs, and provisions within collective bargaining agreements. Achieving our model as described means addressing these problems or challenges through significant increases in levels of engagement, collaboration, and accountability across all parties committed to improving teacher preparation. At the same time, it is important to note our model includes many roles that currently exist in teacher preparation programs, such as teacher candidates, mentor teachers, IHE supervisors, and program or site coordinators. Beginning to rethink individual and institutional roles and how knowledge, skills, and resources may be reallocated to achieve more cost-effective outcomes is the first step in building stronger partnerships. Changes in roles include:

- Mentors, program faculty and district staff will deepen their engagement in the design and implementation of the preparation program, including the development and teaching of the curriculum with faculty from colleges of education and arts and sciences;
- Program faculty must have opportunities to serve as field specialists, with potential adjunct status at the partner IHE;
- Preparation program leaders, especially university deans and faculty (both in colleges of education and arts and sciences) will be more engaged with and present in district schools to guide and support teacher candidates from pre-service through their first few years as a teacher-of-record; and
- IHE deans and presidents must play key roles in communicating that teacher education is a top priority for the whole institution.³³

Paying for It: Financing Teacher Preparation Partnerships

Another barrier to strong partnerships between preparation programs and school districts is how to pay for the additional time and effort needed (especially in the early phases) to develop and implement this new partnership model. In a time of declining resources and one in which future increases in public school funding look doubtful, the challenges of funding loom even larger.

The partnership model proposed here requires preparation programs and districts to work in close collaboration for the first three years of a teacher candidate's career. A different type of funding model is required than a simple breakdown of costs and resources. If program and district partners co-own their preparation program, they must no longer think of their organizations' budgets as separate.

The teacher preparation model proposed here will likely necessitate the development of a new budget model that would pool funds from multiple sources and require partners to determine, collaboratively, how those resources will be spent. Researcher Kenneth Howey calls this idea "fused funding" and says, "these [partnerships] would draw upon the resources of both universities...and K-12 schools. The governance should be a shared responsibility."³⁴ Program and district partners may also consider jointly lobbying for funding at both the federal and state levels.³⁵

While there is evidence that a partnership model of teacher preparation can be cost-neutral, it is important to note that any partnership is likely to require initial start-up funding. Some researchers have estimated the start-up costs of a PDS to be \$50,000–\$100,000. Others have suggested costs may be substantially more. Included in these costs is the coordination of the program, planning time, technology, furnishings, space, and legal reviews.³⁶ After these initial costs, researchers have debated the cost of program maintenance. Some studies have found that the costs of PDS activities could be absorbed by existing budgets,

whereas others estimated as much as a 10 percent increase to accommodate additional planning and coordination.³⁷ Potential sources for these start-up costs include federal grants and philanthropy.

Considerations

The Rennie Center encourages state policymakers and teacher preparation program and district leaders to give serious consideration to adopting the model proposed here. However, full-scale, immediate adoption of this entire model may be unrealistic. Thus, the following are some near-term options that would move the Commonwealth closer to making strong post-baccalaureate teacher preparation partnerships a reality.

For state policymakers:

- **Consider policies that promote and provide incentives for partnerships.** Our review of current research revealed that partnerships can produce improved outcomes for students, as well as for teacher candidates, districts, and institutions of higher education. Policymakers may examine the feasibility of policies that require all teacher candidates to be trained in models comparable to Professional Development Schools as a first step toward large scale reform. The Legislature might also consider pooling resources and, if possible, offering competitive grant opportunities for programs and districts that commit to engaging in transformative partnerships.
- **Continue to develop data systems to make public the outcomes of teacher preparation programs.** Massachusetts now has the capacity to aggregate the student achievement data of teacher preparation program graduates. These data may be used as a policy lever to encourage preparation programs to examine the results of their graduates and to make corresponding improvements. Transparency is of key importance. Making aggregate data public may encourage programs to explore deeper partnerships with districts as a way of gauging districts' needs and ensuring that teacher preparation programs are responsive to those needs, as well as help inform individual teacher candidates about the decisions they are making in their growth and development.
- **Use teacher preparation program outcome data to inform decisions about approval.** As previously mentioned, federal policy is already moving toward stricter accountability requirements for teacher preparation providers by denying funding to under-performing programs based on student learning growth, teacher retention, and surveys of employers and graduates. The state may collect and analyze data on teacher effectiveness linked to teacher preparation programs to determine whether or not individual programs should continue to be approved.

For school and district leaders:

- **Prioritize the preparation of new teachers.** Districts have traditionally ceded responsibility for the preparation of new teachers to university-based teacher preparation programs. But schools and districts have a vested interest in ensuring that the preparation of teachers is not viewed as someone else's responsibility. The Rennie Center partnership model calls for a much more active role among district and school leaders in preparing teachers to be effective in their classrooms. School and district leaders can seek out ways to make the preparation of new teachers a significant priority for all school and district staff, while considering the concurrent opportunities this could provide for retaining and creating career advancement for veteran teachers.
- **Consider deepening existing partnerships with preparation programs to more closely align teacher preparation to the needs of schools and districts.** School and district leaders may reflect on their existing partnerships with programs that prepare their teachers and identify areas where they can deepen partnerships to meet criteria in the model proposed above. Of key importance is re-examining partnerships with institutions of higher education, where a majority of teachers are trained.

For teacher preparation programs, including those at institutions of higher education:

- **Deepen existing partnerships with the districts in which teacher candidates are placed.** Teacher preparation programs may consider examining their existing partnerships with the schools and districts in which their teacher candidates are placed. Universities, in particular, might explore opportunities to engage in some or all of the collaborative work described above.
- **Establish professors of practice, and provide incentives for faculty who assume these roles.** In teacher preparation programs at IHEs, a disconnect exists between university faculty and the schools in which their graduates teach. IHEs should consider reviewing tenure and promotion policies to increase the legitimacy of work done in schools for faculty whose core responsibility is to develop and train new teachers.
- **Advocate for access to data on graduates' student outcomes, and use this data to inform program changes.** Programs would benefit from better data about district leaders' perceptions of their graduates as well as student-level data on their graduates' K–12 students' outcomes. These data could then be used formatively, to work with district partners to make regular adjustments and improvements to their programs.
- **Make clear the importance of teacher preparation.** There is a need for presidents and deans at institutions that prepare teachers to emphasize that the preparation of high-quality teachers and improving outcomes for K–12 students are integral parts of IHEs' missions.

Appendix A

References used in the New Partnership-based Model for Massachusetts Teacher Preparation

Each element of the proposed model is based on research findings indicating positive teacher or student outcomes. Further details can be found in the following sources.

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