

**Recommendations from the Association of Teacher Educators
for Improving *No Child Left Behind*
Related to Definition of Highly Qualified Teachers**

The Association of Teacher Educators is pleased to have this opportunity to make recommendations regarding the implementation of *No Child Left Behind* specifically as the law relates to the definition of highly qualified teacher. In order to have highly qualified professionals in every classroom as required by Title II of NCLB, we believe there needs to be a greater emphasis on teacher preparation in the future, and this emphasis should include mentoring, teacher induction, incorporation of the Professional Development Schools concept into the legislation, and other techniques to enable all schools, including hard-to-staff schools, attract and retain qualified teaching professionals.

ATE affirms the need to prepare a sufficient supply of highly qualified teachers from diverse backgrounds for all children in all types of schools. ATE supports local, state, and federal incentives for teaching in high-needs districts and supports the recruitment of a diverse teaching force reflective of the diversity in contemporary society. School districts, however, must offer competitive salaries in order to attract highly qualified teachers. Highly qualified teachers hold high expectations for all children and are prepared to meet the challenges of today's diverse classrooms. Equity in education is a top priority for ATE.

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind should include provisions which address the need to prepare a **sufficient supply** of diverse, highly qualified, well-prepared teachers for all children in all states and geographic regions, and for all types of schools.

- ATE supports the preparation of teachers who hold high expectations for children and who are prepared to meet the needs of children in diverse classrooms.
- ATE supports local, state, and federal incentives for teaching in high-needs districts.
- ATE supports the recruitment of a diverse teaching force that reflects the diversity in contemporary society.
- ATE believes school districts are responsible for securing fully qualified teachers by offering salaries which are sufficiently competitive.
- Equity in education is a top priority.
- ATE opposes the development of alternative certification programs by private for-profit organizations unless they meet the same quality control measures and standards required for program approval at colleges and universities within their respective states.

The No Child Left Behind reauthorization should encourage teacher educators and teaching institutions to prepare and disseminate ideas, innovations and best practices on a broad-based nationwide scale.

- ATE encourages closer collaboration between education faculty and liberal arts faculty in reviewing the quality of total teacher preparation.
- ATE opposes state-mandated limits on the number of hours of professional teacher preparation.

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind should help establish and foster strong, **college/university-district/consortium partnership** support programs for teachers at all stages of their careers, particularly at the beginning stage, to help attract and retain high quality teachers.

- ATE endorses collaboration between teacher education faculty, liberal arts faculty, and educators in public school systems.

ATE is committed to promoting, initiating, and engaging in quality teacher education program development and research.

- The No Child Left Behind reauthorization should help ATE and other groups promote, initiate, and engage in quality teacher education program **development and research**.

ATE is a strong advocate for high quality, research-based approaches to admission, credentialing, induction, and retention processes that ensure equity and access for all prospective teachers. ATE supports diversity in education. This commitment to diversity originates with ATE's understanding of the concept of pluralism and the importance of creating a teaching force representative of the broader pluralistic society. ATE advocates affirmative action and multicultural education as programs supportive of diversity in education. ATE's commitment to diversity also influences its position on a number of critical issues where diversity may not be maintained. ATE is opposed to lowering or eliminating teacher licensure requirements for emergency certification or for any other reason and supports mentoring programs to assist beginning teachers in making the transition from novice to experienced professional. ATE supports the rights and responsibilities of underserved populations in educational institutions and settings.

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind should advocate for multiple, high-quality, research-based approaches to the **admission, credentialing, induction, and retention** processes that ensure equity and access for all prospective teachers.

- ATE reaffirms support of diversity in education.
- ATE reaffirms support of the concept of pluralism in teacher education and recognizes the importance of creating a teaching force that is representative of the broader pluralistic society.
- ATE supports affirmative action in educational settings.
- ATE supports multi-cultural education.
- ATE supports the rights and responsibilities of underserved persons in educational institutions and settings.

- ATE opposes the lowering and/or abrogation of certification standards in the name of emergency certification.
- Induction year programs need to be established to assist beginning teachers in making the transition from novice to experienced professional.
- State organizations need to determine if legislation for liability insurance exists for candidates in their early field experiences (as well as during student teaching).

ATE is an advocate for reliable, valid, and reasonable assessment requirements for teachers and students at all levels. While ATE supports basic skill competence and professional expertise for beginning teachers, ATE opposes the use of standardized exams as the sole or primary criterion for assessment of students at the p-12 or college level or for determining a quality school. The No Child Left Behind reauthorization should encourage proactive teacher educators to accept the challenge to advocate for **reliable, valid, and reasonable assessment requirements**, instruments, and processes for pre-service and in-service teachers, as well as for p-12 students.

- ATE opposes the use of standardized exams as the sole or primary criteria for assessment of students at the p-12 and college levels or for determining what constitutes a quality school.
- ATE believes that any effort to employ state-wide competency testing be consistent with relevant professional practices.
- ATE supports the development and application of certification requirements and standards that ensure all beginning teachers demonstrate both minimal basic skill competence and minimal professional expertise.

ATE is an advocate for PreK-12 students, believing that best practices for high quality educational experiences should be supported and fully funded. ATE advocates the incorporation of child abuse information in all preservice and inservice programs of study and supports collaboration with other education and child advocacy groups to promote the general well being of children and youth. ATE supports full funding for educating refugee and illegal alien students, for nutritional school lunch programs, and for quality education for children with AIDS. ATE is opposed to budget reductions to public education. ATE also supports the concept and practice of inclusive schools, including the creation of school climates supportive of all family patterns. ATE supports the concept of a safe school environment for all children and recognizes the importance of parents and other caregivers in children's education.

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind should advocate for best practices that foster **high quality educational experiences for p-12 students**.

- ATE supports the concept and practice of the inclusive school.
- ATE supports the involvement of parents and other caregivers in their children's education.
- ATE encourages the creation of school climates that are supportive of all family patterns.
- ATE supports the construction and maintenance of safe school environments.

- ATE supports policies [standards] and practices encouraging teacher preparation programs to include instruction designed to improve candidates' knowledge and skills in working with students with special needs.
- ATE believes the federal government should provide full funding for the costs necessary to educate refugee students.
- ATE supports funding teachers' work with refugee and illegal alien students.
- ATE opposes further budget reductions to public education.
- ATE supports adequate funding for a nutritional school lunch program.
- ATE believes that counselors are needed in all elementary schools [as well as in middle and high schools].
- ATE supports the right of all children with AIDS to the continued delivery of a quality education.

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind should analyze issues and practices related to the preparation and professional development of teachers.

ATE supports collaborative efforts with other educational agencies, organizations, and institutions, especially among teacher education institutions, teacher organizations, school districts, and other concerned groups. ATE supports the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. At the national level, ATE supports collaboration with other organizations to maintain licensure reciprocity procedures and to monitor significant educational legislation. The role of the federal government in setting educational policy should include a system of checks and balances involving leaders in the teacher education and education communities.

The reauthorization of No Child Left Behind should allow teachers and teacher groups to cooperate with other educational agencies, organizations, and institutions.

- ATE reaffirms support for collaborative efforts among teacher education institutions, teachers' organizations, school districts, and other concerned groups.
- ATE supports the work of the NBPTS.
- ATE supports working with other education and child advocacy groups to promote the general well being of children and youth.
- ATE encourages the incorporation of information on child abuse in all preservice and inservice programs of study.
- Leaders in the educational community should evaluate the federal government's role in teacher education.
- ATE supports work with organizations to promote certification reciprocity procedures.