

**CREATING TOMORROW:
PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS
A STATEWIDE PLAN FOR ACTION AND RESULTS**

RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNOR A. PAUL CELLUCCI
October 1998

Massachusetts Board of Higher Education

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CREATING TOMORROW: PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS

A Statewide Plan For Action and Results

Executive Summary

In June 1998, Governor A. Paul Cellucci asked the Board of Higher Education to develop a plan for the immediate improvement of teacher education in the Commonwealth. **CREATING TOMORROW: PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TEACHERS** recommends actions to ensure that graduates of our public and private higher education institutions are equipped to be outstanding teachers. It was developed in consultation with legislators, presidents of higher education institutions, deans of colleges and schools of education, teacher education faculty, and K-12 teachers. It is a forward looking and results oriented plan of action designed to make Massachusetts the national leader in producing tomorrow's teachers.

Triggered by the failure of 59% of recent teacher candidates on the first Massachusetts Teacher Test (April 1998), the report moves beyond the test results to the more complex issues affecting the preparation of tomorrow's teachers. It is organized around three major themes:

- *quality and accountability of teacher education programs*
- *recruitment and retention of highly qualified students and teachers*
- *commitment to make ongoing systemic change a major priority for the Commonwealth in the future.*

Call to Action

Three groups – elected officials, the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education, and institutions – are especially called upon to respond aggressively and rapidly to those recommendations for which they have authority. More than twenty actions are recommended. These include:

- **Eliminate certification approval for underperforming institutions.** Withdraw state approval to endorse candidates for certification from institutions “under review” that fail to meet minimum performance standards within two years. Institutions are placed “under review” that do not achieve an 80% pass rate on the communications and literacy test by August 1, 2000 and 90% by August 1, 2001.
- **Eliminate certification approval for underperforming programs.** Withdraw state approval to endorse candidates for certification from any program “under review” that fails to meet minimum performance standards within two years. Programs are placed “under review” that do not achieve an 80% pass rate on a subject matter test by August 1, 2000 and 90% by August 1, 2001.
- **Require immediate external review of teacher education programs.** Require institutions with 1998 Teacher Test pass rates below the state average (54.9%) to conduct by June 30, 1999 an objective, independent, external assessment of the teacher education program.
- **Raise admission requirements for all teacher education programs.** To gain admission into a teacher education program, all students should pass an assessment of college level reading and writing skills.

- **Raise requirements for student teaching.** To be approved for student teaching, all students should pass an assessment of content in their discipline.
- **Fast-track alternative certification for second-career professionals.** Streamline the process for alternative certification without compromising academic standards.
- **Direct financial incentives to high-achieving students who want to become teachers, targeting those who plan to teach in areas of greatest need. Implement the Tomorrow's Teachers Program** guaranteeing that over the next four years up to 3,200 outstanding high school students can participate. After initial implementation, it is recommended that the program be expanded to include students attending independent institutions of higher education. Create an **Incentive Program for Aspiring Teachers** to provide tuition waivers for students enrolled in undergraduate arts and sciences programs who decide to become teachers.
- **Reward outstanding teachers who make a commitment to teach in Massachusetts public schools.** Create a **Career Advancement Program (CAP)** to reward new teachers with up to five free graduate courses, one for each of their first five years of teaching. Develop a **Collaborative Teachers Tuition Waiver Program** to provide tuition waivers for superior Massachusetts public school teachers who mentor a full-time student-teacher.
- **Establish a Joint Board of Education/Board of Higher Education Commission.** To monitor the implementation of this plan and make recommendations on issues related to teacher education, a ten-member Commission will be organized immediately. It will include three representatives from both the Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education and two at-large members selected by each Board. The creation of the Commission recognizes that higher education and K-12 must share the responsibility and accountability for systemic change in the preparation of teachers and the achievement of the goals of education reform.

The Governor, working with the Boards of Education and Higher Education, is determined to move Massachusetts to the forefront in teacher preparation nationwide. The commitment to developing the best system for preparing teachers has never been more compelling or urgent. The Commonwealth's investment in education reform demands nothing less.

October 13, 1998