

# AACTE/ACSR Policy Statements

## I. De-Professionalization of the Teaching Profession

Teaching is the profession that makes every other profession possible. Nonetheless, state policy and policymakers often send messages that devalue educator preparation and education professionals. For example, policy makers can prioritize access to teaching jobs over quality preparation. Additionally, educator preparation professionals often are underutilized when state education policies and rules are developed. These problems are not intractable and can be addressed in ways that elevate program quality and candidate readiness while strengthening the teaching profession.

### Policy Asks

- All teachers of record must complete an accredited, professional preparation program to become a teacher.
- All programs and pathways that prepare teachers should be held to clear, consistent and high standards, and be subject to the same professional program reviews and transparency.
- All candidates who complete these programs and pathways should be required to meet equally high expectations to enter the field.
- Teacher educators should be represented when policies regarding the teaching profession are being discussed, developed and finalized.
- Educator preparation programs should be represented as part of ESSA-related conversations.
- State boards, task forces, committees and hearings should include teacher educators.

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### II. Educator Pipeline

Some states are seeing dramatic decreases in the number of students interested in becoming teachers. These shortages come as longstanding concerns about teacher retention, the diversity of the teacher workforce, and a shortage in some geographic areas and high-needs fields continue. There are several ways that state policymakers can help to create a supply of well-prepared teachers.

#### Policy Asks:

- Develop policies to support programs that help identify and encourage high school students interested in teaching and to diversify the teacher workforce.
- States should create and support scholarships and loan-forgiveness programs – especially for students who work in high-need schools or teach in-demand subjects – to encourage more people to enter teaching.
- Invest in innovative models of clinical practice to better prepare new teachers, which would in turn encourage them to stay in the profession longer.
- Take advantage of educator preparation programs’ willingness to work with state leaders to understand local needs, to develop strategies for recruiting more teachers -- including professionals from other fields -- and to team up to implement new ideas.
- Support programs that prepare career-changers to meet high standards for initial licensure.
- Address issues with salary structures, professional development, leadership opportunities and overall working conditions to make teaching a more attractive profession.

### III. Data Systems

Educator preparation programs want to better use data to inform and improve the preparation of effective beginning teachers. However, today’s data systems vary greatly by state and often are hard to access and use. Shortcomings include state policies that require data, even though many state data systems are not integrated and do not provide much useful data. Many educator preparation programs also lack the resources needed to meet mandated state, federal, and accreditation reporting requirements. States should help educator preparation programs use data for long-term positive change while meeting state and federal privacy requirements.

#### Policy Asks:

- Data systems need to be more accessible and better integrated across agencies and jurisdictions.
- State agencies need adequate staffing and training to be able to provide the data to fully support educator preparation programs.
- States should create a budget line to cover the costs of existing data-related reporting requirements.