

TEACHING A N D
CALIFORNIA'S
FUTURE

THE STATUS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION 2000

An Update to the Teaching and California's Future Task Force

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SUMMARY REPORT
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**THE CENTER FOR THE FUTURE
OF TEACHING & LEARNING**

And

The California State University Institute for Education Reform
Policy Analysis for California Education

Recruiting New Teachers, Inc.

The University of California, Office of the President

WestEd

**RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY
SRI INTERNATIONAL**



THE STATUS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION 2000

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Teaching and California's Future is sponsored by **The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning**. The Center is made up of education professionals, scholars and public policy experts who care deeply about improving the schooling of California's children. The Center was founded in 1995 as a public, nonprofit organization with the purpose of strengthening the capacity of California's teachers for delivering rigorous, well-rounded curriculum, and ensuring the continuing intellectual, ethical and social development of all children. Margaret Gaston and Harvey Hunt, Co-Directors of the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, organized and directed the work.

Cosponsors include: The California State University Institute for Education Reform; Policy Analysis for California Education; Recruiting New Teachers, Inc.; the University of California, Office of the President; and WestEd.

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Research was conducted and reported by SRI International. SRI International is an independent, nonprofit corporation that performs a broad spectrum of problem-oriented research and consulting to government and industry. Founded in 1946, SRI is an internationally recognized contract research organization and one of the largest of its kind in the world. The SRI research team included the following people: Patrick M. Shields, Manager and Senior Policy Analyst, Katherine Baisden, Camille Esch, Daniel Humphrey, Lori Riehl, Juliet Tiffany, Lisa Upresa, Eileen Wojdula, and Viki Young.

Editorial assistance was provided by Andy Plattner of KSA-Plus Communications, a firm that specializes in helping educators understand and communicate with their communities.

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SUMMARY REPORT

The Task Force on Teaching and California's Future was convened in 1998 by the **Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning**. Our mission was to look at what needs to be done to make sure that all of California's students have qualified and effective teachers.

The 20-member task force was composed of the key leaders from the major policy organizations that have a stake in recruiting, preparing and training California teachers, and five award-winning classroom teachers.

In addition to the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, our work was sponsored by:

- The California State University Institute for Education Reform
- Policy Analysis for California Education
- Recruiting New Teachers, Inc.
- The University of California, Office of the President
- WestEd

Research by SRI International of Menlo Park, California.

We have spent three years examining teaching in California. Working with the research firm of SRI International, our last report was released in 1999 and included an inventory of how the state develops and deploys teachers. We carefully examined state policies and local practices regarding teachers. We looked at existing data and produced new research, including an extensive survey of teachers that asked them about their preparation, their induction into teaching, the level of workplace support and professional development they receive, and how they are compensated. To complement the data, we conducted indepth case studies in eight communities, examining how they recruited, hired and developed teachers. Through the work of Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., we examined public opinion towards teachers, teaching and schools, and commissioned a separate report on those findings called *The Essential Profession*.

The update of the secondary data contained in this report is available on the Center's website – www.cftl.org – as are a variety of related policy papers, and the full report.

The Status of the Teaching Profession 2000

PROVIDING QUALITY TEACHERS FOR ALL STUDENTS

A year ago, we described a crisis that demanded the kind of extraordinary response California would organize without hesitation if the disaster was natural in origin – earthquake, fire or flood. The state’s poorest children – those who need good teachers the most – are by far the most likely to be assigned to teachers who are the least prepared. And there are far too many teachers who are not prepared.

This stark reality was a terrible thing to contemplate. The nation’s largest state was running a system of schools which left far too many of California’s children unprepared to meet its own rigorous academic standards and ill prepared for a future that will only reward those who are well educated.

To their considerable credit, the Governor and the Legislature responded with unprecedented, targeted initiatives to recruit, retain, train and support good teachers. California leaders took up the issue of teacher quality with enthusiasm.

What has been done is an important first step; the crisis is being addressed, but it is still with us and will be for some time. We can now look back over two years of data collection to see that conditions are getting worse rather than better. And the disparity is growing between those suburban schools that serve middle-class children and urban schools that serve poor and minority children. The numbers of underqualified teachers that we reported last year have been surpassed by the most recent figures and have become increasingly concentrated in the schools that serve the poorest communities.

These numbers do not yet reflect the impact of incentives and policy changes made during the last legislative session. Indeed, those changes may take several years before the trend

begins to turn around. But even when these changes are taken into account, it is clear that, if every child is to be ensured of a fully qualified, effective teacher, there must be a continued and explicit focus on California’s lowest achieving schools.

In order to accomplish this, the state’s policy makers must maintain as much of a sense of urgency as they did last year. That is what the public wants, and that is what is right for the parents of those children who attend schools with so many underqualified teachers that the schools no longer have the ability to improve. That is the reality that many parents do face; more than 1.5 million California students attend such schools, which make up nearly one in four of all the state’s schools. And for those parents, mostly poor and minority, there is a sense of urgency that cannot be set aside.

There is no issue more critical to California’s future than improving its public schools, to make sure all of the state’s nearly 6 million students have the knowledge and skills to be productive and successful. And there is no issue more critical to improving schools than making sure every student is taught by a teacher who is well prepared and who has the skills to help students learn and grow.

The investment of our collective energy and resources is well worth making.

This brief report captures the essence of a more detailed version – *The Status of the Teaching Profession 2000: An Update to the Teaching and California’s Future Task Force* – that is available through the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning at its website, www.cftl.org.

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A CRISIS OF MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS

This summary provides policy makers with an update of *The Status of the Teaching Profession: Research Findings and Policy Recommendations* released in November of 1999. The information is drawn from the best available data sources, yet some questions from our earlier work remain unanswered. In order to answer those questions, we are conducting extensive new research and analyses of data that will be completed next year. But based on data collected to date, there continue to be three significant dimensions to the crisis:

- There simply are not enough qualified persons available and willing to take the open teaching jobs, and the shortage is larger than previously had been known with the

least prepared teachers concentrated in the most challenging classrooms.

- Far too many of California's new teachers are not sufficiently prepared to help their students meet the state's new academic standards.
- The state's veteran teachers are not routinely getting the kind of professional development required to give them the additional knowledge and skills they need to bring their students to the new, higher standards.

Although the conditions affect nearly every school district in California, they are most severe in those districts and schools that educate our poorest children.

TOO FEW TEACHERS

The demand for qualified teachers willing to take jobs in California schools has grown dramatically and will continue to grow. Demand has outstripped supply, particularly in California's urban school districts.

In the past decade, the number of classroom teachers in California increased by nearly 50 percent. In the school year that ended this past spring, there were approximately 291,000 public school teachers. Part of the increase was due to the 25 percent growth in the number of children over the past decade, part is due to retirements, and part was due to the state's decision to reduce the size of classes.

At the same time, the California economy blossomed, driving up wages and the demand for educated employees who might otherwise have taken teaching jobs. And, the existing teaching force grew older and increasingly eligible for retire-

ment. Teachers are retiring in record numbers and a third of California's teachers are older than 50 and increasingly eligible to retire.

The combination of all these factors required California schools to hire tens of thousands of teachers this past year. But schools, particularly schools in low-income districts, have been increasingly unable to find enough people qualified and willing to teach. The colleges and universities – public and private – that train prospective teachers have increased the number of teacher candidates, but they still only produce 17,000 a year, not all of whom actually become teachers.

Last year, we estimated that in 1998-99 there were 28,500 teachers, a little more than 10 percent of the state's teaching force, who were teaching without the minimum qualifications of a regular teaching credential. For most, this means having

... schools in low-income districts, have been increasingly unable to find enough people qualified and willing to teach.

... schools report that there are now more than 40,000 underqualified teachers who do not hold a full credential staffing classrooms, or about 14 percent of the workforce – nearly one teacher in seven.

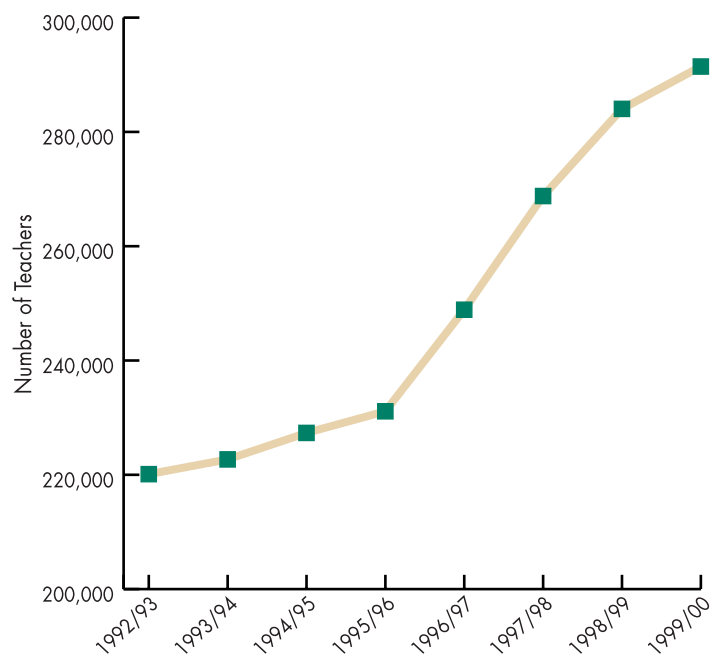
at least a bachelor's degree and passing a minimum academic skills test. No experience in teaching children is required. But even these standards are often lowered by waiving the skills test requirement. Updated numbers indicate that in 1998-99, there were actually 32,700 teachers working under emergency permits or waivers, or about 11.5 percent of the teaching force.

Data comparable to those used in last year's report are not yet available for the 1999-00 school year, but other data indicate that the number of teachers working on emergency permits has continued to rise, perhaps to 37,000 or more. And

schools report that there are now more than 40,000 underqualified teachers who do not hold a full credential staffing classrooms, or about 14 percent of the workforce – nearly one teacher in seven.

These numbers offer a glimpse at conditions that, if left unattended, are likely to worsen. The significant policy changes just enacted to attract, retain and train more teachers have not yet had time to affect these numbers, and it is not yet clear when or whether we will see these trends reverse. It does seem clear, however, that without the prompt action taken by the Governor and the Legislature the situation surely would have gotten worse. But we believe continued attention from the policy community will be required over several years to avoid even further decline.

Historical Demand for Teachers in California
1992/1993 to 1999/2000



Sources: CDE (1998); CDE (1999); CDE (2000)

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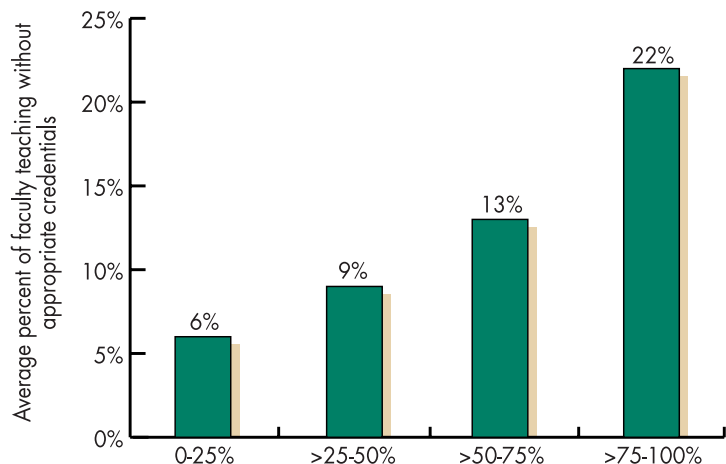
If the underqualified teachers – nearly one teacher in every seven classrooms – were evenly distributed through schools across California, it might be possible, though not easy, to manage. But the distribution is anything but even. Some California schools have no underqualified teachers, and four in 10 schools have no more than one teacher in 20 who is underqualified. But in some urban schools there are more teachers with emergency permits than teachers with full credentials.

In places like this, there simply is not enough veteran leadership for a school to provide mentoring and guidance to new and inexperienced teachers, and certainly not enough for whole-school improvement. Many of these underqualified

teachers often are barely surviving from day to day. Our case study research indicates that schools where more than 20 percent of the teachers are underqualified are likely to lack the capacity to improve the academic performance of students. There are more than 1,600 such schools – 24 percent – in California serving more than 1.5 million students, and this presents a massive roadblock in the state’s reform plans to raise the academic performance of all students through higher standards and tougher tests.

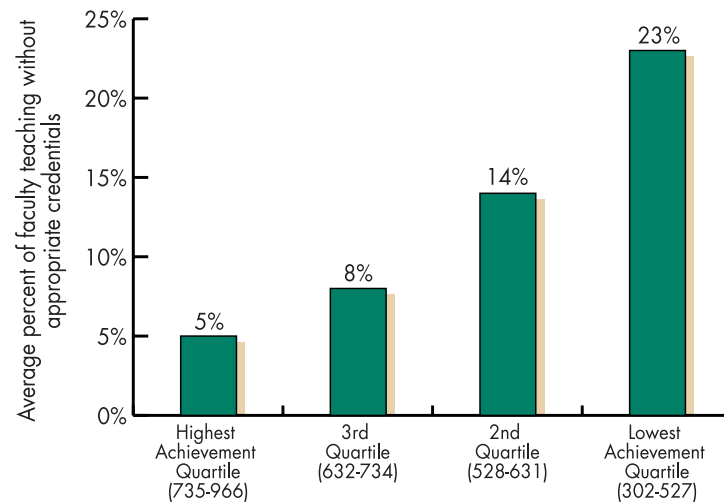
These 1,600 schools – nearly a fourth of the state’s schools – are predominantly the schools serving the state’s poorest students, children who typically come to school with the least

Who Gets Underqualified Teachers?



Percentage students in school receiving free or reduced lunch

Sources: API (2000); CBEDS (2000); SRI analysis



Student achievement (school-level API scoring range)

Sources: API (2000); CBEDS (2000); SRI analysis

By looking at the new Academic Performance Index, we see that those schools ranked at the bottom had the largest average percent of underqualified teachers.

academic preparation, such as familiarity with books and reading. These are the students who are most in need of excellent teachers and the least able to overcome teachers who are underqualified. By looking at the new Academic Performance Index, we see that those schools ranked at the bottom had the largest average percent of underqualified teachers.

In addition to underqualified teachers being distributed un-

evenly across California, there are also uneven numbers of teachers in several specialty areas, such as those who teach special education, science, or mathematics. In the last school year, for example, nearly 2,500 math teachers – one in eight – were underqualified. Students in California’s poorest schools were twice as likely than their more advantaged peers to have an underqualified math teacher.

THE DEMAND FOR QUALITY TEACHING

California is expecting more than it ever has of its students and of its teachers. The state has adopted rigorous academic standards that it expects all students to master before graduating from high school.

But many of the state’s teachers – new or veteran – have not been prepared to teach all kids to reach these standards. While the state is putting considerably more resources into professional development, this investment will take time to pay off. Further, teachers report that a single workshop is less effective for helping improve their practice than sustained and continual work with other teachers with content focused on curriculum and the students they teach. But it is the one-time, stop-gap sessions that are too often provided to teachers, particularly those who teach in the poorest performing schools.

Last year, we noted that there are a wide variety of profes-

sional development programs in California, but characterized them as “incoherent and disconnected.” The combination of state, federal and local professional development programs is not a system, but a patchwork that teachers say does not meet their needs and has little impact on what happens in classrooms.

In order to be successful, teachers need time and opportunity to examine collectively the work their students are doing compared to what those students need to do to meet the state’s academic standards. But, despite the state’s increased attention to professional development, most teachers in California are not provided either the time or opportunity to examine their own teaching through the lens of what their students are producing.

The combination of state, federal and local professional development programs is not a system, but a patchwork that teachers say does not meet their needs and has little impact on what happens in classrooms.

SOLUTIONS THAT WON'T COME EASILY

Considerable praise is due the Governor and the Legislature for their willingness to take on issues surrounding the quality of teaching in California.

However, much more must be done to focus resources on strengthening the quality of the state's lowest performing schools. The tough task of keeping the shoulder hard to a wheel that will turn slowly and may not produce quick, visible results lies ahead. But backing away is not a choice if we care about a brighter future.

In the year since our first report, California policy makers enacted programs and provided resources aimed at attracting more qualified people to teaching, expanding teacher preparation programs, providing more financial incentives to prospective and existing teachers, providing more mentor programs for new teachers, and expanding the opportunities for

professional development.

The level of attention and resources have been unprecedented. The policy changes enacted included:

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

The state expanded its use of Internet and media campaigns to recruit teachers from within and outside California, and established regional teacher recruitment centers throughout the state. Policy makers allocated nearly \$120 million in grants to low performing school districts to recruit and retain credentialed teachers in low performing schools, those in the bottom half of the Academic Performance Index (API). And the state provided financial incentives to potential teachers, particularly those willing to work in hard-to-staff schools.

BUT WILL THE POLICY CHANGES WORK?

The state will clearly need to monitor the effect of these policies and programs. And it needs to examine these policies and new ones through a range of key questions including:

- Are we recruiting and retaining enough qualified teachers to replace the tens of thousands of teachers now leaving California classrooms?
- What incentives are needed to attract qualified teachers to those schools that are now having the most difficulty finding or keeping them?
- How good a job are those institutions doing that train prospective teachers?
- Are new teachers prepared to teach in those schools where they are most needed?
- Are there enough willing veteran teachers to take on all the leadership roles, including mentoring new teachers and colleagues, that policy makers are proscribing for them?
- Is the state and are local districts providing the professional development that teachers need to help all students reach California's ambitious academic standards?
- Is there sufficient coherence and coordination among the variety of professional development programs now in place?
- Do schools have the support they need to organize learning opportunities for teachers and, thus, for students?
- What workplace conditions in California's schools are necessary for effective teaching and learning?

... much more must be done to focus resources on strengthening the quality of the state's lowest performing schools.

We continue to believe that the state should eliminate the hiring of unqualified teachers by setting a timetable to phase out the approval of emergency teaching permits and waivers.

TEACHER PREPARATION

The state increased funding for programs that train prospective teachers through the California State University system, and expanded internship programs to assist non-credentialed teachers as they become fully certified to teach. In addition, the state made it easier for teachers prepared in other states to obtain teaching credentials in California.

TEACHER COMPENSATION

The state has made funding available to districts to increase annual salaries for beginning teachers from a minimum of \$32,000 to \$34,000. It began providing an income tax credit of up to \$1,500 for teachers. And it began paying bonuses of up to \$25,000 to teachers in low-performing schools that showed significant improvement, as well as cash rewards to schools that improved.

SUPPORTING TEACHERS

The state significantly increased its program to provide mentoring support to beginning teachers, quadrupling the size in 1998-99 and increasing further in subsequent years to reach potentially more than 26,000 new teachers in the current school year. Professional development programs were vastly expanded, particularly to help teachers more effectively teach reading and mathematics. In the current school year, for example, the University of California is expanding to provide institutes in key subjects to 73,500 teachers, approximately one quarter of the state's entire teaching force, and the state significantly expanded its effort to help school teams develop school-wide instructional improvements. And the state provided considerably more support for those teachers seeking certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

KEEPING THE SHOULDER TO THE WHEEL

This year's update makes it even more clear that the most significant problems of teaching quality are in the schools that serve the state's poorest children. And, at least for the moment, these are the schools that should get the bulk of our attention.

These schools need the ability to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, which means they will have to have the capacity to pay higher salaries and offer better working conditions. Today, the opposite is often true with veteran teachers leaving these schools for better pay and working conditions in suburban districts.

If we want teachers to have the time to gain proficiency with the more challenging curriculum, and opportunity to examine their students' academic work against the state standards, we are going to have to provide that time and opportunity. We believe that we should start this process by focusing first on the lowest performing schools in the state, the bottom 20 percent. These schools are the most dysfunctional and least likely to make progress through incremental steps.

We continue to believe that the state should eliminate the hiring of unqualified teachers by setting a timetable to phase out the approval of emergency teaching permits and waivers.

Until we reach the point where we say no to the hiring of underqualified teachers the practice will continue.

The policy community has come to rely on sound data for decision making. In order to ensure that this type of information is available, the state's system of gathering and reporting

data about its teaching force must be greatly improved. (Our full report details the serious flaws in the state's "system" of data collection and recommends a series of steps that will eventually give policy makers much better and more timely information.)

AN INVESTMENT WORTH MAKING

California policy makers have invested a great deal of political energy and taxpayer dollars to improve schools. The state has adopted an ambitious set of academic standards that it expects every student to meet before graduating. And it is clear that without significantly improving the quality and skills of California's teaching force, far too few students will actually meet these standards.

In the past year, policy makers have worked hard to develop and adopt the kind of programs that will indeed improve

teaching. They deserve great credit. They also require all of our support to intensify their efforts, to push even harder to ensure that every California student has a teacher with the capacity to help him or her succeed.

This effort will take time. The problems are complicated, and the solutions are not always evident. But the energy and capital that goes into solving them is an investment we must make.

Policy makers require all of our support to intensify their efforts, to push even harder to ensure that every California student has a teacher with the capacity to help him or her succeed.



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