Introduction

Teacher education in the United States is under unprecedented scrutiny by Federal decision makers. Directing policy tools toward matters of teacher quality is not new; what is unique in the current policy environment is the extent to which the Federal government is assuming responsibilities traditionally held by the states. This report looks at the Secretary of Education’s second report to Congress on the quality of teacher education. It is designed to provide a critical look at how the Higher Education Act, Title II data reporting system and how the information available for decision makers from that system have been interpreted. The analysis concludes with a series of questions that should guide members of Congress as they consider options to reauthorize the Higher Education Act or otherwise impose legislative solutions to supposed teacher education weaknesses.

The Report and Its Purpose

The Secretary of Education’s obligation to report on the quality of teacher education, Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge (U.S. Department of Education 2003), was legislated in the 1998 amendments to the Higher Education Act (HEA). Details of this annual report are found in Title II, Sec. 207 of HEA and include a requirement that colleges and universities that prepare teachers gather and report certain information on students who complete their programs. Although concerns about the reporting provisions were expressed in 1998 when the Congress first drafted these provisions, objections to the reporting mandates in Sec. 207 were dismissed as attempts by colleges and universities to avoid accountability. Two years of Title II data and two reports from the Secretary of Education to the Congress on the quality of teacher education in the United States are now available. As Congress prepares to reauthorize the Higher Education Act in 2004, the question before lawmakers must be: Do we now have the robust portrait of teacher education in the United States that the Congress wanted and
The answer is “no.” Because of the significant differences in state law and collegiate teacher education programs, even collecting very basic data has been problematic. Nevertheless, when faced with the need to present a report to Congress the U.S. Department of Education chose not to address shortcomings of the Title II system. Instead the agency used both the 2002 and 2003 reports as opportunities to promote No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the Bush Administration’s elementary and secondary education initiative.

The conceptual and legislative links between HEA and NCLB are attention to teacher quality and the expectation that states will modify their current teacher licensure laws. One might assume that a detailed analysis of the institutional and state data reported to the Federal government as required by HEA, Title II would lead decision makers to look at policy connects and disconnects between HEA and NCLB. Such as, do teacher licensure examination pass rates and the number of teachers holding substandard licenses appear to relate to the number of schools in a state unable to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP)? Unfortunately, the report does not contain that level of analysis and instead it reads more like a public relations brochure to promote selected goals and provisions of NCLB – specifically, “…raising academic standards for teachers and lowering barriers that are keeping many talented people out of the teaching profession” (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. iii).

What’s There and What is Not

Alternative Routes: The Research Base

A consistent message from U.S. Department of Education officials is that education policy and practice must be based on empirical evidence, and that “…the field [should] employ experimental designs in the student of teacher effectiveness” (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, p. 3). Unfortunately, the Secretary’s 2003 report does not adhere to its own standards. As an example, the report highlights a study by Raymond and Fletcher (2002) on teacher performance in Houston, citing it as evidence of the superiority of Teach-for-America-prepared new teachers over other new educators.

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1 The history of the reporting provisions in the 1998 Higher Education Amendments (HEA, Title II) is described in Title II of the Higher Education Revisited and Reconsidered which is Appendix A to this document.
The Raymond and Fletcher study is described by the authors as an evaluation of Teach for America (TFA) and was supported by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, an organization that promotes a free market approach for hiring teachers. The authors looked at data from the Houston Independent School District from 1996 to 2000 with the intent of comparing TFA teacher performance with other new teachers and with all teachers teaching comparable grades in the district. They concluded that differences between teachers recruited through TFA and other teachers were not significant and that TFA teachers had a positive impact on student learning.

Two aspects of how Raymond and Fletcher framed their evaluation compromise their conclusions. They are: (1) an assumption that for the purpose of their analysis TFA teachers and all other teachers would constitute two separate but internally homogeneous pools of educators—TFA or non-TFA; and (2) an absence of consideration of the diversity of preparation among any group of teachers and subsequent lack of attention to this as having impact on their analysis. Raymond and Fletcher acknowledge, but dismiss as unimportant, the variability of preparation for non-TFA teachers. They contend their study is to compare TFA teachers with the pool of new and veteran teachers in the Houston school system. Differences in how teachers were prepared is an important factor that should not be casually set aside. It is likely, and indeed quite probable, that during the time of the study some number of individuals teaching in Houston were unlicensed, long-term substitutes, or came into the classroom through other alternate routes. Thus, the Raymond and Fletcher study may actually be comparing the performance of TFA teaching candidates to individuals who entered teaching through other alternative routes. Because the preparation backgrounds of the non-TFA teachers are not known or accounted for, the study cannot be used, as implied in the Secretary’s 2003 report, as evidence of the superiority of alternative routes in general.

Although the Secretary’s report to Congress goes to some length to encourage states to adopt more alternative routes to teacher licensure, it does not mention that their own data (U.S. Department of Education, 2003, Appendix D4 and Appendix D5) show that most states already have alternative route options and that many of these alternatives involve partnerships with institutions of higher education. By the Department of Education’s silence on their own data, the message becomes: there needs to be more
alternative routes and alternatives that involve institutions of higher education should not be considered an option.

Any attempt to draw a clear distinction between “traditional” teacher preparation programs and alternative routes is problematic. In reality, neither accelerated routes nor more typical collegiate programs are of one stripe; some are selective and others are not, some provide depth of preparation while others do not. Many institutions of higher education offer accelerated programs for career switchers, often designed and delivered in cooperation with local school districts; as a result, the distinction between so called traditional teacher education programs and alternative routes is even more blurred.

Subject Majors for Licensure

Reporting the academic preparation of teachers, as measured by their collegiate majors, is not an HEA, Title II requirement; however the anticipation that teachers will be proficient in the subjects they teach is an NCLB expectation. The Secretary’s 2003 report includes a chart (p. 9) indicating the number of states that require a “subject area bachelor’s degree” (35), the number that do not (18), and the number for which there were no data (1). Without presenting analyses of these data, the report implies that only 35 states have provisions in place that are aligned with the highly qualified teacher expectations in NCLB. But digging into the data presents a different picture. Information available in the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education Certification’s (NASDTEC) Manual (2002) categorizes states by the nature of the content preparation required for teachers (coursework, minor, major) but not by whether or not the students have a subject matter bachelor’s degree. The NASDTEC information, for example, indicates that North Dakota has no content major/minor requirements for elementary level teachers but the chart in the Secretary’s Report identifies that state as requiring a “subject area bachelor’s” degree. Alabama, on the other hand is cited as not having that kind of content requirement but according to the NASDTEC manual that state does require content area majors/minors.

More to the point, the term “subject area bachelors” is confusing and misleading. If a student has a bachelor’s degree from a school of arts and sciences but did not major in a subject taught in the public schools, that individual would not necessarily be considered a highly qualified teacher under the provisions in NCLB. Furthermore, the
Chart on page 9 of the Secretary’s 2003 report does not indicate if the categorization of states by degree requirements includes special education teachers, who must meet the highly qualified standard if they are teaching in a content area. Clearly the information presented in the NASDTEC Manual is more useful for understanding states’ content requirements than the data presented in the Secretary’s report. One then wonders why so much time, effort, and funds are devoted to a system that gives us less useful data than one already in place and conducted by a non-governmental source.

The Paradox of Barriers and High Standards

The Secretary’s 2003 report echoes the argument put forward by many of the “free market” organizations and individuals who believe that the states’ teacher licensure requirements should be eliminated to allow anyone to enter the profession (see for example Hess, 2001). These individuals and organizations argue that higher standards for teaching will be achieved if licensure requirements (what they refer to as barriers) are removed. The Secretary’s report is quite clear about what may constitute a barrier. The following statement is described as one of a series of areas of potential concern in the report’s section on eliminating barriers: “…many state regulations set forth a multitude of conditions including academic coursework, pedagogical coursework, minimum grade-point averages, student teaching and passing a variety of assessments that must be met before a person can enter a classroom” (U.S. Department of Education, P. 7).

Parents and citizens might ask, exactly what is objectionable about taking academic coursework? That teachers will be proficient in subjects they teach is an NCLB requirement, so it is perplexing to see it described in the Secretary’s report as a barrier. What specifically is wrong about expecting future teachers to meet certain standards such as a particular grade point average on college work, or successfully passing an examination? Aren’t these forms of accountability that should give parents, school leaders, and the public a level of confidence in teachers’ ability? Finally, even those who object to much of collegiate-based teacher education acknowledge that candidates’ experiences in schools, whether through student teaching, internships, or other clinical experiences are the most valuable component of these programs. Those who drafted the Secretary’s report have relied on a line of reasoning in support of accountability that undercuts their own free market argument. Standards are a condition of accountability. If
a system is expected to be held responsible for the quality of new teachers there must be some metric against which performance is measured. In teacher education state licensure standards are an accountability measure because they are intended to keep some people from teaching until certain skills and abilities are met.

Data Simplification and Missing Analyses

In a number of cases data found in the Secretary’s report are presented without clearly identifying their contribution to assessing teacher quality. Additionally, some charts and figures are presented absent an explanation of terms used in them. Figure 3 (page 10) lists the number of institutions per state, the licensure examination used in them, and the summary pass rate in the state. However, the narrative doesn’t tell the reader what is meant by “summary pass rate.” Similarly, Figure 8 (page 18) lists states categorized by the percent of teachers working with licensure waivers, yet the narrative explaining the information in Figure 8 doesn’t note that standards for allowing someone to teach without full certification vary considerably from state to state. Without a full description of the conditions under which a waiver is allowed, the comparative data in Figure 8 have little meaning. Finally, the state-by-state data from the Title II reports presented in Appendix D (and barely touched upon in the report’s narrative) are not compared with data from the previous year’s report. If the purpose of Title II is to hold states and institutions accountable for teacher preparation as a means to improve the education system, it is important for reports such as these to show whether or not change occurred from year to year.

Conclusion and Remaining Issues

The Secretary’s Second Annual Report on Teacher Quality raises more questions about the nature of teacher education in the United States than it answers. As noted previously, the report is hampered by poorly conceived data expectations mandated under HEA, Title II that offer little substantive information on teacher preparation programs. The presence of poor data is compounded by limited analysis and a decision to use the report as a vehicle to promote NCLB. Many questions of interest remain and should influence the agenda of Congress when it reauthorizes HEA in 2004 – 2005. They include:
• Have the accountability provisions enacted in HEA, Title II provided data and information useful to the Congress and others to judge the quality of teacher preparation programs?

• What is the evidence that connects pass rates of teacher candidates on their licensure examination to the quality of the teacher education students’ preparation or their subsequent performance in schools?

• What are other, possibly more robust indicators of quality? And, are means available to gather and analyze these data?

• NCLB extended federal attention to teacher education by requiring that by 2006 all children have a highly qualified teacher (as defined in that law). Is this action the first step toward making a HQT a civil right?

• If having a HQT is a federal mandate, and potentially a civil right, should the definition of HQT in NCLB stand or should it be modified and if so, how?

• If the emphasis on teacher quality is the candidate’s subject matter preparation, how will arts and sciences departments in institutions of higher education be held accountable for candidates’ content (major/minor) competence?

• The Congress established a statutory link between HEA and NCLB when the elementary and secondary amendments were passed in 2001. What are the implications of strengthening this link when HEA is next reauthorized? Moreover, what are the positive, or negative, consequences of this trend to federalize aspects of the nation’s education system?

• What is the correct balance between Federal, state, local, and institutional decisions on teacher preparation and professional development?

• Language to study teacher education in the Conference Report for the pending FY 2004 Omnibus Appropriations Bill charges the National Research Council with developing a “model for collecting information on the content, knowledge, pedagogical competence and effectiveness of graduates from teacher education programs and teachers trained in alternative certification programs (italics added)…” Does this language predetermine that the NRC is expected to find that

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2 The notion of a highly qualified teacher becoming a civil right was raised by Marilyn Cochran-Smith in a series of e-mails with this author in September and October 2003.
“typical” and “alternative” teacher preparation programs actually have different content and pedagogical knowledge bases? What are the implications of this approach and how can the process be positively informed?

Before Federal and state policies to revise teacher preparation are put into place, they should be analyzed for their potential harm as well as their potential benefit to children and schools. It also is important to honestly portray how teachers are prepared by colleges and universities working in partnership with K-12 schools. Policy by flawed premise is weak policy indeed.

References

Appendix A

Title II of the Higher Education Act Revisited and Reconsidered*  
An Analysis of the Secretary of Education’s 2002 Report on Teacher Quality

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Introduction

The 1998 amendments to the Higher Education Act (HEA) included new provisions in Title II of that law to gather data on institutions of higher education with teacher education programs and on state laws and policies related to standards for teacher preparation and licensure. Data collected in 2001 and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education were reported to the Congress in June 2002 in Meeting The Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge, The Secretary’s Report on Teacher Quality (U.S. Department of Education 2002). However, the 66-page document devotes as much space to the recently enacted No Child Left Behind legislation as it does to information gathered through HEA, Title II.

This analysis first reviews the policy context during which the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 were debated and enacted. The requirements in HEA, Title II and the accompanying House and Senate Conference report are then detailed, followed by consideration of how the U.S. Department of Education attempted to create a consistent data set from the Title II reports. From this analysis, problems with the law and its subsequent interpretation are put forward as explanations for the lack of useful data to inform national policy. Finally, data from Title II reports submitted to the U.S. Department by 32 states (www.title2.org) are reviewed.

Context

The Higher Education Act (HEA) is the federal government’s primary vehicle to provide financial support for low and middle-income individuals to pursue postsecondary education. This law, like many large government programs, is periodically examined by Congress and updated through amendments. The process, referred to as reauthorization, occurs approximately every five years. In 1996 Congress began one of these reviews, which culminated in November 1998 when President Clinton signed the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 (P.L. 105-422).

* Authors note: Portions of the introduction to this document were previously published in Earley, P.M. (2001), Title II Requirements for Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education. ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education, EDO-SP-2001-3. The author served as a member of the Consultative Committee on Title II referenced in this document as did several reviewers. I am most grateful to Larry Bowen, John Fuller, Jacqueline King, and Nicholas Michelli who reviewed drafts of this paper and provided valuable comments.
Concern about the quality of teacher education emerged as a policy issue during the 1996-1998 review of the Higher Education Act (Earley, 2000). Although federal programs to strengthen the teaching force through teacher preparation and professional development grants existed for over 15 years in Title V of HEA, Congress used the 1996-1998 amendment process as an opportunity to make major revisions in that portion of the law. This was done by abolishing Title V and creating a new Teacher Quality section in HEA, Title II. The new Title II had two purposes: Sections 202-205 established grant programs for partnerships between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education and for states to improve teacher quality, while sections 206, 207, and 208 laid out new reporting requirements for states and institutions that prepare teachers (Higher Education Reauthorization, 1998).

Initial discussion of HEA reauthorization began in 1996. That also was the year that the National Commission on Teaching and American’s Future (NCTAF) released its report *What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future*. The NCTAF report offered recommendations for institutions of higher education, state teacher licensing agencies, and local schools to improve the quality of K-12 teaching by developing and aligning more stringent teacher preparation and credentialing standards (National Commission, 1996). The NCTAF report received extensive media coverage (Applebome, 1996; Broder, 1996; Sanchez, 1996; Whitmier, 1996), but not all of it was positive. In general groups and individuals who distrusted state and professional control of teacher standards as quality measures and who endorsed as an alternative a free market approach to teacher recruitment and hiring were vocal in their criticism of NCTAF and the Commission’s report (Ballou & Pordgursky, 1997).

Members of Congress and their staffs who were engaged in reauthorization of HEA could not miss the pro/con NCTAF debate in the media, and although most of the policy issues raised by NCTAF and its critics fell under the purview of states or institutions of higher learning members of Congress looked for ways national directives could leverage changes in the teacher preparation system. The federal government is limited in its ability to establish college-level curricula or to set state licensure standards for educators; however Congress may impose requirements on entities that receive federal funds. Thus, lawmakers approached what they felt were weaknesses in teacher preparation by mandating in HEA, Title II that states and institutions with teacher preparation programs receiving HEA funds submit to Congress annual reports on their efforts to improve teacher quality. As will be noted in the following section, the initial targets for congressional oversight were to be states and partnerships that received grants through Sec. 202 – Sec. 204 of Title II. The broader reporting provisions that applied to all colleges and universities preparing teachers were added to provide the public and school districts information on whether these institutions’ graduates were well prepared to teach or not (Burd, 1998).

The Law’s Purposes
The purposes of the Title II programs are spelled out in Sec. 201 and are to: (a) improve student achievement, (b) improve the quality of teacher preparation and professional development, (c) hold institutions of higher education accountable for preparing skilled teachers, and (d) recruit highly qualified persons into teaching. Discretionary program in Sections 202, 203 and 204 provide awards to states and institutions for program reform and educator recruitment, while the accountability and reporting provisions are found in Sections 206 and 207.

Congressional expectations for Title II may be further understood by referring to comments by House and Senate leaders during the reauthorization process. Representative George Miller (D-CA), a strong advocate of the Title II provisions, noted in April 1998 that he felt public reporting of teacher licensure exam scores could help prevent poor children from getting bad teachers by giving citizens more information about teacher quality (Burd, 1998). Affluent school districts, Miller argued, can offer better salaries and compete for the best teachers but poor school districts can’t. Essentially using a school choice line of reasoning, he asserted that by making public the test scores of graduates of various teacher education programs, parents and administrators will know more about the quality of teachers from these colleges and universities. Parents and the general public would then know if a school is not recruiting the best teachers and administrators could make more informed hiring decisions. Moreover, Miller argued, Title II should force college presidents to direct necessary resources to their education schools (Miller, 2001). On the Senate side, James Jeffords (I-VT) who was then a Republican and chair of what then was the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, indicated in a May 7, 1998 hearing that a new Title II would “provide a framework for local and state innovations” (Jeffords, 1998).

The intent of Title II is further amplified in the House and Senate Conference Agreement (Higher Education Amendments of 1998 Conference Report), which was passed as part of HEA reauthorization and is considered part of the law. The conference report notes that Title II includes strong accountability measures for states and partnerships receiving grants through Secs. 202-204 and that, “in addition (emphasis added), each institution of higher education receiving federal assistance will be held accountable for disseminating information on the quality of their program based upon criteria such as the pass rates of their graduates on teacher assessment, where appropriate (p. 289).” Thus, as clarified in report language, Title II imposed two levels of accountability: (a) entities receiving funds through Secs. 202-204 were to report to the federal government very specific indicators of teacher quality improvement efforts and (b) institutions with teacher preparation programs were expected to make public information on their teacher education program and the performance of their graduates. This report may include pass rates on teacher licensure exams.

Reporting Requirements for Institutions. The reporting requirements in Title II that cover colleges and universities are relatively short and include: (a) The pass rate of the institution’s graduates on the state teacher certification or licensure assessments, but only for those students who took those assessments within three years of completing the program. Acknowledging the importance of protecting student records, if
fewer than 10 graduates took any single initial teacher certification or licensure assessment during an academic year, the institution may only collect and report information regarding average pass rates taken over a three year period. (b) The program’s pass rates on all assessments along with the average pass rates for all other programs in the state. (c) The number of students in the program. (d) The average number of hours of supervised practice teacher required for those in the program. (e) The faculty-student ratio in supervised practice teaching. And, (f) the names of institutions with what the state has designated as low-performing teacher education units. The law requires that this information be made public by colleges and universities through catalogues, promotional material, and the like (HEA, Sec. 207(f)).

Reporting Requirements for States. Title II also imposes a reporting burden on state governments. In addition to providing extensive information on teacher licensure standards and the types of teaching credentials issued, the state must calculate “the percentage of teaching candidates who passed each of the assessments used by that State for teacher certification and licensure disaggregated and ranked by the teacher preparation program in the State from which the teacher candidate received the candidate’s most recent degree, which shall be made available widely and publicly” (Sec. 207 (5)). These data must be sent to the U.S. Department of Education as part of the accountability provisions imposed on states. Thus, the requirements for institutions are to provide statistics and other information for decision making purposes by teacher education consumers in the state (school personnel officers, future students, and citizens), whereas, each state is responsible for reporting pass rates on teacher licensure assessments to the federal government as one measure of that state’s responsibility for oversight of teacher education.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) was charged with developing “key definitions” and “uniform reporting requirements” for the state and institutional reports required under Sec. 207. Thus, we see the nexus of four powerful and competing policy expectations: (a) The requirement that institutions make certain data about their teacher education program public (b) The expectation that states and partnerships receiving grants through Sec. 202 – Sec. 204 will be held accountable for using those funds appropriately. (c) The obligation of states to describe how they regulate teacher education programs. And (d) the overlay of a need for uniform definitions and reporting methods. It will be shown that the convergence of inconsistent expectations became the source of many of the problems and confusion associated with the Title II data.

Title II Implementation Guidelines

Federal laws rarely can be enforced exactly as written. The development of regulations or guidelines to implement bills passed by the Congress is a responsibility of the executive branch. Title II, Sec. 207 identified NCES as the responsible agency to design a Title II reporting system and to do so in consultation with interested parties, such as state officials and representatives of institutions of higher education. To do this, the U.S. Department of Education formed a Consultative Committee on Title II. The committee initially was composed of about 20 people representing state and institutional interests
but new members were added as the information gathering process proceeded. It should be noted that this committee was advisory only and that there were no requirements that NCES accept the group’s recommendations.

As noted previously, Title II had four data gathering and accountability expectations:

1. The Congress expected that if institutional data were available for citizens and state policy makers they would make better and more informed decision. This requires that institutions of higher education be the unit of analysis and that performance evidence be linked to standards and regulations particular to the state in which the college or university is located.

2. The federal government wanted information on how grantees funded through Title II used the resources they received to improve teacher quality. This requires that grantees be the unit of analysis based on details of contractual obligations between the federal government and the entity receiving the grant.

3. The Congress expected information on how state governments were regulating teacher quality via licensure and other state policies. In this instance each state would be the appropriate unit of study. Because state laws regarding teacher education vary widely, to the extent that the federal government plans to document changes in state policies it could do so only after having each state establish an individual baseline.

4. The Congress, by directing NCES to come up with common definitions, anticipated that the federal government would build a common data set that would reflect indices of teacher quality from which there could be national policy observations and recommendations.

The fourth expectation is particularly problematic. Short of stepping back in time, eliminating the reserved powers clause of the U.S. Constitution and creating a national education system in the model of many European countries, the task of creating common definitions to apply to different sets of state laws and over a thousand colleges and universities that prepare teachers would seem virtually impossible.

Institutions have autonomy to determine how they will meet state standards for preparing teachers. As a result, within the same state, preparation programs may have different names, different expectations, and different time frames for program completion. Asking institutions to make these data public is a reasonable expectation and hoping that this activity will cause those in the college or university to reflect on the quality of their offerings is equally reasonable. However, once states are required to rank institutions using just one data point – student pass rates on licensure exams – other institutional characteristics that should be important to school districts that hire teachers and to students planning to enroll in a teacher education program are obscured. Moreover, the federal government’s pressure on states to use a common system to report pass rate data is equally problematic because states require different examinations and have established
different qualifying scores. Essentially the process of developing implementation guidelines for Title II became an example of attempting to design a national repository for data that were generated for use at the institutional and state levels.

The method of devising a system to gather and report Title II data created considerable tension between institutions, states, and the federal government, with the federal government prevailing. The U.S. Department of Education’s push for a common, national Title II framework had the effect of combining accountability provisions described in law that had been created for different purposes (public information vs, federal review of grantees’ activities as an example) and in doing so compromised legislative purpose and confused units of analysis. This resulted in a data collection system that could not fulfill statutory expectations and that generated information of questionable use to policy makers. Three examples are presented to illustrate the complexity of attempting to create a national reporting system drawing upon information with unique state or institutional meanings:

- the requirement that states and institutions aggregate then summarize licensure exam scores;
- the creation of “adjusted quartiles” to rank institutions; and,
- the impact of imposing “last touch accountability” on colleges and universities.

Title II clearly asks institutions to report all licensure examination pass rates of students in their teacher education programs. That is, the pass rates of students in programs to become mathematics teachers, in programs to become English teachers, in programs to become elementary level teachers, and the like. Sec. 207 (b)(5) is unambiguous. The legislative language requires that states report the “percentage of teaching candidates who passed each of the assessments used by the state…” As federal officials were gathering input on implementation of Title II, they realized that many states use multiple examinations for individuals planning to teach different subjects and different levels of students. Consequently when a state received its institutions’ Title II data it likely would find that some institutions would rank highly in certain areas and lower in others, making the determination of the overall top institutions difficult. To clear up the problem of potentially conflicting data, the U.S. Department of Education developed what became known as aggregate and summary pass rates (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

**Aggregate Pass Rates.** The aggregate pass rate is the proportion of program completers who passed all of the tests they took in each of six content and professional knowledge areas: basic skills; professional knowledge and pedagogy; academic content areas (e.g., mathematics, social studies, science, and the arts); teaching special populations (e.g., special education, English as a Second Language); other content areas (e.g., agriculture, marketing, computer science); and performance assessments (U.S. Department of Education, 2000, p. 12). On its face, this seems straightforward. As an example, if 12 students at a given college or university take a mathematics content exam and six fail, the aggregate pass rate is 50 percent. The problem with aggregate pass rates is that in many states and for some content areas, multiple exams are required. So the hypothetical 12 students might not take just one mathematics exam. They might need to take one in basic
computation, one in algebra, and one in geometry. The Department of Education decided that if a student failed one component of the three mathematics exams she/he would be counted for Title II purposes as a fail. This made computing aggregate pass rates easier but obscured important data about whether there were issues of interest related to one part of the exam. Again using the 12 hypothetical students, assume that six passed all three mathematics exams and six passed only the algebra and geometry portions. Wouldn’t it be important for state and institutional decision makers to be alerted that either the mathematics program isn’t preparing students well in basic computation or that the test isn’t a valid measure what students know?

Summary Pass Rates. All of this is further complicated with the addition of the summary pass rate requirement. The summary pass rate is “…based on all assessments that an individual needs to pass to become initially certified or licensed as a teacher in a given area of specialization in a state” (p. 12). This is computed by dividing the number of students who passed any tests in the six skill or knowledge areas by all who took any of the tests. As in the aggregate pass rate, if a student fails one exam, but passes all others she/he is counted for Title II purposes as a fail. Returning to the example of the six students who failed one component of the mathematics content exam. If the state also required that each teaching candidate pass a basic skills exam and a pedagogy exam the six students who failed the basic computation portion of the math exam would be counted as having failed all of the additional required licensure exams, even if they actually passed them.

Again, this system allows the U.S. Department of Education to collapse extensive test data into one final pass rate. Unfortunately, the summary pass rate gives decision makers no real information about how students are performing on various tests. Furthermore, it is the aggregate and summary pass rates that states must use to rank institutions according to “adjusted quartiles.” It should be reiterated that this is an extra-statutory addition by the U.S. Department of Education. The law does not ask for nor require summary or aggregate pass rates, it requires pass rates by individual licensure examination which suggests it was the intent of Congress to determine whether students are competent in specific content components rather than a combination of them.

Adjusted Quartiles. As part of the state accountability provisions in Title II, state education agencies are to rank institutions according to their students’ pass rates on all required teacher licensure examinations. As noted above, the U.S. Department of Education determined that licensure exam data should be aggregated, summarized, and then ranked on these composite numbers. This process not only obscures important data but by aggregating and summarizing them also makes the rankings more high stakes because there are fewer numbers upon which apparent institutional quality will be judged. Perhaps to soften the impact of this high stakes ranking, the Department of Education decided that institutions’ aggregate and summary pass rates would be placed in quartiles. Because it is possible that more than one-fourth of the institutions in a state could have the same pass rate, “adjusted quartiles” were established. This would allow institutional pass rate values that are tied to be in the same quartile (U.S. Department of Education, 2000). The summary rankings for Kentucky are useful for showing how the
system works and also how it may distort an institution’s performance (www.title2.org). Kentucky has 25 teacher preparation institutions with the following summary pass rates:

1st quartile (8 institutions) – score range: 98 – 100%
2nd quartile (7 institutions) – score range: 95 – 96%
3rd quartile (5 institutions) – score range: 90 – 93%
4th quartile (5 institutions) – score range: 55 – 89%

Several points are of note. In this example, an institution with a respectable pass rate of 93 percent ended up in the third quartile, a placement that for the average reader would suggest less than adequate performance. Scores for institutions in the first three quartiles are tightly clustered, whereas there is a wide distribution in the fourth quartile where the summary pass rates are 89, 88, 85, 81, and 55 percent. The only potentially useful information from these rankings is that one institution has a summary pass rates well below the others in the state. Listing the institutions by pass rates would provide the same information without implying that the institutions in quartile 3 and quartile 4 are substandard. Like aggregate and summary pass rates, “adjusted quartile” rankings are not called for in law and do nothing to provide citizens and decision makers useful information about teacher education quality. To the contrary, this system implies a tiered system of teacher preparation quality that does not exist.

The distribution of pass scores described above is not unique to Kentucky. In fact, similar distribution patterns are found in 14 of 32 states that reported data (excluded from this analysis are states that indicated they required no licensure exam, that showed 100 percent pass rates on all exams, or that had fewer than four institutions reporting data). This is information state policy makers can easily access without quartile placements. It would appear that by establishing a national system of quartile rankings a subtle message is being sent that across the nation there are certain commonalities among all Quartile I or all Quartile IV institutions. That simply is not the case. While nearly half of the 32 states reporting data show a similar distribution pattern within the quartiles, differences in the examinations used, the qualifying score to pass the examinations, and the use of summary and aggregate pass rates make quartile comparisons meaningless. Thus, since the quartile system provides no new information to state policy makers or school districts that are recruiting teachers and since they cannot be used for cross state comparisons, what is its value?

The placement of institutions into “adjusted quartiles” based on a pass rate summary and then using that for purposes of evaluation is of questionable validity. According to Thorndike, Cunningham, and Hagen (1991) validity should “measure what we want to measure, all of what we want to measure, and nothing but what we want to measure” (p. 123). The summary pass rate fails on two counts. It clearly does not measure all that is important to evaluate a teacher education program and quite possibly is compromised by issues of program size, a point discussed later in this paper.
Last Touch Accountability. The term “last touch accountability” does not appear in either the law or documents providing guidance on Title II by the U.S. Department of Education. Instead it is a term coined to describe how institutions are to handle transfer students who receive all or most of their content preparation at another college or university. During the development of guidelines to implement Title II, the question of where accountability begins and ends was discussed extensively. Representatives of colleges and universities wondered if, and how, they would be accountable for coursework (most often in an academic or teaching field) taken at other institutions. Department of Education officials determined that it would be cumbersome and unrealistic to track students’ coursework beyond the final institution attended by the teaching candidate. They asserted it is the responsibility of the institution that recommends the student for licensure to certify that the candidate is competent in subject matter taken at other institutions. That is, the institution that provides the final coursework assumes responsibility for any coursework, wherever it occurred: last touch accountability.

The concept of last touch accountability created unintended and far reaching consequences. If teacher education units are to be responsible for content preparation they did not offer, the most efficient way to be certain that teaching candidates who enter their program actually know the material they will teach is to test them upon entry or perhaps prior to beginning student teaching. Since evidence of content mastery is to be determined by how students perform on their licensure exam, it seems reasonable to use the actual exam required by the state. By doing so, the institution can ensure that all students know required subject matter at some point before they begin student teaching. A result of this approach is that institutions can identify students in need of additional preparation early in the program, and if necessary, they might be counseled out of teaching entirely. While one might consider these good outcomes, the political consequences have been different. Institutions that test students before they complete their teacher preparation program may have responded to the expectation of last touch accountability, but by doing so have been accused of inflating their licensure exam pass rates to avoid being held accountable for unsuccessful students (Ashby, 2002).

Reporting Title II Data

Limitations of the Title II data collection system are clearly reflected in the Secretary of Education’s report to the Congress on teacher quality. Mandated by HEA, and first issued in June 2002 the report presents several charts summarizing certain of the Title II data but relies more heavily on previous U.S. Department of Education reports and analyses by external groups. The Education Trust issued a sharp critique of the Secretary’s report that pointed out the limitations to it but tended to find fault with the pace at which states gathered and reported the data rather than the essence of the data themselves (Huang, 2002).

As discussed previously, there is a disconnect between the data required under HEA, Title II and the expected information to be drawn from the data. A particular college or university’s pass rates on licensure examinations will have meaning for decision making
at that institution. If disaggregated, test scores potentially will be of interest to school
districts relative to teacher recruitment strategies and to state governments in terms of
higher education policy decisions. Beyond those units, the data have limited application.
Attempts to create some form of nationwide commonality by requiring pass rates to be
aggregated and summarized then placed in quartiles merely obscures what useful
information might have been gathered at the institutional and state levels.

Perhaps the most telling example of the disconnect between state and institutional policy
and national expectations came from testimony presented in October 2002 to the U.S.
House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce by an analyst for
the General Accounting Office. This testimony outlined the GAO’s preliminary findings
of a study of Title II requested by the Congress. In the written statement submitted at the
hearing, the GAO criticized Title II because “…[the U.S. Department of] Education
allowed states to define some terms from the legislation in a way that was applicable to
their state because of the variability in how states defined and collected information on
some terms” and, “…because [the U.S. Department of] Education allowed each state to
define initial certificate or license for itself, each state reported different information on
its waiver count” (Ashby, 2002, p. 12) . Federal involvement in education has increased
in the past fifty years, but nonetheless it is states and localities that provide most funding
and enact the majority of laws governing education. It may be that a federalized system
of education would be more efficient for data gathering than the decentralized system in
the United States. However, the 10th Amendment to the Constitution and several hundred
years of local and state authority over education cannot be set aside merely because this
complicates Title II data collection. The tone of the GAO’s testimony suggests the U.S.
Department of Education has the responsibility to define terms found in state laws and if
the Department had done this job better the data would be better. A different
interpretation suggests that such a rigid set of definitions would further degrade the
quality of information potentially available.

Does Title II Offer Useful Data?

In terms of the four accountability expectations that frame this analysis—informing
consumers, grant compliance, state policy development, and gathering national data—the
information available to the public on the Title II web site (www.title2.org) is not
illuminating.

Consumer Information. Listing institutions’ summary pass rates would be of limited use
to school districts for employment decisions. Rather, employers and citizens would find
more evidence of teacher quality on measures such as disaggregated test score
information, the length and type of future teachers’ clinical experiences, and the number
of graduates who are hired as teachers and remain in the profession.

Grant Compliance. Information on how states and institutions are using federal grant
dollars is specific to the proposal accepted for funding. Even if an institution applied for
and received an award to establish a new teacher education curriculum, government
auditors would want more information about program refinements than the composite data submitted on the Title II report.

**State Policy.** Although states must report on their efforts to regulate teacher quality through such tools as licensure and program approval standards, this involves changing state laws and regulations and the impact of such interventions would not be reflected in Title II data for several years. At best, the Title II data might be useful in some states to inform future state policy decisions regarding teacher education.

**National Data Set.** Finally, in spite of months of deliberation, many meetings, and extensive public input, the U.S. Department of Education could only agree upon certain common definitions for Title II reporting. This is because state policies and terms differ more fundamentally than federal lawmakers realized and states remain unwilling to turnover their authority over teacher education policy to the Congress and U.S. Department of Education.

The Title II data used to rank institutions and posted on the Title II web site is not useful for the four accountability expectations outlined in the statute, but this does not mean that the data gathered by the Department of Education are meaningless. The question of interest is do the data on institutions of higher education submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by the states, provide any beneficial information to inform policy? In considering this question, data on institutional pass rates posted on the Title II web site (www.title2.org) were used. States with 100 percent pass rates, states that do not require a paper/pencil examination for licensure, and states with fewer than four institutions were excluded, leaving 32 states for the purpose of this analysis. The exclusion of states with 100 percent pass rates reflects no judgment on why this occurs but rather because there are no data to analyze. States with fewer than three institutions were excluded because it would take a minimum of four to fill the required quartiles.

A potentially useful piece of information for national policy is how states differ in terms of the qualifying scores used for teacher licensure exams (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 26-27). Although no strong correlation has been established between states’ licensure exam qualifying scores and teacher excellence (as measured by student learning), it could be argued that it is better to have higher rather than lower qualifying scores. If the federal government wanted to invest in creating a system whereby qualifications for teachers were similar across the nation, it could use grants or other mechanisms to encourage states to adopt common licensure exam qualifying scores. Discussions are underway within the U.S. Department of Education about requiring accreditation agencies to use Title II data when evaluating teacher education programs (NCATE, 2002). If such a requirement were instated, the interest in common qualifying scores would surely increase. Interestingly, Title II isn’t needed to get information on licensure exam qualifying scores in each state. This is available on most state education agency or licensure bureau web sites and also is compiled and published annually by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Certification. Either source could provide an interested party with qualifying scores for teacher exams in all states with little effort.
The summary pass rates used to rank institutions by adjusted quartiles are not a valid evaluation measure, yet the data reveal an interesting distribution pattern. In nearly half the states (14 of 32) an outlier effect shows up in the fourth quartile. That is, in these 14 states most institutions’ pass rates were clustered at or above 80 percent but in each there were one or two outlier institutions reporting pass rates below 60 percent. These outliers have the effect of creating a fourth quartile with extreme pass rate variance. Beyond documenting the problem of ranking institutions by quartiles, is there useful information about the outliers?

In the 14 states, 16 institutions reported pass rates below 60 percent. These institutions come from the ranks of both state supported and independent colleges and universities. All but two are in states east of the Mississippi, but it should be noted that in general there are more teacher preparation institutions in the eastern US than in the west. Although several have unique missions such as educating the deaf, music education, or a historically and predominately African-American student body, these are not characteristics common to all of them. Perhaps the most interesting attribute is that they have relatively small numbers of students taking the licensure exams. Twelve of the 16 institutions had 50 or fewer students take a licensure examination and only one reported over 100 candidates. This should not be interpreted as evidence that institutions with few graduates have weak programs. In each of the 14 states with outliers, there were multiple small programs with pass rates over 80 percent and several that reported 100 percent pass rates, so no claim of correlation between small numbers of test takers and low pass rates can be asserted. It is of interest that, with only one exception, institutions with large numbers of test takers did not report pass rates below 60 percent.

Rather than providing additional data for policy makers, the matter of small programs illustrates another potential problem with the Title II reporting system: the disparate impact of an unsuccessful student on the pass rate of a small program. As an example, consider the impact of two students not passing a component of the licensure exam on four institutions. In an institution with 200 program completers if two do not pass, the institution has a 99 percent pass rate. An institution with 100 test takers, 98 of whom passed the exam would have a 98 percent pass rate. However in an institution of 20 program completers, two failures would result in a 90 percent pass rate and a college with 13 of 15 completers passing the exam would have an 86 percent pass rate. In several states, pass rates of 90 and below place institutions in the third or fourth quartile. As constructed, the Title II reporting system does not consider the influence of institutional differences such as size, mission, geographic location, or existing state regulations.

Drawing conclusions about program quality from the Title II data is problematic, but the reports may provide a potential check on information about the teaching fields of students who have passed the licensure exams. The federal government collects extensive information from colleges and universities regarding the majors and fields of study of their graduates. From this, some general observations may be made about the pool of new teachers by teaching field and level. Unlike some other data sets, Title II includes within the definition of program completer individuals who have finished coursework necessary
for a teaching license but are not in a degree program (both in traditional and “alternative” routes). Thus, the data may be useful to confirm the number of individuals who have completed coursework and examinations to teach in particular fields. This information could be useful to decision makers at the state and national levels as they consider teacher recruitment and retention strategies.

Conclusion

It is reasonable for citizens, state policy makers, and federal officials to be interested in the quality of new teachers. It is not clear that the Title II requirements serve to meet these expectations. State teacher licensure examinations were developed to assure hiring school districts and the public that teaching candidates have met certain requirements essential for a beginning teacher. If the licensure exam is reliable and valid, a student successfully passing it can be assumed to be adequately prepared irrelevant of how other students from the same institution perform. While aggregate pass rates may be of interest for institutional decision making, they are not a proxy for the academic merit of teaching candidates overall and should not be used for high stakes judgments about teacher quality.

If the purpose of Title II is to assure citizens that teaching candidates are well qualified to enter the profession, the unit of evaluation should be the individual college or university programs. It is important, however, that the evaluation design take into account laws and regulations in that state. Attempting to create a national evaluation system by manipulating 50 state laws to fit federal definitions has been found unworkable. When Title II is reauthorized decision makers should carefully link accountability expectations and measures with appropriate units and levels. Information on institutions’ teacher preparation programs should be available to school districts and the general public, but it should be broader and richer than a licensure exam pass rate. In particular, use of the summary pass rate as an indicator of teacher education program quality should be avoided.

Governance of K-12 education is the responsibility of states and localities. Over time this has come to include standards for entering teachers and for their preparation. Attempts to federalize or nationalize this system is not a small issue, particularly if new federal regulations are in addition to those already in state law. One option for a revised Title II would be to require states to establish a baseline for teacher preparation quality then demonstrate progress by periodic reports to the federal government. Because each state would have a different starting point and would use different metrics to measure changes in the quality of teacher preparation, receiving state reports would be a federal responsibility but aggregating them would not be possible. This proposal mirrors the requirements for school districts under No Child Left Behind.

Consideration of these issues is a serious matter. The decision to gather data on state licensure exams for teachers seemed on its face to be a reasonable way to measure teacher quality, yet this is a flawed approach in a system where control of teacher education is regulated by 50 different sets of state laws. Review of the Title II
institutional data reported to the federal government indicate that they provided only limited information for federal or national policy. Using the argument that having good teacher for public elementary and secondary schools is a common good that promotes the general welfare, it may be that it is time to discuss appropriate federal role. However, this is a decision with implications for the entire PreK-16 education system and not one to be made lightly.
References


Ashby, C.M. (2002, October 9). *Teacher training programs, activities underway to improve teacher training, but information collected to assess accountability has limitations*. Testimony before the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness, Committee on Education and the Workforce, U.S. House of Representatives. General Accounting Office. GAO-03-197T.


[http://www.title2.org](http://www.title2.org)
Appendix B

Analysis of Congressional Proposals to Reauthorize HEA, Title II

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November 2003

In preparation for reauthorization of the Higher Education (HEA) in 2004-05 legislation has been passed in the House (HR 2211) to revise the teacher education accountability provisions in Title II of that law. A bill was recently introduced by Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) to reauthorize all of HEA and he also proposes extensive changes to Title II (S.1793). Although these bills are pending in the Congress, HEA reauthorization is a lengthy process that is unlikely to be completed in 2004. Before turning to HEA, the Congress must complete work on the Individuals with Disabilities Act and a number of non-education matters all of which will be on the agenda during an election year with the White House, a third of the U.S. Senate, and the entire House of Representatives engaged in re-election campaigns.

A comparison of S.1793 and HR 2211 with current law accompanies this summary. It should be noted however, that at this time not all of the likely players have revealed their reauthorization agendas. The President, through the Department of Education, is expected to put forward either legislative language or detailed principles for a new HEA. Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) was closely involved in the last reauthorization of HEA and has not, at this point, joined as a co-sponsor of Senator Kennedy’s bill. Moreover, the chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, Judd Gregg (R-NH) will
certainly introduce his own legislation. If HEA is not reauthorized in 2004, before the general election, the currently pending bills will have to be reintroduced when the new 109th Congress is convened in January 2005. This analysis and accompanying comparison of current law with bills now in the House and Senate summarize the range of ideas lawmakers have in mind for revising teacher education, licensure, and professional development. It is important to recognize that S.1793 and HR 2211 are merely a starting point.

The teacher education provisions for a new Title II in the House and Senate bills attempt to align HEA and NCLB in three ways:

(1) by adding to Title II definitions of highly qualified teachers (HQT), scientifically based research, and mentoring that are identical to those in NCLB;

(2) by further stressing the importance of academic preparation for teachers; and

(3) through the expectation that teacher preparation quality will be linked to teacher impact on student learning as measured by standardized tests.

The consequence of these more expansive provisions (found in both Senate and House bills) is further confirmation that Washington policy makers believe oversight of teacher preparation and educator professional development is a Federal responsibility. As examples, HR 2211 echoes the theme of NCLB that teacher quality is a function of the individual’s expertise in a content area as measured by holding an academic major in the content field or passing a
rigorous examination. The Senate bill adds the importance of pedagogy but goes the extra step of proposing a National Academy of Sciences study to identify core pedagogical themes or topics.

House and Senate legislation include new definitions of “teaching skills.” The House version stresses competence in teaching academic subjects while the Senate bill attempts to identify and describe characteristics of good teaching, such as “…an understanding of the learning process itself…” Both bills include new provisions to assist institutions of higher education (IHEs) in their efforts to improve teacher preparation. As another case in point, the Senate bill includes support for the professional development of college and university faculty.

Both S.1793 and HR 2211 have structures that parallel current law: grants for states, for partnerships, and for teacher recruitment. The two new bills give greater weight to teacher recruitment and retention, particularly in the Senate measure where S.1793 offers funds for educator recruitment in its state grant and partnership programs and in addition creates a new Part B that is a freestanding recruitment measure. The Kennedy bill targets its recruitment efforts on subjects and geographic areas of teacher shortage with a specific focus on recruiting and preparing special education teachers and teachers for limited English proficient students. It is possible that increased attention to recruitment is an outgrowth of the NCLB “highly qualified teacher” provisions and school district concerns about having adequate personnel. It is of interest that the House bill places greater emphasis in the state and partnership programs on developing
and support alternate routes to teaching as well as *alternative certification* systems.

In terms of the so-called “higher education report card” provisions in HEA (Sec. 207), the Senate’s proposed data reporting expectations for colleges and universities on teacher candidate pass rates are similar to current law. However, the Senate legislation adds several new requirements; specifically that states collect and forward to the Federal government: the placement rates for teacher education program graduates, the percentage of full-time faculty in IHEs who teach classes offered by a school of education, and the tracking of graduates three years after graduation from a teacher preparation program.

The House legislation takes a different approach to how institutions will report the pass rates of their teacher education program completers. Spurred by unease that some states indicated all of their institutions had 100 percent pass rates on the teacher licensure examination/s, members of the House included new language in Title II requiring that any student who is at least half way through a teacher education program and takes a licensure exam must have his or her score included in pass rate calculations even if the individual hasn’t completed the program (or potentially dropped out and never became a program completer). This is a peculiar provision. Does the mid-point mean time or number of courses taken? Does mid-point include subject matter courses taken in arts and sciences departments if an academic major is a precondition for enrolling in teacher education coursework? More careful consideration of this revision will be needed before it is incorporated into a final HEA reauthorization measure.
As the Congress considers the teacher education and licensure provisions in HEA, the following themes and issues should be on the agenda for further debate:

- Given apprehension by some educators about provisions in NCLB, what is the appropriate amount of alignment between NCLB and HEA, Title II? Should linking Title II to NCLB be done now or after the elementary and secondary legislation is modified?
- What is the correct balance between Federal, state, local, and institutional decisions on teacher preparation and professional development?
- What is the suitable balance between academic content and pedagogy for new teachers and who decides?
- HR 2211 calls for more opportunities for alternative routes to licensure as well as alternative certification (which implies a new licensure system and possibly is the Congresses’ attempt to provide a measure of endorsement for the new ABCTE license). How would or should a new alternative licensure system align with existing state-developed standards?
- How can teacher recruitment provisions be flexible enough to respond to school district needs while addressing national shortages?
- Will changes to the state and institutional report card provisions in Title II provide new and useful data? Are the data expectations ones that can be easily and efficiently accomplished? What, if any, additional costs are associated with proposed new provisions?
Comparison of HEA, Title II (current law); Title II provisions in S. 1793
(Kennedy); and H.R. 2211 (Ready to Teach Act of 20030)

P. Earley – Center for Education Policy – November 2003

Language that differs significantly from current law is in red.

**Purpose Sec. 201**

**Current Title II Provisions:** Improve student achievement; improve the quality of the current and future teaching force by improving teacher preparation and professional development; hold IHEs accountable for preparing teachers who have necessary teaching skills and are highly competent in the academic content they plan to teach; and recruit highly qualified individuals, including individuals from other occupations into teaching

**S. 1793:** Improve student achievement; increase Title II programs to meet the goal of having 100% HQTs; recruit and retain HQTs; hold IHEs accountable for preparing teachers through coursework in pedagogy, with effective methods of teaching as a means of better preparing teachers for modern day classrooms (neither current law nor HR 2211 mention pedagogy); enhance professional development; hold IHEs accountable for preparing teachers competent in teaching skills and subject matter content; recruit individuals from other occupations into teaching (focus on persons to teach in high need geographic areas and subjects); encourage “learning partnerships.”

**HR. 2211:** Improve student academic achievement; enhance professional development; hold IHEs accountable for preparing HQTs (this is a more limiting purpose than current law or S. 1793 and reflects Congress’ intent to link HEA, Title II directly with NCLB); recruit individuals from other occupations into teaching.

**Definitions Sec. 201**

**Current Title II Provisions:**

- **Arts and Sciences** -- A unit in an IHE that offers one or more academic majors in disciplines or content areas corresponding to the academic subject matter areas in which teachers provide instruction.
- **High Need Local Education Agency** – high percentage of individuals from families with incomes below the poverty line; high percentage of individuals teaching out of field; or high teacher turn over.
- **Poverty Line** – Standard OMB definition is used
S. 1793:

**Arts and Sciences** – Same as current law

**High Need Local Education Agency** – similar to current law with the addition of the specific percentage of students from families below the poverty line (30% or more 20,000 students)

**Poverty Line** – Standard OMB definition is used

**High Need School** – a school with a high concentration of students with families below the poverty line or that is identified as in need of improvement or corrective action by NCLB. This definition appears in the Senate bill only.

**Professional Development** – Same definition as NCLB

**Highly Qualified** – Same definition as NCLB

**Mentoring** – Same definition as NCLB (in Senate bill only).

**Parent** – Same definition as NCLB (in Senate bill only)

**Parental Involvement** – Same definition as NCLB (in Senate bill only)

**Teaching Skills** – grounded in the disciplines of teaching and learning that teachers use to create effective instruction in subject matter content and that lead to student achievement and the ability to apply knowledge; and that require an understanding of the learning process itself, including the use of strategies specific to the subject matter, the application of ongoing assessment of student learning, individual differences in ability and instructional needs and effective classroom management (NOTE HOUSE BILL DIFFERENCES)

HR 2211:

**Arts and Sciences** – Same as current law.

**High Need Local Education Agency** – similar to current law however the percentage of children from families below the poverty line is 25%.

**Poverty Line** – Standard OMB definition is used

**Professional Development** – Same definition as NCLB

**Highly Qualified** – Same definition as NCLB

**Scientifically Based Reading Research** – Same as NCLB (House bill only)

**Scientifically Based Research** – Same as NCLB (House bill only)

**Teaching Skills** – based on scientifically based research; enable teachers to convey and explain subject matter; lead to increased student academic achievement; and, use strategies specific to subject matter, include ongoing assessment of student learning, focus on identification and tailoring of academic instruction; and focus on classroom management (NOTE SENATE BILL DIFFERENCES)

**State Grants Sec. 202**

**Current Title II Provisions:** States apply to the federal government for funds to reform teacher preparation. They must use their money for at least one of the following: (a) reform teacher preparation with an emphasis on candidate’s academic content; (b) reform teacher certification; (c) support
alternatives to traditional teacher preparation; (d) establish alternative certification systems; (d) recruit teachers and provide merit-based salary adjustments for educators; (e) implement procedures to end social promotion.

**S. 1793:** Specificies that the division of Title II funds between state grants and partnerships will be 25% - 75%. State Grants are described in sec. 203. States **must** use their federal grants for the following activities: (a) ensure that the state’s teacher certification requirements are rigorous; (b) teacher recruitment (scholarships, support services, helping existing teacher become highly qualified, and assistance during candidates first three years of teaching). The scholarships provisions require that recipients teach in high need LEA). S. 1793 identifies eight allowable activities. They are: (a) reforming teacher preparation with an emphasis on content and teaching skills including the requirement that teachers major in disciplines they plan to teach; (b) reforming licensure requirements with an emphasis on academic preparation; (c) Providing alternative routes to teacher certification in colleges of arts and sciences or at nonprofit educational organizations. These entities need to demonstrate they have selective means for admitting students, they include pedagogical coursework; and offer mentoring or similar support services during the initial teaching experience. (d) Support/mentoring for all new teachers. (e) Teacher recruitment, particularly for high need areas such as special education, and attracting individuals from other careers. (f) Developing policies to end social promotion. (g) Developing certification programs for AP or IB teachers. (h) Providing incentives for teachers to work in high need schools.

**HR 2211:** In a manner similar to current law, HR 2211 requires states to use funds for one or more of the following activities: (a) Reform teacher education programs so HQTs understand scientifically based research and are able to use advanced technology effectively in the classroom. This includes retraining faculty and redesigning teacher education program to be based on rigorous academic content, scientifically based research and state academic content standards. (b) Reform teacher certification. (c) Develop alternative teacher preparation programs and alternative certification mechanisms. (d) Planning and implement innovative programs to enhance the ability of IHEs to prepare HQTs. This could include relaxing state requirements, collecting longitudinal data on teacher performance and student achievement; ensuring high-quality preparation of teachers from underrepresented groups; and creating performance measure to document innovative methods. (e) Help school districts develop merit pay programs. (f) Develop teacher advancement and retention initiatives. (g) Develop and implement mechanisms to remove incompetent or unqualified teachers. (h) Technical assistance for low performing teacher preparation programs within IHEs. (i) Establish systems to measure the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs and professional development programs. (i) Implement teacher
recruitment and retention programs. (j) Improve qualifications of preschool teachers.

**Evaluation.** Current law and the Senate bill discuss evaluation expectations as it applies to all aspects of Title II. HR 2211 includes additional evaluation language in Sec. 202. Essentially it expects the state’s evaluation will include the effectiveness of teacher preparation and professional development activities in producing gains in student learning. The results of this evaluation must be made public.

*Partnership Grants Sec. 203*

**Current Title II Provisions:** The nature of the partnerships is outlined and must include a partner institution, a school of arts and sciences and a high need local education agency. The partner institution **must** have a teacher education program that has pass rates on the licensure examination/s of 80% or more; is otherwise identified as high performing; has an intensive clinical experience requirement; and requires a major in a teaching field (secondary level) or demonstration of academic competence (an alternative for elementary level). Grantees are required to use funds to implement teacher preparation reforms (with emphasis on academic content), working with arts and sciences divisions, integrating research-based teaching methods into the curriculum; providing sustained and high quality clinical experiences; and creating opportunities for enhanced and ongoing professional development that improves academic content knowledge of teachers. **Allowable** activities include preparing teachers to work with diverse student populations and the parents of these students; disseminating information on effective practices; developing mechanisms to provide principals and superintendents with effective managerial skills; and teacher recruitment.

**S. 1793:** Primarily the same as current law. S. 1793 notes that clinical experiences should substantially increase interaction between faculty at IHEs and new and experienced teachers, principals, and other administrators. Several additional **required** uses of funds are included. They are ensuring that teachers have adequate preparation to meet high standards...this would include training in reading, addressing the needs of LEP students, training in student achievement data and analysis (an optional provision is training in teaching AP/IB programs). Developing a one-year paid internship program for students who complete a four-year teacher education program. **Allowable** uses of funds parallel current law with the addition of several provisions. Awarding scholarships for teaching candidates; providing support services to scholarship students; assisting current teachers to meet HQ standards; providing financial incentives for teachers to teach in high need schools. Teacher recruitment grants are included with the partnership programs in S. 1793 as well as in a new Part B (see description page 10 of this document). In current law and in HR 2211 recruitment programs are separate from the partnership program.
and generally not as extensive as in S. 1793. The Senate bill notes the possibility of recruiting and preparing special education and regular education teaching candidates in a team environment. Class size reduction is allowed. The Senate bill includes a new “Faculty Opportunity Program” to award competitive grants to IHES to fill education faculty vacancies in special education, early child education, and bilingual education. These funds may also be used to develop doctoral programs in these areas. A full salary subsidy would be for no more than two years with a partial subsidy for up to three additional years.

**HR 2211:** Primarily the same as current law. Like current law, grantees must address one or more of certain activities. The House bill includes as one of the required activities reforming teacher preparation programs by retraining faculty and designing teacher preparation programs so they are based on rigorous academic content, scientifically based research (including scientifically based reading research). Teacher preparation also is to provide training in methods of “improving student behavior in the classroom.” The Allowable activities are similar to current law with an emphasis on alternatives to traditional teacher preparation and state certification to “reduce unnecessary barriers to teacher preparation while producing highly qualified teachers.” Several other allowable partnership activities under HR 2211 are of note. States may support clinical experiences in science mathematics, and technology through connections with business and industry. They also may support community colleges to implement teacher preparation programs, including through distance learning to either earn a bachelor’s degree with a teaching license or to become highly qualified.

**Teacher Recruitment Sec. 204**

**Current Title II Provisions:** Current law provides grants to develop and operate scholarship programs for persons who want to be teachers. Emphasis is on recruiting teachers for high need fields/areas. Support services and follow-up/mentoring may be provided during the first three years of teaching. A service requirement is required for scholarship recipients.

**S. 1793:** As noted previously, recruitment provisions in the Senate bill are included within the partnership programs and in a new Part B (Part A includes state grants, partnerships, and accountability provisions).

**HR 2211:** The House bill is very similar to existing law with a slightly greater emphasis on recruiting individuals who are career switchers, in particular individuals from technology, science, and mathematics fields.

**Administrative Provisions Sec. 205**

**Current Title II Provisions:** Describes application procedures and peer review procedures as well as matching funds requirements. A provision is included that requires schools to provide in an understandable and
uniform format the qualifications of the teacher/s in the school to parents, upon request.

**S. 1793:** Similar to current law. Would give priority to innovative teacher preparation reforms with particular attention to reducing the shortage of HQTs in high poverty urban and rural areas and in certain subjects. The parental right to know teacher qualifications is not included.

**HR 2211:** Similar to current law but the parental right to know teacher qualifications is not included.

**Accountability and Evaluation Sec. 206**

**Current Title II Provisions:** Details the state Grant Accountability report. That is, any state receiving a grant under Title II, Sec. 202 is required to provide extensive data to the U.S. Department of Education. Partnership grantees have similar evaluation requirements.

**S. 1793:** Evaluation and accountability provisions are similar to current law but are linked to NCLB, which was passed following the Higher Education Act. In general, the evaluation links state or partnership activities to success in increasing student achievement on the states’ standardized assessment/s.

**HR 2211:** Similar to current law but greater emphasis on linking program activities to enhanced student achievement.

**Accountability for Programs that Prepare Teachers Sec. 207**

**Current Title II Provisions:** This section details the information that Institutions with teacher education programs must provide to the state and the state then must forward to the Federal government. This encompasses student scores and pass rates on the licensure exam/s, the ratio of faculty to students in student teaching, whether or not the program is accredited and if it has been designated by the state as low performing. Note: certain of the reporting provisions for institutions – such as the “adjusted quartile for institutional rankings do not appear in statute; these were developed by the Department of Education after the law was passed.

**S. 1793:** The Senate bill includes language in Sec. 207 that education programs applying for federal grants under this part must demonstrate that they provide each teacher candidate with a deep knowledge of the subject he/she will teach; an understanding of how students learn; teaching skills (defined elsewhere) necessary to help all students achieve high standards (including children with special needs); how to create a positive learning environment; how to reflect on practices in order to improve teaching and student learning; standards integration; ability to use a variety of assessment strategies; technology integration; classroom management; opportunities to collaborate with colleagues; and training in reading. This is of note because these criteria apply only to institutions receiving Title II partnership.
In terms of determining student pass rates, the Institutional Report Card requirements are almost identical to current law, however several new reporting requirements are added. If the Senate bill became law, states would need to calculate and report to the Federal government the placement rates for teacher education program graduates (one assumes placement means in a teaching position), the percentage of full-time faculty in IHEs who teach classes offered by a school of education, and the tracking of graduates three years after graduation from a teacher preparation program.

The Senate bill includes a new provision in Sec. 207 directing the Secretary of Education to enter into a contract with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a two-year study to develop a suggested core curriculum in pedagogy for schools of education. The legislation outlines domains of knowledge for this study, the extent to which research informs the proposed curriculum, and the procedure for gathering input from interested parties (such as college presidents).

HR 2211: The accountability requirements (state and institutional report cards) are similar to current law with a notable exception. The House bill would require that institutions of higher education report the pass rates for any students who have completed at least 50% of the requirements for a teacher education program if they take the licensure examination prior to completing their program. This provision would apply both to “traditional” and “alternative” teacher preparation programs.

State Functions Sec. 208

Current Title II Provisions: The state is required to provide the US Department of Education with a list of low performing institutions based on criteria developed by the state. If an institution offering teacher preparation loses state recognition or ceases to receive financial support from the state, that institution will no longer be eligible to receive US Department of Education professional development grants. Moreover, the institution may no longer be able to enroll students receiving Title IV student financial assistance in its teacher education program.

S. 1793: Same as current law.
HR 2211: Same as current law.

New (or moved) Provisions in Senate and House Bills

S. 1793: The Senate bill includes a new Part B to support recruitment and retention of high quality teachers and administrators. Many of the provisions of Part B parallel recruitment activities supported in the partnership sections of S. 1793 or in current law. S. 1793 would fund partnerships of IHEs, local education agencies and non-profit entities to recruit, prepare and mentor new teachers. The bill would provide stipends for mentors, housing support/incentives for new teachers, moving
expenses, and the like. Scholarship recipients would have a service requirement in a high need local education agency or high need school. Four-year institutions and community colleges would be supported to establish partnerships to establish agreements and programs to jointly prepare teachers. Programs to help paraprofessional and provide leadership development for school administrators also are included. A new Part C, “Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers to Use Technology” supports the integration of technology into teacher education programs in a manner similar to the PT-3 Grants.

**HR 2211:** Current law is amended to extend the Preparing Tomorrow’s Teachers to Use Technology initiatives. A New Part C would establish Centers of Excellence in institutions that prepare significant numbers of minority teacher candidates. Predominately minority institutions are defined in various federal laws and these institutions would be eligible for grants under this part. This new program would provide funds to reform teacher education programs, retrain faculty, expand clinical experiences for teaching candidates, and provide scholarships for students who intend to be teachers.