

Statement by Mary Brabeck
Board Chair, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and
Gale and Ira Drukier Dean and Professor of Applied Psychology Steinhardt School of
Culture, Education, and Human Development, New York University
Before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Teacher Preparation: Ensuring a Quality Teacher in Every Classroom
March 25, 2014

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Alexander, committee members and my distinguished panelists, I am honored to have the opportunity to speak before you today as chair of the Board of Directors of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). It is a pleasure to discuss CAEP's new standards and how they ensure that accredited programs prepare teachers who are classroom-ready and demonstrably raise learning for all of America's diverse student population. This is an urgent priority for all of us.

Launched in July of 2013, CAEP is the new single specialized accreditor of educator preparation in the United States. Accreditation in educator preparation plays a vital role in informing policymakers, providers and candidates about the quality of preparation programs and whether the professional standards are being met. Equally important, CAEP is committed to raising the bar in educator preparation so that all accredited programs in our nation move from adequacy to excellence and weak programs are closed. We can no longer tolerate failure or mediocrity in the preparation of the next generation of America's teachers and school leaders.

I have been in higher education for 34 years, and for over 20 years I have been, as a dean, responsible for teacher preparation. During the span of my career, there have been multiple calls for education reform, but with very little agreement on how to implement needed reforms in a credible way that separates the highly performing programs from the poorly performing programs. In my judgment, the adoption of CAEP's new rigorous standards achieved **historic consensus** and alignment on educator preparation issues among diverse stakeholders for the first time. The stakeholders engaged in developing the CAEP standards and recommendations for a radically different approach to accreditation included deans, state policymakers, local superintendents, unions, teachers, P-12 student parents, alternative preparation programs, and even critics of educator preparation and accreditation.

CAEP's standards are not business as usual ---but embody four research-based levers of change that will have strong effects on preparation.

- **CAEP requires evidence of strong clinical experiences and partnerships with schools**—Integrating a robust clinical experience into the core of any preparation program is essential. This demands strong partnerships with P-12 schools and school districts that will meet employers’ urgent needs (e.g, special education teachers, STEM teachers, teachers of English language learners, teachers for the most challenging schools, etc.)
- **CAEP will assure the public of teacher candidate enhanced quality and diversity**— CAEP establishes higher entry standards for admission into the programs and active recruitment of high quality and diverse candidates. From recruitment and admission, through preparation and exit and into P-12 classrooms, educator preparation programs will take responsibility for building an educator workforce that is capable and representative of America’s diverse population. Graduates of these programs will be classroom and school-ready to teach all children.
- **CAEP includes all providers**—Accreditation must encourage innovation by welcoming all of the varied providers from university-based programs to alternative, for-profit, and online programs to seek accreditation and meet challenging levels of performance.
- And surmounting all others, CAEP insists that preparation be **judged by outcomes and impact on P-12 student learning and development**—Results matter; “effort” is not enough.

CAEP’s footprint is expansive and positions accreditation as a lever for change in improving educator quality and effectiveness. Currently, more than 900 educator preparation providers participate in the educator preparation accreditation system. Participating institutions account for nearly 60% of the providers of educator preparation in the United States, and their enrollments account for nearly two-thirds of newly prepared teachers.

A critical part of the accreditation system is the dynamic partnerships developed between CAEP and the States on program approval, licensure, and data improvement policies to support continuous improvement. Today, 23 states require accreditation for all public teacher education institutions and 31 states require accreditation for the majority of its institutions. There is a growing interest among state policymakers in adopting the new, rigorous CAEP accreditation system to leverage change and urgent reforms; Ohio, Rhode Island, Kentucky, Illinois, and Georgia state superintendents and agencies have all begun to pave the way for implementation of CAEP’s new mode of accreditation. We expect others will follow suit with the endorsement of the standards by the Council for Chief State School

Officers, the Chiefs for Change, and the State Higher Education Executive Officers and many other organizations.

CAEP places an emphasis on evidence, continuous improvement, and innovation. CAEP aims not only to raise the performance of new teachers as practitioners in the nation's P-12 schools, but also to elevate the stature of the entire profession. CAEP will do this by raising the standards for evidence that supports providers' claims of quality and insisting on transparency and accountability to the public. A number of recent national reports from the National Research Council¹, the American Educational Research Association, and the Council of Chief State School Officers² point out the glaring need for research on effective teaching practices and preparation, empirically grounded quality control systems, and comprehensive and coherent systems for collecting, reporting, and using data and outcomes-based measures to drive continuous improvement. These bodies of work provided a foundation for the development of the standards and focus on the desired outcome to advance P-12 student learning.

CAEP will exploit the new tools recently developed to assess programs as part of its agenda to promote continuous improvement and evidence-based accreditation. Today, we have better tools for the task of building an evidence-based profession. For example, we have begun to build better state longitudinal data systems that allow us to link data from teacher education programs to data from P-12 student learning. Today, we have more rigorous state college and career readiness standards and will soon have a next generation of assessments to evaluate student learning of these more rigorous standards.

We also have more sophisticated statistical models to assess the impact of programs on student learning. States and districts are on-lining new value added modeling (VAM³) and

1

National Research Council. (2010) *Preparing teachers: Building evidence for sound policy*. Retrieved from http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12882, 180.

² Council of Chief State School Officers. (2012). *Our responsibility, our promise: Transforming educator preparation and entry into the profession*. Washington, D.C. 22.

³ American Psychological Association Task Force, *Assessing and Evaluating Teacher Preparation Programs*. Accepted without revision by the American Psychological Association Council of Representatives, February 23, 2014.

other student growth measures and there is a robust literature on their power and cautions regarding valid and reliable use of these models to assess programs. And research studies are yielding better information about what measures are the best predictors of student learning gains. For example, recent research from the Gates Foundation's *Measures of Effective Teaching Project*⁴ (MET) found that elementary and middle school student survey assessments and high-quality classroom observations systems, used in combination, can be reliable measures of effective teaching.

CAEP is currently engaged in research to explore the possibilities of using these P-12 student surveys in assessing pre-service teachers. Advancing research and development (R & D) and innovation are strategic priorities for CAEP and we are among the first accreditors to have a commitment and committee devoted to expanding our knowledge base.

The emphasis on robust evidence, continuous improvement and innovation represents a new vision and mode for accreditation. No longer can our profession rely on outmoded accreditation systems with one-time reviews every 7-10 years. The new system will demand yearly accountability and continuous improvement with frequent review cycles and annual reports by providers on their performance data that will trigger appropriate action and incentives by CAEP. No longer can our profession depend on an input-focused (e.g., syllabi, library resources, credit hours), compliance-based accreditation that allows programs to get credit for merely claiming the existence of a quality assurance system or submitting stacks of paper but little data that show graduates can teach all children. CAEP expects accredited programs to collect and report data and evidence that are meaningful, valid, reliable, and actionable. And by actionable, I mean that institutions or programs will shine a bright light on the strengths and weaknesses within their programs and their partnerships with P-12 schools, for their candidates, alumni and other stakeholders to use. And providers will use the data to inform decisions about how to improve their programs.

CAEP will not accredit low-performing programs and will identify and celebrate outstanding programs that are making substantial contributions to the field.

The states will also need to do their part in closing down poor performers that produce ineffective educators.

⁴ Measures of Effective Teaching Project. (2013). *Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project's three-year study*. Retrieved from http://www.metproject.org/downloads/MET_Ensuring_Fair_and_Reliable_Measures_Practitioner_Brief.pdf, 20.

Finally, CAEP must allow flexibility so that programs can take risks, re-imagine the delivery of education, and test innovations without being penalized.

CAEP's five core standards and recommendations were based upon the best available research in the field and on lessons learned from high-performing organizations in other sectors and best practices in accreditation. The three areas of teacher preparation identified by the National Research Council (NRC) as most likely to have the strongest effects on raising student achievement are: 1) content and pedagogical knowledge, 2) clinical experience, and 3) the quality of teacher candidates. Standards 1-3 were developed in response to these areas:

Standard 1-Content and pedagogical knowledge --- Candidates develop a deep understanding of the **critical concepts and principles** of their discipline and, by completion, are able to use **discipline-specific practices** flexibly to advance the learning of all students toward attainment of college- and career-readiness standards. Examples of evidence might include data from new assessments demonstrating candidates' understanding of content knowledge and direct classroom observations of candidates' ability to teach content effectively to diverse learners.

Standard 2- Clinical Practice and Partnerships--- Effective **partnerships** and high-quality **clinical practice** are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P-12 students' learning and development. An example of evidence for this standard might include demonstration of joint decision-making on program improvements, co-selection of clinical educators, or use of direct classroom observation protocols to meet school districts' human capital and instructional needs.

Standard 3- Quality of teacher candidates --- The quality of candidates selected for teaching is essential and preparation programs will be responsible for ensuring quality from **recruitment, at admission**, through the **progression** of courses and clinical experiences, and to **decisions that completers** are prepared to teach effectively and are recommended for certification. Regarding selection of candidates into a teacher education program, by 2016 to be accredited, programs will need to demonstrate that their entering cohorts of students have on average a GPA of 3.0. The same groups will need to have, on average, a group SAT score above the 50th percentile by 2016; and by 2020, on average the group must be in the top one-third of the distribution of scores on a standardized nationally normed test (e.g., GRE, SAT, ACT) test. Likewise we need a teaching force that reflects the demographics of the P-12 population. We need ethnic, racial, language of origin and gender diversity; we need more men in the teaching force. Finally programs need to recruit candidates who will meet local and national needs (e.g., special education, STEM

teachers and hard to staff schools). Evidence of meeting this standard might include reporting of GPAs, nationally normed tests of candidates, and strategic recruitment plans and success rates of programs.

The remaining CAEP standards discussed below were developed from a body of research on best practices in high performing organizations in other sectors and in accreditation.

Standard 4-Impact and outcomes --- With an emphasis on assuring quality based upon outcomes and evidence rather than solely inputs, the Commission created a standard for using multiple measures for determining the impact of program completers on P-12 student learning and development, classroom instruction, and schools, and the satisfaction of its completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation. This standard that providers must show evidence of completers' **impact** is of special significance in that providers must meet each of the four components of the standard to be accredited. To my knowledge, no other accreditor has put down such a challenging marker to hold those they accredit accountable for results. The four components are 1) impact on P-12 student learning, 2) indicators of teacher effectiveness, 3) satisfaction of employers, and 4) satisfaction of completers.

Standard 5- Quality assurance and continuous improvement --- In keeping with the dual function of accreditation, as both accountability and continuous improvement, CAEP created a standard for **assessing the provider's system** for assuring quality and continuing improvement through the **effective use of valid data from multiple measures**. Programs must demonstrate how they use their data to improve the program and its outcomes. To support continuous improvement, providers would assure that appropriate stakeholders, including alumni, employers, practitioners, school and community partners are involved in program evaluation, improvement, and identification of models of excellence.

CAEP will hold itself accountable and will study the intended and unintended consequences of implementation of the standards. CAEP will assess how well it meets its fiduciary responsibility to the public to ensure that all accredited programs provide high quality teachers for our nation's schools.

As the Committee moves forward with its legislative and policy activities in the months and years ahead, I respectfully ask that you consider the following recommendations to improve the Higher Education Act:

1. Streamline Title II reporting requirements by aligning federal program grantee reporting to CAEP's performance-based and outcome-driven measures. Currently, metrics

on the Title II institutional and state report cards do not capture what we need to know about program quality, outcomes, and impacts. CAEP's new program impact standard focuses on 8 required data elements, including teaching candidates' impact on P-12 student performance.⁵ A streamlined, outcomes-based reporting system with common data elements would allow federal government, states, the accreditor, and programs to benchmark performance and identify innovations and high quality programs or aspects of programs. These exemplars might inform other providers and possibly be duplicated or even taken to scale. Specifically, CAEP recommends that Title II reporting in both HEA and ESEA be aligned to CAEP's new performance-based outcome measures, along with common reporting elements new standards and on program characteristics.

2. Build Data Capacity and Reduce Reporting Requirements and Burden --- Build national, state and local capacity for data quality and demand common data for benchmarking performance. This will provide an important feedback loop to accreditors, providers, policymakers and the public. CAEP recommends that the National Center for Educational Statistics develop common data definitions in educator preparation for benchmarking purposes. I also recommend continuation of investments in the federally funded State Longitudinal Data Systems grant program with a particular focus on reporting systems for educator preparation.

3. Expand and Support Research and Development and Innovation---- invest in R&D to further build knowledge about effective educator preparation targeting the Institute for Education Sciences, National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Mental Health. Currently, I believe that less than 1% of money for education goes into research; compared with 20-25% of health budget which goes to research. As the National Research Council reported in 2010, we need better information on which teacher preparation program characteristics produce effective teachers and leaders. Continue and expand efforts to develop and improve reliable and valid assessments of effective teaching and P-12 learning and development. Like medicine years ago, education must be transformed into an evidence-based discipline and we need the tools to do that.

4. Support Accountability- We need the federal government to help, encourage, and monitor States who act on low performing programs, as reported in Title II's state report cards. But closing weak programs is only part of the solution. Working together, Sates and CAEP must also move the full range of programs to get better, a shift from tolerating "adequacy" to insisting on "excellence." A full-court press by States and CAEP in

⁵ Annual Reporting Measures include: 1) Impact on P-12 learning and development; 2) Indicators of teaching effectiveness; 3) Results of employer surveys, including retention and employment milestones; 4) Results of completer surveys; 5) Graduation rates; 6) Ability of completers to meet licensing (certification) and any additional state requirements; 7) Ability of completers to be hired in education positions for which they were prepared; 8) Student loan default rates and other consumer information.

collaboration is required to meet the needs of the nation's P-12 learners. Support Innovation and Capacity-Building for major systemic changes to meet CAEP's rigorous standards. Investments in robust clinical practice models and partnerships between preparation programs and school districts will develop the capacity for programs to meet CAEP's new high expectations.

5. Encourage states to partner with CAEP in accreditation and program approval, and alignment of state and CAEP standards, data requirements and accountability processes. Alignment will produce coherence and reduce redundant time consuming reporting that too often in the past has not improved P-12 outcomes.

We now have a historic opportunity to do what the Flexner Report did for medical education in 1910. That report called on American medical schools to enact higher admission and graduation standards and to adhere strictly to robust scientific knowledge in teaching and research. Flexner transformed medical education making it the clinical model it is today and spurred the transformation of North American medicine into a profession. Prior to the release of that report, medical schools differed greatly in their curricula, methods of assessment and requirements for admission and graduation, and clinical preparation. These are the current challenges in educator preparation. The Flexner report had a deep and lasting impact on medical education and lifted the stature of the profession. I think all of us in this room who have a stake in improving the preparation of teachers have an unique opportunity to do the same, ultimately improving the outcomes for our nation's students. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss CAEP's overhaul of its accreditation system and how it will positively impact preparation programs and P-12 student learning in our nation. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.