

**TEACHING** A N D  
**CALIFORNIA'S**  
**FUTURE**

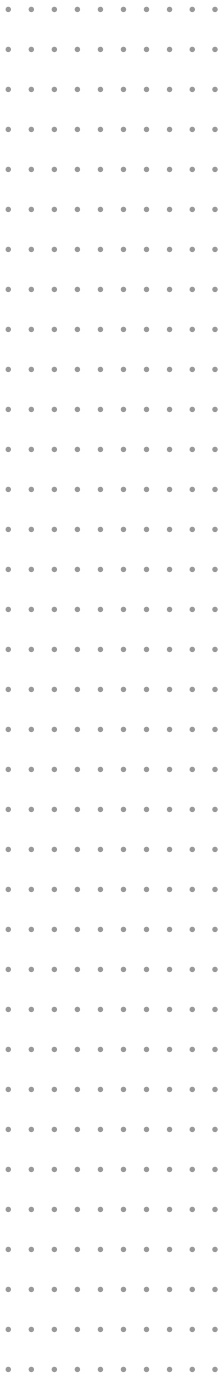
**THE STATUS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

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

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

**RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY  
SRI INTERNATIONAL**

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

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

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SUMMARY REPORT

# Teaching For California's Future

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

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

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

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

Research for the task force was conducted by SRI International of Menlo Park, California.

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

The full report is available on the Center's website – [www.CFTL.org](http://www.CFTL.org) – as are a variety of related policy papers.

# Teaching For California's Future

## FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION

Is California setting its children up for failure?

As a state we have dramatically increased academic standards – what we expect all students to learn. But we have not provided all students with the skilled teachers they need to help them meet these higher standards.

Indeed, as our standards went up, the quality of California's teaching force was compromised as school districts hired tens of thousands of teachers who did not meet even the minimum qualifications to serve in a classroom. Although there are underqualified teachers in nearly every community in the state, the truth is that our least successful students and our poorest children – those who often have the most need for good teaching – routinely get the teachers who are least qualified or not qualified at all.

Good teachers are critical. The research is clear – the single most important thing that a school can provide to ensure the success of students is a skilled and knowledgeable teacher. Good teachers – those who know what to teach and how to teach it – produce successful students. And there are many thousands of California teachers who are hard working, highly qualified and very effective.

But teachers who are underqualified or ill-equipped do not produce successful students. We looked, for example, at third grade reading – a skill that is crucial for later success in school and life. We found that a significant portion of those California third grade students who are failing to read – who score in the bottom quarter on the state reading test – attend schools that have more than five times as many underqualified teachers as those students who score in the top quarter.

There are more than 1 million California students attending schools with so many underqualified teachers as to make these

schools dysfunctional. These schools are simply unable to increase student performance without dramatic support to help them improve. These conditions define a crisis that demands the undivided attention of California's policy makers, parents, educators and taxpayers.

In California, we have come to expect occasional natural disasters – earthquakes, fires and floods. When those occur, we acknowledge the emergency and take extraordinary measures to save lives, comfort the injured and prevent further damage.

The time has come to declare a similar state of emergency – to take extraordinary steps. If we don't, the crisis in California's schools eventually will claim far more victims than all of the past century's natural disasters.

The good news is that there are practical solutions to strengthening California's teaching force. The better news is that the time is right – the public sees improving schools as California's top priority and particularly supports investments in good teaching, California's politicians similarly want to produce better schools for their constituents, and the state's economy is thriving and can handle the investment required.

We recommend a series of bold steps that will enable all California students to have qualified, skilled teachers. These recommendations include eliminating the hiring of unqualified teachers, providing incentives to bring experienced teachers into schools that now have the most difficulty attracting them, strengthening our system of preparing prospective teachers, providing better training to working teachers, and making teaching more attractive by significantly increasing starting salaries for teachers and improving teaching conditions.

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# THE WORLD HAS CHANGED

During the last 15 years, the nation saw an unprecedented shift to an economy based far more on knowledge and information than on manufacturing and natural resources. California saw the trend up

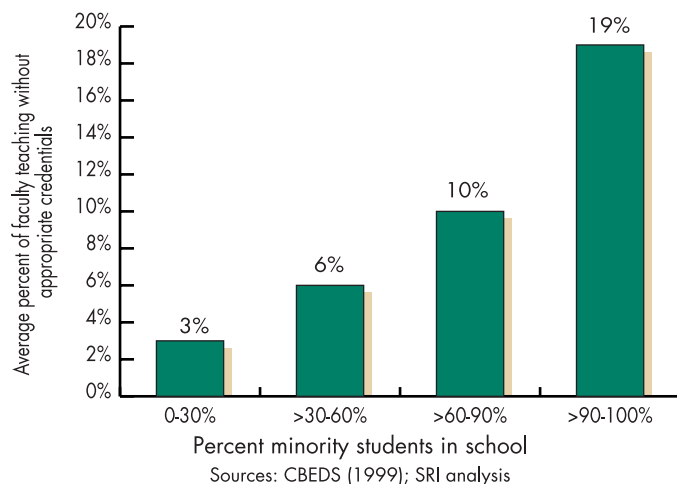
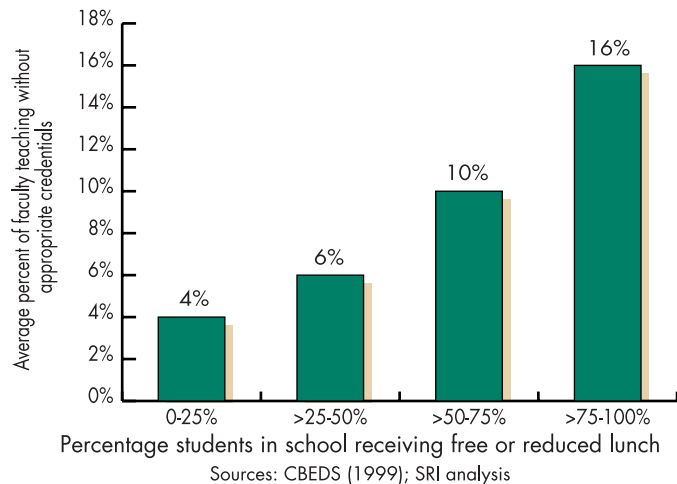
close. We helped lead the technology revolution that increasingly rewards people for knowledge and skills.

Our schools have been asked to do far more than merely provide the basics. In the last few years, the state formally increased the expectations for what all California students must learn. Now the state is starting to require students to pass tougher tests before they graduate from high school.

By raising standards for what all California students are expected to know and to be able to do, we also are expecting more than we ever have from the state's teachers. We used to be satisfied if teachers succeeded in getting a small percentage of their students to master sophisticated mathematics and science, to write well and to speak persuasively. Now, we expect teachers to achieve that level of success with *all* of their students, including those who come to school not speaking English, or not speaking it well.

But, while we expect our teachers to accomplish more than ever before, too many teachers do not themselves have either a deep enough understanding of the subjects their students are expected to know or possession of the teaching skills necessary to deliver good instruction. In some cases, the adults teaching in California classrooms have no training at all. They have been hired because school districts can not find or have not found fully credentialed teachers to employ.

## Who Gets Underqualified Teachers?



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## TIME FOR SOLUTIONS

After a detailed examination of teaching in California's public schools, we've concluded that our system of recruiting, hiring, training and retaining good teachers has not kept pace with the demands schools face today.

Simply put, we are not doing a very good job of making sure that every student has a good chance of getting a good teacher every year. Indeed, the odds are so great that poor and urban students will get underqualified teachers that if the state's lottery offered similar odds, we would all play every day and win big every week.

This short summary and the more detailed research report upon which it is based outline the nature of the problems and our recommended solutions. We do not assign blame for the situation in which we find ourselves; we believe that California's policy makers and educators have always intended to have high quality teachers in our classrooms.

And California is not alone in this fight. Across the country, many

urban and rural school districts are struggling to find good teachers, particularly as older teachers become eligible for retirement. But California's problems are of a different magnitude simply based on our size. California is a much bigger state with a very large proportion of children who are poor or who do not speak English. The diversity of culture and language that is a source of strength for California also makes teaching more difficult. California's public schools teach 5.7 million students every day. More than 1 million of these children are in schools with a disproportionately large number of underqualified teachers.

This, we believe, must change or we risk an economic and social disaster that will affect all of us. To simply state the obvious, it is neither right nor fair. If our great state provides nothing else, it ought to ensure that all children have the opportunity to a quality education. And the most important thing our schools can do is to make sure students have a qualified, competent teacher every year.

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## SUPPLY, DEMAND & QUALITY TEACHING

We were alarmed by three major conditions. First, there are simply not enough qualified teachers available and willing to take teaching jobs where they are needed. Second, far too many of California's teachers are not prepared for the task they face. Third, almost all of the state's teachers are not receiving the kind of professional development they need to make sure their students meet California's standards.

These issues affect nearly every school district in the state, although the problems are particularly severe in California's poor and urban school districts. Throughout the teaching force, there are simply not enough veteran teachers to usher novices into teaching or to maintain a professional culture focused on excellence.

California now employs about 284,000 teachers in its public

schools, and that figure has grown nearly 40 percent in the past decade. Part of this rapid growth is a result of having 24 percent more children to teach. Part of it is a result of the state's 1996 decision to quickly reduce the number of students in elementary school classrooms, and later to reduce class sizes in 9th grade as well.

Meeting the demand for teachers might be more manageable if it was caused only by enrollment growth and smaller classes. But it is compounded by significant numbers of qualified teachers leaving the profession. A substantial number – 30 percent in their first three years – leave soon after starting as teachers. A growing number of veteran teachers are retiring and the retirement trend is expected to surge in the next several years; more than half of California teachers are at least 45 years old.

This combination – more students to teach, smaller classes, teachers leaving or retiring – means that California school districts are now having to hire a record 26,000 new teachers each year.

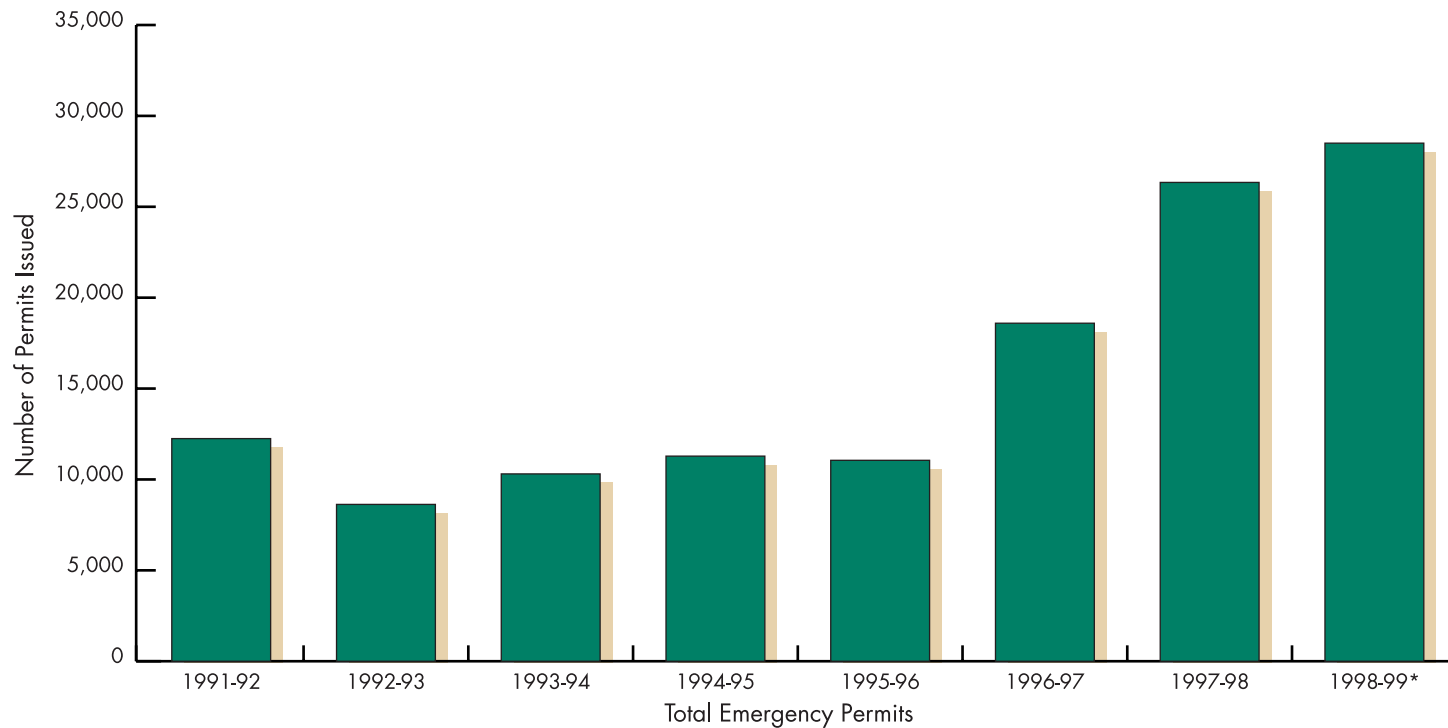
While demand for qualified teachers has surged, there is not necessarily an increase in supply. The number of prospective teachers being trained by California colleges and universities has not grown significantly. This year, about 17,000 people completed a teacher training program in the state, but a substantial portion of them chose not to become teachers. Many former teachers – about 10,000 – reentered California’s teaching force, but this still leaves a considerable gap between the number of classrooms that need quali-

fied teachers and the number willing to take jobs in those classrooms.

The result: School districts – especially districts with many poor students – hire people who do not meet the minimum qualifications the state sets to be certified as a teacher.

During the 1998-99 school year, more than 10 percent of the California teaching force – approximately 28,500 people – worked on an emergency permit rather than with a regular teaching credential. To get an emergency teaching permit, a person must have at least a bachelor’s degree and pass a minimum academic skills test. No experience teaching children is required. But even these stan-

### Growth of Teachers on Emergency Permits



Source: California Commission on Teacher Credentialing

\*Preliminary data. The CTC anticipates that the actual count will be slightly higher.

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dards are often lowered by waiving the skills test requirements.

The distribution of individuals teaching with emergency permits is quite uneven. Some districts, particularly those with more affluent populations, have few problems finding credentialed teachers who want jobs. But other districts, particularly in poor and urban parts of the state, are desperate to find qualified teachers.

Prospective teachers see working conditions as better in suburban districts, while urban school districts spend an increasing amount of energy and resources recruiting teachers.

In Los Angeles, for example, one quarter of the city's 34,000 person teaching force do not hold full teaching credentials. And that portion is growing; of the 3,900 new teachers hired by Los Angeles last year, fully three quarters – 2,900 – only held emergency permits.

Some schools simply cannot find enough teachers with even emergency permits, and wind up using a rotation of long-term substitute teachers to staff classrooms.

These problems are greater in, but not limited to, our large cities. For example, 38 percent of the teachers are underqualified in the Ravenswood City Elementary School District in East Palo Alto, and in all of the district's 11 schools, underqualified teachers comprise more than 20 percent of the staff.

Several specific types of teachers also are in short supply. Schools throughout the state find it increasingly difficult to hire and retain mathematics and science teachers at a time when the state is requiring students to know more in these subjects than ever before. Schools similarly are having difficulty finding trained special education teachers to teach students with learning and other disabilities.

Too frequently teachers who are fully qualified to teach are frustrated by cumbersome personnel policies at local school districts or come with teaching licenses from other states, only to find that California does not recognize the license they earned elsewhere.

*When more than one in five teachers in a school – 20 percent – are underqualified, the school loses its capacity to improve the performance of its students.*

## A QUALIFIED TEACHER FOR EVERY CHILD

Like many states, California has adopted a school improvement strategy aimed at getting all students to meet rigorous academic standards, measuring their progress through tough tests, and holding students and schools responsible for achievement. It is a strategy that cannot work without good teachers and good teaching in every classroom.

Certainly not all of California's teachers who operate on emergency permits are bad teachers, just as not all teachers who are fully credentialed by the state are excellent ones. But holding a state teaching certificate represents a minimum standard of qualification for teachers as they start in the classroom and begin to gain the experience that increases their skills.

In good schools, the best experienced teachers can take beginning teachers under their wings, serving as mentors to help new teachers make the transition from learning about teaching to being

good teachers. And, in good schools, there is sustained professional teamwork among teachers focused on the progress students are making, and what teachers can do to make sure students succeed.

As the number of underqualified teachers grows in a school, there are often not enough good experienced teachers to provide either the mentoring that is crucial for new teachers or to lead substantive discussions about student performance.

Our research indicates that at the point when more than one in five teachers in a school – 20 percent – are underqualified, the school loses its capacity to improve the performance of its students. Although about one quarter of California schools have no underqualified teachers, one-fifth of our schools – 1,380 schools – have 20 percent or more of their staff who are underqualified. Some of them – 64 schools – have more than half of their staff in this underqualified category.

Life in these schools is not easy for teachers or for their students. The underqualified teachers are barely surviving from day to day by trial and error. According to Stanford Professor Linda Darling-Hammond, “At best in these situations, teachers are in a race to learn how to teach before their students move on – and it is a race where students often are the losers.”

The experienced teachers in these schools are stretched way too

far trying to help the underqualified teachers and to make up for the lost learning opportunities that students experience in poorly taught classrooms. Turnover in the teaching staff in these schools is high, as underqualified teachers walk into classrooms full of hope and walk out in despair, while experienced teachers often “burn out” and leave the profession or take a job in a school that offers better teaching conditions.

## PREPARING AND SUPPORTING NEW TEACHERS

Even those new teachers who have gone through a university-based preparation program do not feel totally prepared to handle classroom reality. In our survey of teachers, new teachers were more concerned than veterans about the quality of the training novices received. In general, new teachers felt they should have had more exposure to real classrooms before they began teaching, as well as more experience designing instructional plans and using curriculum materials.

The level of support that new teachers receive as they start working varies widely across the state. About two-thirds of new teachers are actually assigned to a mentor teacher; about half have the opportunity to meet with veteran teachers and observe their teaching.

Those who get the most assistance are elementary teachers, while high school teachers get the least. And those new teachers working in districts where there are large percentages of underqualified teachers usually have fewer opportunities to receive support as they begin teaching.

California has a variety of requirements and programs that are aimed at helping support new teachers and assessing their skills. But in practice these programs do not offer a coherent approach. The case studies we conducted show that most mentors are over-subscribed, usually carrying a full teaching load themselves in addition to working with novice teachers.

The state has taken a big step by increasing funding for the Be-

ginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program– it grew from \$5 million supporting 1,100 new teachers in 1992 to nearly \$72 million serving 23,000 new teachers in 1999-2000. But even with this significant increase, the program still does not serve all new teachers. The districts with the most underqualified teachers have the least capacity to carry out the program – there are simply not enough skilled teachers in these districts to help their novice colleagues.

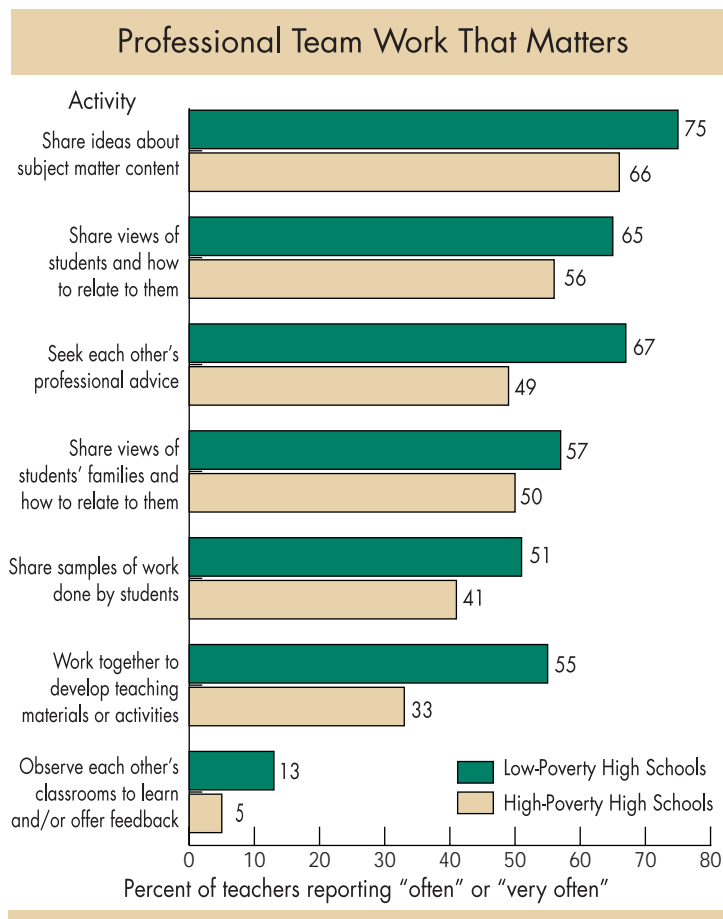
Indeed, in districts with large numbers of underqualified teachers, the emphasis for new teachers is on providing them with “survival techniques” of classroom management and discipline, lesson planning and how to fill out administrative forms. But in places with fewer underqualified teachers, there is much more emphasis on the actual teaching of subject matter, often complete with opportunities to observe experienced teachers in classrooms and to be observed in their own classrooms by mentor teachers.

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A MUST FOR GOOD TEACHING

Other states that have demonstrated success in improving schools have a common theme. They have invested considerably in professional development for all teachers, veterans as well as beginners. These states have tried to make this training part of the regular life of schools, not added events thrown on top of teachers' regular schedules.

High-quality training for all teachers – veterans and novices – is



particularly necessary as California raises standards for students, requiring for example that students know far more mathematics and science than ever before.

Good teachers need to know their subject matter thoroughly. But many teachers in California classrooms today do not. Four out of ten teachers assigned to teach a particular subject do not have either a college major or minor in the subject they are teaching.

Beyond the content of the subject they teach, teachers need training in how best to teach diverse students who come to them with a wide array of backgrounds and learning styles. Teachers need to know what other teachers are doing to succeed, what is working elsewhere across the district, the state or the country.

In good schools, teachers need time and leadership for the professional teamwork necessary to make sure students succeed. They need to time together, for example, to examine the work that students are doing and to determine collectively how to make it better.

In California, there are a variety of professional development programs under way, but they can be characterized as incoherent and disconnected. In addition to programs provided and mandated by the state, there are programs from the federal government, county offices and local school districts.

Indeed, while many teachers say they can choose from a number of professional development options, they perceive much of it as lectures and workshops that fail to meet their needs and have little impact on their teaching or their students' learning. The programs that they say are best – and there are several in California – are those that allow them to focus with other teachers on the work of their students in particular subjects.

The disjointed nature of training and teamwork is compounded by difficult working conditions that range from overcrowded and dilapidated school buildings to year-round schedules that do not

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allow entire faculties to meet at the same time. Further, because of the overall shortage of credentialed teachers willing to take jobs, it has become far more difficult to find substitute teachers available to take over classes so that teachers can get training. This combination makes it difficult for teachers to establish or maintain a professional working team focused on the needs of students. In addition, when

the state recently increased the number of instructional days for students, it eliminated almost all of the training and out-of-class working time for teachers. While the policy allowing schools to substitute teacher professional development time for student instructional time was clearly an unacceptable tradeoff, time for teachers to learn and improve their skills is critically important to student success.

## FINDING SOLUTIONS

We believe that California's need to provide qualified teachers for every student represents a crisis of immense magnitude and will require solutions of matching intensity. There is not a single answer, and there are no quick solutions. This is an issue that California policy makers will need to wrestle with over several years.

We must realize the full magnitude of the crisis in teaching. State leaders need to acknowledge and talk about it. The difficult part is to do so without casting blame or demeaning those teachers who are working hard under difficult circumstances.

As we said at the beginning, there is also good news: California's leadership has taken steps in the right direction, including expanding teacher preparation and induction programs. Further, California's public strongly supports a wide range of solutions – including some quite expensive – to make sure all of our students have good teachers. The state's policy makers want to deliver solutions that work, and the state's economy can afford the investment in producing those solutions.

The conditions are right to develop and sustain the teaching force that California needs. There are some things that policy makers can do immediately. There are other things that, while vital, require time to devise comprehensive policies that do not have unintended consequences.

We offer a summary of our major recommendations here, and provide greater detail in the full report.

### 1. ELIMINATE THE HIRING OF UNQUALIFIED TEACHERS.

- Phase out the approval of waivers and emergency permits over the next 5 years.
- Expand CAL TEACH T grants in size and number, with special emphasis on shortage fields.

### 2. ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD HAS A FULLY QUALIFIED, EFFECTIVE TEACHER.

- Implement a comprehensive program of preparing and placing qualified teachers in inadequately staffed schools by making competitive grants with this specific focus available to publicly supported colleges and universities located in areas with high percentages of inadequately staffed schools.
- Provide 100% forgivable state loans of at least \$20,000, plus tuition fees and books, to students who enroll in and complete a teacher preparation program and immediately go on to teach in a hard-to-staff school for a minimum of 4 years.
- Expand SB 1X to provide annual discretionary grants of \$350 per student for up to three years to enable inadequately staffed schools to attract and retain fully qualified classroom teachers.
- Expand the provisions of existing law by requiring the Commis-

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sion on Teacher Credentialing to notify annually all local education agencies when they employ more than 150% of the statewide average of underqualified teachers.

- Encourage local policy makers and bargaining units to focus Peer Assistance and Review programs (PAR) on inadequately staffed school sites.
- Establish regional cadres of accomplished veteran teachers and recognized experts to provide professional development and support for novice teachers at inadequately staffed schools.

### **3. IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION TO ATTRACT AND KEEP FULLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS.**

- Revise the current beginning teacher salary incentive of \$32,000 to establish a target minimum of \$40,000 for fully qualified new teacher hires in order to make teaching more competitive with other professional opportunities in attracting talented and qualified individuals.
- Continue and expand through CAL TEACH and other state and local programs efforts to recruit teacher candidates whose background and experiences mirror those of the state's diverse student population.
- Provide incentives for developing and maintaining a professional working environment that address facilities use, scheduling, safety, materials, supplies, and other conditions under which teachers are attracted to and stay in the profession.

### **4. STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ALL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS.**

- The Commission on Teacher Credentialing should ensure, as a part of the monitoring and accreditation process being developed, that teacher preparation programs, including district or university

internships, prepare teachers in a manner consistent with the California Academic Standards and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.

- Stop the flow of prospective teachers out of the system before classroom placement through a statewide system to monitor the progress of preservice candidates through professional preparation and into the job market.

### **5. REDUCE UNNECESSARY BARRIERS TO TEACHING.**

- Continue to pursue full reciprocity with other high-standards states and recruit aggressively from states with surpluses of qualified teachers.
- Initiate an independent effort to review local hiring and placement practices and to develop model policies and procedures designed to reduce the delays in hiring new teachers and to identify steps local districts and bargaining units can take to ensure that students with the greatest educational needs are placed with teachers best qualified to teach them.

### **6. ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT TEACHERS TO REACH HIGH LEVELS OF SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE AND INSTRUCTIONAL SKILL.**

- Commission an independent analysis of existing statutes, regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines with the intent of eliminating provisions that deflect teachers' professional development time to matters other than the enhancement of subject matter expertise and instructional skills.
- Support professional development opportunities that incorporate the elements of high quality professional development and focus on enabling students to meet the state standards for learning.
- Ensure that all novice teachers, including interns and those on

*Provide incentives for developing and maintaining a professional working environment that address facilities use, scheduling, safety, materials, supplies, and other conditions under which teachers are attracted to and stay in the profession.*

emergency permits and waivers, get the support and guidance they need to enable their students to reach the state's standards.

- Make available to districts incentives of up to \$250 per student (75% new funding with a local match of 25% from existing sources) to embed in the teaching day and year time for teachers to participate in high-quality professional development that addresses state standards for student learning.
- Create incentives for teacher preparation institutions to offer experienced teachers masters degree programs consistent with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, culminating in the award of both a master of arts degree and National Board certification.
- By 2005 establish an overall statewide goal in statute of one teacher certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for every school in the state.
- Support for National Board certification candidates, including incentives for becoming certified, should be included annually in the budget.

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