The California Alliance for Teacher Education
An Invitation to Participate

The California Alliance is a new statewide partnership that will initiate a range of innovative clinical approaches for preparing future teachers. It will seek results that significantly improve both the preparation of novice teachers and the learning of all students in a broad range of settings, thereby contributing to closing achievement gaps. It will be a network of voluntary partnerships across the state between teacher preparation institutions, schools and school districts, and other interested stakeholders in teacher education.

The Alliance is being led by Chancellor Charles Reed of the California State University and Superintendent Christopher Steinhauser of Long Beach Unified School District. Both served on the distinguished Blue Ribbon Panel that prepared the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) highly respected recent report, *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers.*

The California Alliance has identified five key initial areas for partnerships advancing highly promising innovations in teacher education. This invitation provides an overview of the five California Alliance areas of focus. Universities and P-12 partners may select one or more of these or other areas in teacher education that are of interest to them and become further involved in the Alliance. The five areas are:

- Ensuring rigorous admission criteria for teacher education programs
- Establishing demonstration sites preparing new teachers using a clinical approach
- Creating a collaborative process for selecting placements for teacher candidates
- Structuring an alternative induction program for beginning teachers available to recently laid-off new teachers and those unable to secure a first teaching position
- Piloting performance-based P-12 outcome measures for teacher education.

**Rigorous Admission Criteria for Teacher Education**

This approach focuses on collaborative approaches for developing a shared set of higher selection and admission standards for entering teacher credential candidates. Although existing admission criteria are aligned with state standards for program accreditation, a key area of interest is how to institute even more selective criteria that will serve to recruit the very best of candidates. Also of interest is how to align university entrance criteria with later district hiring criteria. The challenge is both to achieve increased rigor and to maintain or increase diversity in the selected pool of teacher education candidates.

**Clinical Preparation Demonstration Schools**

Similar to well-respected “residencies” or “professional development schools”, demonstration sites will be established that incorporate clinical preparation into school-based teacher education, as a true collaboration between university and P-12 faculty. Clinical approaches will feature site-based preparation of new teachers in order to foster candidate expertise aligned with district needs and to advance P-12 student learning. Demonstration schools will embed preparation of new teachers within the challenges of professional practice, and the sites will benefit from co-teaching by teacher candidates.
Collaborative Process for Teacher Candidate Placements

There are currently many different processes for determining student teacher practicum placements, typically undertaken by the district/school or by the university alone, despite the fact that collaborative and deliberate approaches have demonstrated marked positive results. Development of a shared process for identifying student teaching field placements, with the goal of finding the best classrooms for novice teachers while also serving school and district needs—bringing university resources to the selected schools, is the focus of this component. Attention will also be given to selection and training of cooperating teachers who serve as mentors to student teachers during their classroom practicum placements.

Alternative Teacher Induction Program

Alternative induction programs are being developed to allow newly credentialed teachers to complete an induction program in order to fulfill state requirements without being employed as a contracted teacher. Participants typically will include recently laid-off teachers as well as newly credentialed teachers who are unable to secure a first teaching position. Participants will be able to remain in the profession, develop ties to a local district, enhance existing skills, and add training in teacher shortage areas such as science and mathematics, becoming better prepared to return to full time positions when available.

Performance-Based Outcomes Assessment

Partnerships between universities and school districts have the unique potential to advance innovative measures for evaluating the impact of teacher education programs on P-12 student outcomes. Both sets of organizations seek strengthened approaches for assessing the relationship between teacher professional preparation and student learning outcomes. By exploring a range of innovative assessment approaches, both will learn about the features and utility of various measures that examine the impacts of various teacher education approaches on P-12 learning and achievement and other student outcomes.

Interested?

The benefit of joining the Alliance is a major one—becoming part of a state initiative that has the potential to dramatically improve preparation of new teachers and learning among all P-12 students. Interested parties are encouraged to discuss the Alliance with potential local partners at this time and to determine whether you wish to explore joining. Additional background about the initiative is available at www.calstate.edu/teachered/ca-alliance.

Entities interested in becoming members of the Alliance or obtaining more information should contact Christine Dominguez, Deputy Superintendent, Long Beach Unified School District, at Cdominguez@lbschools.net or Beverly Young, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Teacher Education and Public School Programs at the California State University Office of the Chancellor, at Byoung@calstate.edu. It is requested that all entities interested in the Alliance contact Ms. Dominguez or Dr. Young by September 30, 2011, indicating that they wish to participate and/or identifying questions that they would like to have answered.