

First Systemwide Evaluation of Teacher Education Programs in The California State University 2001

Executive Summary

Origins and Purposes of the Evaluation. For several years, 21 campuses of the California State University (CSU) made extensive changes in teacher preparation programs to produce larger numbers of well-qualified new teachers for public schools in California. In 1998 the CSU Board of Trustees embraced these efforts in a systemwide policy entitled *CSU's Commitment to Prepare High Quality Teachers*. Three years later, after making additional program changes, the 21 CSU Deans of Education decided to find out how well the programs were progressing toward the goals of productivity, excellence and equity in teacher preparation. In 2001 the Deans initiated the first Systemwide Evaluation of Teacher Education Programs in the University's history.

A central purpose of the evaluation was to provide information that the Deans and other campus leaders could *use* in making further improvements in teacher education programs. Rather than viewing evaluation as a one-time need, the Deans initiated an ongoing process that will provide new and updated evaluation data annually.

Evaluation Questions and Answers. The CSU Deans drafted questions about teacher education program quality and effectiveness. The questions focused on how well CSU is preparing teachers to implement the academic standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Based on a stratified random sample of all graduates of credential programs in 1999-2000, CSU located the graduates who were K-12 teachers in 2000-01. The Chancellor's Office received anonymous, confidential, candid answers from 1,408 teaching graduates or 50.3 percent of the teaching sample. CSU also invited the school-site supervisors (most of whom were principals) of these teaching graduates to answer the evaluation questions. A total of 1,186 administrators answered the questions anonymously, confidentially and candidly, for a 45.3 percent return. Due to the sampling procedures and the response rates, the findings of the evaluation accurately describe the preparation of all credential program graduates in the "class" of 1999-00, which consisted of 10,512 newly-prepared teachers.

Evaluation Findings: CSU Productivity in Preparing K-12 Teachers

- (1) Of the 10,512 university students who finished CSU teaching credential programs in 1999-00, 96 percent served as teachers in K-12 schools for one full year or more beginning in 2000-01. These data show that the CSU is highly successful in preparing large numbers of classroom teachers for California schools. Half of the teachers finished the entire program of CSU professional preparation in 15 months or less.
- (2) The largest portion of CSU graduates (37%) taught in "urban and inner-city schools serving lower-income families," according to the principals. Large percentages taught in "rural or small-town schools" (23%), and in "metropolitan schools that serve mixed populations of middle- and lower-income families" (22%). The smallest percentage of CSU graduates (19%) taught in "suburban schools." The data show that most CSU graduates teach in schools that urgently need their fresh expertise and newly-acquired teaching skills.

Evaluation Findings: CSU Effectiveness in Preparing K-12 Teachers

- (1) Principals reported that 81 percent of CSU graduates were well prepared or adequately prepared to teach reading, and 80% to teach mathematics. So recent CSU reforms in the preparation of K-8 teachers for reading-language arts and mathematics instruction were generally successful. More program changes will address the goal of preparing 100 percent of new K-8 teachers to teach these core subjects effectively.
- (2) A smaller portion (78%) of CSU graduates are well prepared or adequately prepared to teach science, and 80 percent to teach history-social science in grades K-8. CSU campuses have given much less attention to these core subjects during the recent focus on K-8 reading and mathematics. Next it will be important to strengthen science and history preparation without reducing reading or mathematics preparation.
- (3) In high schools, principals and other site administrators reported that 86 percent of CSU graduates are well prepared or adequately prepared to teach their major subjects. The graduates need stronger preparation in assessing and assisting individual students, and in developing students' content-based reading skills.
- (4) Principals indicated that 81 percent of all CSU teaching graduates are well prepared or adequately prepared to manage classrooms during instruction. CSU is somewhat less effective in preparing teachers to manage student conduct and discipline, another important area where CSU program improvement is needed.
- (5) Principals also reported that 90 percent of CSU's teaching graduates were well or adequately prepared to work collaboratively with other teachers. And 84 percent were also well or adequately prepared to communicate effectively with parents, according to 1,186 experienced principals of California schools.

Evaluation Findings: CSU Equity in Preparing K-12 Teachers

- (1) CSU campuses have recently made some progress in preparing teachers to meet the instructional needs of a diverse student population. Principals reported that 77 percent were well prepared or adequately prepared. Campuses need to continue making substantive improvements in this important area of educational equity.
- (2) CSU preparation to teach in urban schools, inner-city schools and metropolitan schools is almost as effective as CSU preparation to teach in suburban and rural schools. So the CSU is becoming successful in meeting the educational needs of California's diverse school communities. CSU campuses must make additional strides toward the goal of preparing teachers *equitably* for all students in California's schools.
- (3) Increasingly, CSU graduates teach classes with high concentrations of English language learners. Because of CSU initiatives to expand CLAD-BCLAD preparation programs, 73 percent earn specialized credentials for teaching ELL students. CSU preparation to teach classes with high-concentrations of ELL students is almost as effective as CSU preparation to teach low-concentrations of these students. To maximize its effectiveness in all school communities, the University will continue pursuing the goal of educational equity by preparing more teachers for the rich linguistic diversity of the state's children and adolescents.
- (4) School districts remove increasing numbers of prospective teachers from supervised teaching and place them in classrooms as interns or emergency teachers. In 1999-2000, 18 percent of CSU candidates were interns and 27 percent were emergency teachers. CSU preparation of student teachers is substantially more effective than that of interns and emergency teachers because only the student teachers work intensively and extensively with experienced mentor teachers in their classrooms. To be successful, future improvements in teacher preparation programs — especially improvements in the preparation of interns and emergency teachers — will require greater cooperation from school administrators and teachers.

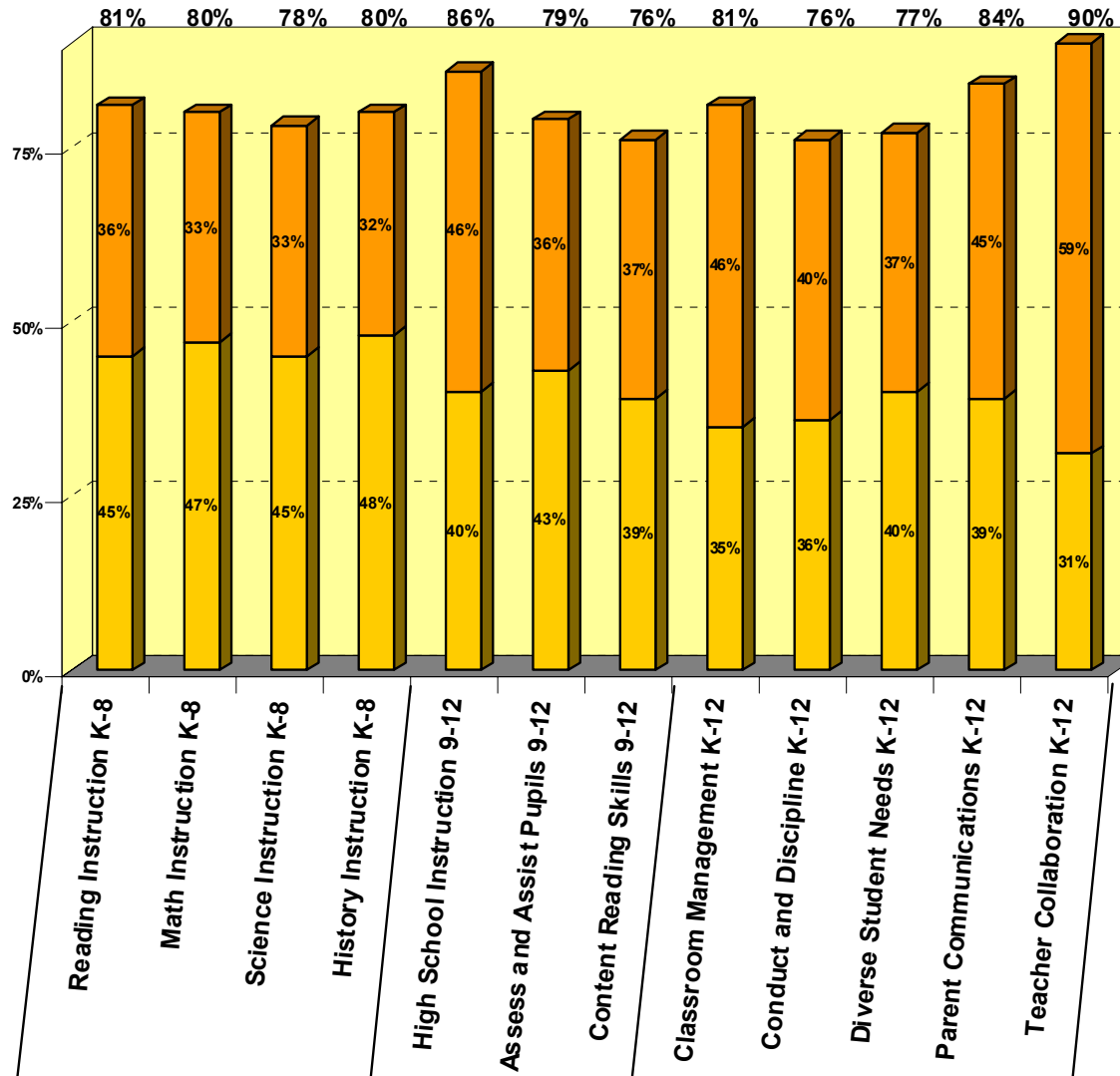
The following chart summarizes evaluations by 1,186 school principals of 12 major outcomes of CSU programs for prospective teachers, highlighting recent improvements as well as needed improvements beginning in 2002.

Twelve Significant Outcomes of CSU Teacher Preparation Programs Evaluated by 1,186 School Principals and Other Site-Administrators in California (K-12)

Systemwide Evaluation of CSU Teacher Preparation Programs:

A Rigorous Systemwide Assessment of the Professional Preparation of 10,092 CSU Graduates from the CSU Class of 1999-2000 Who Were Teaching in California's K-12 Schools During 2000-01.

Office of the Chancellor, California State University 2001



Each School Principal Gave the Following Evidence Anonymously:

"This CSU Graduate Is Serving In My School As a 1st-Year Teacher Under My Supervision, and WAS . . .

Well Prepared
Or
Adequately Prepared

. . . For Each Major Responsibility of K-12 Teachers As Specified Below."

Numbers Inside the Graph Show Percentages of the 1,186 Principals Who Gave Each Answer about Each Major Responsibility of K-12 Teachers. At the Top are Total Percentages of Principals Who Gave the Two Answers (Combined) About Each Responsibility.

CSU Graduates Compared with New Teachers Nationwide

The CSU findings indicate that first-year teachers from the California State University are prepared more effectively than first-year teachers throughout the United States according to the results of a nationwide study by the National Center for Education Statistics (2000). For example, 72 percent of CSU teaching graduates from the class of 1999-2000 reported they were well-prepared or adequately-prepared to implement California's new reading curriculum standards, but 66 percent of first-year teachers nationally gave similar reports about their preparation "to implement state curriculum and performance standards." Also, 74 percent of new teachers who graduated from CSU programs were well- or adequately-prepared to meet the instructional needs of diverse pupils but NCES received equivalent reports from 49 to 67 percent of the national sample of first-year teachers.

Major Conclusions of the CSU Evaluation

In general, the First Systemwide Evaluation of CSU Teacher Preparation Programs indicates that the California State University is beginning to achieve its commitments to productivity, excellence and equity in preparing new teachers for California's K-12 schools. Additional improvements are urgent, particularly in learning to teach K-8 science, assess and assist individual students, improve content-based reading skills, maintain student conduct and discipline, and meet the instructional needs of a diverse student population.

Next Steps for the California State University

The First Systemwide Evaluation of Teacher Education Programs in the California State University will lead to the following actions by the University.

- (1) The results of the evaluation are being used by the CSU campuses as a basis for making further improvements in their programs of professional teacher preparation. The specific findings as outlined in this overview will be the basis for specific program changes as determined by the CSU Deans of Education and other academic leaders and faculties.
- (2) Beginning in 2002-03, further CSU evaluations of programs for prospective teachers will enable campus leaders and systemwide policymakers to track the System's continued progress toward *CSU's Commitment to Prepare High Quality Teachers* as adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1998.
- (3) The CSU will expand the scope of the evaluations to give more attention to the subject-matter preparation of teachers in the subjects of the K-12 curriculum. The current evaluation focused on preparation to *teach* subjects such as reading-language arts and mathematics. Further evaluations will yield added data about content-based preparation outside the CSU's schools, colleges and departments of education.
- (4) Future CSU evaluations will also examine the actual performances of CSU's teaching graduates in K-12 classrooms, subject to the availability of sufficient funding. Aspects of K-12 student achievement that can validly be attributed to CSU preparation programs will also be investigated if adequate funds are secured.
- (5) As the California State University continues and expands its evaluations of teacher education program effectiveness, the Office of the Chancellor will continue to report the findings and conclusions of these evaluations to the Board of Trustees, the Deans of Education, state policymakers and the general public.

For further information about the first Systemwide Evaluation of CSU Teacher Preparation, contact the Office of the Chancellor, California State University, at (916) 278-4582 or dwright@calstate.edu or (510) 763-3943.