The nation needs great teachers. Over the past nine years, the CSU has prepared nearly 100,000 fully qualified teachers. Updated and strengthened federal legislation can help enhance recruitment, preparation, support, and retention of world-class new teachers.

Meeting the Need: The California State University has, over the last decade, prepared more of California’s teachers than all other institutions combined, and roughly 8 percent of the nation’s. During the past six years, the CSU has doubled (to 1,500 per year) the math and science teachers it prepares, over half of whom work in schools in which the majority of children are from families in poverty.

Leading the Way: The CSU is playing a lead role nationally in the transformative redesign of teacher preparation. Twenty-two CSU campuses are preparing P-12 teachers in innovative ways, working in close partnership with local schools through experiential, practice-based, clinical approaches. CSU campuses prepare outstanding new teachers who are effective with all students and prepared to meet the challenges of high-need, inner-city, and rural communities. Campuses are redesigning teacher preparation to address the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.

Emphasizing Accountability: The CSU has for a decade evaluated and refined its preparation programs by surveying school principals who rate the quality of its graduates, and by surveying the graduates themselves after a year of teaching about how well they were prepared for the classroom. The CSU has also put in place an advanced process to analyze the impact of its teacher graduates on student performance, using P-12 student achievement data to continuously improve its programs.

CSU Priorities for 2013: As Congress and the administration work to strengthen teacher recruitment and preparation and new teacher support and retention, the CSU supports legislation that will:

Reward the Most Promising Reforms: Institutions of higher education should be eligible to compete as principal grantees for the same funding opportunities as local education agencies and non-profit organizations in all teacher preparation programs. Co-equal opportunities for support, along with targeted funding and clear partnership requirements, encourage collaboration between P–12 and higher education and help develop and retain excellent teachers for hard to staff schools.

Target Funds to High-Need Schools and Shortage Fields: Federal funding should explicitly target high-need schools and teacher preparation in shortage fields, such as science, mathematics, and special education. Successful aspects of the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) program should be retained, and a dedicated source of funds (similar to the current 2.5 percent set-aside for IHE’s in Title II, ESEA) should be provided for partnerships between IHEs and high need school districts for the professional development of both new and current teachers and school leaders.

Support Data-Driven Accountability in Teacher Preparation: The CSU encourages explicit provisions that advance rigorous measurement and evaluation of both candidate and program outcomes at the state and institutional levels. Improving teacher preparation requires accountability by institutions of higher education and necessitates direct funding for building reliable and valid systems for assessing candidate and program outcomes. Institutions must be given the opportunity, support, and time needed to develop robust procedures for tracking performance of graduates, the impact they have on P-12 students, and retention in the profession. Rigorous and meaningful accountability processes require multiple measures and flexibility responsive to institutional conditions.