

## PREPARATION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

# Strengthening Tennessee's New Teacher Pipeline

APRIL 2017





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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than 65,000 teachers show up each day to work in Tennessee’s public schools. At the current rate, half of these teachers will leave or retire in the next decade. The positions they vacate will be filled primarily by novice educators.

## **What will it take to ensure that our state has a strong and vibrant new teacher pipeline in the years to come?**

### **This report looks at the landscape of new teachers in Tennessee to understand more about state needs around teacher preparation.**

We investigate both the level of demand for teachers with particular subject-area specializations and the effectiveness and comfort level with which new teachers enter the classroom. We argue that we must continue to improve our systems to ensure that prepared teachers find their ways into the schools and districts that need them most and that they continue to develop their skills once they reach the classroom.

This is not simply a call for increased effort on the part of Tennessee’s educator preparation providers (EPPs). Preparation providers are as dependent upon pre-K–12 schools as these schools are on EPPs. The two groups are intricately linked through a progression from the identification of areas of need to the initial recruitment of students into EPPs and continuing through clinical placement and teacher induction programs.

To improve the pipeline, we will need to place renewed attention on the level of integration across systems to support novice teachers and the extent to which we are making the right demands and offering the right set of supports for both EPPs and Tennessee school districts.

This next step will be challenging. Districts and EPPs have historically struggled to engage in deep and sustained partnerships, despite having generally positive relationships, in part because most districts interact with

a significant number of EPPs, and EPPs send teachers to a wide variety of districts. Developing meaningful, data-informed, and sustained partnerships will require substantial commitment on the part of both districts and EPPs.

To get there, we offer several next steps, each of which places specific requirements on our state agencies, districts, and EPPs. Only with coordinated action and a shared definition of success will we succeed in our efforts to ensure that new educators are equipped to deliver effective instruction to all Tennessee students.

### **To this end, we describe state efforts to:**

- provide better data for better decisions and
- new resources for partnership, collaboration, and enhancing the pipeline.

### **And we offer a series of recommendations for districts and EPPs aimed at:**

- addressing teacher shortages and
- developing high-quality teachers for every classroom.

# THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION CONTEXT IN TENNESSEE

Our state has made significant policy changes in recent years aimed at strengthening accountability systems for educator preparation providers and connecting educator preparation programs more closely to the needs of Tennessee’s classrooms.

## **Eight years ago, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission began publicly releasing an educator preparation report card that shared data on teacher placement and effectiveness rates for each individual EPP in the state.**

In 2015, the responsibility for this report card moved to the State Board of Education, reflecting the philosophy that the data reports needed to incorporate more information from Tennessee’s public K–12 schools and focus on higher education and K–12 audiences.

Most recently, the state board revised the EPP comprehensive review process for ongoing state approval, requiring that EPPs demonstrate that they meet Tennessee state standards that are in alignment with the 2013 Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP) Standards.<sup>1</sup> This program approval framework promotes continuous improvement of EPPs to ensure that all new teachers are prepared to effectively educate a diverse group of students.

The state board’s new program approval framework places significantly more attention on the outcomes and impacts of program completers than ever before. While it is based in standards that were developed by a national organization, Tennessee has worked with stakeholders from EPPs and districts to create a set of required evidence templates related to each of the five standards. By collecting standardized evidence, the department will implement a review process that is grounded in clear expectations for performance through tools like rubrics and identified performance thresholds.

This process relies on educator preparation provider and completer data that the department will generate reports from and provide to EPPs annually. These EPP Annual Reports both assess provider effectiveness and serve as a source of data to drive annual EPP improvement. If a provider falls below expectations on multiple annual reports, the EPP will be required to engage in an interim review. During an interim review, providers must develop a plan that includes clear action steps and expected outcomes that are designed to address the areas of deficiency. The purpose of interim reviews is to support continuous improvement and help the provider prepare for the comprehensive review, although the interim reviews can eventually lead to program closure if improvement milestones are not met. The comprehensive review takes place once every seven years and requires each provider to demonstrate evidence related to each CAEP standard.

The policy also called for the creation of a task force to advise the department on the implementation of a program approval progression integrated with the Annual Reports.<sup>2</sup> For each of the five CAEP standards, the implementation working group set a series of Tennessee-specific expectations; standardized evidence collection, including tools and procedures; and a set of metrics to assess outcomes and impacts through the EPP Annual Reports process. In 2017, the Educator Preparation Working Group will work to develop rubrics to assess presented evidence and, through a standard-setting process, recommend expectations for the EPP Annual Report metrics.

# Educator Preparation Program Standards

## CAEP Standard 1—Content and Pedagogical Knowledge

Standard 1 focuses on ensuring that educators have the knowledge and skills needed to provide effective instruction.

*Specific to Tennessee:* All Tennessee EPPs will be required to complete the same template. This standardized evidence collection process will support our understanding of the types of coursework, assessments, and clinical experiences that lead to the preparation of effective educators.

## CAEP Standard 2—Clinical Partnership and Practice

Standard 2 focuses on expectations regarding partnerships between key stakeholder groups and specifically addresses expectations related to clinical educators and clinical experiences.

*Specific to Tennessee:* All Tennessee EPPs will be required to complete the primary partnership templates that identify how partners collaborate and the outcomes of that collaboration.

## CAEP Standard 3—Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity

Standard 3 focuses on expectations related to candidates, including cohort diversity, candidate dispositions and academic credentials. In addition, the standard sets expectations for selection throughout the program, including entrance, progression, and exit requirements.

*Specific to Tennessee:* In addition to considering candidate data through the annual reports, all Tennessee EPPs will be expected to work with primary partners to develop specific recruitment goals. Finally, beginning January 1, 2019, all candidates will be required to complete a performance assessment called edTPA. This assessment considers candidates' preparedness in the areas of planning, instruction, and student assessment.

## CAEP Standard 4—Program Impact

Standard 4 considers outcomes and impact data, including employment statistics, satisfaction results and measures of educator effectiveness.

*Specific to Tennessee:* All Tennessee EPPs will receive an annual report generated by the department that will address the required components of this standard and additional Tennessee-specific expectations. The department will work with the educator preparation working group during 2017 to complete a standard setting process based in the first iteration of the annual reports, which were published in March 2017.

## CAEP Standard 5—Provider Quality, Continuous Improvement, and Capacity

Standard 5 sets the expectation that providers implement a system that allows them to assess the effectiveness of their programs and to support continuous improvement.

*Specific to Tennessee:* All Tennessee EPPs will be required to complete the same template. This standardized evidence collection process will support our understanding of the ways in which providers collect and use data to support continuous improvement of their programs.

# TENNESSEE'S NOVICE TEACHER LANDSCAPE

The recent policy shifts around educator preparation raise the question of how we as a state are actually doing in readying new teachers for the classroom. Tennessee districts need to be able to count on a steady supply of teachers trained across subjects and grade levels with the knowledge and skills to deliver effective instruction to a diverse group of students. Our new teachers must be able to count on strong support, especially in their beginning years, to refine their craft and improve in areas of weakness. Are we succeeding?

In the next sections, we summarize the set of available data on the novice teacher landscape in Tennessee. We begin with what we know about teacher supply and demand in the state and then move to the expertise that our new teachers bring to the classroom.

## STAFFING NEEDS IN TENNESSEE SCHOOLS

Staffing challenges—in Tennessee and elsewhere—have contributed to a growing national narrative on the insufficient supply of teachers to meet classroom needs. Most recently, the Learning Policy Institute's report, *A Coming Crisis in Teaching? Teacher Supply, Demand, and Shortages in the U.S.*, launched a variety of news articles on the subject that focused on the looming crisis related to the lack of teachers being prepared for our nation's schools.

Yet important nuances of the story seem to be getting left out of the discussion.

The national report points out, “teacher shortages are not felt uniformly across all communities and classrooms, but instead affect some states, subject areas, and student populations more than others, based on differences in wages, working conditions, concentrations of teacher preparation institutions, as well as a wide range of policies that influence recruitment and retention.”<sup>3</sup>

Tennessee's teacher labor markets are similarly complex. At the state level, we have seen some decline in the number of overall graduates from Tennessee EPPs each year; however, the bulk of this decline has been in the

number of veteran teachers obtaining additional degrees rather than in the number of new teachers entering the profession. In fact, teachers in certain subject areas such as English language arts graduate from Tennessee EPPs at such high rates that a report from the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee Knoxville characterized teaching in general as an “over-supplied” career path within the state.<sup>4</sup>

There is less evidence that we face widespread shortfalls in the quantity of available teachers than that we face particular challenges in certain subject areas, types of districts, and demographic categories of teachers.

We see the greatest need in the areas of English as a Second Language (ESL), world languages, and science. Although the number of ESL-licensed teachers graduating from Tennessee EPPs has grown substantially, the growth has been outpaced by the increase in students identified as needing English Learner (EL) services across the state. We see similar patterns in world languages and science, where relatively few teachers obtain Tennessee licenses in comparison with levels of demand in the state.

It is also notable that few of our Tennessee EPP graduates come from minority subgroups. Only 14 percent of EPP completers self-identified as not white in the 2015-16 cohort, compared with 36 percent of Tennessee's student population. This issue was recently called out in a report by Tennessee State Collaborative On Reforming Education (SCORE)—*Prepared for Day One: Improving the Effectiveness of Early-Career Teaching*—that offered a series of strategies for improving the racial and ethnic diversity of Tennessee's teaching population.

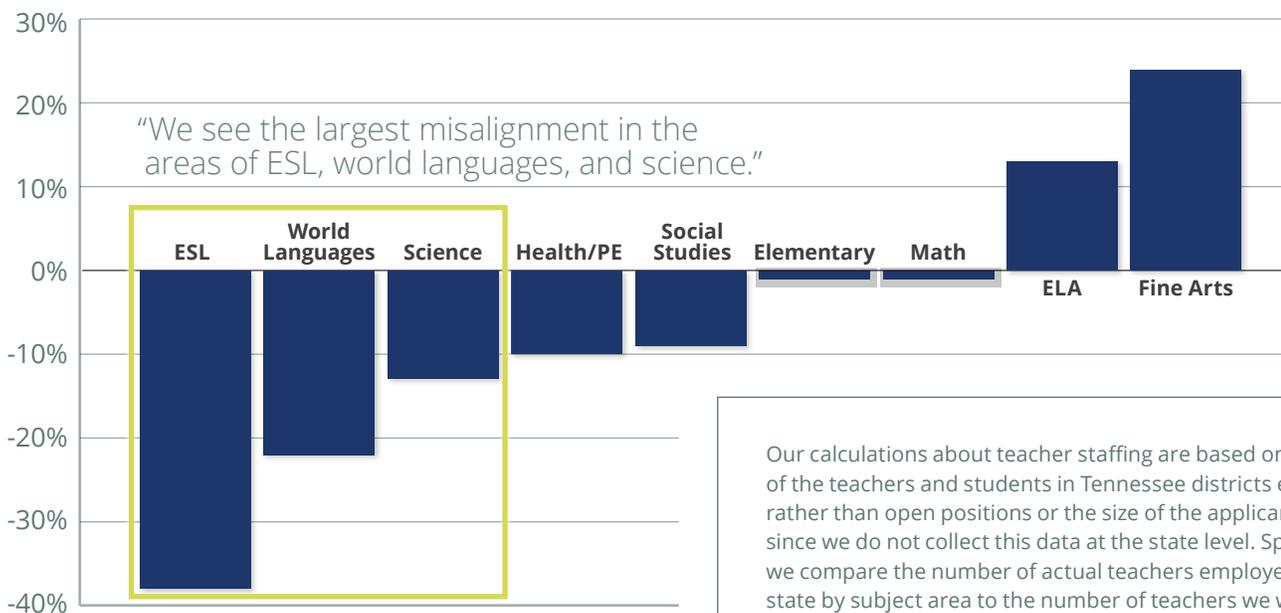
Constrained production of teachers in certain areas is compounded by the fact that not all graduates from Tennessee EPPs go on to teach in Tennessee public schools, and the rates at which this takes place differ by subject area. Ninety-one percent of elementary education program completers get Tennessee licenses with elementary endorsements in the two years following program completion, whereas only 65 percent of world languages program completers and 71 percent of secondary science program completers go on to get a Tennessee license in their area of study.

The patterns on the teacher supply side align with districts' reported needs. In a central office survey conducted by the department, more than half of districts reported the perception that EPPs are not producing enough teachers to meet staffing needs in world languages, math, science, and ESL. State data

on staff placement tells a similar story.<sup>5</sup> When we compare the number of actual teachers employed in the state by subject area to the number of teachers we would expect to see working in our schools, based on state course taking requirements and class size guidance tied to funding guidelines, **we see the largest misalignment in the areas of ESL, world languages, and science.**

However, the overall statewide issues we face are not uniformly experienced by all districts. Districts each have their own distinct challenges. For example, the ESL gaps we see tend to be driven by many of our urban districts, while many of our smaller, rural districts have small, if any, populations of ELs. In contrast, our rural districts tend to have the greatest difficulty attracting world languages teachers. We also see some districts facing challenges in areas where we did not find overall statewide shortages, such as fine arts and social studies.

This means that simply producing more ESL, world languages, and science teachers will not be enough to ensure all districts have an adequate supply of teachers. Instead, we must focus on how to get the properly prepared and endorsed teachers into the schools and districts that need them most. Different schools and districts face different challenges in finding the teachers they need to serve their students.



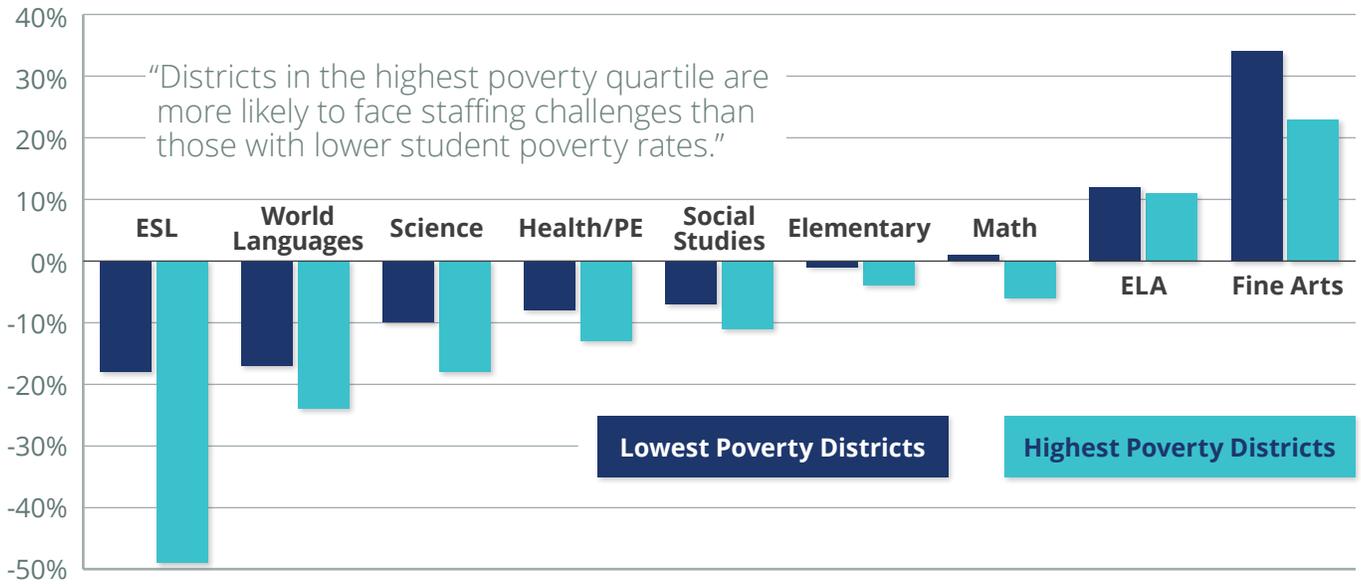
Our calculations about teacher staffing are based on counts of the teachers and students in Tennessee districts each year rather than open positions or the size of the applicant pool, since we do not collect this data at the state level. Specifically, we compare the number of actual teachers employed in the state by subject area to the number of teachers we would expect to see, based on state course taking requirements and class size guidance tied to funding guidelines.

Figure 1

## Rates of Overstaffing and Understaffing in Tennessee Schools

Figure 2

### Staffing Rates by Subject, Comparing Lowest and Highest Poverty Districts



We also see ways that shortages contribute to the state’s equity challenges. **Districts in the highest poverty quartile—those with more than two-thirds of their students qualifying as economically disadvantaged—are more likely to face staffing challenges than those with lower student poverty rates.**

Schools and districts that face staffing challenges employ a variety of strategies to deal with their deficits. Some strategies include increasing class sizes, assigning teachers outside of their endorsement area, and, at the high school level, offering fewer course options. This results in constrained student pathways. Even more

concerning, there is evidence that schools with teacher shortages in a particular content area have smaller gains in student achievement in that area compared to similar schools without shortages. When we compare schools that are understaffed in a particular subject area to those with a larger staff pool, the understaffed schools average lower school-level value-added scores in the affected subject areas.

Addressing our supply issues represents the first critical step to ensuring quality teachers for all students, especially since we have evidence that an inadequate supply of teachers has real consequences for our schools and our students.

## NEW TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Filling positions is not only about finding teachers with the appropriate endorsements in the subjects needed. Districts and schools face an equal if not greater set of hurdles in finding teachers who possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide effective instruction to students with a diverse set of needs.

Identifying classroom-ready teachers presents a challenge for most districts. In 2015, less than 60 percent of districts reported that “the new teachers our district hires are prepared for our district’s classrooms,” and just under one-third of districts agreed that new teachers

demonstrated an understanding of the key instructional competencies measured by Tennessee’s teacher evaluation rubric.

In Tennessee, as is true across the country, new teachers tend to enter the classroom somewhat less effective than their more experienced peers; evaluation ratings for new teachers average about half a point lower than for veterans. In particular, new teachers tend to be flagged by administrators as weaker in instructional practices such as questioning and on classroom environmental measures such as managing student behavior.

But we also see tremendous variation across new teachers that enter the workforce in any given year. **While novice teachers are on average rated less effective than veteran teachers, there is tremendous variation in effectiveness within both groups.** In 2014-15, nearly 60 percent of novice teachers earned an overall level of effectiveness of 4 or 5. At the same time 13 percent of novice teachers scored a 1 or 2. New teachers enter the classroom with different sets of strengths and weaknesses and varying levels of preparedness. Treating them as a block makes it challenging to determine how to best target improvement efforts.

A growing body of evidence shows that some of the variation in new teacher effectiveness can be traced back to the preparation program the new teacher completed.<sup>6</sup> Ongoing research in Tennessee continues to explore how EPPs vary in their ability to provide high-quality teachers to school districts. Researchers at the University of Michigan are analyzing observation data to try to understand the particular strengths and weaknesses across Tennessee EPPs.<sup>7</sup>

As a state, Tennessee has tracked and publicly released measures of program effectiveness since 2010 through the Teacher Preparation Report Card.<sup>8</sup> This report card

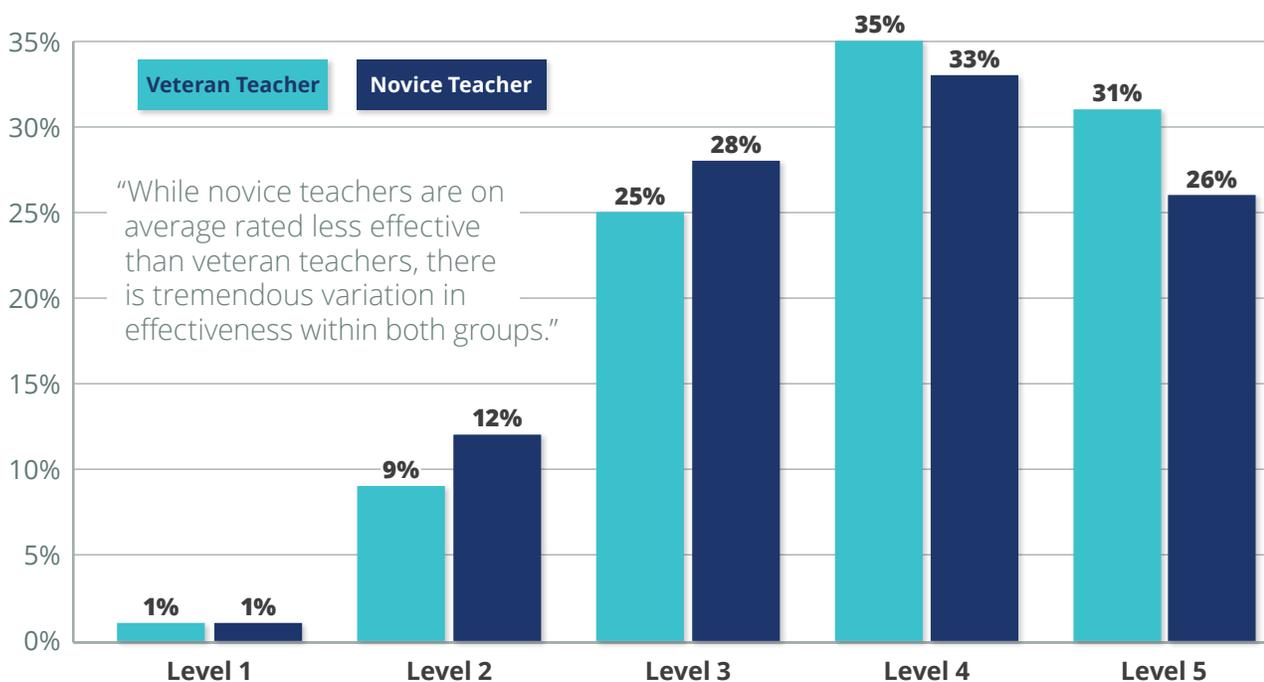
evaluates EPPs on the rates of teacher employment in Tennessee public schools, retention among completers who enter Tennessee public schools, and these teachers' effectiveness as measured by Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) and observation ratings. In addition to the Teacher Preparation Report Card, the department's new EPP Annual Reports highlight variation across programs within every provider on multiple measures of program effectiveness including the evidence of its candidates' impact on student growth. By examining this data over time, we will be able to identify programs within Tennessee EPPs as well as the elements of program design that are related to preparing teachers who thrive in Tennessee schools.

The data also shows how teachers' perceptions are informed by their school and district placement. When we survey new teachers about their preparation experiences, we find that their views about their own classroom readiness are significantly informed both by the EPP they attended and by the district and school where they took a job.

The data from new teacher survey results is particularly intriguing when it comes to the effects of induction on bridging the distance between preparation and

Figure 3

### Novice and Veteran Teacher Levels of Overall Effectiveness (2014–15)



comfort in the classroom. **Teachers who reported participating in a district-based induction program viewed their EPP coursework more favorably than those who did not, and they felt more prepared for the expectations of the classroom.** Specifically, about 73 percent of new teachers reported participating in a district led induction program, with 54 percent of these teachers saying they were very satisfied with the quality of the preparation they received from their EPP. Just 46 percent of teachers who did not participate in an induction program

responded that they were very satisfied with their EPP preparation.

One possible interpretation of this finding is that induction—under the right circumstances—can actually reinforce the effects of preparation by ensuring that new teachers quickly find their footing within their new context. By linking effective preparation with high quality induction, EPPs and districts can collaborate to improve the overall quality of our educator workforce.

“Teachers who reported participating in a district-based induction program viewed their EPP coursework more favorably than those who did not, and they felt more prepared for the expectations of the classroom.”

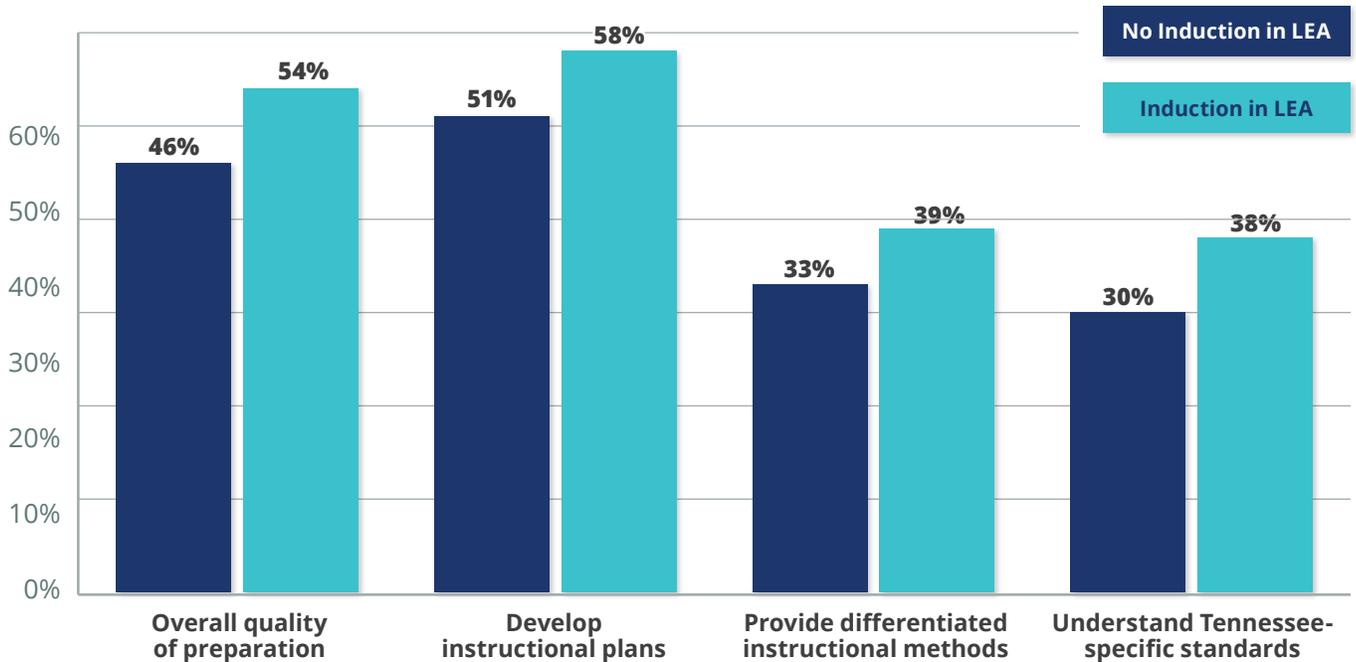


Figure 4  
**Percent of New Teachers Feeling “Well Prepared”**

# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This report highlights two key challenges facing our state: **shortages in certain subject areas and new teacher quality**. To address these challenges, key stakeholders must work together to achieve shared goals. Because we know that this work is complex, we must develop a coherent statewide strategy that capitalizes on the most efficient use of limited resources while offering flexibility to meet the specific needs of individual districts and schools.

We begin by describing our view of **the state's role** in this work and then we list a series of specific **recommendations for districts and EPPs** to collaboratively support this work going forward. These next steps build on a growing momentum across the state to continue to improve our new teacher pipeline, and they align well with recommendations and next steps from other advocacy groups across the state.<sup>9</sup>

## THE STATE ROLE



### Better Data for Better Decisions

In the past few years, the department has initiated several major efforts to provide better staffing data to inform district and EPP decision-making. First, the department is providing **Annual Reports** on Educator Preparation directly to EPPs. These reports provide disaggregated data related to program completers and include information about placement and retention.<sup>10</sup> This information should help EPPs consider which of their individual programs are producing the teachers that Tennessee public schools need and whether their completers are staying in the positions into which they are placed. In addition, these reports offer significant information about the quality of novice educators following placement in Tennessee public schools. EPPs can use this information to better understand how they can support the development of effective novice teachers. For example, the new reports offer EPPs highly detailed information about how completers are assessed during observations. This type of information provides EPPs with clear indicators of areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

Along with the development and release of Annual Reports, the department is in the process of building an **EPP Portal application**, a data collection and reporting system that will streamline and standardize the program review process, produce and disseminate Annual Reports (including stakeholder surveys), and serve as a platform for conducting research on the impact of program design characteristics (e.g., the impact of clinical practice type on completer effectiveness). Through this application, clear, efficient standards will be set and used for preliminary reports from the department and, as part of the program approval process, to understand the quality of the educators that are produced by EPPs at the program level. This application will significantly improve the state's ability to provide transparent, accurate, and timely information to EPPs.

Beginning January 1, 2019, all pre-service teacher candidates will be required to complete the **edTPA**, a performance assessment that considers candidates' preparedness in the areas of planning, instruction, and student assessment. The edTPA is generally completed during the candidate's clinical practice (e.g., student teaching, internship, or job-embedded preparation

experience). EPPs can use this data as a capstone measure to understand the preparedness of their completers as they exit the EPP. Even more beneficial is the use of data in the aggregate to inform program changes to support the development of candidates with stronger skills in the areas of greatest need.

On the district side, the department began providing districts with district-specific **Human Capital Data Reports** in 2015 to help districts think strategically about their workforce. The reports include a series of guiding questions to help districts reflect on evaluation data, retention rates, equitable access to effective educators, and where the district gets its new teachers. Data analysts located in each of the department's Centers of Regional Excellence (CORE) offices are using the reports to guide conversations with district leaders about improving their human capital strategies.



### Resources for Partnership, Collaboration, and Enhancing the Pipeline

The state will be making a **\$200,000 investment in innovation grants provided to EPPs** striving for gains in recruitment and training of new candidates and focused on early literacy training. The purpose of the innovation grants is to incentivize approved EPPs to design new approaches and/or strategies as a part of educator preparation that will support the development of a diverse educator workforce, increase production of educators with preparation in high-demand endorsement

areas, and promote collaboration to improve preparation in the area of literacy.

The revised educator preparation policy requires all EPPs to establish partnerships with districts where their enrolled candidates complete clinical experiences. This revision stemmed from a need expressed by both EPPs and districts for improved communications and collaboration. In response, the department began coordinating a district-EPP partnership network to establish a systematic process for developing meaningful partnerships. The state chartered its inaugural **Network for Educator Preparation Partnerships (NEPP)** in June of 2016, with the goal of fostering effective, mutually beneficial partnerships between and among EPPs and school districts in support of improved teacher effectiveness. Through the NEPP, the state, districts, and EPPs are working to develop a shared understanding of what an effective partnership looks like. Districts and EPP partners are using data to set shared goals and identify responsibilities and strategies for working together to achieve these goals (see pull box with a description of the ETSU partnership with Johnson City and Kingsport). The state is providing tools to help districts and EPPs evaluate their partnership work.

Since 2013, the state has contracted with **Teachers-Teachers.com**, one of the largest educator databases available in the country, in order to provide Tennessee school districts with access to job seekers nationwide. This resource expands support to districts by automating the application, outreach, and screening processes,

## Partnerships

In August 2016, leadership teams from Johnson City Schools (JCS), Kingsport City Schools (KCS), and East Tennessee State University (ETSU) began transforming their long-standing relationship into a partnership as part of the department's inaugural Network for Educator Preparation Providers (NEPP). The network seeks to substantially reshape and strengthen how candidates are prepared and supported as they become teachers. To grow relationships into partnerships involves moving beyond attending job fairs or requesting mentor teachers. Partnerships require working hand-in-hand to develop the pathways from preparation into teachers' early careers. Recognizing that district partners play an important role in the preparation of teachers, the

team is examining ETSU's admissions requirements by actively involving principals from JCS and KCS in teacher education admissions interviews. The team is also examining feedback from mentor teachers, principals, and teacher candidates about the content and rigor of curriculum, programs of study, and the year-long clinical experiences of teacher candidates to identify ways to better meet the needs of district partners. Through this process of continuous review, the teams have identified opportunities to improve the preparation of teachers. ETSU, JCS, and KCS are transforming a good relationship into a strong partnership that will benefit Tennessee educators and ultimately students in Tennessee's public schools.

and helping them to develop proactive recruitment strategies. Over the last few years, the functionality of the tool continues to improve. For example, new data integrations with job aggregators, including Indeed.com, allow one job posting to reach significantly more qualified candidates. In 2016, 134 Tennessee districts and 34 charter schools posted more than 5,600 job postings which resulted in over 48,000 applications, nearly eight applicants per posting. In the coming year, the state plans to offer additional trainings and webinars in recruitment best practices, understanding millennial job seekers and improved functionality of Teachers-Teachers.com.

Districts share in the challenge of recruiting, hiring, and retaining educators who reflect the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of their student population. The state will focus on cultivating the educator pipeline to address diversity, equity, and teacher shortages in multiple ways in 2017. First, working closely with the department's college, career and technical education team, districts will be supported in developing more **"Grow Your Own" programs** via increased course offerings in "Teaching as a Profession" and expanding student

interest groups such as Educators Rising. The team will prioritize expansion in districts with significant shortages in key academic areas and significant mismatches in teacher and student demographics.

Second, the state plans to make a **\$100,000 investment in grants for targeted districts** to develop plans to increase diversity of the teaching force. The department has done some preliminary analysis to identify the districts with the largest gaps between teacher and student demographics. The initial analysis of 2014 data showed 122 districts without a single Hispanic teacher and 27 districts without a single African American teacher.

Lastly, Tennessee is partnering with seven other states to learn from each other on key state-level talent management challenges and solutions that directly impact districts' and states' abilities to find and keep great talent in their schools. The result of this alliance will be a state-specific toolkit with practical materials and best practices to share with districts and schools in 2018.

## DISTRICT AND EPP STRATEGIES

### Addressing Teacher Shortages Identifying the Teachers We Need

**Districts should prioritize determining their hiring needs in advance and share this information with EPP partners.** Districts face different challenges in recruiting the right candidates, and many face budget and other resource constraints that limit their ability to attract and retain the strongest candidates who might be swayed by other compensation packages offered in other districts. At the same time, we see opportunities for more strategic recruitment via better forecasting of the positions districts expect to need to fill in coming years. The most helpful forecasting is subject and grade level specific. Districts should confirm and post job openings earlier, giving them a longer time to find high quality candidates. EPPs then can work with this information to steer candidates into areas of need. According to reports on the district survey, less than half of Tennessee districts conduct regular forecasting of what positions they will have open in future years. Most districts not only post but identify open positions in the spring with only a few districts starting the hiring process as early as winter. A handful of districts reported not confirming and posting vacancies until summer.

**Districts and EPPs should use data from EPP Annual Reports and Human Capital Reports to**

**jointly develop targeted recruitment strategies.**

By sharing data from these reports, partners can begin to develop plans for recruiting teachers, including both attracting diverse initial candidates into the EPP pipeline in particular subject areas and sending these candidates into areas of need across the state. Recruitment strategies should be tied to district knowledge of upcoming vacancies. Working strategically with EPP partners is a primary avenue for districts to fill open positions. Thoughtful clinical placements are especially powerful since candidates are often employed in the districts and schools where they completed student teaching. While recruitment to the profession is a responsibility shared across stakeholders, EPPs play a significant role in helping prospective candidates make decisions about pursuing a career in teaching. Providers should use their own data to highlight program strengths, job placement statistics and opportunities for scholarships that can be targeted to prospective candidates. Using data estimates or forecasts provided by partner districts, EPPs should set recruitment goals that reflect the needs of districts and schools. In some cases, this may require that institution-level leadership, such as presidents and provosts, provide direct expectations for collaboration across departments within the institution. For instance, recruiting more math teachers may require developing a strategic plan in concert with the math department within the college of arts and sciences.

## Haywood County: Building a High-Quality and Diverse Teaching Staff from within a Diverse Community

Among Tennessee districts serving mostly minority students, Haywood County Schools has one of the most diverse teaching staffs in the state. About 70 percent of its students and 30 percent of its teachers are African American, Hispanic, or Native American. Haywood's efforts to increase diversity also serve to strengthen their staffing as a whole—the district has fewer shortages than most districts in the state. Chief Talent and Strategy Officer Toni Eubanks attributes these successes to keeping the community involved: "It's a small town. In small towns, people support each other." She relies on the small-town community to help the district achieve its goals of building a diverse, high-quality teaching staff. She regularly reaches out to community organizations—including a group of retired Haywood teachers, the local chapter of a national teaching sorority, a community social

group, and nearby university Freed-Hardeman—to provide funding for staff and students in Haywood County who are interested in teaching. Some of the scholarships specifically target minority candidates while others encourage nomination of minorities for receiving funds. For example, a recent Brownville High School graduate planning to major in education received a scholarship to Freed-Hardeman after a school employee informed her of the opportunity. Additionally, the retired teachers club raises funds to help Haywood paraprofessionals and substitute teachers, who are often minority staff members, to receive teaching credentials. By thinking long-term and keeping the diversity of its current staff, students, and community in mind as Haywood searches for teachers, Eubanks and the Haywood staff have better positioned the district to provide the teachers its students need.

**EPPs need to provide strong job placement support to candidates.** While candidates often have preferences about where they may prefer to teach, EPPs can provide placement support by advising candidates about where jobs are plentiful and steering them toward districts that are most in need. For example, EPPs can send job opening announcements to particular students or help students understand hiring policies of high-need districts. By providing EPPs with information about their hiring needs in advance, districts can support these efforts. Further, as research from outside Tennessee has shown, partners should recognize that clinical placement can have significant influence on job placement.

**Districts must strategically design targeted human capital efforts.** Strong recruitment strategies are multifaceted and aimed at a variety of audiences in order to fill open positions with quality candidates. As we have seen, high-poverty districts often face particular challenges recruiting qualified candidates. Resource availability will always cause challenges, but there are strategies that even low-resource districts can take to attract high-quality teachers. While EPPs are certainly the top source for teacher recruitment, districts report using a variety of other avenues including recruiting experienced teachers outside their district, new teachers certified through alternative certification programs, and substitutes and paraprofessionals from within the district (see the Haywood County box above for an example of

how a district can think outside of the box when it comes to recruitment). Furthermore, in partnership with EPPs, districts can identify candidates for the EPP with the hope that they return to the district to educate students at the completion of their program. Promising examples include districts engaging CTE concentrators whose program area is education or paraprofessionals who need more education to become qualified educators. Districts also have extensive tools of their own for recruiting, developing, and retaining their staff. These include differentiated pay plans and teacher-leader strategies that help recruit new teachers by targeting particular high-need subjects or schools for bonuses, rewarding performance, and defining clear pathways into leadership positions.



### Addressing Novice Teacher Quality Developing High-Quality Teachers for Every Classroom

**EPPs must continue to improve their ability to develop and deliver relevant and rigorous coursework.** Effective educator preparation programs align coursework to Tennessee's Academic Standards and align coaching strategies and feedback with state and local expectations. Using candidate assessment data, observation scores, and perceptions of new teachers, EPPs can evaluate the effectiveness of their program design, including coursework. These data can inform

changes in structure, pacing, and content to lead to the production of educators who are fully equipped to provide effective instruction in Tennessee’s public schools. Ideally, EPPs include pre-K–12 practitioners in the delivery of coursework. This integration supports ongoing collaboration and ensures that both EPPs and districts are aware of areas of alignment and areas that may need additional attention. Finally, faculty delivering coursework should engage in opportunities to create authentic experiences that allow for the application of theoretical course content.

**Districts and EPPs should collaborate closely to ensure high-quality and meaningful clinical experiences for teachers in training.**

One of the best ways to develop effective educators is to provide an opportunity for them to learn to apply their knowledge in an authentic setting with the guidance and support of effective mentors and expert faculty. When surveyed, new teachers reported that their clinical experiences were more valuable than their coursework in supporting their learning related to instruction and classroom environment, especially managing student behavior. Working collaboratively to design and

implement effective clinical experiences is an essential component of effective preparation. About 70 percent of districts reported collaborating with EPPs to select, set expectations for, and train mentor teachers for pre-service educators. Effective collaboration in this area allows candidates to transfer the skills they learn in their own coursework to the classroom under the guidance of effective mentor teachers. Mentor teachers model effective instruction and offer support and feedback for novice educators as they begin to practice the craft of teaching. District and EPP partners should regularly assess the quality and effectiveness of clinical experiences offered to candidates.

**Districts should regularly review the systems they have in place for developing and supporting novice teachers.**

Quality induction programs bridge the transition from preparation to practice. Systems of support through effective mentorship, coaching, and well-developed new teacher orientations help teachers apply their knowledge in the classroom. Much research has focused on the challenges of developing and implementing effective professional learning for teachers. One consistent feature that has

Figure 5

## A Roadmap for District and Teacher Preparation Programs to Build and Sustain Strong, Bold Partnerships<sup>11</sup>

### INITIATION STAGE

**1** Districts should understand their talent pipeline and discuss these needs with teacher preparation programs.

**2** Partners should set the initial vision and goals together, with a focus on relationship-building and trust.

**3** Partners should align on rubrics and key expectations for program graduates.

**4** Partners should commit to sharing and looking at data together to drive action.

### IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

**5** Partners should jointly select and train mentor teachers and strategically place candidates.

**6** Partners should ensure coursework matches clinical experiences and district language.

**7** Partners should communicate and meet frequently.

**8** Partners should spend more time in schools together.

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT STAGE

**9** Partners should be open to change and regularly step back to honestly discuss progress and challenges.

**10** Partners should ensure that district needs drive shifts in teacher preparation programs’ pipelines, structures, and systems.

emerged in the research is the idea that one size does not fit all. Personalized development plans that are aligned with and rooted in practice can target areas in need of support. Districts can support their school leaders to set clear expectations for their new teachers and to provide them with the systems of support to make the improvements to develop into more effective educators. In Georgia, the state requires that all candidates work with the EPP to develop a personalized learning plan based on data from the edTPA (described in more detail above under the state role). This plan can serve as a roadmap for novice teachers' induction, professional development, and other types of support.

**EPPs must ensure that they provide aspiring educators with a strong understanding of statewide instructional initiatives.** Over the last few years, the department has increased efforts to regularly include EPP faculty and staff in training opportunities related to new standards and instructional shifts, teacher evaluation, and other statewide initiatives like Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>) and Read to be Ready. These efforts are aimed at ensuring that EPPs have the information needed to align preparation with current teaching expectations that novice teachers face as they enter Tennessee classrooms. The department is committed to increasing opportunities for EPPs to be engaged in these initiatives alongside district partners.

## Using Data to Inform Quality Clinical Placements

The Improving Student Teaching Initiative (ISTI) seeks to improve the quality of student teaching experiences during pre-service preparation. This improvement strategy, led by Dan Goldhaber (American Institutes for Research) and Matt Ronfeldt (University of Michigan), has two main parts. First, ISTI helps programs use existing administrative and evaluation data to identify and place pre-service candidates with mentor teachers in placement schools that are most likely to lead to successful clinical experiences. Second, ISTI is working with EPPs to implement a more rigorous feedback system during student teaching. The feedback system is based upon an observational

rubric aligned with the host district's observational protocols. It operates on an accelerated schedule, includes automated and regular reports that focus on a few areas of potential improvement, and involves structured debriefing sessions with the university field supervisor and mentor teacher. Following the conclusion of the clinical teaching experience, ISTI will test whether either of these strategies improves the employment, effectiveness, and retention of teachers. Ideally, this information will prove valuable to participating institutions and, more broadly, the teacher education field.

# NOTES

1. In July 2013, CAEP replaced the two former accrediting bodies, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC).
2. The implementation working group consisted of 35 members representing EPPs of varying size and location, school districts, and education advocacy groups.
3. Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., and Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.* Washington, DC: Learning Policy Institute.
4. Murray, Matthew et al. (2016) Academic Program Supply and Occupational Demand Projections: 2008-2018. Accessed 3/24/17 at [cber.haslam.utk.edu/pubs/mnm118.pdf](http://cber.haslam.utk.edu/pubs/mnm118.pdf).
5. Math teachers do not show up as a high-needs area in our calculations; however, our calculations do not look specifically at higher level math courses. Districts tend to highlight their need for more teachers who have the ability to teach advanced mathematics.
6. Gansle, K. A., Noell, G. H., & Burns, J. M. (2012). Do student achievement outcomes differ across teacher preparation programs? An analysis of teacher education in Louisiana. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 63, 304–317; Henry, G. T., Purtell, K. M., Bastian, K. C., Fortftner, C. K., Thompson, C. L., Campbell, S. L., & Patterson, K. M. (2014). The effects of teacher entry portals on student achievement. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 65(1), 7–23.
7. Ronfeldt, M. & Campbell, S. (2016). Evaluating teacher preparation using graduates' observation ratings. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 38(4), p. 603–625.
8. 2016 Teacher Preparation Report Card, Accessed 3/15/2017 at [teacherprepreportcard.tn.gov/](http://teacherprepreportcard.tn.gov/).
9. We see similar recommendations in *Prepared for day one: Improving the effectiveness of early-career teaching*, released by Tennessee SCORE in October, 2016.
10. The first reports were released in March 2017.
11. Adapted from Education First (2016). *Ensuring high-quality teacher talent: How strong, bold partnerships between school districts and teacher preparation programs are transforming the teacher pipeline*, p. 2. Accessed 3/24/17 at [education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Ensuring-High-Quality-Teacher-Talent.pdf](http://education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Ensuring-High-Quality-Teacher-Talent.pdf).



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