

**Summary of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA,
P.L. 110-315)**

Provisions Affecting Educator Preparation Programs



Serving Learners

September 2008

***Note that HEA will be used to describe the previous law and HEOA will be used to describe current law.

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Title II, Teacher Quality Enhancement

HEOA contains a significantly revised Title II that is more targeted to strengthening the clinical components of educator preparation and to ensuring that preparation programs are meeting the needs of the K-12 school system and that preparation programs are preparing candidates to teach all students, including students with special needs, English-language learners, and students in high-need, low-income schools. The accountability provisions within this act are also revamped to assess how well preparation programs are meeting the needs of P-12 schools and students.

Title II, Sec. 200 – Definitions

This section provides the definitions for many of the terms used throughout Title II. It is significantly expanded from the Higher Education Act, which contained three definitions. HEOA contains 23 definitions. Among the definitions to note are

- *Eligible Partnership* – As in HEA, a partnership must include a high-need local educational agency, a partner institution (higher education institution) and a school or department of arts and sciences within the partner institution. The optional partners include the Governor’s office, state board of education, businesses, and community agencies, among other entities. HEOA expands the required partners to include:
 - a high-need school or consortium of such schools or, as applicable, a high-need early childhood education program; and
 - an SCDE within the partner institution. It is important to note that proven professional development programs within SCDEs can also be part of the partnership.
- *Induction Program* – This is a new definition which requires that induction programs provide support to new teachers for at least the first two years of their teaching. These programs must include, among other elements: teacher mentoring, structured time for collaboration for teachers in the same field, assistance with helping teachers understand how to collect and assess student achievement data, and regular observations and evaluations of new teachers by multiple evaluators.
- *Partner Institutions* – HEA defines “partner institution” in terms of a four-year institution that has a teacher preparation program. HEOA expands the definition to include community colleges that offer dual programs with four-year institutions. Community colleges, however, cannot be the sole “partner institution” participating in a partnership.
- *Teaching Residency Program* – This is a new definition that describes a residency program as a one-year, master’s degree program in which the resident teaches alongside the teacher of record in a K-12 classroom while completing coursework to meet the requirements of the academic degree.
- *Teaching Skills* – This is a new definition that partially defines these skills as the ability of a teacher to increase student learning, convey academic subject matter, teach higher-order thinking and communication skills, communicate with parents, manage a classroom, and provide differentiated teaching to classrooms with diverse learning needs.

Title II, Sec. 201-204 – Teacher Quality Partnership Grants

Authorization levels: \$300 million for FY 2009 and such sums for FY 2010 and 2011

HEOA consolidates the three former grant streams in the Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant program of HEA into a partnership grant program. HEOA maintains the five-year grant period, but partnerships must now match 100% of the amount of the grant in cash or in kind (rather than 50% as required in HEA). Grants can be used to strengthen the preservice preparation of teachers at the graduate and undergraduate level. There are two required uses of grant funds and two optional uses:

Required:

- To strengthen the clinical components of preservice teacher preparation at the baccalaureate level
- To develop preservice teacher residency programs at the graduate level

Optional:

- To prepare school leaders for rural K-12 schools
- To develop digital education content to strengthen preservice preparation

Summary of the four “Use of Grant Funds”

- *Partnership Grants for Pre-Baccalaureate Preparation of Teachers* – These funds are intended to support institutions in preparing highly qualified teachers and early childhood educators. These preparation programs are expected to use scientifically based practices and research to guide the curriculum and clinical experiences that will result in teachers who know and are able to use empirically based practices to teach and assess student learning. Partnerships receiving grants under this use of funds must also have or develop at least a one-year clinical component for teacher candidates. There is a new focus in Title II on early childhood educators, preparing teachers to teach English-language learners, and preparing teachers to teach students with special needs. In this particular grant stream, institutions must prepare teacher candidates in the principles of universal design for learning, and, if the partnership is focusing on early childhood education, the grant must include initiatives to increase compensation for early childhood educators obtaining degrees. There are several reforms required of institutions that use Teacher Quality Partnership Grants for this purpose including:
 - Developing evaluation tools to assess teacher candidate and new teacher teaching skills;
 - Ensuring that candidates are prepared in and can implement research-based teaching practices;
 - Ensuring that candidates can provide differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners;
 - Ensuring that all candidates are prepared in content areas to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements;
 - Developing an induction program; and
 - Aligning the preparation programs admissions requirements and priorities with that of the high-need local educational agency in the eligible partnership.

These grants must also include components that focus on teacher recruitment strategies and preparing candidates in literacy teaching skills.

- *Teaching Residency Programs* – Partnerships can use grants to develop one-year teaching residency programs at the master’s degree level. These programs provide rigorous graduate coursework and intensive clinical experiences to residents. Residents would work beside mentor

teachers who are designated so based on their teacher effectiveness. Individuals who would be eligible for the program would include recent college graduates and professionals with strong content knowledge and a demonstration of professional accomplishments. Residents would be paid a living stipend/salary and would agree to serve as a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a high-need school in the “eligible partnership” for at least three academic years after completing the residency program.

- *Partnership Grants for the Development of Leadership Programs* – Partnerships can also use grants under this section to develop school leader preparation programs for rural K-12 schools. “School leaders” include superintendents, principals, early childhood education directors, and individuals who may serve in many capacities including that of school leader. Partnerships using funds for this purpose must ensure that school leaders are prepared in the following and other ways:
 - to understand and assess data related to school performance;
 - to provide school climates conducive to teacher professional development, high student achievement, and increased parental and community engagement; and
 - to manage school resources.

Partnerships must provide at least one year of clinical experiences for this program as well as an induction program for school leaders. Eligible candidates for this program would include recent college graduates, mid-career professionals, current teachers, or a school leader intending to become a superintendent.

- Partnership with Digital Education Content Development – “Eligible partnerships” under this grant would partner with entities that develop digital education content to strengthen preservice teacher preparation.

Accountability and Evaluation of Partnership Grants

“Eligible partnerships” receiving grants under the teacher quality partnership program must develop evaluation plans. HEOA greatly expands the required components of the evaluation plans while maintaining many of the components found in HEA such as teacher retention data for at least the first three years of the teachers’ careers, data on the number of teacher trained to use technology in the classroom, and data on the percentage of teachers prepared in academic subject areas. “Eligible partnerships” now, though, have more flexibility in determining how they will assess teacher effectiveness, whereas in HEA this was measured by teacher pass rates on certification and licensure exams. HEOA has also refocused the required components on tracking and disaggregating (based on subject area, school level, race/ethnicity) data on the number of HQT’s prepared by the partnership and hired by the LEA in the partnership.

Title II, Sec. 205 - Accountability for Programs that Prepare Teachers

HEOA maintains the accountability structure that was in HEA, requiring annual institutional report cards, state report cards, and a federal report card on the quality of higher education-based teacher preparation programs. However, some accountability provisions are refocused on how preparation programs meet the needs of diverse learners and high-need schools. There are also changes made in HEOA to provide more accurate, meaningful data on preparation program effectiveness.

Institutional and Program Report Cards on the Quality of Teacher Preparation

In this report card, institutions describe and report on their teacher preparation program effectiveness. As in HEA, institutions must report on the pass rates of their teacher candidates on certification and licensure exams. HEOA asks institutions to disaggregate the pass rates data to report on different groups within the teacher candidate pool such as those who have completed 100% of the non-clinical coursework in their preparation program and those who are formally enrolled in the SCDE at the institution. Additionally, institutions will now report the average scaled scores of their teacher candidates on the certification and licensure exams. Institutions must now describe how they have met the goals and assurances required in Sec. 206 (a new provision requiring institutions to set goals and assurances for preparing teachers to teach in high-need fields and in diverse classrooms, see p. 8 for more information). As in HEA, institutions must describe the teacher candidate pool. HEOA expands this to require that institutions report on their admissions criteria for preparation programs; to disaggregate the number of students in their programs by race, ethnicity, and gender; and to report on the number of students who have been certified/licensed (and to disaggregate that data by subject area/area of certification). HEOA also asks institutions to report on how they prepare teachers to use technology in their instruction and how they use it to analyze student learning data. Institutions are now required to describe how they prepare all candidates to teach students with disabilities.

State Report Card on the Quality of Teacher Preparation

The state report card, as in HEA, reports on all of the preparation programs in the state. The HEOA state reporting requirements are altered to mirror the institutional reporting requirements. Additionally, states must now report on how assessments for early childhood education are aligned with state standards. States no longer need to rank-order their preparation programs based on pass rates. Previously states had to describe their higher-education based alternate preparation programs; they now must include their non-higher education-based programs as well and report the average scaled score on assessments of individuals who complete such alternative routes. A new provision also requiring states – as a whole, and by institution – to report on how many teachers are prepared in each area of certification, by academic major, and by the subject area in which the teachers were prepared to teach. States must now describe how preparation programs are addressing the shortage of highly qualified teachers.

Report Card of the Secretary on the Quality of Teacher Preparation

The Secretary provides an annual report to Congress on the quality of teacher preparation in the United States. The report consists of a comparison of states' efforts to prepare teachers and bases its findings on the state report cards. Under HEOA, the Secretary's report is not radically changed. It does, however, include a new provision that requires the Secretary to report on the results of the "eligible partnerships" that received Teacher Quality Partnership Grants. The Secretary must also report on the national mean/median score and pass rate on certification/licensure exams used in more than one state. Under HEA, the Secretary only needed to report on the scores.

Title II, Sec. 206 – Teacher Development

This new provision requires institutions of higher education that enroll students who receive financial assistance under Title IV of HEOA to set goals for increasing the number of teachers prepared in shortage fields – designated so by the Secretary of Education or the State educational agency – such as math and science and in high-need areas such as special education and English language learners. Additionally, institutions must provide assurances to the U.S. Department of Education

- that candidates being prepared to teach special education students are prepared in content areas;
- that general education candidates are prepared to teach students with disabilities and English-language learners;
- that candidates, as applicable, are prepared to teach in urban and rural schools;
- that candidates are prepared to teach in LEAs and states where the institutions' graduates are likely to teach; and
- that candidates' preparation provides them with the tools to meet school and instructional needs.

The provision makes clear that institutions are not expected to create new preparation programs (for example, in math or science) to meet the requirements.

Title II, Sec. 207 – State Functions

HEOA maintains this provision requiring states to identify low-performing teacher preparation programs; however, it expands it to recommend criteria states could use to measure performance of such programs against state goals for improving teacher preparation including:

- By what percentage is the preparation program increasing the number of highly qualified teachers in the state?
- How is the preparation program improving student learning?
- How is the preparation program increasing its standards for entry?

The provision is also expanded to require that programs that lose their state approval and/or state financial support must provide transitional support to students in the preparation program, cannot receive funding under Title II of HEOA, and cannot accept/enroll students who receive financial aid under Title IV of HEOA. Preparation programs are also able to be reinstated after they have demonstrated improved performance.

Title II, Sec. 208(c) – Release of Information to Teacher Preparation Programs

This is a new provision requiring states to provide data to preparation programs that will help them assess their program effectiveness and their graduates' effectiveness in the classroom. This could include K-12 student achievement data or demographic data as well as teacher evaluations.

Title II, Sec. 231 – Preparing Teachers for Digital Age Learners

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This is a new program that creates grants for eligible consortia (comprised of higher education-based preparation programs, a department of arts and science, state educational agencies, and an entity associated with technology) to ensure that teacher candidates are prepared to incorporate technology into their instructional strategies and to use technology to assess student learning data. Grants can be used to:

- Provide candidates with early field experiences with technology;
- Provide professional development that enhances the technological skills of the K-12 faculty who participate in the field experiences;
- Build learning communities within consortia focused on using technology; and
- Redesign teacher preparation curriculum to ensure that candidates are prepared in various technologies and that they can use these technologies to effectively teach K-12 students.

Title II, Sec. 241-242 – Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This is a new program created to support and strengthen educator preparation programs at schools that serve historically underrepresented populations. The minimum amount for each grant is \$500,000. Grants can be used to

- prepare teachers who can use scientifically based research and technology to improve their instructional skills;
- strengthen the clinical components of preparation programs; and,
- strengthen the recruitment and retention of teachers prepared in the programs.

Title II, Sec. 251 – Teach to Reach Grants

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This is a new program created to ensure that general education teachers are prepared to teach children with disabilities. Grants will be used to

- amend the general education curriculum in teacher preparation programs to ensure that teacher candidates are prepared to teach students with disabilities;
- prepare general education candidates in instructional strategies to teach children with special needs effectively;
- develop two-year mentoring and induction program to support teachers as they teach students with disabilities; and,
- enhance clinical components to ensure that general education candidates have teaching experiences in special education.

Title II, Sec. 255 – Adjunct Teacher Corps

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This is a new program created to support eligible entities (local educational agencies or a partnership between a local educational agency and a public/private educational organization or business) in hiring

professionals with subject-matter expertise in math, science, or critical foreign languages into the secondary school classrooms. “Eligible entities” are defined as local educational agencies or partnerships between LEAs and a public or private business or organization. Grants can be used to train professionals to become adjunct content specialists or to provide preservice training and professional development to adjunct content specialists.

Title II, Sec. 258 – Graduate Fellowships to Prepare Faculty in High-Need Areas in Colleges of Education

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

In this new program, grants will be given to institutions to support doctoral candidates preparing to become faculty in colleges of education in the areas of special education, math education, science education, and teaching English-language learners. Students who receive grants under this program must teach at an institution of higher education that has a teacher preparation program for one year for each year they receive grants.

Title III – Institutional Aid

Title III, Sec. 356 – Promotion of Entry into STEM Fields

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This new grant program would allow the Secretary of Education to engage a firm to conduct a campaign to recruit youth from underrepresented populations into the STEM fields. The campaign must include a focus on recruiting professionals from underrepresented populations into the K-12 STEM teaching fields.

Title IV – Student Assistance

Title IV, Sec. 412-420P – TEACH Grants amendments

HEOA amends the TEACH Grant program in three key areas. First, teacher candidates prepared in state-listed shortage fields are able to complete their service obligations in those fields regardless of whether the field remains on the state shortage list. The original statute required those candidates whose teaching fields fell off the state list to either teach in another field (and thus be prepared in another field) or else not meet the service obligation requirements (and thus have the TEACH grant convert to a loan). Second, HEOA requires the Secretary to develop a list of extenuating circumstances in which a TEACH Grant recipient would not be required to complete the service obligation. Third, HEOA requires the Secretary to develop a program report on the TEACH grants that would include data such as the number of TEACH grant recipients; the degrees these recipients obtained; the location, type of school, and field in which the recipients fulfill their service obligations; and the number of recipients who complete their service obligations.

Title IV, Sec. 429 – Loan Forgiveness for Teachers Employed by Educational Service Agencies

HEOA maintains this program with only minor technical amendments. This program forgives up to \$5,000 in loans for full-time teachers who have been employed in a Title I school for five consecutive school years.

Title IV, Sec. 430/428K – Loan Forgiveness for Service in Areas of National Need

HEOA replaces the “Loan Forgiveness for Child Care Providers” program in HEA with the “Loan Forgiveness for Service in Areas of National Need” program. This new program would forgive up to \$2,000 a year (for up to five years and no more than \$10,000) in loans for each year of full-time service in an area of national need. Areas of national need include

- Early childhood educators
- Foreign language specialists
- Librarians
- Highly qualified teachers serving ELL students in low-income communities
- Speech and language pathologists and audiologists
- School counselors
- Superintendents, principals, and other administrators

Title VI – International Education Programs

Title VI, Sec. 604 – Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Programs

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

HEOA maintains this program with minor amendments. This program provides grants to institutions of higher education to strengthen their foreign language programs. Grants can be used to strengthen the foreign language content knowledge of preservice and in-service teachers.

Title VI, Sec. 637 – Science and Technology Advanced Foreign Language Education Grant Program

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This is a new program intended to support institutions of higher education in encouraging students understanding of and interest in science, technology, and foreign languages. Additionally, the program is intended to “foster future international scientific collaboration” and to provide professional development to K-12 teachers in the critical foreign languages. Grants can be used, among other purposes, to strengthen the preparation of teachers to teach foreign languages.

Title VII – Graduate and Postsecondary Improvement Programs

Title VII, Sec. 760-765 – Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

HEOA amends this existing program that gives grants to institutions of higher education to help prepare and ensure that their faculty, staff, and administrators provide students with disabilities a quality education and experience at the institution. Grants can be used to

- train faculty, staff and administrators in effective teaching methods and strategies
- prepare faculty, staff, and administrators in effective transition practices to help students with disabilities entering the institution (this was added in HEOA)
- prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to offer distance learning opportunities to students with disabilities (this was added in HEOA)
- prepare faculty, staff, and administrators to prepare students with disabilities for the workforce

Title VII, Sec. 766 – Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities into Higher Education

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This is a new program aimed at supporting students with intellectual disabilities in the transition to higher education. Grants will be made to institutions (or consortia of institutions), and priority will be given to institutions that have or are forming partnerships with agencies that support students with intellectual disabilities; to institutions that plan to integrate students with disabilities into housing for non-disabled students; and to institutions that plan to involve students studying special education, general education, assistive technology, and other related fields in the model transition program. Grants can be used to:

- provide individual supports to students with intellectual disabilities;
- provide independent living skills, socialization; academic enrichment, integrated work experiences, and career skills to students with intellectual disabilities; and,
- partner with local educational agencies to support students with intellectual disabilities.

Title VII, Sec. 776-777 – National Technical Assistance Center; Coordinating Center

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

Under this program, a new national center and a coordinating center would be established to support students with disabilities and the institutions of higher education serving them. The national center will provide technical assistance and information to students with disabilities and their families as they prepare for higher education and to institutions of higher education to improve their services to students with disabilities. The center will also develop a database that collects information on disability documentation requirements, financial aid available to students with disabilities, support services available at institutions of higher education, and other topics important to students with disabilities. The center will also conduct a study to assess the “condition of postsecondary success for students with disabilities.”

The coordinating center will serve as a technical assistance resource for all postsecondary transition programs for students with intellectual disabilities, develop evaluation methods for all such programs, develop recommendations for the critical components of such programs, and convene a work group that would develop accreditation standards for such programs.

Title VIII – Additional Programs

Title VIII, Sec. 806 – Teach For America

Authorization Level: \$20 million in FY 2009, \$25 million in FY 2010, and such sums as necessary for the following four years.

This program authorizes the Teach for America (TFA) program and supports its efforts to recruit highly qualified teachers for high-need schools. TFA will provide an annual report to the Secretary on the number and quality of candidates it recruits. It will also include an external evaluation of how satisfied LEAs are with teachers from the TFA program. The Secretary will also conduct a comparison study of student achievement scores of those taught by TFA teachers and non-TFA teachers.

Title VIII, Sec. 805 – America History for Freedom

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

This new program offers three-year grants to institutions to strengthen their history programs in the areas of American history, history of free institutions, and history of Western civilization. Grants can be used, among other things, to strengthen content mastery of teacher candidates in these areas of history.

Title VIII, Sec. 811 – Early Childhood Education Professional Development and Career Task Force

Authorization Level: Such sums as necessary

The purpose of this new program is to strengthen the early childhood education workforce through a statewide task forces and through creating a consistent and high quality system of core competencies, pathways to credentials and degrees, and compensation. Grants will be awarded to states to develop task forces. Among the activities in which task forces will engage are

- assessing opportunities for and barriers to individuals becoming early childhood educators;
- developing a professional development and career system for education childhood educators; and,
- serving as coordinating bodies between the various entities that contribute to preparing early childhood educators

Title XI, Studies and Reports

Title XI, Sec. 1116 – Study on Teaching Students with Reading Disabilities

The Center for Education of the National Academies will conduct a study to determine how well teacher candidates are prepared to teach students with reading and language-processing disabilities. The study will look at literacy curricula in preparation programs and determine whether these curricula are based on scientifically based reading research. The Center will issue an interim and final report to the Secretary of Education within two years of the study's launch, and the Secretary will establish a task force to make recommendations to the Department of Education based on the findings of the final report.