

TEACHING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19: STATE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS AND NEW TEACHERS

The coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis has created many challenges in the education field, including interruptions to the preparation of teachers. In an effort to mitigate these challenges, states have issued guidance that adjusted policies and practices for educator preparation programs (EPPs) and new teachers. As the leading voice on high-quality educator preparation, AACTE analyzed state changes and proposed 10 recommendations to guide state leaders on preparing and maintaining an effective educator workforce during the time of COVID-19.

Licensure and Certification

Recommendation 1

In making licensure and certification waivers for teachers, states should make changes that are: (a) Directly necessary because of the pandemic, (b) Temporary with a timeline for ending clearly delineated, and (c) Transparent in that those who are granted certification as a result of waived requirements must be so classified.

Recommendation 2

States should seek innovative opportunities to address ongoing challenges – such as lack of diversity in the profession and the need to modernize the processes of licensure and certification – as they consider licensure and certification revisions.

Clinical Experiences

Recommendation 3

Ensure candidates continue gaining experience teaching in a clinical setting with a mentor teacher, university supervisor, and continuous feedback.

Recommendation 4

Encourage flexibility and collaboration between EPPs and school districts that ensures teacher candidates participate in clinical experiences online or in distance settings if PK-12 schools are not physically back in brick and mortar buildings.

Recommendation 5

Encourage innovative approaches to clinical experiences including distributed learning models that employ team teaching in PK-12 settings, simulated classroom environments that allow candidates to approximate teaching, and financially supporting candidates through employment with the local school.

Teacher Induction

Recommendation 6

Assess the needs of new teachers impacted by COVID-19 and identify areas for additional support.

Recommendation 7

Require an induction support plan for new teachers describing the activities that must be completed or acquired for successful induction.

Recommendation 8

Establish a mentorship program to equip new teachers with strategies to deliver high-quality instruction to diverse learners.

Recommendation 9

Implement co-teaching for new teachers whose clinical experiences were fully or partially waived, and teachers who have not passed exams for licensure and certification due to COVID-19.

Recommendation 10

Partner with EPPs to provide professional development to ensure that new teachers possess the knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach diverse students.