



“Ask The Network” Survey Response

Teacher Preparation and Licensure in Michigan September 2007

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Network of Michigan Educators, a group of recognized teachers and school leaders, gave its membership the opportunity to take an online “Ask The Network” survey in early September, 2007. 94 members provided their input on issues of teacher preparation, licensure and mentoring in Michigan.

Tiered Licensure

Although members of the Network overwhelmingly supported the concept of a tiered licensure system in Michigan, with 87% in favor of such a plan, only about half of them felt their teaching colleagues would react favorably to such a change. In their extensive comments, teachers felt that newer teachers would be more likely to support a third tier for “master teachers.” While working out details of such a plan would be a challenge, teachers felt that recognizing high levels of teaching skill could eventually benefit the profession.

Performance Assessments for Teachers

About three-quarters (74%) of NME members agreed that a research-based performance assessment for teachers has the potential to enhance our current teacher evaluation system, with 18% disagreeing, mostly over issues of time, expense and lack of trust in performance assessment instruments (i.e., administrative observations). In their comments, many teachers recommended a neutral-assessor portfolio system, similar to National Board Certification. However—about 60% of them felt that their fellow teachers would be opposed to any kind of performance assessment.

Mentoring and Induction

Members of the Network felt strongly (88%) that new teacher mentoring and induction are “weak and spotty” in Michigan. The long list of suggested remedies includes a reduced teaching load for novice teachers, better mentor-mentee matching, as well as effective training and compensation for mentors.

Teacher Preparation

Virtually all NME members (97%) believed that university education staff should have K-12 experience before working with pre-service teachers, and 85% thought that a “significant” field experience was essential. Members were about evenly divided in their preference for a semester-length student teaching experience vs. a year-long internship. Several noted that student teachers are not compensated, and asking some of them to work even longer to become prepared for teaching was a financial burden, which might keep promising candidates away from the profession.



“Ask The Network” Survey Response

Teacher Preparation and Licensure in Michigan September 2007

Survey Results

The following graphs provide the results of the survey following the format of the survey as members took it on-line in early September 2007. The survey was requested by Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mike Flanagan and the questions were developed by the “Ask The Network” team working with members of his staff who were involved with the Teacher Preparation Policy Study Group (TPPSG). Questions were developed that would surface the best thinking of Network of Michigan Educator members on issues, discussed by TPPSG, that most directly affect classroom teachers. There were 145 visits to the survey with 94 surveys completed.

Survey Results:

Brief Background - Please read before answering 1. and 2.

Some states have created tiered licensure systems to distinguish highly accomplished educators and provide a "career ladder" to keep exemplary teachers in the classroom. These tiered licensing systems were designed to lead to a greater understanding of the knowledge and skills that make teachers full professionals, and provide a sense of "moving up." In Michigan, the current licensure system provides little consideration of how accruing these competencies increases classroom efficacy. For more background refer to the document at the bottom of your email or go to www.nme-educators.org and click on "Ask the Network"

1. Agree or Disagree - Teacher licensure in Michigan should become a three tiered system including initial license, professional license, and master/advanced license

Strongly Agree		40	43%
Agree		41	44%
Neutral		3	3%
Disagree		2	2%
Strongly Disagree		2	2%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		5	5%
Total		93	100%

2. Agree or Disagree - Teachers with whom I am familiar would react favorably to such a change to a three tiered system

Strongly Agree		8	9%
Agree		36	39%
Neutral		16	17%
Disagree		21	23%
Strongly Disagree		7	8%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		5	5%
Total		93	100%

3. Comments on 1. and 2 (see the comments following these results)

Brief Background - please read before answering 4. and 5.

We currently have subject area assessments for teachers in Michigan, but no performance assessment. There are states that have established performance assessments based on established models, such as a required portfolio evaluated by neutral assessors (eg. Connecticut's BEST program), or National Board Certification. Performance assessments are not based on principal evaluations or correlating teacher "performance" with student test scores. For more background refer to the document at the bottom of your email or go to www.nme-educators.org and click on "Ask the Network".

4. Agree or Disagree - the addition of a high quality, research based performance assessment for teachers would support and/or enhance the current system

Strongly Agree		37	40%
Agree		32	34%
Neutral		5	5%
Disagree		13	14%
Strongly Disagree		4	4%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		2	2%
Total		93	100%

5. Agree or Disagree - Teachers with whom I am familiar would react favorably to an addition of a performance assessment.

Strongly Agree		5	5%
Agree		18	19%
Neutral		15	16%
Disagree		42	45%
Strongly Disagree		13	14%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		1	1%

6. Comments on 4. and 5. (see the comments following these results)

7. Agree or Disagree - Mentoring and induction seem to be both weak and spotty in Michigan.

Strongly Agree		44	47%
Agree		38	41%
Neutral		5	5%
Disagree		5	5%
Strongly Disagree		1	1%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		1	1%

8. Comments on 7. (see the comments following these results)

9. Agree or disagree - Teacher preparation institutions should require instructors and professors to have K-12 classroom experience as part of their background.

Strongly Agree		76	81%
Agree		15	16%
Neutral		2	2%
Disagree		0	0%
Strongly Disagree		0	0%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		1	1%

10. Agree or disagree: Pre-service teachers should have a significant field experience before entering the classroom as teacher of record.			
Stongly Agree		66	71%
Agree		22	24%
Neutral		4	4%
Disagree		1	1%
Strongly Disagree		0	0%
Am not informed enough on the topic to comment		0	0%
Total		93	100%

11. The minimum length of the student teaching experience should be . . .			
Six (6) weeks		0	0%
Ten (10) weeks		1	1%
One (1) semester		48	52%
One (1) School year		38	41%
Other, please specify. View Responses		6	6%
Total		93	100%

12. Comments on Teacher preparation (see the comments following these results)

INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS—Network of Michigan Educators Survey on Teacher Preparation and Licensing in Michigan

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 1 & 2: Comments on whether a graduated/tiered licensing system or structure might be beneficial in Michigan

Response (there are 55)

1 Any graduated system would be an improvement and would encourage teachers to climb their career ladder as a teacher, instead of leaving the classroom.

2 It may help districts to have starting pay lower but then pay more to high performing teachers. I also think it would keep teachers in the classroom when many stop after obtaining their 1st masters degree.

It would allow school districts to adapt their pay structures based upon certification, not seniority. Districts could build an attractive pay structure for the top tier which would encourage significant and planned professional development. There are masters programs out there in the state of Michigan which are not very rigorous and do not prepare the teachers for the math/science certification. Teachers would not react favorably to this as it will be more work and many of them who hold permanent certificates would possibly have to get more coursework. This tiered system makes more sense than the 6 credits every 5 years for the Professional Certificate. I know many teachers who take ANY class to get the credits to renew their certificate. The initial license needs to be able to accommodate females who need significant time off for maternity leave as well as to accommodate those individuals who desire to teach but cannot obtain a position in the Michigan job market.

4 Make sure there is no merit pay involved.

I believe the graduated system would be beneficial. Some teachers grow because of self motivation and should be acknowledged. It might give a nudge to those who might be thinking about professional and have not made the initial step.

6 It has been my experience that licensing and certification by our state has not led to more highly qualified teachers in the classroom. Some of the licensing requirements are costly and quite frankly, I think of some of the private school teachers and poorly paid teachers who are certified and licensed as well and this process may deter them as well. More licenses and tiers will not make for better teaching.

7 I think that this is a good idea BUT outside parties like universities must be responsible for providing appraisals. Schools will fake it.

8 As it is teachers spend much of their so-called summer taking classes to renew certification. I would not support this unless time to move up the tier is provided.

In states where they have such a system, master teachers get recognition and leadership roles in the top tier. This also leads to an understanding of the Masters degree as professional development, not just accrual of graduate hours to move up the salary schedule.

10 I suspect the trick to this would be to effectively evaluate how a teacher achieves each level. There are so many variables that affect education. How can this be done?

A support system for beginning teachers is a must. The idea of working with a classroom teacher during your final year of university for the whole year is very appealing to me. Some sort of partnership between the university and the school districts would offer the supportive community for beginning teachers.

12 I think it would be great but it would really tick off the vast majority of tenured teachers.

I think many union members might think of this "tier system" as equal to tiered pay (merit pay) issues. I think you need to think carefully about whether or not this would impact teacher pay, and if it did, how easy would it be to qualify for this third tier compared to other, current, things that lead to more pay (masters, masters +30, etc). This might be beneficial in Michigan, IF the districts bought into the system. You have to think about all the different benefits that third tier would have, how one would reach that third tier, and whether or not the districts would buy into it.

I believe that teacher advancement with such a program would be based on student test scores, which many teachers feel do not accurately represent their teaching quality. An idea would be to have pre-testing and post testing. The license then could be based on student improvement.

15 I think Michigan should look at National Board Certification as a way to identify accomplished practice.

The thresholds for each tier of the system would need to be carefully articulated and have criteria that represent more than length of time spent as a teacher, particular numbers of credits or documentation of a certain number of certain types of continuing education. The criteria need to correspond with professional contribution and student learning (beyond a MEAP indicator of such learning).

17 I really need to know more about standards and processes for a teacher to move through the tiers.

18 It might provide incentive for teachers if the highest tier is linked to some type of reward such as additional steps or release from some continuing ed requirements, like National Board.

19 There is so little currently done to enhance, enrich or reward those going above and beyond in the classroom. Some kind of viable recognition is needed.

20 A graduated system would have to be introduced to new teacher candidates as they begin their education courses. I don't feel teachers in the field right now would react positively.

21 Teachers would question why the change should occur and would need further information on it. What are the positives and negatives? What other states currently have it?

22 Why not National Board certification as an acknowledged step? Then the burden is not on state or district administrators to govern!

23 Since few district recognize (\$\$\$) National Board Certified teachers, perhaps these levels would encourage professional learning. Also... see Charlotte Danielson's work on Teacher Evaluation/Development

24 Needs to be fair. Should get some school support to move up or get paid more as you do.

25 Teachers currently must update their Professional Certificate every five years. I think having another level- Master- would be an excellent idea.

26 This would help improve teacher quality.

27 A graduated system may be beneficial if it is designed so teachers have incentive to move up and this move up is supported with evidence of increased efficacy in the classroom.

28 It would be beneficial by standardizing some consistency in the profession.

29 I feel that many teachers would feel that this is dividing teaching members from one another. I think this opinion will be held more so by more experienced teachers.

30 This is similar to Lowell Milken's proposal some years ago!

31 I think experienced and highly educated professionals should be licensed in a separate way - it could be linked to pay or career advancement.

It will depend on if there is a monetary or some other form of accolades attached to it as in other professions. In 32 teaching you are identified as "a teacher," regardless of the amount of training you receive or what you are able to accomplish in the classroom. It would be nice to have "something" that acknowledges your accomplishments.

Those teachers who are interested in developing their craft and increasing their professional competency would be 33 very interested in being able to prove their increasing competency through a tiered system. Those teachers who would be resistant to a tiered system are those teachers who would be most threatened by the need to prove their competency.

34 Very beneficial -- Master/advanced license opportunity, such as National Board Certification would motivate teachers to improve their practice.

35 Currently, the best teachers are taken from the classroom and placed in administrative positions. While this may allow for greater exposure, the classroom and students suffer by losing that teacher.

The 3-tier system would offer a two sided benefit. Those who truly love to teach and learn would be rewarded, and 36 visa versa. It would help with the union issue and pay scale (I would hope) so those dead beat teachers who really don't want to grow would not be making as much as the top tier. A tier system must be very well thought out so competencies learned in additional training are respected, relevant, and rigorous.

37 This would weed out those "teachers" who use teaching as a meal ticket to something else. It would keep those who are dedicated to the learners.

38 A practical graduated system would be beneficial. There would need to be not only financial incentives, but professional incentives as well.

39 Most likely our legislators would use this as a way to further undervalue educators instead of finding ways to increase their value of the best educators.

40 Teachers would be against it if they don't have enough information. Question: would teachers continue to be grandfathered and get away with not continuing their education?

41 How about using National Board Certification as the last "Master" certified?

42 I think that once teachers understand that it may be more beneficial professionally than earning graduate degrees to gain a pay raise.

43 The three tiers would allow for demonstrated growth. It would also be an incentive to teachers who are committed to excelling in the field and a deterrent to people looking for an "easy job".

44 This leveling should not be used as a tool for censure but as an encouragement to teachers as they develop skills and experience.

45 Teacher reaction to this change would substantially differ based on the "advanced" definition.

During my grad classes at Oakland University we talked about this approach -- only a few were against this 46 approach. They stated that they couldn't understand who would rate them and how that would improve student instruction and what if you had a tough class how would you be evaluated?

Earning a Masters degree does not necessarily mean that you are a master teacher. A performance assessment, like 47 National Board Certification, would be an effective indicator of master teacher status. This would be a great incentive for teachers to undergo a rigorous process that lifts teachers to new levels of effectiveness. Student learning would increase, and the state of Michigan would benefit.

Although it might initially be unfavorable, it would, in the end be a positive move. However, pay raises would 48 have to accompany these decisions to help pay for the costs of more education while on the job. OR... the classes would have to be part of the overall PD / or a combination Teachers are simply running out of time to prepare lessons , take classes and complete PD requirements

49Is there a financial incentive to move to level 3?

50Yes, it would make continuous self improvement a vital component of educators as it is in other professions.

51I believe we should look to the National Board Certification Process as a model for developing a tiered system of both licensure and professional development.

52Excellent teachers who strive to better their skills would welcome having the recognition of their accomplishments, other teachers who see this more as a 'job' may not out of fear. How this would be accomplished, who would make these decisions or how arduous the process for proving this would all be important questions to handle.

53I think it would encourage and distinguish teachers to add such a system in our state.

I would need to know much more about the "status" of the different tiers. As one goes "up", does this mean fewer hours taught and more mentoring, more pay, greater ability to select specific courses, who and how are tier levels determined? (among other questions)

Too political.

Too subjective.

55We have "No Child Left Behind." What about "No Teacher Left Behind?" Why not spend money/time on quality professional development that would give all teachers generic teaching skills that would improve the teaching skills and thus the learning of all students.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 4 & 5:

Ideas on how a performance assessment based on national models would enhance, support or change our current system?

Response (There are 53)

1 I am sure many would react unfavorably because it would entail more work, but true, high-performing teachers would not mind. But, I am a NBCT so I am probably biased.

2 This could be controversial but I think we need to have some common understanding of the characteristics of an effective professional. The NBPTS is such a model.

3 Great idea but the unions will have an issue with this idea.

4 Maybe I am just fortunate, but I already work in a school system with a high quality research-based assessment.

5 As a National Board Certified Teacher, I know firsthand how a close examination of practice improves and fine-tunes teaching. I would strongly endorse performance assessments for teachers if they included a portfolio-type presentation of teaching accomplishments.

6 As an NBCT I feel that a portfolio assessment is a great tool for improving teacher practice. But...the NBPTS has invested a lot of time and research to make sure that the portfolios are fairly scored. I could only support a portfolio system if there was a high level of objectivity embedded in the process.

7 A performance assessment based on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards model would change our current system for the better. Teaching and learning are improved in 2 ways when a teacher goes through the National Board process: the teacher attempts to provide evidence that her/his practice meets the high and rigorous standards as set by recognized accomplished teachers in that field. In order to do this the teacher studies what accomplished teaching should look like and how to best show that through performance. They are learning, doing, and most of all practicing reflective teaching. It is this part of this process that forever improves the teaching and learning provided by that teacher.

8 Supports the development of reflective practice, among other things.

9 They would be afraid of losing their jobs or part of their income. Many average teachers are insecure.

10 Again, I think many pro-union teachers would think of this as equal to merit pay. I think the emphasis on it NOT being linked to principal assessment or test scores IN ANY WAY would be helpful - don't even make those part of the assessment.

- 11 We have "popular" teachers who do not have any understanding of current research, "best practices, etc. These teachers could become "effective" with training, practice, mentoring, feedback from master teachers, etc.
- 12 Research has shown that NBCTs have improved/increased student learning as well as becoming "accomplished" in their field of teaching.
- 13 PLEASE...Let us teach!!! If you want improved teacher quality, districts need to improve professional development!
- 14 Board Certification is a personal, concerted effort to examine teaching and become better. I think it is the ultimate professional development instrument.
- I am afraid we would be creating a top tier of teachers based on how well they can "play the game" versus how their students learn. We may be able to assess the science of teaching, but top teachers have skills, experience and knowledge that allows them to connect with children in special ways.
- I have had many student teachers and have been disappointed in a few as to their abilities to carry out their lesson plans. It sometimes just takes more experience w/ students in a classroom. I wish there was more classroom performance evaluations before a teacher was fully certified. This would be possible with a three-step teaching certification system.
- 16
- 17 Knowing the material does not assure the ability to teach it. I've seen too many student teachers and new teachers who mistake exposure to information as teaching.
- 18 Finding the time would be a huge issue for performance assessment for most teachers.
- I believe many of my colleagues feel that currently, they are being required to do so much more than what they were five years ago, mainly because of NCLB. My school has made drastic changes in the last two years to accommodate all students and new challenges. I think the idea of a performance assessment would push many out of education because they would be fearful of it and it would push them over the edge.
- 19
- 20 As long as the assessment is based on MY performance as a teacher and not my student's performance. While the two are inextricably linked, I only have so much control over how much a student learns.
- We have attempted to implement a performance assessment as a part of our annual teacher evaluations and it has met with strong resistance mainly from union rank and file. It would probably require the State to take it on as a licensure issue for it to take hold. However, sometimes, when these kinds of things are taken to that level of scale (i.e. highly qualified portfolios), their intent is diminished.
- 21
- 22 Using a pre-existing system such as National Board would minimize costs (financial and managerial) and even the playing field.
- 23 Depends on the model/product. If it's merely busywork that anyone can produce...then it's not worth it. CT's program is a good one.
- 24 Too political. Who has time to do this or pay people to do this?
- Most seasoned teachers have not had to be assessed via performance (other than when evaluated by their administrator). This might be a scary prospect for some teachers, who have been in the profession for a number of years. New teachers have had this experience in their college courses/training. I could see more acceptance from this group of teachers.
- 25
- 26 These types of assessments are not based upon an actual teaching event or events (i.e., they can be made up).
- The performance assessment would have to be 'real', simple to monitor, and something that is really doable for beginning and career teachers. Many of our good teachers move to administration-it pays more-if the pay was equitable, they would have more incentive to stay.
- 27
- 28 Many teachers might complain about additional assessment. However, it would enhance the professionalism of our system and provide needed improvements in delivery of subject matter to students.
- 29
- 30 It depends (see previous comment)

I passed the Michigan teacher certification exams in my subject area before I was even accepted into a teacher preparation program. If I can pass the exams before I have taken any teaching courses there are certainly serious weaknesses in the assessment process. I believe accomplished, competent teaching is achieved through a process of practice and reflection. Knowledge of content can be gained through education while competency of instruction can only be gained through practice, reflection, adjustment, and further practice.

NBC is an excellent performance assessment model that is proven in research to improve teaching. Teachers learn the art of reflection and goal setting and all most have gone through the certification process agree it is the most valuable professional development they've had.

Still too vague and new. Needs more details. Question: will higher-rated teachers receive greater compensation?

Many teachers are people of habit. Changing the system would rock the boat. The change would be a wake up call for those who are complacent and hopefully move them out by their choice. The teacher union in this state is strong. It will have an affect on change. I wonder if they support such changes. I believe in the long run, with competent evaluators, performance assessment would enhance our present system. As a teacher for over 30 years I know full well there are many who can take tests well, but truly can't teach! Many ask, how do they get a job? The good old boy system is still around and alive (especially when it comes to athletics).

Many teachers think they are too busy teaching to get bogged down with an additional assessment.

Performance assessments may be more valid than subject area assessments.

Most often, due to how groups' select criteria, this would not reflect the best teaching, which is as much art as science.

I am a National Board certified teacher and think it would work great, but older teachers would start a revolution to stop its implementation

If some of the current teachers had to take it, they would disagree.

See above.

National Board certification is an excellent example of professional development that impacts the teacher and his/her students. We might look at the results and impact in states like Ohio and North Carolina where it is required and tied to an incentive package.

I do not clearly understand the type of performance assessment, seems like it would be very difficult to manage. I would like to see connected to student performance.

While some might disagree, I think adding a performance assessment would give a clearer picture of what a teacher can do. Having gone through the National Board Certification process, and becoming a NBCT, I'm often appalled that our district has adopted the board standards for its evaluation tool, yet teachers are being rated as "Meets Goals" based on two administrative observations.

I feel that the assessment should correlate with professional development, years of experience and recommendation by that school district and on a written performance test which does not necessarily demonstrate the qualities of a good teacher.

Although I think this would be a great plan, most teachers are feeling overwhelmed by the budget cuts and how it affects our classrooms (primarily larger classes). The time it would take to complete the portfolio would feel intrusive to many teachers, but would be well worth their time. This could create some resentment. The time needed to do a quality job on the portfolio would have to be planned for ahead of time.

This would meet the needs of those teachers who want to reach the top of their profession. These teachers would have to examine their own practice, look closely at their students, reflect upon and revise their understanding of how to meet the needs of their students. These teachers could inspire other teachers to improve their practice.

Portfolios have shown no connection to actual teaching ability to my knowledge... I've had amazingly great portfolios presented to me by student teachers and they are abysmal in the classroom

I think a performance based assessment such as that used by National Board Certification causes a teacher to thoroughly reflect on her teaching practices. An evaluation based on observations doesn't allow time for thinking or reflecting. It is more of an all or nothing situation. Just as the kids have bad days that can be reflected on a standardized test due to nerves, etc., an excellent teacher could have a bad evaluation based on a one or two time observation. From my own personal experience, teachers perform for children. When other adults are present this performance is inhibited.

Accountability would become key. Different districts have different standards and it would raise the bar in many that need improvement.

Research-based best practices and the ways in which teachers practiced those teaching methods should serve as the basis for licensure in education. This could occur without teachers giving up creativity or individuality. This approach would further professionalize education. Further, supports could be put in place which would reduce the high number of teachers who leave the profession after five years.

I believe that performance assessments would enhance the current system, having the knowledge and being able to implement it are far different things. Many districts use a teaching performance to distinguish between candidates with much success. This would be a statewide application of this idea.

Teachers are very threatened by performance assessments and also would feel overwhelmed by any extra work such as making a portfolio. Outstanding teachers work very hard as it is and may not like the idea of having to spend planning time proving they are excellent.

Go carefully here! What we don't need is another "hoop" young teachers need to go through and deal with. Whatever we do in this area, we need to change the paradigm whereby in America, teachers come from the lower 1/3 of their undergraduate class as opposed to the British where their teachers come from the upper 1/3.

RESPONSES TO QUESTION 7:

What can we do to provide a strong mentoring and induction system? Please include suggestions on models, programs and partners needed to make this a statewide effort.

Response (there are 59)

1 Common planning time for mentors and mentees....

2 I don't have sufficient knowledge to make a comment.

3 Stop cutting per-pupil spending so quality mentoring can be encouraged by administrators.

4 Provide a way for mentor teachers to report their experience and HOLD SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE for the mentoring system in place. Maybe tie the university into the accountability for mentoring new teachers.

5 Every new teacher is assigned a mentor for a three year period. Most mentors are selected for their skills and expertise.

Mentors should be trained. The New Teacher Center at Santa Cruz provides one good model. When novice teachers get strong, research-based support, they stay in the classroom, making the investment in mentor training pay off in reduction of turnover.

I think that this is a place where the ISDs could step up. A county based program with programs to train mentors, allow for e-mentoring, an oversight group that makes sure that districts are living up to the intent of the current 3 year induction program.

8 Choose the mentors carefully- used accomplished/recognized teachers and pair them with mentees for at least their first entire year in the classroom- next door or co-teaching in close proximity.

9 Classroom teachers should be more actively involved in the teaching of student teacher courses.

10 Until there is funding connected, I see this area as one that districts feel can be "cut." Funding could be used for mentor stipends, appropriate professional resources, substitute teachers, etc.

11 There are not enough good mentor teachers to guide the young teachers. I was paired with a PE teacher/football coach, and I teach Economics.

- Whatever you do, you have to get the districts to buy into it. Making it mandatory for new teachers, etc. Right now, some districts are strong, some are weak. In the districts themselves, some schools are strong, some are weak. So, whatever you do, you have to get the districts to buy into it, or make it mandatory in some way.
- 13 The Pathways Mentoring system from ETS and endorsed by MEA is excellent but is expensive to implement.
- 14 Utilize National Board teachers in the programs.
- 15 Target ED or NSF or Title II funds for a pilot program.
- 16 The ASSIST website is EXCELLENT! Provide information regarding this to ALL Michigan educators!!!!
- To be a mentor should be part of the teacher's day, rather than an additional commitment. For example, I would teach for 3 hours and mentor for the remainder of the day. This would allow me some prep time, time to work individually with the beginning teacher and also time to co-teach with the new teacher in their classroom.
- 18 Pay the mentors and choose them carefully.
1. Have more thought put into matching mentors and mentees.
 2. Include peer observation and time for peer coaching in the mentor agreement.
- 19 3. Training for mentors
4. Cooperative formative assessment before final evaluation each year. Participation by teacher, mentor and principal.
- 20 Provide time for meetings and help with mentors
- It always seems to come down to money. We need to have Teacher consultants in every district to work with new teachers to help them succeed. This will benefit the teachers by helping them feel they are not alone. Building Principals don't always have the time to mentor. The districts as well as the state would benefit by having competent and successful new teachers. It would help reduce the number of new teachers who may drop out of teaching because they feel stressed and alone in the beginning of their careers.
- 22 Should be a consistent model across the state
- 23 Time, time, time. Mentors need release time to observe mentees. It's the only way to make a valuable contribution to the mentee's professional development.
- Add language to the legislation that requires mentors to be at the top level of the graduated system being proposed.
- 24 Add language that doesn't just require new teachers have a mentor, but also gives some quality criteria of the mentoring relationships. Possibly require mentors to have some type of mentors training, at least (I've seen times where mentors were more the 'union rep' and less the mentor).
- 25 Financial incentives for mentor teachers OR regional training centers - i.e. ISDs willing to work with a number of new professions. See work at Berrien ISD or Northern Michigan University
- 26 Do not know what we can do.
- 27 The problem with mentoring is time. Release time needs to be granted to both mentors and mentees so they can meet/discuss/observe.
- 28 Not sure. But we need a better system.
- 29 I was very pleased with the Pathwise Mentoring materials and training I received through MEA and ETS several years ago. An issue is teacher buy-in as well as the increased cost for mentors
- 30 Assigning mentors to all new teachers for more than one year with specific rating scales and feedback techniques would help all teachers improve.
- 31 Have experienced teachers have more opportunities instead of just a principal's choice for mentorship.
- 32 Fund the mentoring programs.

A good mentoring program would be like a medical residence program. A first or second year residence does not make a final decision without speaking with a licensed doctor. However, in teaching, a new teacher is placed in a classroom after training and told "if needed" to speak with the teacher next door. A good mentoring program should include a step program. The new teacher teaches 3 out of 5 classes and must meet and plan with a master teacher in their area. The second year, 4 out of 5 classes with continual planning with the master teacher. During their last two years of pre-tenure, they should be able to handle a classroom very well and have a true (not university) repertoire of ideas and lessons.

I have been trained and served as a mentor teacher for my district. I am currently a cooperating teacher for a student teacher. I believe student teachers are shoved into a classroom with any teacher who will agree to "bother" with one. Often this teacher is not the most effective teacher in the school or district. We should have highly qualified teachers supporting our student teachers. These teachers should be recruited, trained, held to rigorous standards and paid accordingly. I see a complete disconnect between the university and K-12 classroom at this point. I have been a cooperating teacher for 2 years now and have had to train myself. I have utilized the "Assist" program but I believe there should be a strong link between the university and their cooperating teachers. I would like to be involved in creating a training program and a set of standards for cooperating teachers.

Set up a state-wide online network of NBCTs and other accomplished teachers to mentor new teachers and promote standards-based teaching.

The Jackson County Intermediate School District has a great mentoring class as an option taught by an experienced teacher- Laura Goldsmith. Since she is a neutral person, it benefits everyone. Jackson Community College teaches ISW- Instructional Skills Workshop where the veteran teacher, new teacher or pre-service teacher actually teach and openly provide feedback for each other based on best practice teaching techniques and assessment processes. Finally, most principals, and teachers do not have enough time in a given day to really mentor adequately. A strong mentor needs to be a people person, with an array of experiences to guide and assist the new teacher. They must be passionate about the profession. These individuals are usually the doers of the school and are stretched beyond capacity if the mentor is within the school.

Another option is to provide mentors from the community college or university of which new teachers attended and were prepared. A well planned masters education course could provide mentoring. The professor must have had at least 10 years in the K-12 classroom.

Train the mentors to mentor.

Districts can only have their new teachers teach a 50% schedule the first year while they use the other 50% to plan and co-teach with a colleague (who may or may not be in their building or district).

Many schools allow teachers to volunteer for this work. I believe that only teachers who are outstanding in their own work should be assigned these roles, and should be compensated in some form for this service.

Mine was with a PE teacher, I teach History.

It is difficult to get highly qualified mentors for many reasons. This could be strengthened with a state-wide plan for all districts or a plan set in place by the Universities.

Additional funding to support a required mentoring or on job support and feedback would be helpful. At the very least there should be a pool of qualified professionals that a new teacher or administrator could call in to give them an unbiased assessment of their job performance.

Give structure and time... and recognition to mentors for their time and efforts.

ETS Pathwise and the MEA tried to implement a program many years ago. It was fantastic. It focused on all areas of the new teacher's classroom and needs. The cost was more than many districts could afford. We need to find something of an equal caliber.

It's not rocket science. There seems to be a lack of follow through at the District and school level.

We can continue the mandate for every new teacher to have a mentor. Ann Arbor has a model where new staff are required to meet with, document and verify a specified number of hours. The weakness of the program is that it is self-reported and there are no clear guidelines as to what should be taking place. If a new teacher gets a great mentor, they do fine. If their mentor is not a very good teacher, they have wasted time "learning" under them.

47 Teachers who have demonstrated good interpersonal and professional skills should be selected to mentor new teachers. They should be given a monetary gift for their efforts and be recognized for their willingness to mentor.

Our school district needs a clear definition from the state on how the mentoring program should work, and how to
48 implement it. We had a great person coordinating the mentor program, but she left several years ago, and the program has fallen apart. The activities the current mentors are to do with their mentees are not seen as valuable.

49 I know this might not be popular --- PAY teachers for taking on a MENTOR -- you should be compensated for taking on more work --- and it would add value --- I know that seems awful... but MONEY talks!

50 National Board Certified teachers, National Writing Project Teacher Consultants. Both organizations attract teachers that constantly strive to stay current in research and to focus on evidence of student learning.

51 Ann Arbor has traditionally had a great system. It has become weaker, but Karen Schulte is someone to consult with... her program was excellent.

While probably not feasible, I believe the first year of contract teaching experience should be in a "team teaching"
52 situation with a master teacher. This allows for more concentrated mentoring. When there is just a mentor teacher and both have their own classes, the tendency is for the master teacher to devote herself to her own class. There just isn't enough time to devote to the mentee effectively.

53 There is no time built into the system to effectively mentor a new teacher. Why not consider having retired master teachers serve as mentors for young teachers?

54 Wayne WRESA PM3 Grant Mathematics Model has outstanding research and results. Dr. Fredricka Frost heads the research.

55 ISDs in Michigan need to partner with universities and for-profit professional developers. An example would be the Oakland Writing Project's partnership with the University of Michigan to provide literacy PD.

56 Most positive mentoring situations that I have observed occurred naturally. The formal pairing may or may not work and just because we can say that the mentoring is occurring, is it really? And is it of any value?

I think the ISDs could take on the induction programs. They could provide a 3-5 day program featuring the work of Harry Wong (*The First Day of School*) and maybe even our own Bill Cecil (*The Best Year Ever*). Other
57 significant works such as *Failure is Not an Option*, *The World is Flat*, etc. could be shared. A day re: special education laws and community resources could be included as well. If the ISDs did a 4 day induction, the local district could easily provide one day of induction and then schools would be exemplary on the SIF report.

Time, or lack of, is the biggest parameter in affecting change. We need to free up our master teachers to do
58 mentoring as opposed to adding one more thing for them to do in their typical busy schedule. Master teachers get that way in part because they do everything to the "nth" degree with great passion. That's why it's exhausting. We need to build in a time infrastructure that's really allows for the interaction between teachers that is effective.

I believe Michigan is too focused on "what" to teach and not at all focused on "how" to teach. It seems that a performance assessment has the "cart before the horse". Who is teaching our teachers HOW to teach? Thinking that putting a three-tiered system out there as a "carrot", that all would grab for it is absurd. Why not build a quality professional development program that would focus on excellent generic teaching skills that would improve the instruction delivered by all teachers in Michigan. Why not "No Teacher Left Behind?" Where is the focus on professional development and the follow-through to improve instruction? One can know the subject area well but that isn't all that matters. Nobody since I.T.I.P. (the Madeline Hunter teacher training) has talked on effective instructional practices. I see too many young teachers struggling, not because they don't know the subject area or not because they don't want to make a difference in the lives of their students. They are so caught up in the
59 pressure that comes from the State and then is filtered down through the school district to improve MEAP scores. The focus is on the "what" and not how to present it so students really learn. I believe we are teaching for the present just so our students pass a standard assessment. Teachers think that stuffing the heads just to pass the MEAP is good teaching. Quality teaching includes teaching for long-term memory. There is so much more to the learning process than just teaching a GLCE. Our professional development days in my district are strictly content directed thinking that focus on content will improve MEAP scores. However, if there was more focus in professional development to the instructional process and best practices for all teaching I think better instruction would happen. I spent my own money to go to Maryland this summer to a three day seminar called "Tools for Teaching" by Fred Jones. The focus of the three days was discipline, instruction and motivation. It was sponsored by the Montgomery County School District and many of the teachers were sent there to become mentors and use

his video series to help teachers in their individual schools. We need to think out of the box to improve instruction by ALL teachers in Michigan instead of focusing on a test or performance examination. Get creative.

RESPONSE TO QUESTION 12

12. Comments and suggestions on the teacher preparation process in Michigan.

Response (there are 54)

1 I hesitate to say that all student teachers should have to fulfill 1 school year because it is a lot of time to pay to work for free and schools like MSU do not have significantly better graduates because of it.

2 More classroom experience, management, put theory into practice.

3 We must provide a system for teachers to succeed. No amount of mentoring can overcome the difficult workloads that especially new teachers are expected to manage. Reallocate resources and reduce workloads!!!

4 Let's not make it harder to find education professors. NCATE certified colleges and universities make sure that they have K-12 teaching experience.

5 All teachers struggle in the first few years, but well-prepared teachers struggle less. We cannot compare teacher preparation institutions by comparing teacher exam scores required for certification. The proof of excellent preparation comes when the novice begins work in the classroom, and is also affected by the quality of induction and mentoring.

6 Most of the student teachers that I have had from Eastern Michigan University seem better prepared than those from 10 years ago. They are strong in their content knowledge and are aware of the State's requirements.

7 Insist that teacher education institutions require monitored pre-service (pre-student teaching) experiences and feedback with counseling for prospective teachers about their work in the classroom. Students should not get to student teaching when they are not going to succeed as teachers.

8 Student teachers need to see a whole year - from getting prepared for the first day of school to closing out the records on the last day of school.

9 I felt totally unprepared by my teacher preparation at U of M A2. I really learned how to teach from a friend who was not my formal mentor, but taught me everything I needed.

10 Needs to be more standardized across universities. Needs more emphasis on in-classroom experience.

11 Michigan State has a good program where students intern for a school year. Student teachers who are committed to urban education need a longer teaching experience with a qualified mentor. Research on MSU's student teacher follow up retention teacher rates vs. other institutions may be helpful.

12 The "critic teacher" from the university should have recent classroom experience in the same general field as the student teachers. Master teachers who have recently retired from active classroom duty should be recruited as resources.

13 More time in the field...Less time on the theory. I have found that once you add students into the equation, everything changes!

14 I think that student teaching programs that exceed one semester are excessive and punitive. Less than a semester, however, is almost useless.

15 While instructor qualifications/experiences and the length of time in student teaching can influence the quality of professional preparation, more focus needs to be on the content and processes of educating teachers so that the time spent is worth the investment.

16 Quality of preparation is quite erratic. Steps should be taken to increase early contact of potential teachers with real classroom experiences. Students need to learn earlier if they have the potential and desire to be a teacher. We need to identify and counsel out weak candidates.

17 Instructors who have had K-12 classroom experience are much better able to disseminate what is important and valuable to new teachers than instructors who have never been in a classroom.

Consider a 'student teaching experience' that is more like a residency, where they can be paid for some of their work. Possibly one semester is working with a critic teacher for credit and the second semester is more independent for credit and/or a small stipend (see the physician's training model). How will we ever attract the highest quality people to the profession if they have to take a vow of poverty for a semester/year while working full time and no other time to earn a living?

Remember to keep an eye on implementation "costs" - financial and in terms of people-hour costs - with any plans.

Too many of our top-notch teachers are leaving the State of MI. They go to a state university (tax subsidized tuition) and are forced to leave the state to find a teaching position.

Student teaching is at the end of all course work. I once had a student teacher who failed student teaching. That meant that 3 1/2 years of college time and tuition were wasted. Too bad there wasn't some kind of pre-teaching evaluation before the end to make sure potential teachers are selecting the right course of study.

One year is too long but 10 weeks too short. Pay supervisor teachers real money to do this since tuition is paid by student teacher. This money can be used by student teacher to also purchase things for his/her classroom (their budget).

The main problem with the student teaching experience: student teachers have to pay to attend (tuition) a fulltime job. It is difficult to be unemployed during this period of time. Also, some institutions do not consider student teacher's full-time students because student teaching might only be an 8 credit course. It is tough working all day (for free), grading papers/etc. and then being required to take additional classes to remain a full-time student (this is the voice of experience talking). We need to make student teaching a more productive and less stressful experience on the students.

Teaching colleges also need a better screening system for elementary candidates.

Professors' experience in classrooms could be minimal IF they continue to work closely with classroom teachers to learn more about the environment of a school

Student teaching experiences should be in two diverse situations, and a 2nd year should be required for those who need remediation.

We discussed ways to improve this several years ago and suggested financial stipends for the student teachers also.

I would like to see more colleges requiring education students to spend time in area classrooms. Once teachers get a job, they need mentoring, but I don't think the mentors should do that for free. I would also like to see teachers have a graduated licensing, so we don't have teachers who earn tenure and then coast through their careers.

The more experience actually working with or teaching students the better.

It varies from university to university. It needs more uniformity.

I believe student teachers should have an extended practice time with graduated support. Even the first year as a new teacher should be a "supported" year. This year should be supported at the university level and not left up to the will of the K-12 school. Student teachers are provided their student teaching experience, graduate, gain certification and then all formal support is discontinued. I would like to see university support for the first full year of a teachers career.

Look at the success of the MSU intern program where students intern for a year.

Students should experience classroom teaching early in their programs and continuously throughout their 4/5 years, beginning with small blocks of time and expanding to a full year before graduation.

The more actual classroom exposure, the better!

1. Our teacher education programs are all autonomous. This makes it difficult for the future teacher in deciding where to go especially if they are a transfer student from a community college. It is also difficult as everyone receives different training at various levels. The only item that equates all of them is the Michigan testing process which only tests knowledge, not teaching skills. Michigan community colleges have an organization, MACCEP. It was founded during their program development for pre-service teacher education programs. This should be
35 recognized. Many students have received more authentic education training in their early years of college education than they get at a university. Research shows these programs have drawn a pool of non-traditional future teachers, minority teachers, and they have more flexibility with course development and a myriad of connections with field service. Definitely things need to change in Michigan to keep up with 21st century demands and to maintain and improve the respect needed for the teaching profession. Our state cannot be complacent when it comes to any aspect of education at this point in time.

36 Potential teachers need to get into the classroom as soon as possible. Pre-student teaching experiences can guide the direction a student may wish to go.

37 The weakest element at the institution with which I'm most familiar -- WMU -- is that the instructors/professors are too often "past their prime" of usefulness to the teachers who will be formed for today's classrooms (though there seems to be some improvement of late). I also feel strongly that fine teachers who have relevant and relatively recent experience in the K-12 classrooms make the greatest instructors/professors.

38 There are too many teachers coming out of the program with a lack of knowledge on how to teach effective reading and writing, including the content subject areas.

I think students should do all on site instruction for the junior year, then return to the higher ed institution with
39 individual learning plans for the senior year that were based on their field experience in a classroom. Student teaching seems to be perfunctory at best. Very little support or assistance from the colleges.

40 Student teachers need to know the beginning, middle and end of a school year. See Oakland University's model.

I've had pre-student and student teachers from 3 different universities in Michigan. The students prepared to think were the most successful. The students with a bag of tricks never seemed to know what to do in an emergency or
41 when the lesson fell flat.

None of the students seemed to have enough training or experience in special education, English Language Learners or technology.

42 The student teaching experience should include experience at least two diverse sites.

I think it is important for instructors to have classroom experience because so many things happen that are not in the book. So much of a teacher's experience comes as a combination of training and on the job experience, we do
43 pre-service teachers a disservice by not giving a significant field experience. The reason I support a full year is that then the student teacher gets to see what school start up is like, what kids are like after a winter break and what it means to end the school year with a class. The experience is just so much fuller.

I think it has improved significantly since I graduated. Teachers now have more opportunities to support and
44 practice teaching skills in the classroom setting. I strongly feel that professors should be required to teach in the classroom on a periodic required basis so they can personally revisit what a teacher experiences and practice methods they teach to their students.

Before student teaching, university students should be required to do a specific amount of in-class work. I work
45 with pre-service teachers from 3 universities and their experiences are vastly different. One university does a better job requiring placement time than the other 2.

46 My full year program (MSU) gave me a wonderful chance to fully understand the ins and outs of a classroom! It was SO beneficial!

I worry about the cost of the after graduation classes that new teachers have to take. It is a real financial burden.
47 Could other resources, ISDs, be used to provide professional development without requiring college credit? Many of our new teachers already have student loans. And they are already putting in lots of hours in professional development requirements. Give them a break. Other professions do not require this.

Methods courses should include content and pedagogy. These courses should be taught by outstanding teachers from classrooms. When I taught at WSU methods, students would often comment that I was the first "real teacher" that they had. I organized the course by content and used hands-on materials, cooperative learning as I would in my real classroom. Many methods courses are taught by people who are great in theory but lack real life experience with students, parents, administrators, school boards etc. etc.

49 Programs that require a one-year internship offer the best preparation for pre-service teachers.

50 So much of being initially successful in the classroom is building classroom management and student relationship skills. Knowing your material and having good methods are very important but worth nothing if you can't actually teach due to management issues. The more experience with kids and opportunities to discuss and learn from what they see is very important. If students in teacher prep. programs are having ongoing classroom experiences and the opportunity to learn from and about them this will enhance their development. This is why their professors need classroom experience so they can connect the theory to the experience and help to guide the students.

51 It is so important for colleges to provide PRACTICAL information to teachers. So many of the important day-to-day aspects of teaching are not even covered in our teacher training programs.

52 Many professors have been away from the K-12 environment for many years. Theory does not always match the actual classroom environment.

53 The universities need to have conversations with host schools/teachers about prospective teachers, their personalities, and expectations.

I guess I have a few opinions tonight. I have more than just teacher preparation suggestions and comments. I have taught for several universities around the state and am always amazed when I share ideas for effective teaching practices and strategies, motivational ideas, discipline ideas, etc. that my students are all ears and soak in all that I share with them. I think that the State needs to look at some of the great teacher preparation programs of the past. I have always believed that I had the best teacher preparation that money could have bought back in the 1960's. I graduated from Michigan State University in 1970 through the Elementary Intern Program (E.I.P.) After two years of basic classes we entered the education portion of our studies. Michigan State had several satellite sites around that state where students did most of their final two years of preparation. My student teaching experience was 54 really two terms long. The first term I took my methods courses but taught lesson assigned through my methods courses in the classroom in which I student taught the next term. I started my student teaching experience knowing all the students and my supervising teacher and didn't have the "getting to know you" period. We went back to campus for spring and summer terms and then back to our satellite town. My last year of college I had my own classroom and received 2/3 salary, received 18 term credits and took two classes. The other third of my salary went to Michigan State to pay an intern consultant who was over 5 or 6 interns. They came into our rooms, modeled lessons, helped us through the first year teaching blues, taught workshops, and brought us the most up-to-date materials which were borrowed from the center. I felt so well prepared and confidence in my teaching. I have more to say but the survey won't take it.



Connecting Recognized Educators As a Resource To Improve Teaching & Learning

www.nme-educators.org

Thank you for allowing the Network to serve education with this "Ask The Network" survey research