Assessing and Evaluating Teacher Preparation Programs

A project sponsored by
The Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education
and the
Board of Educational Affairs
Why Should APA Be Involved?

We psychologists hold expertise in:

• Research methodology, measurement and evaluation
• Teaching and learning
• Education policy
• Leadership of teacher preparation programs
However....

All these experts didn’t agree on what’s best for improving teacher preparation.

The crux of the matter:

• How to determine the quality of programs
• Whether methods proposed to assess quality were sufficiently valid
Opposing Viewpoints

• The methods currently proposed for evaluating teacher preparation were not ready for prime time

• The situation is too grave to wait for the perfect and the current methodology is sufficiently valid to use.
Not on the Table

• We don’t have a problem.
Solution

• Bring together best experts from opposing views.
• Focus on solving a problem together
• Include a chair that is good at facilitating in difficult dialogues
• Generate a product that would be constructive, focusing on accountability but also on continuous improvement
Membership

• 3 highly regarded deans of schools of education
• 3 methodologists
• everyone had some expertise on teaching and learning
• advised by Jenny Smulson
• chaired by Frank Worrell
Consensus on Sticky Issues

• All agreed that the primary responsibility was to pupils in the schools and their success in learning.

• Each measure employed in assessing program would be presented as useful, but with clearly delineated constraints.

• Use the best possible methods currently available, with the recommended constraints – and not wait for the perfectly validated method.
Consensus on Non-Sticky Issues

• Use multiple methods and multiple time samples
• Standardize Implementation
• Train higher education faculty and staff on data collection and analysis
• Support the continued development of ever more high quality measures that can be employed in all subjects and grades.
Impacts

• Teacher preparation accreditation and state agencies are using the report as a reference.
• We’ll see what the new regulations say!!
• Will psychology programs be held accountable for their graduates’ contributions to their patients’/clients’ mental health?