



Production of Teachers Who Remain in the Classroom Varies by Preparation Program

at a glance

The state provides a number of pathways that individuals may use to receive training needed to attain teaching credentials. Universities and colleges provide initial teacher preparation programs to individuals pursuing degrees. For individuals who already have baccalaureate degrees, Educator Preparation Institutes and school district alternative certification programs provide professional training on the competencies needed for professional certification. The effectiveness of these programs in producing completers, placing them in classrooms, and retaining them in the classroom vary substantially partly because each program serves different types of students. School district programs have the highest percentage (79%) of their participants who remain in the classroom after completion. In contrast, 45% of state university program participants and 32% of college program participants were placed as teachers and remained in the classroom. Because Educator Preparation Institutes did not begin until 2005-06, it is too early to assess their productivity in producing teachers that remain in the classroom.

Programs have implemented strategies to improve these outcomes. To improve program completion, the programs offer class scheduling accommodations, financial aid, and test preparation assistance. To improve placement rates the programs provide career advising, sponsor job fairs, and partner with school districts. To improve retention rates, programs provide mentoring, and sponsor workshops on classroom management.

Programs currently do not report sufficient information for the state to measure their effectiveness. By requiring programs to track student completion rates and cost information, the state could better understand how effective the different programs are at producing classroom teachers.

Scope

As directed by the Legislature, OPPAGA examined the success of state-approved teacher preparation programs in producing new teachers. We also identified strategies the programs have implemented to address challenges program participants have in completing the programs, getting jobs, and staying in their classroom positions over time.

Background

Florida has faced a long-standing shortage of teachers in public K-12 schools due to the state's enrollment growth, the class size reduction constitutional amendment, and the loss of existing teachers to retirement or leaving the classroom. While the recent decline in the number of public school students and the current economic situation have reduced this shortage, Florida will still need to produce additional teachers to replace those that will retire in coming years, particularly in the areas of exceptional student education, mathematics, and science.¹

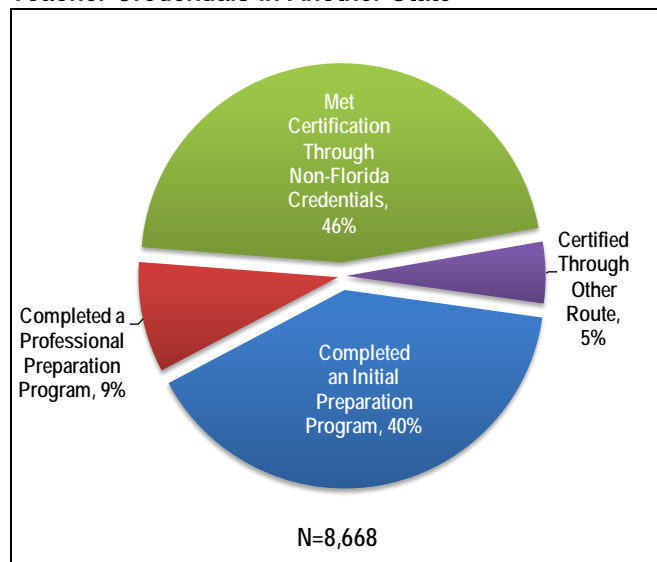
Florida meets this need through a number of pathways to professional teaching certification.²

¹ According to the Department of Education, the number of K-12 students decreased by 8,628 (0.3%) from school years 2006-07 to 2007-08.

² A professional certificate is valid for five years, is renewable, and required for teachers who wish to continue teaching in public classrooms.

First, as shown in Exhibit 1, nearly half (46%) of the 8,668 new teachers, those teaching with a Florida professional certificate for the first time during the 2005-06 school year (the most current year for which complete data are available), had completed their teaching credential in another state.³ Pursuant to s. 1012.56, *Florida Statutes*, the Florida Department of Education has reciprocity with other states to grant teaching certificates to persons who held certification in those states. The department reviews the academic preparation of people who move to Florida after completing another state's teacher preparation program.

Exhibit 1
Nearly Half of the 2005-06 New Teachers Completed Teacher Credentials in Another State^{1, 2, 3}



¹ New teacher is defined as an individual teaching on a professional certificate for the first time.

² Seventy-three percent of the new teachers produced from initial preparation programs graduated from state universities, while 22% graduated from private universities, 3% graduated from Florida college programs; data did not indicate the institutions that produced 2% of graduates.

³ The Educator Preparation Institute programs began during the 2005-06 school year and did not produce new teachers until the following year.

Source: OPPAGA analysis.

Second, initial teacher preparation programs offered by Florida universities and colleges produced 40% or 3,498 of the new teachers in the state during the 2005-06 school year. Nineteen

³ In accordance with the definition of 'New Teacher' for this report, a new teacher may have already been teaching on a temporary certificate or had prior teaching experience that did not require a Florida Teaching Certificate, such as teaching in another state.

public and 20 private colleges and universities offer teacher preparation programs in Florida.^{4, 5} These programs typically serve upper-division students who have already completed 60 hours of college credit.⁶ The programs generally provide this training in traditional classrooms, although institutions increasingly also offer online course options. Students must spend at least the last semester of their programs as full-time student teachers. Students must also pass all three portions of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (General, Professional, and Subject Area Exams), and typically take at least two years to complete these programs after admission.

Third, school districts are required by statute to offer professional preparation programs, otherwise known as alternative certification programs, to newly hired teachers who request the program. During the 2007-08 school year, 45 of Florida's school districts provided alternative certification programs to classroom teachers who were hired on a three-year, non-renewable temporary certificate.⁷ To complete the program and qualify for professional certification, participants must complete a minimum number of teaching days; document competence on all basic teaching skills; attend instructional classes, workshops, and seminars; and pass the Professional Education portion of the Florida Teacher Certification exam. Participants typically take one to one and a half years to complete these programs and must do so within three years. These programs produced 9% of the new Florida teachers during the 2005-06 school year.

⁴ The State Board of Education, initially approved St. Petersburg, Chipola, and Miami-Dade colleges to award four-year education degrees between 2001 and 2002. Subsequently, it also has approved Edison State College, Okaloosa-Walton College (now Northwest State College), Indian River State College, Broward College, Daytona State College, and Florida Community College at Jacksonville to also award baccalaureate degrees in education.

⁵ The Florida College System was formerly the Division of Community Colleges.

⁶ Graduate programs also serve to provide initial teacher preparation but are not included in the focus of this study due to lack of comparability in terms of length, cost and structure.

⁷ These programs may be part of the Alternative Certification Program managed by the Florida Department of Education, or may be developed by the school district and approved by the department. The programs range greatly in size from one participant in several districts (Dixie, Levy, and Okeechobee) to 873 in Hillsborough.

Fourth, as authorized by the 2004 Legislature, all 28 public Florida colleges and five state universities offer a professional preparation program through Educator Preparation Institutes.^{8,9,10} These institutes serve individuals who already have earned at least a baccalaureate degree in a field other than education and are interested in being classroom teachers and receiving professional certification. The college programs using the state developed collaborative model are competency based and designed to address the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices through four modules: the instructional process, scientifically-based reading methods, the teaching profession and diversity in the classroom. The modules are taught through seven courses and two 15-hour field experiences in which participants demonstrate teaching competencies in a classroom setting, including both teaching and classroom observation and assisting. Participants can complete all program requirements within one year, and must pass the Professional Education portion of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination. Institutions may award participants college or institutional credit for completing all of the competencies.¹¹ These programs began during

⁸ Section 1004.85, *F.S.*

⁹ The five state universities offering an Educator Preparation Institute include Florida Atlantic University, Florida Gulf Coast University, the University of Florida, the University of North Florida, and the University of West Florida.

¹⁰ Because the University of West Florida was the only state university that had an established program in 2005-06, we limited our analysis of the institutes to those offered through the state colleges.

¹¹ Twenty-six of the 28 state colleges use the Collaborative Model for

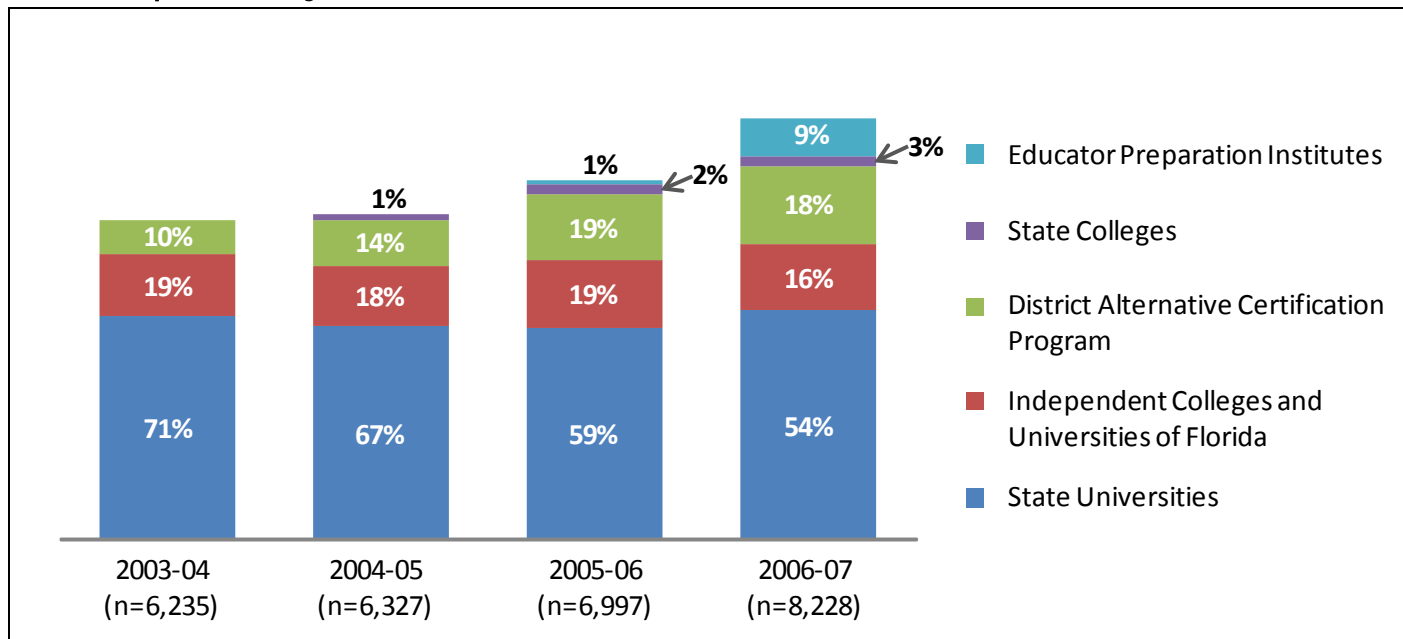
the 2005-06 school year but did not produce new classroom teachers until the following year.

Finally, individuals can qualify for a teaching certificate without participating in a formal teacher preparation program by documenting that they have met all requirements for a professional certificate. There are several ways individuals can meet the requirements. For example, individuals can submit documentation of at least two semesters of successful full-time teaching at the college level and passing the Subject Area Examination portion of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination, or submit a valid certificate from the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence and demonstrate professional education competencies in the classroom. All of these routes produced 5% of the new Florida teachers during the 2005-06 school year. For additional information on these and other routes see Appendix A.

As shown in Exhibit 2, the number of program completers generated by Florida's various preparation programs has increased over time, growing by about 2,000 completers between 2003-04 and 2006-07. Most of this increase occurred in school district alternative certification programs and the Educator Preparation Institutes offered at the 28 Florida colleges. While the proportion of program completers from state universities has decreased, the number of completers has increased by approximately 100 individuals during this time period.

Community College Teacher Preparation. The model includes 295 contact hours, which convert to 21 institutional credits that are used for tuition purposes.

Exhibit 2
Alternative Programs Account for a Growing Proportion of the Individuals Completing a Florida Teacher Preparation Program



Note: All completers of a state-approved teacher preparation program are included in the above exhibit, thereby capturing all program activity.
 Source: OPPAGA analysis of Department of Education data.

Program costs

The cost of producing teachers who remain in the classroom cannot be calculated for each of the various teacher training programs given currently available information. However, preliminary estimates show that teacher preparation programs’ direct costs vary widely. State university and college programs appear to have the highest costs, because the state pays \$178.76 and \$116.14 per credit hour, respectively for each type of program. If students in these programs took an average of 60 upper division credits, it would have cost the state \$10,726 for students to complete a university teacher preparation program and \$6,969 for a state college program during Fiscal Year 2007-08.

In contrast, Educator Preparation Institutes and District Alternative Certification programs appear to have lower direct costs. The state paid \$116.14 in costs per credit hour for the 21 credit hour Educator Preparation Institute program, or \$2,439 total, for each of these participants. Program costs for District Alternative Certification programs vary according to how each district designs its program and how many participants are enrolled.

Detailed summary financial information on District Alternative Certification programs is not available; the limited data that are available indicates that these programs may cost up to \$2,000 per program participant. However, in addition to these direct program costs, participants in Educator Preparation Institutes and District Alternative Certification programs must have at least a bachelor’s degree to participate; if these individuals earned their degrees at one of the state’s public universities or colleges then state expenditures related to their training would be substantially higher.

Findings

Florida’s teacher preparation programs have varying success in producing completers who obtain teaching jobs and remain in the public classroom over time. District alternative certification programs have the highest completion and teacher retention rates, followed by initial teacher preparation programs and the relatively new Educator Preparation Institutes. These different rates of performance partly reflect the substantial differences in the types of students

they serve. All of the program types have implemented strategies to improve these outcomes. The department should require the programs to track and report these outcomes and costs, which would enhance the Legislature’s ability to consider the programs’ productivity when allocating funds.

Florida’s teacher preparation programs have varying outcomes

In order for Florida’s teacher preparation programs to effectively address the state’s need for teachers, they must successfully produce completers who can then obtain classroom teaching jobs and remain in the classroom over time. We examined key outcomes for university and college initial teacher preparation programs for individuals pursuing baccalaureate degrees leading to a professional teaching certificate as well as Educator Preparation Institutes and school district alternative certification programs for individuals who already hold at least a bachelor’s degree. To use the most current data available, we evaluated participant outcomes using different cohorts to calculate completion, placement, and retention rates (see Appendix C). We were able to assess the completion and placement outcomes for the first year of implementation of the Educator Preparation Institutes, but we were not able to assess the teacher retention rate as the institutes did not begin operating until the 2005-06 school year.

Completion rates vary among programs. As shown in Exhibit 3, District Alternative Certification programs had the highest completion rate. Of the students who participated in these programs during the 2003-04 school year, almost all (97%) completed the programs within three years. In contrast, initial teacher preparation programs at state universities for individuals who had not yet earned a baccalaureate degree had three-year completion rates of 63% when computed on the ‘admission’ method and 71% when computed on the ‘first found in data method’.¹² The completion

¹² Completion rates were computed using two methods—‘admission’ and ‘first found in the data’. The ‘admission’ method uses the date in the admission field of the Teacher Education File, which may or may not be the date the students were admitted to the program, while the ‘first found in data’ method counts students based on the date that they were first found in the Teacher Education File. The

rate for students enrolled in initial teacher preparation programs offered by Florida colleges was lower at 43%. While Educator Preparation Institutes are designed so that participants can complete the program within one year, relatively few participants (34%) from the programs’ first year completed within that time frame.¹³ However, this completion rate is based on the institutes’ first year of operation and many of the institutes did not start until the spring semester. This rate may improve over time as the programs become more established.

Exhibit 3 District Alternative Certification Programs Have the Highest Completion Rates

Programs	Number of Program Participants	2003-04 Cohort: Percentage Completing	
		Within 2 Years	Within 3 Years
District Alternative Certification	1,153	72%	97%
State Universities Method 1: Admission	3,291	46%	63%
State Universities Method 2: First Found in Data	3,802	58%	71%
Florida Colleges	385	26%	43%

Notes: ‘Admission’ cohorts were calculated using the date provided in the program admission field, while the ‘First Found in Data’ cohorts were calculated based on when the student was first found in the Teacher Education data file.

The EPI programs were excluded from the exhibit because the first institutes were implemented during the 2005-06 academic year.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of Board of Governors data and the Department of Education data.

Placement rates vary among programs. District alternative certification programs had the highest placement rate (89%) after program completion, as all of the programs’ participants were hired as teachers in order to gain admission to these programs. Initial teacher preparation programs

‘first found in data’ method tends to produce higher three-year graduation rates because students’ dates of admission are typically earlier than the date they first are recorded in institution databases. For additional information see Appendix C.

¹³ Many institutions used SUCCEED, Florida! grants to develop an Educator Preparation Institute in Fiscal Year 2005-06. However, due to the lengthy competitive grant process, the institutions were unable to use the grants to establish their programs until the second half of this academic year, which may have contributed to the low completion rates for these programs. Only 20 of the 28 community college Educator Preparation Institute programs had enrolled students during the 2005-06 academic year.

offered at Florida colleges had the next highest placement rate, as approximately 81% of their program completers accepted teaching positions in a public K-12 school (see Exhibit 4). Fewer students from initial preparation programs at universities, approximately 72%, were employed in a public school classroom one year after completing their program. Educator Preparation Institute completers had the lowest placement rate, with 60% of the 2005-06 program completers employed in classroom teaching positions the next school year. (See Appendix B for disaggregated placement rate information.)

Retention rates are similar across the programs. All types of teacher preparation programs had high retention rates. As shown in Exhibit 5, over 90% of completers from the various program types remained in their classroom teaching positions for a second year. We could not compute retention rates for completers of Education Preparation Institutes as data were not yet available on whether their program completers had classroom teaching jobs after two years.

Exhibit 6 summarizes these outcomes for the different types of teacher preparation programs. The District Alternative Certification programs had the highest overall outcomes, followed by state university teaching degree programs and the Florida college programs. For each 100 district program participants, 79 of the teachers produced remained in the classroom. Because retention rates are not yet available for Educator Preparation Institutes, the exhibit does not illustrate retention for these programs. While these outcomes vary by each program type, a survey of 2006-07 program completers and their principals and peer mentors reported high levels of satisfaction with the preparedness of teachers from all program types. These included favorable ratings on both teachers' competency levels and eligibility for rehire.¹⁴

¹⁴ A report on State Approved Teacher Preparation Programs with Results of Surveys of 2006-2007 Program Completers, Florida State University, January 2009.

Exhibit 4
School Districts Had the Highest Percentage of 2005-06 Program Completers Placed as Public Classroom Teachers in 2006-07

2005-06 Completers by Institutional Program	Employed in Florida	Employed in the Education Profession	Employed in a Florida Public School District	Employed in a Florida Public K-12 Classroom
Alternative – District Alternative Certification (<i>n</i> =1,314)	97%	96%	90%	89%
Initial Preparation Programs –Florida Colleges (<i>n</i> =168)	94%	92%	85%	81%
Initial Preparation Programs – State Universities (<i>n</i> =3,142) ¹	88%	81%	77%	72%
Alternative – Educator Preparation Institutes (<i>n</i> =86) ²	85%	72%	66%	60%

¹ Cohorts for the state university programs only includes the subset of students who had not already earned a bachelor's degree at the time of enrollment in the program. As a result, approximately 72% of the 2005-06 program completers from the Teacher Education file were included in the analysis.

² The University of West Florida is not included in the analysis of the Educator Preparation Institutes.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of Department of Education data.

Exhibit 5
All State Preparation Programs Had High Retention Rates

Certification Route	New Teacher in 2005-06 ¹	Percentage Teaching in 2006-07
Initial Preparation Programs at Florida Colleges	107	93%
Initial Preparation Programs at State Universities ²	2,569	92%
District Alternative Certification Programs ³	744	92%

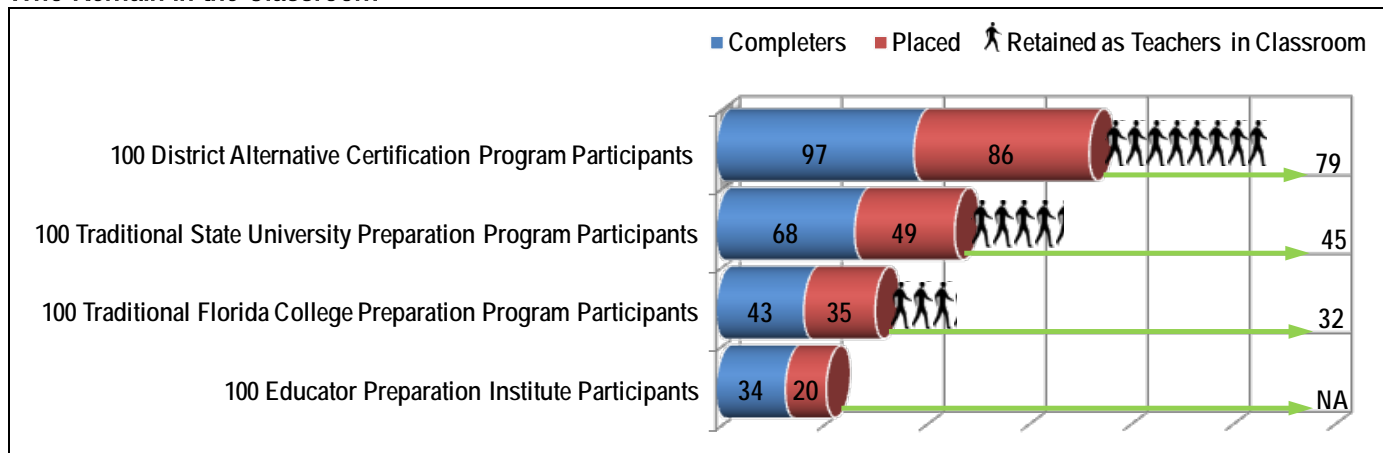
¹ New teachers are defined as individuals teaching with a Florida professional certificate for the first time.

² Rates for individual state universities ranged from 88% to 96%.

³ For districts with 30 or more completers, rates for individual districts ranged from 87% to 95%.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of Department of Education data.

Exhibit 6
District Alternative Programs Have the Highest Overall Outcomes in Producing Teachers Who Remain in the Classroom



Notes: Except for the Educator Preparation Institutes, the completers are based on three-year completion rates for students who started the program in 2003-04. Educator Preparation Institute completion rates are based on participants who started the program in 2005-06. The number of completers placed is based on the percentage of 2005-06 completers who were employed as a public classroom teacher in 2006-07. The number of teachers retained is based on the percentage of 2005-06 new teachers who were subsequently employed in 2006-07. We were unable to calculate retention rates for Educator Preparation Institutes with the available data.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of Department of Education data.

These outcomes partly reflect differences in the types of students served by the three types of programs. The differences in completion, placement, and retention rates among Florida’s teacher preparation programs partly reflect the substantial differences in the types of students they serve. Students in university educational degree programs tend to be younger and may still be exploring different career paths and may be open to the idea of relocating outside of Florida. As a result, university students may have lower completion rates and placements in a Florida classroom. Students enrolled in programs at one of the Florida colleges often attend on a part-time basis while being employed and may thus less likely to complete the program within the three-year period we examined, which may result in lower completion rates. However, these students tend to be older and have already established permanent connections to the local community making it more likely that they will be employed locally after completing the program. Participants in district alternative certification programs are already employed as classroom teachers and are thus highly motivated to complete the programs to achieve professional certification and retain their employment.¹⁵ Participants of Educator

Preparation Institutes are typically older as well and are often mid-career professionals; some of these participants may subsequently determine that teaching is not a good match for their skill sets and interests. Consequently, fewer of these participants may complete the programs or pursue teaching positions.

Programs have implemented strategies to improve their outcomes

The teacher preparation programs reported that they have taken steps to help participants complete their programs, find teaching jobs after graduation, and remain in the classroom over time.

Programs have taken several steps to help students complete the program. Program participants often face several challenges in

the 2005-06 school year held temporary teaching certificates. However, these teachers are not required to participate in a program leading to professional certification. Our analysis found that 28% of the 9,736 teachers who started on temporary certificates in 2003-04 were not successful in attaining a professional certificate before their temporary certificate expired at the end of 2006-07.

¹⁵ Approximately 57% of the newly hired Florida public teachers for

completing teacher preparation programs, including resolving time conflicts, paying for school, and passing the teacher certification exam. As recommended by national literature, the programs have adopted several strategies to help their participants address these challenges. These steps include creating course schedules that accommodate working and part-time participants such as offering summer, weekend, evening, and on-line classes. While survival training is required for all district participants prior to assuming responsibility for a classroom, this varies by program. One model is the Miami Dade three-week summer ‘boot camp’ that covers academic instruction, professional development, and classroom management skills. Offering this type of training in the summer rather than during the school year makes it easier for participants to complete the program.

Several universities have created financial aid programs to help aspiring teachers. For example, Florida Atlantic University has established a program that pays qualified students who have completed all program requirements except their student teaching experience a \$5,000 stipend for being the teacher of record during their student teaching semester. The University of Central Florida has formed a partnership with the Osceola County School District which pays up to two years of tuition for eligible students.

Several programs have established tutoring and mentoring programs to help participants pass the teacher certification exam, including forming learning communities and student support groups. In addition, several districts’ alternative certification programs offer workshops and individual test preparation assistance, and some require participants to have completed all or at least some portions of the Florida Teacher Certification Exam prior to being admitted into the program.

Programs formed partnerships and provided student advising and job fairs to facilitate the placement of program completers. For example, the University of Florida and the Alachua County School Board’s Urban Teacher Partnership have developed a program to place a small number of qualified candidates in internships as full-time teachers. These candidates receive a full-time teacher’s salary and a \$1,200 stipend for curriculum

planning, while receiving systematic coaching by University of Florida faculty. Participants are required to complete their bachelors’ degree, teach in the area for two years, and complete the teacher certification test.

To increase the likelihood that program completers find teaching jobs, many programs also provide program participants advisement and job fairs. For example, some program counselors advise participants to focus their coursework in a critical shortage area to increase the likelihood of placement in a teaching job. Universities and colleges also frequently offer on-campus job fairs to help connect program completers to school districts seeking to fill teacher vacancies.

Programs have adopted strategies to increase new teacher retention. New teachers can be overwhelmed by their classroom responsibilities. To help program completers meet these challenges, many teacher preparation programs have established mentoring programs and offer workshops on classroom management and test assessment. For example, faculty members at the University of North Florida visit their new program completers in their classrooms to observe them and offer advice.

The department should collect and report additional data on teacher preparation programs

While teacher preparation programs are required by law to report some data on their outcomes, this information does not provide the Legislature with sufficient information on the programs’ productivity and cost-effectiveness. Section 1004.04(5)(f), *Florida Statutes*, requires preparation programs to report the percentage of their program completers who are placed in teaching jobs, average length of stay in the teaching position, and employer satisfaction of their program completers. However, the programs are not required to report their completion rates, and they are not required to report their total teacher training costs. As a result, the Legislature lacks information to fully consider program outcomes when making its funding decisions.

Accordingly, we recommend that the Department of Education, in collaboration with the Board of

Governors, develop a methodology to determine the cost-effectiveness of the various teacher preparation programs. Analysis should include program outcomes of student cohorts such as completion rates, placement rates in teaching jobs, and retention rates in the classroom. The methodology for determining program costs should use existing expenditure data, when available, to determine the cost of producing a completer that remains in the classroom.

Agency Response ---

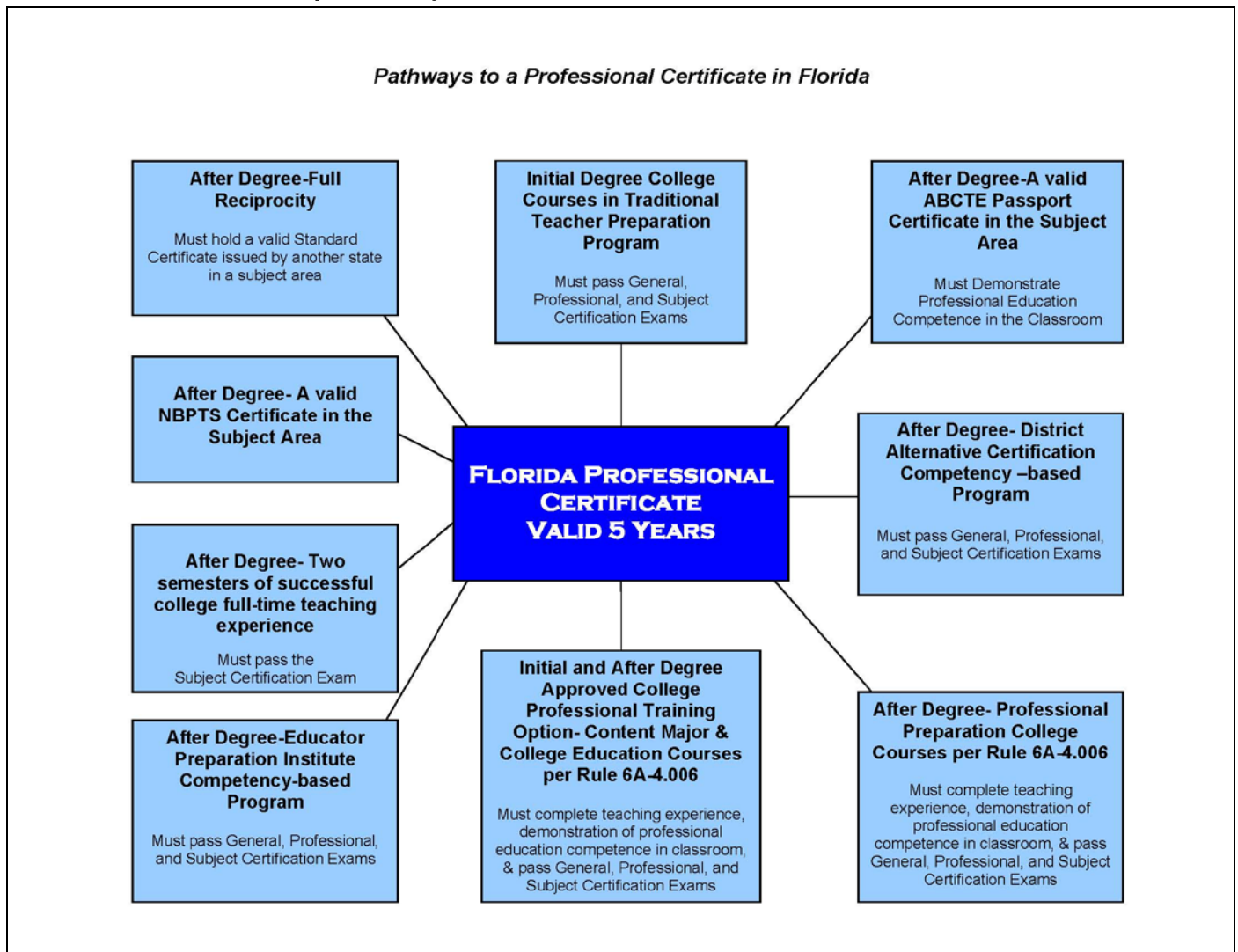
In accordance with the provisions of s. 11.51(5), *Florida Statutes*, a draft of our report was submitted to the Florida Board of Governors and the Department of Education to review and respond. Both written responses have been reprinted herein in Appendix D followed by OPPAGA comments.

Appendix A

There Are Multiple Pathways to Florida Professional Certification

Florida has established multiple ways for an individual to meet the requirements for professional certification. Table A-1 shows that individuals have the option of meeting certification through an initial degree program or through a program after already earning a baccalaureate degree.

Table A-1
Florida Has Established Multiple Pathways to Professional Certification



Source: Department of Education data, Bureau of Educator Certification.

Appendix B

Disaggregated Program Outcomes

Placement rates within programs vary by institution. For the university programs, Table B-1 shows that Florida International University (82%) and the University of North Florida (80%) had the highest placement rates while Florida State University (60%) had the lowest placement rate. The differences may be a result of the type of students each university attracts. Placement rates for the Educator Preparation Institutes vary widely between programs.

Table B-1
School Districts Had the Highest Percentage of 2005-06 Program Completers Placed as Public Classroom Teachers in 2006-07

2005-06 Completers by Institutional Program	Employed in Florida	Employed in the Education Industry	Employed in a Florida Public School District	Employed in a Florida Public K-12 Classroom
Alternative – District Alternative Certification (n=1,314)	97%	96%	90%	89%
Initial Preparation Programs –Florida Colleges (n=168)	94%	92%	85%	81%
Chipola College (n=9)	*	*	*	*
Miami Dade College (n=24)	*	*	96	96
St. Petersburg College (n=135)	93	90	82	77
Initial Preparation Programs – State University (n=3,142)	88%	82%	77%	72%
Florida International University (n=300)	93	90	83	82
University of West Florida (n=130)	85	83	81	77
University of Central Florida (n=750)	92	84	80	73
Florida Gulf Coast University (n=105)	87	84	78	76
University of Florida (n=197)	76	72	65	64
University of South Florida (n=583)	89	80	76	72
University of North Florida (n=250)	91	86	83	80
Florida Atlantic University (n=417)	90	84	80	73
Florida State University (n=305)	80	71	64	60
Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University (n=105)	77	72	67	63
Alternative – Educator Preparation Institutes (n=86)	85%	72%	66%	60%
Indian River Community College (n=9)	*	*	*	*
Manatee Community College (n=22)	86	50	50	32
North Florida Community College (n=24)	83	75	71	67
Pensacola Community College (n=14)	64	57	43	43
Polk Community College (n=17)	*	*	*	*

*To protect the confidentiality of program participants, categories with less than 10 participants or greater than 95% are not reported.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of Department of Education data.

Appendix C

Methodology

To assess the outcomes of Florida’s teacher preparation programs, OPPAGA calculated completion rates, placement rates, and retention rates for these programs based on information we obtained from the department’s Education Data Warehouse. As these programs had operated for differing periods of time, we could not track cohorts of students from each type of program from their initial enrollment through two years after graduation. We instead tracked student cohorts varying periods of time to calculate completion, placement, and completion rates.

Data requested

We requested various data elements for students who were first accepted into a teacher preparation program between 2001-02 and 2006-07 and their subsequent records. We also requested certification information along with Florida employment data. Table C-1 shows the type of data and for which academic years we requested data.

Table C-1
Data Request Included Participant, Certification, and Employment Data

Types of Data	Academic Years					
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Participants in Teacher Preparation Programs						
State Universities – <i>(All records of the Board of Governor’s Teacher Education File)</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X
Florida Colleges – <i>(All students accepted into a Florida college BS teacher preparation program)</i>			X	X	X	X
Educator Preparation Institute – <i>(All students enrolled in the 28 Florida college Educator Preparation Institute)</i>					X	X
District Alternative Certification – <i>(All teachers participating in a district alternative certification program)</i>			X	X	X	X
Teacher Certification						
Florida Teacher Certification Exam Status <i>(Pass/Fail)</i>		X	X	X	X	X
Teacher Certification Data <i>(certification type, etc.)</i>		X	X	X	X	X
Florida Employment						
Employment in a Public School District <i>(Automated Staff Information System)</i>		X	X	X	X	X
Employment in Florida <i>(Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program – FETPIP)</i>		X	X	X	X	X

Source: OPPAGA data request to the Education Data Warehouse.

Completion rates

To calculate completion rates we tracked cohorts of students who were admitted to teacher preparation programs. For the state university programs, we focused our analysis on the subset of programs designed for individuals pursuing bachelor's degrees that lead to a professional teaching certificate.¹⁶ In our analysis, we determined whether the students within each cohort had completed the program, dropped out, or were still enrolled in the program within specified periods of time. To take into consideration characteristics of university programs and district alternative programs, we allowed at least a three-year completion period from the time of admission to completion for university, Florida college, and district alternative certification teacher training programs.¹⁷ Because many of the Educator Preparation Institutes are designed for participants to complete within one year, we were able to calculate one-year completion rates for the first year (2005-06) of the program.¹⁸ Because the University of West Florida was the only state university that had an established program in 2005-06, we limited our analysis of the institutes to those offered through the State colleges.

Due to limitations in the Board of Governors' Teacher Education File, we computed completion rates for university teacher preparation programs in two ways. First, we calculated completion based on the date recorded in the admission field within the Teacher Education File; second, we calculated completion based on the date that students first appear in the Teacher Education File. The second method produces somewhat higher graduation rates as the date of the students' first record may be later than the date recorded in the admission field.

Placement rates

To calculate placement rates, we tracked the cohorts of program completers to determine whether they were subsequently employed in a public Florida K-12 classroom or employed elsewhere in the state of Florida. We counted teacher placements if the program completers were employed as a full-time public K-12 teacher; we excluded those who were employed in other educational positions such as administrators, guidance counselors, curriculum and media specialists, substitutes, and teacher assistants.

Retention rates

To calculate teacher retention rates we tracked whether new Florida classroom teachers, those teaching on a professional certificate for the first time in 2005-06, remained employed in a public K-12 classroom the following year. Our cohort included all new teachers who obtained their initial Florida professional teaching certificate.¹⁹ We were unable to calculate a retention rate for the Educator Preparation Institutes because the first institutes began in 2005-06 and their first completers were employed as teachers in 2006-07.

¹⁶ For the 2003-04 cohort, the subset of students included in the completion analysis represents approximately 65% of the students identified as first enrolled within the Teacher Education File for that year.

¹⁷ The 2003-04 academic year is the most current data that would allow us to track program participants from admission to completion over a three-year period. The three-year period was chosen to take into consideration that some university programs are designed so that students complete with a master's degree and that school district program participants can teach for three years on a temporary certificate.

¹⁸ We were unable to calculate completion rates for the second year of the program because the data available at the time of analysis did not allow us to track participants a full year who started the program at the end of the second year.

¹⁹ Some of the new teachers to Florida may have taught previously in another state.

Appendix D



FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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May 15, 2009

Gary R. VanLandingham, Ph.D., Director
 Office of Program Policy Analysis
 And Government Accountability (OPPAGA)
 Claude Pepper Building, Room 312
 111 West Madison Street
 Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Dr. VanLandingham:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft report: "Production of Teachers Who Remain in the Classroom Varies by Preparation Program." Further, we appreciate the open and cooperative approach that your staff has followed during the development of this report.

The report describes the different pathways available in Florida for individuals to attain teaching credentials and makes the important point that the preparatory programs serve different types of students and different workforce needs. Initial teacher preparation programs at public colleges and universities, through which the majority of all teachers are trained within Florida, serve students who are seeking a degree (usually their first degree) on the path to a career as a teacher. In contrast, district alternative certification programs have a different mission, providing a path from temporary to professional certification for teachers who have already earned a college degree and have already been hired to teach.

Early in the development of this report, Board of Governors' staff expressed concern about making simplifying assumptions and drawing comparative conclusions in light of the mission and population differences among the certification paths. As written, the report compares the different paths to teacher certification with a common set of metrics and without any discussion of the implications of those metrics or opportunities for improving any one of the certification paths' performance. To compare the different groups' completion and placement rates

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provides little insight into what should be considered a successful outcome for each or whether the available paths in Florida can be improved. For example, an initial teacher preparation program may help some students determine that they do not want to become teachers prior to their being hired into a classroom. It should be considered a success for such a student to complete a college degree and find employment in another field rather than be employed as a classroom teacher. The report would have been more useful had it looked at each path to certification in the context of the population served and distinct mission and then identified strategies for each path to increase its effectiveness.

The report acknowledges some shortcomings in the data comparisons and discusses differences in the populations served in each certification pathway. Yet, the statements made in the "at a glance" summary section of the report and in the exhibits in the findings section do not recognize those caveats and instead present the performance of each certification path relative to the other paths. As an example, the report's finding that "School district programs have the highest percentage of their participants who remain in the classroom after completion" appears in the page one "at a glance" summary section. However, the important explanation for this finding, that "participants in district alternative certification programs are already employed as classroom teachers," appears on page seven of the report, but is omitted from the "at a glance" summary.

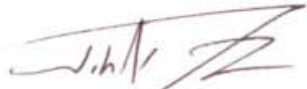
We urge you to continue exploring ways to evaluate the effectiveness of various policies and programs that affect Florida's school districts and postsecondary institutions' capacities to meet critical state workforce needs. Specifically, we recommend that you pursue additional research on teacher education to address the following policy questions:

- What measures of success are appropriate for the different certification paths and where are the "pipeline leaks"?
- How might public and private educational institutions improve performance and productivity vis-à-vis the success measures?

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- What role can the Legislature, Board of Governors, and State Board of Education play in implementing recommended improvements?

Sincerely,



John A. Delaney
President in Residence

JAD/smm

- c: Frances Haithcock, Chancellor
Judy Bilsky, Executive Vice Chancellor
Jane Fletcher, OPPAGA
Derry Harper, Auditor General, BOG
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May 18, 2009

Gary R. VanLandingham, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Program Policy Analysis and
Government Accountability
Claude Pepper Building, Room 312
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1475

Dear Dr. VanLandingham:

SUBJECT: Response to OPPAGA Draft Report Entitled, "Production of Teachers Who Remain in the Classroom Varies by Preparation Program"

I appreciate the opportunity to formally respond to your draft report, as well as the opportunity afforded members of my staff to meet with your researchers in April on an earlier draft. My staff provided you with a thorough and detailed review of that draft, and we note that you have utilized some of our suggestions for clarification. An attachment is included with this response outlining the remaining discrepancies.

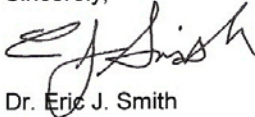
While this draft represents a somewhat clearer picture of the restricted data set you analyzed in this study, I maintain, as my staff indicated in the initial meeting last month, that the summary and introduction of the study as described on page one do not serve to alert the reader of these important limitations. If we are to utilize this information to improve policies and performance, I remain concerned about the resulting statistics and incomplete program depictions, especially as they relate to the description of the scope of the study. For example, your report indicates that district alternative certification completers as a group seem to remain in the classroom longer than other program completers. This kind of conclusion is important for us to know, as it could support significant changes in other programs, such as the length and type of field experiences required. However, the data behind the result are incomplete. Therefore, I generally agree with the excerpts in the report, which indicate that conclusions cannot be drawn yet and further study is needed, so that we can glean more useful results.

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Finally, as Chancellor Haithcock expressed during the April briefing, a study of teacher preparation program effectiveness in this day and age is not complete without an analysis of the achievement of the students served by the program completers. While studies of cost, completion rates and retention rates are important elements in a complete picture of "return on investment," the central piece of any such study must be an examination of the resulting student learning. Further, to truly improve our ability to prepare effective teachers, we should be studying linkages of these results with specific aspects of preparation programs, certification examinations and other requirements.

I understand that OPPAGA conducts analyses only in response to specific Legislative direction, and I respectfully request, if future studies are conducted on program "effectiveness," that consideration be given to these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Dr. Eric J. Smith
Commissioner

EWS/kh

Attachment

OPPAGA Comments to Agency Response

We clarified some sections of our report to address issues raised by the department's response. The Commissioner's response classified the data set we analyzed as 'restricted'. However, this data set contained information on all students enrolled in district alternative certification programs, community college educator preparation institutes, state-approved community college baccalaureate and state-approved university programs. At universities, our analysis included all students who had not yet earned a baccalaureate degree for the years analyzed in the report, but did not include students not enrolled in a formal preparation program.

We agree with the department that it would be useful to assess whether different types of teacher preparation programs are related to differences in student outcomes in the classes they subsequently teach. However, such a comprehensive analysis cannot yet be done because many of the educator preparation programs have not been in existence long enough to collect data needed for a complete analysis of student outcomes. The department's survey found that principals reported high levels of satisfaction with teachers who had completed all types of teacher preparation programs.

While teachers who had completed all types of preparation programs had high one-year retention rates, the district alternative certification programs had the highest overall success rates in completion, job placement, and retention. These outcomes may largely be a result of how the district programs are structured: participants are simultaneously working in the teaching field while meeting the requirements for a professional certificate and have an incentive to complete the program within three years to maintain their employment. These persons are already employed as teachers and do not have to seek placement but rather must only decide to retain their existing placement with the school district. The other types of teacher preparation programs that are not as closely linked to the classroom may have lower outcomes because their participants must determine if teaching is the right occupation for them and they must then successfully gain and retain employment with a Florida school district.

The Florida Legislature

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OPPAGA supports the Florida Legislature by providing evaluative research and objective analyses to promote government accountability and the efficient and effective use of public resources. This project was conducted in accordance with applicable evaluation standards. Copies of this report in print or alternate accessible format may be obtained by telephone (850/488-0021), by FAX (850/487-3804), in person, or by mail (OPPAGA Report Production, Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 W. Madison St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475). Cover photo by Mark Foley.

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