



SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Agenda Item 8.02D

September 6, 2018

MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Tim Hofferth and Members, SC Commission on Higher Education

From: Chair Terrye Seckinger and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Initiative to Coordinate Educator Preparation Advocacy

Proposal

Upon the Commission's statutory authority and its commitment in the *Public Agenda* to statewide workforce development, the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) proposes that the Commission coordinate a new advocacy initiative for improved PK-12 educator preparation, recruitment, retention, and advancement. Actions will include 1) partnering with current recruitment initiatives, outlining the need and focus, and 2) convening and maintaining the roundtable toward the goals of: a) coordination among the state's higher education institutions; b) formulating appeals to the Legislature, the business community, and other key stakeholders to incentivize teacher preparation at the state's institutions of higher education; and c) putting forth recommendations which result in fostering the teaching profession in SC.

CAAL Meeting

At its August 30, 2018 meeting, the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing (CAAL) hosted a roundtable to discuss the state's current teacher shortage and the challenges of educator preparation, recruitment, retention, and advancement. Participants included representatives from the teaching profession, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), the SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC), the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA), Greenville Technical College, educator preparation faculty, and deans [the South Carolina Education Deans Alliance (SCEDA)]. Three key findings participants presented include the following: despite best efforts, the state's institutions are unable to prepare enough new teachers to meet critical statewide demand. Second, teachers are vacating S.C. classrooms after the provisional year, which means barriers to teacher retention need to be addressed. Third, the shortage of teachers is adversely impacting student performance on statewide assessments.

Challenges to sustained educator preparation, induction, and retention include discipline-specific costs and perceived onerous testing, lack of alternative preparation options for higher education institutions, limited career advancement opportunities, non-competitive salaries, teacher dissatisfaction with workplace conditions, negative perceptions about the teaching profession, and more.

In response, CAAL discussed the role and responsibilities of the Commission, including the statutory mandate “for higher education in South Carolina...in providing a coordinated, comprehensive system of excellence in education by providing instruction, research, and life-long learning opportunities which are focused on economic development and benefit the State,” *SC Code of Laws 1976, as amended, 59-103-15*. CAAL members discussed the Commission’s [Public Agenda](#) (rf. pp.4-6) as a primary means and position statement for responding to teacher preparation and induction challenges in fulfillment of the statutory mandate. Through the roundtable and related activities, CAAL would continue to coordinate teaching profession discussions, investigate the reasons for reduced productivity of higher education teacher degree programs, understand causes to recruitment and retention challenges, highlight local intervention initiatives, work to remove barriers, and track progress. Specific next steps include increasing stakeholder engagements and partnerships (e.g., with the SCDE), advocacy for review of profession-related test score criteria (e.g., Praxis Core), and investigating options for potential alternative certification offerings at institutions of higher education.

After discussion, CAAL unanimously passed a motion to appeal to the Commission to coordinate new advocacy for improved PK-12 educator preparation, recruitment, retention, and advancement; that the Commission convene and manage an advocacy roundtable; and that the Commission propose to the General Assembly via coordinated correspondence potential solutions to favorably impact educator preparation and the state’s teacher shortage.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends the Commission coordinate renewed advocacy for improved PK-12 educator preparation, recruitment, retention, and advancement; convene and manage an educator preparation advocacy roundtable; provide coordination among the state’s higher education institutions; and propose to the General Assembly via coordinated correspondence with stakeholders the potential solutions to favorably impact educator preparation and the state’s teacher shortage.