

March 30, 2017

RE: In Support of SB221 as it pertains to an extension to CAEP Accreditation timeline

Dear Chair Roblan, Vice-Chair Linthicum and members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Dr. Erin Prince, Vice President of Education Policy for the Chalkboard Project. I am here today to testify on behalf of SB221 as it applies to extending the timeline for University Educator Preparation Programs to become fully CAEP Accredited by meeting the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation Standards.

The background information that prompted the passage of SB78, requiring teacher preparation programs to gain national accreditation through the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation Programs began years ago with the recognition that we can do better and must do better in preparing our teachers to meet the needs of students in an ever challenging learning environment.

Every student deserves an excellent teacher, well prepared and well supported.  
Every teacher deserves an excellent preparation program that is highly rigorous and supports teacher success.  
Every Preparation program deserves a set of high standards and blueprint that guides, supports and measures outcomes of teacher success out in the field.

Following a Chalkboard survey that was conducted through the TeachOregon collaboratives across the state, an audit and report by the Secretary of State's Office was filed in August, 2013. Both found that over half of administrators felt teachers were not sufficiently prepared and teachers themselves did not feel fully prepared for the classroom once graduating from their prep programs. It also was evident that other states were further ahead of Oregon in the collection of valuable data that followed hiring and retention rates, success of teachers entering their first few years of teaching and the development of strong collaborative partnerships between K-12 and prep programs. Additionally, the Governor's Council for Educator Advancement recommendations are built on the premise that all educator prep programs will gain national accreditation.

Based on my 32 plus years in public education, most recently as a superintendent in the Corvallis School District, I appreciate fully the impact national accreditation can and will have on our Oregon Educator Preparation Programs.

Chalkboard Project's experiences from 3 years of TeachOregon partnerships have served to emphasize the importance of strong collaborative partnerships and mutually beneficial commitments between university teacher preparation programs and School districts. The need for collection of relevant evidence and data sharing between partners and the two state agencies (TSPC and ODE) is crucial to continuous improvement of these programs. Strong clinical experiences with carefully selected teachers and teacher candidates trained in co-teaching to enrich the clinical practice experience along with the training of university supervisors is another prime factor for ensuring success for the beginning teacher. Early recruitment efforts and support for culturally and linguistically diverse candidates is a program element that must be center focus for Oregon in our efforts to close the opportunity/access gap in our schools.

As Portland State University Dean, Dr. Randy Hitz shared in his written testimony in support of the extension in SB221, PSU is already accredited. It was not an easy process, yet was rigorous and he states "Let me .....say thank you for taking the step to require national accreditation for all educator preparation programs (EPPS) in Oregon. This will help to ensure the highest quality preparation for all educators and improve the education for our PK12 students."

Recognizing the high level of rigor, collection of extensive data (while systems are still being developed), and making program shifts, we at Chalkboard fully support the extension of the timeline through SB221 for university educator preparation programs to successfully meet the national standards for accreditation.

Thank you,

Erin Prince  
Vice President of Education Policy  
Chalkboard Project