

Message from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

The NCATE works to improve how America prepares teachers by accrediting colleges and universities that meet national standards. Nearly 700 education programs-which prepare two-thirds of the nation's teachers- are accredited, including most state universities.

Accreditation is important because of accountability. Accreditation is the ultimate measure of quality in new teachers, like a professional seal of approval because it assures the public across the board-parents, business leaders, policy-makers-that candidates coming out of a particular institution have been prepared to teach using rigorous standards that have been designed by the profession.

There are some programs that aren't accredited that adequately prepare new teachers, but research has found that accredited programs produce the best teachers. Hospitals don't hire Doctors unless they have graduated from accredited schools:someday the same might be said for teachers. By holding teacher education preparation programs to high standards, we are assuring the public that they can be confident in new teachers.

If you find out that your school is not NCATE accredited, there are several steps you can take.

1. Hold discussions with faculty on NCATE Accreditation.
2. Ask if your University can set up a partnership with local schools and provide you with the clinical experiences you need to be fully prepared to teach in a classroom environment.
3. Ask your state education agency, if it has information on additional programs or partnerships with NCATE accredited universities. (You may be able to take additional courses for credit)
4. Visit the NCATE web-site for a list of accredited schools.

www.NCATE.org

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The NEA Responds to the House Vote



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2007

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Higher Education Bill Keeps Quality Teachers in Classrooms *NEA Leaders Applaud Legislation for Easing Burden of Student Loan Debt*

This is a big step for college students, for our nation and especially for our public schools,” said *Weaver.*

WASHINGTON—NEA President Reg Weaver and Anthony Daniels, chair of the Association’s Student Program, believe the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007 will help reduce the alarming number of new teachers who leave the classroom because they can’t afford to make ends meet or repay their student loans. According to a study released earlier this year by the National Center for Education Statistics, 20 percent of new teachers left the profession in the 2004-05 school year.

“This is a big step for college students, for our nation and especially for our public schools,” said Weaver. “If this act becomes law, it will help to alleviate some of the concern that individuals who want to become teachers face about paying their student loans while supporting themselves on a beginning teacher’s salary.”

The House of Representatives passed the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007 this week. The act would provide tuition assistance and loan forgiveness for college graduates who agree to become public school teachers or enter other public service professions. The Senate is expected to consider legislation concerning college affordability later this summer.

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NEA Responds to the House Vote

“Our children are losing too many good teachers due to skyrocketing student loan debt,” said Daniels, who represents more than 60,000 student NEA members who are preparing to become teachers. “This legislation will help to attract and retain quality teachers, and we know that good teachers help to make great public schools.”



The bill increases the maximum Pell Grant amount by \$500 over the next five years. When combined with other legislation passed or proposed by Congress this year, the maximum grant would reach \$4,900 by 2008 and \$5,200 by 2011, which is up from \$4,050 in 2006. Students pursuing postsecondary education can receive Pell Grants based on their financial need.

The legislation also cuts in half interest rates on student loans by 2012 and limits loan repayment amounts to a reasonable percentage of a graduate’s income. Lawmakers believe the act would pay for itself by reducing excessive federal subsidies paid to lenders in the college loan industry by \$19 billion.

“Choosing to become a public school teacher shouldn’t mean a life of debt and endless part-time jobs just to survive,” said Weaver. “We applaud the House for taking this momentous step and strongly encourage the Senate to pass this important legislation.”

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The National Education Association is the nation’s largest professional employee organization, representing 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers.

Advisory Committee Report

The Advisory Committee has been working extremely hard this past year. There were two things that they focused on :Ways in which you recruit freshman and sophomores, and ways in which you recruit and retain ethnic minorities.

Freshman/Sophomore Committee:

1. Recruit members by using personal stories. Example: Tell them how the organization has helped you.
2. Identify benefits that will specifically resonate with college students. I.e.: discounts on items like cell phone equipment, monthly cell phone bill discounts, textbooks, classroom supplies, car rental, car insurance etc....
3. Survey your local chapter members to see what things are they looking for from the organization.



Minority Committee:

1. Minority Leadership Training Program coming in 2008
2. Ethnic Minority Week (Celebrating the contributions of ethnic minorities in education)
3. More advertisement in publications widely read by ethnic minorities



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See you next issue!