Collaborative Programs in General and Special Teacher Education

An Action Guide for Higher Education and State Policy Makers

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The Center for Improving Teacher Quality is a national center that is working with states to develop models for improving the preparation, licensing, and professional development of both general and special education teachers of students with disabilities. The lead partner in operating the Center is the Council of Chief State School Officers, through its Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. Collaborating partners include the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the federal Regional Resource Centers, the federal Regional Comprehensive Centers, and the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extrastate jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major education issues. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium is a program of CCSSO that works with states to improve the preparation, licensing, and ongoing professional development of teachers through standards-based reform.

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education is a national, voluntary association of higher education institutions and other organizations dedicated to ensuring the highest quality preparation and continuing professional development for teachers and school leaders in order to enhance PK-12 student learning.

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Preface

CTQ is a project funded through the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. This project is designed to bring together state departments and higher education to improve the preparation, licensing, and professional development of both general and special education teachers in their work with students with disabilities. As president of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and state superintendent of public instruction in Wisconsin, I am delighted to introduce a new publication from CTQ called *Collaborative Programs in General and Special Teacher Education: An Action Guide for Higher Education and State Policy Makers*.

The purpose of this document is to provide direct support to state policy makers in special and general education and their higher education colleagues as they work together to prepare and license all teachers of students who have disabilities. The guide includes two major sections: (1) a conceptual framework and models for collaborative teacher education and (2) a set of self-assessment tools and specific strategies for moving the work ahead in both the state and higher education arenas.

At CCSSO, we are committed to actively serving the children and the schools of our nation by bringing practical clarity to the issues that surround the education of students with disabilities. The best way we can ensure an appropriate education for all of our children is to invest in high-quality professionals in every school. Our students deserve nothing less. Research clearly shows—and every parent can tell you—that the most important factor in influencing student achievement is the quality of the teacher. The work of CTQ emphasizes that student learning is directly related to good teaching.

We are on the right track. This action guide will support our efforts in ensuring high-quality teachers. Our responsibility is clear—we must support teachers in every way so they can best serve all children, including children who have disabilities.

Elizabeth Burmaster

The Center for Improving Teacher Quality: Building Alliances and Fostering Dialogue

Since 2002, the Center for Improving Teacher Quality (CTQ) has been operating to support collaboration between state departments of education (i.e., program approval, teacher licensure, special education) and higher education professionals to improve the preparation, licensing, and professional development of all teachers to work with students who have disabilities, including teachers in both general and special education. The Center's lead partner is the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), through its Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC). Collaborating partners include the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). The work of the Center builds upon INTASC's development of model policies that can help states drive systemic reform of their teacher licensing systems, particularly INTASC's *Model Standards for Licensing General and Special Education Teachers of Students With Disabilities: A Resource for State Dialogue* (CCSSO, 2001).

Since its inception, CTQ has been working with teams from 42 states whose members represent the key leverage points for change in teacher education and licensure as it relates to both general and special education teachers of students who have disabilities. CTQ has sponsored annual forums at which state teams have drafted, updated, and reported on the implementation of state-specific action plans to reform the preparation, licensing, and ongoing professional development of all teachers who work with students who have disabilities. Among the resources made available to assist states in their reform efforts, CTQ supported the development of this action guide.

This guide is designed to extend CTQ's efforts to support the reform of teacher education as representatives from state departments of education and higher education *work together* to better align policy, practice, and resources to improve the quality of all teachers—in general and special education—to serve students who have disabilities within the larger context of preparing teachers to meet the needs of the broad range of students who make up the school population today. It is based on the assumption that by working together, general and special educators, state policy makers, and higher education faculty—whether in the arena of the states or of preparing new educators in colleges and universities, or in practice in PK-12 classrooms—can accomplish more to support the learning of students who have disabilities than they can working in isolation.

The CTQ web site can be accessed at www.centerforteacherquality.org.

Collaborative Programs in General and Special Teacher Education:
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Executive Summary

Collaboration across general and special education has long been identified as critical to improving educational opportunities for students who have disabilities. But despite the acknowledgment that every teacher needs to be prepared for this aspect of their work, how best to prepare them remains unresolved. Today the majority of students who have disabilities spend a great deal of time in general education classrooms, have greater access to the general education curriculum, and are expected to learn the general education curriculum alongside their peers. While there may be disagreements about how much inclusion is appropriate, it seems clear that we are not returning, nor should we, to the days when segregation was the norm and when the general education curriculum was typically not seen as appropriate—and certainly not accessible—for students who have disabilities. Similarly, while there may be disagreements about the various ways in which collaborative teacher education is structured, it is clear that we cannot continue the status quo of segregated general and special teacher education programs that give little more than lip service to collaboration.

This action guide was developed as a resource to advance the dialogue regarding collaboration in the preparation of general and special education teachers and to support reform in teacher education policy and practice. It is based on the assumption that such collaboration must take place as an interrelated effort across state policy, teacher preparation, and classroom practice. The guide is divided into two major sections:

Section 1 of the guide proposes a conceptual framework and common language to define and describe collaborative teacher education models and licensure approaches. This section includes a typology of dominant models of collaborative teacher education along with a discussion of how these models differ along several major programmatic and structural dimensions. It also provides a description of major considerations in creating and sustaining collaboration in teacher education and an overview of the role of teacher education research for rethinking collaborative programming. Vignettes from colleges and universities throughout the United States highlight a range of collaborative teacher education program structures.

Section 2 focuses on practical tools, in the form of self assessments and core strategies, for use by state policy makers and higher education faculty to advance their teacher education and licensure work. These self-assessments are organized according to the major dimensions for creating and sustaining collaborative programs discussed in the first section of the guide. For states, these dimensions include higher education collaboration, curriculum coherence, depth of knowledge, licensure, and PK-12 partnerships. For higher education, they include faculty collaboration, curriculum coherence, depth of knowledge, alignment of performance/portfolio assessments, administrative structures, and PK-12 partnerships. The self-assessment for each dimension of program reform contains a three-level rating scale ranging from *entry* to *developing* to *high*. To assist states and institutions in moving forward once they have completed a self-

assessment, this section also includes core strategies for each audience, organized according to these same program dimensions.

While collaboration in teacher education can be difficult work, it is also essential work if the nation is to realize the commitment made beginning with the first Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1975 and—more important—to foster all students' learning of the general education curriculum. As this guide illustrates, some teacher education programs have moved beyond the status quo of programs that demonstrate little collaboration or curricular coherence among general and special education and have implemented other, more collaborative models of teacher education. In addition, some states have reconsidered their licensure structures and better aligned general and special education. Most important, the work of CTQ and the provision of resources such as this action guide highlight the critical interaction of state policy makers and higher education professionals in implementing reform efforts for the benefit of all children.

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INTRODUCTION

A caring, competent, and qualified teacher for every child is the most important ingredient in education reform . . . . (National Council on Teaching and America's Future, 1996, p. 3)

Ensuring a high-quality teaching force so that every student receives the best education possible is a national priority. Although definitions of what it means to be "qualified" may differ among educators and researchers, it is widely accepted that teachers play a pivotal role in students' success in school. For students who have disabilities, this means first and foremost that general education accepts the responsibility for working with this population of students and that general education teachers are prepared to collaborate with their special education colleagues to do so. It also means clearly delineating the "value-added" role of special education in educating students who have disabilities—the special expertise *in addition to* the fundamental knowledge, skills, and dispositions that every teacher must bring to the classroom.

Serving students who have disabilities in the public schools represents a longstanding national commitment. It was only a little more than 30 years ago that students who have disabilities were routinely segregated without cause, receiving either substandard public education or, in many cases, no education at all. While there may be disagreements about the degree of inclusion that is appropriate, it seems clear that the nation is not returning, nor should it, to the days when such segregation was the norm. Today the majority of students who have disabilities spend a great deal of time in general education classrooms. Because of this, every teacher needs to be prepared to work effectively with students who have disabilities and to collaborate effectively with special or general education teacher counterparts. This responsibility requires a joint effort on the part of those who prepare general and special education teachers in the country's institutions of higher education. Moreover, the success of such efforts requires collaboration across institutions of higher education that prepare teachers and state departments of education that create and monitor teacher education policies.

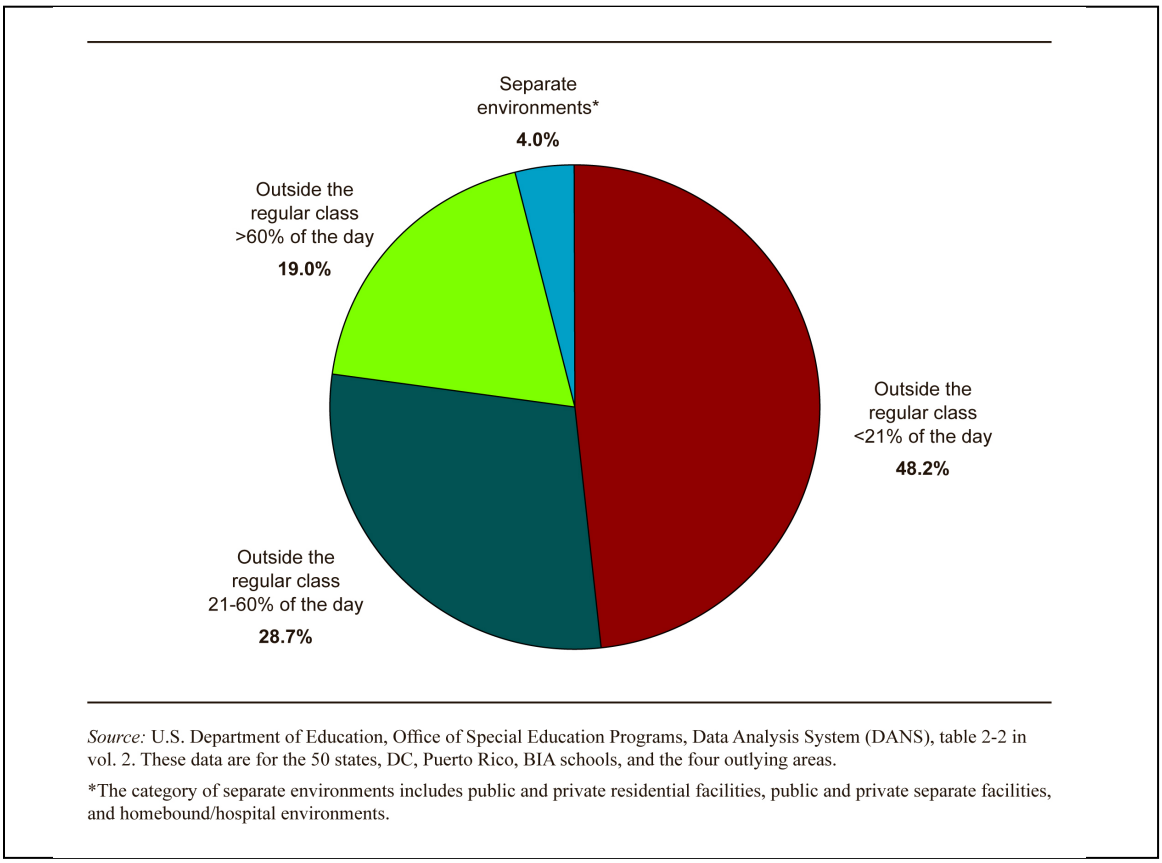
Why Revisit Collaboration Now?

The initial impetus for discussions about collaboration in teacher education was, without question, the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975 (first enacted as Public Law 94-142), with its emphasis on integrating students who have disabilities into general education. Because collaboration between those who prepare teachers for general and special education has been a goal for so long, why is it urgent to revisit these issues today?

First, the focus on having students who have disabilities achieve in the general education curriculum is greater than ever before; the 1997 amendments to IDEA amplified the priority of this goal. The expectation that most students who have disabilities can and will learn the general education curriculum dispenses with the notion that students who have disabilities are not able to learn what their nondisabled peers have the opportunity to learn. Providing access to all students, including those who have disabilities (see Figure 1), places responsibility on both special and

general education teachers to know the general education curriculum well and, whether they are teaching together or alone, to foster their students' learning of the general education curriculum.

Figure 1. Percentage of Students Ages 6 Through 12 With Disabilities Receiving Education and Related Services in Different Environments: Fall 2002



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Data Analysis System (DANS), table 2-2 in vol. 2. These data are for the 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, BIA schools, and the four outlying areas.

*The category of separate environments includes public and private residential facilities, public and private separate facilities, and homebound/hospital environments.

Second, reports that continue to show significant achievement gaps among groups of children in our country's schools signal the importance of creating classrooms that are designed from the outset to be successful with the full range of students who make up today's school population. While this guide has a focus on students who have disabilities, it is important to emphasize that disability is only one marker of diversity in an increasingly diverse population of school-aged students. Although multiple national reports show that large numbers of students who have disabilities score among the lowest on state achievement tests, they also reveal that many general education students are found among the lowest scoring students on these tests and that students with the lowest scale scores are often Black or Hispanic students (National Center on Education Outcomes, 2006). The larger issue, then, is how to make good on the expectation that all students across the diversities of race, class, language, or culture, as well as disability, can succeed in school.

Third, the requirements of IDEA intersect with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) for teachers to be "highly qualified." This intersection sets the bar higher to ensure that

teachers possess the ability to serve the range of students they regularly encounter in schools and classrooms across the nation. As a result, more than ever before, preparing every teacher to work effectively with students who have disabilities is the business of teacher educators in both special and general education. In particular, NCLB emphasizes the need for content preparation for all teachers, including special education teachers. However, what teachers know and should be able to do to meet the needs of students who have disabilities is certainly not just a matter of knowing academic content—for either general or special education teachers. On the contrary, every teacher must also possess the ability to represent that content to the students they teach (i.e., pedagogical content knowledge), as well as a finely honed array of instructional and management skills to ensure that today's multiracial, multiethnic, and multilingual classrooms function smoothly and productively (see, for example, Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Fourth, although many teacher education programs have taken steps to engage in some initial level of collaboration so that all teachers are better prepared to teach all students, often the practical outcome has been the requirement of a single course in areas such as special education. Adding a course, or even several courses, to a teacher education curriculum does little to address the larger teacher education reform imperative identified by a wide range of national studies and reports (e.g., Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Holmes Group, 1986; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). The first generation of such courses in special education were typically based on teaching about categories of disability ("disability of the week"); this has eventually given way to a second generation of courses that for the most part emphasize collaboration between special and general education and how to make accommodations and modifications to support students who have disabilities (Pugach, 2005). Today at least 45 states require such a course (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification, 2004). While requiring a course is certainly a step in the right direction, it does not represent a robust, *systematic* integration of special and general education across all aspects of the preservice curriculum, nor does it address the relationship between disability and other markers of diversity. Further, the single-course approach does not necessarily address how general education might contribute to the preparation of special education teachers. Finally, the single-course approach is based on the assumption that the responsibility for rethinking teacher preparation as it relates to disability is the job of teacher educators in special education alone, rather than a joint responsibility across teacher education to address not only disabilities, but the broader range of diversity as well.

Fifth, a lack of alignment between state teacher education policies and reform goals in teacher education may stymie even the most well-intended efforts toward increasing collaboration in teacher preparation. Differences in licensure structures for general and special education within a state (e.g., states that have grade-level licensure for general education but broad PK-12 licensure for special education) may make it difficult to restructure teacher education for collaboration. In contrast, some states may launch teacher education reform efforts to move collaboration in teacher education along faster than departments, schools, and colleges of education can respond. To further complicate matters, many states are experiencing increasing shortages of special education teachers. Teacher shortages, coupled with the new demands for increasing the quality of teacher preparation, make the alignment of state policy and teacher education practice more important than ever. In each of these cases, strong working relationships

between state departments and institutions of higher education are critical in achieving sound collaboration.

Taking Action

Widespread concern for the quality of the nation's teaching force provides an unparalleled opportunity to address, in a more systematic fashion than ever before, how best to prepare both general and special education teachers to educate students who have disabilities. Within this context, the broad goal of this action guide is to advance the dialogue between state departments of education and institutions of higher education regarding the preparation of all teachers for working with students who have disabilities, and to provide strategies that can lead to greater and more systematic collaboration to improve teacher preparation. Specifically, the action guide is designed to facilitate this dialogue by

- Creating a common understanding of and shared language for discussing dominant models of collaborative teacher education
- Placing collaborative teacher education into historical perspective
- Considering how state policies, and in particular teacher licensure policies, can support or hinder collaboration in teacher education programs within and across institutions of higher education
- Providing descriptions of preservice programs that illustrate different structures for addressing collaborative teacher education
- Creating a conceptual framework for analyzing and developing collaborative teacher education programs that has applicability for collaboration across all aspects of teacher education, not just collaboration to prepare teachers for working with students who have disabilities
- Providing stakeholders in state departments of education with specific action strategies for supporting collaboration in teacher education and for aligning teacher education program approval and licensure to attain this goal
- Providing stakeholders in higher education with specific action strategies for building collaboration across faculty in general education teacher preparation, special education teacher preparation, and the arts and sciences to support the goal of preparing all teachers for working with students who have disabilities
- Providing state department and higher education stakeholders with specific tools to develop action plans to create greater programmatic collaboration between the preparation of general and special education teachers

This action guide addresses the preparation of general education teachers and special education teachers in both high- and low-incidence disabilities. The following question frames the strategic

work suggested by this guide: *If we are successful in significantly improving the preparation of general education teachers for their work with students who have disabilities, what are the implications for the kinds of preservice programs we offer for preparing special education teachers?*

The guide is divided into two major sections. Section 1, *A Typology of Dominant Models of Collaborative Teacher Education*, provides descriptions of three program models across a continuum from less to more collaborative teacher education. This section also includes a brief history of collaboration in teacher education and a discussion of considerations that are essential for successful implementation. Section 2, *Critical Dimensions of Program Development*, provides an overview, self-assessments, and specific core strategies to guide stakeholders through the process of developing specific action plans to increase and improve the development of collaborative teacher education programs. These tools can also serve as a template for interactions across the entire spectrum of preservice teacher education spanning arts and sciences through professional education.

SECTION 1

A Typology of Dominant Models of Collaborative Teacher Education

General agreement that all teachers need to be prepared to work well with students who have disabilities may or may not be emblematic of a deep, common understanding of what this means in the classroom, and, by extension, of internal consistency for what occurs during preservice preparation. (AACTE, 2002)

Requiring a single special education course for general education teachers appears to be the modal response to preparing teachers to work with students who have disabilities. Nevertheless, over the last decade, several teacher education programs have taken the lead in developing more collaborative approaches to preservice education. Different terms (e.g., *blended, integrated, merged, unified*) have been used to describe efforts to bridge the preparation of general and special education teachers. For example, the term used most frequently in the literature for early childhood education programs is *unified,* referring to "those that combine all of the recommended personnel standards from the respective general education and special education program into a newly conceptualized curriculum" (Stayton & McCollum, 2002, p. 213). Most often these terms are not defined, and even if they are, they mean different things to different programs and people. Sometimes such terms refer to connections between programs within departments in colleges and schools of education and sometimes they refer to programs across departments; other commonly used terms refer instead to licensure outcomes (e.g., *dual* programs).

The problem is that such titles do not actually tell us a great deal about specific program designs, structures, and features. Even in the field of early childhood, where collaboration has been more prevalent than in other fields, a review of programs indicates that there may be far less collaboration than the title of a program suggests (e.g., Miller & Stayton, 1998). As a result, it is often difficult to know exactly how much and what kind of collaboration is actually taking place. Two very different collaborative programs may carry similar titles (e.g., a *blended* program or a *unified* program or a *dual* program), but may actually engage in widely varying degrees of faculty interaction and program/curricular coordination.

As a means of fostering greater dialogue and common understanding of collaborative approaches to teacher preparation, a major purpose of this action guide is to create a conceptual framework and a common language for describing and discussing the range of dominant models that exists. The three models presented in this document include *discrete* programs (which represent the status quo), *integrated* programs, and *merged* programs. These terms are used generally to refer to (a) the degree of collaboration among faculty whose primary responsibility is to prepare general education teachers and those whose primary responsibility is to prepare special education teachers and (b) the extent to which curricular components from general and special education programs are integrated and coordinated through a process of collaborative program development/redesign. These terms do not refer to the kind of license(s) a candidate will ultimately earn or administrative arrangements of departments within higher education (i.e., whether various departments within a school or college of education are joined or not). Issues

regarding licensure, however, are critical to the work of collaborative teacher education and do bear consideration; as such, they are addressed throughout this guide.

Model 1: Discrete Programs

Discrete programs refer to teacher education in which there is little if any relationship between programs or collaboration between faculty who prepare general and special education teachers. Such preservice programs prepare general educators or special educators independently, and students generally receive licensure in either general or special education. While this model represents only the most minimal level of collaboration and programmatic coordination among general and special education teacher education faculty, it is included in the typology because in many colleges and universities it is often the departure point from which greater collaborative teacher education develops. The following characteristics are associated with discrete programs.

- **An absence of any real coordination exists across general and special education. If coordination does take place, it is only at the level of individual courses and not at the programmatic level.**

In discrete programs, the curricula of general and special education, including courses and field experiences, are generally separate from and independent of one another. Special education might provide "service courses" to the general teacher education program (e.g., an introduction to special education, a course in inclusion, and/or a course in collaborative teaching). Likewise, faculty in general teacher education might provide courses or modules in specific content area instruction for special education candidates. Although collaboration may exist at the level of individual courses, it does not exist at the programmatic level; deliberate and intentional connections across multiple courses and/or field experiences have not been developed. In other words, teacher education programs can be said to be discrete if little or no collaboration is taking place, or if collaboration is taking place only in response to program requests for specific courses or between individual faculty members in relationship to individual courses or projects. Discrete programs may exist either at the undergraduate or the postbaccalaureate level.

- **Minimal expectations exist for faculty collaboration.**

Discrete programs are marked by minimal expectations for faculty to collaborate across special and general education, even if one preservice program requires content and/or courses from the other. Although faculty might work together regarding individual courses or might even conduct joint projects and/or research, they do not work together from a *programmatic* perspective, that is, as a whole, to align the preservice curriculum. The term "service course" itself seems to run counter to the idea of collaboration and communicates an isolated status for courses that are so described. In discrete programs, faculty typically have not sat down together to identify shared goals and understandings regarding the preparation of teachers, nor do they do so on a regular basis. As a result, faculty in general teacher education are likely to be relatively unfamiliar with the content of a required special education class, and vice versa, and would not intentionally link what students are learning in one class to another. For example, what students are learning in a literacy methods class in general education would not purposefully be connected to what they are learning about literacy accommodations and modifications for students who have disabilities in a

special education class. Students would be on their own to make such linkages—and many students might not do so. Further, what students are learning about literacy in one class might contradict what they are learning in another, with no attempt by faculty either at reconciling the two or considering them in relationship to one another.

- **Candidates' performance and portfolio assessments are not related.**

The use of performance and portfolio assessment of candidates in teacher education provides opportunities for students to demonstrate their emerging abilities to work effectively with students who have disabilities, whether their primary role is in general or special education. In discrete programs, portfolio entries for general education candidates may or may not include assessments regarding disabilities, and candidates in special education may or may not complete assessments in content and pedagogical content knowledge. When such assessments are included, they may not be evaluated by faculty with the greatest expertise in the area, thus exacerbating the discrete nature of the programs. Further complicating the question of assessment is defining what teacher educators accept as evidence of candidates' abilities to work with diverse student populations in the first place. For instance, an exit portfolio might require a specific entry on "diversity." If this is the case, would a student's portfolio be considered to have met standards with regard to diversity if he or she chose to address disability but chose not to address race, class, culture, or language (Pugach, 2005)? Faculty typically do not interact regularly about such program assessment requirements. As a result, conversations about what constitutes an acceptable portfolio entry about diversity may not be taking place, especially not at the level of complexity that is needed to place disability within the larger context of diversity. Regular conversations among faculty who teach methods, multicultural education, foundations, and special education do not characterize discrete programs.

- **Program graduates experience a dichotomy in their teacher preparation.**

In discrete teacher education programs, candidates may learn that once they take teaching positions in schools, they will be expected to collaborate across general and special education, but they see little such collaboration within their own preservice program. As a result, special and general education teachers may exit discrete programs lacking a deep understanding of collaboration in PK-12 settings. On the other hand, if they complete field experiences in schools that practice a high degree of collaboration successfully, they may develop important skills. In discrete programs, reducing the dichotomy preservice candidates experience is not addressed directly or intentionally from a programmatic perspective.

- **Obtaining both a general and a special education license is usually a lengthy process for students and generally consists of simply adding courses and experiences to the student's first preservice program.**

In discrete programs, candidates may elect to get two licenses, one in general and one in special education. Because there is no programmatic approach to collaboration, the course work and field experiences required for the second license (whether it be in general or special education) are simply added to the student's first preservice program, with little if any logical relationship between the original preservice program and the work required for the additional license. This

absence of program alignment means that students who elect to obtain a second license—whether it is in general or special education—are usually required to complete a large number of additional courses and field experiences. Such additional courses may or may not duplicate what they have already taken. When students do elect to obtain two licenses, some institutions may refer to this as a *dual licensure* or *dual major* program. In reality, they are two discrete programs that have little relationship to one another and have not been designed to intentionally complement one another. While it may be technically accurate to say that students in such programs can earn "dual licensure," they do so in the absence of programmatic, curricular collaboration.

Model 2: Integrated Programs

Integrated programs, the second model in this typology, are defined as programs in which general and special education faculty engage in intentional and coordinated program-level efforts to accomplish a significant degree of curricular overlap. Faculty work together to redesign the content of multiple courses and/or field experiences so that specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions across special and general education are interdependent. In this model, teacher education programs systematically complement and/or build upon one another from a programmatic perspective. General and special education retain their respective identities and students can earn licensure either as a general educator or as a special educator, or as both. While program identity is retained in the integrated model, the high level of faculty collaboration and the redesign of the core teacher education program are intended to result in the preparation of general educators who have been well prepared to teach all students in general education classrooms from an inclusive philosophical framework and special education teachers who possess a great deal of knowledge about the general education curriculum. The following characteristics are associated with integrated programs.

- **Intentional and coordinated curricular overlap/interdependence in courses and field experiences takes place at the program level.**

The extent of curricular overlap and interdependence is a function of decisions made by faculty at each institution and, as a result, integrated programs may look different at different institutions. What is common across all integrated programs, however, is that faculty engage in intentional and coordinated program-level development to accomplish a substantial degree of curricular integration and overlap. This implies that faculty meet together on a regular basis to discuss the purpose and function of courses and/or field experiences in relationship to one another and that such collaboration extends beyond the provision of a single course or even several courses. For example, faculty working in integrated programs may decide that students from general and special education should take some of the same methods courses and corresponding field experiences. In such cases, students are learning the same content, as well as pedagogical content knowledge, to support them when working with all students. Such an arrangement might include having preservice teachers from general and special education going to the same schools for their field experiences in pairs to ensure specified interactions within school settings and similar outcomes. There is a coordinated effort to build in content knowledge for all teachers, including candidates in special education, and the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to work with students who have disabilities.

Collaborative Field Experience in an Integrated Program

Early on in the development of collaborative models of teacher education, the University of Florida experimented with, and then institutionalized, what is known locally as the *Unified Elementary Proteach Program* (Bondy & Ross, 2005). This integrated program provides a common base of course work and field experience at the undergraduate level. All students are required to complete a fifth year to obtain their certification as an elementary teacher (K-6) with English as a second language endorsement and elect either postbaccalaureate licensure or a master's degree in elementary or special education. Fifth-year students who choose special education are then on a dual certification track and earn a license in special education (Exceptional Student Education K-12) in addition to their elementary license.

Faculty continue to be housed in different departments. Courses are not team taught, but the entire program is collaboratively planned and assessed. Faculty plan together and work on content and assignments to align the curriculum in what are called *course teams*, but each teaches separate courses and/or course sections; graduate students who teach in the program are actively involved as full partners in this work. Course teams vary in the amount of time they meet, but all instructors are conscientious about their commitment to preparing graduates for working in inclusive settings and purposeful in their course design to achieve this end. Teaming provides a programmatic view of the curriculum. All faculty and instructors who teach in the program are members of the program area, which is where all policy decisions related to the program are made. Program meetings take place under the auspices of the School of Teaching and Learning (STL) across several departments; chairpersons from Special Education and STL attend all program meetings.

In the first two professional semesters, roughly equivalent to a student's junior year, the focus in all courses is heavily on inclusion and includes, for example, *Child Development for Inclusive Education* and *Teachers and Learners in Inclusive Schools*. In the final undergraduate semester students complete a required field experience that is specifically focused on inclusive education and is co-led by STL and Special Education. In this field experience preservice students are paired and must experiment with different models of coteaching in their assigned classroom and consider the strengths and liabilities of each model. Partnerships with the schools have been strengthened over time and graduate students are now embedded at the school sites as school-based coordinators, which strengthens the students' inquiry not only about coteaching but about their entire clinical experience.

According to Dorene Ross, who was instrumental in the development of this program, when the program began, students tended to view the focus on inclusion as something that was being forced on them. Today, she notes, more and more preservice candidates come in with an inclusive focus, and the number of candidates who elect special education is increasing. Students who choose elementary certification appear to have a propensity to understand difference, a strong ability to collaborate, know what they do not know, and have had a great deal of experience working to accommodate different learners. Those who choose special education are prepared well to work with students who have disabilities. Both are prepared as teachers who view inclusion as an ideal. One challenge, according to Ross, is that the high-stakes testing

environment in schools becomes a major dynamic in discouraging graduates from making accommodations for any student within a classroom.

In contrast to discrete programs, where faculty members from general and special education may only collaborate at the individual instructor level on single courses and in essence function independently, a distinctive feature of integrated programs is that faculty work collaboratively at the *programmatic level* to achieve interdependence. Working at this broader level, faculty consider the program as a whole and coordinate their efforts. In other words, faculty in integrated programs recognize the specific expertise of their colleagues in either general or special education and are deliberate in their efforts to link relevant content and issues across targeted courses and experiences. For example, preservice teachers in a special education program may take several courses to gain in-depth knowledge of academic content and pedagogical content knowledge across content areas, while preservice teachers in a general education program will have the benefit of faculty in special education working with those in general education to assure that sufficient knowledge of students who have disabilities is provided in introductory and other courses throughout the general education curriculum.

- **Faculty collaborate routinely to ensure alignment of integrated program components.**

Another distinctive feature of the integrated program model is the expectation that faculty engage in *ongoing* collaboration to ensure the success of the integrated components of their programs. The assumption is that faculty who teach in integrated programs meet regularly to share their work, to enhance the connections between courses and field experiences across general and special education, and to discuss how various parts of the program complement and enhance one another. Ideally such collaboration should include all faculty who teach in the program across all courses and/or departments, including foundations courses in learning and development, social/historical/philosophical foundations, and multicultural education, as well as methods in general and special education. This level of collaboration takes place whether special and general educators who teach in the program are housed in the same department, as is the case at Teachers College, Columbia University and at Pacific Lutheran University, or in different departments, as is the case at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Florida, where program faculty meet regularly during the semester, across departments, under the leadership of a program director.

Further, integrated programs are based on the assumption that there is a clear understanding of the value added by special education and how the knowledge base of special education and the work of special education teachers enhance what general education classroom teachers know and are able to do. Likewise, faculty should display greater insight into the need for special education teachers to understand the general education curriculum for purposes of collaborating with their general education colleagues, both for PK-12 students for whom they share responsibility as well as for those who may be taught solely by special education teachers. Finally, faculty collaboration is part of the culture of an integrated program and/or unit (i.e., school or college of education); expectations for faculty collaboration are publicly expressed in, for example, advertisements for new faculty positions, and may be recognized in the faculty merit system.

- **Faculty coordinate performance and portfolio assessments.**

Ideally, for those portions of the general and special education programs where overlap occurs, faculty work collaboratively to develop common performance and portfolio assessments for candidates in both programs. Portfolio entries for general education candidates include assessments regarding disabilities, and those for special education include assessments in content and pedagogical content knowledge. Assessments and portfolio entries are evaluated by faculty with the appropriate expertise to provide the evaluation. For example, special education faculty evaluate portfolio entries regarding disabilities, and general education faculty evaluate those in subjects such as the teaching of reading. Depending on their specific expertise, they may work jointly to conduct such evaluations as well. At the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, faculty who teach in a given semester of the program all participate in end-of-semester oral presentations required of each student. In addition, in integrated programs, faculty collaborate to address complex issues within the assessment process, for example, the various dimensions of diversity that teacher education candidates are expected to address and the interrelationship among various areas of diversity such as disability, race, class, culture, language, and gender. Finally with regard to assessment, faculty review the quality of performance and portfolio assessments together for the purpose of using this feedback for program improvement.

- **Program graduates are prepared to engage in collaborative performance and should experience a reduction in program dichotomy.**

Graduates of integrated programs will have engaged in some level of collaborative performance in courses and, similarly, been exposed to some level of collaborative activity in field experiences—depending on where and how faculty decide to create overlap in general and special education programs. As a result, graduates of integrated programs should exit their programs with a greater understanding of collaboration in PK-12 settings compared to those who complete discrete programs. Although the degree of understanding of and experience with collaboration will depend on the degree of program integration, graduates of integrated programs experience less program dichotomy and have more experience with inclusion than those who complete discrete programs.

- **Program graduates may obtain one or two licenses; if they elect to obtain two licenses, the addition of the special education license complements the base general education license.**

Integrated programs retain the distinction between general and special education, but unlike discrete programs, integrated programs are purposefully and systematically related to one another. In most cases, graduates of integrated programs receive a general education license when exiting an undergraduate or postbaccalaureate certification program, then may choose to continue on to obtain a special education license either by adding additional course work to the integrated program or by entering a graduate program, or both. In the University of Florida's elementary program, students elect to obtain a general or special education license, but all students take the same basic core of integrated preservice classes prior to making this decision. At Pacific Lutheran University, the basic core of integrated preservice classes and experiences students complete in elementary education is often sufficient for school districts to employ them

in special education while they complete additional courses to earn the second license in that field.

The important distinction between discrete and integrated programs with regard to licensure is that in integrated programs, faculty have worked together to intentionally relate one license to the other so that a student who wishes to be licensed in both general and special education sees the relationship between the two. This means that faculty who may previously have been operating within discrete programs are now working together to consider what courses and field experiences begin to form a common and sound basis for either a special or general education license. With a strong foundation in general education, those who continue on for a special education license after completing an integrated program gain well-defined depth of knowledge as a special education teacher, which may include high- and/or low-incidence disabilities, depending on the specific program and on the structure of each state's special education licensure. At the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), for example, students who successfully complete the general education program and wish to continue on in special education are automatically admitted to the postbaccalaureate program for teaching students with mild disabilities or who are deaf or hard of hearing. In many integrated programs, including that at UWM, special education course work for the additional license also counts toward a master's degree.

Depth of Knowledge for Special Educators

At Teachers College, Columbia University, all preservice students in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching wishing to earn an elementary license have only one choice: the Elementary Inclusive Education Program. This 40-credit program leads to a license for Grades 1-6 in general education and a master's degree. The core curriculum includes at least one practicum in an inclusive school setting. Curricular emphases include differentiated instruction, collaboration, coplanning, and individualized education programs (IEPs), among others.

Faculty in the department include those who would traditionally be thought of as being in general elementary teacher education as well as those who are in special education with an emphasis on inclusive education and disability studies. The program change was initiated by faculty who were formerly associated with the preservice program in learning disabilities (LD) but whose orientation was already cross-categorical and inclusive. The former LD program no longer exists. Preservice programs for stand-alone special education licensure still exist in the Department of Health and Behavior Studies (e.g., blindness and visual impairment, deaf and hard of hearing, mental retardation, applied behavior analysis).

This inclusive preservice elementary program forms a basis for students who wish to add a special education license to their general education license. In New York, the additional special education license enables graduates to teach across all disabilities (except deaf and hard of hearing and blind and visually impaired) at the grade level at which they are certified in general education (for this program, Grades 1-6). Students who wish to earn two licenses add a 12-credit semester called the Critical Special Education Practicum Semester and earn a 52-credit master's degree upon completion of the additional semester. This dual-license option is geared specifically toward students who wish to take on the role of the special education teacher. In the

additional practicum associated with this semester, students are assigned to schools where they work on action research projects with school staff. These are not necessarily ideal inclusive education settings, but rather settings in which teachers face new challenges working with populations of students who have disabilities they may not have worked with before. They focus particularly on access to academics for all students, including English language learners as well as students with IEPs.

The program director, Celia Oyler, is adamant about having a program that prepares all teachers for their roles with students who have disabilities but also in which only those graduates who really want to take on the intensive role of a special education teacher are licensed to do so. That is why dual licensure is an option and not a requirement. "I did not want a program that gave special education licenses to people who are not committed to special education," says Oyler. The Elementary Inclusive Education Program is committed to preparing all of its graduates to work with students who have disabilities and to a philosophy of inclusion. However, it is also based on the premise that depth of knowledge in special education across disability categories—within an inclusive, disability-rights framework—is critical to the success of teachers for students who have disabilities.

Model 3: Merged Programs

Merged programs, the third model in this typology, prepare general and special educators in a single curriculum, with a complete integration of courses and field experiences designed to address the needs of all students, including those who have disabilities. General and special education faculty collaborate extensively about the content and delivery of the program, and the outcome for graduates is licensure in both general and special education and preparation to teach in both general and special education classrooms. Characteristics defining merged programs include the following.

- **Intentional and coordinated curricular overlap/interdependence result in a single preservice curriculum for general and special education.**

A common feature of merged programs, regardless of the differences in courses and field experiences at various institutions, is that faculty in general and special education come together to offer a single undergraduate curriculum for their general and special education students. Students entering merged programs are all prepared to teach in both fields. In some institutions, the merged program is the only option available, as is the case at Syracuse University (the Inclusive Elementary and Special Education Program), Providence College, the University of Saint Francis (for secondary majors in all areas except art education), and the early childhood program at the University of Florida. Other institutions offer a merged program as one of several choices for students. At Indiana University and the University of Nevada-Reno, for example, students can elect a merged, single-curriculum program in elementary education and special education, but they can also enter discrete programs. At the University of Southern Maine, merged program options exist at both the elementary and secondary levels. Note that although the program at the University of Nevada-Reno carries the title "Integrated Program," its structure corresponds to the merged model in the typology presented here—underscoring the need to provide detailed information about program structure rather than depending on titles alone.

Similarly, the program at the University of Saint Francis carries the title "Dual Licensure Program," but its structure corresponds to the merged model.

As is the case with the integrated program model, general and special education faculty working in merged programs engage in intentional and coordinated program development. Faculty conduct an extensive review of the content and experiences typically offered in special and general education programs as well as of the requirements of licensure, professional organizations, and, depending on the setting, accreditation. This team effort includes reconceptualizing program content and reorganizing courses and experiences into a unified curriculum.

A Fully Merged Undergraduate Program With a Long History

Beginning in the 1980s, the state of Rhode Island started requiring a general education license as a prerequisite to a special education license. Because at that time Providence College did not offer an undergraduate elementary education program, faculty opted to begin an elementary program in combination with special education, thus providing a single, merged curriculum as the only option available for undergraduate students interested in either field. The first students were admitted to the program in 1986 and graduated in 1989. Graduates of the Merged Elementary Education and Special Education Program obtain both a 1-6 elementary license and a K-8 mild/moderate special education license.

Collaboration is a point of pride for program faculty, and it is emphasized in advertisements recruiting new faculty members. Lynne Ryan, who has worked in the program since its inception, describes this work as "a belief system for our faculty," and each faculty member possesses knowledge of and is involved in the entire program, including the content of the curriculum, student assessments, and field placements.

Every course in the program is designed to include content from both general and special education. Having the opportunity to build a new program from the ground up gave faculty the luxury of conceptualizing the whole program and its content, then developing the scope and sequence of courses and field experiences to fulfill the program's vision. Faculty incorporated state and national standards (such as those from INTASC and the Council for Exceptional Children) to ensure that content and pedagogical expectations of national and state organizations were addressed.

Graduates are employed in a variety of elementary and special education teacher roles. Follow-up surveys indicate that program graduates feel prepared for the realities of today's schools, which, in the Northeast, are focused more and more on inclusive practices.

A Secondary-Level Merged Program

The University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne, Indiana, began offering an undergraduate "dual licensure" program (which equates to the merged model in this typology) in middle/secondary education and special education (focused on secondary mild interventions) in 2002-2003. Merged programs are offered in business, chemistry, health & physical education, language

arts/English, life sciences, mathematics, physical sciences, and social studies. Segments of the programs are cotaught by faculty in subject matter areas and special education, while other segments are taught individually by faculty from the specific disciplines. Regardless of whether a faculty member coteaches with a colleague or teaches courses individually, every faculty member collaborates regularly about the overall program. For students wishing to teach either middle/secondary subject matter or secondary special education, the merged program is the only 4-year undergraduate program available for them at the University of Saint Francis. However, the university offers another undergraduate program in elementary and special education with mild interventions licensure and a 5-year degree program in special education (mild interventions) for those wishing to obtain a teaching license across all grades (K-12). This program requires both elementary generalist education and secondary content areas. Finally, for those who meet graduate school criteria, the fifth year can be completed at the graduate level.

Students entering the middle/secondary and special education program begin by taking core courses—all of which are cotaught—then complete courses and experiences in both subject matter (e.g., mathematics) and in special education (e.g., behavior/classroom management). According to Daniel Torlone, codirector of secondary education, several reasons contribute to the faculty's ability to cover the content in both the specific subject matter areas and in special education. First, the program is focused on middle/secondary education, which aligns with Indiana grade-level licensure for both general and special education. Second, 6-12 special education licensure in Indiana is available in the area of mild interventions. Finally, with Indiana's focus on performance-based standards, faculty can develop a coordinated curriculum without state requirements to include specific courses/course titles. Program faculty also studied the university's general education curriculum carefully and sequenced and coordinated what students take in general studies with the courses they take in the secondary education program.

Students exiting the 128-credit-hour program at the University of Saint Francis may apply for licensure in their subject matter area (Grades 6-12) and in special education-mild interventions (Grades 6-12). Most students opt to apply for both licenses, although a few students do not seek special education licensure.

- **Program faculty from both general and special education work as a team to ensure sufficient content knowledge for all teachers and the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to work with students who have disabilities.**

Similar to the integrated model, merged programs feature faculty who work from the programmatic level and consider the curriculum as a whole as they address content knowledge and the pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to work with all students, including those who have disabilities. In merged programs, faculty recognize the specific expertise of their colleagues in either general or special education and are intentional in their efforts to connect relevant content and issues in all courses and experiences in the curriculum. What clearly distinguishes merged programs, however, is that they represent one single preservice curriculum for both general and special education students. Unlike integrated programs, in merged programs all students experience the same curriculum, which presumably addresses both general and special education preparation in sufficient depth to prepare graduates for both roles in the schools.

When the merged program is the only choice students have, faculty involved in such programs typically include all of the general (elementary and/or secondary) and special education faculty at an institution (e.g., Syracuse University, Providence College, University of Saint Francis). The assumption is that all faculty have agreed in principle to preparing teachers to meet the needs of all students. In contrast, when the merged program is one among several options for students, they typically include only the segment of the faculty who are dedicated to the merged program model (e.g., Indiana University and the University of Nevada-Reno), while other faculty may choose not to participate. While both kinds of merged programs are similar in that they provide a single curriculum offered by a collaborative group of general and special education faculty, they differ significantly in terms of the breadth of faculty involvement and overall institutional commitment to collaboration.

Another variation exists at the University of Southern Maine (USM), where the merged Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP) is housed in the Teacher Education Department (TED) and is focused primarily on working with paraeducators who complete all field experiences within the context of their positions in the schools. ETEP exists alongside separate programs in elementary and special education. Until very recently, the discrete initial-certification special education program resided in another department of the college. A yearlong dialogue between that department and TED has resulted in moving the initial special education licensure program to TED, where the merged and single-license general education programs reside. This move enables faculty to participate jointly in curriculum development across all of these programs, whether they are discrete or merged. The examination of curriculum from the perspective of collaborative preparation and preparing teachers for inclusive practice has been established as a TED priority.

A Merged Program as an Option for Faculty and Students

Students interested in a bachelor's degree program in elementary education or special education at the University of Nevada-Reno (UNR) have three choices: elementary education, special education, or the merged program, which is called Integrated Elementary/Special Education. All three program choices can be completed in 128 credits.

The integrated program option, which began in fall 2004, is located administratively in the same department as the stand-alone special education programs. The elementary program is housed in a separate department. According to Christine Cheney, chair of the department where the integrated program resides, a departmental reorganization occurred at the same time that this new merged program option was being developed, with two new departments created from a former department of curriculum and instruction. This intersection of departmental reorganization and program development led some of the content area faculty with elementary level expertise to affiliate with one department (where the stand-alone special education program resides) and other content area faculty to affiliate with another (where the stand-alone elementary education program resides). At first glance, it may seem that this administrative arrangement could hinder collaborative teacher education; however, the faculty in the newly formed department at UNR worked together to implement a collaborative program as one option for their education students.

In the creation of the Integrated Elementary/Special Education program option, courses in the elementary education program were modified to include more content on differentiated instruction and diverse learners. Faculty devoted all the electives normally available in the stand-alone elementary program to special education courses and practicum/seminar courses. Because of state certification requirements, some courses carry specific special education titles and content (e.g., Curriculum Development in Special Education). The program admits students in cohorts, uses blocked course sequences with intense weekly field experiences each semester, and culminates in a 20-week internship experience. In addition, faculty choose program themes to ensure program coherence. These themes span semester blocks and have included topics such as differentiated instruction and assessment. During the evaluation sessions that also focus on the themes, faculty pose questions such as What vocabulary was used in courses to represent this topic? What should students know at the beginning, middle, and end of their programs? What assignments in the various courses are used to promote students' growing skill development over time?

- **Program faculty have shared goals and collaborate extensively and routinely.**

General and special education faculty in merged programs work as a collective and engage in ongoing collaboration for the one program they share. There is an ongoing expectation for faculty to work jointly in the service of the program, and this level of interaction is part of the organizational culture of the unit. As such, faculty in general and special education share their expertise to ensure that the merged program includes the content they agree is critical for all students, those in general and special education alike. Faculty make purposeful connections across courses and field experiences so that all faculty, regardless of whether they have backgrounds in general or special education, know and understand what is expected in each course and experience within the program. Faculty may or may not reside in the same departmental unit, but on a day-to-day basis they function as part of the same teacher education program.

"Shared Classes" in a Merged Inclusive Elementary Education Program

Syracuse University's long-standing merged Elementary Inclusive Program began in 1990, and there is essentially no debate about whether faculty supports inclusion. Although faculty may discuss at length how best to prepare their students for inclusion, there is little ideological disagreement, according to Mara Sapon-Shevin, who created the concept of "shared classes" and is one of the program's leaders. The absence of such disagreement allows faculty to focus their energy on the process and content of this teacher education program.

Across the program, class syllabi are closely coordinated and faculty complete end-of-semester assessments together as well. One of the unique features of the Elementary Inclusive Program is the shared classes. Out of the typical semester of 16 classes in a block of methods classes, faculty who teach within that specific semester and specific cohort share and coteach five classes each semester and teach 11 classes individually. These five shared classes allow students to see faculty modeling collaborative teaching, provide opportunities for faculty to share their expertise and teach and learn from one another, and allow students to see multiple perspectives within a common framework. The common framework for these five shared classes is a set of five topics

that include (1) community building, (2) assessment, (3) differentiation, (4) debriefing from the field, and (5) social justice. Graduates of this program earn two licenses, both at the 1-6 grade level: one in general elementary and one in students with disabilities (for all disabilities except deaf and hard of hearing and blind and visually impaired).

In institutions where merged programs have been created as a separate cohort and represent a choice for students, it may be the case that only some faculty choose to be involved while others may not be committed to the idea of such a merged approach. Within the cohort that subscribes to a merged program, faculty interact regularly to ensure program collaboration and curricular coordination. At the University of Nevada-Reno, for example, elementary and special education faculty associated with the merged program meet several times each semester to review the curriculum and talk about student progress. Although such faculty segregation is not the ideal, students who elect the merged cohort option benefit from a faculty in both general and special education who model collaborative practices.

- **Assessment of candidate performance reflects the shared understandings and goals of faculty.**

Because there is one preservice program for general and special education, faculty work collaboratively to develop and evaluate performance and portfolio assessments for all students. Assessments and portfolio entries are evaluated by faculty with the appropriate expertise to provide the evaluation. That is, special education faculty working in merged programs will evaluate those portfolio entries regarding disabilities and the general education faculty will evaluate those, for example, in the teaching of mathematics. Where faculty expertise overlaps, responsibility for evaluating assessments may be shared. Faculty ensure that such assessments complement one another and review the results of all assessments jointly to improve the quality of the merged program in which they all teach.

- **Program graduates are prepared to perform shared roles when they become teachers in the schools.**

Because graduates have completed a program that has prepared them, throughout all courses and experiences, to perform shared roles when entering schools, students exiting merged programs experience no program dichotomy. Having experienced inclusive school programs and observed collaborative teaching models, graduates are more likely to enter school settings with the confidence to engage in a variety of collaborative practices and with a strong commitment to inclusive education.

- **Program graduates generally obtain two licenses, one in general education and one in special education.**

By providing a single, completely coordinated curriculum for general and special education, merged programs do not maintain the distinctiveness of either a general education or a special education program. While certain courses within the program may be focused especially on special or general education, there is no intention for students to identify with a general or a special education program alone. The general and special education licenses that graduates of

merged programs receive vary widely and are based entirely on arrangements within the college/university and licensure structures in the state where the program is offered. These variations include, for example,

- **Indiana University:** General K-6 and Special Education-Mild Interventions K-6
- **Providence College:** Elementary Education 1-6 and Mild/Moderate Special Education K-8
- **Syracuse University:** Childhood 1-6 (general education) and Students with Disabilities 1-6
- **University of Nevada-Reno:** Elementary K-8 and Special Education K-12 General Endorsement in mild to moderate disabilities (LD, ED, and mild MR)
- **University of Saint Francis (Indiana):** Subject matter 6-12 and Special Education-Mild Interventions 6-12
- **University of Southern Maine:** General and special education K-8 or 7-12 and Teacher of Students with Disabilities K-8 or 7-12 (mild to moderate disabilities)

The licenses students obtain from merged programs have implications for the types of positions they are able to accept upon program completion. Because students receive both a special and general education license in merged programs, the assumption is that every graduate of a merged program possesses adequate depth of knowledge to take on the role of either a general or a special education teacher and is comfortable, willing, and committed to taking on either role. In these particular examples, students who complete merged programs are licensed only for mild and moderate disabilities, indicating a lack of attention in collaborative teacher education to low-incidence disabilities. In states where special education licenses span all disability categories, the implication for merged programs is that graduates are prepared to teach across the full range of disabilities, not just high-incidence ones.

A Continuum of Teacher Preparation

Prior to the passage of modern special education legislation, discrete programs were the norm in teacher education. Efforts such as the federally funded Dean's Grants, which began in 1974 in anticipation of the first such legislation, represented the earliest collaborative efforts to prepare general education teachers to work with students who have disabilities and were deliberately designed to move away from the discrete model of teacher education. Dean's Grants represented an important step forward and eventually included over 200 projects in departments, schools, and colleges of education in 45 states (Kleinhammer-Tramill, 2003). Although the architects of these projects often envisioned them as an opportunity for broad-based reform in teacher education (see, for example, Grosenick & Reynolds, 1978), in practice they were focused more narrowly on including special education content and experiences in the general teacher education curriculum and less on redesigning the preservice curriculum in general or special education as a whole. Further, no larger context of reform in general teacher education existed at that time to support a broader vision of preservice curricular redesign (Pugach, 2005).

While many individual collaborative efforts in higher education continued after the Dean's Grants program ended in 1982, other schools and colleges failed to address collaborative programming at all. Only in early childhood education and early childhood special education was

there a broader based, more systematic effort to encourage collaboration in teacher education. In these areas, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and its Division for Early Childhood and the National Association for the Education of Young Children agreed to support collaborative teacher education models as part of program review in the accreditation process (Stayton & McCollum, 2002). Even today, with the convergence of multiple policy and legislative levers that have implications for collaboration (i.e., IDEA and NCLB), in many teacher education programs collaboration is still limited to minimal discussions regarding single courses and is not approached from a programmatic perspective. Unfortunately, in some higher education settings, teacher educators in special and general education still see themselves and their work as entirely discrete and mutually exclusive. The discrete model itself, however, does not coincide with the realities of today's PK-12 classrooms and schools, where students who have disabilities are often educated in general education classrooms, a practice that is based on the assumption of collaboration between special and general education. Further, many school practices such as coteaching have flourished even though graduates of discrete programs may never have had an opportunity to engage in the practice—and certainly never observed models in their own teacher preparation programs.

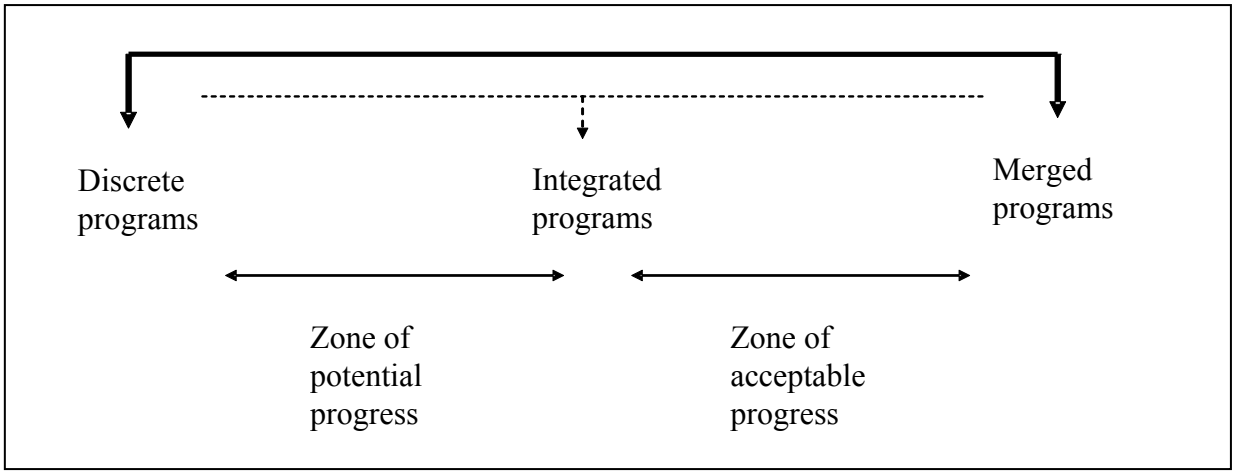
For schools and colleges of education that have moved beyond discrete programs, a variety of program designs have flourished. A review of several early collaborative teacher education models (see Blanton, Griffin, Winn, & Pugach, 1997) amplifies the differences in program designs and the terms used to describe them, and these differences can also be seen in the examples identified in this guide. Each of the collaborative program models presented here can be differentiated along several key common, identifiable program dimensions, including, for example, faculty collaboration for program redesign and development, curriculum coherence, depth of knowledge, and performance/portfolio assessments. As illustrated in Figure 2, these models exist along a continuum from what is essentially a lack of programmatic alignment and minimum faculty collaboration in discrete programs to a single curriculum based on intensive faculty collaboration in merged programs.

Given the national commitment to educating most students who have disabilities in general education classrooms and the concomitant need to prepare both special and general education teachers to foster learning for students who have disabilities, what is an acceptable zone of program collaboration in teacher preparation? At this point in time, what is critical is that faculty across general and special education should be prepared at least to engage in shared dialogue *from a programmatic perspective* and make progress toward integrating teacher education programs. Discrete programs that reflect only the barest minimum of collaboration at the course level alone (or not at all), and that lack any serious intentional and coordinated effort, do not fall into an acceptable zone of program design.

Neither is it the case, however, that all teacher education programs need to be fully merged, that is, to locate themselves at the right-hand end of the continuum in Figure 2. What is necessary is that initial teacher education programs for general and special education teachers be characterized by *intentional program and faculty collaboration that persists over time*, whether faculty members reside in the same department/academic unit or in separate departments of general education (e.g., elementary, curriculum and instruction) or special education, and whether they teach in integrated or merged program models. These programmatic efforts should

be designed to ensure that prospective special education teachers complete their programs knowing academic content and how to represent that content well to students (and as a by-product meet requirements for being "highly qualified") and that prospective general education teachers be prepared to work effectively with students who have disabilities by demonstrating flexibility in instruction and management approaches to a sufficient extent that they can serve their students with confidence.

Figure 2. Program Models: Continuum of Collaboration



Major Considerations in Creating and Sustaining Collaboration in Teacher Education

As state and higher education stakeholders work together to initiate or redesign teacher education programs that ensure greater collaboration between general and special education and better prepare all teachers, many concerns and issues arise. Below we address several of these considerations and raise questions about each: depth of knowledge, curricular coherence, licensure, PK-12 partnerships, and administrative structures in higher education. Some of these considerations are essential for both policy makers and higher education faculty. Others have greater applicability to one stakeholder group than to the other. It is useful to think of these considerations as dimensions around which program redesign efforts take place.

Depth of Knowledge

The depth of the knowledge that is required of beginning teachers in general and special education programs has been defined through the development and adoption of standards by many different stakeholders—higher education, state departments, professional organizations, and accreditation bodies. The program models described in this action guide require a good deal of consideration regarding how programs will ensure adequate depth of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and knowledge and skills in instruction and classroom management necessary to work with all students. In relationship to collaborative teacher education, depth of knowledge refers not only to content preparation for all teachers (and specifically for special education teachers) but also to identifying the unique, value-added

content needed to prepare graduates for licensure as a special education teacher if they are receiving that license.

- **How much is enough, and can it be done in 4 years?**

Both integrated and merged programs will need to grapple with the question of what constitutes an appropriate level of preparation for both general education and special education teachers. In merged programs, for example, substantial content must be integrated from both general and special education. Adequate program space may not exist to include all components of both disciplines in a single program in a way that ensures sufficient depth of knowledge in special education or knowledge of academic content—especially when it is a 4-year undergraduate program from which graduates are licensed in both general and special education. Merged programs typically rely on the general education preservice curriculum as their base, which can result in limited attention to special education content. This approach is especially problematic if graduates of merged programs automatically earn both a general and a special education license and is complicated when licensure for special education is arranged by grade levels in some states and across K-12 in others—and often across all disabilities in either case. Is it possible—or desirable—to expect a student to earn two licenses in a single 4-year undergraduate program and have the requisite depth of knowledge to perform both roles? Will the extent of special education knowledge and experience prepare a graduate for working with students across the full range of disabilities? The depth-of-knowledge issue must also be seen in relationship to preparing teachers for the full range of diversity. Offering a 5-year program may be one way to provide the opportunity to overcome depth of knowledge issues, but because students would remain in their teacher preparation programs for a longer period of time, this may exacerbate teacher shortages in some states.

Integrated programs differ in the degree of curricular overlap from institution to institution. Depending on the program, students may graduate lacking sufficient depth of content or in unique special education knowledge. As is the case with merged programs, offering an integrated program in a traditional 4-year undergraduate format may present a serious challenge. In contrast, programs that are integrated and sequential—that is, in which students complete a general education program that is collaborative, then complete a special education program that builds on the general education license—provide greater program "life space" and a more reasonable view of what it takes to prepare a teacher for the added expertise in special education. In cases where students may add an extra semester or year, or continue on for a streamlined master's degree to gain more specialization and add a second license in special education, teacher shortage issues may again be exacerbated and must be addressed.

- **How can we deal with the teacher shortage issue?**

Teacher shortages are a critical factor currently influencing how policy makers and higher education faculty view the various types of teacher education programs and licensure requirements. Without a doubt, this issue alone can be viewed as a barrier to new initiatives moving forward in teacher education—whether in higher education or in state departments of education. However, such short-term issues should not stand in the way of initiating longer term solutions that are in the best interests of children and youth. Solving this problem will require

collaboration on the part of institutions of higher education, state policy makers, and PK-12 schools.

To assure adequate depth of knowledge for teachers entering the profession directly from bachelor's level programs—coupled with a commitment to serve all students in community schools and primarily in general education classrooms—should entry programs conform at least to an integrated model? Beyond that, based on the assumption that special education teachers bring specialized expertise to schools and classrooms, it is critical to offer additional semesters, accompanied by additional special education certification, master's degrees, and all other means available to higher education to offer partial and full programs that provide the depth of knowledge and role definition required for special education teachers. One approach that may address the shortage may be to provide graduates who have general education licenses with internships or placements in special education classrooms to meet immediate special education staffing needs at the same time they are taking their extended course work to obtain a special education license. While such candidates will not yet possess depth of knowledge in special education, they should possess depth of knowledge in curriculum content as well as classroom organization and management. Providing incentives for general education teachers to become special education teachers in this way might alleviate some of the shortage problem.

Addressing Teacher Shortages Through a Merged Preservice Program

The Extended Teacher Education Program (ETEP) is a graduate internship program located in the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Southern Maine (USM). ETEP began in 1990 as a graduate-level internship program for general education elementary and secondary certification. In 1999, ETEP began offering a merged general education and special education option for any elementary teacher education candidate, known locally as the "unified" program. The department also houses discrete, single-certificate programs in general education and in special education. Working across departments, the merged option was designed by faculty with backgrounds in general education and in special education. Every completer of this program is recommended both for Maine's initial general education K-8 certificate and for the initial special education K-8 certificate (not inclusive of certification in vision, deaf/hard of hearing, or severe disabilities).

In response to research on teacher supply and the potential of paraeducator pathways to certification, the ETEP merged option was redesigned in 2003 so that candidates could be employed in schools and integrate their school-based employment with participation in the program. The K-8 unified program option currently has approximately 50 candidates who are employed across numerous school districts. Over 80% are paraeducators. The majority of those paraeducators are employed in special education; the rest are conditionally certified teachers. A small number of additional paraeducators over the life of the program have worked in Title I or English language learner programs.

Three coordinators design, administer, and teach in the program. Two are university-based faculty who are members of the Teacher Education Department, and one is a school-based coordinator who is a teacher in one of USM's partner schools and has a contract with the university as a program coordinator. All three coordinators have some combination of general education and special education teacher certification and/or experience.

The 2-year, cohort-based program has a common curriculum sequence that includes a yearlong placement in general education *and* a yearlong placement in special education. Typically, the first year of the program is the general education internship placement and the second year the special education internship placement, but this order is not required. In each cohort, several candidates complete their special education placement in the first year of their program. The course and seminar sequence remains the same whether candidates are in special or general education placements, and interns engage in and share about their teaching experiences with some in general education and some in special education.

All placements are already established (i.e., the employing school and district). Within these districts and schools, the goal is to design situations that ensure internships in both general education and special education. This is a challenge to accomplish, and the program could not work without the commitment of the school district teachers and administrators who value the importance of having their paraeducators gain both types of certification. This commitment has helped the program grow to its current enrollment. An individualized planning process involving the district, the program, and the candidate is instrumental in providing both a general education and a special education placement.

A program motto is *Common Targets, Different Paths*. Everyone collaborates, and all candidates progress toward consistent standards and assessments, but how each student gets there may look different depending on specific situations and individual talents. The districts and the program are learning together about the conditions in which the placements work best. They plan for placements the spring before the internship year starts to identify paraeducator assignment options in which opportunities with both general education and special education teachers are most likely to be available. This process represents the simultaneous examination of issues of inclusive practice at both the school and university levels.

The ETEP curriculum continues to be redesigned to address connections between general education and special education. Subsequently, a unified option for Grades 7-12 began in 2005.

Given the cohort structure and the 2-year common curriculum sequence of the elementary merged program, faculty are establishing research-based curriculum strands that thread throughout the program, for example, learning strategies, peer-mediated learning, and varied assessment methodology such as curriculum-based measurement, rubric-based project assessment, and standardized testing. Collaborative teaching, or coteaching, is currently under consideration as a possible strand. Due to the merged work of special and general education across the 2 years, candidates are able to address issues such as equitable engagement in the curriculum from the perspectives of general education and special education alike.

Candidates launch their careers in either general education or special education programs. According to Walter Kimball, one of the program's originators and currently a program coordinator, these new teachers are preparing to bridge general education and special education and to teach students who have a range of abilities and talents regardless of where their teaching assignment is located. USM is currently planning a research project to pursue two goals: (1) to examine exactly how preparation that merges general education and special education unfolds in the program and in the induction phase of candidates' careers and the impact that this type of preparation has on their teaching and (2) to examine the process of simultaneous renewal as school districts and the program design both general education and special education experiences for interns.

- **What about teachers for low-incidence disabilities?**

If preservice programs are integrated or merged, what are the implications for preparing teachers for low-incidence disabilities? Being a teacher of students in low-incidence populations does not preclude the need for adequate content knowledge and a strong basis of pedagogical content knowledge. If the general education license is treated as the base license upon which special education builds, certification in low-incidence disabilities can follow as an additional license—through either postbaccalaureate work or a master's degree. In merged programs that offer two licenses, unless there is adequate program space, it will be difficult to prepare all graduates with the in-depth knowledge to serve all students who have disabilities, even if such graduates earn special education licensure in a state that enables them to teach the full range of special education (e.g., a single PK-12 special education license). As noted above, many integrated and merged programs place an emphasis on students who have high-incidence disabilities, and it is possible that preparation for low-incidence populations is receiving less attention than is appropriate—a serious concern when graduates are licensed to teach across the full range of disabilities.

Curricular Coherence

At the heart of collaborative programming is a vision of a preservice curriculum that is connected and in which each course/experience aligns with and builds on all other prior courses/experiences. While there may be a programmatic view of curriculum *within* a specific discrete program at any given college or university, redesigning preservice programs for collaboration demands a programmatic view of the teacher education curriculum *across all curricular components, including, but not limited to, special and general education.* In fact, program redesign for collaboration is strengthened when it spans the entire spectrum of the preservice curriculum from arts and sciences to foundations to methods courses and clinical experiences.

- **How much curricular coordination is enough?**

At its core, curricular coordination means that faculty in one part of a program (e.g., subject matter courses in middle/secondary math) are intimately familiar with what is going on in other courses and experiences (e.g., core foundation courses) so they can be related and built upon meaningfully and systematically—whether the goal is a fully merged program or an integrated

program. The coordination of curriculum for both merged and integrated program models should be at the forefront of building programmatic capacity to make good on the belief that "good teaching is good teaching"—by ensuring that such teaching practices are considered and carried out *with specific and ongoing attention and application to students who have disabilities.* This goal includes, of course, ensuring a vision of a classroom where students who are incorrectly identified as having disabilities are enabled to progress and shed their inappropriate labels, and where teachers are able to draw on the full range of pedagogy, including technology, to support the range of students they teach.

- **How can collaboration be extended to include arts and sciences?**

Collaboration has traditionally been viewed as the concern of schools, colleges, and departments of education, often focused only on bridging special and general education. With the emphasis on content preparation for all teachers, including those preparing for careers in special education, collaboration between faculty in education and faculty in arts and sciences can be the greater challenge. Not only can the physical distance exacerbate the goal of working closely to align and integrate academic content and professional preparation, but the goals and plans for faculty in one school or college can be vastly different from those for faculty in another school or college.

Projects such as AACTE's Standards-based Teacher Education Project (http://www.aacte.org/programs/standards_practice/step.aspx) and the Carnegie Corporation of New York's Teachers for a New Era (http://www.teachersforanewera.org) have begun to demonstrate that when faculty in arts and sciences and in education identify a common curricular goal—namely, that all teachers ought to know their content and how to teach that content—and when they are engaged together intellectually in such tasks (Zeichner, 2006), they can in fact work together toward preservice curricular reform. More important, perhaps, is gaining a common understanding of the importance of being able to represent that content to children and youth. What can also pull faculty together is the extent to which university-level leadership embraces teacher education as an all-campus responsibility.

Licensure

How teacher licensure is structured in the states may present one of the biggest challenges to the development of collaborative teacher education programs. As state departments of education and higher education faculty wrestle with the alignment of teacher education and licensure, a number of key issues arise in relation to the various teacher education models addressed in this guide. Without question, it is imperative that higher education and state licensure departments interact about how licensure and teacher education do or do not complement one another. Faculty may assume, for example, that they have little to say about state policy and may fail to engage with state departments of education to align teacher education and licensure. One thing faculty must consider is how they can communicate more effectively with policy makers and take action to influence state policy.

In contrast, state departments of education may assume it is difficult to motivate faculty to adopt a new way of thinking about teacher education programs. In such cases, state departments of education may make changes in policy as a way to accomplish change in teacher education

programs. Similar to how faculty may think about policy makers, policy makers may assume that only a policy decision will create change in higher education. What policy makers must consider is how they can communicate more effectively with higher education faculty and engage them in joint decisions about licensure.

- **What licensing structures facilitate or hinder collaborative teacher education?**

Different licensing structures pose different challenges for developing greater collaboration in the preparation of teachers. For example, in states that have a fully categorical special education licensing structure, faculty considering collaborative programs may find the contradictions between categorical licensure and collaborative teacher education difficult to manage. A merged program in which students obtain both a general and special education license, for example, may present a struggle in determining which categories of special education licenses graduates would earn. In an integrated program that relies on the general education license as a base, how would the base license complement the additional preparation across the various categorical licenses? Likewise, if a state has a completely categorical system or a cross-categorical system that includes, for example, a license in high-incidence disabilities and other licenses for low-incidence disabilities, what focus will the preparation in special education take? Typically the focus in merged and integrated programs appears to be on high-incidence disabilities.

Because of issues relating to the depth of knowledge across the many categories of disabilities, consideration will need to be given to which, and how many, categories can be included in, say, a 4-year special education program that is merged with general education. It may be necessary in entry-level undergraduate programs to place the emphasis on high-incidence disabilities because students so identified are served more frequently in general education classrooms. This emphasis on high-incidence disabilities would require that licensure structures have a similar focus. For students to gain the specialization needed in low-incidence categories (e.g., sensory disabilities or severe emotional disabilities), programs could offer add-on certification and master's degree programs.

Another challenge occurs when licensure structures in general and special education are radically different. How might they be coordinated? For example, general education licensing structures are often based on age levels (e.g., early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary), and in many states the special education license is defined very broadly (e.g., a single PK-12 license across all disabilities). In such situations, a merged or integrated program in which two licenses are obtained is, by the very design of the state's special education licensure system, based on the assumption that every graduate of the program is prepared to teach every disability area with a substantial level of expertise across all age levels.

Currently many discrete preservice programs in special education exist, whether categorical or cross-categorical, and are the source of many new special education teachers. Conceptually, the question a discrete special education preservice model raises is whether the expertise of special education teachers can be obtained in isolation of the base skills of general education teachers, especially with regard to pedagogical content knowledge across the full range of academic subjects. The consideration in this regard is whether special education licensure structures need to align with general education licensure structures and/or be developed either as add-on

components or as advanced licenses. These approaches should come closer to honoring the content and pedagogical content knowledge of teachers as a critical foundation for the practice of special education.

PK-12 Partnerships

A consistent challenge for any teacher education program is the quality of field placements and the degree to which teacher and district practice in the field matches what preservice students are learning, and learning to value, in their professional preparation. With regard to teaching students who have disabilities, this means identifying and/or developing field placement sites where collaboration among teachers is practiced and where whatever specific model of collaboration that is being used is based on strong and productive relationships between special and general education teachers. Even in long-standing merged programs where collaboration is extensive and well-established—for example, at Syracuse University—identifying a consistent and large enough group of inclusive classrooms for field sites continues to be a challenge.

- **How do we build strong partnerships for collaboration?**

One fundamental lesson from the original work of the Holmes Group (1986) is that the reform of teaching and teacher education go hand in hand. Both institutions of higher education and local school districts need one another to improve the outcomes of their respective work. It is not useful for PK-12 schools to point fingers at higher education with the accusation that teachers are not well enough prepared, or for higher education to point fingers at school districts for not having enough good cooperating teachers or for placing new teachers in the most challenging assignments. Instead, school districts and higher education institutions can work in much closer coordination to achieve the improvement of teaching and teacher education (Howey & Zimpher, 2005). In many emerging PK-12 partnerships, special education is on the front burner only as it relates to the concern about the continuing shortage of special education teachers. Depending on existing relationships with local school districts, faculty will need to work collaboratively with districts not only to address immediate shortages, but also to build sufficient high-quality field experiences to ensure that prospective teachers observe and participate in the best local models of collaboration and inclusion possible.

PK-12 Partnerships as the Basis for Teacher Education Reform

The existence of a strong network of professional development schools (PDSs) positioned general and special education faculty at the University of Colorado at Denver to work collaboratively in the redesign of teacher education programs. Beginning in 2000, faculty integrated content from general and special education to develop core teacher education programs in elementary and secondary education. Students completing these undergraduate programs receive state certification in either elementary or secondary education but can add special education licensure by completing seven additional courses and an internship. The additional courses and internship meet requirements for Colorado's Special Education Generalist (K-12, ages 5-21) certification.

All students build their understanding of inclusion and collaboration as they complete 800 hours of field work sequenced in four internships throughout their core teacher education program in elementary or secondary education. Required field work occurs in PDS sites—numbering 23 in spring 2007—in six metropolitan districts. Revising field experiences in the redesign of teacher education was made easier because of long-standing partnerships, many of which have been in place since 1993.

Administrative Structures in Higher Education

How departments are organized in schools and colleges of education may play a role in the extent to which faculty collaborate about their teacher education programs. However, collaboration can take place successfully across various administrative arrangements in higher education.

- **How does collaboration work within and across departments?**

If all teacher education programs—in general and special education—are housed in a department of teaching and learning or curriculum and instruction, the fact that faculty work in proximity and share the same meetings may be more conducive to collaborative work. However, being housed in the same department does not necessarily mean that collaboration around preservice programs automatically takes place. If general and special education faculty are in separate departments, collaboration may take even more work, but neither should this arrangement pose an obstacle to collaboration. Regardless of departmental affiliation, what binds faculty together should be the teacher education program they all share—as illustrated at the University of Florida and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Expectations for collaboration can be built into program structures, for example, by holding regular meetings of program faculty across departments and by creating shared responsibility for program and candidate assessment. Leadership can be defined in terms of sustaining such a collaborative program model, in which faculty belong both to a department and to a cross-departmental preservice program.

- **What is the role of faculty leadership in collaboration?**

Faculty leadership for collaboration, especially for programs that have not yet undergone substantial redesign, is best viewed as a joint responsibility. While administrators (e.g., deans, directors) can provide resources and a bully pulpit to support collaboration, it is the faculty working on a day-to-day basis that provides the ongoing leadership and that can create new institutional cultures characterized by collaboration. At the University of Florida, for example, meetings of the Unified Program faculty are regularly attended by the department chairs of teaching and learning and special education. To move toward integrated or merged program models, it is critical to have faculty leaders that represent both general and special education.

The Role of Teacher Education Research for Rethinking Collaborative Programming

What might stakeholders who are moving toward greater collaboration learn from the research on the preparation of teachers? Does the research shed light on particular considerations such as content preparation? While the knowledge base in teacher education is quite robust (Fallon,

2006), the research base in teacher education, for both general and special education, is just beginning to mature. What we are learning from teacher education research offers a number of important initial insights as schools and colleges of education and state departments consider how best to facilitate greater collaboration between general and special education.

Research in General Teacher Education

Research in general teacher education can provide guidance as programs revisit collaborative programming. First, there are some indications that when what is learned in preservice courses is aligned with what takes place in classrooms during field experience and during induction, new teachers are more likely to use the practices they have been taught (Clift & Brady, 2005; Grossman, 2005). These findings have implications for building strong PK-12/university relationships to support collaboration.

Next, the general teacher education literature includes several in-depth case studies of successful teacher education programs—for example, the seven case studies that were completed under the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2006). These case studies, and others like them, provide models for documenting successful cases of collaborative teacher education.

The general literature in teacher education has also begun to shed some light on issues related to the nature and extent of content preparation of teachers. For example, for teachers of secondary mathematics, it appears that the effects on student achievement are no greater when students take no more than five mathematics content courses than when they complete a full major in mathematics (Monk, 1994). In other words, more is not always necessarily better when it comes to content preparation (Floden & Meniketti, 2005), but adequate content preparation is essential. This type of research has important implications for how to structure the subject matter preparation of all teachers, including those in special education, for maximal preparation in the content areas as it relates directly to how subject matter is translated into effective pedagogy for PK-12 pupils.

Research in Collaborative Teacher Education

Although several variations on collaborative programs exist—with most following an integrated rather than a fully merged model (see Blanton et al., 1997)—the literature is generally weighted more toward program description and less toward documented outcomes. One finding in the research literature, however, is that today's general education preservice students fully expect to work with students who have disabilities and are interested in and concerned about whether they are adequately prepared to do so at the preservice level (Taylor & Sobel, 2001). In addition, general education preservice students feel better prepared to work with students who have learning disabilities than with students in other categories of disability (Cook, 2002). This echoes the consideration above about the need for greater depth of knowledge in special education for general education preservice teachers.

Developing a Teacher Education Research Agenda to Examine a Merged Elementary/Special Education Program

Indiana University admitted the first students into the Teaching All Learners (TAL) undergraduate program in 1999. Faculty, initially guided by Lewis Polsgrove and Genevieve Williamson, developed the merged elementary/special education program in response to changes in schools toward more inclusive practice and to the feedback they received from their graduates about their limitations in either knowledge of students who have disabilities or, for special education students, knowledge of the general education curriculum. As noted by Theresa Ochoa, current director of TAL, the institution needed to "prepare teachers to teach a wider range of students and be equally equipped to work with students in general and special education."

Approximately 50 students enter the TAL program annually. Students are grouped in cohorts, and each cohort moves through course sequences that are blocked to assure consistency in program content. The content of elementary and special education is combined for every course and experience, and TAL faculty meet at least twice each semester to address issues and coordinate program assignments. In order to ensure that they include the necessary content in both elementary and special education, faculty limit the focus of the program to students with mild disabilities and admit students in their sophomore year for purposes of beginning program course work early. In addition, given the heavy course load, space for electives is limited. All TAL students exit the 130-credit-hour program with Indiana licensure in two areas, General K-6 and Mild Interventions K-6.

The TAL faculty have begun to collect data on the outcomes of the merged program. They are collecting program evaluation data through traditional sources such as follow-up questionnaires, but they also have begun to examine the impact of TAL graduates on their students' learning. One year of data has been collected to date, with a focus on case studies. Additional plans include examining student achievement and interviews with TAL graduates.

The models and considerations described above can lead to action only when extensive strategic planning occurs. The next section of this action guide suggests a series of strategies that policy makers and higher education faculty might consider in deepening the dialogue about and, more important, taking effective action to initiate or redesign collaborative teacher education.

SECTION 2

Critical Dimensions of Program Development

State policy makers and higher education faculty navigate different structures and have unique needs when engaging in teacher education reform. As such, the considerations discussed in Section 1 of this action guide may play a different or more salient role for one group than for another (e.g., administrative structures in higher education may be of less immediate concern to state policy makers than to higher education faculty). This section of the guide provides tools that are designed to be used by each group independently. However, it also provides essential strategies that the two groups must consider together. If state policy makers and higher education faculty fail to understand the importance of coming together routinely to address collaborative teacher education, the likelihood that changes toward greater collaboration will be sustained is greatly reduced.

Not only do they navigate different organizational structures, but states and institutions of higher education also may be at very different points in their development of collaborative teacher education. While some states may have begun to make changes in teacher licensure to move forward with new collaborative models that are either integrated or merged, other states have yet to address such changes. Similarly, some schools and colleges of education have made great strides in the implementation of collaborative teacher education models, while others have yet to address the issue at all and continue to operate discrete programs. In some colleges and universities where discrete programs persist, overtures toward collaboration might be made by either the general or special education faculty but be rebuffed by their colleagues. Because of these vast differences, there is a need for states and higher education institutions to assess where they are in the implementation of collaboration in teacher education and consider various strategies to assist them as they move ahead with new preservice initiatives. The purpose of this section of the action guide is to provide tools for self-assessment as well as to suggest specific strategies for moving ahead at both the state and college/university levels and, most important, to do so together.

What the literature provides on organizational change is also critical to this discussion. Many readers may be familiar with the IBM Reinventing Change Web-Based Toolkit (http://www.reinventingeducation.org) used by the Center for Improving Teaching Quality in the early years of work with state teams. This toolkit, based on the work of Rosabeth Moss Kanter, offers much information about the fundamental principles of organizational change. We draw on these principles to discuss essential strategies of collaborative program development.

Taking Stock and Moving Ahead: Self-Assessment

The role of persons working in state departments of education is to be responsive to state and federal mandates. Various divisions at the state level (e.g., teacher education program approval, licensure, special education) may work independently or in collaboration, either in or outside of the department of education, to implement policies mandated by state and federal law. How this occurs differs from state to state, and current efforts related to NCLB and IDEA may amplify these differences. What states all have in common, however, is the need to prepare every teacher

to work effectively with all students, including those who have disabilities, and to play a major role in the dialogue about how this will occur.

To this end, some states require a base license in general education before completing a special education license (e.g., Rhode Island, Michigan), and other states (e.g., Louisiana, Connecticut) are proposing or making licensure changes that address both special and general education for initial licensure, with additional specialization (i.e., to gain specialized knowledge and skills in an area or areas of special education) for advanced licensure. Many states continue to offer a K-12 licensure structure for special education and grade-level licensure structures for general education. Some states, however, have structures in which general and special education licensure parallel one another. In Indiana, for example, special education-mild interventions K-6 aligns with general (elementary) K-6. Similarly, the licenses for special education-mild interventions 6-12 aligns with subject matter 6-12.

Likewise, college or university teacher education programs that wish to foster greater collaboration in the preparation of teachers will have to consider how they are addressing the critical dimensions of program development internally. Programs can be at very different points in their development, but at whatever level of program development an institution is functioning currently, it is likely that at least some of the dimensions set forth here will need attention. For example, a well-integrated program may not yet have addressed the alignment of performance assessments. A discrete program might be building stronger levels of faculty collaboration but not yet have addressed curriculum coherence. A merged program might need to consider depth of knowledge in special education or depth of content knowledge, or both. A program that is at more advanced levels of collaboration may need to initiate a research agenda to further its own understanding of collaborative teacher education, while at the same time extending the knowledge nationally. Creating high-quality models of practice in the PK-12 system continues to require serious attention. Further, each individual context requires local leaders—both deans and program directors—to consider which issues and dimensions to tackle first, which are most likely to yield ready results, and what kind of supports and resources may be needed to achieve the goals.

Program Development for State Policy Makers and Higher Education: Self-Assessment

Regardless of the level of progress in each state or higher education institution, it is likely that each stakeholder group will still need to give attention to various specific dimensions of program development. To assist both parties in getting started, self-assessments are provided below that can help each group in determining whether their efforts are at an entry, developing, or high level of implementation. These self-assessments are also designed to help provide guidance in launching further discussion and, most important, action planning and implementation.

The self-assessments are organized according to the five major considerations for creating and sustaining collaborative programs discussed earlier in this paper. The State Policy Maker Self-Assessment (located in Appendix A) includes the following dimensions:

1. Higher education collaboration
2. Curriculum coherence

3. Depth of knowledge
4. Licensure
5. PK-12 partnerships

The Higher Education Self-Assessment (located in Appendix B) includes the following dimensions:

1. Faculty collaboration
2. Curriculum coherence
3. Depth of knowledge
4. Alignment of performance/portfolio assessments
5. Administrative structures
6. PK-12 partnerships

For each of these dimensions, a 3-point rating scale indicates the degree of collaboration ranging from *entry* to *developing* to *high*. These ratings can be viewed as indicators of how much program interaction exists, with *entry* referring to high levels of independence across programs or units, *developing* referring to increasing levels of interdependence, and *high* referring to structural, systematic program interdependence.

To provide ideas for getting started on a self-assessment, one form of this tool contains several examples of what may be taking place currently in any given state or at any given college or university; this list is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to suggest examples of the kinds of issues a state or college/university might consider. The second form is blank to enable each stakeholder group to create its own specific items for self-assessment.

Taking Stock and Moving Ahead: Core Strategies

To assist states and higher education institutions in moving forward once they have completed a self-assessment, this section provides core strategies for consideration in moving, for example, from *entry* to a *developing* level of collaborative teacher education. These strategies aim to support both policy makers and higher education, once they have analyzed the results of their self-assessment, in their achievement of a high level of collaboration in teacher education. To parallel the self-assessments, the core strategies are organized according to the same program dimensions.

The strategies suggested below are not exhaustive, are not necessarily useful in every setting, and depend on the level of collaboration that has been achieved thus far. They are a representative sample of those that appear to be central to successful collaboration.

Core Strategies for State Policy Makers (SP)

SP #1—Core Strategies for *Higher Education Collaboration*

- **Identify and engage key higher education faculty and deans/directors who are already actively engaged in state or national teacher education leadership.** Every

state, through its higher education institutions, possesses great expertise in teacher education. Identify persons in your state who have served on national boards, held offices at national or state levels, won awards for their writing in teacher education, conducted leading-edge research on teaching/teacher education, or have other leadership attributes. If they are not already involved with your initial efforts, these individuals can serve in multiple ways to support state initiatives in teacher education—as advisers or in a "think tank," as committee leaders, as key persons to engage others in higher education, or in other roles you may generate.

- **Use a system of ongoing communication to reduce the potential for constituencies to say they were unaware of new considerations for teacher education and/or licensure reform.** A lack of communication can contribute to major problems when change is being considered. Establish a system of communicating regularly with higher education deans and faculty to assure that these groups are aware of proposed or potential changes in teacher education and licensure.

- **Bring together, through special meetings/forums/retreats, broad-based groups of faculty, deans/directors, and PK-12 representatives to support the state's efforts to initiate or enhance collaboration in teacher education.** Although committees and task forces are effective ways to engage stakeholders initially, longer forums or retreats provide extended time for deeper discussion. States can fund and host such retreats, including state, higher education, and PK-12 participants. It is critical to include all higher education stakeholders—from the largest university to the smallest independent college. While the leadership may come from those with rich experiences, buy-in can only occur if all higher education constituencies are included from the outset. In addition, participation by faculty from all areas in teacher education (e.g., foundations, arts and sciences, as well as general and special education) can begin to create a stronger dialogue that may have positive outcomes across teacher education, not just related to general and special education.

- **Provide seed funding to support higher education initiatives.** Higher education faculty may have an interest in collaboration in teacher education but may not have the time in their workloads to engage in new teacher education initiatives. Small competitive grants funded by the state can support time in faculty members' workloads to focus on collaborative teacher education program development or to coteach courses as a means of faculty development for a period of time during early stages of new program development and initial implementation.

SP #2—Core Strategies for *Curriculum Coherence*

- **Articulate how state leadership values education for *all* students in classrooms.** It may seem simplistic to say that state leaders should articulate their position about the importance of students who have disabilities having access to the general education curriculum. However, if this position is viewed as a value and not just a requirement, articulating this openly and often will help seal its importance.

- **Set clear expectations/requirements for integrating the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for teaching students who have disabilities, including low-incidence disabilities, into all aspects of the teacher education programs.** State requirements will need to include not only the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected in all teacher education programs for teaching students who have disabilities, but these requirements must also provide an understanding that content should be integrated (e.g., methods courses, field experiences). This is essential if the state plans to go beyond the "one course" requirement in special education. Moreover, the state must address how much it expects its general education teachers to know about students with high-incidence and low-incidence disabilities and what distinguishes the role of a special education teacher. Simply legislating additional courses in special education for all general education teachers will not necessarily lead to greater integration or collaboration and in fact may perpetuate discrete programs and vying for turf within already limited program space.

- **Set clear expectations/requirements for the role of academic content preparation for all preservice teacher education students.** States play an important role in ensuring that academic content is a focus in teacher preparation. Engaging in dialogue with higher education may lead to new options, implemented in some states already, such as academic concentrations or minors. States can also provide seed money for building closer collaboration between faculty in education and in the arts and sciences.

- **Articulate the importance of integrated performance/portfolio assessments in collaborative teacher education programs.** The state's teacher education requirements and standards can specify that performance and/or portfolio assessments relating to students who have disabilities must go beyond simple accommodations and modifications in general education classrooms.

SP #3—Core Strategies for *Depth of Knowledge*

- **Address what every teacher needs to know and be able to do to teach students who have disabilities and what the special educator (i.e., specialist) needs to know beyond that.** It is critical for each state to answer this question: What does every teacher need to know about students who have disabilities, and what does the special educator, or specialist, need to know beyond this base? To address this question, the state's leadership, working collaboratively with constituencies in higher education institutions and PK-12 schools, will need to study state, national (e.g., INTASC), and specialized professional association standards to decide how the state will answer the question. INTASC, for example, wrestled with this question in its 2001 standards (http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/spedstds.pdf), and its work can provide guidance in this regard.

- **Articulate the expectations for sufficient depth of content knowledge for all teacher education candidates.** While answering the question "How much academic content preparation is enough?" is not necessarily easy, state leaders can gain much by interacting with higher education stakeholders to understand what the research says on this topic.

While this research is not extensive, it can provide initial guidance in content preparation for all teachers, including special education teachers. Further, these discussions can lead to the development of important understandings regarding the role of pedagogical content knowledge in the preparation of teachers.

- **Make clear decisions about the teacher education knowledge base and how specialists should be prepared.** The time may have come when states and higher education will need to grapple with whether general education should be the base, or starting point, for professional knowledge for all teachers entering the schools. Should specialists, such as special educators, come to their preparation already well-grounded in general teacher education and gain specialization through additional course work, licensure, and/or graduate degrees? A move in this direction is directly connected to the issue of what realistically can be accomplished in a 4-year teacher education program and to what degree of quality.

- **Articulate how the state prepares teachers of students with high-incidence disabilities and of students with low-incidence disabilities.** While it may be possible to provide all teachers with a certain level of knowledge and skills about students with high-incidence disabilities in an entry-level teacher education program that is integrated or merged, accomplishing this for pupils with low-incidence disabilities may be too great a challenge in a limited program space for professional preparation. Each state must articulate clearly what additional requirements are necessary for persons working with students who have low-incidence disabilities, consider the relationship of this goal to licensure structures, and rethink licensure structures that may pose a barrier to or inhibit reaching this goal.

SP #4—Core Strategies for *Licensure*

- **Establish a work team across state department of education divisions of special education, teacher education program approval, and licensure.** For those states where interaction across divisions/departments is limited, it will be necessary for one division leader to engage personnel from other divisions/departments in some type of ongoing work team to focus on collaboration and alignment in teacher education. In the absence of this type of action, interactions may remain limited or even nonexistent.

- **Study licensure structures in your state and consider whether changes are needed.** As noted above, the way licensure is structured in some states may inhibit collaboration in teacher education. For example, if special education licensure is PK-12 and early, elementary, and secondary education are broken into grade ranges (e.g., PK-3, 4-8, 9-12), faculty in college/universities are likely to find these incompatible structures difficult to reconcile as they rethink their teacher education programs. What new licensure structures will best encourage teacher candidates to move more easily from general to special education if that is the route they wish to take?

- **Use "lessons learned" in other states.** Some states may have already addressed structural issues—either for how divisions/departments are aligned or how licensure is

structured for special and general education. Review how other states have navigated these issues and use their experiences to avoid pitfalls.

SP #5—Core Strategies for *PK-12 Partnerships*

- **Include PK-12 school representatives in meetings to discuss teacher education and licensure reform.** The alignment of PK-12 school practices with teacher education practices is critical to assuring common goals and outcomes for all students, including students who have disabilities. Equally important, a common discussion can lead to the development of stronger field experience sites for preservice students. As noted under *Higher Education Collaboration*, it is essential to include representatives from both higher education and PK-12 schools in discussions and recommendations for teacher education and licensure reform.

Core Strategies for Higher Education (HE)

HE #1—Core Strategies for *Faculty Collaboration*

- **Identify shared values across faculty/programs in special and general teacher education**. For faculties that may have a history of discord or noninteraction, special and general education faculty may first need to meet separately to identify core values and then come together to share what each has identified. In such cases, a facilitator from another unit or an outside consultant might be useful. Because some faculty may be unfamiliar with national standards or expectations, consider using the 2001 INTASC standards (http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/spedstds.pdf) as a common starting point for these discussions, or the language in IDEA and NCLB regarding highly qualified teachers.

- **Focus first on preservice programs, or groups of courses within a program, that have a greater likelihood of achieving greater collaboration.** Not all programs will make the same level of progress, and some programs may pose greater challenges than others (e.g., secondary programs for which many content courses reside in another school or college). Begin with programs in which success is more likely, and if necessary, establish one strong program that can serve as a model for others.

- **Provide appropriate, ongoing leadership for collaboration.** Just because faculty may not have worked together previously does not mean joint work is not possible. In these cases, however, leadership is required to initiate and sustain intentional faculty collaboration. It is critical to identify a leader or leaders at the program level who will call faculty together on a regular basis for purposes of program development and improvement.

- **Identify/involve multiple faculty leaders who view program development for collaboration as both a programmatic and a scholarly interest.** Although programs usually need a single director, it is important to create leadership teams made up of

faculty who view the preparation of teachers not just as a programmatic responsibility, but also as an area of scholarly interest and study.

- **Provide funding from the dean's or director's level to hold program development retreats to achieve consensus on shared values across special and general education.** The initial work of reaching consensus among faculty, especially among faculty who have not worked together programmatically in the past, requires more than a couple of short meetings. Deans can play an important role by providing funding to support continuous faculty interaction, especially at the initial stages of program redesign.

- **Create program structures requiring routine faculty interaction**. Regular meetings at the programmatic level must take place for the purpose of discussing the implementation of collaborative programs. These meetings should focus not on administrative details, but rather on the substance of the programmatic commitments and their implementation. Using the work of preservice candidates—for example, portfolio entries—as the basis for such meetings can provide a strong anchor for a deeper understanding of the curriculum and its outcomes for students.

- **Ensure that all job descriptions for faculty who are hired to teach in the program reflect the expectation for collaboration.** Including the program's expectation for collaboration in job descriptions is one way to make these values public. During faculty interviews, collaboration should be communicated and assessed as a valued faculty characteristic.

HE #2—Core Strategies for *Curriculum Coherence*

- **Provide regular opportunities for faculty to talk about their own areas of expertise in relationship to the program as a whole.** Sometimes what is viewed as an obstruction is more the result of faculty members who are not sure their expertise is valued outside of their own departmental or program home. When faculty view their expertise as being valued, they are likely to demonstrate a greater willingness to participate in extended programmatic discussions. This work can be accomplished by setting up subgroups on, for example, literacy, assessment, or behavioral supports. In higher education institutions where collaboration has not been practiced, a place to begin might be program-wide discussions about the relationship between required courses in special education and the rest of the program.

- **Provide funding from the dean's office for an annual program retreat for the specific purpose of supporting continuous program improvement**. For the analysis of student work to become a routine part of teacher education, time must be set aside on a routine basis for faculty to consider their work as a whole and its relationship to student learning. At such annual (or semiannual) meetings, part of the time should also be devoted to a review of syllabi and textbooks in anticipation of planning for subsequent year. Such events also enable faculty to discuss specifically how they address central core concepts across all of the courses and field experiences within the program.

- **Include faculty from foundations departments who may teach required courses in multicultural education in curriculum discussions.** Sometimes the focus of collaboration extends only to faculty associated with a particular degree or program (e.g., special education or math education) or to specific introductory or methods courses without consideration given to core or foundational courses that support all programs. It is critical to include foundations faculty because the courses these faculty teach relate to the complex relationship among various markers of diversity (e.g., disability, race, class, language, gender).

- **Build awareness and understanding that collaborative teacher education is not just a special education issue.** The focus of collaboration in teacher education should be on the core value of preparing teachers to teach all children in our schools. If this goal is viewed only as a special education issue, it distracts from the need to build teacher education programs that address diversity in the broader sense. Further, without this broader perspective, the nuances of the relationship between disability and other markers of diversity may not be explored programmatically.

- **Provide funding to support faculty development that links content across courses through structures such as coteaching.** When faculty have the opportunity to see and hear the way their colleagues teach topics that have a direct relationship to their own areas of expertise, they often become engaged in the process. Coteaching within a preservice program—for example, the "shared class" concept practiced at Syracuse—is a form of faculty development that can facilitate collaborative programming. A specific period of time could be identified for coteaching, linked to a specific curriculum coherence development project early on in the program redesign process.

- **Create shared assignments that require ongoing faculty collaboration.** Shared class assignments create a need for faculty to collaborate and coordinate their work. Such assignments can be shared across a small number of classes or can be more programmatic. In addition, field experiences can serve multiple courses, also creating a greater shared programmatic basis for what students are experiencing and forcing faculty to work jointly in the development and assessment of field experiences.

- **Initiate and sustain a structure for ongoing discussion about the quality of field sites in the schools and the development of improved sites.** If a college or university has a PK-16 council or a professional development school project, it will be critical to consider the role of inclusive field placements. If such structures do not exist, it will be essential to explore establishing this level of school-university collaboration. If strong PK-16 relationships do exist, how do current arrangements inhibit or facilitate collaboration in teacher preparation? For example, a situation in which the special education program uses one set of PDS sites and the general education program uses another is not conducive to collaborative teacher education. This dimension of program redesign should include regular interactions with practicing teachers who support preservice candidates.

HE #3—Core Strategies for *Depth of Knowledge*

- **Define the value added for a teacher who obtains a special education license.** In the early stages of developing greater collaboration in teacher education, it is essential to clearly define what special education teachers who complete a program know and can do that differentiates them from general education teachers. To address this issue, faculty can use existing standards/materials (e.g., the 2001 INTASC standards) that were developed, in part, to distinguish what all teachers should know and be able to do to teach students who have disabilities from the specialist who attains skills beyond this base. During such a process, it will be necessary to consider both high- and low-incidence disabilities as well as what can be accomplished in an entry teacher education program and what must be considered in specializations beyond the initial level.

- **Determine whether program space is adequate for the licenses graduates obtain.** If candidates are enrolled in an integrated or a merged program that results in a general and special education license, it is critical that the faculty assess—using state, national, and professional organization standards and guidelines—whether the program is providing adequate depth of preparation in special education. A similar assessment should be conducted to determine whether academic content preparation is sufficient.

- **Define the degree of special education knowledge, skills, and dispositions program faculty expect general education teachers to have.** It is not likely that the "one-course" approach can provide the depth of knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed by general education teachers to enter classrooms. Regardless of the types of program models in a college/university setting, faculty will need to determine the multiple ways that this content can be effectively threaded throughout the curriculum in addition to the expertise that is provided in a dedicated special education course.

- **Examine whether a general education license is the base that supports the development of special education teachers.** If the program and/or the state does not require a general education license as the base for a special education license, examine the benefits and limitations of this approach. These discussions relate directly to the strategy above regarding the need to clearly define the value added of a special education teacher. If special education moves to a postbaccalaureate or graduate (e.g., master's) level only, plan the transition to accommodate temporary shifts in enrollments that may occur.

- **Build a strong understanding with arts and sciences faculty regarding the relationship between content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge.** It is critical to engage arts and sciences faculty in discussions regarding what content knowledge is most important for prospective teachers and to strengthen students' understandings of content and what it means in the professional work of teaching. Consider building teams of arts and sciences and education faculty to explore these issues along with education faculty and make appropriate curricular and teaching changes to strengthen content preparation of teachers.

HE #4—Core Strategies for *Alignment of Performance/Portfolio Assessments*

- **Analyze current performance/portfolio assessments for evidence of students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to working with students who have disabilities.** Include both special and general education faculty in this activity. Ensure that students address disability at various points throughout the portfolio rather than in only one entry devoted to this topic.

- **Analyze current performance/portfolio assessments for evidence that students attend not only to a student's disability, but also to race, class, culture, language, and gender and the interactions among these various markers of diversity.** Based on an analysis of the work of teacher education candidates, initiate dialogue among special and general education faculty, including those who teach courses in multicultural education, about the importance of a broad perspective on diversity. Such analyses should explore how preservice students attend not only to a student's disability, but also to his/her race, class, culture, language, and gender and to the subtle interactions among these different markers of diversity.

- **Build capacity for shared review of portfolios across special and general education faculty.** This can be accomplished by having teams review portfolios. The activity has value not only in terms of program improvement, but also in terms of faculty development.

HE #5—Core Strategies for *Administrative Structures*

- **Identify faculty leaders who will engage other faculty in discussions of collaboration in teacher education.** Faculty leaders can be effective at engaging other faculty in discussions of changes to their teacher education programs. These people can initiate meetings that might inspire other faculty to work toward changes in their programs. Once new program structures are developed, ongoing faculty leadership for curricular collaboration is essential to the success of the reform.

- **Engage the chair, director, and/or dean in discussions of administrative structures that support collaboration in teacher education.** While faculty leaders and groups of faculty may be most successful in initiating, sustaining, and institutionalizing change in higher education, a strong department chair or dean can initiate discussions regarding administrative structures that might be of significant help in supporting the work of faculty.

HE #6—Core Strategies for *PK-12 Partnerships*

- **If not in place already, establish a PK-12 school advisory board or council for teacher education.** It will be essential to engage with teachers and school administrators about school practices and about the skills and dispositions, or lack thereof, of program graduates who are in the schools. Most school professionals are candid about what

teachers need to be able to do and can provide valuable examples of issues and needs in school contexts.

- **Conduct or review follow-up studies of graduates and their administrators or supervisors to determine what each says about the skills and dispositions of graduates who have entered teaching.** A careful review of follow-up surveys will reveal the strengths and weaknesses of new teachers. In relation to teaching students who have disabilities, it will be necessary to include key questions that provide information leading to improvement in teacher education programs.

- **Identify local concerns that have high visibility or buy-in, and use them as leverage points for joint discussion and action.** Immediate local concerns may differ from community to community and from state to state with regard to collaboration between special and general education. Identifying a local touchpoint is an important strategy for bringing together stakeholders to initiate new ways of strengthening local school practice and sites for preservice clinical experience.

IN CONCLUSION

Moving the Work Ahead Together

Systemic change in teacher education is far more likely when state policy makers and colleges/universities work closely together to reach a common goal. As we noted above, the fundamental principles of organizational change outlined in the IBM Toolkit can be viewed as overarching assumptions as states and higher education institutions implement strategies to achieve greater collaboration in the preparation of teachers. They are revisited here as "Dos and Don'ts."

Do:

- ***Make sure all stakeholders understand the goal or outcome.*** All groups involved in a change process must go in the same direction; remind everyone of the goal periodically.

- ***Remember that change takes time***. Change often takes more time than expected; look positively at the small steps taken and keep your eye on the goal. There will be times when it seems impossible (the Toolkit refers to one difficult stage as the "difficult middles").

- ***Stick to the work***. One meeting, or even a series of meetings, will not necessarily assure success; stick to it—a "slow march" forward is as important as a quick start.

- ***Keep a focus on process.*** Process *is* important, and while some processes (e.g., more meetings with stakeholders) may seem time consuming, keep up the work.

- ***Make plans for continuous interaction both within and across stakeholder organizations.*** Because different groups (or stakeholders) will have different tasks to accomplish, it is critical for the groups to touch base regularly to report on the progress that each is making—and to adjust next steps.

- ***Focus on what can be done, not on what cannot***. Adopt a "can-do" attitude to keep moving forward; nothing destroys momentum like negative talk.

- ***Provide incentives.*** Rewards, even small ones, go a long way in keeping people motivated.

Don't:

- ***Expect change overnight.*** This point bears repeating: Change takes time, and big mistakes can occur when change is rushed.

- ***Mandate without substantial input.*** While it may be important and/or tempting to mandate a change, always do so by including stakeholders in how it can be accomplished.

- ***Overlook the details.*** Details *do* matter, and it is important to follow up, take notes, and remind participants regularly of the status of the work.

One more caveat is in order as both state policy makers and higher education faculty and administrators commit themselves to improving the preparation of all teachers for students who have disabilities. The expertise that resides within both general and special education is critical to the project of redesigning teacher education for collaboration. Both sets of expertise are essential if students who have disabilities are to be served well. The central challenge is creating program and licensure structures that enable this expertise to be clearly defined and harnessed in service of the children and youth who are the focus of our work.

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APPENDIX A

State Policy Maker Self-Assessment

Preparing General and Special Education Teachers of Students Who Have Disabilities
STATE POLICY MAKER SELF-ASSESSMENT (with examples)

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension in your state. Examples are provided as a starting point – they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add other descriptors that best describe current practices in your state.

	Entry (mostly independent)	**Developing (some interdependence)**	**High (consistent interdependence)**
Dimensions of collaboration			
Higher education collaboration	[ ] Have held no formal discussions with institutions of higher education (IHE) faculty about different models for developing collaborative programs in teacher education [ ] Held discussions with IHE faculty about collaboration in teacher education at an annual state meeting (e.g., state association of colleges of teacher education) [ ] Other:	[ ] Have communicated periodically with IHEs about needs and issues related to collaborative programs in teacher education and about how licensure supports or inhibits such programs [ ] Sponsored a state forum with IHEs to address possible models for collaboration in teacher education and why these would be important to the education of all PK-12 students [ ] Have or are using state-level task forces (that include wide representation of IHEs) to address and make recommendations about collaboration in teacher education; IHE representatives include special education faculty from both high- and low-incidence disability programs [ ] Used funding (e.g., grant funding) to support IHEs in their efforts to implement collaboration in teacher education; focus was primarily on collaborative program models involving high incidence disabilities [ ] Other:	[ ] Have involved higher education in all recommendations relating to collaborative programs in teacher education and in licensure changes relating to collaboration in teacher education [ ] Continue to work extensively through state-level task forces (that included wide representation of IHEs) to make recommendations for collaboration in teacher education; special education faculty from both high and low incidence disability programs have and continue to be actively involved [ ] Identified, used, and continue to use multiple sources of funding to provide support to IHEs in their efforts to implement collaboration in teacher education; funding supports program models for both high- and low-incidence disabilities [ ] Other:

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension in your state. Examples are provided as a starting point – they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add other descriptors that best describe current practices in your state.

	Entry (mostly independent)	Developing (some interdependence)	High (consistent interdependence)
Curriculum coherence	[ ] The divisions in the state department of education (i.e., teacher education program approval, licensure, special education) have not come together, in consultation with higher education institutions in the state, around the importance of going beyond the "one course in special education" expectation for general education programs [ ] Have communicated with IHEs about the requirements mandated by IDEA 2004 and NCLB (e.g., "highly qualified teacher" requirements) [ ] Have held no formal discussions with IHEs about the extent of (or expectations for) independence/interdependence of general education curriculum and special education curriculum in teacher education programs [ ] Have held no formal discussions with IHEs about content preparation for all teacher education students [ ] Other:	[ ] Included national standards (e.g., INTASC) at a state-wide forum to promote greater curricular interdependence in general and special education teacher education; discussed how national standards and state requirements intersect and how the intersection, or lack of, supports or hinders collaboration in teacher education [ ] Established state-level task forces in collaboration with IHEs to address issues of independence and interdependence of curricula in general and special education teacher education—including how arts and sciences faculties will be engaged in content preparation for all teacher education students [ ] Have begun discussions about the importance of assuring interdependence of performance or portfolio assessments in general and special education teacher education [ ] Other:	[ ] Worked extensively and routinely with IHEs to establish program approval policies regarding curricular interdependence among general and special education, and with the arts and sciences, to include: [ ] specific expectations for what all teachers need to know and be able to do to teach students who have disabilities, including high- and low-incidence disabilities [ ] specific expectations for how content will be taught to all students in teacher education programs [ ] specific expectations for the interdependence of performance or portfolio assessments in general and special education [ ] Other:

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension in your state. Examples are provided as a starting point – they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add other descriptors that best describe current practices in your state.

	Entry (mostly independent)	Developing (some interdependence)	High (consistent interdependence)
Depth of knowledge	[ ] Have not addressed, nor held formal discussions with IHE stakeholders about, the depth of knowledge needed by [ ] general education teachers to teach students with disabilities, to include high- and low-incidence disabilities [ ] special education teachers to understand the general education curriculum and teach content knowledge [ ] colleges and schools of education to address the value added in special education [ ] Other:	[ ] Included IHE and PK-12 stakeholders in formal meetings and/or task forces sponsored by the state department of education using state, national (e.g., INTASC, NCATE), and specialized professional association standards to address and recommend depth of knowledge needed by [ ] general education teachers to teach students who have disabilities, to include high- and low-incidence disabilities [ ] special education teachers to understand the general education curriculum and teach content knowledge [ ] colleges and schools of education to address the value added in special education [ ] Have addressed the needs of general education teachers for teaching high-incidence disabilities, but have paid little attention to depth of knowledge needed about low-incidence disabilities [ ] Other:	[ ] Worked extensively and routinely with IHEs, using state, national (e.g., INTASC), and specialty association (e.g., CEC) standards, to develop a written document that outlines what teachers need to know and be able do to: [ ] teach students who have disabilities in general education classrooms—both high- and low-incidence disabilities [ ] teach content to all students [ ] understand the value added in special education [ ] Other:

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension in your state. Examples are provided as a starting point – they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add other descriptors that best describe current practices in your state.

	Entry (mostly independent)	Developing (some interdependence)	High (consistent interdependence)
Licensure	[ ] Have made few or no formal attempts to hold discussions among different divisions in the state department of education (i.e., special education, teacher education program approval, and licensure) about how different licensure structures support or hinder collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have made few or no formal attempts to align teacher education program approval with licensure (either in general and special education) [ ] Have not involved IHEs in discussions of alignment of teacher education program approval and licensure or in discussions of how licensure, particularly special education licensure, impacts on collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have not discussed, either within the state department of education or externally with IHE stakeholders, how special education licensure might change as collaboration in teacher education is implemented [ ] Other:	[ ] Have begun regular discussions across divisions in the state department of education (i.e., special education, teacher education program approval, licensure) about how to assure alignment of teacher education program approval and licensure, including the alignment of special education licensure and general education licensure areas [ ] Have held discussions within the state department of education and with IHEs about how state program approval/review intersects with accreditation standards (e.g., NCATE) and/or specialty association standards (e.g., CEC) [ ] Have set up task forces, to include IHEs and representatives from PK-12 schools, to make recommendations about licensure, including how current special education licensure contributes to or inhibits collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have held joint initial discussions, both internally at the state department of education and externally with IHE stakeholders, about how special education licensure might change as collaboration in teacher education is implemented [ ] Other:	[ ] Have made decisions, with broad-based input from IHEs and PK-12 schools, about how the state's program approval process aligns with licensure, including the alignment of special education licensure and general education licensure [ ] Have decided, with broad-based input from IHEs, about how IHEs will address in collaborative programs the multiple standards to which each responds (e.g., specialty association and/or state standards) [ ] Have made decisions, with broad-based input from IHEs and PK-12 schools, about changes in licensure structures to support collaborative teacher education models being developed in IHEs in the state, including the alignment of special education licensure and general education licensure and licensure for low incidence disabilities [ ] Have developed support systems (e.g., small grants) to help IHEs implement collaborative teacher education models [ ] Other:

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension in your state. Examples are provided as a starting point – they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add other descriptors that best describe current practices in your state.			
	Entry (mostly independent)	**Developing (some interdependence)**	**High (consistent interdependence)**
PK-12 partnerships	[ ] Have held no shared discussions with IHEs and PK-12 schools about the types of services needed for students who have disabilities or about the alignment of teacher education and school practices [ ] Have held no shared discussions with IHEs and PK-12 schools about how reform in each requires that schools and teacher education work hand in hand to accomplish common goals and outcomes [ ] Other	[ ] Have coordinated meetings with IHEs and PK-12 schools to discuss services for students who have disabilities and about the need for services and teacher education to address common goals and outcomes [ ] Have coordinated meetings with IHEs and PK-12 schools to discuss "reform issues" (focused on services for students who have disabilities) and how each can pull together to work hand in hand to accomplish common goals and outcomes [ ] Other	[ ] Have developed an ongoing system of communication between IHEs and PK-12 schools about services for students who have disabilities and how collaborative teacher education models address services, including both high- and low-incidence disabilities [ ] Other

Preparing General and Special Education Teachers of Students Who Have Disabilities
STATE POLICY MAKER SELF-ASSESSMENT (open)

Directions: For each rating, use the appropriate box to list bullets describing specific aspects of each dimension in your state.			
	Entry (mostly independent)	**Developing (some interdependence)**	**High (consistent interdependence)**
Dimensions of collaboration			
Higher education collaboration			
Curriculum coherence			
Depth of knowledge			
Licensure			

PK-12 partnerships			

APPENDIX B

Higher Education Program Self-Assessment

Preparing General and Special Education Teachers of Students Who Have Disabilities
HIGHER EDUCATION SELF-ASSESSMENT (with examples)

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension at your college or university. Examples are provided as a starting point—they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add any other descriptors that best describe current practices at your institution.

	Entry (mostly independent)	Developing (some interdependence)	High (consistent interdependence)
Dimensions of collaboration			
Faculty collaboration	[ ] Have held infrequent meetings, if any, between faculty who teach special education courses for general education program and general education faculty [ ] Have had few, if any, discussions among special education, curriculum and instruction/teaching, educational psychology, and multicultural education faculty [ ] Have collaborated on research across special and general education but not on developing program collaboration [ ] Have viewed collaborative teacher preparation solely as a "special education issue" without recognition at the unit level (by deans or directors) of its importance [ ] Other:	[ ] Have established regular faculty discussions to identify shared values [ ] Have begun to identify and align the multiple curricular connections between special and general education (including foundations/multicultural education) [ ] Have begun to coordinate specific parts of the program (e.g., joint field experience, joint student projects on collaboration) [ ] Have started to view the relationship between special and general education as valuable and meaningful at level of dean or director [ ] Have identified internal leaders who can initiate and sustain collaboration [ ] Have received some support/resources at level of dean or director for initial attempts at cross-departmental interaction [ ] Other:	[ ] Have established regular meetings of program faculty across departments and units, including arts and sciences, specifically for the purpose of continuous alignment and improvement of all aspects of program and engaging in joint scholarly and research projects [ ] Have coordinated program features related to high- and low-incidence disabilities across all stakeholder departments [ ] Have made collaboration a well-articulated value for teacher education and encouraged it at the program and research levels, including in job descriptions for potential hires [ ] Have supported faculty development through mechanisms such as coteaching [ ] Have created research plans to study the results of collaborative programming [ ] Have connected with collaborative preservice programs in other IHEs for purposes of conducting shared research [ ] Other:

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension at your college or university. Examples are provided as a starting point—they are meant to be illustrative and are *not* exhaustive. Use the brackets to check those that apply to your setting; then add any other descriptors that best describe current practices at your institution.			
	Entry (mostly independent)	**Developing (some interdependence)**	**High (consistent interdependence)**
Curriculum coherence	[ ] Have held little or no shared discussion at the program level about collaborative teacher education [ ] View courses as being "owned" by the individual faculty member who teaches, rather than courses that serve programs and have some agreed-upon parameters related to program outcomes [ ] Have held an initial meeting to address program coherence, but follow-up and sustained dialogue are not taking place [ ] Use a range of placements from segregated special education classes to fully inclusive classes; no systematic communication mechanism exists for ensuring consistency between program philosophy and practice in field placements [ ] Other:	[ ] Have begun sharing syllabi between special and general education faculty at the start of each semester and discussing how courses, instructional activities, and assignments relate to one another [ ] Have aligned courses and/or field experiences in some areas (e.g., literacy) but not in others [ ] Have established shared program responsibilities across faculty who meet regularly to discuss curriculum, but issues related to special education are not discussed as frequently as other issues or not readily integrated into other related discussions [ ] Have established a systematic relationship with the local schools in a PK-16 council or professional development school model, but have not focused on special education issues [ ] Other:	[ ] Have established structures for program faculty across general and special education to meet throughout the semester to share syllabi, coordinate instructional activities and assignments, and spiral targeted concepts/practices in the curriculum [ ] Have established structures for faculty to become familiar with textbooks used throughout the program that may address their area of expertise and provide feedback to other faculty about their use and value [ ] Faculty in general and special education connect issues of disability as diversity to other manifestations of diversity, for example, race, class, culture, language, and gender [ ] Have created an acceptable balance between a faculty member's responsibility to the program and his/her autonomy in course development, implementation, and coordination [ ] Other:

Depth of knowledge	[ ] Have not explored increasing content preparation for special education teachers [ ] Have not explored integrating special education content beyond one required course [ ] Have focused more on special education content limited to high incidence for general and/or special education teachers and less on low incidence disabilities [ ] Have held little or no intentional dialogue between education and arts and sciences regarding content preparation of teachers [ ] Other:	[ ] Have begun to articulate the specific special education content provided in dedicated special education courses as well as content that will be integrated across the general education preservice curriculum, with focus on high-incidence disabilities [ ] Have begun discussions with arts and sciences faculty regarding content preparation for all teachers candidates, but especially for special education candidates (including high- and low-incidence disability) [ ] Have begun discussions regarding the benefits and limitations of requiring a general education license as a foundation for a special education license [ ] Have begun discussions to explore depth of special education knowledge for students who obtain two licenses through an *integrated* or *merged* program or who complete a *merged* program but receive only a general education license [ ] Have begun discussions regarding the relationship between preparation for high- and low-incidence disability areas for special education licensure candidates [ ] Have begun to define the unique value added for a special education teacher [ ] Other:	[ ] Have ensured that special education program content in general education goes beyond routine expectations for accommodations and modifications [ ] Have put structures into place to support continuous, permanent dialogue between arts and sciences and education regarding content preparation of all teachers [ ] Have ensured that programs reflect a sound basis in content and pedagogical content knowledge as essential for all teachers [ ] Have moved beyond discrete programs into either an integrated or merged model [ ] Have made decisions about the structure of teacher preparation for high- and low-incidence disability areas for special education licensure candidates based on a collaborative model for initial licensure in general education [ ] Have defined the value added for a special education teacher and made program adjustments as needed to reflect this definition [ ] Other:

Alignment of performance and/or portfolio assessments	[ ] Have performance and/or portfolios assessment on disability that are unrelated to other required assessments [ ] Have performance and/or portfolio assessments regarding disability that are limited to low-level accommodations and/or modifications [ ] Read the results of performance or portfolio assessments and aggregate data, however, program faculty do not review them as a whole [ ] Allow students to choose which "diversity" they wish to feature in their portfolio with the possibility of addressing disability and not race, class, culture, language or gender (or vice versa) or how multiple diversity markers interact [ ] Other:	[ ] Have established some level of shared responsibility for assessing performances/ portfolios across special and general teacher education faculty [ ] Use preservice student work as a basis for discussions, and have begun considering adjustments to performance assessments/ portfolio requirements to better reflect the integration of special and general education [ ] Use preservice student work as a basis for discussions, and have begun considering adjustments to performance assessments/ portfolio requirements to reflect a more complex understanding of multiple markers of diversity—including in discussions faculty from general and special education and from foundations [ ] Other:	[ ] Have established permanent structures to enable special and general teacher education faculty to team regularly to assess performances/portfolios [ ] Have established permanent structures to enable special and general teacher education faculty to review student learning as reflected in performance/portfolios regularly for the purpose of continuous program improvement and improved curricular coherence around issues of disability [ ] Have established permanent structures to enable special and general education faculty to share plans regularly for adjusting curriculum and assignments in subsequent semesters based on joint review of student performance/portfolio assessments [ ] Have ensured that when external assessors are used, they include both special and general education teachers/practitioners [ ] Other:
Administrative structures	[ ] Have not considered whether or how administrative structures support or hinder collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have not identified a key faculty member or members who can or will engage other faculty in discussions of collaboration in teacher education [ ] Other:	[ ] Have held initial discussions about whether or how administrative structures support or hinder collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have identified a key faculty member or members who is engaging faculty in discussions of collaboration in teacher education [ ] Other:	[ ] Have decided that current or new structures will support collaboration in teacher education [ ] Key faculty members have engaged faculty in discussions of collaboration in teacher education and options for change are underway [ ] Other:

PK-12 partnerships	[ ] Do not have an advisory board of PK-12 school personnel in place [ ] Have not conducted follow-up surveys of graduates and their supervisors [ ] Have not identified specific school placements that support collaborative practices [ ] Other:	[ ] Have an advisory board of PK-12 school personnel in place and have had initial discussions about collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have conducted follow-up surveys of graduates and their supervisors but have not used the information to consider collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have identified a number of school placements that support collaborative teacher education [ ] Other:	[ ] Have held numerous discussions with the PK-12 advisory board resulting in new field sites/arrangements for collaborative teacher education [ ] Have used follow-up surveys of graduates and their supervisors in decisions about greater collaboration in teacher education [ ] Have worked with local school districts and the PK-12 advisory board to identify and use key school and classroom placements that represent collaborative teacher practices [ ] Other:

Preparing General and Special Education Teachers of Students Who Have Disabilities
HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT (open)

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension at your college or university.			
	Entry (mostly independent)	**Developing (some interdependence)**	**High (consistent interdependence)**
Dimensions of collaboration			
Faculty collaboration			
Curriculum coherence			
Depth of knowledge			

Directions: Use this form to list practices describing specific aspects of each dimension at your college or university.			
	Entry (mostly independent)	**Developing (some interdependence)**	**High (consistent interdependence)**
Alignment of performance assessments			
Administrative structures			
PK-12 partnerships			