

Teacher ed programs striving for success

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Editor, The Messenger:

On Dec. 15, 2010, Chancellor Eric Fingerhut, State University Education Deans (SUED) of Ohio chairwoman Renée Middleton and Ohio Association for Private Colleges of Teacher Education president Mifrando Obach announced that Ohio would become the first state in the nation to establish statewide metrics to monitor the performance of educator preparation programs.

The Ohio Educator Preparation Metrics include indicators such as the placement of graduates in hard-to-staff Ohio school districts and a new teacher's ability to demonstrate student growth. The new Teacher Performance Assessment will measure a beginning teacher's ability to manage a classroom, prepare and execute effective lessons, interact with parents and use knowledge of a student's prior educational background to help each child succeed.

Some of the reaction to the announcement regarding statewide metrics surprised us. The Cleveland Plain Dealer applauded the metrics initiative, but also characterized it as "a flashlight-carrying sheriff ... coming to town to peer into the 50 public and private teacher education programs and report back to lawmakers and the public." This metaphor implies that teacher education has something to hide, that there is an adversarial relationship between our teacher education programs and the state, and that we are not willing participants in the evaluation process.

In reality, SUED and OAPCTE are working with the Regents to offer the best programs possible. We see the Regents not as a sheriff coming to town, but as an ally.

A decade ago we formed the Teacher Quality Partnership to link the actual performance of teachers to teacher education programs. This effort was reflected in the language of H.B. 1 of the 128th General Assembly, which called for the creation of annual performance reports on teacher education programs. The result of this legislative directive was the set of metrics introduced in December.

Ohio is becoming a national model for improving the performance of our teacher education programs — and we are committed to being an integral part of that process.

Lawrence Johnson, member

Board of Trustees, Ohio Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Renée A. Middleton, chairwoman

State University Education Deans (SUED) of Ohio

Mifrando Obach, president

Ohio Association for Private Colleges of Teacher Education

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