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The Preparation of Teachers

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Editorial Comment

THE PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

Many people consider our present teacher education programs to be totally inadequate. One of their criticisms is that too many students complete a four-year program in education and then find themselves in a profession for which they are unsuited and to which they are uncommitted. A second criticism is that teacher education courses are prescribed by agencies and taught by college professors far removed from the real world of the teacher. A third criticism is that the current system of certification focuses on the completion of courses which emphasize cognitive understandings rather than upon the demonstration of teacher competency.

If they are to survive, colleges of education charged with the responsibility of preparing teachers must change. New models of teacher education programs must be created which emphasize the development of competencies actually required in the classroom. Public school personnel and professional organizations must become significantly involved in the development and implementation of more relevant teacher education programs. Completion of teacher education programs and certification for teaching must be based on demonstrated competency to produce desirable behavioral changes on the part of students. Furthermore, programs for the preparation of teachers must become responsive to needed change so that theory, practice, and materials are kept current.

The needs are urgent. The challenges are great. The time for clear thinking and bold action is here.

Dorothy J. McGinnis
Editor