Oregon Secretary of State
Audits Division
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Education: Additional Efforts and Resources Needed to Improve Teacher Preparation and Professional Development

Oregon Education Investment Board

October 8, 2013

Our objective

To determine whether state or local actions could be taken to improve preparation and professional development for beginning teachers

We examined:

- Ways to strengthen student teaching practices,
- Increase confidence in Oregon teaching colleges and their graduates, and
- Improve the professional opportunities that Oregon's school districts provide to beginning teachers.

Teacher training and coaching

Oregon adopted the new recommendations of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. Our audit focused on these four:

- Expanded student teaching experiences should be closely coordinated with the colleges' academic coursework.
- Teacher preparation should be a partnership between the teaching colleges and the school districts.
- Student teachers should have trained, qualified teaching college staff and coaching teachers.
- Teaching colleges should work with school districts to develop new rewards/incentives for coaching teachers and teaching college staff.

Oregon's public teaching colleges can do more to strengthen student teaching

- We found variance in how well public teaching colleges coordinate coursework and student teaching experiences.
- We also found varying degrees of the partnerships between colleges and school districts.

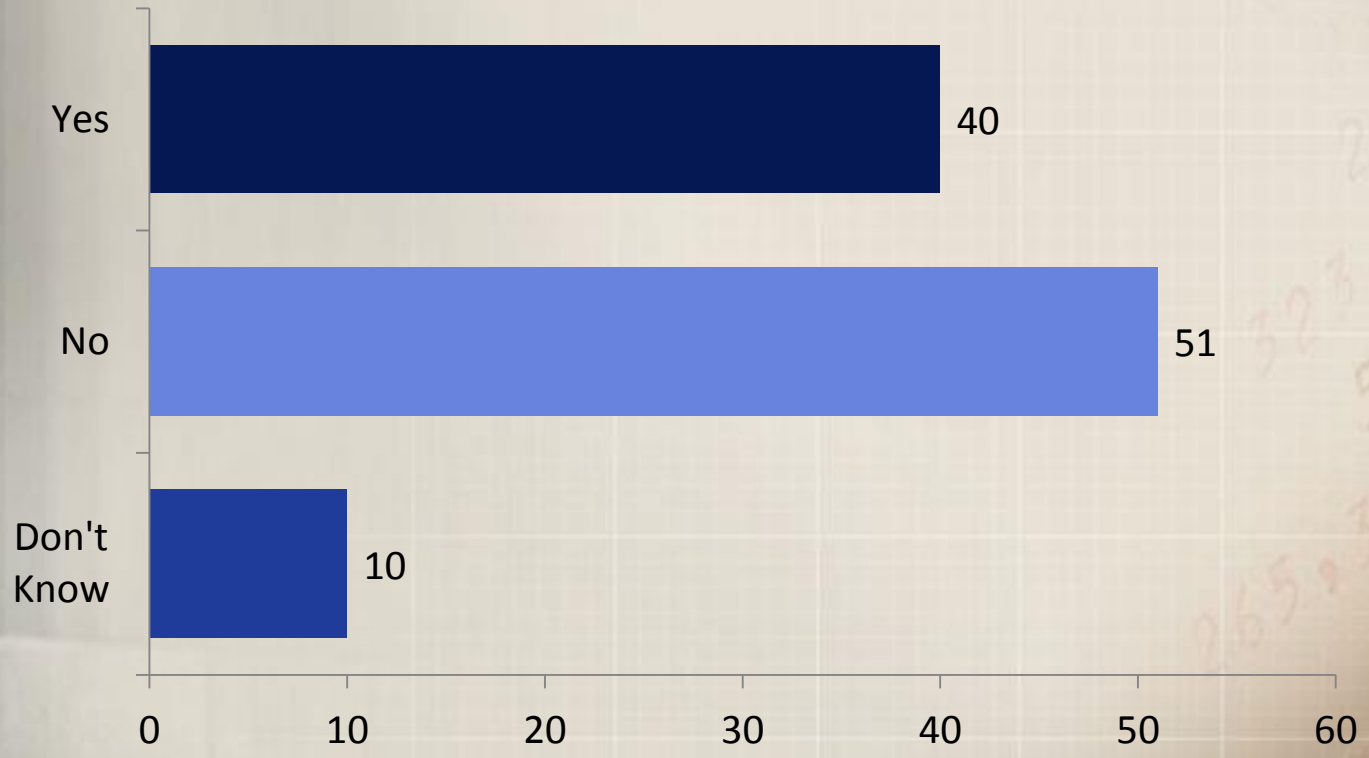
ELEMENTS OF STRONG STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCES	Progress in Implementing					
	EOU	OSU	PSU	SOU	UO	WOU
Student teaching at the center of teacher preparation						
Extended student teaching (beginning earlier, 1+ full year)	●	◒	●	●	●	●
Student teaching coordinated with academic coursework	◍	●	●	●	●	●
Partnerships between teaching colleges and placement schools						
Share decision making on selection of coaching teachers	○	◐	◐	◍	◍	◐
Work together creating professional development school, demo school/class	○	◐	◐	◐	○	◒
Training, time, and compensation						
Provide comprehensive training for coaching teacher	◍	◍	◍	◒	◍	◒
Provide comprehensive training for college staff	●	●	●	●	●	●
Provide incentives for coaching teachers	○	○	○	○	○	◍
Co-teaching and Grouping of placements						
Co-teaching - Student teacher and coaching teacher share teaching responsibilities	○	○	◒	◐	◐	◒
Grouping - Multiple student teachers placed in a single school	◐	◐	◒	◒	◐	◒

Based upon interviews of college deans and staff

Performance indicators can help inform school district decisions

- Indicators on how well graduates succeed in the workforce could provide insight into how effectively public teaching colleges prepare their graduates.

Do you believe that Oregon's public teaching colleges do a sufficient job in preparing teacher candidates for their teaching assignment?



Responses from about half the 197 school districts

- More specific information, as well as objective performance indicators, could help public teaching colleges better understand the perceived shortcomings of their graduates.
- However, performance indicators have limitations
  - indicators only point to areas that may need improvement
  - can be affected by factors that are outside the individual's or program's control.
  - pose risks when used to reward or penalize individuals or programs

- Only three of the six public teaching colleges regularly provide any information on their graduates after they enter the workforce.
- Other states track:
  - hiring and retention data,
  - surveys of teaching college graduates and their employers,
  - measures of student growth attributed to teaching college graduates, and
  - summarized results from teacher evaluations conducted by the graduates‘ principals.

Stronger licensing requirements could provide greater assurances of teacher preparedness

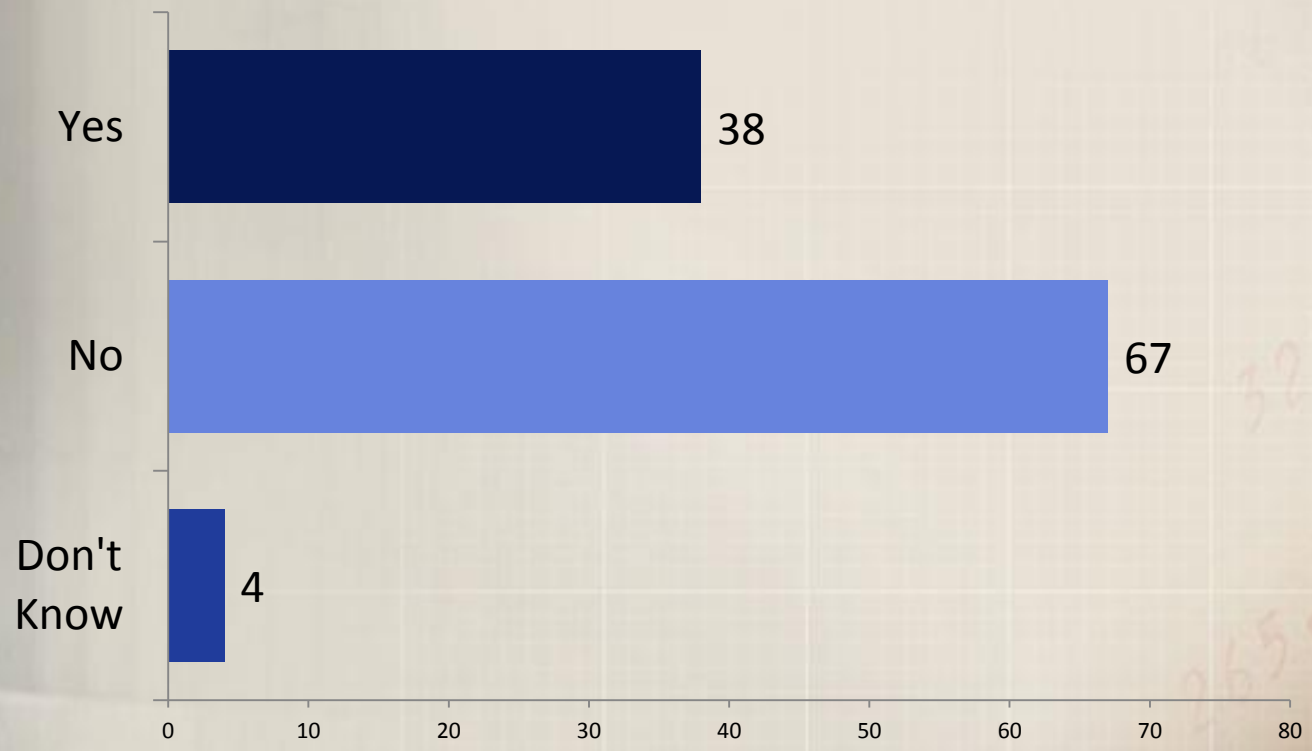
- Lack of an independent performance assessment
- Washington, Wisconsin, and New York are requiring candidates to pass the Teacher Preparation Assessment tool administered by a private contractor.

Further expand professional development and support for beginning teachers

- During their first three to five years, for professional growth and improved student achievement, teachers need:
  - high quality mentoring,
  - ongoing learning opportunities, and
  - standards-based teacher evaluations

Some Oregon school districts provide professional development and support to beginning teachers, others face challenges

Does your school district have written policies, plans or procedures that beginning teachers participate in a mentoring program?



Responses from about half the 197 school districts

- Current mentorship funding supports the participation of only some districts. For example, only 17 of 197 school districts participated in the Mentorship Program during the 2012-13 school year.
- The recent establishment of The Network of Quality Teaching and Learning provides some additional funding for the beginning teacher and administrator Mentorship Program.

Key recommendations:

- Develop standards and guidelines for professional development
- Address professional development funding for:
  - high quality mentoring for beginning teachers
  - identifying and offering needed professional development
  - providing professional development for school districts in remote areas

- Help school districts offer meaningful professional development aligned with Oregon’s Model Core Teaching Standards
- Help school districts create teacher evaluation systems
- Gather, analyze, and report on the effectiveness of graduates of Oregon’s public teaching colleges

- Teacher Standards and Practices Commission should consider:
  - requiring an independent performance assessment of teacher candidates’
  - adding a video component to the work sample requirements to observe teacher candidates’ classroom skills

More details in the audit

- www.sos.state.or.us/audits