



# **2003-2005 Teacher Training Pilot Program Grants:**

## **Final Report to the Legislature**

**January 2005**

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### **Background**

RCW 28B.80.620 authorized the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to administer a competitive grant program to *expand or create collaborative teacher training and recruitment programs through Washington public high schools, community colleges, and four-year institutions*. The 1999-2001, 2001-2003, and 2003-2005 state operating budgets each included a total of \$300,000 for competitive grants to support the teacher training pilot program.

In July 1999, the HECB adopted Resolution 99-27, which outlined the Request for Proposals (RFP) process to review and approve the grant proposals for these pilot projects. A review committee comprised of representatives from the HECB staff, the K-12 education system, the community and technical colleges, and the four-year institutions, reviewed and ranked proposals for the 2003-2005 biennium. In October 2003, the HECB adopted Resolution 03-33, which included the review committee's recommendations to fund four projects.

RCW 28B.80.620 stipulated that, "*Beginning on December 31, 2001, the higher education coordinating board shall submit an annual written report to the education and higher education committees of the legislature, the state board of education, and the office of the superintendent of public instruction on the status of the pilot project.*" In keeping with this stipulation, the HECB is providing this final report on the 2003-2005 Teacher Training Pilot Program. Reports of projects funded in 1999-2001 and 2001-2003 have been provided by the HECB to previous Legislatures.

## Program Outcomes and Funding Priorities

The 2003-2005 grants were required to address one or more of the following outcomes:

- Design of a college-level course for high school students interested in teaching careers.
- Design of lower-division courses that are thematically linked to the state's student learning goals and essential learning requirements.
- Design of upper-division course(s) in the interdisciplinary arts and science curriculum that are supportive of teaching areas appropriate for prospective teachers.
- Design of a pre-professional educational studies minor and interdisciplinary arts and science major that would be pursued simultaneously by prospective K-8 teachers.
- Design of community college level mentoring and service learning activities that would provide prospective teachers with an orientation to professional education.
- Design of a process that satisfies teacher certification requirements, including pedagogical coursework and school-based internships, for financially constrained working adults.

High priority was given to projects that met one or more of multiple criteria, including those that involved shared facilities, shared resources, and co-curricular planning; involved faculty from the interdisciplinary arts and sciences curriculum and professional education as well as K-12 teachers; had the potential to be a model for other institutions or programs; were partnerships among institutions; included plans to share results with other institutions; were new initiatives not currently underway in Washington; included one or more school-based future academies; were designed as distance education programs; and/or leveraged non-state funds to support a coordinated approach to teacher training.

## Project Reports

Lead Institution	Project Title	Grant Amount
Eastern Washington University	<i>Discover the Teacher Within</i>	\$94,500
Highline Community College	<i>Teacher Cohort Program</i>	\$74,334
Seattle Community College District	<i>Online/Fast Track Teaching Academy to AA Pre-teaching Degree Program Model</i>	\$58,235
Tacoma Community College	<i>Project Teaching/Learning Community</i>	\$72,931

## **Eastern Washington University**

The Eastern Washington University Department of Education, in collaboration with Spokane Public Schools and Spokane Falls Community College, established a teacher preparation pathway called *Discover the Teacher Within* for the 2003-2005 biennium. The project's major purpose was to encourage high school students to consider K-12 teaching as a career option. To that end, the project seeks to develop a seamless pathway of teacher preparation, starting in high school and continuing through a community college and on to professional certification at a baccalaureate university. The intent was to develop and model a seamless 2+2+2 pathway that could be implemented by other institutions.

Multiple recruitment tools to reach interested students, paraprofessionals and other professional educators were developed, including presentations at community meetings, a student conference, a digital video disk, an informational brochure, a television program, and a Web site ([www.dttw.net](http://www.dttw.net)). Curriculum to support this pathway was developed for prospective teachers as a portfolio-based college-level course called EDUCation 100, which provides an orientation to professional education. The high school equivalent is the Teaching Academy program.

To support the transfer of credits between the institutions, an articulation agreement from the Spokane Public Schools and Spokane Falls Community College was created and implemented for those students who participated in a Teaching Academy program. To further support this pathway, students enrolled in the teacher preparation program at EWU will receive credit for fulfilling their pre-certification requirements.

## **Lessons Learned**

- While partnerships between universities, colleges, and public schools can be challenging, they have been vital to the success of the EWU project. These partnerships have brought together shared human and technological resources and knowledge, acknowledging that it takes time and resources with the appropriate infrastructure to develop and support such partnerships. In addition, there must be people dedicated to making the partnership succeed. Along with this, partners must be willing to share curriculum, develop common goals and outcomes, think about teaching in a different way, and reinforce the partnership's message.
- This approach to teacher recruitment and preparation provided a holistic perspective that is much needed in the community, perhaps more so than originally identified. There has been positive response throughout the community and from the students themselves.
- Entrance into teacher programs because of competencies, rather than course credits, is bringing "value-added students" into teacher preparation programs. To do this, all three partners need to be involved in the conversations and agreements that support students' progress toward teacher certification. Competencies and alignment should continue to be encouraged between the institutions.
- The Teacher Training Pilot Program is an exceedingly worthwhile venture, and one that needs a commitment to continue once such a partnership is started. This type of collaboration is vital for students, the teaching profession and the institutions involved. A proprietary approach is no longer practical; the work on this grant proves that such partnerships are feasible, desirable and possible.

## **Highline Community College**

Highline Community College, in collaboration with Central Washington University-SeaTac and Federal Way Public Schools, established the *Teacher Cohort Project* for the 2003-2005 biennium. The major purposes of the program were to address the shortage of teachers as well as the lack of teacher diversity in K-12 education, while allowing students to obtain an affordable education within the overall state funding limitations. The program satisfies teacher certification entry requirements.

Twenty-four students enrolled during spring quarter in a hybrid course that combined online instruction with on-campus courses held on Saturdays. Fourteen of these students were teachers' aides currently working in the school system. The program also includes community college-level mentoring and service learning activities that provide prospective teachers with an orientation to professional education. To date, one example of student mentoring has occurred, bringing students together with faculty and advisors. This year, students are being placed in the classroom with mentoring by K-12 teachers.

The project also designed lower-division courses that are thematically linked to the state's student learning goals and essential learning requirements. All courses offered are linked thematically around education topics; for example, the summer 2004 curriculum combined Biology 100 with Speech 100/210 to create interdisciplinary lessons.

## **Lessons Learned**

- Hybrid courses successfully offer students the flexibility to coordinate their busy home, work, and school schedules while still allowing for face-to-face community-building efforts. However, the reduction in face-to-face time decreases the number of informal assessments that faculty can perform on student learning.
- Learning the online instruction technology has proved to be challenging, as has determining which portions of the curriculum best transfer to the online environment. Despite this, students have learned to use the online system effectively and continue to improve their technology skills as they progress through the curriculum.
- Adjustments to the original curriculum were required because students came with a wider range of needs than expected. Awareness of this diversity of knowledge will be helpful in future planning for the program. Faculty and advisors continue to work closely with students to ensure their continued success.
- Housing the program in the college's Extended Learning Office has been a challenge in terms of financial aid, tuition collection, and course coding, etc.

## **Seattle Central Community College**

Seattle Central Community College (SCCC), in collaboration with the University of Washington (UW), Western Washington University (WWU), and the Seattle Public Schools established the *Online/Fast Track Teaching Academy to AA Pre-teaching Degree Program Model* for the 2003-2005 biennium. The project's purpose was to create a model of a seamless, technology-based, high school-to-baccalaureate teaching degree program for adoption by school districts, community colleges, and four-year institutions of higher education.

The project has designed a college-level course for high school students interested in teaching careers. Students who take "Careers in Education" in a Seattle Public High School can receive 12 credits upon enrollment in SCCC's program. These same credits will transfer to the program at WWU. Sixty students who graduated from the Teaching Academy are currently being contacted and recruited for enrollment in the SCCC *Fast Track Program*.

The project has also designed lower-division courses thematically linked to the state's student learning goals and essential learning requirements. Three education courses that focus on critical education topics have been developed or revised. The courses are designed to be transferable to a four-year university; WWU has agreed to accept all three courses in its College of Education, while acceptance by the University of Washington is pending.

## **Lessons Learned**

- Strengthening our 2 + 2 articulation program with WWU by including the Seattle Public Schools in a 12-credit articulation agreement has strengthened institutional partnerships that are vital to student transfer and success in this pipeline project.
- We hope this program can serve as a model for the rest of the state, demonstrating that an articulation of 12 dual enrollment credits from high school to community college can be achieved successfully in a teacher training program.
- We have learned that conference collaborations among sponsored partners – Seattle Public Schools, SCCC, and WWU – are vital in order to help students make connections between the programs.
- Cohort enrollment in the SCCC online portion of the program is scheduled to begin this summer (2005). In creating this program, we learned that the complexity of articulation added time to the development process, and, as a result, we have not yet piloted this program. Before enrolling the first group of students, we need to properly advertise program details.

## **Tacoma Community College**

Tacoma Community College, in collaboration with The Evergreen State College, Tacoma Public Schools, Chandler-Gilbert Community College and Washington State Teachers Recruiting Teachers, established the *Project Teaching/Learning Community* project for the 2003-2005 biennium. The project's purpose was to improve teacher training by creating a learning environment that is personal, supportive, and focused on the unique needs of students in teacher preparation programs.

Over the past two years, the project has designed lower-division courses thematically linked to the state's student learning goals and essential learning requirements. The project has also designed community college level mentoring and service learning activities that provide prospective teachers with an orientation to professional education.

## **Lessons Learned**

- The three courses – Introduction to Education, Public Speaking, and Electric Portfolios – made an excellent trio for a coordinated studies program.
- Forty hours of field experience in the public schools was a rewarding and valuable addition to the courses.
- Planning and follow-up on field experience assignments takes a great deal of organizational and travel time.
- The extended class time and shared experiences in planning, seminars, classroom activities, and school rooms helped create strong friendships among both students and coordinated studies instructors.
- A class of this depth highly affects students' lives and helps them make serious decisions about their future.

## **Summary**

The four projects funded through Teacher Training Pilot Program grants in 2003-2005 have resulted in increased interest and access to teacher training programs in Washington state. All of the projects resulted in significantly increased collaboration through partnerships among four-year institutions, school districts, and community colleges. The projects used multiple strategies to enhance their programs to include school mentoring of students, innovative uses of technology, the development of new lower-division courses that articulate with teacher preparation programs, and enhanced outreach to recruit high school students to these programs. The projects have put into place strategies that will enable them to continue their efforts to expand access to teacher training programs through collaborative partnerships among four-year institutions, community colleges, and school districts.