

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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Commissioner of Education



MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 23, 2004

TO: College and University Deans and Directors of Teacher Preparation Programs
Community College Council of Academic Vice Presidents
District Directors of Staff Development
District Certification Contacts

FROM: John L. Winn, Commissioner

SUBJECT: Educator Preparation Institutes

The quality of the classroom teacher is the key element of student achievement, and Florida's need to prepare, recruit and retain high quality teachers in sufficient numbers to staff our classrooms becomes increasingly difficult each year. Projections show that our shortage will grow from serious to acute in the 2006-07 school year under the full implementation of the class size amendment, with approximately 30,000 vacant teaching positions to fill.

Senate Bill 2986 (2004) provided the authority for accredited or approved postsecondary institutions to establish Educator Preparation Institutes to offer high quality competency-based alternative teacher preparation, professional development, and training for substitute teachers and paraprofessionals. The alternative certification programs offered through these Institutes are an important element in the strategy to prepare high quality teachers and are a prime example of the vision for the current system of quality teacher preparation and certification in Florida: providing flexibility in the delivery system while focusing on high, demonstrable standards as the outcome for the participants.

The Department is pleased to provide the attached documents outlining the implementation of Educator Preparation Institutes in accordance with s. 1004.85, Florida Statutes. Participation is voluntary and there is no deadline for an institution to submit an application, as this opportunity

Memorandum
December 23, 2004

will be ongoing. Approval by the Department is required for each Institute and alternative certification program. The attached Application Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria explain the required approval process and provide information to assist with submission of an application. An Application Cover Sheet is attached that provides a list of individuals within the Department who may be contacted for assistance.

This is an exciting opportunity for all of our institutions, teachers and schools. Preparing the implementation of the Institutes has been a great opportunity for collaboration in our K-20 system. I am confident that we will continue to work together to bring high quality instruction and greater opportunity to all of Florida's educators and students.

JLW/kh

Attachments: Application Cover Sheet
Application Guidelines
Application Evaluation Criteria

cc: SUS Presidents
SUS Council of Academic Vice Presidents
Carolyn Roberts, Chair, Board of Governors