

LOOSE-LEAF VERSION

# FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

BECOMING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS IN CHALLENGING TIMES

James A. Johnson Diann Musial Gene E. Hall Donna M. Gollnick



 Pearson

Seventeenth Edition

 Pearson

# PREPARING TEACHERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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# FOUNDATIONS of AMERICAN EDUCATION

Becoming Effective Teachers in Challenging Times

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We dedicate this seventeenth edition to all educators who use interpretive, normative, organizational, and critical perspectives to wrestle with the demands of our rapidly changing society. There is no question that these four perspectives of *Foundations of American Education* are crucial components for making reasonable decisions in light of so many uncertainties. Without the thoughtful involvement of educators who struggle to open spaces for reflection and diverse voices, closed mindedness and violence will run rampant. As never before, the forthcoming generation of effective and reflective teachers will foster understanding our differences and facilitate continuing development of a peaceful and pluralistic societal fabric.

*James A. Johnson, Diann Musial, Gene E. Hall, and Donna M. Gollnick*

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# PREFACE

The seventeenth edition of *Foundations of American Education* again provides updated, comprehensive coverage of the fast-paced world of information and underlying constructs that influence today's schools. In addition to being very current and thoughtful, this text, more than others in the market, clarifies and responds to the challenges that teachers are confronting head on and provides the foundational tools that will make the difference in their future success as teachers. Examination of critical topics related to the current social, political, and economic climate gives teachers a well-grounded perspective and realistic approach to their developing teaching career. This emphasis on current practice is informed by serious, reflective philosophical and historical principles. This mixture of reflection on principles in the midst of pressures to change and remain current makes this edition especially significant.

The new edition pays close attention to recent trends and issues in schools as well as the emergence of Common Core State Standards, Response to Intervention (RTI), recent changes in education laws, the rapid expansion of social media, the continuing emphasis on assessment, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) among others. This edition offers multiple opportunities for students and educators to make sense of the rapid changes in the world, to determine a reflective response to the present, and to adjust responses and practices as new changes emerge.

The subtitle of this text, *Becoming Effective Teachers in Challenging Times*, emphasizes that today's educators must confront the reality of educational challenges including increasing budget restraints, overcrowded classrooms, and students coming from families who are grappling with economic hardship. These challenges have always existed; however, over the last decade, they have escalated. As a result, teachers must consider, reflect, and respond to divergent approaches to working with diverse classrooms with different types of learners. Teachers must pull ideas drawn from different disciplines of study, different points of view, different experiences, different contexts, and different voices. This text helps student educators analyze these divergent perspectives through academic disciplines that include history, philosophy, politics, sociology, and the law. Students must recognize their impact as teachers on important issues such as diversity, reform, and their personal educational philosophy. Students need to understand these foundational concepts in the beginning of their learning so they can apply them to each step of their continuing development as professional educators.

## NEW TO THIS EDITION!



As with every revision of this text, the content and references from the previous edition were carefully edited and updated. Beyond that, however, the seventeenth edition has gone through even more extensive revisions that include coverage of:

- The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- Recent technological advancements
- Social media in education
- The impact of immigration on schools
- The effect of economic stress on children and youth
- Current teacher employment information
- Teacher certification requirements

## WELCOME TO THE SEVENTEENTH EDITION!

This seventeenth edition of *Foundations of American Education* has been updated to acknowledge the fast-paced world of information that influences today's students and schools and the other challenges that teachers face daily. A teacher's identity emerges and evolves in response to these challenges. This edition offers multiple opportunities for student educators to make sense of the changes in the world, to determine a reflective response to the present, and to adjust responses as new changes emerge. It continues to prepare teachers for tomorrow's classrooms, today's diverse student population, and the emerging trends in education today.

## FOCUS ON PREPARING TEACHERS FOR TOMORROW'S CLASSROOMS

This seventeenth edition focuses on the importance of becoming an effective teacher in challenging times. Education constantly changes, and teachers need to continue learning through professional development and the use of educational research to improve their teaching in tomorrow's classrooms. With many new references and a focus on the emerging trends that are impacting our schools, such as the emergence of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Common Core Standards, the use of evidence-based practices, and social and global networking, this text invites students to embrace new methods of instruction. Explore this content that helps prepare teachers to succeed in tomorrow's classrooms:

- **Learning Outcomes:** The major sections in each chapter are aligned with measurable learning outcomes that are, in turn, aligned with InTASC standards, which have guided the development of state and national standards for the preparation of teachers.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Summarize the views and perspectives held by teachers, policy makers, and the general public that affect today's teachers. (InTASC Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration)
2. Discuss the skills and dispositions needed to pursue teaching as a profession. (InTASC Standards 9 and 10: Professional Responsibility)
3. List and define the requirements, agencies, and systems in place to assure quality teaching. (InTASC Standards 1-10)
4. Articulate the purpose, importance, and opportunities to use reflection to improve teaching performance. (InTASC Standard 1-10)
5. Identify strategies specific to beginning and developing a teaching career. (InTASC Standards 1-10)
6. Outline current and likely future challenges to becoming a great teacher. (InTASC Standards 1-10)

- **Journal for Reflection:** Found in every chapter, these activities give students the opportunity to pause and reflect on chapter content and how it relates to their own experiences in the classroom.

### JOURNAL FOR REFLECTION 1.1

Record your thoughts at this stage of your professional development about:

1. The teaching profession
2. Its strengths and weaknesses
3. Your interest in teaching as a career
4. Your excitement and doubts about working in the profession

- **Teaching in Challenging Times:** Students are presented with a professional dilemma they could face and are then asked to answer "What are my challenges?" allowing them to reflect on their responses to the dilemma or discuss them in small groups or with the entire class.

### TEACHING IN CHALLENGING TIMES

#### Standardized Tests

Testing is pervasive in our educational system today. Many school districts and states require students to pass tests to move from one grade to another grade. They must pass tests to graduate from high school and to enter most colleges and universities. Teacher candidates, like you, are required to pass standardized tests to be licensed to teach.

Not only are students and teacher candidates tested regularly and often, but also their schools and universities are held accountable for their performance on these tests. The aggregated results are published in newspapers and on websites. Schools and colleges are ranked within a state. Some are classified as low performing and lose part of their public funding. In some schools, teachers' and principals' jobs depend on how well their students perform on these standardized tests.

The standardized tests that are being used in elementary and secondary education are supposed to test for evidence that students are meeting state standards. For the most part, they are paper-and-pencil tests of knowledge in a subject area. Although the state standards are advertised as being developed by teachers and experts, many educators

argue that many of the standards expect knowledge and skills that are developmentally inappropriate at some grade levels. In areas such as social studies, recall of specific facts that cover spans of hundreds of years is not an uncommon requirement.

It probably comes as no surprise that some teachers are teaching to the test and even taking weeks out of the curriculum to coach students for the test. Some people believe that this constitutes a form of cheating. And due to pressure to do well on tests, some students find ways to cheat in an attempt to obtain higher scores.

#### WHAT ARE MY CHALLENGES?

1. What are your perspectives on standardized tests at this point in your professional development?
2. What are some things that teachers can do to deal with the problems of standardized tests?
3. What are some of the factors that probably cause students to cheat, and what are some things that a teacher could do to reduce cheating?

## PREFACE

### SCHOOL-BASED OBSERVATIONS

1. Begin a list of the teaching challenges that you observe in schools. Reflect on the challenges that you had not expected when you initially thought about teaching as a career and how those challenges may influence your decision to become a teacher. How much have the teaching challenges you have observed met your initial expectations?
2. Ask several teachers what their major challenges and satisfactions are as educators. Analyze their answers and think about the major challenges and satisfactions you may experience as an educator.

### PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT


1. Find and organize the many materials, artifacts, and records that you currently have. Examples may include term papers, transcripts, awards, letters of recognition, and observation journals. Organize these materials into logical categories. At various points in the future, you will be drawing items out of the folio to develop a portfolio for completion of student teaching or to apply for a teaching position or national certification.

- **School-Based Observation Activities:** This end-of-chapter activity invites students to apply chapter content through focused observations. Students have a chance to connect to the schools and classrooms in which they will teach.

- **Portfolio Development Activities:** Students are encouraged to create artifacts for their teaching portfolio.

# FOCUS ON PREPARING TEACHERS FOR DIVERSE CLASSROOMS

This seventeenth edition introduces readers to diversity in every chapter with an integrated discussion of today’s diverse classrooms. Students are introduced to the social and educational issues faced by a diverse nation and are given opportunities to think critically and reflect on these issues. In addition, Chapter 7 is a separate chapter that will help prepare teachers for diverse classrooms.



7

Diversity in Society and Schools

DIVERSITY IN SOCIETY AND SCHOOLS 107

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to

1. Design ways for incorporating race and ethnicity in your classroom so that students see their cultures in the curriculum and in your instruction. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 7: Planning for Instruction)
2. Identify the intersection of socioeconomic status and schooling and strategies for providing educational equity across economic groups. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 7: Planning for Instruction)
3. Contrast different instructional strategies for assisting English-language learners in learning English and the academic content that will help them achieve at levels necessary to improve their academic achievement. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 7: Planning for Instruction)
4. Analyze differences based on sex and gender that influence how girls and boys are treated and perform in schools. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 7: Planning for Instruction)
5. Discuss strategies for supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students who are often harassed and bullied by other students in school. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 3: Learning Environments)
6. Articulate the need for providing appropriate accommodations in the classroom for students with disabilities. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 7: Planning for Instruction)
7. Characterize accurately the ways religion and religious beliefs can be addressed in schools. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 3: Learning Environments)
8. Develop strategies for creating a classroom that values the diversity of the student population and promotes high academic performance. (InTASC 2: Learning Differences and InTASC 7: Planning for Instruction)

EDUCATION

DIVERSITY CHALLENGES MANY AREA TEACHERS

OKLAHOMA TRIBUNE

(By) on July 3, 2015

The Edmond-Center Schools student population includes 174 students whose first language was one other than English. The majority of all English-language learners, 111, speak Spanish, but others speak Mandarin, Arabic, Punjabi, Romanian, Persian, Tagalog, Russian, Urdu and a host of others.

Faced with the plight of first languages, the Edmond area is not having the same kind of growth in English-language learners that other parts of the state are seeing, according to 2013 census data. Across the state of Indiana, the number of all students enrolled over the last decade is nearly 30,000. That's a fraction of the

- **Perspectives on Diversity:** Located in every chapter, these features allow students to read about real class situations that occur in diverse classrooms.

PERSPECTIVES on DIVERSITY

Teaching about Thanks giving

It's November—the time of the school year that many elementary teachers teach about American Indians and Thanksgiving, even though the traditional story does not match reality. Mrs. Starkes was no different. She was setting up her PowerPoint presentation to introduce the unit to her fourth graders in rural Texas.

"Are we going to talk about Indians today?" Joe asked excitedly.

"Yes," Mrs. Starkes replied.

"I am so excited," the petite blond girl in the first row squealed.

"My great, great grandmother was Cherokee."

Mrs. Starkes was always surprised at how many of her students claimed to have American Indian ancestors, especially in November. She was determined to break the stereotypes that her students had of American Indians. She knew that some of the other teachers were teaching the Thanksgiving story with toothpick tipis, feathered headdresses, and paper-bag Indian vests. She wanted to break the DisneyWorld view of American Indian princesses who saved early European settlers.

How could she break the myth that the Pilgrims provided a great feast for their American Indian neighbors to celebrate the harvest? It's the same story that the parents of most of her

students learned when they were in school. The truth was difficult and depressing. Do her students have any idea that the Cherokees were driven from their homes in the Southeast and forced to walk the "Trail of Tears," which killed one in four of them, to their new government homes in Oklahoma?

"Do you know where Indians live today?" she began the lesson.

"In tipis," a number of students shouted. "In a longhouse," another student offered.

**WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE?**

1. How would you respond to the stereotypes the students have about American Indians, and how would you help them develop a better understanding of the real history and current experiences of American Indians?
2. What is appropriate to teach fourth graders about the history of Thanksgiving?
3. Why do many myths and untruths about ethnic groups persist in our classrooms?

# FOCUS ON CURRENT ISSUES IN EDUCATION TODAY

This seventeenth edition includes an integrated discussion of trends and current hot topics in education today.

## EDUCATION in the NEWS

### UK PARENTS WORRY SOCIAL MEDIA HINDERS KIDS' MORAL DEVELOPMENT

BY TRACI PEDERSEN

More than half of parents in the U.K. believe that popular social media sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, are hindering their children's moral development, according to a poll commissioned by researchers at the University of Birmingham.

The survey points to widespread parental anxieties regarding the influence of online networks on children as young as 11, who are often using the sites despite age limits.

The findings show that only 15 percent of parents think that popular social media sites offer a positive influence on young people's character. In contrast, 40 percent of parents said they were "concerned" or "extremely concerned" about the negative and potentially harmful impact of social media.

The U.K.-wide poll questioned over 1,700 parents of children aged 11 to 17. Researchers carried out this poll to investigate parents' perceptions around the influence of social media on children's character.

"There are some surprising findings in the poll, not the least the low level of agreement that social media can enhance or support a young person's character or moral development," said Dr. Blaire Morgan at the University of Birmingham.

Respondents pointed out a number of character strengths that they believed were lacking on social media: 24 percent said

forgiveness and self-control was least present, followed by honesty (21 percent), fairness (20 percent), and humility (18 percent).

However, a bleaker picture emerged when parents were asked to name the negative character traits, or vices, they saw on social media at least once a month: 60 percent of parents named anger and hostility as the most negative trait displayed, followed by arrogance (51 percent); ignorance (43 percent); bad judgment (41 percent); and hatred (36 percent).

Vanity, commonly perceived to be a major negative character trait in the "selfie" generation, came further down at ninth place in the league table of social media vices, comprising of 30 percent of respondents.

"Social media is not going away, so by learning more about this relationship we should be able to maximise the benefits of its use and avoid the pitfalls," said Morgan.

Although the negative aspects of social media got the most attention, the poll findings suggest some cause for optimism: 72 percent of responding parents said they saw content with a positive moral message at least once a day. (Of all responding parents, 93 percent said they were regular social media users.)

This figure is higher than the percentage of respondents who said they regularly saw negative moral messages, suggesting social media is not purely an environment for moral misconduct.

- Education in the News:** Every chapter begins with a news article (or a summary of a news article) from publications such as *NEA Today*, *Education Week*, and newspapers from across the country. The articles focus on educational issues and invite students to reflect on topics such as standardized testing, diverse classrooms, students and families, and financing schools.

## DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES

### SHOULD PARENTS HAVE A SAY IN PICKING THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER?

Yet another challenge for schools and for some teachers is the situation wherein a parent requests that her or his child be assigned to a certain teacher's class. The dilemma is debated by two contemporary teachers in the following article.

#### YES

**Clyde Hodge** teaches eighth-grade English in Stockton, California; is a chair of the SUSD Title VII/Johnson O'Malley Indian Education parent/student advisory committee; and is a member of both NEA's and CTA's American Indian/Alaska Native Caucuses (at the time this article was published.)

"I believe there are times when parents should have the right to request certain teachers under certain circumstances. I teach at a school district where the American Indian student population is approximately 8 percent, yet American Indian teachers represent only about 1 percent. I feel that American Indian students have a right to choose to attend the classes of American Indian teachers. If not, a large number of these students won't have an opportunity to be taught by demographically representative educational role models. Such modeling has proved to raise both academic testing outcomes and grades, as well as improving student quality of life.

While I believe that students should have the opportunity to achieve educational and intellectual multiculturalism, and that students need to interact with teachers of all demographic backgrounds, I believe parents should be able to request that their children have at least one teacher who represents their cultural or ethnic background. One of the best practices in teaching American Indian students is using native language and culture to promote success, which is often best achieved when at least one teacher shares the student's background."

#### NO

**Daniel Fonder** teaches fifth grade at Hillside Intermediate School in Bridgewater, New Jersey (at the time this article was published.)

"It's natural for parents to want to have input into who educates their child. Children are a parent's most prized possession, and every parent wants what's best for their child. That basic and understandable parental instinct is precisely the reason why parents should not have a say in who will be their child's teacher.

Teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and other educators see the larger pictures. These professionals don't see what is best for one student without also seeing how it would impact the rest of the school community. Teachers who know the students and have experience creating successful classes in the previous years' work very hard to make sure each student in the school is in an optimal learning environment.

To ensure the decisions being made in a school are made to benefit all students, there cannot be special interest voices for a particular student or group of students. Placing a student in the requested teacher's class in some cases, but not in others, leaves a school open to criticism by disenfranchised parents. Parental involvement should begin when the family receives notification of the student's teacher for the year—not before."

#### WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THIS ISSUE?

Source: Differing Perspectives: Should Parents Have a Say in Picking their Child's Teacher? from *NEA Today*. Copyright © 2007 by National Education Association. Used by permission of National Education Association.

- Differing Perspectives:** Students read about the opposing sides of an educational issue and are directed to determine their stance on these important topics.

- **Web Solutions:** These features at the end of each chapter direct students to the Internet for additional resources relevant to the hot topics in the chapter.

## WEB SOLUTIONS

You will eventually need to understand the teacher certification requirements for the state(s) in which you may wish to teach. It is never too early to begin that process; therefore, we highly recommend that you now decide in which state(s) you may end up teaching, find the websites for their teacher certification offices, and search out the current requirement for a teaching credential in your field. The following websites may also be useful:

**National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.**

Information on licensure requirements and state agencies that are responsible for teacher licensing are available on this organization's website.

**NCATE/TEAC.** A list of institutions with teacher education accredited and information about becoming a teacher are available on this website. It also includes links to state agencies and their licensure requirements.

**Educators Rising.** Formerly known as the Future Educators Association, this site contains a wealth of material useful to future educators. You should check it out.

## INSTRUCTOR SUPPLEMENTS!

The following resources on [www.pearsonhighered.com/educators](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/educators) are available for instructors to download. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select the seventeenth edition of the book, and then click on the “Resources” tab to log in and download instructor resources.

- The **Instructor’s Resource Manual** (0-13-448071-6) provides concrete, chapter-by-chapter instructional and media resources.
- **PowerPoint Slides** (0-13-448067-8) are available to download for each chapter. Presentations include key concept summaries and other aids to help students understand, organize, and remember core concepts and ideas.
- The **Test Bank** (0-13-448070-8) includes multiple-choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions, as well as case studies and alternative assessments. The test bank contains page references and answer feedback.
- **Pearson TestGen** (0-13-448068-6) TestGen is a powerful test generator program containing the same items included in the Test Bank. Instructors install TestGen on a PC or Macintosh and create tests for classroom testing and for other specialized delivery options. Assessments may be created for both print and online testing.

Tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

TestGen Testbank file – PC

TestGen Testbank file – MAC

TestGen Testbank – Blackboard 9 TIF

TestGen Testbank – Blackboard CE/Vista (WebCT) TIF

Angel Test Bank (zip)

D2L Test Bank (zip)

Moodle Test Bank

Sakai Test Bank (zip)

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Finally, we thank our families and friends for supporting us throughout the revision process and appreciate the comments and recommendations from the faculty and students who have used previous editions of this book. Their suggestions have led to a number of changes in the current edition. We encourage all our readers to provide feedback for improving future editions.



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# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**JAMES A. JOHNSON**, professor of education at Northern Illinois University, has been an educator for more than thirty-five years, serving as a public school teacher, teacher educator, university administrator, researcher, national/international consultant and speaker, and strong education advocate. He is a life member of, and active participant in, many professional associations, has been the lead author of all editions of this *Foundations of American Education* textbook, as well as the author or coauthor of more than a dozen other college textbooks and scores of professional articles in various professional journals.

**DIANN MUSIAL** is professor emerita in the Foundations of Education and Northern Illinois University Distinguished Teaching professor. Currently, she is field coordinator for educational internships with Great Basin College and a member of Research and Doctoral Processes with Capella University. Diann has taught middle school science and mathematics in Chicago, Illinois, served as principal of an Individually Guided Education elementary school, and worked in industry as director of training. She has directed more than twenty state and federally funded staff development grants, developed countless performance assessments and test item banks, coauthored *Integrating Science with Mathematics and Literacy: New Visions for Learning and Assessment* and *Foundations for Meaningful Educational Assessment*.

**GENE E. HALL**, professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, began his academic career as a teacher education program faculty team member at the national R&D Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas at Austin. The faculty team was charged with developing an experimental teacher education program, the Personalized Teacher Education Program. Following more than a decade at UTA, he became a faculty member at the University of Florida, then the University of Northern Colorado, and currently the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He has twice served as the dean of a college of education. His research has always centered on studies of the change process in schools and business settings. He is the lead architect of the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM), which is one of the major perspectives for understanding, facilitating, and evaluating change initiatives. He also has a continuing role in teacher education.

**DONNA M. GOLLNICK** is the Chief Academic Officer at TEACH-NOW, an online post-baccalaureate program for the preparation of teachers. She previously managed accreditation at the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and was a member of the administrative team that created its successor, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Donna is the coauthor with Philip Chinn of the textbook, *Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society* (Pearson, tenth edition, 2017). She is also a coauthor of *Introduction to Teaching: Making a Difference in Student Learning*. Donna is a past president of the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) and has received Distinguished Alumni Awards from Purdue University and the University of Southern California. She was also honored by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) as an “Advocate for Justice.”

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# FOUNDATIONS of AMERICAN EDUCATION

Becoming Effective Teachers in Challenging Times



Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock

# 1

## Teaching in a Challenging World

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading and studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Summarize the views and perspectives held by teachers, policy makers, and the general public that affect today's teachers. (InTASC Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration)
2. Discuss the skills and dispositions needed to pursue teaching as a profession. (InTASC Standards 9 and 10: Professional Responsibility)
3. List and define the requirements, agencies, and systems in place to assure quality teaching. (InTASC Standards 1-10)
4. Articulate the purpose, importance, and opportunities to use reflection to improve teaching performance. (InTASC Standard 1-10)
5. Identify strategies specific to beginning and developing a teaching career. (InTASC Standards 1-10)
6. Outline current and likely future challenges to becoming a great teacher. (InTASC Standards 1-10)

## EDUCATION in the NEWS

### HEROES EVERY ONE

BY REG WEAVER  
*NEA Past President*

We read about them every month in the pages of this magazine. We rub shoulders with them in our schools. We team up with them to make our communities better places.

Heroes.

The single mom who, after working hard all day as a high school custodian, trudges off to the local elementary school to meet with her child's teacher, instead of staying home and putting her feet up.

The retired music teacher who spends his mornings using music to teach language to preschool children with special needs. His students often learn to sing first and then to speak.

The middle school math teacher who stays late four days a week to tutor students in geometry and algebra so someday they will be able to attend college.

The cafeteria worker who, while dishing out the food she's cooked, keeps a vigilant eye on her diabetic students so they don't eat too much sugar and starch.

The elementary school teacher who goes to school at nights to learn Spanish so she can communicate with her students' parents.

The special education assistant who helps the special education teacher with children with the most severe disabilities—changing their diapers when they need changing.

The science teacher whose enthusiasm and preparation makes the subject come alive in her students' minds, lighting a fire that will glow for a lifetime.

The high school teacher who starts a chess club as an outlet for his most restless, high energy students—and then hauls them off to every chess tournament in the state.



The school bus driver who every year organizes a skiing weekend for inner city kids who otherwise would never get to ski or play in the snow.

The community college instructor who teaches English as a second language to immigrants at four different campuses and spends so much time in her car that her colleagues have dubbed her "the road scholar."

Heroes every one.

It is easy to take these folks for granted, though, because they don't toot their own horn. They're everyday people, not celebrities. I like to call them "unsung heroes." In fact, they don't think of themselves as heroes at all, and when someone like me sings their praises, it kind of embarrasses them. But that doesn't stop me.

Our unsung heroes are the exception to the rule that when all is said and done, more is said than done. Their actions speak louder than words. And in a society that rewards getting rather than giving, they give of themselves for the good of others, and then they give some more.

Yes, it is easy to take our unsung heroes for granted, but we must not. For they are the heart and soul of our Association. These are the folks who, when you come to them with a problem, always say: "What are we going to do about it?" They think in terms of possibilities rather than impossibilities, solutions rather than setbacks, and dos rather than don'ts.

Of course I am aware that a hero is often defined as somebody who does something dangerous to help somebody else. The firefighter

who rushes into a burning building to save a child is definitely a hero. For me, however, the burn unit nurse who tenderly and skillfully cares for that firefighter's wounds through his long and agonizing recovery also qualifies as a hero. And so, too, do the many public school and college employees and retired and student educators I have had the privilege of meeting and knowing as president of NEA.

As educators and Association members, we are in the hope business, and these unsung heroes of ours, above all else, give us hope even during the times when hope seems ready to freeze over.

Unsung heroes of NEA, I am your number one fan!

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. What is your perspective on the ideas about heroes suggested in this news item? Why?
2. What heroes would you add to those mentioned? Why?
3. What are some of the heroes that parents might have? Students? The general public?
4. What educational heroes would you expect to find mentioned in this chapter dealing with the education profession? Why?

Source: Heroes Everyone from *NEA Today* by Reg Weaver. Copyright © 2005 by National Education Association. Used by permission of National Education Association.

**W**e live in a very challenging and rapidly changing world in which there are many differing perspectives on education. These realities will greatly affect your work as an educator, and are therefore developed in various ways and used as themes throughout this book. Each chapter approaches these topics by sharing pertinent information and posing thought-provoking questions regarding the challenges educators face, the countless perspectives on education, and our constantly changing world. Our goal in this book is to help you learn more about these important realities, to enable you to make informed progress toward developing your own professional perspectives on education, to better understand our changing world, and to develop effective ways to meet the challenges you will face as an educator.

We also hope to remind you throughout this book that the major job of all educators is to help students learn. In fact, teachers, school support personnel, school administrators, school boards, educational policy makers, and all others involved in educational endeavors ultimately exist only to help students learn.

Finally, at the very beginning of this book, we want to congratulate you for enrolling in this course and for considering a career as an educator. As you work your way through this course, through this book, and through the rest of your teacher preparation program, you will find that contemporary educators face many challenges. However, when you are thinking about, and maybe even worrying about, the many challenges you will face as an educator, we want you to know and remember that successful educators generally feel that their careers are rewarding, dynamic, exciting, important, essential, personally fulfilling, very worthwhile, and yes, sometimes frustrating, but rarely dull or boring. So if you become tired or a bit discouraged, we sincerely hope you will not give up, but rather "hang in there." Good luck!

## TODAY'S TEACHERS

Teaching is a profession that generally attracts the best and brightest college students into its ranks. Today's new teachers must meet rigorous national and state standards that did not exist long ago for entering the profession. Requirements for entering teacher education programs in colleges and

universities are now more stringent than admission requirements for most other professions. Grade point averages of 3.0 and higher are common requirements for admission; tests and other assessments must be passed before admission, at the completion of a program, and for state licensure. Clearly, not everyone can teach—only the best and the brightest.

Teacher candidates today are diverse in age and work experience. Some of you are eighteen to twenty-two years old, the traditional age of college students, but others of you are nontraditional students who are older and have worked for a number of years in other jobs or professions. Some of you might have worked as teachers' aides in classrooms. Others may be switching careers from, for instance, the armed forces, engineering, retail management, or public relations. Some of you may even be enrolled in nontraditional teacher preparation programs.

Whatever your particular background, we want to welcome you to this exciting profession in which new teachers represent such wonderfully diverse work experiences as well as varying educational, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

## The Importance of Teachers to Society

Society has great expectations for its teachers. In addition to guiding students' academic achievement, teachers have some responsibility for students' social and physical development. They are expected to prepare an educated citizenry that is informed about the many issues critical to maintaining a democracy and to improving our world. They help students learn to work together, and they try to instill the values that are critical to a just and caring society. Teachers are also asked to prepare children and youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to work in the **information age**; information and its management are critical to education and society. Educators play a large and important role in this *information age*.

Given these challenging and rapidly changing responsibilities, teaching is one of the most important careers in all societies, especially in a democratic society. Although critics of our education system sometimes give the impression that there is a lack of public support for schools and teachers, most people believe that teachers play a very important critical role in our society.

This public trust should be encouraging and perhaps a bit frightening to you as a future educator—encouraging because you will be entering a highly regarded and trusted professional group and frightening because you will be responsible for helping to uphold this public trust.

## The Public View of Teachers and Schools

Teachers and parents agree that the quality of the teaching staff is of primary importance in selecting a school for their children. Parents, guardians, and families generally know who the most effective teachers are in a school and will do everything possible to ensure that their children are in those teachers' classes. At the same time, they know the teachers who are not as effective, and they steer their children into other classes if possible. They know the value of an effective teacher to the potential academic success of their children.

The extent to which parents should even have a say in picking their child's teachers is debated by two educators in the accompanying "Differing Perspectives" feature.

Each year, for nearly fifty years, an extensive national poll of the "Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools" has been conducted in the United States. This poll is published annually by *Phi Delta Kappa* (PDK), a highly respected professional organization for all types of educators. Among other things, this recent 46th annual poll\* asked people to assign a letter grade to the public schools. About one-half of them assigned grades of A or B to the public schools in general. (Actually, 12% assigned an A and 38% assigned a B.) But interestingly, these same people assigned a considerably higher grade to the schools their own children attended.

Why do you think parents might tend to rate their own children's schools higher than public schools in general? I wonder if it is because maybe, unfortunately, the new media often tends to report education in a negative light; for instance, often reporting the more sensational things such as law suits, crime, drugs, bullying, shootings, etc. And maybe, on the other hand, parents might tend to see the good things first hand at their own child's school. Interesting to ponder, huh? What grade(s) would you give the schools that you attended?

### Information age

The current age in which information and its management are critical to education and societal advancement.

\*The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual PDK/Gallup Poll, Phi Delta Kappan, Sept., 2014, p. 17.

## DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES

### SHOULD PARENTS HAVE A SAY IN PICKING THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER?

Yet another challenge for schools and for some teachers is the situation wherein a parent requests that her or his child be assigned to a certain teacher's class. The dilemma is debated by two contemporary teachers in the following article.

#### YES

**Clyde Hodge** teaches eighth-grade English in Stockton, California; is a chair of the SUSD Title VII/Johnson O'Malley Indian Education parent/student advisory committee; and is a member of both NEA's and CTA's American Indian/Alaska Native Caucuses (at the time this article was published.)

"I believe there are times when parents should have the right to request certain teachers under certain circumstances. I teach at a school district where the American Indian student population is approximately 8 percent, yet American Indian teachers represent only about 1 percent. I feel that American Indian students have a right to choose to attend the classes of American Indian teachers. If not, a large number of these students won't have an opportunity to be taught by demographically representative educational role models. Such modeling has proved to raise both academic testing outcomes and grades, as well as improving student quality of life.

While I believe that students should have the opportunity to achieve educational and intellectual multiculturalism, and that students need to interact with teachers of all demographic backgrounds, I believe parents should be able to request that their children have at least one teacher who represents their cultural or ethnic background. One of the best practices in teaching American Indian students is using native language and culture to promote success, which is often best achieved when at least one teacher shares the student's background."

#### NO

**Daniel Fonder** teaches fifth grade at Hillside Intermediate School in Bridgewater, New Jersey (at the time this article was published.)

"It's natural for parents to want to have input into who educates their child. Children are a parent's most prized possession, and every parent wants what's best for their child. That basic and understandable parental instinct is precisely the reason why parents should not have a say in who will be their child's teacher.

Teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and other educators see the larger pictures. These professionals don't see what is best for one student without also seeing how it would impact the rest of the school community. Teachers who know the students and have experience creating successful classes in the previous years' work very hard to make sure each student in the school is in an optimal learning environment.

To ensure the decisions being made in a school are made to benefit all students, there cannot be special interest voices for a particular student or group of students. Placing a student in the requested teacher's class in some cases, but not in others, leaves a school open to criticism by disenfranchised parents. Parental involvement should begin when the family receives notification of the student's teacher for the year—not before."

#### WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THIS ISSUE?

Source: Differing Perspectives: Should Parents Have a Say in Picking their Child's Teacher? from *NEA Today*. Copyright © 2007 by National Education Association. Used by permission of National Education Association.

At any rate, in spite of the occasional bad press, these PDK surveys, as well as other indicators, show that our schools and our teachers are generally well regarded by the public; which should be encouraging to those of you who are contemplating an education career.

These same annual PDK surveys also ask people what they consider to be our schools biggest problems. What would you guess parents picked, in the 46th annual poll, as the biggest school problem in recent years? If you guessed something like the lack of financial support, you would be a very good guesser. Some of the other less cited problems parents picked included things that you might expect, like student drug use, lack of discipline, gangs, need for more good teachers, etc.

Do any of these school problems selected by the public surprise you, or are they what you might have expected? Do you agree with these parents? What other school problems might you add to the list?

Incidentally, we highly recommend that you take some time to check out the PDK web site. As already indicated, PDK is a very highly regarded professional organization for all kinds of educators. PDK publishes a wide variety of materials for educators, including an excellent monthly journal entitled the *Phi Delta Kappan*. PDK also conducts a variety of professional meeting for educators. See if they have a low cost teacher education student membership option, which you should seriously consider. Keep an eye out for their annual polls, which are very informative for present and future educators. PDK will have much to offer you as an educator.

And while on the topic of parents, let's briefly consider the important relationships between teachers and their students' parents. If this topic does not seem very important to you at this point, we can assure that it will become very, very important to you when you become a teacher.

It is not very easy, perhaps even impossible, to generalize about either teachers or parents, because they are all very different individuals. Some people are optimistic while some are a bit pessimistic, some smile and some don't, some are energetic and some not so, some talkative while some more quiet, some cooperative and some not so, some more demanding than others, and so on and so on. And while teachers and parents are very different, fortunately they share a common interest in the welfare of their student(s). This important common interest, demands that teachers find a way to become acquainted with, and work effectively with, each parent, in an efforts to cooperatively help their student(s) learn and develop. This is not an easy task for either the teacher or the parent. It requires a good deal of willingness, determination, time, effort, and skill. The teachers must work with many parents and the parents must work with many teachers.

Time and space does not allow much more on this topic at this point, but here are a few suggestions that may eventually be helpful to you when you become a teacher and are faced with your students' parents;

1. Take the initiative, and seize many opportunities to meet your students' parents.
2. Smile, be friendly, tactfully and gently honest, and try to be like people that you like.
3. Listen carefully to the parents; ask them for their concerns, suggestions and ideas.
4. Be patient with parents who are a bit difficult; they may be frustrated with their child, and are taking out their frustration on you, the teacher.
5. Remember that parents pay taxes that provides your salary; in a way, you are working for them.
6. Observe and learn from other teachers who seem to have good relationships with parents.
7. Find a way to study and learn as much as you can about human relationships in general.

We recommend that, during the remainder of your teacher education program, you seize opportunities to learn as much as possible about how people view our public schools, and also about how experienced teachers work with parents. Interviewing teachers and parents might help you do that. Remember to make notes about your efforts and what you learn in your journal.

## Who Teaches in These Challenging Times?

Teachers come from varied backgrounds and hold a wide variety of perspectives. Some are Democrats, some Republicans, and some members of the Reform and other parties. Some belong to unions, but others don't. Teachers hold a variety of religious views. Because of these many differences, it is difficult to generalize about educators in the United States. However, taking a look at some of the similarities and differences among teachers may help you to understand the current teaching profession.

**PROFILE OF U.S. TEACHERS.** Although demographic data are elusive and constantly changing, the following snapshot of educators in the United States should help you get an idea of the profile of U.S. teachers. According to the U.S. Department of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 2013), the United States has about 3.2 million public school teachers, about 400,000 private school teachers, and about 932,000 college and university faculty members. More than 60 percent of the teachers work at the elementary school level. Our schools also have about 411,000 administrative and other types of education professionals.

In addition, approximately 1.25 million teachers' aides, clerks, secretaries, and service workers staff the nation's public schools. There are another roughly 1 million education-related jobs, including education specialists in industry, instructional technologists in the military, museum educators, and training consultants in the business world. So altogether, there are roughly 6 million people working in education-related positions in the United States, making education one of the largest professions in the country.

**TEACHERS LEAVING THE PROFESSION.** Although many teachers make careers out of teaching, unfortunately, some classroom teachers eventually decide that teaching is not the profession they wish



Triangle Images/Photodisc/Getty Images

to pursue. Figure 1.1 sheds light on the length of time that new teachers stay in the education profession.

Teachers leave the classroom for a number of reasons. Some leave to raise children and some decide to return to school full-time for an advanced degree. Others decide to pursue another career that they think might be more satisfying or pays a higher salary. Other reasons for leaving teaching are related to poor working conditions in schools, including lack of administrative support, student behavior problems, and little chance for upward mobility.

### Teacher Supply and Demand

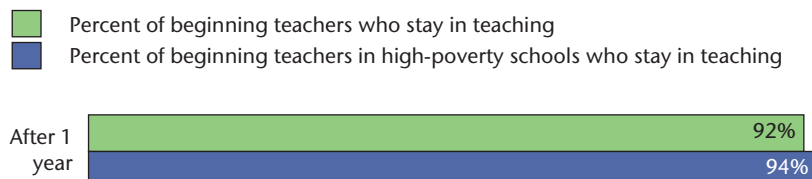
In addition to being passionate about helping learners, teachers must be good managers and take time to collaborate with their colleagues.

Many factors influence the number of teachers that a school district needs—and can afford—each year. These include the school budget, the number of students in schools, and the ratio of teachers to students in classrooms, immigration patterns, and migration from one school district to another. The supply of teachers depends on the numbers of new teachers licensed, teachers who retired or left the previous year, and teachers returning to the profession.

Sometimes the supply is greater than the demand, but various estimates for the next decade indicate a relatively steady demand for new teachers beyond the number being prepared in colleges and universities. At this time, however, the United States does not seem to have a general teacher shortage. Instead, the problem is the distribution of teachers. School districts with good teaching conditions and high salaries do not face teacher shortages. However, inner-city and rural schools often do not have adequate numbers of qualified and licensed teachers, in part because of lower salaries. There also are greater shortages of teachers in those parts of the country with increasing populations, such as states in the Southwest.

**AVAILABLE TEACHERS.** The supply of new teachers in a given year consists primarily of two groups: new-teacher graduates and former-teacher graduates who were not employed as teachers during the previous year. Not all college graduates who prepared to teach actually begin teaching right after graduating. We estimate that only about half the college graduates who have completed teacher education programs actually take teaching positions in the first few years after graduation. Rather than immediately starting to teach, some get married and start a family, some go on to graduate school, some enter another profession, some enter a family business, some don't find a teaching position in the location they want to live and can't or won't go elsewhere that a teaching position is available, and so on. You might face one of these situations when you graduate.

**FIGURE 1.1** Beginning-Teacher Retention Rates



Source: Based on The Center for American Progress, Based on U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Teacher Follow-Up Survey: Current and Former Teacher Data Files (2012–2013). Available to Restricted Users Through the Institute of Education Statistics.

However, even people who complete teacher education programs but never actually teach almost universally feel that their teacher education was worthwhile and valuable in many other ways (for instance, in parenting, working with and better understanding people, better understanding society, in other types of work)

It is estimated that nearly half the teachers hired by the typical school district are first-time teachers. A third represents experienced teachers who have moved from other school districts or from other jobs within the district. Experienced teachers reentering the field make up the remainder of the new hires.

**New Teachers.** A number of new teachers are not recent college graduates. They are typically people who are changing careers or retirees from the military or business. These older new teachers with years of work experience often have completed alternative pathways into teaching through school-based graduate programs that build on their prior experiences. These teachers bring a valuable different perspective on education to their teaching positions.

Unfortunately, still other new teachers have inadequate formal preparation to teach; some do not even have a college degree. More often they have a degree in an academic area such as chemistry or history but have not studied teaching and learning or participated in clinical practices in schools. Some states and school districts allow these individuals to teach with only minimal qualifications, often on a provisional certificate that requires full certification within a certain number of years.

**Returning Teachers.** A number of licensed teachers drop out of the profession for a time but return later in life. We estimate that these teachers constitute about 20 percent of the new hires each year. Therefore, when you finish your teacher education program, you will be competing for teaching positions not only with other new graduates but also with experienced teachers who are returning to the classroom or moving from one school district to another.

**Teacher Demand.** The demand for teachers in the United States varies considerably from time to time, from place to place, from subject to subject, and from grade level to grade level. One of the major factors related to the demand for teachers is the number of school-age children, which can be projected into the future on the basis of birthrates. The projected percentage change in K–12 enrollment, by state, through 2019, is shown in Figure 1.2.

A variety of factors including increases in student enrollment and a somewhat lower number of new teacher certification graduates are likely to result in increasing the need for teachers over the next decade. Also, many current teachers will be retiring during the next decade, raising even higher the number of new and re-entering teachers needed to staff the nation's schools. This suggests you are likely to be able to find a teaching position when you graduate.

**Student-to-Teacher Ratios.** Obviously, one measure of a teacher's workload is class size. The number of students taught by a teacher varies considerably from school to school and from state to state. Elementary teachers sometimes may have more students in a class than secondary teachers, but secondary teachers may have five to seven classes each day.

The demand for teachers has gradually increased over time, in part because some states and school districts are limiting the student-to-teacher ratio, especially in the primary grades. In large school districts, lowering the student-to-teacher ratio by even one student creates a demand for many more teachers. Statewide initiatives to reduce the ratio have an even greater impact on the number of teachers needed.

**Location of the School District.** Within a given area because of, for example, new housing developments, population shifts may cause one school district to grow rapidly, build new schools, and hire



Alexander Rathis/Fotolia

Most teachers enter and remain in their profession because of a desire to work with young people.