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## Transferability and Alignment of Program Exemplars in Teacher Preparation

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TRANSFERABILITY AND ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM EXEMPLARS IN  
TEACHER PREPARATION

by

JULIANN SERGI MCBRAYER

(Under the Direction of Teri Denlea Melton)

ABSTRACT

Teacher preparation needs to be revamped to adequately prepare teachers for P-12 classrooms. Public charter schools are experiencing challenges that include high teacher attrition rates and staffing difficulties in a rapidly growing sector, as well as obstacles for teachers to obtain certification. Thus, charter school teachers are seeking a “choice” in teacher preparation to meet the innovative needs of the sector. To address critical shortages of highly effective teachers, states are offering both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation to earn licensure. The goal of this study was to determine if program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation. An online survey ascertained program providers’ perceptions about the efficiency of non-traditional programs in Georgia based on scaled and narrative responses. Of the program exemplars represented, 32 out of 37 were confirmed to be highly transferable and aligned at or above 80%. In addition, program exemplars not identified on the survey, but that were deemed pertinent by providers were identified. The survey findings may provide insight to reform teacher preparation and increase the number of highly effective teachers in Georgia.

INDEX WORDS: Alternative teacher preparation, Certification, Charter schools, Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP), Non-traditional teacher preparation, Program exemplars, Teacher preparation

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## DEDICATION

For his continued and unconditional support and guidance, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Dr. Lance McBrayer, without whom, this achievement could not have been possible.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation in loving memory to Frank Sergi, my father.

I wish we could have celebrated together, but I know you will be there when the day comes.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Charter schools have become one of the most widely used alternatives to traditional public schools and have received considerable attention among educational researchers as a result (Booker, 2011). The first conception of the charter school movement allowed select schools to operate in the public sector with more autonomy than regular public schools without compromising accountability (Bulkley, 2012). Charter schools are publicly funded schools of choice that are independently operated by a governing board in exchange for certain levels of accountability (Viadero, 2009). According to the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA), a charter is a performance contract promoting the school's mission, program goals, student population, and measures of success. Charter schools are accountable for both academic results and fiscal practices to the sponsors that grant them, the parents who choose them, and the public that funds them (GCSA, 2013).

The charter school initiative developed a school choice option to provide an alternative to traditional public education. Charter schools are designed to address the failure of school districts to enhance academic performance, as well as challenge schools that were currently in operation, but were underperforming. The basis of this reform is that in exchange for public funding and freedom from some rules and regulations, charter schools are expected to meet accountability standards or risk losing their charter contracts with the state (Gross & DeArmond, 2010). The charter school movement provides an opportunity for educators, community members, and families to produce social, political, and economic progress by developing new strategies and academic approaches to educate

students. The growing initiative to create charter schools is providing a different tactic to improve struggling communities and failing educational systems (Levin, 2012).

The charter school movement favors the idea that competition and choice will spur innovation in school practices, and identifies innovative as its use of practices outlined in the charter that are not being implemented by its local school district (Preston, Goldring, & Cannata, 2012). Thus, charter schools strive to use innovative approaches to teaching and learning, such as expeditionary learning, constructivist theory, and multiple intelligences in accordance with the individualized curricular and pedagogical goals outlined in the charter contract. The primary goal of charter schools in Georgia is to better prepare all students, including at-risk and low performing students, for post-secondary education and careers (GCSA, 2013). The highest performing charter schools have demonstrated that low-income minority students can achieve in the right conditions. According to the United States Education Secretary, several high quality charter schools across the country are making a significant difference in children's lives, especially when charter schools in inner-city communities are performing as well, if not better, than their counterparts in wealthier suburbs (Duncan, 2009).

Depending on the laws of the state, charter schools may be given local control over many operational practices including staffing, allowing for hiring flexibility. Charter schools have the option to waive state teacher certification requirements via their charter; therefore, non-certified teachers can be hired. However, due to the federal requirement outlined in Title II of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, teachers are required to be “highly qualified.” Teachers’ highly qualified status and certification are based on specified requirements, as outlined by the Georgia Professional Standards

Commission (GaPSC), Georgia's state licensing agent for teacher certification (GaPSC, 2013). The challenge is that once deemed highly qualified, Georgia teachers have three years in which to convert their highly qualified status (non-renewable teaching certificate) to full certification (professional, clear renewable teaching certificate) or they are no longer considered to be a highly qualified teacher.

Georgia's teacher certification requirements can be satisfied through either traditional (universities and colleges) or non-traditional (regional, local, and state) entities that are state-approved by the GaPSC to offer teacher preparation and certification programs. According to Gatlin (2008), the National Center for Alternative Certification (NCAC) defines non-traditional teacher preparation and certification (i.e., alternative teacher preparation and certification) as routes specifically designed to recruit, prepare, and license individuals who hold a bachelor's degree in content fields including education, yet are in careers other than education to allow opportunities to transition into teaching.

The program unique to Georgia is the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP). The GaTAPP program was instituted by the GaPSC in 2004 in an effort to help teachers in a variety of certification areas gain clear renewable certification. To fulfill a need to provide a licensing option for charter school teachers, GCSA was approved by the GaPSC in 2010 as an Educator Preparation Unit and in 2011 GCSA was granted permission to offer a state-approved teacher preparation and certification program (GCSA GaTAPP) to all charter schools across Georgia. GCSA paved the way as the first non-accredited entity that was not a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA), a school district, or a Local Education Agency (LEA), but

rather a non-profit educational organization. Following approval, GCSA began providing a charter-specific alternative teacher certification program to its first cohort for the 2011-2012 school-year (GCSA, 2013).

The GaTAPP program provides multiple pathways to earn clear renewable teacher certification in Georgia for individuals who hold a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution and who did not complete a teacher education degree program that included certification to transition into the teaching profession. These program pathways equip “teacher candidates” referred to as “candidates” with the skills necessary for initial success in P-12 classrooms. All program paths involve structured support by a Candidate Support Team (CST) comprised of a school-based administrator, a school-based mentor/coach, a GaTAPP program provider/director, a GaTAPP program supervisor, and a content specialist if needed (if the mentor is not certified in the field(s) or grade level(s) the candidate is seeking initial certification, a content specialist joins the CST). All candidates are required to be highly qualified and hold a non-renewable teaching certificate at the start of the program (i.e., an Intern certificate, which demonstrates that the candidate is enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation and certification program).

The CST assesses the level of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and competencies with which a candidate enters the program and recommends the appropriate path for the candidate to take in order to transition through the program and meet program requirements to become a “teacher completer.” Teachers develop with their CST an Individualized Induction Plan (IIP) and through continuous monitoring and assessment of

the candidate's classroom and school-related performances as outlined in the IIP, the CST provides recommendations for advancement at specified checkpoints in the program or provides evidence for remediation and if needed termination. Throughout this transition or induction phase, candidates provide evidence of efficient teaching based on national, state, and regional teacher preparation standards. The role of the GaTAPP "program provider" is to ensure that all of the program components (lesson planning, diverse field experience hours, proficient performance on classroom observations and disposition rubrics) are implemented to the best of the programs' abilities to ensure highly effective teachers are prepared for P-12 classrooms.

Charter schools realize the importance of ensuring teacher quality and understand the need to adhere to the state and federal mandates of staffing highly qualified and certified teachers. One factor increasingly viewed as important to charter school success is the quality and stability of the teaching force (Miron & Applegate, 2007). For the purpose of this research, "highly effective teachers" was defined as those teachers who are efficiently prepared to present the core concepts and central modes of inquiry of the disciplines so that they are deeply understood and are prepared to teach diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006). "Teacher preparedness" was defined as those teachers who are efficiently trained to teach the core concepts and central modes of inquiry of the disciplines in the areas of curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, relevance and rigor, and professionalism and support so that they are deeply understood and are prepared to teach diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006; NAAC, 2007).

Currently, the growing shortage of highly effective teachers in P-12 public schools is reaching alarming numbers (Donaldson, 2011). According to Duncan (2010)



by 2014, the United States Department of Education (USDOE) projects that up to one million new teaching positions will be filled by new teachers. Duncan stated that the challenge to our schools is not just a predicted teacher shortage, but rather a shortage of “great” teachers in the schools and communities where they are needed most. The needs are greatest in urban and rural communities and in hard-to-staff curricular areas such as special education, mathematics, science, bilingual education, and English as a second language (HubPages, 2012).

A new report released by the not-for-profit, non-partisan National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) have found major advances in teacher policy across the country, largely driven by state adoption of policies for including student achievement as a measure of effectiveness. The new teacher evaluation system (i.e., Teacher Evaluation Keys Effectiveness System [TKES]) is comprised of multiple elements including Teacher Assessments on Performance Standards (TAPS), survey of instructional practice, and measures of student growth and academic achievement. This system will allow schools to use teacher effectiveness evidence in decisions about teacher retention and dismissal (GaDOE, 2013). Thus, the issue of teacher preparation and certification has become even more urgent as federal and state law has raised the stakes by tying student learning to teacher performance. The alignment of teacher performance to student success, at the same time that the supply and retention of highly effective teachers is in question, presents continued staffing challenges in public education (GaDOE, 2013, GaPSC, 2013).

President Obama has presented an integrated approach to redesigning schools and enhancing teaching. The initiative proposed an annual spending of \$6 billion to invest in improving the teaching profession. The focus was multi-faceted and supported those

teaching in high-need fields and communities, investments in improved teacher education, stronger accountability (including performance-based assessments for teachers), mentoring for all beginning teachers, professional development and collaboration time, and career ladder programs, both to reward expert teachers and to share teaching expertise (Darling-Hammond, 2010). However, while many states have shown dramatic progress, a report finds that Georgia has done little to support and measure teacher effectiveness. Georgia received an overall grade of C, based on the following criteria: delivering well-prepared teachers, expanding the pool of teachers, identifying effective teachers, retaining effective teachers, and exiting ineffective teachers (HubbPages, 2012). There is a new report on Georgia teacher preparation programs and the findings are not positive. The study concludes that new teacher training programs in Georgia are not adequately preparing teachers for the classroom. The study assigned a rating system to programs nationwide. Four stars are the highest. Thirty-two Georgia institutions were included in the review. None of them received the highest score overall and only three received three stars landing them on the “honor roll” (NCTQ, 2013).

The high demand and need to employ good teachers is resulting in staffing issues in all public schools. The growth of the charter sector and high teacher attrition rates will have an even greater impact on the need to provide public schools a potential pool of teachers to hire from in the future. Public schools need to identify tactics to recruit, hire, and retain highly effective teachers. Staffing schools with better prepared teachers is beneficial to lowering teacher attrition rates and to achieving higher levels of teacher competence in an effort to improve student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2003). The

USDOE stated in *Great Teachers and Leaders* that teacher effectiveness matters, and research demonstrated that teacher effectiveness contributed more to improving the academic outcomes of students than any other school practice and that an effective principal is central to recruiting and supporting these teachers to achieve school improvement. Studies suggested that a student who has had great teachers year-after-year will be on a path of continued growth and success, while a student who is taught by a succession of less effective teachers may experience lasting academic challenges. Many studies attest that some teachers contributed more to their student's academic growth than other teachers and studies suggested that identifying the specific teacher qualifications, characteristics, and classroom practices that are most likely to improve student learning is pertinent (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Effective teacher preparation is essential in training teachers to perform successfully in P-12 classrooms in an effort to enhance student achievement (Marzano, 2003).

Teacher quality influences every aspect of student learning. The quality of a teacher preparation experience, and how well this professional learning is tied to relevant pedagogical practices, influences students' academic performance (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2009). Good teaching directly influences improved student achievement; thus, good teaching should be evident in all classrooms, including both traditional and public charter schools. Teacher quality is critical to the success of public education and this is why forward-thinking educators are so focused on revamping teacher preparation to increase the number of highly effective teachers in classrooms to improve student achievement. Thus, reform efforts need to hold high expectations for teacher preparation, as well as provide support to teachers as they transition from teacher preparation

programs to P-12 classrooms to achieve quality teaching and improved student learning in all schools (Lefkowitz & Miller, 2006).

Rosenberg, Boyer, Sindelar, and Misra (2007) maintained that little is known about how different types of teacher education programs contribute to teacher supply, retention, or quality. Research on beginning teachers has detected significant differences in the perceptions of how well graduates felt prepared after extended, formal teacher preparation in contrast to teachers entering the classroom through alternative licensure pathways, both which often lack many of the criteria needed for efficient teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Junor Clarke & Thomas, 2009). In a seminal survey of 2,956 teachers in New York City with four or fewer years in the classroom, the findings showed that graduates of professional preparation programs felt more prepared to promote student learning, teach critical thinking, understand learners, and develop in instructional leadership than teachers without formal preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2002).

Thus, further study is needed to identify what works in different types of teacher preparation and what areas need to be improved. This study examined the transferability (which program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation were evident in non-traditional teacher preparation) and alignment (the degree to which program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation were evident in non-traditional teacher preparation) to further determine the effectiveness of these programs in preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Teacher preparation needs to be revamped in order to improve teacher competence in P-12 classrooms. Public school teachers need efficient teacher preparation and certification programs that will adequately prepare them to teach in public schools. Furthermore, teachers need programs that will aid them in meeting the specified needs of their school based on the mission and vision, as well as meet the professional and academic needs of the teacher to be prepared to implement best practices. For example, those teachers employed in charter schools need additional training to adhere to the required innovative practices outlined in the schools' charter and address specified curricular and pedagogical needs that are unique to the sector. Specifically, charter school teachers serve in a capacity of roles and need to be well versed in both educational and business tactics due to the nature of the charter school model. In addition, public charter schools are experiencing challenges including high teacher attrition rates, lack of adequate funding, obstacles for teachers to obtain certification, and the need to staff a rapidly growing sector as the number of charter schools in Georgia continues to grow (GCSA, 2013).

To address critical shortages of certified and highly effective teachers working in P-12 classrooms, states are offering both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation and certification pathways to earn state licensure; however, the effectiveness of these alternative avenues remain in question. The goal of this study was to determine which (transferability) and to what degree (alignment) program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation programs were being implemented in non-traditional teacher preparation. Program exemplars that are indicative of teacher preparedness were

identified in traditional teacher preparation to better prepare teachers for P-12 classrooms and are outlined in a comprehensive survey published by a leading researcher and author in the field of teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2006). This survey was utilized to ascertain perceptions of the efficiency of a specified type of teacher certification program in Georgia (GaTAPP). The study sought to fill a gap in the literature by ascertaining the perceptions of non-traditional teacher preparation program providers, as well as their support staff and experts in the field and related field(s) referred to as “affiliates.” The survey was designed to examine what leads to efficient teacher preparation based on identified program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation via the GaTAPP.

The researcher utilized the published survey to try and better understand what was needed for efficient teacher preparation via both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation pathways. The published survey was comprised of multiple assessment criteria deemed effective in measuring teacher preparedness in traditional teacher preparation programs. The survey was used to determine the degree and magnitude that the identified attributes from traditional teacher preparation had on non-traditional teacher preparation in efficiently preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. The researcher examined the extent to which program exemplars identified as being indicative of efficient traditional teacher preparation were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation to prepare highly effective teachers. Existing research on the program exemplars indicative of efficient traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation is widely published, but the magnitude and degree to which these attributes shape non-traditional teacher preparation does not exist.

Research on teacher preparedness has been conducted from the perception of the teacher, but not from the perspective of teacher preparation program providers and their affiliates who are leading or supporting the implementation of the non-traditional GaTAPP teacher preparation program. There is limited research in Georgia on non-traditional teacher preparation, specifically in the GaTAPP program. Furthermore, there is limited charter-specific research about teacher preparation and none for the charter-specific GCSA GaTAPP. Also the survey intended to go beyond the identified program exemplars and survey participants about which program exemplars they deemed as important to the efficient implementation of teacher training in their respective GaTAPP programs or the ones that they worked with, but were not identified on the survey. By identifying attributes specific to GaTAPP programs that were not represented, the research study sought to better understand the attributes needed in non-traditional teacher preparation that may not have been deemed as pertinent in traditional teacher preparation or were not highlighted in the literature review or on the published survey. Overall, program providers' perceptions about transferability and alignment of program exemplars may serve to fill a gap in the literature to enhance the quality and efficiency of non-traditional teacher preparation and certification in Georgia from a different perspective than that of the teacher completer. The program exemplars identified in the literature for traditional teacher preparation may equip program providers with the knowledge to better prepare highly effective teachers for both traditional and charter public schools.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions were used to determine the role that program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation identified in the literature played in efficiently

preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. The study sought to determine the transferability (which) and alignment (to what extent) of these attributes from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation and certification. The following overarching research question guided this study: Are traditional teacher preparation program exemplars and program component areas transferable, to and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation programs via the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP)?

In addition, the following sub-questions guided the primary question:

1. Which traditional teacher preparation program exemplars are transferable to non-traditional teacher preparation?
2. To what degree are traditional teacher preparation program exemplars aligned with non-traditional teacher preparation?
3. What program exemplars not identified in the literature are perceived by non-traditional programs providers and their affiliates as being indicative of efficient teacher preparation?

### **Significance of Study**

The rationale for the study was based on the notion that teacher preparation is unstudied in terms of how program exemplars indicative of successful teacher preparation and certification programs transfer from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation to prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. In addition, research pertaining to alternative teacher preparation is lacking when compared to traditional teacher preparation nationwide. Specifically, limited research exists for non-traditional teacher preparation in Georgia, and no published research exists pertaining to



the GaTAPP program or charter-specific GCSA GaTAPP. Thus, further study was needed to determine the transferability and alignment of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation via the GaTAPP program to improve teacher quality.

### **Procedures**

This was a descriptive study that used a modified research-based survey compiled by Darling-Hammond (2006), who gathered data on program exemplars from a multitude of exemplary traditional teacher preparation programs being conducted across the nation. The study was designed to assess the transferability and alignment of program exemplars identified as leading to efficient traditional teacher preparation in order to determine the degree and magnitude that each program exemplar had on non-traditional teacher preparation. The survey aimed to ascertain the perceptions of program providers and their affiliates to better understand the attributes needed for non-traditional teacher preparation by analyzing both scaled and narrative responses.

In support of a non-traditional teacher preparation initiative in Georgia, the research project focused on the GaTAPP program, with an emphasis on improving the charter-specific GaTAPP program offered by GCSA. The research study was two-fold and examined program exemplars indicative of teacher effectiveness in traditional teacher preparation programs. The study was designed to determine the transferability and alignment of traditional teacher preparation attributes to those of non-traditional teacher preparation from the perception of the program provider and their affiliates. The study also focused on what program providers were implementing in their GaTAPP programs as deemed indicative of efficient training, but were not represented on the survey.

The survey utilized a four-point Likert-scale supported by narrative responses to gather examples on how GaTAPP programs were implementing program exemplars in the specified program offered through their educational agencies. The procedures for this study involved collecting and analyzing data from the survey instrument and identifying program exemplars indicative of preparing highly effective teachers via non-traditional routes and the extent to which these attributes were being implemented. The participants were GaTAPP program providers in Georgia as identified by published lists provided by the GaPSC. The participants also included affiliates identified by program providers and by the GaPSC. The sample size consisted of 93 participants and the survey outcome yielded a 47% response rate with 44 out of 93 responding.

The survey data was collected by means of an anonymous survey via SurveyMonkey<sup>®</sup> (online survey tool). The survey contained Likert scale items based on a scale ranging from 3-0, 3 = very well (defined as very well with strong supporting evidence); 2 = well (defined as well with limited supporting evidence); 1 = needs improvement; and 0=not evident. Each program exemplar was followed by a short answer, narrative response for program providers to submit at minimum one example of how each program exemplar played a role in the efficiency of their GaTAPP program if they opted to answer the narrative section. The survey also included one open-ended question to ascertain program provider and their affiliates' perceptions of GaTAPP program attributes that they deemed as important, but were not represented on the survey and were needed to prepare P-12 teachers for classrooms.

The survey findings were analyzed to examine which and to what degree traditional teacher preparation program exemplars were transferable and aligned to non-

traditional teacher preparation in preparing highly effective teachers. Input from Georgia GaTAPP program providers and their affiliates was gathered to better understand how these exemplars were preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms in their specified programs.

The research study was intended to provide efficient teacher preparation and certification pathways that are competitive, challenging, and supportive of sound teacher preparation and best practices. Attributes from traditional teacher preparation were examined to determine if they were transferable to, and aligned with, the program requirements outlined for the non-traditional GaTAPP. The goal of the study was to help meet the needs of public schools to achieve the required qualifications and certification status, to retain effective teachers, and to provide training based the needs of the teacher and the schools in which they were employed. The research was intended to support the quality, consistency, accountability, and sustainability of teacher preparation and certification in an effort to improve teacher preparedness in the public school arena. The key to GaTAPP program efficiency may be a research-based program that utilizes teacher preparation program exemplars indicative of success in both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation. In addition, the findings were intended to provide insight into the charter-specific non-traditional teacher preparation and certification program in Georgia.

### **Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions**

As with all research, there are limitations, delimitations, and assumptions inherent in this study. Although all GaTAPP program providers and their staff, as well as their affiliates had the opportunity to participate, there was limited control as to who opted to

participate in the survey. Limitations of this study included individuals that were contacted and were reluctant to evaluate their individual programs or did not feel that they had the knowledge to adequately represent programs that they were involved with. In addition, the survey results were limited by the possibility of response bias and/or lack of honesty about how well program providers and their support staff, as well as experts in the field or related field(s), perceived that they were preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. In addition, program providers' perceptions may have differed from those of the teacher completers that successfully exited their GaTAPP program, but since the intended goal of the survey was to ascertain program providers' perceptions, the researcher believed that this did not affect what the survey intended to measure.

Surveys that were not returned from program providers reduced the sample size, but the findings were generalized to GaTAPP programs across Georgia, so the findings were used to make inferences about those who opted not to participate in the survey. The original published survey had been proven effective for traditional teacher preparation, but not for non-traditional teacher preparation, which was a limitation. However, using traditional teacher preparation criteria helped determine how non-traditional teacher preparation attributes were transferable to, and aligned with, traditional teacher preparation. The study utilized a published survey, but while Darling-Hammond is a leading researcher and author in the area of teacher preparation, a limitation could have been that the instrument did not measure the efficiency of non-traditional teacher preparation since it was designed for traditional teacher preparation. However, the findings revealed that the instrument did measure what it was intended to measure in that

the data identified the specified program exemplars that were transferable and aligned from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation programs.

The delimitation of this research was that the study confined itself to identified program providers in Georgia via the GaTAPP and may not be generalizable to teacher preparation programs outside of the GaTAPP or to traditional teacher preparation within Georgia. In addition, the varying degrees of expertise of program providers, some of who were highly experienced and others who were new to implementing the GaTAPP program may have affected the findings. Lastly, delimitation may be that the researcher is a GaTAPP program provider for GCSA. However, the researcher engaged in reflexivity to minimize negatively or positively impacting the findings and did not participate in the survey.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following key terms were defined:

**Alignment of Program Exemplars** – The alignment of program exemplars is defined as the degree to which the attributes indicative of “efficient” traditional teacher preparation and certification correspond to non-traditional teacher preparation.

**Charter Schools** – Charter schools are non-sectarian public schools of choice that operate with freedom from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. The charter is a performance contract outlining the school's mission, program goals, student population, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. Charter schools are accountable for both academic results and fiscal practices to the sponsor that grants them, the parents who choose them, and the public that funds them.

## Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) - The

GaTAPP program is a non-traditional teacher preparation and certification program that provides trainings via various paths to a clear, renewable teaching certificate based on an assessment of the individual's credentials, experiences, knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach. The GaTAPP is utilized by the state of Georgia to help reduce Georgia's teacher shortage; enables individuals with a Bachelor's degree or higher (who meet eligibility requirements for the program) to teach early childhood, middle-grades, or secondary education, and is delivered by various PSC-approved program providers employed at educational agencies throughout Georgia.

**Highly Effective Teachers** – Highly effective teachers are those teachers who are efficiently prepared to teach the core concepts and central modes of inquiry of the disciplines so that they are deeply understood, and are prepared to teach diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

**Non-traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification Programs** – In Georgia, non-traditional teacher preparation and certification programs are state-approved by the GaPSC to allow state educational agencies to prepare “highly effective teachers” for P-12 classrooms and to gain teacher licensure in Georgia through alternative training avenues.

**Non-traditional Program Providers (Georgia)** – Non-traditional program providers are individuals within state educational agencies that are offering alternative teacher preparation and certification programs to prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms and aid teachers in gaining teacher licensure in Georgia. Program

providers include those individuals directly responsible for implementing the GaTAPP program.

**Program Exemplars** – Program exemplars are attributes that serve as a model or example for successful teacher preparation. In essence, they are criteria of programs that effectively prepare and train their teacher candidates to teach the core concepts and central modes of inquiry of the disciplines so that they are deeply understood, and to teach diverse learner (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

**Teacher Preparedness** – Teacher preparedness denotes teachers that have been efficiently trained to teach the core concepts and central modes of inquiry of the disciplines in the areas of curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, relevance and rigor, and professionalism and support so that they are deeply understood, and are prepared to teach diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

**Traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification (Georgia)** – Traditional teacher preparation is formal training of job-related knowledge and skills defined for initial teacher preparation to earn state licensure.

**Transferability of Program Exemplars** – Transferable program exemplars are those attributes indicative of “efficient” traditional teacher preparation identified as preparing teachers for P-12 classrooms very well or well via non-traditional teacher preparation at above 80%.

**Very Well Alignment and Transferability of Program Exemplars** – The distinction of very well is that the program exemplars are implemented into the alternative teacher preparation and certification program with strong supporting evidence.

Well Alignment and Transferability of Program Exemplars – The distinction of well is that the program exemplars are implemented in the alternative teacher preparation and certification program with limited supporting evidence.

### **Chapter Summary**

To address high teacher attrition and shortage of highly effective teachers in a growing charter sector, states need to offer teacher preparation programs to train quality and effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. States, including Georgia, are offering both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation and certification pathways to earn state licensure; however, the effectiveness of these pathways remain in question. The goal of this study was to determine which (transferability) and to what degree (alignment) program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation were being implemented in non-traditional teacher preparation and certification programs. Program exemplars that are indicative of efficient teacher preparedness have been identified in traditional teacher preparation to better prepare teachers for P-12 classrooms and have been used to develop a comprehensive survey by a leading researcher and author in the field of teacher preparation. The study sought to fill a gap in the literature by modifying the survey to ascertain the perceptions of non-traditional teacher preparation program providers and their affiliates to examine what leads to efficient teacher preparation programs based on the identified program exemplars. Alternative teacher preparation and certification may be the answer to preparing, certifying, hiring, and retaining highly effective teachers in both the public school and the public charter school arena in an effort to staff schools with quality teachers to serve in P-12 classrooms.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

Teacher preparation and certification programs are intended to address the needs in public education to recruit, hire, and retain highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. In order to address the growing need for highly effective and certified teachers, alternative teacher preparation programs are in place and the specified elements that result in efficient programs need to be researched further to provide quality teacher preparation. Teacher preparation programs need to rely on current, research-based practices from both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation programs that have been proven efficient in developing highly effective teachers to improve educational practices in P-12 classrooms. The rationale for alternative routes to teacher preparation will be discussed as a viable option for preparing public school teachers, including charter school teachers in Georgia to earn state licensure.

#### **The Charter School Movement and Teacher Preparedness**

Public schools are reporting difficulties recruiting, hiring, and retaining highly effective teachers. Like traditional public school teachers, quality charter school teachers are in high demand due to both the growth of the sector and high teacher attrition rates. In the United States about 50% of teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching (Ingersoll, 2003; Lambert, 2006; Miron & Applegate, 2007). A breakdown of teacher attrition in a seminal study revealed that 12% of traditional public school teachers leave after year one, 19% leave after year two, 28% leave after year three, 34% leave after year four, and 46% leave after year five. Teachers who lack certification leave the profession at higher rates with 49% of uncertified teachers leaving the

profession within five years compared to 14% of certified teachers (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). In a study pertaining to the Teach for America teacher recruitment and preparation program, attrition, already high among new teachers across the nation, has its greatest impact in low-income, high-minority schools (Donaldson, 2011; Scafidi, Sjoquist, & Stinebrickner, 2007). In the most recent data available, 21% of teachers in high-poverty areas leave their schools annually, compared to 14% of their counterparts in low-poverty settings (Harris, 2008).

Research suggested that charter school teacher attrition is higher than in traditional public schools, but the research is limited (Podgursky & Ballou, 2001; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Prior research studies suggested that charter school teachers are 15% less likely to stay in their schools than traditional public school teachers (Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Harris, 2008). Research also suggested that charter schools lose somewhere between 20 and 25% of their teachers each year compared with 14% of traditional public school teachers (Miron & Applegate, 2007; Stuit & Smith, 2009). Charter schools have a 40% greater chance of moving schools than traditional public school teachers and 52% greater odds of exiting the system altogether (Gross & DeArmond, 2010).

According to Toch (2010), charter schools have recruited many people experienced through the workforce to the challenge of improving public school education. Charter school teachers traditionally come from diverse backgrounds with a wide variety of talents and experiences, which allow schools to hire teachers with undergraduate or graduate degrees in areas such as art history, literature, physics, economics, and foreign languages, In addition, those who possess work experience

related to their degree field(s) and ideal candidates for alternative teacher preparation.

This high level of subject-matter knowledge contributes to academic rigor. Also leaders can hire individuals from a multitude of professional backgrounds, such as law, business, science, and finance, which may provide opportunities to present real-world experiences within their classrooms and make learning more relevant. The skills and knowledge gained in these types of careers can be valuable to raising classroom expectations.

Alternative certification programs have been successful in expanding the pool of teacher candidates and in increasing the diversity in the teacher workforce without sacrificing quality (Sullivan, 2001).

Non-traditional teacher preparation first emerged a quarter-century ago to address teacher shortages and failures of traditional licensure programs to successfully prepare highly effective teachers to improve student achievement (Gatlin, 2008). Alternative teacher certification is intended to provide more opportunities for experienced individuals trained via coursework and experienced through the workforce seeking to exit their professions, yet who lack teaching certificates to enter classrooms. Research showed that non-traditional teacher preparation pathways may be better equipped to meet the needs of innovative programs (e.g., charter schools; Gatlin, 2008). Teaching in the charter sector presents a multitude of challenges in addition to the required roles and responsibilities of traditional public school educators. Charter school teachers often have varied responsibilities both inside and outside of the classroom, including dual roles in both educational and business practices. In addition, lack of professional learning opportunities, reduced funding, and limited resources provide further challenges for

charter schools that may not be typical to the traditional public schools found in their districts or neighboring schools (Gross & DeArmond, 2010).

The Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) is a state-approved, non-traditional teacher preparation program approved by the GaPSC, Georgia's sole state accrediting agency for teacher certification. The GaTAPP program is comprised of a multitude of performance-based, job-embedded pathways that prepare teachers to earn certification in the content area and grade level in which they hold highly qualified status and that they are assigned to teach. These different pathways are based on experience in the workforce, content expertise, degrees held, and curricular and pedagogical knowledge ascertained via coursework and state exams (i.e., Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators [GACE]). Non-traditional teacher preparation provides schools with an option to recruit, hire, and retain highly effective public school teachers that have met highly qualified status upon program entry (met all requirements outlined by the GaPSC). Teachers completing the GaTAPP program are eligible for clear renewable certification, which is professional certification in Georgia (GaPSC, 2013).

Charter schools were a new concept when first launched more than 20 years ago and today they are an increasingly well-established part of public education. The first charter school law was passed in Minnesota in 1992 at which time legislation was approved to experiment with chartering by granting charter schools waivers from many of the state and local education laws and rules (Finn, Manno, & Vanourek, 2000). Since individual charter schools vary in purpose and design (employ different curricular and pedagogical strategies and tactics based on their charter) and are subject to different laws

and authorizer requirements from state-to-state, these waivers are a feasible option. However, there are fundamental guidelines on which charter schools must operate. These premises include local control over many aspects of school management, including flexibility in budgeting, curriculum design, pedagogy, scheduling, school calendars, and recruiting and staffing teachers that meet the needs of their schools (Akey, 2008; Triant, 2001). Accountability requirements for schools are outlined in the charter and after a predetermined time (usually three to five-years) schools are subject to closure if no evidence of improved student achievement exists (Stillings, 2005).

According to GCSA (2013), a charter school is a non-sectarian public school of choice that operates with freedom from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools. Charter school history affirms that the movement was supported by the idea that increased autonomy and flexibility in exchange for heightened accountability would lead to the creation and maintenance of more effective schools (Stillings, 2005). This choice of selecting the highest performing schools has provided parents with the option of selecting a school that supports the specified needs of their child who is often not achieving at his or her highest potential. Supporters of school choice maintain that charter schools have the ability to identify students who would have otherwise “fallen through the cracks” by providing them with an innovative and individualized approach to learning (Akey, 2008).

According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, more than 4000 charter schools enrolled over 1.5 million students in the 2009–2010 academic-year. In Georgia, there are a total of 314 charter schools and 16 charter school systems serving 225,800 students (GCSA, 2013). Recent policy development favored further charter

school growth, and the USDOE made support for charter schools a central part of President Obama's Race to the Top initiative (Duncan, 2009).

According to NCLB (2001), public schools need to increase student achievement through strategies such as improving teacher quality and increasing the number of highly qualified and certified teachers in P-12 classrooms and today teacher quality is still at the forefront of this initiative. As reported by GCSA (2013), the number of Georgia charter schools is increasing each year, and the charter school movement is diligently working to create and sustain charter schools in high need communities across Georgia. This initiative has created, for example, schools in vocational education, fine arts, technology education, expeditionary learning, and programs with high numbers of economically disadvantaged and minority populations. The primary goal of charter schools in Georgia is to better prepare all students, including at-risk and low performing students for post-secondary education and careers.

The research maintains that teacher quality is vital to student success. In a pertinent study that examined the impact of teacher quality on student achievement by Marzano (2003), classrooms headed by teachers characterized as "most effective," determined that students demonstrated achievement gains of 53 percentage points over the course of one academic-year, whereas in classrooms led by "least effective" teachers, student achievement gains averaged only 14 percentage points on state test results. This further supports teacher quality is linked to student learning (Berry, 2010).

Federal and state mandates devise criteria for determining teacher quality, which include whether individual teachers are highly qualified and certified, as well as highly effective in accordance with NCLB (2001). NCLB requires that all teachers of core

academic subjects that are the teacher of record be highly qualified. Charter schools can only temporarily waive the state mandate of certification via their charter, but not the federal requirement of highly qualified. GaTAPP teachers are required to hold a non-renewable, Intern certificate, which indicates that the teacher is enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation and certification program, is highly qualified, and is working toward full professional certification. According to the GaPSC to be highly qualified, a teacher must receive a passing score or scores on all required GACE tests and be assigned appropriately for the field and grade levels being taught, which must align to the initial field that the teacher is seeking certification (GaPSC, 2012).

The issue is that although a charter can waive certification requirements, public school teachers in Georgia are under an additional rule that dictates that once highly qualified, teachers have a three-year period in which they are required to become fully certified through the completion of a state-approved teacher preparation program that is either traditional (e.g., university) or non-traditional (alternative teacher preparation) or they are no longer considered highly qualified; thus, the “temporary” waiving of certification by the charter. After successful completion of the GaTAPP program, program providers submit evidence to the GaPSC at which time the Commission converts the teacher completers’ Intern certificate to clear renewable certification to remain highly qualified and become fully certified in Georgia via a professional certificate.

Charter schools are more likely than traditional public schools to employ teachers who lack regular state certification. This presents a significant problem in both hiring and retaining teachers in the charter sector leading to high teacher attrition in a rapidly

growing sector; in addition, lack of funding presents further problems in the hiring process, as charter schools are often unable to pay on the state teacher salary schedule because of these funding issues (Akey, 2008; Bowman, 2000; Triant, 2001). Because charter schools can initially employ non-certified teachers, some researchers argue that this less regulated workforce allows charter schools to hire and retain more effective teachers than traditional public schools. Flexibility in hiring practices have allowed charter schools to attract an academically talented and potentially more effective teacher workforce than traditional public schools (Hoxby, 2002; Podgursky, 2006).

In one charter school surveyed, teachers lacking certification constituted most of the instructional staff, which was largely due to the flexibility in the provisions of the charter allowing the school the option of employing non-certified teachers that were a better fit for their school setting (Finn & Kanstoroom, 2002). According to Triant (2001), charter school principals who were interviewed indicated that the system of hiring teachers in their schools was better than the system in comparable traditional public schools; they hired certified teachers, but had the option to hire uncertified teachers when a certified teacher was not available due to a teacher shortage or quality applicants were not available.

However, legislators are concerned that the multi-faceted challenges faced by teachers in charter schools and lack of administrative support and funding can make these schools difficult places to work, leading to teacher burnout and high turnover rates (Goss & DeArmond, 2010). Teachers who felt prepared in areas such as content expertise, lesson planning, utilization of a variety of instructional methodologies, and assessment practices based on a data driven approach were more likely to remain in the teaching



profession as compared to those who reported weak preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

States are reporting compliance with NCLB (2001) and are presenting data showing high percentages of highly qualified and certified teacher in schools across Georgia. This coupled with the option of charter schools to hire uncertified teachers and with these teachers continuing to teach without the required federal and state highly qualified and certification qualifications, discrepancies in the data exist. Due to the need for highly effective charter school teachers in response to both the growth of the sector (GCSA, 2013) and high teacher attrition rates (Ingersoll, 2003), teachers need preparation programs that address the challenges that are not always present in traditional teacher preparation including both business and educational practices. To support the growing need for efficient teacher preparation, alternative routes were implemented state-to-state to help alleviate the teacher shortage and high attrition rates in public schools across the nation, and they need to continue if highly effective teachers will be the norm in all public schools, including charter schools.

According to a recent survey, four out of ten new public school teachers hired since 2005 were prepared through alternative teacher preparation, which is a 22% increase from teachers hired in previous years (Heitin, 2011). A new analysis completed by the National Association for Alternative Certification (NAAC) indicated that 48,650 teacher preparation program completers, or 20.7% of new teachers, came through alternate route programs in the 2008-2009 academic-year; this is the most recent year for which data are available via the federal Title II, Part A program which is tied to highly qualified status.

These non-traditional teacher preparation programs are focused on preparing teachers for challenging areas, such as high turnover areas and hard to staff areas (e.g., geographically and economically disadvantaged areas, high-need subject areas; Nakai & Turley, 2003). These efforts to prepare highly effective teachers may provide schools with a more qualified applicant pool of teachers to hire. The degree to which teacher turnover is a problem in charter schools is far less understood than it is in traditional public schools (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Guin, 2004; Milanowski & Odden, 2007; Shields, 2001). The National Charter School Research Project conducted by the Center on Reinventing Public Education suggested that high rates of teacher turnover in charter schools may be more a function of the types of teachers that charter schools hire, and where those schools are located, than their status as charter schools. Charter schools are relatively better at retaining teachers in urban environments than are traditional public schools. In addition, when charter teachers leave their schools they are more likely to cite job security, workplace conditions, and multi-faceted job responsibilities as important reasons for leaving than their counterparts in traditional public schools (Gross & DeArmond, 2010). Teachers identify lack of preparation as the major reason for leaving the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2003), and thus the need for quality teacher preparation is essential.

In addition, the extensive requirements for certification have discouraged many talented people from outside of education from pursuing certification (Boyd, 2007). For example, certification requires a multitude of tests, additional courses (e.g., Exceptional Child; Reading and Writing across the Curriculum; Nature and Needs of Middle Grade Learners), ever-changing certification requirements, reduction in support staff at

certification agencies, high teacher preparation program fees, and limited placements for non-certified teachers. Hansen (2001) suggested removing obstacles in the path of experienced people who want to enter the teaching profession and supporting their transition into the classroom. However, easing certification standards is not the answer, and both traditional and non-traditional programs must provide teacher candidates with competitive and challenging pathways to meet teacher licensure requirements that are comparable state-wide free of unnecessary deterrents. Thus, the goal of GCSA is to get all teachers in charter schools highly qualified and certified, and to retain these highly effective teachers in P-12 classrooms to ensure that good teaching is standard practice (GCSA, 2013).

According to the GCSA (2013), charter schools are not seeking to ease certification requirements or to provide a program of poor quality; they are, however, seeking to recruit, hire, and retain experienced, innovative teachers. It is difficult for charter school teachers to meet their certification needs through traditional routes as goals of these programs are often not aligned with the mission and vision of the charter sector (Triant, 2001). The primary drive in promoting highly effective teachers should include a program with elements reflective of both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation proven efficient, as well as research-based best practices leading to classroom success through innovative education for both traditional and charter public schools.

Imposing more certification requirements on prospective teachers has not resulted in improved teacher quality (Arias & Scafidi, 2009). Thus, further research is necessary to determine what is pertinent to quality teacher preparation. If the goal is to prepare highly effective teachers, traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation programs

need to collaborate to evaluate programs exemplars conducive to effective teacher training. Traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation must address the collective needs of schools, as well as the individual needs of the teacher in order to offer specified training that prepares teachers to work in a diversity of school types (e.g., the charter sector). Teacher preparation should employ the application of quality, research-based attributes proven effective and that are continually measured for success regardless of the type of school the teacher is serving in (Hansen, 2001). However, specified issues facing the different types of schools cannot be ignored and need to be examined further to more efficiently prepare teachers for a variety of P-12 classrooms.

### **Need for Traditional and Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation**

The typical regime in public education has become one of advanced certification opportunities. Individuals who complete training in a traditional teacher education programs are deemed to be certified to teach, while individuals who are not traditionally certified may also pursue opportunities to teach with the required preservice training via non-traditional pathways (Arias & Scafidi, 2009). The research is mixed (Gatlin, 2008; Viadero, 2009) on how well traditional, university-based pathways are in preparing enough highly effective teachers to meet the growing hiring needs of public schools, particularly in critical needs and subject areas such as math, science, special education, and foreign languages (HubbPages, 2012). Alternative teacher preparation programs are working to support the expanding need for quality teacher preparation and prepare highly effective teachers, but the effectiveness of these pathways remain in question.

Currently, all 50 states and the District of Columbia reported that they had at least some type of alternate route to teacher preparation and certification (Mitchell & Romero,

2010). According to Gatlin (2008), the goal of teacher preparation is to support innovative practices, rather than replicate traditional approaches that have presented mixed findings on effectiveness in preparing teachers for P-12 classrooms. Gatlin noted that teachers trained by conventional certification pathways are typically prepared to seek employment in traditional public education, but may lack the skills that are necessary in schools with specified programmatic goals (such as charter public schools).

Policy initiatives, encouraged by the federal government under No Child Left Behind (2001) have supported alternative preparation and certification programs that often admit recruits before they have completed, or have often even begun formal preparation for teaching. The search for strong alternative teacher preparation and certification programs has, despite concerns, been important and necessary. These types of non-traditional teacher preparation programs were initially created to provide alternatives to four-year undergraduate programs, which until a quarter of a century ago were the only route to teacher certification in many states. This approach was inefficient for attracting potential teachers from the workforce and preparing enough highly effective teachers to staff the public school arena.

The first alternative teacher preparation and certification programs were Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) certification programs, started in the 1970s. A series of other postgraduate programs were implemented during the 1990s to increase the potential pool of teachers to staff public schools across the nation and, in 2004, the GaTAPP program became an option for Georgia teachers to become certified. High-need districts sought opportunities to attract teachers, especially in hard-to-staff content fields and these teachers needed to reflect the diversity of the students that they were teaching.

According to Darling-Hammond (2010), there are too few direct pathways from traditional universities that are designed to meet schools' staffing challenges because colleges and universities do not always provide an adequate supply of teachers in all of the fields where they are needed because most states do not assess and manage supply and demand.

According to a recent study by Viadero (2009), teachers who chose alternative pathways into the classroom were not any better prepared for curricular and pedagogical delivery than teachers who have completed a traditional teacher preparation program. In fact, there was no significant difference in the performance of students whose teachers were prepared through non-traditional routes and those whose teachers completed traditional teacher preparation pathways. However in a seminal study (Darling-Hammond, 1990) findings noted concerns about the poor quality of mentoring and supervision and the lack of training in content as being a detriment to the preparation of alternatively certified teachers. Because studies continue to present mixed findings on whether teachers with traditional teacher licenses outperform peers who take an alternative path into the classroom, further study is needed (Gatlin, 2008; Viadero, 2009).

With a limited teacher pool to hire from, efficient alternative routes to teacher preparation and certification will need to become the norm for charter schools if they are to successfully hire highly effective, certified teachers and keep pace with a growing charter sector and high teacher attrition rates. Research has shown that alternative routes to certification are attracting people who would not have entered teaching if these programs were not a possibility (Jacobson, 2005). According to Sullivan (2001), if states continue to implement such alternative teacher preparation programs, while

simultaneously seeking to improve them, a pool of potential educators may become a viable option for staffing the public school arena, including the charter sector in an effort to address both high teacher attrition and the need for enhanced teacher quality. The unprecedented demand for new teachers, together with the need for increased quality in the profession, means that schools must develop strategies for identifying teachers who have the greatest potential for achieving success in the classroom, and who may have not entered teaching if these tactics were not in place.

In order to foster the development and implementation of innovative teacher preparation, alternative routes to teacher preparation and certification must prioritize effective, high quality teacher education (Yancey, 2006). Highly effective teaching begins with quality initial teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2003). In teacher preparation programs, states should focus their efforts on ensuring that teacher completers have strong content expertise and are equipped to use research-based instructional strategies (Marzano, 2003). As long as school districts are diligent about recruiting quality teacher candidates who have met rigorous program entry requirements and who have strong content knowledge and excellent work experience, alternative teacher preparation and certification programs could provide a promising avenue to train highly effective teachers (Sullivan, 2001).

The goal of all teacher preparation programs is to produce well-prepared teachers who have demonstrated successful performances on research-based competencies and dispositions required to assess effective teaching and learning (GaPSC, 2012; Gatlin, 2008). These alternative certification programs need to be quality programs that

successfully prepare teachers for classrooms promoting high student performance (Boyd, 2007). All routes to teaching should meet the same high standards to provide new teachers with the skills, confidence, and competence to teach. With this success, these programs could alleviate the limitations in training and preparing teachers for public school classrooms (Qu & Becker, 2003). If the policy goal is to maximize student achievement, states and school districts should have aggressive programs in operation to recruit capable individuals to enter teaching through both traditional and alternative pathways and mechanisms to evaluate these programs need to be in place (Arias & Scafidi, 2009).

Both non-traditional and alternative teacher certification programs have political and social acceptance as a viable option for initial teacher preparation. Choice in teacher preparation is needed to accommodate the growing number of aspiring teachers wishing to enter the profession (James & McNiece, 1991). Alternative teacher preparation is not intended to replace traditional teacher preparation, but rather provide individuals with options that best meet the unique teaching and learning circumstances of their schools.

Teachers need the opportunity to engage in teacher preparation programs through traditional (universities/colleges) and non-traditional (alternative routes to teacher certification) pathways. If a 100% certification rate is going to become a reality for all schools in Georgia, choice in teacher preparation needs to be an option for teachers in both traditional and charter public education. Teacher preparation, whether traditional or non-traditional, need to be effective in preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms, and these programs must work collaboratively to ensure that the overall quality of teacher preparation is the best possible.



## **Traditional versus Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation**

Research suggested that program exemplars required for implementing effective traditional teacher preparation vary widely (Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2007; Gatlin, 2008; Sullivan, 2001). In addition, existing research on the program exemplars indicative of success in traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation is widely published. But, the impact that traditional teacher preparation attributes have on non-traditional teacher preparation is limited (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006; Arias & Scafidi, 2009; Boyd, 2007; Chin & Young, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feistritzer, 2007; Gatlin, 2008; Heitin, 2011; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2008; Nagy & Wang, 2007; Reese, 2010; Mitchell & Romero, 2010; Walsh, Jacobs, & Thomas, 2007; Yancey, 2006).

Programs exemplars pertinent to non-traditional certification are very diverse both across and within states (Feistritzer, 2007; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2008). Alternative teacher certification programs vary in structure, duration, intensity, curriculum, participant characteristics, and the targeted market (Mitchell & Romero, 2010). These programs are provided to individuals who were not certified as teachers via traditional colleges and universities and all contained different requirements for program entry, transition, and completion. Participants held a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in a subject-matter field and this included individuals with education degrees, but who lacked state certification. These programs often involved on-the-job training, in that participants were given full-time teaching jobs where they were observed by and received feedback from mentor teachers (Boyd, 2007; James & McNiece, 1991).

The identification and implementation of quality program exemplars is the key to successful teacher preparation (Yancey, 2006). According to the report issued in 2002 by The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, high quality teacher preparation was a strong predictor of both good teaching practices and teacher retention. Miller (2003) noted extensive research conducted on the impact that schools and teachers had on student achievement, linking the higher success rate of students with "most effective" teachers compared to those deemed "least effective," and it is this effectiveness that can only be achieved through proper teacher training. Effective teaching begins with effective teacher preparation, including both curricular and pedagogical best practices to be adequately prepared to teach in P-12 classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

If schools and policymakers do not like all that they see in teacher preparation, the answer is not to accept the status quo or to avoid non-traditional teacher preparation, but to help make it better. The correct solution is to revamp both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation processes and licensing measures by setting meaningful standards and by using authentic assessments to determine readiness to teach (Wise & Darling-Hammond, 1992). Understanding that teaching is a demanding profession requiring many prior skills, teacher candidates are provided with "extensive training," but the definition of extensive remains highly variable (Fox & Certo, 1999).

Although many program exemplars have been identified in the literature, there is considerable disparity among both traditional and alternative certification programs in terms of what makes them successful in preparing effective teachers for classrooms. Teacher preparation and certification programs that are deemed as "alternative routes" vary greatly by state; some entail high levels of professional learning and completion

requirements, while others have minimal requirements (Boyd, 2007). With such variety in non-traditional teacher preparation, it is easier to define what alternative teacher certification is not; it is anything but a four-year undergraduate program housed in a school of education (Walsh, Jacobs, & Thomas, 2007).

Comparisons among teacher preparation often reveal different requirements for program success. Therefore, information regarding the development of teacher expertise to demonstrate quality is unclear (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Stoddart & Flodden, 1995). Thus, teacher preparation needs to rely on program exemplars that have been proven successful in traditional teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Programs need to determine how traditional teacher preparation and certification program exemplars are transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation. In an effort to support the implementation of a non-traditional teacher preparation initiative, program providers need to understand what is required for program efficiency (integrating effective program exemplars) and the focus must be on the collaboration of traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation and certification.

### **Program Exemplars and Component Areas**

Teacher preparation needs to rely on program exemplars that have been proven effective and efficient in preparing teachers via traditional teacher preparation pathways, such as understanding how different students learn, helping all students achieve high academic standards, and identifying special learning needs and/or difficulties (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Traditional teacher preparation program exemplars need to be examined to determine how the exemplars are transferred and aligned to non-traditional teacher preparation. According to Reese (2010), candidates who are licensed to teach

through alternative pathways held a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, passed content tests, engaged in on-the-job training, completed coursework or equivalent professional learning while teaching, were supported by a mentor-teacher, and met performance-based standards that were program specific. Program exemplars such as creating interdisciplinary curriculum, identifying and addressing differentiated learning needs, and helping all students achieve high academic standards were pertinent to quality teacher preparation just to name a few (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Teacher preparation programs should focus their efforts on ensuring that teachers have strong content expertise and that teachers are provided research-based instructional strategies and best practices (Miller, 2003). Teacher licensure should validate through assessment measures that teachers who enter classrooms are prepared to teach their required subject matter in their specific grade level and improve student achievement (James & McNiece, 1991).

In a California study (Yancey, 2006), program providers credited coursework through distance learning, intensive workshops, and seminars as essential for a successful teacher preparation program. This coursework was coupled with an apprenticeship-type program in which the teacher was not considered the teacher of record, but rather worked under the mentorship of an expert support teacher. Providing teachers with scheduled school-wide duties and responsibilities, such as recess monitoring, tutoring, and attendance at staff meetings, and planning and implementation of school-wide events helped teacher candidates develop ownership and become better prepared teachers. In addition, providing stipends to teacher candidates and mentors in return for hours of services funded through grants has been deemed effective in many programs.

Most alternative teacher certification programs require individuals to have some form of content expertise prior to teaching or to enroll in coursework and professional learning that is content-specific. According to Chin and Young (2007), programs must prepare teachers to function effectively in varied situations and circumstances and teacher's backgrounds and experiences can help determine which teaching circumstances foster higher retention of alternatively certified teachers. Teachers considered their most relevant learning opportunities as those embedded in their daily routines at school, including those both inside and outside of the classroom (Yancey, 2006).

Because of the possible abbreviated nature of non-traditional certification programs, professional learning is likely to be approached differently for those who are trained in traditional teacher preparation programs (Qu & Becker, 2003). According to a research survey (Nagy & Wang, 2007), teachers trained through alternative routes often lacked an understanding of pedagogy, instructional strategies, classroom management, and students' social and academic developmental needs; thus, indicating that comprehensive and relevant professional learning is essential. Also strong mentoring and coaching support is pertinent to the progression and transition of teachers in preparation programs (Arias & Scafidi; 2009, Darling-Hammond, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The USDOE reported that 66% of teachers receiving either informal mentoring indicated that it helped strengthen and facilitate their classroom teaching (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006).

Hawley (1992) outlined several outcomes that were used to ascertain the overall effectiveness of alternative teacher certification programs by assessing such elements as attracting and following teachers with needed qualities and interests, retaining teachers in

the program, achieving student achievement, providing professional development, and limiting financial costs to teacher candidates. Basic subject matter knowledge was essential, but it was also the extent of pedagogical training that made the difference in teacher quality and effectiveness.

Quality program exemplars were reported to include strong partnerships between preparation programs and school districts, a rigorous but flexible selection process, teacher education that delivers content and pedagogy, and a strong support system (Gatlin, 2008). Program exemplars to include rigorous screening processes, such as passing tests and interviews, mastery of content, performance-based programs, coursework or equivalent experiences in professional learning before and during teaching, working with mentor and/or other support personnel, and high performance standards for program completion were indicative of successful programs (Gatlin, 2008).

In 2003, Nakai and Turley's study of alternative routes to teacher certification showed that support for new teachers was essential. Furthermore, it should include clear curricular and instructional expectations, guidance on the daily routines of the classroom including attendance, recordkeeping, discipline, collaboration with peers to gain assistance for curriculum planning, and mentor support. Alternative-route teachers seem more in favor of using measures such as performance-pay and use of student-achievement results in teacher evaluations than were their traditionally prepared counterparts (Heitin, 2011). Making a positive transition from teacher preparation to classroom teacher depends immensely on the extensive and efficient support provided by principals, mentors, districts, and all pertinent stakeholders involved in the learning community (Nakai & Turley, 2003). Some key characteristics of high quality alternative

teacher certification programs included high entrance standards, extensive mentoring and supervision, extensive pedagogical training in instructional delivery, classroom management and curriculum implementation, working with diverse learners, frequent and substantial evaluations, practice in lesson planning and teaching, and high program completion standards and requirements (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002).

Thus, program exemplars pertaining to sound curriculum implementation, differentiation of teaching and learning, assessment practices, relevance and rigor, and professionalism and support need to be evident in both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation to ensure teachers are prepared for P-12 classrooms. Overall, the program exemplars noted in the literature review correspond to the published work of Darling-Hammond (2006) to demonstrate teacher preparedness. Thus teacher quality and preparedness are the fundamental basis for this study to examine the transferability and alignment of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation and certification.

### **Alternative Teacher Preparation and Certification in Georgia**

In order to address the teacher shortage, Georgia began recognizing different alternative teacher certification routes (Feistritz, 2007; GaPSC, 2013). Some programs were designed to help teachers in specific areas earn certification, while others helped a more general population (e.g., Teach for America, New Teacher Project). According to the GaPSC, 2013 in 2004, Georgia introduced a new alternative teacher certification program, Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) program. Enrollment in the program provided the aspiring teacher referred to as a “teacher candidate” or “candidate” with a five-year non-renewable certificate. This has since been

changed to a three-year, non-renewable certificate titled an Intern certificate in Georgia demonstrating that the teacher is in a state-approved teacher preparation and certification program. Upon meeting all GaTAPP program requirements, including completion of professional learning and passing the appropriate Georgia Assessment of the Certification of Educators (GACE) exams, a candidate would receive full state licensure in Georgia that is the same certificate issued to teachers who complete a college or university-based teacher preparation program.

The GaTAPP program is a series of pathways that are performance-based, job-embedded teacher preparation avenues. The GaTAPP is the comprehensive program that houses different pathways based on the credentials of a teacher entering the GaTAPP umbrella. The pathways are designed to teach a variety of fields and grade levels such as early childhood, middle grades, secondary, or P-12 education in fields such as foreign language, art, drama, dance, and special education. These individuals have not completed a teacher preparation program with certification; however, they may have a teacher education degree, but not state certification in Georgia prior to entering the GaTAPP. Individuals who have completed a teacher education program or held any type of teaching certificate in the state are not eligible to participate in the program. The GaTAPP program was not created with the intent of replacing regular college or university teacher education programs, but to serve as an alternative option for individuals who already held a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution.

In order to enter the GaTAPP program, candidates must have a bachelor's degree in an appropriate field or pass the GACE in the field and grade level(s) that the teacher is seeking initial certification and is teaching. Candidates are only accepted with a



minimum grade point average of 2.5 in all college-level work completed, a satisfactory background check, and have an offer of a teaching position (at least 50% of the day) by a participating school system, and have a passing score on any one of several required assessments. The possible exams include the reading, writing, and math sections of the GACE Basic Skills Assessment. The Basic Skills Assessment can be exempted by the following scores: SAT (1000), ACT (43), or the GRE (1030) or a master's degree. However, these scores are under discussion for removal as an exemptions to the GACE Basic Skills Assessment, which would require all individuals entering the teaching profession to have a passing score on GACE Basic Skills (GaPSC, 2013).

The candidate completes a formal application and met all requirements for program entry before being admitted. Once admitted to a GATAPP program, candidates go through introductory training and professional learning, an assessment of the teacher candidate's content background, development of an individualized program of study unique to each teacher candidate, assignment of a three to four person support team, including a school-based mentor and administrator, a GCSA program director and supervisor, and a content specialist if the mentor is not certified in the area that the teacher candidate is teaching and seeking initial certification. GaTAPP is intended to equip teacher candidates with the skills to ensure initial success in the classroom and to institute a supervised internship/induction program that will help candidates move toward mastery of teaching.

Following initial training, candidates begin the first year of the teacher induction phase. This includes professional learning based on Charlotte Danielson's (2010) *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. The candidate works to

design and collect evidence for his/her program of study, known as the Individualized Induction Plan Portfolio. During this time, the candidate will complete all professional learning required to meet Georgia Special Requirements for the grade level taught, including training in the teaching of exceptional children, teaching of reading and writing across the curriculum, and the integration of technology into the classroom as applicable to their certification field and grade level(s). Teacher candidates are required to demonstrate competencies in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for accomplished teaching (Danielson, 2010). Assessments are conducted on the candidate through observations by the assigned CST and the portfolio is scored with a rubric that is based on the Danielson's framework and a minimum of proficient performance level are required in all areas to be considered prepared to teach. Mentoring and assessment by the teacher candidate's support team is continual and the candidate must complete all program requirements at minimum by the end of the first school-year and at maximum by year three or their non-renewable certificate expires and they are no longer highly qualified or eligible to continue in the GaTAPP.

### **Chapter Summary**

Teacher preparation and certification programs are intended to address the needs in public education to recruit, hire, and retain highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms that promote student achievement. In order to address the growing need for highly effective and certified teachers, both traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs have been implemented. However, the variation and quality within these programs has not been adequately determined; thus, further research is warranted. In summary, the focus of this study was to determine if program exemplars proven efficient

in traditional teacher preparation were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation and certification programs in an effort to prepare quality teachers for P-12 classrooms.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

Traditionally, states have required individuals to complete a program of study in a college or university-based teacher preparation and certification program to be licensed to teach in P-12 education. In recent years, however, various alternative teacher certification programs have been developed, and the number of teachers obtaining teaching certificates through routes other than traditional teacher preparation are on the rise (Sass, 2011). A comprehensive review of the literature on teacher preparation suggested that there are many similarities, as well as variations, in how both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation programs operate. However, the work of a leading researcher and author in the field of teacher preparation identified 37 program exemplars in a seminal study that were needed for efficient and effective teacher preparation and training (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The attributes were compiled from exemplary programs across the nation and were based on national and state standards (i.e., INTASC, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards).

Based on the findings from the literature and the published work of Darling-Hammond, a survey was created and directly aligned to the 37 program exemplars identified by the author in reference to the attributes that were needed for efficient teacher preparation pathways. The researcher reviewed the program exemplars for trends and patterns and identified five component areas based on the findings from a research study with NAAC and Ohio State University, 2007 that was provided to the researcher in raw unpublished data through work on this taskforce with the GaPSC. Based on the raw data, five program component areas were identified that logically fit all 37 program exemplars

and included curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, and professionalism and support.

The purpose of this study was to determine which (transferability) and to what degree (alignment) program exemplars were indicative of teacher preparedness. The researcher analyzed transferability and alignment from the perception of non-traditional program providers and their affiliates, as identified by program providers and/or by the GaPSC. The participants were GaTAPP program providers, their support staff, and experts in the field or related field(s) responsible for offering or supporting the alternative GaTAPP program to prepare and certify highly effective teachers through their respective state educational agency. The researcher is a GaTAPP program provider for GCSA, which could present a bias, but the researcher engaged in reflexivity to neither positively or negatively impact the survey findings. Being a provider, the researcher had a captive audience for potential participants in that she meets with them monthly at the GaPSC GaTAPP program providers' meeting. Also the head of the non-traditional teacher preparation and certification division at GaPSC is committed to seeking assessment data to determine the overall effectiveness of the GaTAPP program across the state. Thus, the head provided support to achieve a maximum response rate via the online survey and a 47% response rate was captured.

This chapter will outline survey design methods, the survey instrument, and pilot study specifics. Also included is how the study identified participants to gather survey data. Finally, this chapter will show how data were collected and analyzed based on the overarching and sub-research questions.

## **Research Questions**

This study was designed to survey GaTAPP program providers and their affiliates to determine which and to what extent program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation played a role in non-traditional preparation to train highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. The following overarching research question guided this study: Are traditional teacher preparation program exemplars and program component areas transferable, to and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation programs via the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP)?

In addition, the following sub-questions guided the primary question:

1. Which traditional teacher preparation program exemplars are transferable to non-traditional teacher preparation?
2. To what degree are traditional teacher preparation program exemplars aligned with non-traditional teacher preparation?
3. What program exemplars not identified in the literature are perceived by non-traditional programs providers and their affiliates as being indicative of efficient teacher preparation?

## **Research Design**

The researcher used quantitative survey methods supported by descriptive analyses with statistical measures (compute means and percentages of individual parameters and category metrics) to examine the transferability and alignment of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation via the GaTAPP program. Program providers also supplied narrative responses with examples for each program exemplar to explain how the attributes were utilized in their respective GaTAPP

programs to efficiently prepare highly effective teachers. In addition, the survey identified teacher preparation program exemplars not identified in the literature and not represented on the survey, but were perceived by program providers as being indicative of success in their specified program and potentially other GaTAPP programs across Georgia. Those components not identified on the survey, but were deemed important by program providers are intended to be used in the future to further modify the survey to make the survey GaTAPP-specific. A survey was the best design to measure numerous variables, investigate perceptions that were not able to be observed, describe characteristics that can be generalized to a larger population, and study behaviors that may be difficult to express in a face-to-face situation (Nardi, 2003).

A cross-sectional survey, with data collected at one set point was self-administered to all potential participants (Creswell, 2009). The survey was designed to examine program exemplars indicative of efficient traditional teacher preparation and determine how well they were transferable to and aligned with non-traditional teacher preparation programs. Program providers were asked to answer Likert-scale items based on a range of scores from 3 at very well to 0 for needs improvement to determine which and to what extent program exemplars were transferable and aligned from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation.

Program providers supplied narrative responses that contained examples of what was working in their specified GaTAPP program or GaTAPP programs across Georgia. The program exemplars were examined for themes from both the literature and the published survey based on patterns and trends. The program exemplars were coded into five different categories and included curriculum and pedagogy (C), differentiation (D),

assessment (A), rigor and relevance (R), and professionalism and support (P). (Appendix C outlines each program exemplar and the specified category in which the attribute was coded). The narrative examples were grouped into the five identified component areas and reported as means and percentages based on the scaled responses. In addition, program exemplars not identified in the survey, but considered by program providers to be important in implementing their respective GaTAPP program were reported as narrative replies.

Because the survey is a research-based, published survey from a leading researcher and author in the field of teacher preparation, the researcher had established a rationale for the use of the specific instrument (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The original published survey was compiled using mixed-methods, multiple case study design to collect extensive data from interviews, observations, surveys, and document reviews based on seven identified teacher education programs that were proven to have successfully prepared highly effective teachers. The published survey was informed by standards from the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (ITASC), National Board for Professional Teaching (NBPT), and the literature about elements of teaching that are relevant to teacher effectiveness and preparedness. Thus, the validity and content reliability were confirmed by the author prior to publication, and the specifics about these parameters were included in the published work (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Therefore, no further work by the researcher on validity and content reliability were needed for this study.

The survey design was selected because data could be collected in an efficient, cost effective manner by sampling a limited group to provide generalized findings that



were applicable to a larger population to include those that opted not to participate in the survey or were not identified by the GaPSC or program providers. The timeframe was selected to provide the minimal amount of time needed to achieve the desired return rate and meet research study objectives to collect quantitative data and narrative responses. According to Cook, Heath, and Thompson (2000), a mean response rate for 68 online surveys reported in 49 studies was 39.6% ( $SD = 19.6\%$ ). In addition, the mean response rate for the 56 surveys reported in 39 studies with no missing data on 16 variables was 34.6% ( $SD = 15.7\%$ ); thus the researcher sought a 30% or above response rate. The original timeframe of the study was a four-week period, but one additional week was needed to meet this desired return rate.

The survey length took each participant approximately 60 minutes to complete. The study was conducted to make inferences about the perceptions of the participants based on the specified GaTAPP program being offered by their educational agency or within a program or programs that the participant had worked with.

### **Population, Sample, and Sampling**

The participants in this study were selected from a published, online list of GaTAPP program providers compiled by the GaPSC. Currently, thirty-two GaTAPP programs exist in Georgia. In addition, support staff were identified by program providers and also the GaPSC and program providers provided contact information for experts in the field or related field(s). Because the researcher had online public access to a comprehensive list of potential participants, a single-stage sampling procedure was used in this study (Creswell, 2009). The total sample consisted of 93 potential participants. Program providers and the GaPSC provided contact emails and a compiled email list with

all potential participants was sent to the GaPSC and program providers to check for accuracy and currency, which was confirmed and returned to the researcher prior to the study.

Before sending the survey, a preliminary email explaining the process and the intentions of the researcher was sent to all impending participants. These participants were then emailed the survey on a one-time basis and follow-up emails were sent as reminders to those who did not complete the survey after the end of each week during the five-week timeframe allotted for survey duration.

### **Instrument**

A research-based survey compiled by Linda Darling-Hammond (2006) and published in the book *Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs* was modified and used to determine how well program exemplars proven efficient in traditional teacher preparation were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation to efficiently prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms (Appendix B). The original survey was compiled from a multitude of components from teacher preparation programs with a common approach that focused on classroom environments that were “learning-centered” (supportive of focused, in-depth learning that results in powerful thinking and proficient performance on the part of the student) and “learner-centered” (responsive to individual students’ experiences, interests, talents, needs, and cultural backgrounds; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The original survey sought to better understand the outcomes of teacher preparation to “teach about the teaching of teachers” (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The original published survey was designed to ascertain the perception of the teacher completing the teacher preparation program (teacher completer) to inquire about how

prepared they felt after the initial training/induction phase required to enter the teaching profession. For the purpose of this study, the researcher shifted the survey audience from that of the teacher completer to that of the non-traditional program provider to ascertain their perceptions about the efficiency of the GaTAPP. The researcher selected the survey because the questions were based on program exemplars indicative of efficient teacher preparation. Changing the audience did not alter the content or goal of the research questions to better understand quality teacher preparation.

The survey contained quantitative, Likert-scale items to determine the transferability and alignment of 37 program exemplars. The scaled response selections included very well (3), well (2), needs improvement (1), and not evident (0). The distinction between very well and well is that very well included program exemplars that were implemented into the program with strong supporting evidence and well was considered for program exemplars implemented into the program with limited supporting evidence. In addition, the participants provided narrative responses of examples for each of the program exemplar outlining specific ways that each element was used in their individual programs, or in programs across Georgia, to efficiently prepare teachers. During survey design, the researcher developed categories to better understand the findings and grouped the program exemplars into five different program component areas. The component areas were based on patterns and trends found among the 37 program exemplars identified on the survey and outlined in the literature prior to issuing the survey to participants (Appendix C; Appendix H). Lastly, program providers listed examples of attributes from their specified GaTAPP programs that were not included on the published survey.

The survey was divided into three sections (Appendix B): Section 1: Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification Program Providers' Demographics; Section 2: Alignment and Transferability of Program Exemplars from Traditional to Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification; and Section 3: Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification Program Exemplars Indicative of Success via the GaTAPP Beyond the Survey.

The first section was used to gather generalized information from the participants. Specifically, this section included questions to find out information about type of program provider and their affiliates, program type, number of teachers served overall since the program's inception, experience of the participants in education in general, as well as experience with teacher preparation and certification via both traditional and non-traditional means, and highest degree level. In addition, one Likert-scale item based on a five-point response scale was used to gain the perception from the program provider, as to the overall success of their program if a program provider. The item was based on the scaled responses from the Likert-scale in the choices of successful with supporting data (5), successful with limited supporting results (4), somewhat successful, but data unclear or program too new or participants too few (3), seldom successful with limited retention in the program (2), unsuccessful and needs improvement (1), and unsure and not a program provider, rather an expert in field or related field(s).

The second section examined program providers' perceptions of the transferability and alignment of the 37 identified program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation using four-point Likert-scale items. This section included both close-ended questions followed by open-ended, narrative responses. The

survey contained set scaled responses, as well as examples as to how each program exemplar was being utilized in the participants' specified programs or across Georgia via the GaTAPP to ensure teacher preparedness.

Closed-ended questions were included to provide a finite set of answers from which the participant had to choose; these closed-ended scale items were used to ascertain the respondents' feelings or attitudes about the success of the alternative teacher preparation program by indicating how closely their perceived levels of implementation matched the statements on the survey's rating scale (Fink, 1995). The closed-ended questions were easy to standardize, and data gathered from closed-ended questions allowed for sound statistical analyses via means and percentages. In addition, each program exemplar was supported by an open-ended, narrative response intended to go beyond the closed-ended Likert-scale items and delve deeper to learn the extent to which and how the program exemplars were aligned with individual GaTAPP programs.

The third section allowed program providers to identify those program exemplars deemed indicative of success in their specified programs, but were not identified in the survey as leading to efficient traditional teacher preparation. Section 3 contained one open-ended, narrative response question that identified attributes not represented on the survey. Open-ended questions are important because the participants' own words are preferred, as the researcher did not know all of the possible program exemplars that program providers may have perceived as leading to success in their specified programs (Fink, 1995). By having one open-ended question for program providers and their affiliates to identify program exemplars inherent in their individual programs, the

findings may help to fill gaps in the literature where pertinent program exemplars were not addressed or emphasized, but were deemed important.

The researcher intended to gather data findings from a limited population that would be applicable to all teacher preparation. The findings may be generalized to both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation programs within Georgia, specifically the GaTAPP, as well as outside of the state.

### **Pilot Study**

Darling-Hammond (2006) piloted the survey twice and made modifications based on professional feedback prior to its publication. The survey was further piloted (due to the shift in audience) by the researcher to determine that the survey measured the intended program exemplars that were deemed efficient in preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms via the GaTAPP program from the perception of the non-traditional program provider. The survey was individually administered to a panel of three experts in the area of teacher preparation (GaPSC and National Association for Alternative Certification [NAAC]). The survey was given to the experts from the identified population and confirmed that it measured the intended variables. The panel of experts also determined that the Likert-scale items could provide meaningful and useful inferences about the transferability and alignment of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation. The pilot survey helped to identify problems with the instrument (e.g., clarity of the directions, readability of the questions, and layout of the survey). The comments provided by these pilot participants were used to revise and improve questions, format, and scores in an effort to ensure that the survey items

measured the content intended to be measured and results served a useful purpose and could have positive consequences when used in practice (Creswell, 2009).

### **Data Collection**

The researcher obtained permission from the Georgia Southern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to contacting the participants and conducting the survey (H13186); in addition, the researcher successfully completed IRB training (i.e., Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative [CITI]). The researcher worked with program providers and the GaPSC to identify all potential survey participants for the study. To ensure a high rate of return, the researcher conducted a short advance-notice contact by emailing each potential participant to explain the purpose of the study and confirm contact information accuracy. One week after the advance-notice email, the online survey was sent through secured email to the sample group via SurveyMonkey<sup>®</sup>. Each participant received a unique link to complete the survey that was individualized to ensure confidentiality and the link could not be forwarded to another participant to use, as the link was directly tied to an individual email address.

The participants were thoroughly informed of their rights; contact information for the IRB was provided. Participants were not required to provide their names or names of their program, so the responses were kept anonymous, and all participant rights were outlined in the cover letter that accompanied the survey (Appendix A). Participants' completion of the survey provided implied consent. The researcher ensured that data would only be reported as generalized research findings and no program or program provider would be identified individually.

On January 14, 2013, all identified programs providers and their affiliates were emailed the online survey and a cover letter explaining the significance and rationale of the survey, as well as their rights as a voluntary participant. The explanatory cover letter outlined the rights of the respondent (i.e., “Right to Ask Questions”) if they choose to complete the survey. Participants were informed of their right to answer only those questions that they selected and clearly explained the voluntary nature of the survey, and that they had the choice to opt out of survey completion at any time with no penalty. The letter also noted that the risks were “no greater than what was expected in everyday daily life.”

The survey was sent on a one-time basis unless surveys were not answered at the conclusion of each week and therefore, a reminder email was sent to all participants who had not responded at the close of business day each Friday. The survey administration period was initially a four-week period, but concluded after a five-week duration on February 15, 2013, as the maximum return rate was achieved by week five (i.e., a maximum return rate that would produce generalized data findings; Creswell, 2009).

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher used quantitative survey methods supported by descriptive analyses with statistical measures (means and percentages of individual parameters [program exemplars] and category metrics [program exemplars were categorized into five different component areas]) to examine the transferability (which) and alignment (to what degree) of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation via the GaTAPP program. These statistical means were used to address the overarching research question, as well as sub-questions one and two. Sub-question three was



examined using open-ended, narrative responses that went beyond what was on the survey, but were considered important by the program provider in preparing highly effective teachers. The qualitative data and narrative responses were examined to determine patterns and trends that may aid program providers in efficient implementation of their GaTAPP programs or GaTAPP programs across Georgia. Themes were further examined by supporting data findings with resources outlined in the literature.

Based on the raw data, baseline indicators were identified to establish which program exemplars were leading to efficient teacher preparation. All program exemplars reported at or above 80% for the scaled responses of very well and well were considered by the researcher as high transferability and alignment. Program exemplars that were below 80% at the levels of very well and well were indicated as low transferability and alignment and these were considered by the researcher as attributes of concern and in need of further inquiry. Any program exemplar reported at or above 90% were considered extremely high transferability and alignment.

In addition, those program exemplars identified as needs improvement and not identified were considered to have extremely low transferability and alignment. A baseline indicator was identified by the researcher at above 10% for any exemplar reported as needs improvement indicating low transferability and alignment. Program exemplars indicated as not evident at or above 0% were also indicated as low transferability and alignment. All program exemplars identified as low transferability and alignment were interpreted as attributes of concern and in need of further research. Since the literature identified all of these program exemplars as indicative of efficient teacher preparation, the researcher believed that program exemplars reported as needs

improvement or not evident were cause for concern. Specifically, the response of not evident equated to not pertinent to GaTAPP teacher preparation as indicated in the survey response choices, which further negated what was highlighted in the literature review about attributes required for efficient teacher preparedness.

Because the researcher was reporting high transferability and alignment for the Likert-scale choices of very well and well, the data were also examined separately for these responses. In addition, program providers gave narrative responses with examples for each program exemplar to explain how these attributes were utilized in their respective GaTAPP programs. The narrative responses were divided into the five specified categories to note trends and patterns. The data was reported by mean percentage for each of the five program component areas for the four Likert-scale choices. Because the researcher identified high transferability at or above 80% for the choices of very well and well, data for the five areas were also examined separately for these selections.

Overall, the demographic items in Section 1 were intended to address the overarching research question by providing the groundwork information such as program type and provider expertise. The scaled responses and narrative examples in Section 2 sought to answer the overarching research questions, as well as sub-questions one and two. The narrative responses in Section 3 gathered information from an open-ended question to answer the overarching research questions, as well as sub-question three.

### **Chapter Summary**

The researcher sought to determine which (transferability) and to what degree (alignment) program providers perceived the identified program exemplars as preparing

highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. Program providers used Likert-scale items to identify the overall success of their programs, as well as the degree to which their state educational agencies were preparing teachers for P-12 classrooms via the GaTAPP. The participants also provided narrative responses to provide specific suggestions of program exemplars that have led to efficient teacher preparation in their individual programs or programs across Georgia. Lastly, the participants indicated program exemplars not identified in the survey, but were deemed useful in implementing an efficient teacher preparation via the non-traditional GaTAPP program. Quantitative data from scaled responses supported by narrative responses were examined to determine patterns and trends that may aid program providers in efficient implementation of their programs or programs across Georgia. Themes were further reviewed by aligning the findings (means and percentages) with those attributes outlined from providers and included in the literature as being indicative of effective teacher preparation to confirm the importance of the 37 program exemplars. Overall, analysis of the data were sought to address the overarching research questions, as well as sub-questions one, two, and three.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**REPORT OF DATA and DATA ANALYSIS**

**Introduction**

The research study was designed to gather information that may aid GaTAPP programs in implementing efficient non-traditional teacher preparation and certification pathways for Georgia public schools, including public charter schools. By focusing on a specified non-traditional teacher preparation program (GaTAPP), alternative avenues may be better equipped to train highly effective teachers if data reveal which program exemplars from traditional teacher preparation were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation. Doing so will allow us to better understand the degree and magnitude to which these attributes supported teacher preparation program efficiency.

Survey data were analyzed to ascertain program providers' perceptions of program exemplars that were indicative of efficient non-traditional teacher preparation via the GaTAPP. The findings of the study were analyzed to better understand program exemplars that were identified on a published survey and in the literature as being indicative of efficient teacher preparation. Program exemplars were categorized into five program component areas. These five component areas included curriculum and pedagogy (C), differentiation (D), assessment (A), rigor and relevance (R), and professionalism and support (P). To answer the research questions, scaled responses were examined and supported by narrative examples from program providers to determine how traditional teacher preparation program exemplars were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation.

## **Research Questions**

The survey questions were answered by GaTAPP program providers and their affiliates to provide input about which, and to what extent, program exemplars were transferable to, and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation to train highly effective teachers. The following overarching research question guided this study: Are traditional teacher preparation program exemplars and program component areas transferable, to and aligned with, non-traditional teacher preparation programs via the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP)?

In addition, the following sub-questions guided the primary question:

1. Which traditional teacher preparation program exemplars are transferable to non-traditional teacher preparation?
2. To what degree are traditional teacher preparation program exemplars aligned with non-traditional teacher preparation?
3. What program exemplars not identified in the literature are perceived by non-traditional programs providers and their affiliates as being indicative of efficient teacher preparation?

## **Research Design**

The researcher conducted a quantitative study using descriptive analyses with statistical measures (means and percentages), which included survey research methods to describe transferability and alignment of program exemplars within specified program components areas to examine the quality of teacher preparation. A comprehensive review of the literature and a published survey were used to identify the most significant attributes needed for efficient teacher preparation. The original published survey utilized

elements from a multitude of exemplary teacher preparation and certification programs. The researcher modified the survey for this study to gain the perception of program efficiency from the program provider perspective instead of teacher completers (the audience for the original published survey). Program providers and their affiliates were surveyed to determine the transferability and alignment of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation and certification program via GaTAPP. A cross-sectional survey was self-administered to all participants identified from a published list available online, which allowed for timely and cost efficient means for gathering survey data.

The study identified program exemplars that were being implemented at levels of very well (3), well (2), needs improvement (1), or not evident (0) in the non-traditional GaTAPP teacher preparation program. In addition, the survey design was selected to sample a limited group and make generalized findings to a larger population not represented in the survey. A 35-day timeframe for data collection was utilized to meet the project objective of compiling data with a minimal response rate of 30% (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000).

The researcher used quantitative survey methods supported by descriptive analyses with statistical measures (means and percentages of individual parameters [program exemplars] and category metrics [program exemplars were categorized into five different component areas]) to examine the transferability (which) and alignment (to what degree) of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation via the GaTAPP program.

Based on the raw data, baseline indicators were identified to establish which program exemplars were leading to efficient teacher preparation. Program exemplars reported at or above 80% for the scaled responses of very well and well indicated high transferability and alignment. The program exemplars that had exceptionally high transferability and alignment (at or above 90%) were also noted. Program exemplars and program component areas reported as very well and well, that received less than 80% were referred to as low transferability and alignment. Those program exemplars that were below 80% were indicated as attributes of concern and in need of further inquiry.

In addition, a baseline indicator was identified by the researcher for any exemplar reported at or above 10% for the needs improvement response and were considered low transferability and alignment. All of the program exemplars at or above 0% that were indicated as not evident were also reported as low transferability and alignment. All program exemplars reported for needs improvement and not evident were interpreted as an attribute of concern and needed further inquiry. Because the literature identified all 37 of the program exemplars as indicative of efficient traditional teacher preparation, low baseline percentages were flagged for review.

The narrative examples from program providers of examples of programs exemplars were examined based on the five different identified categories (C, D, A, R, P) and presented in terms of transferability and alignment. In addition, narrative examples were reviewed to better understand the program exemplars believed by program providers to be indicative of efficient teacher preparation, but were not represented on the survey. Those attributes not represented on the survey were also categorized into the five program component areas.

In Section 1 of the survey, program providers provided demographic information about the agency type, program type, number of teachers served, experience of the participants in education, highest degree level, and one Likert-scale item was used to gain the overall success of individual GaTAPP programs from the perception of the program provider. The demographics were analyzed as percentage of responses falling into the given set of answer choices provided on the survey. The question about program success was analyzed using a five-point Likert scale with a final choice to opt out of answering the specified question if not a program provider. Likert-scale items in Section 1 addressed the overarching research question by providing general information about the non-traditional programs for those offering and/or supporting the program.

In Section 2 of the survey, program providers answered Likert-scale items about the transferability and alignment of the 37 program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation. For each program exemplar, findings were reported as a percentage based on the four-point Likert-scale choices (very well, well, needs improvement, and not evident). Percentages of narrative examples provided for each program exemplar by the provider or their affiliates was also noted. In addition to reporting each program exemplar percentage, an overall mean percentage was computed collectively for all 37 program exemplars including each of the four Likert-scale choices to provide the “complete picture.” (Appendices D and E). Because the researcher considered high transferability and alignment for the Likert-scale choices of very well and well only, data were also reported separately for the 37 program exemplars identified at these levels (Appendix E). In addition, program providers provided narrative responses with examples for each program exemplar to explain how each attribute was



utilized in their respective GaTAPP programs to prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms.

Narrative responses were also divided into the five specified categories to note trends and patterns. Data were reported by mean percentages for each of the five program component areas for the four Likert-scale choices (Appendices F and G). Because the researcher identified high transferability at or above 80% for the choices of very well and well, data were also reported separately for these levels based on the five program component categories (Appendix G). The narrative responses in Section 2 addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-questions one and two.

In Section 3, program exemplars not identified in the survey, but considered by program providers to be important in leading their respective GaTAPP program were examined. Narrative examples of program exemplars that providers did not perceive as being highlighted on the survey were reported. These examples were grouped into the five identified component areas (C, D, A, R, P) and themes were noted based on trends and patterns. The narrative responses in Section 3 helped to answer the overarching research question, as well as sub-question three.

### **Description of Participants**

From the public list of program providers in Georgia and their affiliates, 93 individuals were asked to participate in the survey; of the 93 participants 32 were actual GaTAPP program providers and the remaining 61 were support staff or experts in the field or related field(s). According to the GaPSC, 32 GaTAPP programs are currently in existence the state of Georgia each with one main head program provider. However, the data did not reveal if all program providers were represented and this was intentional on

the part of the researcher to ensure confidentiality. Because the researcher is a GaTAPP program provider and meets with this small group monthly, having participants identified as a provider in conjunction with the other demographic data gathered may have removed the anonymity of the respondent. Of the 93 participants surveyed, 44 responded to the survey for a response rate of 47%. Analysis of program type for the total population revealed that 61.9% of the programs were RESAs, 0% were university/college-based programs, 9.5% were LEAs for public school systems, 14.3% were not a program provider, but rather an expert in the field or related field(s), and 14.3% reported as other. See Table 1.

For all Tables the population number (n) is equal to 44 which corresponds to the total number of participants who responded to the survey.

Table 1

<i>Types of Programs Surveyed</i>	
Program Type	%
RESA	61.9
University/College-Based Program	0.0
LEA	9.5
Not a Program Provider	14.3
Other	14.3
Total	100.0

Of the participants, 78.6% were Georgia Academy for Teacher Preparation and Pedagogy program providers (GaTAPP), which included the One-Year Supervised Practicum (OYSP) pathway, 9.5% were OYSP pathway providers only, and 11.9% were not a program provider, but rather an affiliate, such as support staff or an expert in the related field or field(s). See Table 2.

Table 2

<i>Participant Types</i>	
Participant	%
GaTAPP	78.6
OYSP	9.5
Not a Program Provider	11.9
Total	100.0

Of these programs, 4.8% reported that 0-10 teachers had successfully completed their programs since its inception, 26.2% reported 11-50 program completers, 9.5% reported 51-99 program completers, 38.1% reported more than 100 program completers, 11.9% reported they were not program providers, and 9.5% reported that they were unsure as to how many teachers were served in the program they operated and/or supported. See Table 3.

Table 3

<i>Program Completers</i>	
Program Completers	%
0-10	4.8
11-50	26.2
51-99	9.5
100+	38.1
Not a Program Provider	11.9
Unsure	9.5
Total	100.0

The participant demographics revealed that 2.4% had 0-3 years of experience in general education, 7.1% had 4-10 years, 28.6% had 11-20 years, and 61.9% had more than 20 years of experience in education. See Table 4.

Table 4

<i>Years of Experience Working in General Education</i>	
Experience Years in General Education	%
0-3	2.4
4-10	7.1
11-20	28.6
20+	61.9
Total	100.0

In addition, 45.2% had 0-3 years of experience in traditional teacher preparation and/or certification, 26.2% had 4-10 years, 11.9% had 11-20 years, and 16.7% had more than 20 years experience in teacher preparation and/or certification. See Table 5.

Table 5

<i>Years of Experience Working in Traditional Teacher Preparation</i>	
Experience Years in Traditional Teacher Preparation	%
0-3	45.2
4-10	26.2
11-20	11.9
20+	16.7
Total	100.0

Based on experience in non-traditional teacher preparation and/or certification, 28.6% had 0-3 years of experience, 57.1% had 4-10 years, 14.3% had 11-20, and 0% had more than 20 years of experience in non-traditional teacher preparation and certification.

See Table 6.

Table 6

<i>Years of Experience Working in Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation</i>	
Experience Years in Traditional Teacher Preparation	%
0-3	28.6
4-10	57.1
11-20	14.3
20+	0.0
Total	100.0

Of the participants, 19% held the highest degree of a doctorate, 50% held an educational specialist, 23.8% held a masters, 0% held a bachelors, 0% held an associates, 0% held a business certificate, and 7.2% reported that no degree was held. See Table 7.

Table 7

<i>Educational Background of Participants</i>	
Degree Level	%
Doctoral	19.0
Educational Specialist	50.0
Masters	23.8
Bachelors	0.0
Associates	0.0
Business Certificate	0.0
No Degree	7.2
Total	100.0

Of the participants, 45.2% reported GaTAPP programs that were successful overall with supporting data, 40.5% reported successful with limited supporting data (equating to a 85.7% success rate), 4.8% reported somewhat successful, but data were unclear, or the program was too new, or participants too few, to determine; zero percent reported unsuccessful and needs improvement and 9.5% indicated not a program provider. See Table 8.

Table 8

<i>Overall Success of GaTAPP Programs</i>	
Success of GaTAPP Programs	%
Successful Overall with Supporting Data	45.2
Successful with Limited Supporting Data	40.5
Somewhat Successful, Data Unclear	4.8
Unsuccessful and Needs improvement	0.0
Not a Program Provider	9.5
Total	100.0

## **Research Findings**

To answer the overarching research question and sub-questions, the researcher examined the data to determine the program exemplars within specified program component areas. The data were analyzed using statistical measures to compute percentages and mean scores for individual program exemplars, as well as program component areas. Because all of the program exemplars were identified in the literature as being evident of success in teacher preparation and certification programs, the researcher identified high levels of transferability and alignment for each program exemplar and program component area at or above 80%. A high rating only included the responses indicated as very well and well in terms of efficiently and effectively preparing teachers for classrooms. Program exemplars and program component areas reported as very well and well that were less than 80% were referred to as low transferability and alignment and required further inquiry. The research identified program exemplars at or above 10% based on the needs improvement scaled response and at or above 0.0% for the not evident response as extremely low transferability and alignment. Because the literature supported all of the program exemplars represented on the survey as being indicative of efficient teacher preparation, the levels of needs improvement and not evident were areas of extreme concern that needed further inquiry.

### **Transferability and Alignment of Program Exemplars All Responses**

Appendices D and E presented data that addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-questions one and two. Table D identified all 37 program exemplars with means and percentages for each of the four-scaled responses. Table D and E confirmed high transferability and alignment of the program exemplars at or above

80% for the response of very well and well. Of the program exemplars 32 out of 37 were reported at high levels of transferability at 86% (which is at or above the 80% baseline indicator). The program exemplars at very well and well reported below 80% were considered as low transferability and alignment and areas of concern. Of the program exemplars 5 out of 37 were reported at low levels of transferability at 14%.

According to the data, the overall the mean transferability and alignment levels for all of the 37 program exemplars collectively were as follows: 39.5% of the program exemplars were perceived by the participants as leading to efficient teacher preparation at very well, 48.3% as well (thus, equating to a high transferability and alignment [above 80%] at 87.8%), 9.7% at needs improvement, and 2.8% at not evident. For the 37 program exemplars, 17.1% of the program providers provided examples as to how their programs were providing efficient teacher preparation based on each of the specified program exemplars. See Table 9.

Table 9

*Transferability and Alignment (All Program Exemplars)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	43.9	48.8	7.3	0.0	26.8
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	39.0	58.5	2.4	0.0	29.3
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	41.5	56.1	4.9	0.0	22.0
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	48.8	43.9	7.3	0.0	19.5
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	41.5	48.8	9.8	0.0	17.1
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	12.2	61.0	26.8	0.0	14.6
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	14.6	53.7	26.8	4.9	19.5
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	61.0	36.6	2.4	0.0	19.5
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	51.2	46.3	0.0	2.4	19.5
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	36.6	48.8	12.2	2.4	22.0
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	48.8	39.0	9.8	4.9	19.5
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	7.3	51.2	29.3	14.6	14.6
PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	48.8	48.8	2.4	0.0	17.1



PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	24.4	51.2	14.6	9.8	14.6
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	22.0	58.5	17.1	2.4	19.5
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	48.8	43.9	4.9	2.4	22.0
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	43.9	51.2	2.4	2.4	12.2
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	34.1	48.8	14.6	4.9	14.6
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	61.0	36.6	2.4	0.0	17.1
PE 20	Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication.	56.1	36.6	7.3	0.0	17.1
PE 21	Teach students from a multicultural vantage point.	26.8	53.7	14.6	4.9	12.2
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	41.5	48.8	4.9	2.4	14.6
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	39.0	43.9	14.6	2.4	14.6
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	29.3	53.7	12.2	4.9	14.6

PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, & student development to plan instruction.	61.0	36.6	4.9	0.0	19.5
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	29.3	53.7	12.2	2.4	22.0
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	61.0	36.6	4.9	0.0	9.8
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	56.1	41.5	2.4	0.0	19.5
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	43.9	48.8	7.3	0.0	17.1
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	29.3	56.1	12.2	2.4	9.8
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	41.5	53.7	2.4	2.4	12.2
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	17.1	43.9	29.3	9.8	17.1
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	24.4	56.1	12.2	7.3	17.1
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	61.0	39.0	0.0	0.0	22.0
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	29.3	56.1	9.8	4.9	17.1
PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	29.3	56.1	4.9	9.8	14.6
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	56.1	39.0	4.9	0.0	0.0
Mean		39.5	48.3	9.7	2.8	17.1

Again, according to the data, the findings for individual program exemplars, 32 out of 37 program exemplars (87.8%) were indicated as transferable and aligned at very well or well (at or above 80%). The program exemplars reported below 80.0% included evaluate curriculum materials (73.2%), create interdisciplinary curriculum (68.3%), teach to support ESOL (58.5%), provide rationale for teaching decisions (75.6%), develop students' questioning and discussion skills (79.9%), and conduct inquiry or research to inform decisions (61%). See Table 10.

Table 10

*Transferability and Alignment (Program Exemplars Below 80%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	12.2	61.0	73.2
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	14.6	53.7	68.3
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	7.3	51.2	58.5
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	24.4	51.2	75.6
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	34.1	48.8	79.9
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	17.1	43.9	61.0

According to the data, non-traditional teacher preparation programs in Georgia had a noticeably high transferability and alignment (at or above 90%) and were worth highlighting in 19 of the 37 program exemplars=51%. The areas that included teach knowledge, concept, and skills (92.7%), understand how different students learn (97.5%), set challenging expectations (97.6%), help students achieve high standards (92.7%),

develop curriculum that builds on experience (90.3%), use instructional strategies (97.6%), relate learning to the real world (97.5%), choose teaching strategies for different purposes (97.6%), integrate instructional technology (92.7%), develop a classroom environment that promotes social development (95.1%), engage students in cooperative work (97.6%), use effective verbal and nonverbal communication (92.7%), use knowledge of learning, subject curriculum, and student development to plan instruction (97.6%), work with parents to better understand students (97.6%), use a variety of assessments (97.6%), give productive feedback (92.7%), evaluate the effects of actions and modify plans accordingly (95.2%), maintain discipline (100%), and preparedness for P-12 classrooms (95.1%). See Table 11.

Table 11

*Transferability and Alignment (Program Exemplars At or Above 90%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	39.0	58.5	97.5
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	41.5	56.1	97.6
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	48.8	43.9	92.7
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	41.5	48.8	90.3
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	51.2	46.3	97.5
PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	48.8	48.8	97.6
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	48.8	43.9	92.7

PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	43.9	51.2	95.1
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 20	Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication.	56.1	36.6	92.7
PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, and student development to plan instruction.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	56.1	41.5	97.6
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	41.5	53.7	95.2
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	61.0	39.0	100.0
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	56.1	39.0	95.1

The program exemplars reported as needs improvement (above 10%) included evaluate curriculum materials (26.8%), create interdisciplinary curriculum (26.8%), understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning (12.3%), teach to support ESOL (29.3%), provide rationale for teaching decisions (14.6%), help students become self-motivated (17.1%), teach students from a multicultural vantage point (14.6%), help students learn to think critically (12.2%), encourage students to interpret ideas from diverse perspectives (12.2%), understand how factors outside of school influence student learning (12.2%), help students assess their own learning (12.2%), conduct inquiry or research to inform decisions (29.3%), and resolve interpersonal conflict (12.2%). See Table 12.

Table 12

*Transferability and Alignment of Program Exemplars (Needs Improvement At or Above 10%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Needs Improvement (%)
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	26.8
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	26.8
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	12.2
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	29.3
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	14.6
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	17.1
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	14.6
PE 21	Teach students from a multicultural vantage point.	14.6
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	14.6
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	12.2
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	12.2
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	12.2
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	29.3
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	12.2

Program exemplars identified above 0.0% as not evident were in the areas of create interdisciplinary curriculum (4.9%), relate learning to the real world (2.4%), understand how social, emotional, physical and cognitive influence learning (2.4%), identify special learning needs (4.9%), teach to support ESOL (14.6%), provide rationale for teaching decisions (9.8%), help students become self-motivated (2.4%), integrate instructional technology (2.4%), develop a classroom environment that promotes social development (2.4%), develop students' questioning and discussion skills (4.9%), teach students from a multicultural vantage point (4.9%), use questions to simulate different kinds of learning (2.4%), help students learn to think critically (2.4%), encourage

students to interpret ideas from diverse perspectives (4.9%), understand how factors outside of school influence student learning (2.4%), help students assess their own learning (2.4%), evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly (2.4%), conduct inquiry or research to inform their decisions (9.8%), resolve interpersonal conflict (7.3%), plan and solve problems with colleagues (4.9%), and assume leadership responsibilities in the school (9.8%). Although all program exemplars reported at above 0% were attributes of concern, the data revealed that the baseline reporting indicator, collectively from all of the not evident responses all were reported below 10% by the program provider with the exception of teaching to support ESOL (14.6%). So although program exemplars were identified in these areas of concern, low percentages were reported in the 0-10% range with support ESOL as an outlier. See Table 13.

Table 13

*Transferability and Alignment of Program Exemplars (Not Evident At or Above 0%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Not Evident (%)
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	4.9
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	2.4
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	2.4
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	4.9
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	14.6
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	9.8
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated	2.4
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	2.4
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	2.4
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	4.9
PE 21	Teach students from a multicultural vantage point.	4.9
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	2.4

PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	2.4
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	4.9
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	2.4
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	2.4
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	2.4
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	9.8
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	7.3
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	4.9
PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	9.8

Overall, Appendices D and E addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-questions one and two. Program exemplars that were noted at or above 80% were considered to be highly transferable and aligned. Those exemplars indicated at or above 90% were highlighted. Program exemplars reported below 80% were considered as low transferability and alignment. Exemplars identified in the area of needs improvement at or above 10% and as not evident at or above 0% were reported and in need of further inquiry.

### **Transferability and Alignment of Program Areas Scaled Responses**

The program component areas were selected by the researcher based on the themes found among the 37 program exemplars (Appendix C). In addition, Appendix H provided the five identified component areas identified and tied each category to the specified literature to support the five areas selected and provide rationale for the categories selections. Appendices F and G presented the program exemplars by component areas and addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-questions one and two. The transferability and alignment of program exemplars were examined in the areas of curriculum and pedagogy (C), differentiation (D), assessment



(A), rigor and relevance (R), and professionalism and support (P). Each program exemplar was coded based on the five identified categories (Appendix C).

According to the data, the program component area of curriculum and pedagogy reported program exemplars transferable and aligned at very well with 43.4% and well at 45.1% for a total of 88.4% of program providers reporting that the program component area was indicative of efficient teacher preparation. Also in this program component area, program providers indicated needs improvement at 10.7%, and not evident at 1.7%. For the narrative responses, 16.8% of the participants provided narrative response examples for this category. See Table 14.

Table 14

*Program Component Areas: Curriculum and Pedagogy (C) (At or Above 80%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	C	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	C	41.5	48.8	90.3
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	C	12.2	61.0	73.2
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	C	14.6	53.7	68.3
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	C	61.0	36.6	97.6

PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	C	48.8	43.9	92.7
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	C	34.1	48.8	82.9
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	C	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 20	Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication.	C	56.1	36.6	92.7
PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, & student development to plan instruction.	C	61.0	36.6	97.6
Mean		C	43.4	45.1	88.4

Based on the data, the program component area of differentiation reported program exemplars transferable and aligned for very well at 35.1% and well at 49.7% for a total of 84.8% of program providers reporting that the program component area was indicative of efficient teacher preparation. In addition, in this program component area, program providers indicated needs improvement at 11.3%, and not evident at 4.3%. For the narrative responses, 17.1% of the participants provided narrative response examples for this category. See Table 15.

Table 15

*Program Component Areas Exemplars: Differentiation (D) (At or Above 80%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	D	39.0	58.5	97.5
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	D	48.8	39.0	87.8
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	D	7.3	51.2	58.5

PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	D	48.8	48.8	97.6
PE 21	Teach students from a multicultural vantage point.	D	26.8	53.7	80.5
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	D	41.5	48.8	90.3
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	D	39.0	43.9	82.9
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	D	29.3	53.7	83.0
Mean		D	35.1	49.7	84.8

According to the data, the program component area of assessment reported program exemplars transferable and aligned at very well with 38.2% and well with 50.0% for a total of 88.2% of program providers reporting that the program component area was indicative of efficient teacher preparation. Also in this program component area, program providers indicated needs improvement at 9.8%, and not evident at 2.4%. For the narrative responses, 16.3% of the participants provided narrative response examples for this category. See Table 16.

Table 16

*Program Component Areas Exemplars: Assessment (A) (at or Above 80%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	A	41.5	56.1	97.6
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	A	56.1	41.5	97.6
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	A	43.9	48.8	92.7

PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	A	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	A	41.5	53.7	95.2
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	A	17.1	43.9	61.0
Mean		A	38.2	50.0	88.2

The program component area of rigor and relevance reported program exemplars transferable and aligned with very well at 42.0% and well at 47.7% for a total of 89.7% of program providers reporting that the program component area was indicative of efficient teacher preparation. In addition, in this program component area, program providers indicated needs improvement at 7.9%, and not evident at 2.4%. For the narrative responses, 17.9% of the participants provided narrative response examples for this category. See Table 17.

Table 17

*Program Component Areas Exemplars: Rigor and Relevance (R) (at or Above 80%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	R	48.8	43.9	92.7
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	R	51.2	46.3	97.5
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	R	36.6	48.8	85.4
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	R	24.4	51.2	75.6

PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	R	22.0	58.5	80.5
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	R	43.9	51.2	95.1
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	R	29.3	53.7	83.0
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	R	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	R	61.0	39.0	100.0
Mean		R	42.0	47.7	89.7

According to the data, the program component area of professionalism and support reported program exemplars transferable and aligned for very well at 34.8% and well at 51.8% for a total of 86.6% of program providers reporting that the program component area was indicative of efficient teacher preparation. In addition, in this program component area, program providers indicated needs improvement at 8.0%, and not evident at 8.0%. For the narrative responses, 12.2% of the participants provided narrative response examples for this category. See Table 18.

Table 18

*Program Component Areas Exemplars: Professionalism (P) (at or Above 80%)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	P	24.4	56.1	80.5
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	P	29.3	56.1	85.4

PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	P	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	P	56.1	39.0	95.1
Mean		P	34.8	51.8	86.6

Overall, according to Appendices F and G, all five of the categories, which collectively contained each of the 37 program exemplars were reported by program providers as being highly transferable and aligned to their respective GaTAPP programs as indicated by percentages at or above 80%. The program exemplar component area of curriculum and pedagogy was reported as high transferability and alignment with an overall efficiency of 88.4%. The program exemplar component area of differentiation was reported as an overall efficiency of 84.8%. The program exemplar component area of assessment was reported as an overall efficiency of 88.2%. The program exemplar component area of rigor and relevance was reported as an overall efficiency of 89.7%. The program exemplar component area of professionalism and support was reported as an overall efficiency of 86.6%.

Thus, Appendices F and G addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-question one and two. The findings demonstrated that programs were efficiently implementing program exemplars in each of the five categories, which provided conclusive support that the program exemplars identified in the literature were highly transferable and aligned from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation. Participants reported needs improvement or not evident at less than 15% for all five program component areas. This demonstrated the GaTAPP programs were not weak in any specified area, but rather were offering well-balanced teacher preparation programs.

The attributes of concern with low transferability and alignment called for further inquiry to make certain programs included all 37 program exemplars identified in the literature as being indicative of successful teacher preparation.

### **Transferability and Alignment of Program Areas Narrative Responses**

The researcher examined the feedback from the program providers' narrative responses and compiled an outline of the trends and patterns noted in each of the five component areas. The researcher compiled the narrative responses in a summary to better understand what was needed for the GaTAPP program to efficiently prepare highly effective teachers. Each component area contained the elements that were noted more than once by the program provider in their narrative responses or were specifically highlighted and emphasized. The attributes selected for discussion encompassed what was being implemented by programs to ensure teacher quality based on the program exemplars grouped into one of the five component areas (i.e., C, D, A, R, P).

In the area of curriculum and pedagogy (C), program providers stated repeatedly that initial and ongoing training and seminars were important for candidates to learn the curriculum and pedagogy needed for initial teacher training. A focus on standards-based learning, which included courses to teach content, curriculum, and pedagogy were indicative of success. Candidates provided examples of lesson and unit plans and documented how they assessed impact on student learning. Providers emphasized the importance of rubric assessments that incorporated technology and reading and writing across the curriculum. The GaTAPP program was noted as a portfolio-based program. Providers requested curriculum materials be designed by program coordinators. Candidates planned as a group and work has an interdisciplinary focus. All teachers were

required to bridge the gap between disciplines in creative ways. Programs were intended to measure active engagement. Candidates were given instruction in the art of teacher questioning and discussion. Supplemental research articles and small-group discussions were indicated as important for program success. Participation in different models for cooperative learning were utilized. Classroom management strategies were stressed. Reflective journaling was used as a strategy for program reflection. Effective communication was noted. Lastly, the utilization of an online system (i.e., LiveText) was mentioned as the delivery tool for professional learning and training.

In the area of differentiation (D), program providers included examples such as initial and ongoing training and seminars to help candidates be better prepared to provide instruction through a variety of learning strategies. Teachers utilized differentiation tactics in their classroom daily. Evidence of differentiation was provided in portfolio work. Candidates sought to understand the needs of English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), special education, gifted, and poverty students. Programs emphasized cultural diversity and teachers were required to meet the needs of students from diverse perspectives. Candidates were trained to promote a culture of learning through diversity.

In the area of assessment (A), program providers included examples such as initial and ongoing training and seminars to provide professional learning about assessment. Candidates were trained in the application of "best practices" to help students reach individual learning goals. A data-driven approach, where pre- and post-testing was conducted to see how to plan for future instruction was implemented. Teachers used benchmark data to isolate weaknesses of students and address the need to remediate. The



use of assessment to drive instruction was at the forefront of the program. Candidates were required to deconstruct standards to create clear learning goals and outcomes. Teachers used formative and summative (balanced) assessments. Formative assessment and progress monitoring was needed to abide by Georgia State Standards to understand where a student is related to a standard and to know how to better help the student make gains and show growth through standards-based instruction. Teachers worked on grouping students within the classroom to both accelerate and remediate for all students. Candidates provided examples of student work as evidence of student progress. Teachers developed effective rubrics to evaluate student work with commentary.

The creation of an Individualized Induction Plans (IIP) allowed all teachers to set goals at the start of the program that aligned to the program competencies required for successful completion (based on the work of Charlotte Danielson, 2006) and these goals drove program transition. Self-assessment and reflection were integral to candidates assessing their own abilities. Teachers did post observation reflections based on how their lessons went and also made use of testing data to guide future instruction. Teachers were required to complete an assessment of their unit plan and impact on student learning via a self-assessment rubric. Teachers were required to provide evidence of a data collection and showed the use of data in developing future lesson plans and goals. Teachers engaged in action research and peer-reviewed professional readings. Upon entry, teachers wrote teaching philosophies and updated them as they transitioned through the program. Teachers focused on what worked in the classroom and engaged in peer discussion to inform decisions. Program providers gathered evidence that teachers met the competencies and dispositions to teach that are GaTAPP program standards as

outlined by the GaPSC. Repeatedly noted was that the teacher conducted assessment for continuous improvement. In addition, schools used the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System as an evaluation tool to assess candidates' performance within the classroom.

In the area of rigor and relevance (R), program providers included examples such as setting high expectations for program completion and outcomes. Professional development focused on rigor and relevance and was stated as the main intent of the program. Initial and ongoing training and seminars were designed to be challenging. High expectations and professional advancement for teachers were discussed in all classes. Teachers had an extended focus on student use of critical thinking and reasoning skills. Teachers did lesson planning and submitted unit plans showing rigor and relevance. Classroom observations with feedback focused on setting high standards.

Supervisors and mentors looked for real world connections in lessons observed and in lesson plans. Programs had a consistent emphasis on relevance and transfer of learning. Candidates were encouraged to use community resources. Teachers made real-world connections with curriculum and pedagogy. Participants reported an understanding of the age group and their characteristics to teach in a meaningful manner. The utilization of group work so that lessons were interactive and meaningful with a focus on cognitive skills development was important. Rationales were required for portfolio assignments and seminar discussions to make certain work was rigorous. Teachers provided a philosophy to students and parents explaining classroom procedures, rationales, and expectations for success. Teacher communicated to parents via logs to ensure that students were successful. Video walk-through of the classroom were done by teachers to show the set-up, explain the purpose for layout, and highlight important room

features to ensure an environment that is inviting, engaging, and conducive to learning. Good classroom climate was vital and needed an environment that supported rigor and relevance. Teachers were encouraged to become teacher leaders and show students the importance of working within their school and the community.

In the area of professionalism and support (P), program providers included examples such as initial and ongoing training and seminars for professional learning, specifically in the area of ethics. Ongoing supervision throughout the program was important. Teachers engaged in continuous relationship building. Teachers were supported in the development of effective communication and organizational systems within and outside of the classroom. Effective communication was expected by the teacher with both students and parents, as well as the community. A strong mentor-teacher relationship was required for success. Teachers navigated relationships with mentors, administrators, staff and other faculty, GaTAPP program supervisor and director. Coaching and modeling helped teachers grow as professionals. Pertinent stakeholders worked together as a team and met periodically to discuss program transition. Meeting weekly with grade level teachers to develop lesson and unit plans was essential. Teachers attended professional conferences. A classroom management plan was required to provide teachers with support in this area where teachers were considered by many providers to struggle most. Classroom observations with feedback in the areas of instruction and professionalism were vital. Teachers sought opportunities that demonstrated innovation in the classroom and worked with colleagues to come up with school improvement ideas. Teachers were expected to work in a professional capacity at all times. Dispositions ratings were provided to teachers on a periodic basis to

monitor professionalism. Teachers used reflective journaling and communication with the cohort to become a better teacher. Participation logs were required to indicate the roles and responsibilities that the teacher held in the school that resulted in leadership duties. Teachers were expected to move toward being a teacher leader in their school, setting the best example both ethically and academically and teachers were encouraged to serve in a variety of leadership roles.

### **Program Exemplars Beyond the Survey**

Based on the knowledge of individual GaTAPP programs or knowledge of programs across Georgia, the perceptions of program exemplars that were pertinent in preparing highly effective teacher for P-12 classrooms, but were not identified in the survey were noted. However, a multitude of participants indicated that the survey adequately identified the program exemplars needed to prepare highly effective teachers.

The elements of teacher preparation that were indicated as not being represented on the survey were grouped based on themes that emerged from the data that aligned within the five component areas. In the area of curriculum and pedagogy, program providers stated that individuals with no teaching experience should be expected to take the education courses that were required for traditional teacher preparation via colleges and universities. An important finding was that professional learning was needed because one provider explained that on-the-job support was limited and another mentioned that there was no back-up plan for those who are unsuccessful in the program. A provider further explained that professional learning was important since non-traditional teacher education programs were not viewed positively in the education arena because they did not adequately prepare teachers for success in classrooms. Training in

state and personal ethics was identified a multitude of times as being important to candidates.

One provider believed that the survey did attempt to capture the “heart” of the teacher, but could have been better designed to delve deeper into what it means to be a *good teacher*. Building a transition plan for those entering teaching from outside the profession was provided as a sound example of setting teachers up for success. Content knowledge and thinking outside of the box were stated as important for candidates to achieve success in the classroom. Training in standards-based classroom practices that support instruction were necessary. One provider indicated that the ability to differentiate instruction for candidates was important, since program providers encouraged their teachers to use differentiation in the classroom, they believed the program should be delivered through many learning modes such as readings, videos, case studies, action research, online systems, demonstration and modeling, personal tutoring, directed study, and remediation if needed to become life-long learners in the field of education. Training to evaluate, reflect, and strengthen the dispositions necessary to become an effective teacher were also stressed.

In the area of differentiation, program providers noted that field experiences to provide opportunities to observe teachers in diverse classroom setting and to reflect on those experiences were pertinent, as well as recruiting diverse teachers to match the diversity of school populations. Also, important was the ability of the teacher to differentiate within teaching and learning on a daily basis to address diverse student populations.

In the area of assessment, program providers noted that GaTAPP assessors needed to use formative assessment of skills and knowledge to evaluate candidates. One provider stated that the use of common assessments is a strength in the state-wide GaTAPP program and could be reflected on the survey. Inter-rater reliability studies were suggested to see if what one provider considered to be a *well-prepared candidate* was the same as what another GaTAPP provider considered to be a *well-prepared candidate*.

In the area of rigor and relevance, program providers noted that both were crucial to the success of the GaTAPP program. Mentioned numerous times was that the program provided candidates with a challenging plan of action to make the candidate the best teacher possible.

In the area of professionalism and support, program providers stated that the survey should put emphasis on communication, as communication is something many candidates struggle with during the program. Effective professionalism and communication were often lacking in candidates when they began the program, but improved as teachers progressed through the program. Nurturing positive relationships with students and colleagues was essential. Developing “appropriate” relationships with students was also mentioned. The Candidate Support Team (CST) made up of an administrator, mentor, and program provider was very relevant to the success or failure of the candidate. Every candidate needed a strong, successful mentor and administrator or instructional coach who were well trained regarding his or her work with the candidate to be successful in the classroom. The importance of modeling and providing feedback on

classroom procedures were deemed important in understanding the foundation of a healthy classroom environment.

Overall, the narrative responses provided by program providers not represented in the survey, but were regarded as important to effective teacher preparation addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-question three. These questions were addressed by identifying examples of attributes that were being implemented in the GaTAPP in the five identified component areas (C, D, A, R, P) to better understand what program providers perceived as being indicative of their program's success, but were not represented on the survey.

### **Chapter Summary**

The chapter presented the research findings in terms of alignment and transferability of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation. The statistical analyses included individual percentages and means for each of the 37 program exemplars, as well as categorical data from the five specified program component areas (curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, professionalism and support). Overall, the findings showed that a substantial number of the identified program exemplars were aligned and transferable at very well and well. Collectively, the computed overall mean for 32/37 program exemplars at 87.8% was at or above 80% indicating high transferability and alignment. The program exemplars were reported at extremely high transferability and alignment at or above 90% for 19 out of the 37 program exemplars equating to 51%. From the program exemplars, 5 out of 37 were identified as low levels of transferability and alignment below 80% representing 14%.

Any program exemplar identified as needs improvement at or above 10% and not evident at or above 0% were considered as low transferability and alignment. Those program exemplars indicated as low transferability and alignment were areas of concern and needed further inquiry. The narrative responses were provided to support the scaled responses and further explain how each exemplar was being implemented in specified providers' programs for each of 37 program exemplars. The responses were examined for themes to go beyond the Likert scale data and better understand how the program providers utilized the program exemplars in their individualized programs or programs that they worked with.

These narrative examples were placed into five different categories (curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, professionalism and support) based on the trends and patterns found among the 37 program exemplars. Because the literature identified all program exemplars represented on the survey as being indicative of efficient teacher preparation, the program exemplars that were noted as of attributes of concern needed to be furthered examined in an effort to make certain that the required attributes for teacher preparation are in all alternative teacher preparation pathways. In addition, the narrative responses that were identified from program providers that they deemed important, but that were not represented on the survey were reviewed. These responses that went beyond the survey were also categorized based on the five identified component areas selected as a comprehensive representation of the overall 37 program exemplars identified in the published work of Danielson, 2006.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Summary**

Teacher preparation and certification programs should rely on program exemplars that have been proven efficient in preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. Quality teacher preparation is needed to address high teacher attrition rates and increase the number of highly effective teachers. A shortage of highly effective teachers continues in public schools across the nation; hence, initiatives should be started to whereby experts in the fields of education, and those outside of education (from the workforce) encourage professional to enter the teaching. With the charter school movement on the rise nationally and in Georgia, the shortage of highly effective teachers will continue to present a problem, particularly for newly opening charter schools. Charter school teachers need teacher preparation pathways that meet the unique needs of sector, in addition, they need training in best practices to be efficiently and effectively prepared for P-12 classrooms.

If teacher preparation is to improve, states need to focus on educational reforms that improves teacher training for those entering the profession. Teacher preparation needs to extend beyond traditional, university-based pathways to prepare a sufficient number of highly effective teachers, specifically in critical needs and subject areas such as mathematics, foreign languages, and special education. Alternative teacher preparation and certification programs are needed to support innovative practices (e.g., the charter sector), which are often not addressed in traditional teacher preparation (Gatlin, 2008). Thus, in an effort to ensure that an adequate number of effective teachers are entering

classrooms, non-traditional avenues to earn teacher licensure need to be a viable option in meeting the staffing needs of public schools.

The procedures for this study involved conducting a comprehensive literature review and gathering data about program exemplars indicative of efficient traditional, and non-traditional, teacher preparation and certification. The research yielded 37 program exemplars that resulted in efficient teacher preparation. These 37 program exemplars were identified in a seminal study conducted by a leading researcher in the field of teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The program exemplars were categorized into five different areas including curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, and professionalism and support based on the themes that emerged after careful examination of the original survey.

A survey was created based on this literature review and directly aligned to 37 program exemplars identified by Darling-Hammond (2006) with reference to the attributes that were needed for efficient teacher preparation pathways. The researcher reviewed the program exemplars for trends and identified five component areas based on the findings from a research study with NAAC and Ohio State University. This study was provided to the researcher as raw unpublished data through work on a taskforce with the GaPSC. Based on the data, five program component areas were identified that fit all 37 program exemplars and included curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, and professionalism and support.

## **Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

### **Demographic Findings**

The survey yielded a 47% response rate with 44/93 program providers, support staff, or experts in the field (or related field(s)) participating in the survey. This met the objective of reaching a response rate of above 30% (Cook, Heath, & Thompson, 2000). The majority of the program providers were working for a RESA, but input was also provided by experts in the field or related field(s), as well as from school systems and LEAs providing a well-rounded perspective about the quality of non-traditional teacher preparation across Georgia. The most significant programs represented were comprehensive GaTAPP programs with multiple pathways, which housed the OYSP pathway, and a few were OYSP program providers only. Less than 5% of the participants reported 10 or fewer teachers prepared through their programs, thereby demonstrating that these agencies were established non-traditional teacher preparation programs. A very small percentage of participants reported having three or fewer years of experience in education in general; however, 45.2% reported 0-3 years of experience in teacher preparation and certification. Non-traditional teacher preparation experience was evident in that 30% had 4-20 years or more of experience.

Half of the participants held a degree of educational specialist, and 19% held the terminal degree of a doctorate. Twenty-three percent held a master's degree, and no respondents held a bachelor's degree alone, hence the most program providers held an advanced degree beyond the bachelors. However, the survey further revealed that 7% held no degree at all, which may have negatively affected the findings due to lack of expertise.

Participants reported an 85.7% overall program success rate. Success was defined as scores on the Likert-scaled items of “successful with supporting evidence”, as well as “successful with limited supporting evidence” in preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. No respondents reported “seldom successful with limited retention in the program” or “unsuccessful and needs improvement”. Thus, the results demonstrate that program providers considered their programs to be successful overall.

### **Transferability and Alignment of Program Exemplars Scaled Responses**

The transferability and alignment data for the scaled program responses addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-question one and two. The mean transferability and alignment for 32 out of the 37 program exemplars were reported at above 80% in the scaled responses of “very well” and “well”. Baseline indicators were set to indicate which program exemplars were playing a role in the preparation of teachers via alternative pathways. Program providers reported the majority of program exemplars at above 80%, which was evidence that the identified program exemplars were transferable and aligned from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation. Each program exemplar was supported with a narrative response to find examples of what was working in the providers’ respective programs or the program that their affiliates supported. Examples were provided for all program exemplars and went beyond what could have only been identified via the scaled responses.

Very high transferability and alignment scores (above 90%) were noted in areas such as teaching knowledge, concept, and skills, understanding how different students learn, helping students achieve high standards, choosing teaching strategies for different purposes, integrating instructional technology, using effective communication, using

knowledge of learning, subject curriculum, and student development to plan instruction, working with parents to better understand students, using a variety of assessments, giving productive feedback, evaluating the effects of actions and modifying plans accordingly, maintaining discipline, and being prepared for P-12 classrooms.

Areas of weakness were indicated as program exemplars reported as “needs improvement” (above 10%). These included elements such as evaluating curriculum materials, creating interdisciplinary curriculum, understanding how developmental skills influence learning, teaching to support ESOL, providing rationale for teaching decisions, helping students become self-motivated, teaching students from a multicultural vantage point, helping students learn to think critically, encouraging students to interpret ideas from diverse perspectives, helping students assess their own learning, conducting inquiry to inform decisions, and resolving interpersonal conflict.

Program exemplars identified as “not evident” (above 0.0%) were in the areas such as creating interdisciplinary curriculum, relating learning to the real world, understanding how social and developmental skills influence learning, identifying special learning needs, teaching to support ESOL, providing rationale for teaching decisions, helping students become self-motivated, integrating instructional technology, developing students’ questioning and discussion skills to simulate different kinds of learning, teaching students from a multicultural vantage point, helping students learn to think critically, encouraging students to interpret ideas from diverse perspectives, understanding how factors outside of school influence student learning, helping students assess their own learning, evaluating the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly, conducting inquiry to inform their decisions, resolving interpersonal

conflict, planning and solving problems with colleagues, and assuming leadership responsibilities in the school.

### **Transferability and Alignment of Program Areas Narrative Responses**

Several of the narrative responses program providers indicated that the training of ESOL was weak and needed further development. Questioning and discussion skills were reported and referred to the training in the art of questioning technique as an important aspect of programs. The narrative responses also repeatedly addressed training in unit and lesson planning, which would result in strong curriculum development, but was noted also as an area of concern by providers. Diversity was acknowledged as needing to be enhanced, was stated in the responses as being pertinent to GaTAPP training, and should be further explored. Technology integration was mentioned as necessary to teacher's successful performance in the classroom and many programs were delivered with an online learning tool. Effective communication was evident. Because program providers reported the maintenance of discipline at 100%, it was evident that the GaTAPP programs focused on classroom management. Thus, further evidence for the support of the identified program exemplars was noted beyond the scaled responses in the narrative examples provided by program providers.

In addition, the alignment and transferability of program exemplars were examined in the areas of curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, and professionalism and support. The program component area of curriculum and pedagogy reported program exemplars aligned and transferable at very well and well with a success rate of 88.4%, differentiation at 84.8%, assessment at 88.2%, rigor and relevance at 89.7%, and professionalism and support at 86.6%. Thus, the findings

demonstrated that programs were efficiently implementing program exemplars in each of the five categories, which provided conclusive support that the program exemplars identified in the literature were transferable and aligned from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation and that programs were well-balanced based on the component areas. Participants reported needs improvement or not evident at less than 15% for all five program component areas, with the closest being 10.7% reported as needs improvement in the area of curriculum and pedagogy. Curriculum and pedagogy yielded a percentage of 1.7% as not evident. Differentiation was reported at 11.3% in needs improvement and 4.3% as not evident. Assessment was reported at 9.8% and 2.4% respectively. Rigor and relevance were reported at 9.8% and 2.4%. Lastly, professionalism and support were reported at 7.9% and 2.4%. These low percentages demonstrated that GaTAPP programs were not weak in one specified area, but rather were offering well-balanced teacher preparation programs via non-traditional means.

The transferability and alignment data for the narrative responses based on the scaled program responses addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-question one and two. The researcher examined the feedback from the program providers' narrative responses and compiled an outline of the trends and patterns grouped into each of the five component areas. The researcher compiled the narrative responses in a summary with highlighted program exemplars to understand what was needed for the GaTAPP program to efficiently prepare highly effective teachers based on the themes that emerged. Each component area contained the elements that were noted more than once by the program provider in their narrative response. The researcher focused on what was believed to have encompassed what the GaTAPP program providers identified

as leading to quality programs. Also, each of the component areas were tied to pertinent research from the literature review to provide support for the best practices that were deemed important for efficient teacher preparation.

**Program Area: Curriculum and Pedagogy**

Based on the examples provided by program providers and their affiliates, themes were noted in the area of curriculum and pedagogy. These themes included teacher preparation programs that focused their efforts on ensuring that teachers had strong content expertise and that teachers were provided research-based instructional strategies to most effectively teach (Miller, 2003). Teacher quality influences every aspect of student learning. The quality of a teacher preparation experience, and how well this professional learning is tied to relevant pedagogical practices, influences students' academic performance (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2009). Program providers credited coursework (through distance learning, intensive workshops, and seminars) as essential for a successful teacher preparation program. Most alternative certification programs required individuals to have some form of content expertise prior to teaching or to enroll in coursework and professional learning that is content-specific (Yancey, 2006). Because of the possible abbreviated nature of non-traditional certification programs, professional learning was likely approached differently for those who were trained in traditional teacher preparation programs (Qu & Becker, 2003). Teachers trained through alternative routes often lacked an understanding of pedagogy, instructional strategies, classroom management, and students' social and academic developmental needs; thus, comprehensive and relevant professional learning was essential (Nagy & Wang, 2007).



Quality program exemplars included a rigorous but flexible selection process and teacher education that delivered appropriate content and pedagogy training (Gatlin, 2008; Saphier, Freedman, & Aschheim, 2001). Program exemplars to include rigorous screening processes, such as passing tests and interviews, mastery of content, performance-based programs, and coursework or equivalent experiences in professional learning before and during teaching were important (Gatlin, 2008). Some key characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs included extensive pedagogical training in instruction, management and curriculum and practice in lesson planning and teaching (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002).

Several outcomes ascertained the overall quality of alternative certification programs by assessing such elements as attracting and following teachers with needed qualities and interests, retaining teachers in the program, enhancing student achievement, and providing professional development. Basic subject matter knowledge was essential, but the extent of pedagogical training also made a difference in teacher quality and effectiveness. Program exemplars pertaining to sound curriculum implementation, differentiation of teaching and learning, assessment practices, relevance and rigor, and professionalism and support need to be evident in both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation to ensure teachers are prepared for P-12 classrooms (Hawley, 1992).

In the area of curriculum and pedagogy (C) and in conjunction with the literature above, program providers stated repeatedly that initial and ongoing training and seminars were important for candidates to learn the curriculum and pedagogy with a focus on active engagement. A focus on standards-based and interdisciplinary learning, which included courses to teach content, curriculum, and pedagogy were indicative of success.

All teachers were required to bridge the gap between disciplines in creative ways. Candidates provided examples of lesson and unit plans and documented how they assessed impact on student learning. Providers emphasized the importance of technology integration and reading and writing across the curriculum. Portfolio-based work was deemed pertinent. Candidates were given instruction in effective questioning and discussion. Supplemental research articles and small-group discussions were reported as important for program success. Classroom management strategies for success were stressed. Reflective journaling was used as a strategy for program reflection. Encouragement of teacher to communicate effectively was noted.

### **Program Area: Differentiation**

A key characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs is working with diverse learners (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002). According to Chin and Young (2007), programs must prepare teachers to function effectively in varied situations and circumstances, and teachers' backgrounds and experiences helped to determine which teaching circumstances foster higher retention of alternatively certified teachers. Program exemplars such as creating interdisciplinary curriculum, identifying and addressing differentiated learning needs, and helping all students achieve high academic standards were pertinent to quality teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

In conjunction with the literature above, program providers included examples in the area of differentiation (D) such as initial and ongoing training and seminars to help candidates differentiate classroom instruction. Evidence of differentiation was provided by teachers in their portfolio work. Candidates needed to understand the needs of ESOL, special education, gifted, and poverty students. Programs emphasized cultural diversity

and teachers were required to meet the needs of students from diverse perspectives. Candidates were trained to promote a culture of learning through diversity.

### **Program Area: Assessment**

Teacher licensure should validate through assessment measures that teachers who enter classrooms are prepared to teach their required subject matter in their specific grade level and improve student achievement (James & McNiece, 1991). In the area of assessment (A) and in conjunction with the literature above, program providers included examples such as initial and ongoing training and seminars to provide professional learning about assessment via best practices. A data-driven approach, where pre- and post-testing are conducted to determine how to plan for future instruction. Teachers used benchmark data to isolate student weaknesses and remediate as needed, as well as accelerate for those that were making higher achievement gains. The use of assessment to drive instruction was vital. Candidates were required to deconstruct standards to create sound learning goals and outcomes.

Teachers used formative and summative (balanced) assessment to abide by Georgia state standards. Candidates provided examples of student work as evidence of student progress developed effective rubrics to evaluate student work with commentary. Teachers posted observation reflections based on how their lessons went. Teachers engaged in action research and professional readings to remain current on best practices. Teachers focused on what worked in the classroom and engaged in peer discussion and professional development to inform decisions. Candidates' performance within the classroom was assessed continually. Program providers gathered evidence that teachers met competencies and dispositions that are GaTAPP program standards as outlined by the

GaPSC. Self-assessment and reflection were integral to candidates assessing their own abilities. The creation of an Individualized Induction Plans (IIP) allowed all teachers to set goals at the start of the program that aligned to the program requirements (based on the work of Charlotte Danielson) and these goals drove program transition and completion.

### **Program Area: Rigor and Relevance**

High performance standards for program completion were indicative of successful programs (Gatlin, 2008). Some characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs included high entrance standards, frequent and substantial evaluation, and program completion standards and requirements (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002). Alternative teacher certification programs vary in structure, duration, intensity, curriculum, participant characteristics, and the targeted market (Mitchell & Romero, 2010).

In conjunction with the literature, program providers included examples in the area of rigor and relevance (R) such as setting high expectations for program completion and outcomes. Initial and ongoing training and seminars were rigorous, relevant, and challenging. High expectations were reinforced in all classes. Portfolio work was required and needed to be supported by rationales for selection of artifacts. Teachers had an extended focus on student use of critical thinking and reasoning skills. Teachers conducted lesson planning and submitted unit plans showing rigor and relevance. Classroom observations with feedback focused on setting high standards for classroom instruction with learning goals and outcomes. Supervisors and mentors looked for real-world connections in lessons observed and in lesson planned. Programs had a consistent

emphasis on relevance and transfer of learning. Candidates were encouraged to use community resources and make real-world connections with curriculum and pedagogy. Teachers had an understanding of the age group and their characteristics to teach in a meaningful manner. Teachers utilized group work so that lessons were interactive and meaningful and focused on developmental skills. Positive classroom climate was crucial and required an environment that supported rigor and relevance.

### **Program Area: Professionalism and Support**

Working with mentor and/or other support personnel to support transition from teacher preparation to the classroom is essential (Gatlin, 2008). A key trait of high quality alternative teacher certification programs is extensive mentoring and supervision (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002). Strong mentoring and coaching support is pertinent to the progression and transition of teachers in teacher preparation programs (Arias & Scafidi, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Teachers receiving either informal mentoring indicated that it helped strengthen and facilitate their classroom teaching (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006). Making a positive transition from teacher preparation to the classroom depends immensely on the extensive and efficient support provided by principals, mentors, districts, and all pertinent stakeholders involved in the learning community (Nakai & Turley, 2003). Quality program exemplars included strong partnerships between preparation programs and school districts via a strong support system (Gatlin, 2008; Saphier, Freedman, & Aschheim, 2001).

Nakai and Turley's (2003) studied alternative routes to certification. These authors showed that support for new teachers is essential for maintaining professionalism. Also the support given must include guidance on the daily routines of the classroom

including attendance, recordkeeping, discipline, collaboration with peers to gain assistance for curriculum planning, and mentor support. Teachers considered their most relevant learning opportunities as those embedded in their daily routines at school, including those both inside and outside of the classroom. Providing teachers with scheduled school-wide duties and responsibilities, such as recess monitoring, tutoring, and attendance at staff meetings, planning, and implementation of school-wide events, helped teacher candidates develop ownership and become better prepared professionals (Yancy, 2006). It is vital for teachers to be in control of their own educational advancement and to fulfill their objectives. This may occur through professional development via practical seminars, pedagogical activities, and by means of the assessment and evaluation process (Ignat & Clipa, 2010).

Program providers included examples in the area of professionalism and support (P) such as initial and ongoing training and seminars for professional learning, including ethics training. Ongoing supervision throughout the program was important. Strong mentor-teacher relationships were required for success. Coaching and modeling helped teachers grow as professionals. Teacher-navigated relationships with mentors, administrators, staff and other faculty, program supervisor, and program directors who worked together as a team ensured successful program transition. Teachers were encouraged to promote and work with colleagues to develop school improvement ideas. Effective communication was expected among the teacher, students, parents, and the community. Teachers were expected to work in a professional capacity at all times. Disposition ratings were provided to teachers on a periodic basis to monitor professionalism. Teachers used reflective journals and communication with the cohort to

become a better teacher. Participation logs were required to indicate roles and responsibilities in school that resulted in leadership responsibilities. The teacher was expected to move toward being a teacher leader in their school, setting the best examples both ethically and academically, as well as serving in a variety of leadership roles for professional advancement.

In an open-ended response, providers noted their perceptions of program exemplars that were not identified by the survey. However, several participants indicated that the survey adequately identified the program exemplars needed to prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 education.

### **Program Exemplars Beyond the Survey**

The program exemplars provided beyond the survey by program providers addressed the overarching research question, as well as sub-question three. The elements needed for teacher preparation via the GaTAPP that were not represented on the survey were grouped based on themes that emerged from the data that aligned within the five component areas. In the area of curriculum and pedagogy, program providers stated that individuals with no teaching experience should be expected to take education courses. Content knowledge was reported as important for candidates. Training in standards-based instruction that supports best practices was said to be necessary. The ability of programs to differentiate modes of instruction for candidates was important. One of the most important elements mentioned was the need to understand and capture the “heart” of the teacher, as this should be the sole driver in the reform of teacher preparation, if we are to truly revamp teacher training and ensure that all teachers are adequately prepared for P-12 classrooms.

In the area of differentiation, program providers noted that field experiences to provide opportunities to observe teachers in diverse settings and to reflect on those experiences were pertinent. Teachers needed to be able to differentiate to address the individualized needs of each student. Also important was the need to recruit diverse teachers to meet the diversity of school populations.

In the area of assessment, program providers noted that GaTAPP assessors needed to use formative and summative assessments of skills and knowledge to evaluate their candidates. The use of common assessments is a strength in the state-wide GaTAPP program. Inter-rater reliability studies were suggested to make sure that performance evaluations were consistent from assessor to assessor.

In the area of rigor and relevance, program providers noted that both were pertinent to the success of the GaTAPP program and that the program provided candidates with a challenging plan of action to allow them to grow professionally to become efficient teachers.

In the area of professionalism and support, program providers stated that the survey should emphasize teachers' communication skills. Nurturing positive and appropriate relationships with students and colleagues was essential. Lastly, the importance of modeling and providing feedback on classroom procedures and performance was deemed important in understanding the foundation of a healthy classroom environment.

### **Conclusions**

The growing shortage of highly effective teachers in P-12 public schools is alarming (Donaldson, 2011). With a limited teacher pool to hire from, alternative routes



to teacher preparation and certification will need to become the norm for public schools to hire highly effective, certified teachers. In addition, charter schools need a viable pool of qualified teachers to keep pace with this growing charter sector, and current high teacher attrition rates. The unprecedented demand for new teachers, together with the need for increased teacher quality in the profession, means that schools must develop strategies for identifying teachers who have the greatest potential for achieving success in the classroom. Research has shown that alternative routes to certification are attracting people who would not have entered teaching if these programs were not a possibility (Jacobson, 2005).

If states continue to implement alternative teacher preparation programs, while working to improve them, a pool of highly effective teachers may become a viable option for staffing public schools and enhancing teacher quality. The unprecedented demand for new teachers, together with the need for reform within teacher preparation, means that programs must develop strategies for identifying teachers who have the greatest potential for achieving success in the classroom, and who may have not entered teaching if non-traditional teacher preparation programs were not in place. If a policy goal is to maximize student achievement, states and school districts should have aggressive programs to recruit capable individuals to enter teaching through both traditional and alternative pathways, and the mechanisms to evaluate these programs (Arias & Scafidi, 2009).

Imposing more certification requirements on prospective teachers has not resulted in improved teacher quality (Arias & Scafidi, 2009). Further research was necessary to confirm what was identified in the literature as being pertinent to quality teacher

preparation. In order to foster the development and implementation of innovative teacher preparation, alternative routes to teacher preparation and certification must prioritize effective, high quality teacher education (Yancey, 2006). These alternative certification programs need to be quality programs that successfully prepare teachers for classrooms promoting high student performance (Boyd, 2007). All routes to teaching should meet the same high standards to provide new teachers with the skills, confidence, and competence to teach; with this success, these programs could alleviate the limitations in training and preparing teachers for public school classrooms (Qu & Becker, 2003).

The data collected were analyzed to determine program exemplars that were transferred and aligned from traditional to alternative teacher preparation and certification programs. The program exemplars identified in the literature corresponded to the published survey to ensure teacher preparedness, which included support for curriculum and pedagogy, differentiation, assessment, rigor and relevance, and professionalism. The researcher analyzed the data and identified patterns and trends. This allowed for themes to emerge, which provided the framework for analyzing the findings of the study. The researcher sought to provide insight into attributes indicative of efficient teacher preparation found in both traditional and non-traditional teacher training programs to prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms.

The results provided further evidence that program efficiency was determined by program exemplars within identified program component areas. The degree to which program assessment. The survey provided an initial phase of evaluation for non-traditional teacher preparation in Georgia. By implementing the identified program exemplars, an efficient alternative teacher certification program may establish the quality,

consistency, accountability, and sustainability to ensure that non-traditional, alternative teacher preparation is an option with traditional routes, so teachers have choices when seeking state teacher licensure. Both alternative teacher preparation programs, along with traditional teacher programs, need to be in place in an effort to reach Georgia's state goal of 100% certification of teachers in public schools, including public charter schools. If achieved, this will demonstrate that teacher preparation reform is indeed at the forefront of education. Furthermore, it will allow all teachers to be highly qualified and fully certified in Georgia.

One factor increasingly viewed as important to charter school success is the quality and stability of the teaching force to prepare highly effective teachers (Miron & Applegate, 2007). Charter schools need the opportunity to remain in compliance with state licensure guidelines, and continue to teach children who would have otherwise fallen through the cracks. Charter schools understand the importance of providing students equitable classroom experiences and realize the need to be highly qualified and certified. However, these teachers need pathways that are aligned with the innovative best practices unique to the sector including both educational and business best practices. Teacher preparation programs are working to address the teacher shortage and prepare, certify, and retain quality teachers for all public schools.

Good teaching should be the rule, and not the exception, in every classroom. Both non-traditional and alternative teacher certification programs have political and social acceptance as a viable options for initial teacher preparation. Choice in teacher preparation is needed to accommodate the growing number of aspiring teachers (James & McNiece, 1991). Alternative teacher preparation is not intended to replace traditional

teacher preparation, but rather provide individuals with options that best meet the unique circumstances of their school.

## **Recommendations and Implications**

### **Research**

Further research should be conducted with additional program providers in Georgia and across the nation offering non-traditional teacher preparation and training. Utilization of a larger sample might lead to findings that are more generalized, which in turn, would allow the findings to further demonstrate what leads to effective alternative teacher preparation in Georgia, and/or nationally. The findings of this student may also be useful to national traditional teacher preparation. Programs could be studied further to determine if specific types of programs (e.g., RESAs, LEAs) were implementing program exemplars with higher levels of efficiency than those programs that reported less efficient programs, and also to see how the demographic specifics may have caused specified responses (e.g. lack of experience, or lack of degree. may have led to needs improvement and not evident because of limited expertise.)

The narrative responses that were deemed by program providers and being indicative of efficient and effective teacher preparation, but were not provided on the survey, but could be used to further modify the survey and make the tool GaTAPP-specific. Also input could be gathered from experts from the charter sector to get their feedback on what is needed for quality teacher preparation to even further modify the survey to be both GaTAPP-specific, as well as charter-specific. The tool could be utilized by program providers nationally to assess the quality of their program. Program

providers could also have teacher completers provide feedback about their preparedness for P-12 classrooms based on the training they received via the GaTAPP.

The researcher intends to extend the scope of this study and remain focused on the overarching research questions and sub-questions to further address the transferability and alignment of program exemplars from traditional to non-traditional teacher preparation. The researcher plans to conduct a bi-fold longitudinal study with the GCSA GaTAPP program using both the program provider (the researcher) and program completers. First, the researcher plans to use the tool to self-assess the GCSA GaTAPP program upon completion of the 2012-2013 cohort in August 2013. Secondly, the researcher will provide the survey to teacher completers in the 2012-2013 cohort to obtain two different perspectives of effectiveness of the GCSA GaTAPP and teachers' preparedness for P-12 classrooms.

In addition, the research will provide a tool to the GaPSC head of non-traditional teacher preparation to use as a potential evaluation tool for program providers across Georgia to self-assess their programs, as well as gather data from teacher completers to determine quality training. Based on the high survey response rate, program providers and their affiliates willingly evaluated their programs to achieve continuous program improvement.

The researcher will format the dissertation findings in publication format to submit to a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on teacher preparation (i.e., *Journal of Teacher Education*). The plan is to present the findings at the National Association of Alternative Certification's upcoming conference in March 2014 to gain feedback from experts in alternative teacher preparation and certification. The researcher maintains that

the results of this study will be valuable to program providers in Georgia, as well as nationally, to better understand the program exemplars needed to operate an efficient and effective teacher preparation program, specifically via alternative pathways.

### **Implications**

Using data collected from the survey, program providers could improve non-traditional teacher preparation programs in Georgia and nationally by implementing all 37 of the program exemplars within the five specified five program component areas to help strengthen training programs. Exposing areas of strength through self-assessment and including teacher completion data may allow program providers to share best practices from program to program to improve the statewide success of GaTAPP programs. In addition, addressing areas of weakness may result in program providers enhancing the quality of their programs by identifying the components identified in the literature as being indicative of quality teacher preparation, but were not being implemented very well or well in their specific GaTAPP programs. The assessment data should enable continuous program improvement. Thus, a modified study could be used by program providers to ensure that programs embedding best practices based on the 37 program exemplars identified in the literature (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

By recognizing that teaching is a demanding profession requiring many skills, teacher candidates should be provided with “extensive training” to be prepared to enter classrooms after program completion. Because the definition of “extensive training” is highly variable, further research should further clarify the quality attributes required for teacher preparation and certification program success, specifically via non-traditional means including the GaTAPP.

The focus of maintaining quality control from program to program should drive continued efforts to promote alternative teacher certification programs that are effective, consistent, accountable, and sustainable. Such programs will provide talented individuals with opportunities to teach in their area of expertise. The implementation of quality indicators, in accordance with specified program components, is crucial to the success of alternative teacher certification programs. To ensure quality control among programs, data-driven research must guide program assessment so that we may develop, implement, and maintain quality, non-traditional certification programs. A positive transition from teacher candidate to classroom teacher depends immensely on the support provided by the learning community (Nakai & Turley, 2003). Program providers should continue collaborating with other successful programs to improve effectiveness from program to program. Through collaboration, providers could develop a network of support. This type of quality control and support will provide more efficient teacher preparation, and higher quality teacher preparation in Georgia.

Because studies continue to present mixed findings on whether teachers with traditional licenses outperform peers who took an alternative pathway, further research will inevitably be required. The program exemplars leading to effective programs should be used to implement more efficient non-traditional teacher preparation and certification programs, particularly in Georgia. Program exemplars identified by providers as not being evident and/or need improvement require further evaluation to better understand where programs could improve. The literature was conclusive about which program exemplars were required for efficient teacher preparation. Thus, programs need to strive to achieve implementation of all of these attributes at high levels. Program providers

must examine their areas of weakness and improve them to ensure that their programs are preparing highly effective teachers.

In summary, the information gathered from this study will aid program providers in Georgia, and nationally, in implementing effective alternative teacher certification programs. The findings show that key program exemplars exist, and that programs feel it is important to use an ongoing assessment process to improve non-traditional teacher preparation and certification programs. Further research could help improve the quality, consistency, accountability, and sustainability of teacher preparation such that reform efforts related to teacher quality are successful. Such research and further study will promote continuous program improvement in both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation and certification programs.



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## APPENDIX A

### COVER LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS: TRANSFERABILITY AND ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM EXEMPLARS IN TEACHER PREPARATION



**GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY (GSU) in collaboration with the Georgia Charter Schools Association (GCSA) to fulfill partial requirements for the degree Doctorate in Educational Administration.**

**Title of the Study: TRANSFERABILITY AND ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM EXEMPLARS IN TEACHER PREPARATION**

Dear Participant,

I am inviting you to participate in a research study (the project's tracking number is H13186) to examine program exemplars from teacher preparation and certification programs to explore the transferability and alignment of the exemplars in a non-traditional teacher preparation program (i.e., Georgia Teacher Academy of Preparation and Pedagogy [GaTAPP]). This project is in partial fulfillment of the requirements set forth by GSU to earn a Doctorate in Educational Administration. I am asking you to respond to this anonymous, online survey that asks questions about teacher preparedness to determine the transferability and alignment of program exemplars in teacher preparation to train highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms via the GaTAPP. If you choose to do so, please complete the survey and completion of the survey will serve as informed consent. The survey should take you about sixty minutes to complete and will be distributed on a one-time basis unless the survey is not returned by the due date.

It is the intent of the researcher to better understand what is needed to prepare highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. The survey may be useful in improving teacher preparedness, specifically in the GaTAPP programs offered across Georgia and in the charter sector via GCSAs GaTAPP program.

The project has minimum risks, which are no more than those experienced in daily life. I guarantee that your responses will be anonymous and no data will be collected that identifies you personally or identifies your specified program or agency. Respondents and their individual responses will not be shared with anyone outside of my research group, which consists of GCSA and my research committee (GSU College of Education Dissertation Committee). All results will be compiled and presented as generalizable findings. Please complete the survey and submit by January 31, 2013. The survey period will conclude four-weeks from the start date.

Again, the survey should take you about sixty minutes to complete. Because the project has not been approved by a school, school system, or your educational agency, the survey should be completed on your own time. If you have any questions, concerns or comments please email me, Juliann Sergi McBrayer at [jsergi@gacharters.org](mailto:jsergi@gacharters.org) or my faculty advisor, Dr. Teri Melton at [tamelton@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:tamelton@georgiasouthern.edu). Please note that this survey is voluntary and there is no penalty for choosing not to participate. You may opt to answer only the questions you select, and skip the questions you do not wish to answer. However, completing the survey, you as the participant agree to informed consent. As a participant, you have the right to ask questions and have those questions answered. If you have questions about this study, please contact the researcher named above or the researcher's faculty advisor. For questions concerning your rights as a research participant, contact Georgia Southern University Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at [irb@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:irb@georgiasouthern.edu). Regardless of whether you choose to participate, please let me know if you would like a summary of my findings by emailing me. I thank you in advance for considering the opportunity to engage in the above survey to enhance teacher preparedness.

**Sincerely,  
Juliann Sergi McBrayer, M.Ed., Ed.S., Ed.D candidate**

**\*The survey can be accessed via an anonymous link sent to participants through SurveyMonkey©.**

APPENDIX B

TRANSFERABILITY AND ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM EXEMPLARS IN  
TEACHER PREPARATION SURVEY

**TRANSFERABILITY AND ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAM EXEMPLARS IN  
TEACHER PREPARATION SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey is to determine how well the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP) is preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms. Please read each section and answer the questions provided.

\*Because the participants are comprised of Program Providers and their support staff and experts in the field or related field, please answer each question to best of your ability based on your role and professional knowledge.

**Section 1: Non-traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification Program  
Providers' Demographics**

The following section includes general information about the program, agency, and/or the program provider. Please remember your name is not required on this survey and answers will be kept anonymous; by completing the survey, informed consent is implied.

\*Because the participants are comprised of Program Providers and their support staff and experts in the field or related field, please answer each question to the best of your ability based on your role and professional knowledge.

1. What type of program provider are you? (check one response only)

- Regional Educational Services Agency (RESA)
- University/College-Based
- Local Education Agency (LEA) for a Public School System
- Not a Program Provider, rather an expert in field or related field
- Other: Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Which type of program do you offer? (check one response only)

- Georgia Academy for Teacher Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP)
- One Year Supervised Practicum (OYSP) (GA providers only)
- Both a GaTAPP and a OYSP (GA providers only)
- Not a Program Provider, rather an expert in field or related field

3. Approximately how many teacher candidates have successfully completed your program?  
(check one response only)

- 0-10                       11-50                       51-99                       100+
- Not a Program Provider, rather an expert in field or related field

4. How many years of experience do you have in education?

- 0-3                       4-10                       11-20                       20+

5. How many years of experience do you have in traditional teacher preparation and/or certification?

- 0-3                       4-10                       11-20                       20+

6. How many years of experience do you have in non-traditional teacher preparation and certification?

- 0-3                       4-10                       11-20                       20+

7. What is your highest degree level?

- Doctorate
- Specialist
- Masters
- Bachelors
- Associate
- Business certificate
- No degree held

8. Overall, how would you rate the success rate of your program or the GaTAPP program in general in terms of preparing highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms? (circle one response only)

- 5=Successful with Supporting Data
- 4=Successful with Limited Supporting Results
- 3=Somewhat Successful, but Data Unclear or Program too new or participants too few
- 2=Seldom Successful with Limited Retention in the Program
- 1=Unsuccessful and Needs Improvement
- Unsure
- Not a Program Provider, rather an expert in field or related field



12. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to help all students achieve academic high standards.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

13. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to develop curriculum that builds on students' experiences, interest, and abilities.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

14. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is trained to evaluate curriculum materials for their usefulness and appropriateness for students.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

15. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is trained to create interdisciplinary curriculum.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

16. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to use instructional strategies that promote active student learning.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

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Example:

17. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to relate classroom learning to the real world.

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3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

18. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is trained to understand how students' social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development influence learning.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

19. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is trained to identify and address special learning needs and/or difficulties.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

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Example:

20. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is trained to teach in ways that support English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

21. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to choose teaching strategies for different instructional purposes and to meet different student needs.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

22. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to provide rationale for teaching decisions to students, parents, and colleagues.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

23. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to help students become self-motivated and self-directed.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

24. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to integrate instructional technology into classroom curriculum and pedagogy.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

25. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to develop a classroom environment that promotes social development and group responsibility.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

26. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to develop student's questioning and discussion skills.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

27. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to engage students in cooperative work as well as independent learning.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

28. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to use effective verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to guide student learning and behavior.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

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Example:

29. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to present curriculum and pedagogy to students from a multicultural vantage point.

---

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

---

Example:

30. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to use questions to stimulate different kinds of student learning.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

31. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to help students learn to think critically and solve problems.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

32. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to encourage students to see, question, and interpret ideas from diverse perspectives.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

33. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to use knowledge of learning, subject matter, curriculum, and student development to plan instruction.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

34. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to understand how factors in the students' environment outside of school may influence their life and learning.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

34. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to work with parents and families to better understand students and to support their learning.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

35. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to use a variety of assessments (e.g., observation, portfolios, tests, performance tasks, anecdotal records) to determine student strengths, needs, and progress.

3	2	1	0
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Example:

36. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to give productive feedback to students to guide their learning.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

37. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to help students learn how to assess their own learning.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:



38. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is required to evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

39. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to conduct inquiry or research to inform their decisions.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

40. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to resolve interpersonal conflict.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

41. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to maintain discipline and an orderly, purposeful learning environment.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

42. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is expected to plan and solve problems with colleagues.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

43. \_\_\_\_ The teacher is encouraged to assume leadership responsibilities in the school.

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

44. \_\_\_\_ Overall, how well do you feel that the GaTAPP program prepares highly effective teachers for P-12 classrooms via the program offered by your educational agency or through the programs offered across Georgia?

3	2	1	0
---	---	---	---

Example:

\*Survey adapted from the teacher preparation survey published in *Powerful Teacher Education: Lessons from Exemplary Programs* (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 355)

**Section 3: Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation and Certification Program Exemplars Indicative of Success via the GaTAPP Beyond the Survey**

Based on the implementation of your educational agencies individual GaTAPP program or your knowledge of GaTAPP programs across Georgia, what are your perceptions of program exemplars that are pertinent in preparing highly effective teacher for P-12 classrooms via the GaTAPP that were not identified in the survey? Please briefly explain.

APPENDIX C

TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM EXEMPLAR CHART (Danielson, 2007)

Program Exemplar Chart (Danielson, 2007)

Program Providers and their Support Staff will be asked: “How well do you think the nontraditional teacher preparation program via GaTAPP provided by your educational agency prepared teachers to do this?” The scores will be identified as: Very Well (3); Well (2); Needs Improvement (1); and Not Evident (0). The survey findings will be coded and include: Curriculum and Pedagogy (C); Differentiation (D); Assessment (A); Relevance and Rigor (R); and Professionalism and Support (P).

1. Teach the concepts, knowledge, and skills of the teacher’s discipline in ways that enable students to learn. (C)
2. Understand how different students are learning. (D)
3. Set challenging and appropriate expectations of learning and performance for students. (A)
4. Help all students achieve academic high standards. (R)
5. Develop curriculum that builds on students’ experiences, interests, and abilities. (C)
6. Evaluate curriculum materials for their usefulness & appropriateness for students. (C)
7. Create interdisciplinary curriculum. (C)
8. Use instructional strategies that promote active student learning. (C)
9. Relate classroom learning to the real world. (R)
10. Understand how students’ social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development influence learning. (R)
11. Identify and address special learning needs and/or difficulties. (D)
12. Teach in ways that support English Speakers of Other Language learners. (D)
13. Choose teaching strategies for different instructional purposes and to meet different student needs. (D)
14. Provide rationale for teaching decisions to students, parents, and colleagues. (R)
15. Help students become self-motivated and self-directed. (R)
16. Integrate instructional technology into classroom curriculum and pedagogy. (C)
17. Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development and group responsibility. (R)
18. Develop student’s questioning and discussion skills. (C)
19. Engage students in cooperative work as well as independent learning. (C)
20. Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to guide student learning and behavior. (C)
21. Teach students from a multicultural vantage point. (D)
22. Use questions to stimulate different kinds of student learning. (D)
23. Help students learn to think critically and solve problems. (C)
24. Encourage students to see, question, & interpret ideas from diverse perspectives. (D)
25. Use knowledge of learning, subject matter, curriculum, and student development to plan instruction. (C)
26. Understand how factors in the students’ environment outside of school may influence their life and learning. (R)
27. Work with parents and families to better understand students and to support their learning. (R)

- 
28. Use a variety of assessments (e.g., observation, portfolios, tests, performance tasks, anecdotal records) to determine student strengths, needs, and progress. (A)
  29. Give productive feedback to students to guide their learning. (A)
  30. Help students learn how to assess their own learning. (A)
  31. Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly. (A)
  32. Conduct inquiry or research to inform their decisions. (A)
  33. Resolve interpersonal conflict. (P)
  34. Maintain discipline and an orderly, purposeful learning environment. (R)
  35. Plan and solve problems with colleagues. (P)
  36. Assume leadership responsibilities in the school. (P)
  37. Overall, how well do you feel that the GaTAPP program offered by your educational agency prepares teachers for P-12 classrooms? (P)
-

## APPENDIX D

### NON-TRADITIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS: PROGRAM EXEMPLARS (ALL PROGRAM EXEMPLARS)

Appendix D

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (All Program Exemplars)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	43.9	48.8	7.3	0.0	26.8
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	39.0	58.5	2.4	0.0	29.3
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	41.5	56.1	4.9	0.0	22.0
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	48.8	43.9	7.3	0.0	19.5
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	41.5	48.8	9.8	0.0	17.1
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	12.2	61.0	26.8	0.0	14.6
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	14.6	53.7	26.8	4.9	19.5
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	61.0	36.6	2.4	0.0	19.5
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	51.2	46.3	0.0	2.4	19.5
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	36.6	48.8	12.2	2.4	22.0
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	48.8	39.0	9.8	4.9	19.5
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	7.3	51.2	29.3	14.6	14.6

Appendix D (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (All Program Exemplars)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	48.8	48.8	2.4	0.0	17.1
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	24.4	51.2	14.6	9.8	14.6
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	22.0	58.5	17.1	2.4	19.5
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	48.8	43.9	4.9	2.4	22.0
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	43.9	51.2	2.4	2.4	12.2
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	34.1	48.8	14.6	4.9	14.6
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	61.0	36.6	2.4	0.0	17.1
PE 20	Use effective verbal & nonverbal communication.	56.1	36.6	7.3	0.0	17.1
PE 21	Teach students from a multicultural vantage point.	26.8	53.7	14.6	4.9	12.2

Appendix D (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (All Program Exemplars)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	41.5	48.8	4.9	2.4	14.6
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	39.0	43.9	14.6	2.4	14.6
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	29.3	53.7	12.2	4.9	14.6
PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, & student development to plan instruction.	61.0	36.6	4.9	0.0	19.5
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	29.3	53.7	12.2	2.4	22.0
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	61.0	36.6	4.9	0.0	9.8
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	56.1	41.5	2.4	0.0	19.5
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	43.9	48.8	7.3	0.0	17.1
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	29.3	56.1	12.2	2.4	9.8
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	41.5	53.7	2.4	2.4	12.2



Appendix D (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (All Program Exemplars)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	17.1	43.9	29.3	9.8	17.1
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	24.4	56.1	12.2	7.3	17.1
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	61.0	39.0	0.0	0.0	22.0
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	29.3	56.1	9.8	4.9	17.1
PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	29.3	56.1	4.9	9.8	14.6
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	56.1	39.0	4.9	0.0	0.0
Mean		39.5	48.3	9.7	2.8	17.1

APPENDIX E

NON-TRADITIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION  
PROGRAMS: PROGRAM EXEMPLARS (PROGRAM EXEMPLARS INDICATIVE  
OF IMPLEMENTING EFFICIENT PROGRAMS)

Appendix E

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (Program Exemplars Indicative of Implementing Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	39.0	58.5	97.5
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	41.5	56.1	97.6
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	48.8	43.9	92.7
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	41.5	48.8	90.3
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	12.2	61.0	73.2
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	14.6	53.7	68.3
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	51.2	46.3	97.5
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	36.6	48.8	85.4
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	48.8	39.0	87.8
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	7.3	51.2	58.5

Appendix E (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (Program Exemplars Indicative of Implementing Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	48.8	48.8	97.6
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	24.4	51.2	75.6
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	22.0	58.5	80.5
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	48.8	43.9	92.7
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	43.9	51.2	95.1
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	34.1	48.8	79.9
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 20	Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication.	56.1	36.6	92.7
PE 21	Teach students from a multicultural vantage point.	26.8	53.7	80.5
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	41.5	48.8	89.5
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	39.0	43.9	82.9
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	29.3	53.7	83.0
PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, and student development to plan instruction.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	29.3	53.7	83.0
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	56.1	41.5	97.6

Appendix E (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation: Program Exemplars (Program Exemplars Indicative of Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	41.5	53.7	95.2
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	17.1	43.9	61.0
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	24.4	56.1	80.5
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	61.0	39.0	100
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	56.1	39.0	95.1
Mean		39.5	48.3	87.8

APPENDIX F

NON-TRADITIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM EXEMPLAR  
COMPONENT AREAS (ALL)

Appendix F

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (All)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Curriculum and Pedagogy (C)</b>							
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	C	43.9	48.8	7.3	0.0	26.8
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	C	41.5	48.8	9.8	0.0	17.1
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	C	12.2	61.0	26.8	0.0	14.6
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	C	14.6	53.7	26.8	4.9	19.5
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	C	61.0	36.6	2.4	0.0	19.5
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	C	48.8	43.9	4.9	2.4	22.0
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	C	34.1	48.8	14.6	4.9	14.6
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	C	61.0	36.6	2.4	0.0	17.1
PE 20	Effective verbal & nonverbal skills.	C	56.1	36.6	7.3	0.0	17.1

Appendix F (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (All)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, and student development to plan instruction.	C	61.0	36.6	4.9	0.0	19.5
Mean			43.4	45.1	10.7	1.7	16.8
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Differentiation (D)</b>							
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	D	39.0	58.5	2.4	0.0	29.3
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	D	48.8	39.0	9.8	4.9	19.5
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	D	7.3	51.2	29.3	14.6	14.6
PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	D	48.8	48.8	2.4	0.0	17.1
PE 21	Teach students from a multi-cultural vantage point.	D	26.8	53.7	14.6	4.9	12.2
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	D	41.5	48.8	4.9	2.4	14.6
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	D	39.0	43.9	14.6	2.4	14.6



Appendix F (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (All)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	D	29.3	53.7	12.2	4.9	14.6
<b>Mean</b>			35.1	49.7	11.3	4.3	17.1
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Assessment (A)</b>							
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	A	41.5	56.1	4.9	0.0	22.0
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	A	56.1	41.5	2.4	0.0	19.5
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	A	43.9	48.8	7.3	0.0	17.1
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	A	29.3	56.1	12.2	2.4	9.8
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	A	41.5	53.7	2.4	2.4	12.2
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	A	17.1	43.9	29.3	9.8	17.1
<b>Mean</b>			38.2	50.0	9.8	2.4	16.3
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Rigor and Relevance (R)</b>							
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	R	48.8	43.9	7.3	0.0	19.5
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	R	51.2	46.3	0.0	2.4	19.5

Appendix F (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (All)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	R	36.6	48.8	12.2	2.4	22.0
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	R	24.4	51.2	14.6	9.8	14.6
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	R	22.0	58.5	17.1	2.4	19.5
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	R	43.9	51.2	2.4	2.4	12.2
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	R	29.3	53.7	12.2	2.4	22.0
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	R	61.0	36.6	4.9	0.0	9.8
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	R	61.0	39.0	0.0	0.0	22.0
Mean			42.0	47.7	7.9	2.4	17.9

Appendix F (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Component Areas (All)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Needs Improvement (%)	Not Evident (%)	Provided Examples (%)
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Professionalism and Support (P)</b>							
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	P	24.4	56.1	12.2	17.3	17.1
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	P	29.3	56.1	9.8	4.9	17.1
PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	P	29.3	56.1	4.9	9.8	14.6
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	P	56.1	39.0	4.9	0.0	0.0
Mean			34.8	51.8	8.0	8.0	12.2

APPENDIX G

NON-TRADITIONAL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM COMPONENT  
AREAS (PROGRAM EXEMPLARS INDICATIVE OF EFFICIENT PROGRAMS)

Appendix G

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (Program Exemplars Indicative of Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Curriculum and Pedagogy (C)</b>					
PE 1	Teach concepts, knowledge, and skills to learn.	C	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 5	Develop curriculum that builds on experience.	C	41.5	48.8	90.3
PE 6	Evaluate curriculum materials.	C	12.2	61.0	73.2
PE 7	Create interdisciplinary curriculum.	C	14.6	53.7	68.3
PE 8	Use instructional strategies.	C	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 16	Integrate instructional technology.	C	48.8	43.9	92.7
PE 18	Develop students' questioning and discussion skills.	C	34.1	48.8	82.9
PE 19	Engage students in cooperative work.	C	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 20	Use effective verbal and nonverbal skills.	C	56.1	36.6	92.7

Appendix G (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Program Component Areas (Program Exemplars Indicative of Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 25	Use knowledge of learning, subject, curriculum, and student development to plan instruction.	C	61.0	36.6	97.6
Mean		C	43.4	45.1	88.4
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Differentiation (D)</b>					
PE 2	Understand how different students learn.	D	39.0	58.5	97.5
PE 11	Identify special learning needs.	D	48.8	39.0	87.8
PE 12	Teach to support ESOL.	D	7.3	51.2	58.5
PE 13	Choose teaching strategies for different purposes.	D	48.8	48.8	97.6
PE 21	Teach students from a multi-cultural vantage point.	D	26.8	53.7	80.50
PE 22	Use questions to stimulate different kinds of learning.	D	41.5	48.8	90.3
PE 23	Help students learn to think critically.	D	39.0	43.9	82.90

Appendix G (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (Program Exemplars Indicative of Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 24	Encourage students to interpret idea from diverse perspectives.	D	29.3	53.7	83.0
Mean		D	35.1	49.7	84.8
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Assessment (A)</b>					
PE 3	Set challenging expectations.	A	41.5	56.1	97.6
PE 28	Use a variety of assessments.	A	56.1	41.5	97.6
PE 29	Give productive feedback.	A	43.9	48.8	92.7
PE 30	Help students assess their own learning.	A	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 31	Evaluate the effects of their actions and modify plans accordingly.	A	41.5	53.7	95.2
PE 32	Conduct inquiry or research to inform decision.	A	17.1	43.9	61.0
Mean		A	38.2	50.0	88.2
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Rigor and Relevance (R)</b>					
PE 4	Help students achieve high standards.	R	48.8	43.9	<b>92.7</b>
PE 9	Relate learning to the real world.	R	51.2	46.3	<b>97.5</b>

Appendix G (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (Program Exemplars Indicative of Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
PE 10	Understand how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive influence learning.	R	36.6	48.8	85.4
PE 14	Provide rationale for teaching decisions.	R	24.4	51.2	75.6
PE 15	Help students become self-motivated.	R	22.0	58.5	80.5
PE 17	Develop a classroom environment that promotes social development.	R	43.9	51.2	95.1
PE 26	Understand how factors outside of school influence student learning.	R	29.3	53.7	83.0
PE 27	Work with parents to better understand students.	R	61.0	36.6	97.6
PE 34	Maintain discipline.	R	61.0	39.0	100.0
Mean		R	42.0	47.7	89.7



Appendix G (continued)

*Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Component Areas (Program Exemplars Indicative of Efficient Programs)*

Program Exemplar Number	Program Exemplar	Program Component Area	Very Well (%)	Well (%)	Total Very Well+Well (%)
<b>Program Exemplar Component Area: Professionalism and Support (P)</b>					
PE 33	Resolve interpersonal conflict.	P	24.4	56.1	80.5
PE 35	Plan and solve problems with colleagues.	P	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 36	Assume leadership responsibilities in the school.	P	29.3	56.1	85.4
PE 37	Preparedness for P-12 classrooms.	P	56.1	39.0	95.1
Mean		P	34.8	51.8	86.6

APPENDIX H

PROGRAM COMPONENT AREAS ALIGNED TO THE LITERATURE TO  
SUPPORT THE FIVE IDENTIFIED AREAS BASED ON THE 37 PROGRAM  
EXEMPLARS

## Appendix H

### *Program Component Areas Aligned to the Literature*

Seminal studies by a leading research in the field of teacher preparation supports the effectiveness of traditional teacher preparation programs based on specified program exemplars required for teacher preparedness (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2010, 2006, 2005, 2003, 2002, 2000, 1990).

Program exemplars pertaining to sound curriculum implementation, differentiation of teaching and learning, assessment practices, relevance and rigor, and professionalism and support need to be evident in both traditional and non-traditional teacher preparation to ensure teachers are prepared for P-12 classrooms.

#### **Program Component Area**

#### **Curriculum and Pedagogy**

According to Reese (2010), candidates who are licensed to teach through alternative pathways held a bachelor's degree, passed content tests, engaged in on-the-job training, completed coursework or equivalent professional learning while teaching, were supported by a mentor-teacher, and met performance-based standards that were program specific.

Program exemplars such as creating interdisciplinary curriculum, identifying and addressing differentiated learning needs, and helping all students achieve high academic standards were pertinent to quality teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Teacher preparation programs should focus their efforts on ensuring that teachers have strong content expertise and that teachers are provided research-based instructional strategies and best practices (Miller, 2003).

In a California study (Yancey, 2006), program providers credited coursework through distance learning, intensive workshops, and seminars as essential for a successful teacher preparation program. This coursework was coupled with an apprenticeship-type program in which the teacher was not considered the teacher of record, but rather worked under the mentorship of an expert support teacher.

Most alternative teacher certification programs require individuals to have some form of content expertise prior to teaching or to enroll in coursework and professional learning that is content-specific. According to Chin and Young (2007), programs must prepare teachers to function effectively in varied situations and circumstances and teacher's backgrounds and experiences can help determine which teaching circumstances foster higher retention of alternatively certified teachers.

According to a research survey (Nagy & Wang, 2007), teachers trained through alternative routes often lacked an understanding of pedagogy, instructional strategies, classroom management, and students' social and academic developmental needs; thus, indicating that comprehensive and relevant professional learning is essential.

Hawley (1992) outlined several outcomes that were used to ascertain the overall effectiveness of alternative teacher certification programs by assessing such elements as attracting and following teachers with needed qualities and interests, retaining teachers in the program, achieving student achievement, providing professional development, and limiting financial costs to teacher candidates. Basic subject matter knowledge was essential, but it was also the extent of pedagogical training that made the difference in teacher quality and effectiveness.

Program exemplars to include rigorous screening processes, such as passing tests and

interviews, mastery of content, performance-based programs, coursework or equivalent experiences in professional learning before and during teaching, working with mentor and/or other support personnel, and high performance standards for program completion were indicative of successful programs (Gatlin, 2008).

In 2003, Nakai and Turley's study of alternative routes to teacher certification showed that support for new teachers was essential. Furthermore, it should include clear curricular and instructional expectations, guidance on the daily routines of the classroom including attendance, recordkeeping, discipline, collaboration with peers to gain assistance for curriculum planning, and mentor support.

Some key characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs included high entrance standards, extensive mentoring and supervision, extensive pedagogical training in instruction, management and curriculum, working with diverse learners, frequent and substantial evaluation, practice in lesson planning and teaching, and high program completion standards and requirements (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002).

Teacher quality influences every aspect of student learning. The quality of a teacher preparation experience, and how well this professional learning is tied to relevant pedagogical practices, influences students' academic performance (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2009).

### **Differentiation**

Teacher preparation needs to rely on program exemplars that have been proven effective and efficient in preparing teachers via traditional teacher preparation programs, such as understanding how different students learn, helping all students achieve high academic

standards, and identifying special learning needs and/or difficulties (Darling-Hammond, 2006).
Program exemplars such as creating interdisciplinary curriculum, identifying and addressing differentiated learning needs, and helping all students achieve high academic standards were pertinent to quality teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2006).
Because of the possible abbreviated nature of non-traditional certification programs, professional learning is likely to be approached differently for those who are trained in traditional teacher preparation programs (Qu & Becker, 2003).
Some key characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs included high entrance standards, extensive mentoring and supervision, extensive pedagogical training in instruction, management and curriculum, working with diverse learners, frequent and substantial evaluation, practice in lesson planning and teaching, and high program completion standards and requirements (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002).
<b>Assessment</b>
Teacher licensure should validate through assessment measures that teachers who enter classrooms are prepared to teach their required subject matter in their specific grade level and improve student achievement (James & McNiece, 1991).
Hawley (1992) outlined several outcomes that were used to ascertain the overall effectiveness of alternative teacher certification programs by assessing such elements as attracting and following teachers with needed qualities and interests, retaining teachers in the program, achieving student achievement, providing professional development, and limiting financial costs to teacher candidates. Basic subject matter knowledge was essential, but it was also the extent of pedagogical training that made the difference in

teacher quality and effectiveness.
Alternative-route teachers seem more in favor of using measures such as performance-pay and use of student-achievement results in teacher evaluations than were their traditionally prepared counterparts (Heitin, 2011).
<b>Rigor and Relevance</b>
Alternative teacher certification programs vary in structure, duration, intensity, curriculum, participant characteristics, and the targeted market (Mitchell & Romero, 2010).
Teacher preparation needs to rely on program exemplars that have been proven effective and efficient in preparing teachers via traditional teacher preparation programs, such as understanding how different students learn, helping all students achieve high academic standards, and identifying special learning needs and/or difficulties (Darling-Hammond, 2006).
According to Reese (2010), candidates who are licensed to teach through alternative pathways held a bachelor's degree, passed content tests, engaged in on-the-job training, completed coursework or equivalent professional learning while teaching, were supported by a mentor-teacher, and met performance-based standards that were program specific.
According to a research survey (Nagy & Wang, 2007), teachers trained through alternative routes often lacked an understanding of pedagogy, instructional strategies, classroom management, and students' social and academic developmental needs; thus, indicating that comprehensive and relevant professional learning is essential.
Program exemplars to include rigorous screening processes, such as passing tests and

interviews, mastery of content, performance-based programs, coursework or equivalent experiences in professional learning before and during teaching, working with mentor and/or other support personnel, and high performance standards for program completion were indicative of successful programs (Gatlin, 2008).

### **Professionalism and Support**

According to Reese (2010), candidates who are licensed to teach through alternative pathways held a bachelor's degree, passed content tests, engaged in on-the-job training, completed coursework or equivalent professional learning while teaching, were supported by a mentor-teacher, and met performance-based standards that were program specific

Providing teachers with scheduled school-wide duties and responsibilities, such as recess monitoring, tutoring, and attendance at staff meetings, planning, and implementation of school-wide events, helped teacher candidates develop ownership and become better prepared teachers. In addition, providing stipends to teacher candidates and mentors in return for hours of services funded through grants has been deemed effective in many programs (Yancey, 2006).

Teachers considered their most relevant learning opportunities as those embedded in their daily routines at school, including those both inside and outside of the classroom (Yancey, 2006).

Also strong mentoring and coaching support is pertinent to the progression and transition of teachers in preparation programs (Arias & Scafidi; 2009, Darling-Hammond, 2010; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

The USDOE reported that 66% of teachers receiving either informal mentoring indicated



<p>that it helped strengthen and facilitate their classroom teaching (Anthony &amp; Kritsonis, 2006).</p>
<p>Quality program exemplars were reported to include strong partnerships between preparation programs and school districts, a rigorous but flexible selection process, teacher education that delivers content and pedagogy, and a strong support system (Gatlin, 2008).</p>
<p>Program exemplars to include rigorous screening processes, such as passing tests and interviews, mastery of content, performance-based programs, coursework or equivalent experiences in professional learning before and during teaching, working with mentor and/or other support personnel, and high performance standards for program completion were indicative of successful programs (Gatlin, 2008).</p>
<p>In 2003, Nakai and Turley's study of alternative routes to teacher certification showed that support for new teachers was essential. Furthermore, it should include clear curricular and instructional expectations, guidance on the daily routines of the classroom including attendance, recordkeeping, discipline, collaboration with peers to gain assistance for curriculum planning, and mentor support.</p>
<p>Making a positive transition from teacher preparation to classroom depends immensely on the extensive and efficient support provided by principals, mentors, districts, and all pertinent stakeholders involved in the learning community (Nakai &amp; Turley, 2003).</p>
<p>Some key characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs included high entrance standards, extensive mentoring and supervision, extensive pedagogical training in instruction, management and curriculum, working with diverse learners, frequent and substantial evaluation, practice in lesson planning and teaching,</p>

and high program completion standards and requirements (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002).