



GOVERNOR GRAY DAVIS
Office of the Secretary for Education
John B. Mockler, Interim Secretary for Education

**Testimony of Margaret Fortune,
Assistant Secretary for Special Programs**

**Little Hoover Commission
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TALKING POINTS

The Commission has asked to hear the Secretary's position on California's teacher shortage in terms of five prompts:

- Providing leadership
- Attracting the best recruits
- Keeping quality teachers
- Teaching the most needy
- Improving administration

Today I am going to address these five areas of interest by way of talking about the new course for solving the teacher shortage the Governor and the Legislature charted in the last legislative session.

In the past year, the state has really put unprecedented resources behind solving California's teacher shortage. I predict that during the course of implementing the state's new strategy for teacher preparation, attraction and hiring, we will uncover underlying causes for the teacher shortage—the complexity of which have not been fully described by current research.

These underlying causes are likely common knowledge to human resources professionals in schools and the people who use personnel offices to find jobs.

This effort will allow policy makers to take a deeper look at what it takes to solve the human resources challenges in the teaching profession as local programs take on the challenge of implementing a targeted strategy to alleviate California's teacher shortage.

So, what is the strategy and how did we get here? The short answer is SB 1666. The long answer for the Davis Administration begins with a commitment from day one to improve student achievement for children in our public school system.

On a national level, research from good people like Ron Ferguson at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government has born out the idea that a teacher's level of preparation has a significant impact on their students' achievement. Professor Ferguson's study of the correlation between teacher preparation and student outcomes in math are the backbone for some of the commentary on this subject we've heard from Linda Darling Hammond and others in recent years.

This research base explains the connection reflected in Davis Administration policy linking teacher quality with student achievement. We see this through over \$900M in investments that the Governor has supported since taking office.

Teacher recruitment, preparation and hiring represents about one third of the investment.

In the 1999-2000 legislative session, the Governor sponsored SB 1666. Senator Alarcon of Los Angeles authored this legislation on the Governor's behalf. SB 1666 created a menu of incentives to attract teachers to low performing schools and a regional recruitment effort to do the hard human resources work required to get teachers placed in the schools that need them the most.

Other companion initiatives introduced in the Governor's Budget complemented SB 1666. Most importantly:

- funding for the Fiscal Crisis Management and Assistance Team to review and give technical assistance to school personnel systems in trouble and

- funding for CalTeach (our statewide teacher recruitment campaign) to do a regional media & public relations campaign in the local communities that need high quality teachers the most.

We have met with all the agencies responsible for implementing a SB 1666 program and formed them into an implementation team. What the Governor and the Legislature approved last August was a coordinated effort—and that’s what the Secretary wants to make sure they get.

Now, before I conclude my remarks, I want to address the Commission’s five points in terms of the program I have just laid out.

1. Providing leadership

- SB 1666 is a huge step in the right direction of providing state level leadership in addressing the teacher shortage. Our work on federal initiatives through the Title II Teacher Quality Grant that the US Department of Education awarded California in 1999 has shown us that our state is clearly in the vanguard of what is going on nationally to make systemic changes that result in better teacher quality and increased supply.
- The state has provided funded, but local school districts and county offices of education are really the ones that have to do the heavy lifting for these initiatives to work. It takes leadership from school boards and among principals, superintendents and personnel directors. Genuine leaders will have the courage to hire only the best teachers available and to require underprepared teachers already in the schools to get prepared immediately.
- Our intent at the state-level is to build the regional capacity and the public will for local leaders to face their human resources challenges decisively.

2. Attracting the best recruits

- In asking this questions, the Commission has framed the “best recruits as those who “no longer view education as a desirable career choice.” There is evidence to suggest that the tide is

turning on that view of teaching. With the new efforts I've described to you today, California is going to accelerate that growing excitement about teaching. And we are going to give people the assistance they need to realize their dreams.

- School districts will organize into regional consortiums to manage recruitment centers to aggressively recruit teachers giving them easy, reliable information about credential requirements and providing job placement services.
- Through CalTeach, the media and public relations message will be coordinated on the state, regional and neighborhood level.
- FCMAT will assist broken personnel departments to function efficiently.

3. Keeping quality teachers

- Getting graduates of programs into our schools
 - Most of the state incentives for teachers require the recipient to teach in a low performing school as a condition of receiving the benefit.
 - The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA) is widely acknowledged as a successful way to reduce teacher attrition. That program has been fully funded for the past two years. This means that there is sufficient funding for each of the 27,000 new teachers who enter the system every year to go through a one to two year induction program that typically leads to their retention in the profession.

4. Teaching the most needy

- As indicated earlier in my testimony, the state's new teacher recruitment and incentive effort invests hundreds of millions of dollars to recruit teachers to the schools that need them the most because of poor student achievement.

5. Improving administration

- The Commission has stated its interest in ensuring that poor management in schools is not contributing to teacher shortages. The Administration has scratched the surface of this issue by directly engaging FCMAT's to review and offer technical assistance to troubled school district personnel offices. The Governor has also expressed his interest in principal leadership through the Principal Leadership Institutes he initiated at the University of California. This is likely an issue that merits more attention in the future.

In closing, I want to thank the Commission for the opportunity to address the body on this important issue. We are at the beginning stages of implementing the new initiatives I have talked about today. Each of the agencies that you will hear from today have a role to play in doing the hard work it will take to address California's teacher shortage—including the researchers. It is a complex human resources problem that is not just about teachers. The challenge is also driven by high turnover in personnel offices that are responsible for hiring teachers. The administration will continue to engage the partners you will hear from today as a team with a mission addressing the teacher shortage rigorously.