

RESOLUTION - 1984

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, AFL-CIO

THE PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF TEACHERS

WHEREAS, teaching is a profession, that requires a firm grounding in its intellectual foundations as well as experience in its practice and mastery of subject matter, and

WHEREAS, all of these components are required for the proper preparation of qualified teachers, and

WHEREAS, the current popular demand for excellence in education calls for a strengthening of such preparation and not its weakening, and

WHEREAS, some official bodies responsible for the certification of teachers have proposed a relaxation of such requirements for the sake of expediency;

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers reaffirms its commitment to professional studies, internship and subject matter mastery as the prerequisites to teacher certification, and

RESOLVED, that the AFT encourages teacher preparation institutions and state certification boards to enhance teacher preparation by pursuing the following recommendations:

- requiring that all college and university graduates in teacher education have a major in an academic subject field other than education and that secondary school teacher candidates have an academic major in the subject which they will be teaching;

- insuring that the clinical and field experiences of teacher education students are more directly supervised and planned by college or university faculty specializing in the appropriate discipline;
- insuring that college and university faculty integrate these experiences more closely with the student's on-campus course work; helping develop a better line between the university supervisor and classroom teacher supervising the experiences;
- conducting a general periodic review and upgrading of course offerings, including broad educational issues as well as the more particular teacher training concerns; reviewing methods and foundation of education courses periodically to insure their relevance and usefulness to the future educator, including computer skills for teachers in the teacher education curriculum;
- evaluating faculty involved in teacher preparation programs on their ability to handle such responsibilities as classroom instruction and supervision of clinical and field experiences and student teaching as well as on research;
- insuring that, while alternative routes to certification of teachers should be studied, these routes do not ignore the need for vigorous academic training including professional teacher education courses supervision, and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers opposes attempts to eliminate or compromise these requirements and any other attempt to de-professionalize the profession of teaching. (1984)