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Preparing Ohio Teachers

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Kevin Kelly, the dean of the University of Dayton School of Education and Allied Professions, testified before the Ohio House Education Committee Feb. 9 regarding HB 21, which would grant a professional educator license to alums of Teach for America and require the use of student performance data in evaluating teachers and principals for licensure, among other provisions.

Download the full transcript of his remarks (url: [../././images/documents/HB_21_Testimony_Kevin_Kelly_Feb_9_2011.pdf](http://www.udayton.edu/images/documents/HB_21_Testimony_Kevin_Kelly_Feb_9_2011.pdf))

Dean Kelly addressed three significant topics:

- Teach for America alumni should have a pathway to becoming Ohio teachers
- Alternative licensing options in Ohio need improvement in reading education
- Improving teacher preparation

Teach for America alumni should have a pathway to becoming Ohio teachers

- - They should not be exempt from the Ohio Resident Educator Program, which provides mentoring and support, and is required by the state to receive the Professional Educator License.
 - Additional training, support and mentoring in literacy development should be provided to TFA teachers seeking early childhood, middle childhood and intervention specialist licenses. Research shows TFA teachers do not produce satisfactory reading achievement gains. Third-grade reading proficiency is the number one predictor of high school graduation and college attendance.
 - Enhance content knowledge (Particularly in STEM disciplines).
 - Provide deep clinical experience for pre-service teachers.
- Dean Kelly supports providing a way for TFA alumni to earn teacher licensure in Ohio with two caveats:

Alternative licensing options in Ohio need improvement in reading education

Dean Kelly also noted that Ohio's current four-tier license structure already provides an Alternative Resident Educator License, which should not be difficult for TFA teachers to obtain.

However, he says this alternative license provision is unsatisfactory because it does not include the 12 semester hours of reading coursework for middle childhood and intervention specialist licenses that are required of all graduates of traditional teacher education programs in Ohio.

Improving teacher preparation

To improve teacher effectiveness, teacher education programs must:

To address this, the University of Dayton teacher education program requires 80 to 120 classroom hours for students in the fall semester of their senior year and a 12- to 15-week student teaching assignment.

The University also takes seriously the need for specialized preparation of teachers for urban schools with the Urban Teacher Academy, which provides a yearlong seminar on urban education with a field placement during the junior year, student teaching in an urban school with a mentor teacher in the senior year, and a post-graduate year of mentoring and University support for graduates hired as teachers within Dayton Public Schools.

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