

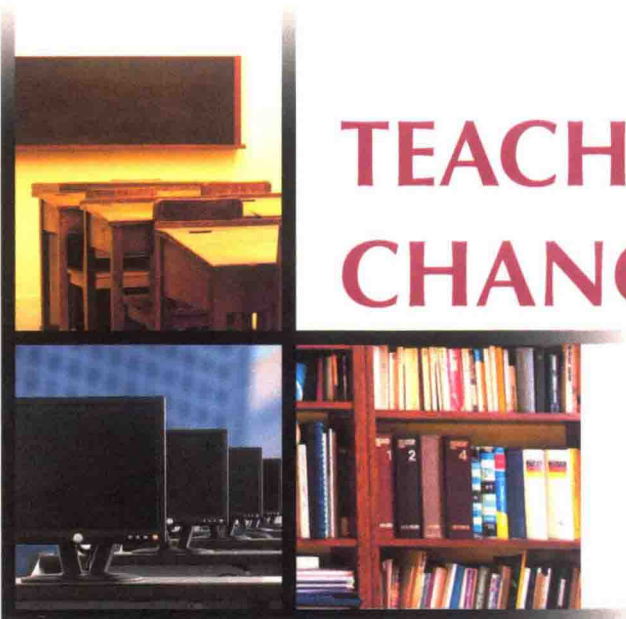
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## TEACHING IN A CHANGING WORLD



T. Lindfors/Lindfors Photography

# TEACHING IN A CHANGING WORLD



# EDUCATION IN THE NEWS

## HEROES EVERY ONE

By **REG WEAVER**, NEA Past President

NEA Today, May 2005

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

Heroes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heroes every one.

It is easy to take these folks for granted, though, because they don't toot their own horn. They're everyday people, not celebrities. I like to call them "unsung heroes." In fact, they

don't think of themselves as heroes at all, and when someone like me sings their praises, it kind of embarrasses them. But that doesn't stop me.

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

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

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

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

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

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

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

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Articulate the role demographics play in determining teacher supply and demand and identify areas where teachers will be in high demand during the next decade.
2. Outline the professional responsibilities of a teacher as viewed by the public, parents, and professional colleagues. (INTASC 1: Subject Matter)
3. Identify the characteristics of professions and develop arguments for or against declaring teaching a profession.
4. Identify sources of evidence to show that you are developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined in the INTASC standards. (INTASC 1–10)
5. Identify some of the challenges that affect teachers, but not other professionals, and clearly articulate why you plan to pursue a teaching career.
6. Identify the basic requirements for the initial teaching license in the state where you plan to teach, including the types of tests and other assessments that are required.

We live in a world of rapid change, and many people have become so accustomed to change that they hardly take notice of it. People have many different perspectives on and opinions about schools, teachers, and education. Schools in general, and teachers in particular, are affected in many ways by this rapid change and by people's different perspectives on education. For instance, societal and parental expectations of schools constantly change; these expectations even change from parent to parent and from school to school.

These two realities—our rapidly changing world and the countless differing perspectives on education—greatly affect the work and lives of educators. Our goal is to help you learn more about these important realities and to enable you to make informed progress toward developing your own professional perspectives on education and to better understand our changing world.

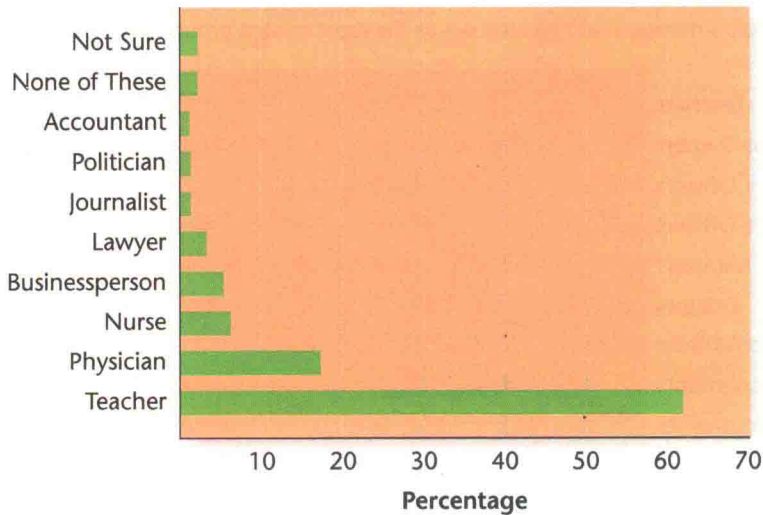
## TODAY'S TEACHERS

About four million teachers provide the instructional leadership for public and private schools in the United States. Teaching is a profession that attracts the best and brightest college students into its ranks. Today's new teachers must meet rigorous national and state standards for entering the profession that did not exist a decade ago. Requirements for entering teacher education programs in colleges and universities are now more stringent than admission requirements for most other professions. Grade point averages of 3.0 and higher are becoming more common requirements for admission; tests and other assessments must be passed before admission, at the completion of a program, and for state licensure. Clearly, not everyone can teach.

Teacher candidates today are diverse in age and work experience. Some of you are eighteen to twenty-two years old, the traditional age of college students, but others of you are nontraditional students who are older and have worked for a number of years in other jobs or professions. Some of your classmates may have worked as teachers' aides in classrooms for years. Others may be switching careers from the armed forces, engineering, retail management, or public relations. Welcome to a profession in which new teachers represent such wonderfully diverse work experiences, as well as varying educational, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

### The Importance of Teachers to Society

Society has great expectations for its teachers. "Nine out of ten Americans believe the best way to lift student achievement is to ensure a qualified teacher in every classroom," according to a national survey (Recruiting New Teachers, 1998). In addition to guiding students'

**FIGURE 1.1****Professions That Provide the Most Benefit to Society  
According to Survey Respondents**

Source: Based on data from Recruiting New Teachers, Inc., *The Essential Profession: A National Survey of Public Attitudes toward Teaching, Educational Opportunity and School Reform*, Belmont, MA: Author, 1998.

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

Given these challenging responsibilities, teaching is one of the most important careers in the world and especially in a democratic society. Although critics of our education system sometimes give the impression that there is a lack of public support for schools and teachers, the public now ranks teaching as the profession that provides the most important benefit to society. Public perceptions of the importance of teaching have improved over the years (Recruiting New Teachers, 1998). In fact, respondents to a survey about professions that benefit society ranked teachers first by more than a three-to-one margin over other important professionals such as physicians, nurses, businesspeople, lawyers, journalists, politicians, and accountants, as shown in Figure 1.1.

Teachers were also given a vote of confidence in a Gallup Poll that asked people to indicate the most trusted group of people in the country. The results, as shown in Figure 1.2, indicate that teachers were ranked first as the most trusted group in the country.

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

### The Public View of Teachers and Schools

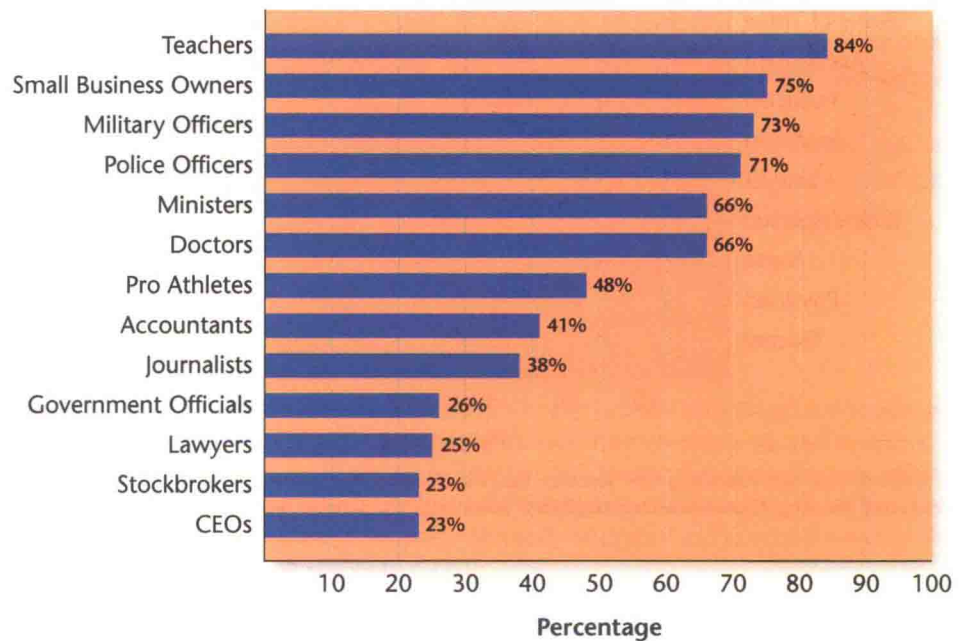
Teachers and the public agree that the quality of the teaching staff is of primary importance in selecting a school (Langdon & Vesper, 2000). Parents, guardians, and families know who the effective teachers are in a school and will do everything possible to ensure that their children are in those teachers' classes. At the same time, they know the teachers who are not as effective, and

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

**FIGURE 1.2****Teachers Get America's Vote of Confidence**

You may not make as much as a CEO or a pro baseball player, but your stock has a lot more currency than theirs in the eyes of the American public.

In a Gallup Poll, Americans ranked teachers as the most trusted group of people in the country.



Source: Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll, July 2002, as reported in *NEA Today*, October 2002, p. 9.

they steer their children into other classes if possible. They know the value of an effective teacher to the potential academic success of their children.

The annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll survey on the public's attitudes toward public schools asks respondents to grade schools in both their local area and the nation as a whole. Figure 1.3 shows the results of the most recent survey, which indicates that parents generally give high grades to the school their oldest child attends.

This same annual PDK/Gallup Poll survey asks citizens to indicate the most serious problems facing our schools. The results are shown in Figure 1.4. Public school parents in their combined opinions view funding, overcrowding, and fighting as major school problems.

**FIGURE 1.3****The Public's Opinion of Public Schools**

|                  | '08<br>%  | '07<br>%  | '06<br>%  | '05<br>%  | '04<br>%  |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>A &amp; B</b> | <b>72</b> | <b>67</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>70</b> |
| A                | 30        | 19        | 26        | 31        | 24        |
| B                | 42        | 48        | 38        | 38        | 46        |
| C                | 14        | 24        | 24        | 21        | 16        |
| D                | 5         | 5         | 5         | 6         | 8         |
| Fail             | 4         | 3         | 4         | 4         | 4         |
| Don't know       | 5         | 1         | 3         | 0         | 2         |

Source: William J. Bushaw and Alec M. Gallup, "The 40th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan* (September 2008), p. 12. Reprinted by permission of *Phi Delta Kappan*.



**FIGURE 1.4****The Public's View of Problems in Schools**

|                | National Totals |           |           | Public School Parents |           |           |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                | '08<br>%        | '07<br>%  | '06<br>%  | '08<br>%              | '07<br>%  | '06<br>%  |
| <b>Funding</b> | <b>17</b>       | <b>22</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>19</b>             | <b>26</b> | <b>21</b> |
| Discipline     | 10              | 10        | 11        | 3                     | 5         | 7         |
| Overcrowding   | 6               | 7         | 13        | 11                    | 9         | 16        |
| Fighting       | 6               | 6         | 5         | 8                     | 8         | 4         |
| Drugs          | 4               | 4         | 8         | 4                     | 3         | 7         |
| Good teachers  | 4               | 5         | 4         | 3                     | 4         | 4         |
| Standards      | 3               | 4         | 4         | 2                     | 4         | 3         |

Source: William J. Bushaw and Alec M. Gallup, "The 40th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools," *Phi Delta Kappan* (September 2008), p. 12. Reprinted by permission of *Phi Delta Kappan*.

**Who Teaches?**

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

**PROFILE OF U.S. TEACHERS.** Although demographic data are elusive and constantly changing, the following snapshot of educators in the United States should help you get an idea of the profile of U.S. teachers.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, the United States has about 3.2 million public school teachers, about 400,000 private school teachers, and about 932,000 college and university faculty members. More than 60 percent of the teachers work at the elementary school level. In addition to teachers, our schools have about 411,000 administrative and education professionals. Approximately 1.25 million teachers' aides, clerks and secretaries, and service workers staff the nation's public schools. There are another roughly one million education-related jobs, including education specialists in industry, instructional technologists in the military, museum educators, and training consultants in the business world. So altogether, there are roughly six million educators in the United States, making education one of the largest professions in the country.

**REMAINING IN THE PROFESSION.** Although many teachers make careers out of teaching, unfortunately, a relatively high percentage of classroom teachers eventually decide that teaching is not the profession they wish to pursue. It is estimated that approximately 20 percent of the new teachers hired annually are not teaching three years later. Teachers leave the classroom for a number of reasons. Some leave to raise children and some decide to return to school full time for an advanced



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



Go to the Assignments and Activities section of Topic 1 *The Teaching Profession* in the MyEducationLab for your course and complete the activity *Why Become a Teacher*.





Most teachers enter and remain in their profession because of a desire to work with young people. Jim Cummins/Corbis-NY



Go to the *Assignments and Activities* section of Topic 14: *Professional Development* in the MyEducationLab for your course and complete the activity titled *Succeeding in Your First Year of Teaching*.

**induction** Years one to three of full-time teaching.

**mentoring** An experienced professional helping a less experienced colleague.

degree. Others decide to pursue another career that might be more satisfying or pays a higher salary. Other reasons for leaving teaching are related to poor working conditions in schools, including lack of administrative support, perceived student problems, and little chance for upward mobility.

Like all other professionals, teachers become accomplished through experience. Most states do not grant a professional license to teachers until they have taught for at least three years. Teachers cannot seek national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, which will be discussed in more detail later) until they have taught for three years. When teachers leave the profession in their first few years of practice, schools lose an important developing resource. Good professional development programs for teachers such as **induction** programs, which provide special help for new teachers during their first few years, also help to retain new teachers.

Many schools now have a system that provides **mentoring** among teachers. This peer mentoring system is designed to facilitate teachers helping one another. As part of a new teacher induction program, many of these schools assign an experienced master teacher to mentor beginning teachers.

When you search for your first teaching job, find out whether the school district provides induction programs, mentors, and professional development, especially for beginning teachers. These are services that help teachers improve their skills as well as their chances of being successful teachers for an entire career.

### Teacher Supply and Demand

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

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

**TEACHER SUPPLY.** The supply of new teachers in a given year consists primarily of two groups: new teacher graduates and former teacher graduates who were not employed as teachers during the previous year. Not all college graduates who prepared to teach actually begin teaching right after graduating. Generally, only about half the college graduates who have completed teacher education programs actually take teaching positions in the first few years after graduation.

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

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

Still other new teachers have no preparation to teach; some do not even have a college degree. More often they have a degree in an academic area such as chemistry or history, but have



not studied teaching and learning or participated in clinical practices in schools. Some states and school districts allow these individuals to teach with only a few weeks of training in the summer. Participants in these programs are more likely to be dissatisfied with their preparation than are teachers who have completed either regular or nontraditional programs for teacher preparation. They often have difficulty planning the curriculum, managing the classroom, and diagnosing students' learning needs, especially in their first years of teaching. Individuals who enter the profession through this path leave teaching at a higher rate than other teachers.

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

**TEACHER DEMAND.** The demand for teachers in the United States varies considerably from time to time, from place to place, from subject to subject, and from grade level to grade level. One of the major factors related to the demand for teachers is the number of school-age children, which can be projected into the future on the basis of birthrates. The projected demand for K–12 teachers is shown in Figure 1.5.

**FIGURE 1.5**

**Relative Teacher Demand by Field**

| Fields with Considerable Shortage (5.00–4.21) |      | Fields with Some Shortage-con't. (4.20–3.41)       |      |
|---|------|--|------|
| Severe/Profound Disabilities                  | 4.47 | Middle School Principal                            | 3.46 |
| Mathematics Education                         | 4.46 | Library Science/Media Technology                   | 3.46 |
| Physics                                       | 4.39 | Elementary Principal                               | 3.42 |
| Multicategorical                              | 4.39 | Fields with Balanced Supply and Demand (3.40–2.61) |      |
| Mild/Moderate Disabilities                    | 4.37 | Speech Education                                   | 3.40 |
| Chemistry                                     | 4.35 | Gifted/Talented Education                          | 3.34 |
| Mental Retardation                            | 4.34 | School Social Worker                               | 3.34 |
| Emotional/Behavior Disorders                  | 4.31 | Family & Consumer Science                          | 3.33 |
| Bilingual Education                           | 4.31 | Counselor  | 3.29 |
| Learning Disability                           | 4.28 | Languages—Classics                                 | 3.22 |
| Visually Impaired                             | 4.24 | Elementary—Middle                                  | 3.20 |
| Dual Certificate (Gen./Spec.)                 | 4.23 | Languages—French                                   | 3.13 |
| Hearing Impaired                              | 4.23 | Music—Instrumental                                 | 3.13 |
| Speech Pathologist                            | 4.21 | Languages—German                                   | 3.04 |
| Fields with Some Shortage (4.20–3.41)         |      | Music—Vocal  | 3.04 |
| English as a Second Language/ELL              | 4.08 | Journalism Education                               | 3.03 |
| Early Childhood Special Education             | 4.07 | Music—General                                      | 3.01 |
| Biology                                       | 4.06 | Business Education                                 | 3.01 |
| Earth/Physical Science                        | 4.01 | English/Language Arts                              | 2.89 |
| Audiologist                                   | 3.99 | Elementary—Pre-Kindergarten                        | 2.74 |
| Physical Therapist                            | 3.91 | Art/Visual Education                               | 2.74 |
| Languages—Spanish                             | 3.88 | Elementary—Intermediate                            | 2.73 |
| General Science                               | 3.87 | Theatre/Drama                                      | 2.70 |
| Occupational Therapist                        | 3.82 | Dance Education                                    | 2.69 |
| School Nurse                                  | 3.80 | Fields with Some Surplus (2.60–1.81)               |      |
| Technology Education                          | 3.58 | Health Education                                   | 2.57 |
| Languages—Japanese                            | 3.53 | Elementary—Kindergarten                            | 2.52 |
| Agriculture                                   | 3.52 | Elementary—Primary                                 | 2.41 |
| Computer Science Education                    | 3.52 | Physical Education                                 | 2.33 |
| Reading                                       | 3.52 | Social Studies Education                           | 2.20 |
| Superintendent                                | 3.50 | Fields with Considerable Surplus (1.80–1.00)       |      |
| High School Principal                         | 3.49 | None   |      |
| School Psychologist                           | 3.49 |  |      |

*From preliminary data supplied by survey respondents. In some instances, the averages are based upon limited input and total reliability is not assured.*

Source: "Relative Demand by Field," in 2009 AAEE Job Search Handbook for Educators, Columbus, OH: American Association for Employment in Education, Inc., 2009, p. 13. Reprinted with permission.



The number of school-age children in the United States is expected to increase during the next 10 years, requiring more teachers. Bill Aron/PhotoEdit Inc.

Many teachers will be retiring during the next decade, raising even further the number of new and reentering teachers needed to staff the nation's schools. As you plan your teaching career, you will want to consider a number of factors such as salary, benefits, cost of living, workload, and other forces that influence the demand for teachers. As you read the following, you will realize that many other factors may influence you as you decide what subjects you will teach and the area of the country where you will teach.

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

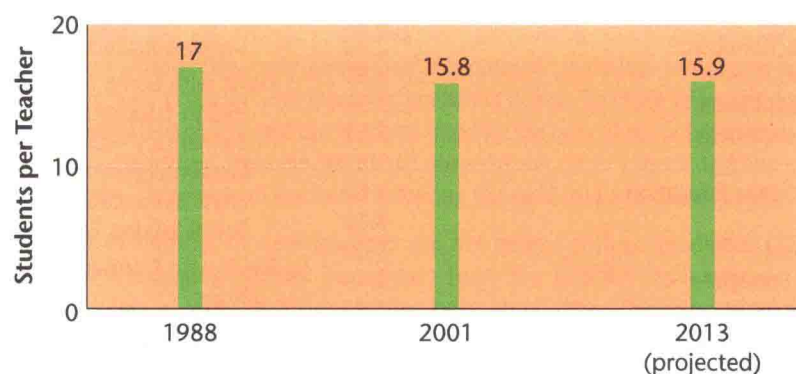
classes each day. Figure 1.6 shows average student-to-teacher ratios in public schools in the United States.

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

**Location of the School District.** Within a given area because of say, new housing developments, population shifts may cause one school district to grow rapidly, build new schools, and hire new teachers, while a neighboring school district closes schools and reduces its number of teachers. Nevertheless, the greatest shortages are usually in urban schools with large proportions of low-income and culturally and linguistically diverse populations. Some teachers do not want to teach in large urban school districts because of poor working conditions in many schools and relatively low salaries compared to schools in the wealthier suburbs. Other teachers believe that teaching in a large city is both challenging and fulfilling. We recommend that you explore the advantages and disadvantages of teaching in districts of different sizes and locations.

**FIGURE 1.6**

### Pupil/Teacher Ratio in Elementary and Secondary Schools, Selected Years



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data surveys, various years.



Student enrollment also varies depending on the part of the country. In the next eight years, increases are expected in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, and New Mexico; decreases are expected in most midwestern and northeastern states (Hussar & Bailey, 2008).

**Teaching Field Shortages.** Teacher shortages are more severe in some fields than others. For instance, the number of students diagnosed with various disabilities has increased considerably during the past decade and now totals more than 5 million throughout the country. As a percentage of total public school enrollment, the number of students requiring special education has risen considerably in recent years. Consequently, most school districts report the need for more special education teachers.

There is also a critical shortage of bilingual teachers. The need for bilingual teachers is no longer limited to large urban areas and the southwestern states. Immigrant families with children have now settled in cities and rural areas across the Midwest and Southeast. The projected demographics for the country indicate a growing number of students with limited English skills, requiring more bilingual and English as a second language (ESL) teachers than are available today. The Global Perspectives feature below provides an example of one school district's efforts to recognize and serve our increasingly diverse society.

Licensed mathematics and science teachers are prime candidates for job openings in many school districts. One of the problems in secondary schools especially is that teachers may have a state license but too often not in the academic area they are assigned to teach. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future reported that nearly one-fourth of all secondary teachers do not have even a college minor in their main teaching field. This is especially true for mathematics teachers due to a shortage of candidates in this field.

Teachers often receive out-of-field assignments when teachers with the appropriate academic credentials are not available. Sometimes the assignments are made to retain teachers whose jobs have been eliminated as enrollments shift and schools are closed. The tragedy is that students suffer as a result—it is difficult to teach what you do not know. The federal legislation commonly referred to as the **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)** is designed to significantly reduce this out-of-field teacher assignment problem in the near future.

**Teachers from Diverse Backgrounds.** Although the student population is rapidly changing and becoming more racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, the teaching pool is becoming less so. The number of Latino students is rapidly increasing, pulling almost even with the number of African American students in the 2000 census.

Having teachers from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds is extremely important to the majority of people in the United States (Recruiting New Teachers, 1998). Most school districts are seeking culturally diverse faculties, and districts with large culturally diverse populations are aggressively recruiting teachers from diverse backgrounds. The federal government and some states provide incentives to colleges and universities to support the recruitment of a more diverse teaching force. Another implication of the demographics of increasing student diversity is that all teachers need to become skilled at teaching in diverse schools and classrooms. Again, the Global Perspectives feature below provides an example of how some school districts are attempting to meet the demands of our rapidly changing global diversity needs.



**No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)** A federal law passed in 2001 that sets goals for achievement for all students and requires that teachers meet certain qualifications.

## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

### Teaching Chinese to American Students

Our schools recognize that we live in a rapidly changing world in which more people now speak Chinese than any other language. China has become a major market, as well as a major supplier, for American industry. With these facts in mind, the Portland, Oregon, public school system instituted a K–12 Chinese-language instructional program for their approximately 50,000 students. Starting in kindergarten, students will study the Mandarin language and Chinese culture.

#### Questions for Reflection

1. What is your perspective on this idea?
2. What foreign language(s) are the most important for students to learn today?
3. At what grade level and intensity do you think foreign languages should be taught?

## TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

Historically, fields such as law, medicine, architecture, and accountancy have been considered professions, but teaching has sometimes been classified as a semiprofession. This distinction is based in part on the prestige of the different jobs as reflected in the remuneration received by members of a particular profession. Although teaching salaries remain lower than those of most other professionals in most parts of the country, educators consider themselves professionals. The good news is that during the past decade the prestige of teaching has risen. Most teachers have master's degrees and continue to participate in professional development activities throughout their careers. They manage their professional work, designing and delivering a curriculum during a school year. They develop their own unique teaching styles and methods for helping students learn. In this section, we explore the factors that determine a profession and a professional and demonstrate that teaching itself is a full-fledged profession.

### Professional Responsibilities

Being a professional carries many responsibilities. Professionals in most fields regulate licensure and practice through a professional standards board controlled by members of the profession rather than the government. Professional standards boards for teaching currently exist in about one-fourth of the states; other agencies have this responsibility in the remaining states. These boards have a variety of titles and typically include many practicing educators. Not only do these boards set standards for licensure, but they also have standards and processes for monitoring the practice of teachers. They usually have the authority to remove a teacher's license.

**DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENTS AND DISPOSITIONS.** Successful teachers exhibit **dispositions** (beliefs, attitudes, and values) that facilitate their work with students and parents. Teachers' values, commitments, and professional ethics influence interactions with students, families, colleagues, and communities. They affect student learning, motivation, and development. They influence a teacher's own professional growth as well. Dispositions held by teachers who are able to help all students learn include the following:

1. Enthusiasm for the discipline(s) she or he teaches and the ability to see connections to everyday life
2. A commitment to continuous learning and engagement in professional discourse about subject matter knowledge and children's learning of the disciplines
3. The belief that all children can learn at high levels
4. Valuing the many ways in which people communicate and encouraging many modes of communication in the classroom
5. Development of respectful and productive relationships with parents and guardians from diverse home and community situations, seeking to develop cooperative partnerships in support of student learning and well-being.

**LEARNING TO USE AND CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH.** Another important professional responsibility of all educators is to be able to understand, evaluate, and use educational research results. Parents rightly expect teachers to utilize the best of educational research in their classrooms, just as we patients rightly expect our physicians to utilize the most recent medical research results when they provide us with medical treatment.

Teachers can begin to better understand and use good educational research by enrolling in courses dealing with educational research, attending meetings on the subject, reading educational research journals, and doing web searches on the topic. Teachers can also participate in research studies and, with proper background, even design and carry out their own action research to help solve problems they face in their classrooms.

**dispositions** The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

**authentic assessment** An assessment that measures one's ability to perform a task in a real-life situation.

### Professional Knowledge

Professionals provide services to their clients, and their work is based on unique knowledge and skills grounded in research and practice in the field. Professions require their members to have completed higher education, usually at the advanced level. The competence of most professionals is determined in training by **authentic assessments** in real-life settings. Traditionally, professionals have had control of their work with little direct supervision.



One of the characteristics of a profession is that its members have some generally agreed-on knowledge bases for their work. This professional knowledge has evolved from research and practice in the field. Teachers who have prepared to teach are more successful in classrooms than those who have a degree only in an academic discipline. These competent and qualified teachers are key to student learning.

To be a professional, teachers must also know the subjects they will be teaching. For example, secondary teachers should major in the academic area that they later will teach so that they learn the structure, skills, core concepts, ideas, values, facts, and methods of inquiry that undergird the discipline. They must understand the discipline well enough to help young people learn it and apply it to the world in which they live. As students learn about a concept or skill, teachers must be able to relate the content to the experiences of students in order to provide meaning and purpose.

### Professional Skills

One of the cornerstones of the field of teaching is knowledge about teaching and learning and the development of skills and dispositions that help students learn. Therefore, teacher candidates study theories and research on how students learn at different ages. They must understand the influence of culture, language, and socioeconomic conditions on learning. They also have to know how to manage classrooms, motivate students, work with parents and colleagues, assess learning, and develop lesson plans built on the prior experiences of fifteen to thirty or more students in the classroom. Teaching is a complex field. There are seldom right answers that fit every situation. Teachers must make multiple decisions throughout a day, responding to individual student needs and events in the school and community, all while keeping in mind the professional ethics required by the education profession. Incidentally, by taking this course, you are taking an important step toward developing the professional skills needed to be an effective educator.

Qualified teachers have also had the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills, and dispositions with students in schools. These field experiences and clinical practices such as student teaching and internships should be accompanied by feedback and mentoring from experienced teachers who know the subject they teach and how to help students learn. Work in schools is becoming more extensive in many teacher education programs. Some teacher candidates participate in yearlong internships in schools, ending in a master's degree. Others work in professional development schools in which higher education faculty, teachers, and teacher candidates collaborate in teaching and inquiry. In both of these cases, most, if not all, of the program is offered in the school setting.

An example of the various kinds of problems that teachers face can be found in the Reflect on Diversity feature.

## REFLECT on DIVERSITY

### Student Bullying



All year Jasmine has been teased by some of her eighth-grade classmates because she is very petite and at least six inches shorter than any of the other girls. One spring day when the class was supposed to be working on an assignment at their desks, Latoya

started making fun of Jasmine again, first very quietly. Before long, the exchanges became louder.

"You're fat as a theater."

"Your mama's so ugly."

Then, Latoya hit too close to home when she responded "And your father's in jail."

Before the teacher could intervene, other students redirected the conversation around Jasmine's desk. As the room quieted down and students returned to their assignment, Mr. Brown decided to let it go.

After the girls crossed the street from school to begin the walk home through a wooded area, Jasmine confronted Latoya about her taunting in class. The exchanges between the two girls continued,

again becoming very personal, when Latoya retorted with degrading remarks about Jasmine's size and boyfriend. Jasmine hit her. When Latoya returned the punches, Jasmine's cousin, Mitchyl, jumped in to help. Within a few minutes, Latoya was running back to school with numerous lacerations on her face, requiring stitches.

#### Questions for Reflection

1. Who was the bully and who was the victim in this altercation at school?
2. How could Mr. Brown have responded differently to the situation earlier in the day? What other steps could the teacher or other school officials have taken to try to prevent the after-school fight?
3. What action should the school take against either Jasmine or Latoya? What recourse does Latoya's family have?



To respond to these questions online, go to the *Book Specific Resources* section in the MyEducationLab for your course, select your text, and then select *Reflect on Diversity* for Chapter 1.

Most important to you as a future teacher, the No Child Left Behind Act requires that every classroom have a highly qualified, competent teacher who is fully certified and licensed in the areas being taught in every classroom. Like all sweeping pieces of legislation, the No Child Left Behind Act is controversial and has many critics. Because it will have a considerable impact on your future as an educator and citizen, we highly recommend that you review it more closely.

Some teachers feel that local, federal, and state requirements, such as NCLB and other various requirements and standards, place undue pressure on schools, teachers, and students to perform especially well on standardized tests.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

One of the roles of professions and their standards is to provide quality control over who enters and remains in the profession. Most other professions, such as law, medicine, and dentistry, require candidates to graduate from an accredited professional school before they are eligible to take a licensing examination to test the knowledge and skills necessary to practice responsibly. Some professions also offer examinations for certification of advanced skills, such as the CPA exam for public accountants, or for practice in specialized fields such as pediatrics, obstetrics, or surgery. The same quality assurance continuum now exists for teaching. Figure 1.7 depicts a comprehensive quality assurance system for teaching that includes complementary sets of standards and assessments for initial teacher preparation, state licensure, national board certification, and continuing professional development.

### Accreditation

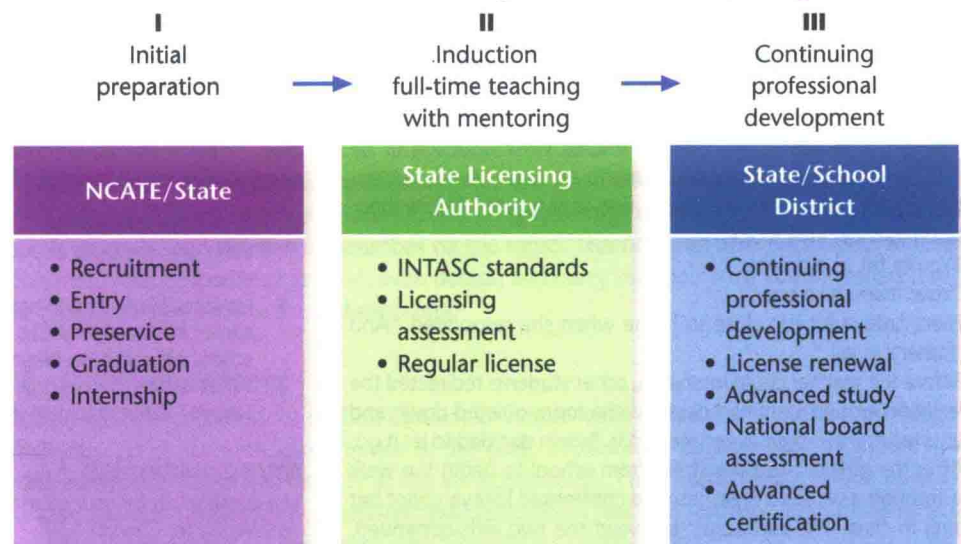
Both public schools and teacher education programs are subject to **accreditation programs**, which are standards established by accreditation agencies, some of which are mandated and some of which are voluntary. Accreditation provides assurance to the public that graduates of programs are qualified and competent to practice. The proportion of accredited schools, colleges, and departments of education in a state has been found to be the best predictor of the proportion of well-qualified teachers in a state. Because well-qualified teachers are the strongest predictor of student achievement on national achievement tests, accreditation is an important first step of a quality assurance system for the education field.

**accreditation programs** Recognition given to educational institutions that have met accepted standards applied by an outside agency.

**REGIONAL ACCREDITATION.** The general concept of accreditation is related to an internal attempt on the part of a professional training system to examine and improve the quality of the profession that it serves. Six regional accreditation bodies offer accreditation to all K–12 schools and to colleges and universities. One of these six agencies, all of which are named by the general region

**FIGURE 1.7**

### The Professional Continuum and Quality Assurance in Teaching





in which they function, is functioning in your state right now. For instance, the **North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA)** covers a large number of states in the upper central part of the nation. You might want to inquire whether your own institution is accredited by one of these six regional accrediting agencies. There is a good chance that the schools in which you will eventually teach will also be involved in some type of regional accreditation.

**NCATE.** Do you know whether the teacher education program you are now in has NCATE accreditation? Your college or university is probably accredited by one of six regional accrediting bodies just discussed that apply standards to the university as a whole by reviewing its financial status, student services, and the general studies curriculum. However, professional accreditation in teacher education is granted to the school, college, or department of education that is responsible for preparing teachers and other educators. Fewer than half of the roughly 1,300 institutions that prepare teachers in the United States are accredited by the profession's major accrediting agency, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). However, the NCATE accredited institutions graduate a majority of our new teachers. To learn more about the accreditation status of institutions, visit NCATE's website at [www.ncate.org](http://www.ncate.org).

**TEAC.** Yet another somewhat smaller organization that offers accreditation to teacher education programs is the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). This accrediting body, which was founded in 1997, is newer than NCATE and is dedicated to helping improve degree programs for professional educators.

## Licensure

When you graduate, you will be required to obtain a teaching license for the state in which you wish to teach. The requirements for your license are determined by the state in which you teach.

**STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION.** State licensure is a major component of a quality assurance system for professionals. To practice as a teacher, you must be granted a license from a state agency. A license to teach usually requires completion of a state-approved teacher education program and passing of a standardized test of knowledge. In addition, student teaching or an internship must be completed successfully.

States traditionally required candidates to take specific college courses, complete student teaching, and successfully pass a licensure examination for a license. Most states are now in the process of developing **performance-based licensing** systems. These systems will not specify courses to be completed; instead, they will indicate the knowledge, skills, and sometimes dispositions that candidates should possess. Future decisions about granting a license will depend on the results of state assessments based primarily on licensure test scores.

As mentioned, requirements for licensure differ from state to state. For this reason, if you plan to teach in a state different from the one in which you are going to school, you may want to contact that state directly for licensure information. The teacher certification officer at your institution should be able to provide you with licensure information and details about seeking a license in any particular state.

An initial teaching license allows a new teacher to practice for a specified period, usually three to five years, also known as the induction period. On completion of successful teaching during that period and sometimes a master's degree, a professional license can be granted. Most states require continuing professional development throughout a teacher's career and periodic renewal of the license, typically every five years.

**INTASC.** The ten principles of the **Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)** have been adopted or adapted for licensure by many states. Figure 1.8 shows these ten INTASC principles, which describe what teachers should know and be able to do in their first few years of practice. You should be developing this knowledge and these skills in the college program in which you are currently enrolled.

Before granting a professional license, some states are requiring teachers to submit **portfolios**, which are scored by experienced teachers, as evidence of teaching effectiveness. The portfolios that you begin to compile during your teacher education program could evolve into the documentation you will later need to submit for your first professional license.



To see a list of state certification and licensure offices throughout the U.S., go to the MyEducationLab for your course, select *Resources*, and then select *Licensure and Standards*.



Go to the *Building Teaching Skills and Dispositions* section of Topic 1: *The Teaching Profession* in the MyEducationLab for your course and complete the activity titled *Using the INTASC Standards and Teaching Practice*.

**performance-based licensing** A system of professional licensing based on the use of multiple assessments that measure the candidate's knowledge, skills, and dispositions to determine whether he or she can perform effectively in that profession.

**Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)** An

organization that created a set of principles that describe what teachers should know and be able to do.

**portfolio** A compilation of works, records, and accomplishments that teacher candidates prepare for a specific purpose to demonstrate their learning, performances, and contributions.


**FIGURE 1.8**
**INTASC Principles: What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do**

1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.
2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social, and personal development.
3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. The teacher plans instruction based on knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
8. The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.
9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

Each of these ten principles is accompanied in the full INTASC document with knowledge, dispositions, and performance expectations for candidates. INTASC content standards also have been developed for teachers of the arts, English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, elementary education, and special education. INTASC standards can be accessed from the web at [www.ccsso.org](http://www.ccsso.org).



To learn more about the Praxis exam, review test-taking strategies, and see sample questions, go to the MyEducationLab for your course, select *Resources*, and then select *Licensure Exams*.

**PRAXIS.** The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has developed a series of examinations, commonly called the *Praxis Series*<sup>TM</sup>, that are designed to assess the knowledge and skills required to be an effective educator at various stages of a beginning teacher's career. Praxis I assesses academic skills, Praxis II assesses the subjects to be taught, and Praxis III assesses classroom performance. Some teacher education programs and most states make use of these tests as part of their admission, retention, graduation, and certification requirements. Perhaps you are familiar with these Praxis tests; you may even have taken some of them. In any case, you should become familiar with them. You can learn more about the *Praxis Series* by visiting its website at [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis).

### Advanced Certification

Advanced certification has long been an option in many professions but is relatively new for teaching. Like all issues related to education, requiring advanced certification is not supported by everyone.

Many states now have an advanced certification option for educators. Some states actually require teachers to progress through a series of certification levels, whereas other states have either optional levels of certification that are made available to teachers or only one certification level. You should inquire about the certification levels required or available in your state. You should also eventually understand the certification requirements and options in any school district in which you might consider working.

**NBPTS.** The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was established in 1987 to develop a system for certifying accomplished teachers. The first teachers were certified by NBPTS in 1995, and the number of teachers seeking national certification continues to increase.

**National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)** A national association that creates and publishes standards and offers certification to accomplished teachers.



Nearly 74,000 teachers have achieved this national certification, and this number increases each year.

The NBPTS standards outline what teachers should know and be able to do as accomplished teachers. These standards state that nationally certified teachers:

1. Are committed to students and their learning.
2. Know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students.
3. Are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Are members of learning communities.

Why do teachers seek national certification? For one thing, recognition of accomplishment by one's peers is fulfilling. Nationally certified teachers are also aggressively being recruited by some school districts. Nationally certified teachers may also be paid an extra salary stipend of several thousand dollars. Your current teacher education program should be providing you with the basic foundation for future national certification.

To become eligible for national certification, you must teach for at least three years. The process for becoming nationally certified requires at least a year. You can learn the details about this opportunity by visiting the NBPTS website at [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org) or by going to MyEducationLab.

The certification process requires the submission of portfolios with samples of student work and videotapes of the applicant teaching. In addition, teachers desiring NBPTS certification must complete a number of activities at an assessment center, where experienced teachers score the various assessment activities. Many teachers do not meet the national requirements on the first try but report that the process is the best professional development activity in which they have participated. Overwhelmingly, teachers report that they have become better teachers as a result. More and more parents in the future will likely desire nationally certified teachers in their children's classrooms.



Given the trend to include students with disabilities in general education classrooms, it is likely that some of your students will have special needs, no matter what grades or subjects you teach. Bob Daemrich/PhotoEdit Inc.

## Standards

Standards and standards-based education are prevalent at all levels of education today. To finish your teacher education program, you will have to meet professional, state, and institutional standards that outline what you should know and be able to do as a novice teacher. When you begin teaching, you will be expected to prepare students to meet state or district standards. Assessments are designed to determine whether students meet the preschool–grade 12 standards at the levels expected. Most states require teacher candidates to pass standardized tests at a predetermined level before granting the first license to teach. Some states require beginning teachers to pass **performance assessments** based on standards in the first three years of practice in order to receive a professional license.

Standards developed by the profession (e.g., the INTASC and NBPTS standards just discussed) can be levers for raising the quality of practice. When used appropriately, they can protect students, including the least advantaged students, from incompetent practice (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Some educators view standards as a threat, especially when a government agency or other group holds individuals or schools to the standards, making summative judgments about licensure or approval. Others see standards as powerful tools for positive change in a profession or in school practices.

**USING TECHNOLOGY TO BETTER UNDERSTAND STANDARDS.** Just about all national and state educational standards can be rather easily found on the web. Standards created by professional organizations can also be accessed by checking the websites of those organizations. We highly recommend that you find and carefully examine any standards that apply to your major(s) and to

**performance assessments** A comprehensive assessment system through which candidates demonstrate their proficiencies in the area being measured.