

Running Head: THE POLITCS AND PRACTICE OF ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION

The Politics and Practice of Alternative Teacher Certification

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Abstract

Purpose: Alternative routes to teacher certification, such as California's Intern Program, have increasingly gained acceptance and popularity in the last decade. A significant and growing percentage of all new teachers, close to 30% in California, now enter the classroom through alternative paths and are considered highly qualified under NCLB. This research examines program designs and market strategies resulting from the subsidies provided to public and private Intern programs in California.

Research Design: Conceptual analysis of qualitative data from 11 in depth case studies.

Findings: California's policy and subsidy framework have resulted in development of four distinct program designs and program marketing strategies.

Conclusion: This study shows how the four distinct training program designs have emerged as the constrained and subsidized market framework created by California law and regulations intersect the priorities, capacities and interests of training providers. For education professionals and policy makers, this study provides substantial guidance regarding what can be expected to happen when various service providers adapt state goals, regulations and subsidies to local conditions to develop training programs.

Keywords: Alternative teacher certification, teacher intern programs, program evaluation, teacher education policy, teacher certification

Type of Article: Multiple case studies

The Politics and Practice of Alternative Teacher Certification

Traditional teacher training programs, with requisite university coursework and student teaching experience prior to becoming a certified teacher of record, have long been the mainstay of training and credentialing for new teachers. In the last decade, however, alternative routes to certification, such as California's Intern Program, have increasingly gained acceptance and popularity. Currently in California, close to a third of all new teachers enter the profession through the intern-based alternative certification route. And, this picture mirrors a nationwide trend. All fifty states currently offer some form of alternative certification.

Given that a significant and growing percentage of all new teachers enter the classroom through alternative paths, continuing to use the word "alternative" may actually be missing the mark. Intern programs are now mainstream mechanisms for teacher credentialing. Indeed, in some areas, such as special education, they represent a very substantial percentage of newly credentialed teachers (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2006, 2007, 2009; Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2005). It is imperative, then, that a thorough examination of alternative certification programs be made.

Proponents of alternative certification make passionate claims that these programs fundamentally restructure teacher training and are far superior to traditional teacher training (Feistritzer, 2007; Haberman, 2004; Hawley, 1992). Opponents make equally passionate arguments that alternative certification is a watered-down teacher preparation program that places ill-prepared and under, or unqualified, teachers in our nation's classrooms (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Darling-

Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Lasko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Public Advocates, 2007; Rosenhall, 2007; Rubin, 2007). The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), in particular, voices concern about the efficacy of alternative teacher preparation programs. According to the AACTE “superior teachers required of the complex, multicultural, fast-paced 21st century do not enter a classroom as a blank slate and learn on the job”(“Teacher Preparation Makes a Difference,” 2009). The AAUW adopted a policy resolution which “urges” resistance to policy which attempts to solve teacher shortage problems by “circumvention of high standards of preparation” (“Resolutions of the AACTE Membership, Resolution #57,” 2009).

There is one overarching and often heated debate in the research literature surrounding alternative certification (McKibbin 2001; Chin and Young 2007; Humphrey and Wechsler 2007). Proponents believe that alternative certification offers a qualitatively better approach to filling the nation’s classrooms by eliminating barriers blocking qualified individuals from entering the profession (Zumwalt 1996; Feistritzer 2001; Chin, Young et al. 2004; U.S. Department of Education 2004) . They open the classroom door to a pool of talent coming from outside of traditional teacher education programs. According to Feistritzer (2001, p.3), “People coming in to teaching through alternative routes tend to be older, people of color, more men, have academic degrees other than education, and have experiences in other occupations.” For individuals with family and home ownership responsibilities unpaid student teaching is unaffordable. Some argue that content knowledge and verbal ability are the only pre-service requirements needed to begin teaching (Abell Foundation 2001; Feistritzer 2001; Haberman 2004).

Proponents also see alternative certification as unlocking university monopolies over teacher education – monopolies that they believe offer too little practical content. Feistritzer

(2001) argues that internship training provides the needed intensive, field-based, training. And Haberman (2004, p. 3) adds that, “The best way to learn to teach is by actually teaching and having access to a mentor, other teachers and online resources.” In short, not only are alternative certification programs quicker and less expensive, they provide superior training.

Analysts defending the importance of university-based pre-service teacher preparation programs see alternative certification as an ill-advised band-aid on the teacher shortage problem. They argue for more rigorous requirements for pre-service preparation and adequate support to attract candidates (Feiman-Nemser 2001; Feiman-Nemser 2003; Darling-Hammond 2006). Linda Darling-Hammond (2006), argues that three critical components are needed: a) tight coherence and integration across courses and linking course work with clinical work, b) substantial, intensely supervised, clinical work using pedagogies that link theory and practice, and c) close working relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively and model good teaching. She, and others, argue that many alternative certification programs significantly “water down” preparation and should be resisted. Lasko-Kerr and Berliner (2003), see alternatives to traditional certification as putting children “in harm’s way” and express grave concern that both students and teachers are being compromised in their ability to be successful. While they specifically address “emergency” credentials, they clearly believe that traditional certification is needed to ensure quality.

In sum, intern-based alternative certification programs are controversial policies aimed at overcoming teacher shortages and encouraging second-career and other new population groups to choose a teaching career. They are controversial because some scholars think they offer inno-

vative, enhanced teacher training while others insist that, as implemented, they tend to water down training rigor and short-change the students whom they teach.

Numerous studies have sought to document the effect of alternative forms of training and certification on teacher effectiveness, retention in the profession, and student academic achievement (Zeichner and Schulte, 2001; Darling-Hammond, Chung and Frelow, 2002; Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin and Heilimnh, 2000; Humphrey, Wechsler and Hough, 2008). Several studies reported finding the performance of alternatively certified teachers satisfactory or better. However, Zeichner and Schulte conclude that the results were of “very limited value” for a number of reasons including their reliance on ratings by observers who “had a stake in the programs being assessed” (p. 276) and other methodological problems such as small sample sizes, and vaguely defined, incomparable or the complete lack of a comparison group.

Other studies have employed a survey research approach, generally asking teachers about how prepared or how effective they were in the classroom. For example, in a study of new teachers in New York City schools, Darling-Hammond, Chung and Frelow (2002) found that traditionally prepared teachers “felt” better prepared than their alternatively trained colleagues, though this varied by program. The authors also found that sense of preparedness positively correlated with self-efficacy and plans to stay in teaching.

In another effort to measure the effectiveness of alternative certification, Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin and Heilimnh (2005) linked teacher certification type with standardized test scores (math and reading scores on TAS, SAT9, Aprenda) for a large sample of 4th and 5th grade Houston students. Controlling for teacher experience, educational background, student demographics and prior achievement, they concluded that, on most measures “relative to

teachers with standard certification, uncertified teachers and those in most other non-certification categories generally had negative effects on student achievement” (p. 16). Twenty-two of 36 estimates favored traditionally certified teachers at $\alpha < .10$. They also report that the effects of the certification status were stronger than the effects of teacher experience.

Humphrey, Wechsler and Hough (2008) studied the components, participants, school contexts and outcomes of seven different programs (one of them in California). Not surprisingly, they found that effective programs provide participants with curriculum that is coherent, timely and context sensitive, and with mentor teachers who have adequate time and resources to provide meaningful support. Of all of the variables they examined, the school context exhibited the strongest effect. That is, the most effective alternative certification programs were those that placed candidates in schools with the best environments—schools with strong and effective leadership, a warm collegial atmosphere and adequate resources. Additionally, they found that the best programs attracted and served the best candidates who attended more competitive undergraduate institutions and those with prior experience in the classroom.

Reaching firm conclusions from this effectiveness research is made difficult, as several scholars have noted, because the great variety of alternative programs that have evolved have quite different designs and goals (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; McKibbin, 2001; Zeichner & Schulte, 2001). The research reported in this article helps to clarify why this variety of program designs has emerged by examining implementation of California’s Intern Program and asking, how do state sponsored intern programs restructure teacher preparation?

Programs and pathways labeled alternative certification are very diverse both across and within states (Feistritz, 2007; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Humphrey, et al., 2008; Author,

2007). Alternative certification programs vary in structure, duration, intensity, curriculum, participant characteristics and the targeted market. They are run by universities, school districts, county offices of education, and a variety of private entrepreneurial enterprises. Even in California, where alternative certification (intern) programs are fairly well regulated, there is a substantial assortment of program designs. Some programs attempt to truly differentiate themselves in content, structure and delivery from traditional training. Other programs place interns into the same courses taken by traditional teacher candidates (Chin, Young, & Floyd, 2004; Author, 2007).

California's alternative certification legislation provides training providers with a subsidy in the form of \$2,500 or \$3,500 per intern . It also "unlocks" the university monopoly over teacher training. By allowing other organizations, including school districts and county offices of education, to provide intern training the State has stimulated the development of 74 different local intern teacher training agencies with varying program designs and diverse training goals.

This paper develops findings regarding the ways in which California's policy and subsidy framework generates four distinct program designs. The framework provides substantial guidance regarding what can be expected to happen when new regulations are combined with significant subsidies to create new market opportunities for training service providers. Findings in this paper are drawn from a policy study supported by the California Department of Education (Author, 2007). We use qualitative data from 11 in-depth case studies to document our findings.

Theoretical Framework

This research employs an economic framework to understand and explain the diversity of intern program designs found in California. Economic theory on labor markets, organizational responses to subsidies, and organizational slack explain the assortment of program responses providers make as they enter into agreements with the State to provide professional development services for intern teachers. This framework enables us to understand what happens when state regulations and cash subsidies serve to create new market opportunities for training agencies.

Structural Imperfections in the Teacher Labor Market

Many states, particularly California where this study was conducted, experience chronic shortages of qualified teachers, particularly math, science and, special education teachers and teachers willing to work in poor, urban and other difficult assignments (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Ingersoll, 2006; Murphy, DeArmond, & Guin, 2003; White & Fong, 2008). In economic terms, this is a labor market failure in that salaries paid are too low to motivate individuals to undergo certification training, seek employment in the field, and make a career commitment to teaching. The failure need not be seen in salary terms alone – the labor market is influenced strongly by the existence of more or less onerous training, regulatory constraints and working conditions as well as wage rates. A primary cause of the labor market failure leading to teacher shortages is the fact that teacher wages are set politically rather than in response to market conditions. As a result, teacher salaries are characterized by wage rigidity, a single salary structure, seniority based pay, and a lack of salary adjustments for hard to recruit specializations or difficult work assignments (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2003; Rice, Roellke, Sparks, &

Kolbe, 2009). Simply put, politically controlled wage rigidity prevents teacher salaries from adjusting to market clearing equilibrium prices. Consequently, individuals with valuable degrees and skills in such fields as math, science and technology tend to make alternative labor market choices, opting for more lucrative careers outside of teaching (Baugh & Stone, 1982; Reback, 2006).

Wage rigidity is not the only structural imperfection in the teacher labor market. Prospective teachers enrolled in traditional teacher education programs face at least one significant barrier to entry-- a year or more of unpaid training and student teaching. For many individuals, including industry-experienced people with families, and younger people from traditionally disadvantaged minority groups, the opportunity cost associated with this unpaid absence from the labor market is too expensive when compared with other options.

Additionally, as many researchers have noted, the teacher labor market is highly localized. Most teachers work within 40 miles of where they graduated from high school or attended college (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005). The localized nature of the labor market restricts competition for teaching jobs and assures that some districts will struggle to fill classrooms, while others rarely experience a shortage of qualified individuals (White & Fong, 2008). Because the school systems with a surplus of applicants also tend to be those getting more highly qualified candidates. Unevenness in the availability of job applicants makes more it difficult to create market appropriate differentiated salary schedules. In other words, teacher shortages are compounded by a significant unevenness in both the quality and the quantity of applicants willing to apply for openings found in specific schools or districts (Boyd, et al., 2003).

These imperfections in the teacher labor market have made it difficult for pre-service training providers (primarily public and private colleges and universities) to attract and prepare teachers in sufficient quantity and with the appropriate mix of skills to serve the needs of the public school system. And this is compounded by the inability of school organizations to sustain teacher motivation and commitment (Reed, Rueben, & Barbour, 2006; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Low wages compared to other professions, inadequate training and the relative unattractiveness of employment in the most challenging schools have resulted in high rates of teacher attrition.

Subsidies, Organizational Slack and Decision Making in the Market Place

Subsidies are a policy tool used to incentivize organizational behavior (in this case to increase the production of teacher interns). Subsidies are employed by governments to overcome market imperfections and to generate goods with positive externalities such as education (Duizendstraal & Nentjes, 1994; Fernandez & Rogerson, 1994). Subsidies work by shifting the supply curve down and to the right on a supply and demand as a function of price graph, resulting in more output at the same market price, helping to overcome the negative consequences of teacher wage rigidity and the opportunity costs associated with training.

The \$2,500 or \$3,500 per intern grant provided by California functions as an output subsidy.¹ The State's intention, or formal goal, for the subsidy is to increase the production of highly qualified teachers willing to work in existing school settings and at prevailing wage rates. In addition to serving the State's interest in producing more (and possibly differently trained) teacher candidates, however, the various organizations seeking to qualify for the state subsidy do so because they expect it to provide them with the means of reaching some of their own organ-

izational “preferences and priorities” which may or may not align with the overarching state objective (Duizendstraal & Nentjes, 1994; McDonnell & Elmore, 1987). Simply put, not everyone applies for an opportunity to provide any given state-subsidized good or service; only those who see that access to state subsidies will help them to also reach some of their own organizational goals and interests will apply. It is rare, indeed, for an organization’s pre-existing goals to be so thoroughly aligned with the state’s interest that they seek the subsidy exclusively to pursue the state’s policy goals.

Economic theory tells us that production subsidies are to be interpreted as principal/agent transactions. Subsidies are used by an economic principal (in this case the State) to motivate and direct the activities of an agent (in this case the training service provider), so that the agent pursues goals established by the principal. In order for the subsidies to be attractive to the agents, however, they must provide some “organizational slack” that can be used by the agents to pursue their own purposes – otherwise the agents will simply not seek or accept the subsidy (Duizendstraal & Nentjes, 1994). The organizational slack created by the subsidy is a form of economic “rent” – so understood because a part of the subsidy payment going to an agency is used to pay for access to the service providing agency’s teacher training capacity. This “rent” payment is the amount of the subsidy that exceeds the actual cost of the training provided. It is, in essence a “cushion” against the cost of production (Bourgeois, 1981; Cyert & March, 1963; Duizendstraal & Nentjes, 1994). Slack has a number of possible uses. It can allow agent organizations to exploit new opportunities, to innovate and experiment, to buffer the impact of difficult economic times, to indulge in suboptimum behavior, or to allow pursuit of idiosyncratic agency goals (Bourgeois, 1981; Cyert & March, 1963; Herold, Jayaraman, & Narayanan, 2006). The

important point is that organizations make different decisions on how to use slack. The expected organizational response varies with the agencies' market position, and goals and the values they seek to maximize. Thus, along with accepting the formal policy goal of creating more interns, program providers may use program resources to optimize agency reputation, to capture additional market share, or to pursue their own "professional views" regarding what type or quality of training to provide. Since economic theory tells us that this is the typical case, field research ought to reveal divergent types of training service delivery based on specific characteristics of the agencies that have successfully applied for and received the state subsidies for intern teacher training.

California's Alternative Certification Intern Program

California's intern certification program has some unique features, but is broadly similar to those in many other states. A bit of background will help put our field research into proper perspective. Authorized in 1967, California Internship Teacher Preparation programs are designed to allow participants to complete most teacher preparation coursework and credential requirements during their first or second year in a paid teaching position. Some preliminary instruction in teaching basics is followed by on-the-job training and support provided by university and district staff. California interns are fully salaried and serve as teachers of record. The duration of the internship is one or two years, with a brief (four to six weeks long) pre-service program to provide the foundation skills needed to begin teaching and in this state working with English language learners.

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) issues to each candidate an Intern Credential, which is generally valid for two years while the intern is enrolled in an intern training program². One important feature of this credential is that individuals holding it are considered “highly qualified” teachers, meeting federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandates (a status not accorded to substitutes or previously prevalent Emergency Credentials). Upon program completion interns receive the same Preliminary Teaching Credential as those completing traditional university-based teacher preparation programs (though they have a reduced responsibility for participating in the California new teacher induction program required of all regularly credentialed teachers). The CTC reports that, more than 31,000 teachers have received their teaching credentials through participation in the State’s internship programs during the last six years (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2006, 2007, 2009). In 2006-07 there were 8,170 candidates participating in financially supported and at least 2,400 additional interns studying in university training programs without direct state support (Author, 2007).

Today’s California Intern Program is governed primarily by the Alternative Teacher Certification Act of 1993, AB 1161 (Quackenbush). AB 1161 (1993) rolled together two earlier laws and established funding criteria for the combined intern programs. The first, Teacher Education Internship Act of 1967, established the original university-based intern programs, and the second, 1983 Hughes-Hart Education Reform Act, authorized district-based intern programs. Under AB 1161, both programs received legislative authorization and fiscal support in the form of matching grants. Up until the 1993 legislation was signed into law intern programs were authorized, but no funding was provided. In the same year that AB 1161 was adopted the state budget included an appropriation of \$2 million to support teacher internship programs.

The 1993 Intern Program law was enhanced in 1997, when AB 18 (Mazzoni, Pringle) authorized increased funding for intern programs, and AB 309 (Mazzoni) authorized increasing the per candidate subsidy to \$2,500. In 2002, SB 2029 (Alarcon) allowed district intern programs to offer intern certificates in all areas of special education.

Further support came in 2006, when SB 1209 provided an additional \$1,000 per candidate in funding incentives for local programs willing to enhance their internship programs. Three specific enhancements were required by this legislation: 1) added hours for English learner pre-service preparation, 2) more on-site support for each intern by a certificated teacher at the school site, and 3) limiting the number of interns at any given school to specified ratios and comparative percentages of new and experienced teachers. If programs agree to these enhancements, funding is increased to \$3,500 per intern.

California Education Code §§44380-44386 specifies the legislative intent of the intern program: “to provide a concentrated program leading to a permanent teaching credential” (§44381) in order to:

- recruit talented individuals including those retiring from the military, industry and other career changers
- alleviate shortages of qualified teachers in the fields of math, science, technology
- address the need for teachers of limited-English-proficient students
- increase the numbers of minority teachers
- address shortages of teachers in certain geographic areas

In essence, the internship path to certification seeks both a qualitative and quantitative solution to the State’s chronic teacher shortage problem: quantitatively, by attracting a pool of individuals who otherwise might not enter the teaching profession and offering them an accelerated path to a full salaried teaching assignment, and qualitatively, by bringing experienced

individuals with backgrounds in math, science or technology into the classroom. Additionally, internships allow school districts and the State to meet the letter, if not always the spirit, of federal requirements to provide all students with “highly qualified” teachers.

California law currently authorizes two types of intern programs: university programs and district intern programs (California Education Code §§44450-44468 and §§44325-44329, respectively). Both programs receive fiscal support of \$2,500 or \$3,500 per intern. In university programs, intern teachers take courses in pedagogy after their teaching day ends. The courses are frequently, but certainly not always, located on university campuses taught by university faculty. These interns often attend the same “pre-existing” university classes as traditional, pre-service teacher candidates (Chin, et al., 2004, p. 7; Author, 2007). In some programs courses are provided via the Internet. In addition to course instructors, the universities also generally provide “supervisors” who are expected to make classroom observations and provide support for the interns.

In district programs, interns also take classes after school, but the classes are generally taught at the school district, by district employees and professional educators, in contrast to university professors (though some district programs hire university faculty on a part-time basis). The content of district intern programs tends to reflect the district vision and priorities.

The state places a number of regulatory requirements on the service providing agencies. To qualify for funding, intern programs must show that they meet the same standards of quality as traditional pre-service teacher training programs. They are required to collaborate with county offices of education, school districts and other professional organizations more than is the case for non-internship programs. They are required to submit an annual Program Improvement Plan

to the California Commission for Teacher Credentialing upon which continued funding is contingent (although suspension of funding has been a very rare event). The plan must include, among other things, a narrative with information describing the credentials offered, the recruiting process used, methods used to support and assess intern performance, and selection and training of intern support providers.

From a theoretical perspective, the funding and regulatory guidelines provided to local intern programs are appropriately seen as creating a subsidized and regulated market for the provision of professional development services. The state subsidy (\$2,500 or \$3,500 per Intern teacher plus an additional \$2,000 of in-kind support from local education agencies) is believed by state policy makers to be a sufficiently powerful market incentive to allow these monetary grants to be accompanied by reasonably strong state regulations regarding who should be admitted to the program and how they should be trained.

By stimulating the development of 74 different local intern teacher training agencies (each fiscally managed by a sponsoring local district or county office of education), the state has established a nominally competitive market structure among the local intern training programs and an even more competitive market between these programs and the colleges and universities that up to about 1980 largely controlled teacher training and certification and operated without the intern subsidies. This competition is not a simple head- to-head competition over quality, price and accessibility, however. It also involves conceptually distinct organizational structures and different emphases in the type of training service being provided.

Methods

Our analysis will focus on a review of qualitative data regarding program design and implementation gathered from 11 intensive case studies. The larger project of which this study is a part involved researchers from four institutions (University of California, Riverside; The RAND Corporation; the American Institutes for Research and California State University, Northridge). The methods and data sources for that study are described in detail in a technical report submitted to the California Department of Education (Author, 2007). The larger study utilized on-site observation and interviews to conduct intensive case studies of 11 local Intern projects selected from the entire population of 74 intern programs across the state. The data from the local intern projects were collected and interpreted utilizing typical qualitative case study field methods: documents were collected, numerous hours of observations conducted, interviews and focus groups were transcribed, research summaries and notes became the basis for building conceptual models of local program operations and effects.

Data Sources

Data for this project were collected at two distinct levels. At the statewide program population level, survey data provide a broad array of variables on program participation, operations and impacts. These data come from three specific sources. An annual “user” survey asks all participants in intern programs throughout the state, together with their support providers and their school site administrators, to offer judgments regarding the nature and quality of Intern program operations and impacts. Second, a briefer “consent” survey is given to each intern at the opening of each academic year. This survey elicits demographic data covering gender, ethnicity, under-

graduate college identification, credential being sought, the schools and districts within which the interns are working, along with reasons for entering the teaching profession in general and the intern program in particular. A third statewide data file reports on the identity of the 74 Intern programs across the state. This file provides a “profile” of each program that includes the credentials offered, the structure of program activities and requirements, the enrollment in each program and the first year dropout rates for interns enrolled in the program. These data are analyzed in detail in a technical report to the California Department of Education and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Author, 2007), and are not discussed here.

The statewide program data were used to select the 11 sites for intensive case study in order to obtain a sample that accurately represented the statewide diversity of program providers. Prior to selection, programs were categorized by geographical region (using the six regions employed by the California Teacher Credentialing Commission), organization type (private or public universities or district program), program size (small, medium or large), and types of credentials issued (multiple subject, single subject, education specialist, all). Programs were then carefully chosen to ensure a mix of each of these components.

A sample of ten programs was initially generated. These ten sites included small, medium and large programs; geographically dispersed sites, private and public universities and district managed programs; offering a mixture of the various credential types. The original list of ten sites was modified in two ways. First, it was noticed that geographical representation was too concentrated in Southern California, so an eleventh site was added from the northern part of the state. Second, in consultation with state officials, one program that was in the process of

closing down was replaced by another public university program. Table 1 lists the salient characteristics of the eleven cases selected for study.

Insert Table 1 about here.

The focus of this paper is on analysis of extensive qualitative data gathered from these eleven local intern program case study sites. These data involve on site observations and interviews as well as document collection. Interviews lasting from 40 minutes to nearly 2 hours were conducted with local program directors and four to six focus groups at each site. The focus groups were composed of: interns, teachers who had graduated from the intern program, school district support providers, university supervisors and university faculty. The focus groups were typically composed of five or six individuals, but ranged from as few as two interns to as many as 12 supervisors. Over 130 interviews and focus groups were conducted. Eight broad, open-ended questions were addressed in both the director and the focus group interviews. These questions covered Intern program organization and activities, resources and resource issues, the links between the Intern program and other pre-service training programs available within the area, and with a required California new teacher induction program call the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program. Focus group participants were urged to share descriptive information regarding program design, activities and requirements as well as evaluative information regarding how successful local programs are in meeting their own and state policy goals. Documentary data collected at each case study site included program budgets (including budgeted matching funds), the funded program proposals and copies of annual reports to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Results

Consistent with the literature, our case study research found significant diversity in the structure, curriculum and design of California's Intern programs. Some programs emphasized the unique character of the training they provide. Others emphasized increased convenience and lower opportunity costs as the primary benefits of their programs, continuing well established training program content by placing their interns into courses that parallel pre-existing teacher preparation courses.

Four distinct models of program organization and implementation were found among the case studies. Interview evidence indicates that these four alternative models evolved as local program sponsors entered the subsidized and regulated market for teacher preparation services created by the California intern program legislation. The organizational slack created by the intern program subsidies enabled program operators to pursue, in addition to the State's primary goal of training more teachers, efforts to: a) maximize institutional reputation for quality, b) lower cost and/or make service delivery more convenient, c) capture an increased share of the teacher training market, d) induct new teachers into district "professional" norms, e) redesign their teacher preparation curricula, and/or f) overcome local shortages of qualified teachers.

The identification and pursuit of specific local program goals arose as program operators sought to answer two fundamental questions: 1) To what extent, and in what ways, should they redefine or restructure the form and content of teacher preparation services? And 2) Who constitutes the primary client of the program – employing school districts in need of qualified teachers or the intern candidates seeking easier access or better professional training?

Program sponsors answered these questions in substantially different ways. Some local programs viewed the market as requiring substantial redefinition of pre-service training, while others emphasized making existing program content more attractive to intern candidates or school district employers. As they decided whether to emphasize program innovation or make marketing improvements, program sponsors also tended to choose between making their programs more valuable to the candidates or concentrating on supporting school district employers by helping them fill vacancies with teacher candidates meeting the federal mandate to place “highly qualified” teachers in every classroom. Figure 1 provides a few details of how different responses to these two questions lead to different intern program designs.

Insert Figure 1 about here.

In “ideal type” terms (Weber, 1946), Type A programs can be thought of as *School Oriented Traditional* programs, Type B as *School Oriented Local Culture* programs, Type C as *Candidate Oriented Traditional* programs, and Type D as *Candidate Oriented Intensified Training* programs. The rows in Figure 1 distinguish programs that focus on supporting school district employers (top row) from those seeking to ease access and/or enhance training opportunities for the credential candidates (bottom row). The Type A and B programs see the central issues as finding teachers for specific job assignments and meeting district needs to recruit and select at least minimally qualified teacher candidates. The Type C and D programs see the problem as opening up access and/or improving the quality of the teacher training system so as to bring more and better new teachers into the school system. For them intern placement, while essential to securing an intern credential, is secondary to candidate recruitment and training.

The columns of the table distinguish programs emphasizing expansion of traditional teacher training (left column) from those that see intern subsidies as an opportunity to substantially change the content and character of the teacher training process (right column). The Type A and Type C programs, found in the left column, do not envision their programs substantially restructuring teacher training. In sharp contrast, the Type B and D programs, in the right column, intend to fundamentally change teacher training (though those in the top row (Type B) have a very different vision of what that new training should look like from the bottom row (Type D) programs. All of the case study sites we found could be located in one of the four cells of the table. A description of each of these four archetypes with supporting qualitative evidence follows.

The Type A, *School Oriented Traditional*, programs are typically found among the California State University system campuses. They tend to emphasize using their traditional pre-service courses and supervision system, together with a declaration that they have created “market driven” responses to district staffing needs. Interns generally follow the same scope and sequence and are often enrolled in the same classes as traditional teacher candidates.

Statements by program directors verify that Type A programs do not envision re-defining the nature or culture of teacher preparation. Interns are integrated into existing pre-service programs and courses. Type A program administrators made such unequivocal statements as:

The courses in which you will enroll are identical to those courses in which every student who completes a single subject credential program at [name of University] completes (IHE Director, Case 6, 5-MAY-07)

You won't see much difference in program for interns and regular students ... Basically it looks the same as the traditional student teacher (IHE Director, Case 10, 10-MAY-07)

It was also evident from interviews that these programs are working directly with school districts to meet market driven needs for NCLB qualified teachers. For example, program directors report:

We really do what they [the districts] say. They wanted to enhance that link between districts looking for interns and university having interns looking for jobs. ... Districts say... we need interns to know a little bit more of this and that. (Director, Case 9, 10-MAY-07)

We've done a lot to connect with our districts to be very involved with them and be sure we are meeting their needs and demands. (Director, Case 6, 21-MAY-07)

Type A programs utilize the slack generated by the subsidy to maximize a quantitative goal of meeting local school district needs for intern teachers. However, their ability to meet district needs is tempered by fairly rigid predetermined institutional limits on, for example, the maximum number of sections the university can offer. The subsidy may mean that some additional number of sections are offered (in some cases staffed with part time instructors) but it is not utilized to remake or change the type of training offered.

The Type B, *School Oriented Local Culture*, programs also focus their efforts on teacher employers. However, these programs emphasize re-defining the nature of teacher preparation. They tend to be found in District Intern Programs (sponsored by single districts or County Offices of Education). Training is undertaken primarily by experienced professionals and not by university faculty. The organizational goal is to create a new “professional” or “practical” training program where teachers are inducted into the norms and school specific practices of the local district rather than pedagogical theory or concept development.

This intention to re-define the nature of teacher preparation was frequently expressed in terms of dissatisfaction with traditional university training. For example, in a single district program we heard:

[In University training] there a discrepancy between course work and application to the assignment. What we hear is “I’m not getting what I need to be successful in the classroom.” ... it’s a lot of theory without application. There is a disconnect between [university] preparation courses and the classroom (Director, Case 3, 31-MAY-07).

These programs are marketed as controlled, targeted professional preparation, preparing teachers for specific schools or districts:

The Universities tend to over-generalize and do not target to one district. Practical application is met more at the district level than at the University level (Director, Case 3, 31-MAY-07).

The vision is we train a unique core of teachers. We are training teachers in math and science that is where the need is... so our program links with math and science and what the district’s vision is. (District Program Manger, Case 11, 17-MAY-07)

We have the strongest staff development around...they feel there is more value in those classes—using our district, our materials, textbooks—all geared toward our district. (Director, Case 3, 31-MAY-07).

[Our interns] grow up in the district, rather than having preconceived notions about what it’s like here. (Director, Case 3, 31-MAY-07))

Type B programs emphasis that they purposefully utilize professional educators rather than university professors as the program instructors. They emphasize the practicality of their curriculum as distinct from training offered by Universities:

[Who are the teachers?] Teachers, other teachers. The district usually hires other teachers.... (Intern, Case 8, 14-JUNE-07)

We all know that there is an ideal world of what we learn in the books and then the reality of the [school district name] classroom environment but I think the program does a pretty good job in matching the real work with the ideal work. (Intern, Case 8, 14-JUNE-07)

With us it's more practical. It's more like a discussion. It's more like what's going on in your classroom and there's projects and activities that we'll have to do. (Intern, Case 8, 14-JUNE-07)

It's one thing to sit in ed classes for a year and take notes and think about what it is supposed to be like and taught by somebody who knows all the books, and it is something else to be in a classroom and go to those classes and you have to apply everything you've been learning. It has immediate practicality. You can ask questions of the instructors that are relevant to you that day. (Supervising Teacher, Case 5, 31-MAY-07)

In short, it is clear from interviews that, unlike Type A programs, Type B programs intend to use the subsidy created organizational slack to create an entirely different type of teacher training program specifically designed to meet local district needs.

Type C, *Candidate Oriented Traditional Programs*, tend to be developed by private and entrepreneurial educational institutions that offer training at multiple, convenient locations, utilize internet based courses, and emphasize direct candidate recruitment. They market to intern candidates on convenience and flexibility. They create a variety of instructional options including internet based, on-line instruction. These programs do not seek to redefine the nature of teacher training. As one director noted, “the syllabi [for traditional student teachers and interns] are quite similar.” (*Director, Case 4, 17-MAY-07*). Instead they focus on service delivery options attractive to candidates with the goal of increasing market share.

These programs typically boast about the number of sites, flexibility and variety of content delivery options available to interns.

We have six total sites. That includes the main campus but we also have programs at [names 5 additional locations] (Director, Case 4, 17-MAY-07).

Though not one of our eleven intensive case studies, another program that has a Type C profile presents on its website archetypical language manifesting the commitment of these programs to candidate access and ease of entry into the profession. This program advertises:

Courses are offered in a traditional classroom setting at one of [school name] 28 campuses, online, and as a combination of both on-campus and online.

Our year-round registration, flexible programs, online degrees, and unique one-course-per-month format are suited to fit your busy lifestyle

Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, our online programs offer the ease and convenience of earning a degree or taking individual courses at your own personal computer.

Allows students to enroll at any time without waiting for a new quarter or semester.

Start at the beginning of any month that's convenient for you.

And, it is clear from intern remarks in our Type C case study programs that individual candidates are attracted by the convenience and ease of service provided.

[They enrolled me in the intern program] within a day I think. There're really quick and I was happy about that. I didn't have to do a lot of paperwork. They actually just got all the forms ready and all I had to do was fill out...that's why I'm here...I was a student at [name of CSU] and I just never liked their program. They said before even being considered a teacher credential student...you had to take four classes and once you pass those classes then you apply...And I'm just thinking "No" (Intern, Case 4, 17-MAY-07) .

The whole class was more or less online ... and we had to do everything online (Intern, Case 4, 17-MAY-07) .

They're like always there when you need them. It's pretty amazing. Like you can shoot your professor an email and get a response in an hour from

a lot of the professors I've had. And any time. Any time you go into the teacher credential office over here you can talk to anybody like almost immediately (Intern, Case 4, 17-MAY-07).

Unlike Type A and B programs, Type C programs clearly market to individual teacher candidates on the convenience and flexibility of their programs. Here organizational slack is used not to create a new type of training but to increase market share. And, their entrepreneurial orientation leaves them more flexible to quickly enroll new students. There is little or no real cost to enrolling another student in an online course. And, their use of numerous part time instructors, allow them to add classes as the demand arise.

Finally, turning to the Type D, *Candidate Oriented Intensified Training Program*, is illustrated principally by only one of the eleven case study programs. This program has a restrictive enrollment policy, is focused on providing science, math and English, single subject, high school level preparation and insistence on substantial pre-program preparation, and aims at raising rather than lowering the time and effort required to secure a credential. To make its point clearly, the program restricts interns to accepting no more than a 60% teaching assignment so that they have time to study and undergo rigorous training. State officials report that there are other local programs that also embrace this conceptual model. This program clearly emphasizes quality over quantity and envisions a new approach to change the nature of teacher training programs. Type D programs utilize the subsidy to maximize institution reputation for quality.

It was clear that this program envisioned a new approach to change the nature of teacher training programs. The Program Director reported that their approach grew out of,

frustration with most of the programs that had a semester of student teaching and sometimes just one class and that counted as student teach-

ing for secondary – thought way less than needed to be a good high school teacher. (Director, Case 11, 17-MAY-07)

And that,

This program emphasizes the rigor and intensity of training provided individual candidates.

Our intern program is not a program designed only to fill a need in the subject area. It also provides a much richer field experience.

Our students take a full undergraduate minor ... and they spend a full year part-time – volunteer observer, tutor and what we call apprentice which looks a lot like student teaching...Then they take 5 courses in the summer, very intense, subject matter specific methods, reading and writing across the curriculum, multicultural education, technology. They get more than half of their methods courses in the summer. Then we set them loose with a lot of support from our faculty and some support from the district

If you come to us from [another program] you have to spend a full year with us doing what that undergraduate minor is because we put you into the Internship. Might give you credit for a couple of courses but we don't put you right into an internship just because you have 30 hours of observation in the classroom. You have to have 120 hours of prior work and 40 of those has to be in something that looks like student teaching.

we almost never place an intern in a full-time position. .. [other programs] pop them in the schools and hope for the best (Director, Case 11, 17-MAY-07)

Type D programs, like Type C programs, also market to individual teacher candidates.

However, Type D programs use slack to enhance institutional reputation by intensifying requirements. These programs are clearly interested in qualitative over quantity.

Seeing the Overall Pattern of Program Organization

Stepping back from the individual cells in Figure 1, to look again at the overall framework used to organize the table draws attention to the fact that some teacher employers want to

move teacher candidates as quickly as possible out of university training programs and into full teaching responsibility because they face a shortage of fully credentialed teachers willing to accept positions at prevailing wage rates in some of their classrooms. The shortage areas may be ones demanding special preparation (like special education, mathematics or science), or they may be ones where difficult working conditions or hard to teach students keep fully credentialed teachers out of the labor market. These school systems want teacher preparation programs that help them recruit and place intern teachers quickly. Some teacher candidates are willing to accept moderate quality training in exchange for low cost and easily accessible training services. Many school employers, however, want professionally oriented and well trained teachers, and take steps to secure them. For some employers, this means taking the primary responsibility for organizing and operating an intern training program that induct candidates into the “district way.” For some training agencies, this means using the intern program subsidy to raise the bar on admission criteria, strengthen in-district supervision, or to make the training itself more rigorous.

Some of the “big ideas” in education policy analysis are reflected in these diverse and somewhat contradictory training program options. Candidates who seek low cost, convenient, low demand training are being prepared to fit into the type of managed, educational service delivery characterized by so-called “deskilling” (Terry, 1998) of the teaching occupation. Thus these programs may be helping to produce reduced professionalism and lowered commitment to high performance among teachers. The districts that are successfully taking possession of the intern programs and placing them under the direction of the district staff development or human resources offices appear to be embracing the “new managerialism” an approach to worker supervision that emphasizes closely monitored, carefully structured work tasks and an outcome rather

than process oriented approach to accountability (Terry, 1998). A third, apparently smaller group of trainers and districts are collaborating to use intern training for preparation, pursuing the long held, but elusive idea that teaching might become a true profession.

The important point here is that, despite funding and strong state regulations, intern program designs are, in substantial part, structured by managerial decisions regarding the marketplace where these services must be bought and paid for. State funds are incentives for program development but, to become operational, institutional resources must also be tapped. Therefore the programs have to be seen as wise investments by intern applicants and school districts as well as by state policy makers. This motivates program operators to cooperate closely with school districts and with candidate training institutions, but it also limits their willingness to see program priorities in terms of state interests.

Conclusion

This study provides an important contribution to the analysis of educational policy impacts on the activities of professional educators. It shows how education professionals respond to state policy issues within a constrained and subsidized market framework by developing very different conceptions of what compliance with the intent of the policy should entail.

Conceptual analysis of qualitative data demonstrates that California's policy and subsidy framework has resulted in development of four distinct program designs. These programs offer substantively different visions of intern teacher training. Some of the programs attempt to truly change the nature of teacher training while others concentrate on increasing market share. For education professionals and policy makers, this study provides substantial guidance regarding

what can be expected to happen when strong regulations are combined with substantial subsidies aimed at expanding teacher recruitment and training without significantly changing politically negotiated credential and salary structures.

Table 1: Case Study Sites

Descriptions of the Eleven Intern Case Study Sites						
Case Number	Region	Agency	Train Special Educ?	Locale	Number of Interns	2006 Survey Response Rate
1	South	Multiple	Yes	Urb/Sub	69	91.4%
2	North	Private	Yes	Urb/Sub	23	81.3%
3	South	District	Yes	Suburban	16	64.3%
4	South	State Univ	No	Urb/Sub	411	85.9%
5	North	Multiple	Yes	Urban	93	41.5%
6	North	State Univ	Yes	Mixed	64	85.6%
7	North	District	No	Mixed	330	47.8%
8	South	District	Yes	Urban	434	80.9%
9	South	State Univ	Yes	Suburban	255	93.5%
10	South	State Univ	Yes	Mixed	162	55.1%
11	South	Public Univ	No	Urban	31	68.0%

Figure 1: The Regulated Market for Teacher Intern Training

		Redefine the nature of pre-service teaching?	
		<i>No, the issue is producing more and more targeted teachers to meet pressing needs</i>	<i>Yes, this is an opportunity to change the whole culture of preparation</i>
Focus on Marketing to:	Teacher Employers	<p><i>School Oriented Traditional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >integrate interns into existing pre-service programs >use established courses >keep down costs >work with districts to produce NCLB “highly qualified” teachers > market to school districts <p>Maximize: quantity produced</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Type A</p>	<p><i>School Oriented Local Culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >professionalization of training >move away from universities toward LEAs >use professional rather than academic trainers >market to district administrators as controlled, targeted preparation <p>Maximize: district “professional” norms</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Type B</p>
	Intern Candidates	<p><i>Candidate Oriented Traditional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >diversify operations >create multiple training locations >use on-line instructional options >market to candidates on cost and convenience > market to intern candidate <p>Maximize: market share</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Type C</p>	<p><i>Candidate Oriented Intensified Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Intensify training in both content/time >Interning is student teaching on steroids >insist on pre-training, resist last minute enrollment > market to intern candidate <p>Maximize: institutional reputation</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Type D</p>

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¹ A variety of types of subsidies exist and the expected organizational response varies with the structure of the subsidy. For example a subsidy may be an upfront, fixed lump sum subsidy, or an input subsidy based on the cost of production, or an output subsidy based on the number of units produced (Duizendstraal & Nentjes, 1994). Output subsidies incentivize output as intended but this can come at the cost of quality unless system of quality monitoring is established (Duizendstraal & Nentjes, 1994).

² University Intern Credentials are valid for one to two years. District Intern Credentials are valid for two years for regular education teachers (Multiple and Single Subject Credential holders) and three years for special education teachers (Education Specialist Credential holders).

District Intern Credential holders may also be granted a one year extension at the request of the district Governing Board.