In Fall 2018, TeachDE – a group of stakeholders from across Delaware – released a set of recommendations as a call to action for members of the policy, practice, and educator preparation communities to collaboratively address critical needs of educators in our schools. The Partnership for Public Education, a University-wide initiative designed to leverage UD resources in support of public education, has prepared this brief to summarize related initiatives currently underway at our institution as a means of demonstrating our commitment to strengthening the educator workforce for all children.

1.1 Reimagine traditional teacher preparation programs to appeal to today’s students and attract additional students to the teacher pipeline.
In Fall of 2017, the College of Arts and Sciences was awarded a UNIDEL Foundation grant to reimagine pathways into secondary science and mathematics teaching. The intent of the project is to broaden the pool of potential future teachers in these high needs fields and to thereby bolster the teacher workforce in the State of Delaware.

1.3 Foster and expand “grow your own teacher” initiatives.
The University is actively working to ease and increase matriculation of participants in Teacher Academies, the education-focused Career and Technical Education pathway, to UD. The University has created a form letter for teacher pathway supervising teachers to submit with admission documents to assist in the admission process. UD is also exploring creation of dual-enrollment courses designed specifically for Teacher Academy students.

1.4 Establish and support paraprofessional-to-teacher pathways across the state.
The University’s Alternative Routes to Certification Program (ARTC) encourages and supports paraeducators to become teachers through the Master’s Plus Certification Program. The two-year graduate program offers graduate special education coursework while candidates spend the first year working as a paraeducator in a special needs classroom and in the second-year candidates are hired as a special education teacher of record while completing their coursework. Successful candidates complete the degree with a master’s degree and certifications in special education and a chosen content area. Additionally, the ARTC program, offers pre-service special education seminars in summer, fall, and spring which advises participants in seeking employment as a full-time special education educators.

2.2 Actively recruit students into educator preparation programs that address critical shortages.
The University of Delaware’s Associate in Arts in Elementary Teacher Education (AA-ETE) two-year degree at the University of Georgetown campus is uniquely positioned to address geographic teacher shortages in Kent and Sussex counties. The program recruits from Southern Delaware. The AA-ETE program offers the equivalent to the first two years of the bachelor of science degree in Elementary Teacher Education (BS.Ed) at the University’s Newark campus. The University will be launching an AA-ETE program at the Wilmington Campus in fall 2019. Additionally, the Delaware SEED Scholarship Program, offered by the state of Delaware, covers tuition for Delaware residents that are full-time students enrolled in the AA program at UD.

The University’s ARTC program also exclusively recruits candidates to address the critical need subject areas as identified by the Delaware Department of Education annually. The ARTC program regularly attends and recruits candidates from around the state through job and career fairs.

2.3 Establish a flexible and responsive system that allows schools to fill critical needs areas efficiently.
The University’s ARTC program provides pathways to certification – with a specific focus on critical need areas - for career changers that afford Delaware’s classrooms a wealth of academic training and professional experience in a variety of disciplines. In the past three years, the ARTC program has grown from 50-70-person cohorts to cohorts of over 130 candidates annually. Additionally, the ARTC program affords flexibility for teacher candidates by designing and customizing courses of study for participants which account for prior course work.

Recognizing the critical need for language instructors across the state, The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (DLLC) has worked with the English Language Institute (ELI) to provide recommendations for the best possible courses for candidates pursuing world languages and dual languages certification through the
alternate routes program (ARTC). A year-long professional development series has been created for in-service teachers and those seeking certification through the ARTC. Additionally, new course are being developed, LLCU167 and LLCU417, to support practical field experience for teacher candidates.

3.1 Develop more supportive induction and mentorship experiences.
UD has contracted with the DDOE to provide training and support for LEAs in the use of the edTPA performance assessments for novice educators and mentors.

3.3 Explore pathways for individualized professional development.
The University’s Professional Development Center for Educators (PDCE) offers school-based coaching through a combination of large group, small group, and individual teacher supports from experienced content-area specialists. Through the use of school-based Professional Learning Communities (PLC), teachers engage in collaborative planning which allows teachers peer-to-peer support and support from PDCE’s instructional coaches. Additionally, classroom-based coaching offers modeling, co-teaching, and observation opportunities.

3.4 Support and expand meaningful support systems for pre- and in-service teachers of color and men.
In Fall of 2017, the College of Education and Human Development was awarded a UNIDEL Foundation grant to support underrepresented and minoritized students interested in becoming teachers. In summer 2018, the Teachers of Tomorrow program welcomed the first cohort of area high school students to campus.

In 2013, The Collaborative to Diversify Teacher Education at UD, published a white paper with recommendations to advance equity in teacher education. Those recommendations include improving the campus climate, advocating for the teaching profession as a whole, and centrally coordinating and supporting outreach and support efforts. One specific recommendation is to fund the Academic Support Program Inspiring Renaissance Educators (ASPIRE) as a formal University-wide program and foster coordination with NUCLEUS. ASPIRE currently operates as a registered student organization to support underrepresented teacher candidates. NUCLEUS is a current program at the University to provide support and mentorship for underrepresented students in the College of Arts and Sciences. (Report: http://bit.ly/uddiversifyteachered)

4.3 Establish equity-literacy as a cross-cutting theme of education preparatory programs and professional learning.
The University has focused on equity across its education preparation programs and student organizations. The University currently requires EDUC258 and EDUC419 – diversity and equity for elementary and secondary education majors, respectively – and offers a minor in Urban Education which focuses on the challenges of urban spaces and marginalized populations.

Both individual faculty members and specific teacher education programs have sought to foster a greater focus on equity. The Equity Inquiry Group, led by two faculty from the School of Education, has brought together a group of interested faculty once a month for more than a year in order to examine their own practice, learn about diversity, inclusion, and equity, and make changes to their courses as a result.

Some teacher education programs also make equity an explicit focus of their mission. The English Education program, for example, offers a strong focus on equity in all its secondary education courses, beginning with ENGL295 – Introduction to English Education. Experiences and assignments have been deliberately developed to build teacher candidates’ understanding and commitment to equity over the course of study.

Additionally, the Secondary Educators of Tomorrow (SET) group, a registered student organization at the University, has expressly focused on issues of equity in education, offering reading groups and hosting panel presentations and workshops on campus.

On the matter of equity-literacy professional learning, the Partnership for Public Education, in conjunction with faculty, graduate students, and staff across the University, is collaborating with members of the K12 community to co-design equity-oriented professional learning opportunities for administrators and in-service teachers.

Visit www.udel.edu/ppe or email ppe-info@udel.edu for more information.