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## **State University Education Deans (SUED) and Ohio Association of Private Colleges for Teacher Education (OAPCTE)**

### **Position Statement on Alternative Preparation Pathways for Ohio Teachers**

Our members believe that all children in Ohio deserve a world-class education delivered by highly qualified teachers. Our public and private institutions of higher education are well versed with Ohio's educational context. We know Ohio's schools, administrators, teachers, and children. We embrace rigorous national accreditation standards. We know Ohio's codes and standards and are thus uniquely positioned to provide high-quality teacher preparation.

Research shows that effective teachers need in-depth knowledge of the content they plan to teach, and they need to know how to teach that content to diverse learners. The number of individuals pursuing Ohio's Alternative Resident Educator Licensure pathway has increased as teacher shortages in the state have magnified. Since the passage of SB 3 in March 2017, critical course content requirements previously required for Ohio's alternative resident educator pathway no longer exist. The removal of these course requirements compromises the readiness of these teachers to impact student learning. This is exacerbated in Intervention Specialist/Special Education, where the needs of learners are formidable.

Our members have been actively monitoring the quality and efficacy of alternative licensure preparation programs across the nation for some time. Prior to September 2017, no mechanisms existed for IHEs in Ohio to gain approval to offer alternative licensure preparation programs, despite requests for approval to develop such programs. Our institutions have now been provided an opportunity to address our state's teacher shortages by creating alternative licensure preparation programs. Our members have begun working collaboratively with the Ohio Department of Higher Education to develop high-quality, data-driven alternative licensure preparation programs designed to ensure that:

- a) Alternatively prepared teachers will positively impact all Ohio learners, including our most vulnerable children residing in our urban and rural districts where resources may be limited and academic progress is most challenged;
- b) Alternatively prepared teachers will be equipped with the specialized skills necessary to be learner-ready and effective on day one when working with all students, including those with special needs and/or disabilities;

c) Alternatively prepared teachers will be prepared to respond to the complex social-emotional learning and support needs of children experiencing trauma, such as the impact of Ohio's opioid crisis; and

d) Alternatively prepared teachers will be supported beyond day one with ongoing professional development aimed to address and sustain the acquisition of skill sets necessary for effective teaching and retention of Ohio's teacher workforce.

Ohio's 50+ approved teacher preparation programs have the skills, relationships, credibility, accountability, and commitment to deliver highly qualified effective teachers through multiple pathways for Ohio. Working across our expansive networks and established partnerships (e.g., the Ohio Confederation of Teacher Education Organizations, P-16 Collaborative, professional regulators, school districts) we are transforming Ohio's educational infrastructures and leveraging the state's investment in quality education.

Our organizations hope that our testimony on the need to support quality alternative preparation pathways will be considered as real progress toward addressing Ohio's teacher shortage, by leveraging Ohio's existing accredited Educator Preparation Programs to build our state's capacity of professional teachers. Together, we will make sure that every Ohio child has access to the highly qualified, professionally trained teachers delivering the best possible education to our children.