



Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

Fall 2011

Dear IACTE Members,

What an interesting time for teacher preparation! From the Obama Administration's plan for teacher education reform to Governor Branstad's administration's blueprint, the reform spotlight is on teachers and teacher preparation. Every day, something from the education reform arena is in the media.

However, while the reform agenda escalates, IACTE members continue to hear from schools that our student teachers and beginning teachers are "the best we have ever had". We also trust our program data to indicate that we meet nationally recognized standards. How disheartening it has been to see and hear inaccurate information and distortions about teacher preparation in Iowa. Simply said, it has been a confusing and humbling experience for all of us in teacher preparation in Iowa to have holes poked in our practice and what we have believed to be "best in class" teacher preparation.

I assumed the position of president of IACTE on July 1, 2011, and had to hit the ground running. It has been a marathon to keep current with all of the reform efforts in Iowa and the nation, and to be IACTE's presence and voice in the Governor's Education Summit, state level meetings, town hall meetings, legislative briefings, etc. As you know, I sent a letter to Governor Branstad requesting a role for IACTE in decision making or at least in providing input. I have the utmost respect and appreciation for his decision to involve IACTE in this time of reform. At his request, IACTE provided several recommendations for improving teacher preparation. I know that many of you worked together over a weekend to provide recommendations in order to meet the deadline. Please note that the needs for additional information and participation will most likely increase as the legislative session approaches.

We do, however, have wonderful resources to help us. It is with great appreciation that I acknowledge the support of our national organization, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. AACTE provides fabulous support and training through the State Leaders Conference and the Day on the Hill. AACTE's generous support of the Iowa chapter also extends to providing Jon Gentile for the October 22 Fall Meeting "Lobbying 101" training session.

I also acknowledge and appreciate the continuing hard work on our behalf of past IACTE president, Tracy Schuster Matlock, past IACTE president David Whaley and IACTE president-elect, Susie Lagos Lavenz, as well as the members of the IACTE Executive Board. All have spent long hours in dialog and reflection on IACTE's next steps in this time of change. Lastly, I want the world to know that our IACTE

members are extremely intelligent, amazingly resilient, and wise professionals! It would be impossible to serve as your president without the collective wisdom of the IACTE membership. It is an honor to serve as president for a professional organization that is truly based on collegiality and collaboration. I am very proud to represent you and the 32 excellent teacher preparation institutions in Iowa that you serve.

Joel Rottler Larson

IACTE President