



# Newsletter

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Association of Teacher Educators, Manassas Park, Virginia

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## ATE Responds to Levine Study

A study by Arthur Levine, formerly president of Teacher's College, Columbia University and currently president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, was released on September 8, 2006. The book, *Educating School Teachers*, looked at all phases of teacher preparation in the United States. The study and an executive summary are available for downloading at the website of the Education Schools Project, [www.edschools.org](http://www.edschools.org).

The Association of Teacher Educators has prepared the following response to this study, which has been posted on ATE's website and sent to education reporters:

### Response to *Educating School Teachers* by Dr. Arthur Levine from the Association of Teacher Educators

Dr. Arthur Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation and former president of Teachers College, Columbia University, has authored a study of teacher education, *Educating School Teachers*, released by the Education Schools Project. The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) welcomes his call for improvements in the teacher education process; ATE's members are actively working for many of the changes he supports. We do, however, challenge, his recommendations related to expanding teacher education programs at highly selective institutions and closing some programs at Masters I universities rather than seeking to improve programs at all institutions including those educating most of the nation's teachers. At a time when our nation faces escalating teacher shortages in hard-to-staff elementary and secondary schools, we believe Dr. Levine's statement that "Many of the programs that should be closed will be found among Masters I universities" is elitist at best. Many of the education programs Dr. Levine suggests closing fill a

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Left to right, Opening General Session speaker Lindamichelle Baron; ATE President Jane McCarthy; and Philadelphia Mayor John F. Street

## Summer Conference Draws Crowd to Philly

The 2006 Summer Conference of the Association of Teacher Educators was held at the Hyatt Regency Philadelphia at Penn's Landing July 29-August 2, and preliminary figures indicate it drew the third largest crowd ever for an ATE Summer Conference. Highlights of this conference included a great motivational talk by poet, storyteller and educator Lindamichelle Baron; views of Philadelphia's educational challenges from Mayor John F. Street and Philadelphia Schools Superintendent Paul Vallas; a talk by Pennsylvania House of Representatives member Dwight Evans; an evening dinner cruise along the Delaware River aboard the Spirit of Philadelphia; and a series of special presentations on topics such as Professional Development Schools and the unique Philadelphia urban consortium uniting area colleges and the city's schools.

Theme for the Summer Conference was **Reinventing the Educational Landscape: Renewing Hope, Heart and Vision for Teachers, Learners and Communities**. Planning Committee co-chairs Edwina and Larry and Vold gathered a group representing 10 different states to put together the program, and they were able to draw upon the resources of the city of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to create

a program of interest to all.

On the 300th anniversary of the birth of Ben Franklin, it was fitting that the individual himself welcomed attendees to the opening reception. Mr. Franklin (as enacted by Ralph Archibald) told stories about his life and provided guidance for the current day based on his own experiences.

ATE President Jane McCarthy's President's Brunch talk was entitled "Who's Coming to School? The Role of Teacher Education in Creating Equity of Opportunity for All Learners."

## Nominations Open

ATE is looking for nominations for Board and officer positions. The 2007 elections, which will be held following the Annual Meeting in San Diego, will be for President-Elect and two open Board of Directors positions.

To download nomination forms and election information, which should be submitted prior to the San Diego Annual Meeting, go to ATE's website, [www.ate1.org](http://www.ate1.org), click on "Governance" in the top menu bar, and then click on "Election Information" in the left-hand menu bar.

# ATE Responds to Levine Study

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valuable role in preparing diverse teacher candidates for a wide variety of schools in many locations. Closing these programs rather than seeking to improve them is premature and unrealistic.

As noted, ATE's members are actively engaged in working to improve teacher education in ways that Dr. Levine notes. Consider his recommendations (in bold):

**Recommendation One: Transform education schools from ivory towers into professional schools focused on school practice.** ATE's members are already in the field, working with schools, school districts and practitioners. ATE actually got its start as a field service association whose members were primarily engaged in mentoring student teachers. The National Field Directors Forum, an important ATE Special Interest Group, continues this legacy. In addition, ATE strongly supports the establishment of Professional Development Schools, in which college and university education schools partner with PreK-12 schools to help prepare teachers and improve instruction methods.

**Recommendation Two: Focus on student achievement as the primary measure of the success of teacher education programs.** While there are numerous problems with this approach as discussed elsewhere, ATE has worked with and provided input on unique longitudinal studies of student performance in Texas and other areas. The U.S. Department of Education has only recently begun discussing what it calls "growth models" to evaluate student achievement on a longitudinal basis. ATE has supported research which evaluates student achievement and seeks to correlate teacher performance with student achievement since its founding. The soon to be published third edition of ATE's Handbook of Research on Teacher Education is a fundamental reference in this field. At a time when the Federal government is severely cutting back on aid for teacher preparation, states and localities may not be in a position to undertake the kinds of studies that would be required under this recommendation. However, we would like to see additional work in this area before strong correlations between student achievement and individual

teacher performance ratings can become reality.

**Recommendation Three: Make five-year teacher education programs the norm.** ATE strongly supports enhancing the curriculum for prospective teachers. Our members represent many institutions which have been leaders in designing multiple approaches for preparing teachers. ATE is always willing to partner with other professional groups to develop model programs that address emerging realities for early 21st century teachers.

**Recommendation Four: Establish effective mechanisms for teacher education quality control.** Dr. Levine recommends investigating the creation of a "blue ribbon panel created by a neutral party, such as the Carnegie Corporation" to "bypass" existing accrediting associations. ATE has been an active participant in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which accredits teacher education programs on a voluntary basis, since its founding. We believe NCATE and the other accrediting groups we work closely with have developed processes of evaluating teacher education programs which are strenuous and effective. These processes can perhaps be improved and we would support efforts to improve them, but to "bypass" the existing accreditation processes, which involve state and local education agencies and the U.S. Department of Education as well as the college and university schools of education, would be a tremendous waste of effort. NCATE, for example, just completed a major revision of its standards. The accountability standards called for in Dr. Levine's report are only a slight restatement of the new NCATE standards.

**Recommendation Five: Close failing teacher education programs, strengthen promising ones, and expand excellent programs. Create incentives for outstanding students and career changers to enter teacher education at doctoral universities.** Eighty percent of those preparing to be classroom teachers are educated at public institutions, most at regional state colleges and universities. Many of these colleges and universities would not qualify for the doctoral university status which Dr. Levine favors. It would be ideal if all or even most of the teachers needed by the nation's PreK-12

schools, in inner cities as well as suburbs and rural areas, were educated at elite institutions of the type Dr. Levine seems to favor. The reality is that because of economic pressures, pay scales for the teaching profession, and the high cost of elite institutions, the Masters I colleges and universities will continue to prepare most of our nation's future teachers. Our goal should be to improve teacher preparation programs in those institutions, not to close them. Those institutions failing to respond to accreditation reviews indicating that their programs need to be improved should be closed.

In addition to the economic realities of the teaching profession, many colleges and universities, including the elite institutions Dr. Levine favors, do not emphasize teacher education. The prevalent practice of institutional siphoning off of funds brought in by education schools to other university programs should cease, and a steady support stream should be created to continue and expand the improvement in teacher education that has begun. This is a process that needs support from many different groups.

The Association of Teacher Educators does agree with Dr. Levine that more resources should be devoted to all phases of teacher preparation, including upgrading programs in all colleges and universities; insuring that alternative certification programs provide the necessary preparation and ongoing mentoring needed to produce qualified teachers; devoting greater investments to research on student achievement before such data can be used to evaluate teacher performance; and continued improvements in the accreditation process of teacher education programs. States, localities and the federal government could do much more to upgrade the status of the profession and the retention of qualified teachers by raising teacher pay scales, as Dr. Levine points out.

**About ATE:** The Association of Teacher Educators was founded in 1920 and is an individual membership organization devoted solely to the improvement of teacher education both for school-based and post secondary teacher educators. ATE members represent over 700 colleges and universities, over 500 major school systems, and the majority of state departments of education.

# 2007 Annual Meeting Set for San Diego

The 2007 Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators will be held February 17-21, 2007, at the Manchester Grand Hyatt, San Diego. Theme for the meeting will be **Reinventing the Educational Landscape: Renewing Hope, Heart and Vision for Teachers, Learners and Communities.** This theme will be reflected in general sessions as well as workshops and presentations strands. A wide variety of presenters from all segments of the educational community. More than 450 proposals for educational sessions were submitted, which may be a record number of proposals for an Annual Meeting.

## Workshops

Seven pre-conference Saturday Workshops will be offered on February 17. They include:

1. "A Day at the San Diego Zoo," presented by Betty Crocker, University of North Texas and Sheri Sherman, San Diego Zoo Educator. (All Day)

2. "Assessment and Accountability in the NCATE System," presented by Donna Gollnick and Boyce Williams, NCATE. (All Day)

3. "Explore the World of Digital Cameras and Digital Images," presented by David McCarthy, University of Minnesota Duluth and Kathryn Smith, Minnesota State University-Bemidji. (Morning)

4. "Using TuxPaint Graphics Program to Engage Learners," presented by Brian Giza, The University of Texas El Paso. (Afternoon)

5. "Understanding Culture and Community through Museum Education," presented by Diana Bernshausen, University of North Texas. (Afternoon)

6. "Digital Equity: Providing Economically Disadvantaged Students with Equitable Access to Learning Technologies," presented by Robert McLaughlin, chair of the International Society for Technology and with the National Institute for Community Innovations. (Afternoon)

7. "Explore What's New in Educational Technology," presented by David McCarthy, University of Minnesota Duluth and Kathryn Smith, Minnesota State University-Bemidji. (Afternoon)



## Speakers

ATE has lined up impressive speakers for the General Sessions in San Diego.

They include:

**David C. Berliner**, Regents' Professor



of Education at Arizona State University. He has taught at the Universities of Arizona, Massachusetts, Teachers College, Stanford

University, as well as at universities in Australia, The Netherlands, and Spain. Dr. Berliner is a past president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the Division of Educational Psychology of the American Psychological Association (APA). He is co-author of the best seller *The Manufactured Crisis*, co-author of *Putting Research to Work*, and co-author (with N. L. Gage) of the textbook *Educational Psychology*, now in its 6th edition. He has authored more than 200 published articles, technical reports, and book chapters.

**Kimberly Oliver**, a teacher at Broad Acres Elementary School in Silver Spring, Maryland, is the 56th National Teacher of the Year. She led the teachers of her school in implementing programs to ensure consistency in curriculum, instruction, and assessment to the extent that Broad Acres Elementary School made significant improvements on local, state and national tests and led the school system in percentage increase in test scores and, since 2003, has met or exceeded all



requirements of NCLB. She helped sponsor "Books and Supper Night," an event held four times a year that allows families to visit the school and check out books

from the library. She has also received grants to purchase electronic learning systems, tape players, and books in English and Spanish to send home with students.

**Robert J. Yinger** is Professor of



Educational Studies and Teacher Education at the University of Cincinnati and Research Director for the Ohio Teacher Quality Partnership. From

1998 to 2005 he was Dean of the School of Education and Professor of Educational Psychology at Baylor University. Dr. Yinger received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University and is immediate past Chair of the Board of Directors for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and past President of the Holmes Partnership.

Registration information for ATE's 2007 Annual Meeting is being sent to all members and presenters and will soon be available online at ATE's website, [www.ate1.org](http://www.ate1.org).

## 30% Discount at ATE's Publications Marketplace

Beginning now through October 31, 2006, all ATE members can order publications from ATE's online Publications Marketplace at a 30% discount (in addition to member discounts). In association with Rowman & Littlefield Education (RLE), ATE members will be able to receive this discount on all RLE titles as well as ATE publications.

To obtain the discount, go to ATE's online Publications Marketplace. First go to ATE's website, [www.ate1.org](http://www.ate1.org). Click on "Publications" in the top menu bar. When you get to the Publications page, the first paragraph, with the headline "ATE Books from Rowman & Littlefield Education" contains the direct link to ATE's Publications Marketplace on the RLE web

page.

Order the books you want from this marketplace. When you check out, enter the following promotion code: **6MATE30**, and you will receive the discounted price.

Rowman & Littlefield also publishes ATE's quarterly journal, *Action in Teacher Education*. Back copies of this journal may be ordered on the website as well.

## Free Teacher Education Satellite Broadcast

On Wednesday, November 1, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), in partnership with the California State University System, California State University Long Beach, and California State University Northridge, will offer a free satellite broadcast on evidence of effectiveness in teacher education, "Building Evidence Systems for Accountability and Improvement in Teacher Education."

In an era when teacher education is being criticized at every level, this is a critical opportunity to join participants in

exploring strategies to create a comprehensive set of data systems and strategies to use evidence for assessing the effectiveness of teacher education programs. The broadcast, a live satellite broadcast of panel discussions and presentations, will help colleges and universities, working with public schools and state administrators, build teacher preparation programs based on evidence.

Time for the broadcast is 3:00 - 4:30 pm (Eastern Time) 2:00 - 3:30 pm (Central Time) 1:00 - 2:30 pm (Mountain Time) 12:00-1:30 pm (Pacific Time).

AASCU urges you to assemble teams of people from campuses to view the program together. There will be an 800 number, a fax number and an email address for live callers during the event.

Information about the broadcast and registration information may be found at: <http://www.aascu.org/meetings/06broadcast/broadcast.htm>.

Please contact AASCU's Director of Teacher Education, Mona Wineburg, at 202 478-4649 or [wineburgm@aascu.org](mailto:wineburgm@aascu.org) if you have questions.

### ATE Board of Directors

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