Teaching Today

An Introduction to Education

Ninth Edition

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AN INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATION

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PEARSON

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The authors have been blessed to have career-long companions who have endured the frustrations and celebrated the successes of this enduring project. We believe their support has enriched the quality of each edition. Thus, we are happy to dedicate this ninth edition to **Sharon Henson** *and* **Marsha Savage**.

PREFACE

WELCOME TO THE NINTH EDITION!

Because education is one of the critical components in society, the quality of education is the subject of much debate. This debate is often passionate and complex. Education is in an age of reform, focusing on every aspect of education from the preparation of teachers to the quality of preschool. These reform proposals have the potential to dramatically change education as we know it. Because change can be positive or negative, education today poses many challenges and opportunities. One thing is certain—the status quo is not acceptable.

The responsibilities of those involved in education include evaluating proposals for change and making sure that the interests of students are upheld. The nation needs quality teachers who have a clear grasp of basic issues—motivating us to write the ninth education of *Teaching Today.*

We have had exciting and productive careers in education and we have found teaching to be a fascinating and rewarding profession. We want to encourage the best and the brightest of our nation to accept the challenge to be teachers. However, to enter the teaching field as a challenging responsible individual, preservice teachers must understand that thorns go with the roses. Teaching in today's world brings many challenges. Perhaps that is what makes the success sweet. Therefore, in *Teaching Today* we have tried to provide a strong dose of reality. We want individuals to realize that there are many conflicting points of view and no national consensus about the goals of education or how they should be accomplished. Although we recognize that there might be some who find this conflict and the prospect of profound change disconcerting, we believe that many of today's students are invigorated by this prospect, realizing that they can play an important role in shaping the lives of students and the future society.

In preparing the ninth edition, we have emphasized topics that are relevant to the world you will enter as an educator. In addition to basic information about these topics, we have attempted to give alternative perspectives on these issues so that you can better analyze, reflect, and decide.

This text provides opportunities for you to reflect on issues and develop your personal perspectives. We encourage you to track your growth toward becoming a professional educator.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS TEXT

Both undergraduate and graduate students have used earlier editions of *Teaching Today* in their search to develop a broad understanding of the complex world of education. This edition organizes content under three major headings, as listed and described below.

Part 1 The Changing Profession.   If there is one constant in contemporary education, it is change. Many proposals for changing the education profession come from various sectors. Chapter 1 focuses on the changing nature of education and the forces influencing that change. Chapter 2 emphasizes the process of becoming

a professional educator and the possible roles that educators play. Chapter 3 discusses specific proposals for reforming schools.

Part 2 Working with Students.   Chapter 4 presents information on selected characteristics of students and patterns of development that influence student learning and the way it is affected by diversity, including students with exceptional challenges and those with exceptional gifts. Chapter 5 focuses on the classroom environment, and Chapter 6 discusses what is taught and how it is taught. Chapter 7 emphasizes assessment. In an age of accountability, it is important for teachers to know how data are gathered and to be able to determine whether students have learned.

Part 3 Forces Shaping Educational Policies and Practices.   This, the most extensive section, discusses several forces. Chapter 8 focuses on the history of education so that teachers can understand how educational practices and policies were developed. It is important to note that we define history as not just one story, but as several stories. Chapter 9 discusses the role of school in society and different perspectives through which education can be viewed. Chapter 10 focuses on specific educational philosophies and how they influence educational policy and practice. Chapter 11 presents legal issues relating to the rights and responsibilities of teachers and students.

NEW TO THE NINTH EDITION

Additions

- **NEW FORMAT: Pearson eText**   This new ninth edition is available as a Pearson eText. Readers are able to access additional content not available through print, such as in embedded video and direct links to related content on the Web. To learn more about the Pearson eText, go to **www.pearsonhighered.com/etextbooks**.
- Two chapters (*Who Are the Students* and *How Has Diversity Affected Teaching?*) were combined to form a new chapter titled *How Our Changing Students Are Changing Teaching.*
- A second new chapter was added titled *How Can We Create a Positive Learning Environment?*
- Dispositions have always played a major role in teaching. The previous edition of *Teaching Today* discussed the importance of dispositions in teaching. Some of the chapters contained a feature titled *Disposition Check*. Because this feature was so strongly accepted, these activities have been added to all chapters in the ninth edition.

Deletions

- Because the impact of technology has spread to all parts of schooling, a chapter titled *How Is Technology Changing Education?* has been deleted, and the information on technology's impact on schooling has been spread through all chapters in the book.
- A second chapter titled *Who Controls and Finances Education?* has been deleted.

- Previous editions of *Teaching Today* had a feature titled *Critical Incident*. Because the readers responded so favorably to this feature, additional Critical Incidents have been added to the ninth edition. The feature titled *A Day In the Life . . .* was equally popular, and therefore some new *A Day in the Life* scenarios have been added to this edition.

Citations

- No book can experience a true revision without a thorough updating of the research and knowledge base. The ninth edition contains updates in every chapter. This updating has been thorough: It includes new research studies, dozens of new quotes from the literature, and the latest education polls.

- New education standards and other reform efforts have been included. The new research studies include new approaches to meeting the needs of multilingual students; the exposure of current and traditional practices that contribute to violence and the lasting effects of ability grouping; new media literacy; the effects technology has on immigrant students; and new uses of technology to meet the needs of all students.

- Special attention has been given to the differences in the behaviors of teachers in low-achievement schools whose students experience high achievements; and the differences in schooling in those countries that consistently outperform U.S. students in science and mathematics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PART I

THE CHANGING PROFESSION

HOW IS EDUCATION CHANGING?

OBJECTIVES

This chapter will help you to
- identify basic foundational questions related to education.
- describe many of the realities teachers face each day.
- point out characteristics that add to the complexity of teachers' responsibilities.
- explain how changes related to characteristics of learners, knowledge about teaching and learning, views of education's purposes, curriculum standards, and demands for learner and teacher accountability affect teachers' work today.
- describe advantages of creating a professional-development portfolio.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the interesting world of education. Education is one of the basic institutions of society. The quality of education in a given society has a direct link to that nation's social, economic, and political health. As a result, it is a subject of intense interest for a variety of individuals, ranging from the parents and guardians of young children to business and political leaders on the national stage.

Those considering teaching will find it to be a demanding, exciting, rewarding, and frustrating profession—sometimes all in the same day! Some teachers choose the profession because of their love of the discipline; others, because of their love of students (Zhang & Coleman, 2012). The U.S. Department of Labor reports teaching as one of the most complex occupations (Silva, 2010). But teaching is also a satisfying profession. The percentage of teachers who agree that most teachers are very satisfied with their profession increased from 40% in 1984 to 62% in 2008 (Met-Life Report, 2009). Their happiness spills over into the classroom (Ripley, 2010). There is nothing more rewarding than to see students' eyes suddenly widen as they *get* it—to see the excitement of students who are succeeding, and to know that you have played an important role in their success. However, it is just as frustrating to see students with potential waste that potential and remain unmotivated or even hostile to learning and intellectual growth.

Teaching is often labeled society's "essential" profession. As a teacher, you have an impact on the most valuable resource in society, the youth of the nation. For this reason, the effectiveness of teachers is extremely important to students' lives (Semadeni, 2010).

Teaching has always been viewed as an honorable profession, and it is currently enjoying a high degree of popularity. Almost three-fourths (70%) of U.S. parents say they would like to have their children become teachers (Bushaw & McNee, 2009). It is not unusual for individuals who are honored for their contributions to society to single out a teacher who had an impact on their lives. Without good teachers there would not be good engineers, physicians, attorneys, scientists, musicians, politicians, and others who contribute to the overall health of a society.

There is certainly no shortage of ideas about what education should be and what teachers should do. Because all citizens have had some personal experience with education, they tend to view themselves as "experts." For example, one

of the authors has found that the reactions of individuals vary according to how he introduces himself. If he introduces himself as a "researcher" or a "writer," there is usually a relatively low-key response. However, if he introduces himself as a "teacher," people often launch into a discussion about what needs to be done to improve education! You will find that these ideas about education vary tremendously. As you analyze individual proposals, you will encounter many suggestions that are supported by compelling evidence and have great potential for enhancing the quality of learners' experiences in school. On the other hand, you are certain to encounter other prescriptions for improvement that, if implemented, might actually diminish the quality of school programs. One of your challenges as an educator will be to distinguish between school-improvement proposals with legitimate prospects of making schools better and more dubious propositions with little potential to make positive changes.

WHAT ARE THE FOUNDATIONS?

To understand the current status of education and evaluate proposals for improvement requires an understanding of the foundations of education. The foundations comprise the set of historical, philosophical, social, legal, and cultural assumptions that form a logical base for decisions about schools and schooling. As a preparation for making informed decisions about competing school-improvement ideas, you will find it useful to know something about questions associated with the foundations of education. Some examples associated with selected foundation categories follow:

- *Social and philosophical foundations. What is the good society, and how should education contribute to that society?* (Many debates about changes in education are really debates among people who have different views of what constitutes the good society. Debates about what should be taught and who should be taught are two areas of conflict in the social and philosophical foundations.)

- *Historical foundations. Where did current school practices and traditions originate, and are they still important?* (Current school practices did not come about because a group of experts sat down and worked from a blank slate. Historical developments have greatly influenced our educational system. Your task is to determine the extent to which these historical influences still have merit.)

- *Political foundations. Who has the power to decide priorities and to influence how schools operate?* (You will find that some proposals for changes in the ways schools conduct their business are directed at the wrong audience. For example, letters to the editor on topics related to education are often directed to "teachers" when they should be directed at the school board or state legislators who are making the rules. You and others interested in school reform

need to know who has the power to make decisions that will result in desired changes.)

- *Curriculum foundations. What is taught, and why is it taught?* The term *curriculum* is used to describe the overall framework for an instructional program. (You will find that much debate about the quality of education centers on what is taught in the schools. Content is important [Hersh, 2009]. There is consensus around the idea that the curriculum must keep up to date with technological changes. However, contention rages around other issues. Should more be required of learners at earlier ages? How much content about different cultures should be included? Should young people be allowed to learn in their primary language? Are some subjects "frills" that can be eliminated?)

- *Instructional foundations. What is good teaching?* The term *instruction* refers to teaching approaches that are used to help learners achieve the overall purposes that are outlined in the curriculum. (The issue of good teaching is central to any debate about education. You will find that not everybody defines "good teaching" in the same way. For example, some people want teachers to embrace findings of recent research into how the brain operates and processes information. Others favor approaches based on other research or theoretical perspectives. One issue you will need to confront concerns striking a balance between (1) requiring teachers to follow certain common instructional patterns and (2) allowing teachers flexibility to implement instructional approaches of their own choosing.)

- *Legal foundations. What are the legal and ethical rights and responsibilities of teachers and learners?* (In recent decades there has been much litigation relating to education. Proposals for change have to take into account legal principles that influence the actions of teachers and school administrators.)

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Take a couple of minutes to respond to the following questions.

- **How are the foundations interrelated?**
- **How might an understanding of the foundations help you make an informed decision about becoming a teacher?**

Throughout this text we will address these basic foundations of education. They are central to discussions about educational change. Understandings you develop related to these questions will help you better evaluate specific educational change proposals.

There are numerous misconceptions about the life of the teacher. Some see it as a relatively easy job with few intellectual demands. For example, a friend of one young woman preparing to be an elementary teacher asked, "What's difficult about teaching someone that two plus two equals four?" One individual challenging the need to complete courses in order to obtain a teaching credential remarked, "All you need to know to be a teacher is how to read the teacher's guide." It is relatively common for individuals in interviews for admission to teacher-preparation programs to state, "Oh, I know I'll be a good teacher because I've done lots of babysitting and teaching in church school." In fact, some recent

proposals for reforming education seem to presume that, other than subject matter, there is little a teacher needs to know.

What is teaching really like? You have spent thousands of hours as a learner in classrooms, and you may have spent time observing teachers. You may also have spent considerable time working with youngsters in a variety of other settings. As a result, you may think you have a clear grasp of the role of the teacher. However, it is probable that at this point in your professional development, you still have a somewhat restricted view of what teachers do.

As a recipient of instructional services and as an observer, you have experienced only the visible actions of teachers as they communicated with their learners. Actually, teaching is one of the most complex professions (Silva, 2010). The reality is that many excellent teachers are so good at what they do that they make teaching look easy to observers. They move smoothly through the curriculum, their learners are engaged in lessons, and few disruptions interfere with the instructional process. What you probably were not able to discern during your observations were (1) the thinking and the decision making involved in lesson preparation and (2) the teachers' prior efforts to understand the interests and motivations of individuals, resulting in lesson strategies that learners found meaningful. Often, too, good teachers make small, important, and sometimes invisible-to-observers, adjustments to changing classroom situations that keep learning on track. As a result, what you may have seen as a seamless, almost effortless activity actually involved a complex interplay of actions requiring application of sophisticated learner-understanding and interpersonal-communication skills.

The unobserved aspects of the public performance of good teachers may be only one of the surprises you will encounter as you start work in the profession. We have often heard former students comment, "There is so much I don't know." Many people are surprised at how much time is taken up by activities that don't involve direct work with learners. Among them are responsibilities associated with

- planning lessons,
- record keeping and other administrative duties,
- participating in special school events (back-to-school nights, parent-teacher meetings, athletic contests, school dances, graduation exercises, and so forth),
- serving on various committees,
- participating in professional group activities, and
- communicating with parents or guardians.

The types of activities you will be involved with will vary according to the age level of your learners and the nature of your school and school district. What might be an issue in one place may not be an issue in another. For example, the special characteristics of your school may make it essential that you quickly come to an understanding of the political climate. This understanding might be less critical in another setting. If you teach at the secondary level, you may be expected to serve as an adviser or a sponsor for a school organization or to assist at athletic events. If you teach in an elementary school, you may spend time monitoring learners on the playground or in the lunchroom.

There are no ordinary days in teaching, and there are no typical schools. As a result, place-to-place and day-to-day differences make it difficult to describe the reality of a day in the life of a teacher. However, we thought it worthwhile to make the attempt. We observed a randomly chosen elementary teacher for a single day. We make no claim that this scenario generalizes to this teacher's other days or to other teachers in other settings. Our purpose is not to suggest that this day is typical. Rather, our intent is to prompt you to reflect on some aspects of teaching that you may not have considered.

Throughout the text, we have placed "A Day in the Life . . ." features. These features are based on actual experiences of teachers. Our intent is to give you a glimpse into the rewards and frustrations that accompany being a teacher. In all of these instances, we have identified the teacher as "Pat Taylor." See this chapter's "A Day in the Life: A Typical Day."

> ### WEB EXTENSION 1–1
>
> **New Teacher Web Page**
>
> The Web offers an excellent opportunity for you to extend your understanding and to find resources that can assist you in accomplishing your professional goals. A good place to start is the New Teacher Web page. This site provides specific information about a variety of topics such as finding a job, substitute teaching, and becoming a professional in the classroom.
>
> *www.newteacher.com*

THE COMPLEXITY OF TEACHING

As you review the day described next, consider the variety of things to which Pat Taylor had to attend. When you begin your career in the classroom, your duties will embrace much more than simply teaching lessons. You may find yourself emotionally stretched as you learn to cope with these many responsibilities. Teaching is, indeed, a complex process (Weingarten, 2010). Walter Doyle (1986)

Classrooms are very public, multidimensional environments that require alert and active teachers.

A DAY IN THE LIFE . . . A Typical Day

Students in Pat Taylor's elementary school are expected to arrive by 8:30 a.m. However, the day for Pat and the rest of the teachers begins much earlier, because school regulations require teachers to be present no later than 8:00 a.m. Many teachers are in the building by 7:30 a.m. or earlier, working on room decorations, preparing lessons, making copies, taking care of administrative work, and preparing for the instructional day. On this morning, Pat spends time completing paperwork from the district personnel department relating to validation of summer-term courses taken at a local university.

Pat learns that a parent has called the school. Her child is ill and will miss several days of school. Pat has been asked to prepare assignments that the parent can pick up and use with the child at home. The parent does not want her son to fall behind. Another surprise event this morning is the unexpected arrival of another parent. This parent is concerned about her child's progress, and Pat and the parent spend some time discussing the situation. Phone calls from parents, unexpected arrivals, and other early-morning events are typical of what is encountered most mornings. On some days, there are scheduled early-morning meetings of the entire faculty. What all this means is that there are few days when Pat has uninterrupted time in the morning to work in the classroom.

We are visiting Pat early in the fall when the district regularly holds its annual "Back-to-School Night." During this event, each teacher gives parents an overview of the curriculum and teacher expectations. Pat knows that the explanation will need to be repeated at least twice so that parents with more than one child can visit at least two classrooms. Even though the event does place an additional burden on the teachers, Pat welcomes the opportunity to make contact with parents. Establishing positive rapport now can pay off later in the year.

Pat is expected to pay close attention to the public relations importance of the back-to-school event, and extra time will have to be spent making the room attractive and stimulating. This morning, with the time that is left, samples of student work are put on the bulletin boards.

The children arrive, and things begin to move quickly. During the first part of the morning, Pat moves the class smoothly through the curriculum. Class members are generally on task, and things go well. Recess time arrives, and students quickly leave the classroom. Pat gathers materials and books that have been used and puts them away. Then, after checking to make sure all material is ready for the rest of the morning, there is time for a brief trip to the lounge for a cup of coffee and conversation with other teachers.

Recess time passes quickly. Pat and the other teachers position themselves outside their doors to monitor students as they return to the classrooms. A couple of problems have occurred during recess. One of the girls has a skinned elbow that needs attention, so Pat sends the youngster to the office. In times past, the school nurse would have handled this situation, but because of budget cuts, a nurse is available only one day a week. As a result, the school secretary calls the girl's parents and gets permission to bandage her elbow.

Pat also has to deal with a complaint brought by several children who claim that some students were not behaving properly on the playground during recess. Pat informs them that the matter will be addressed. These assurances seem to satisfy them, and the class is soon back to work. As learners work independently, Pat holds a brief conference with those involved in the recess incident. A warning with a firm tone of voice seems to achieve the desired outcome.

As the morning passes, some class members have trouble staying on task because their attention spans shorten. In response to this situation, Pat moves around the classroom working with different groups and refocusing learners' attention on what they are supposed to be doing. Lunch comes as a welcome break.

The lunch period begins with a trip to the cafeteria. Joking and light conversation with other teachers make the time go swiftly. A quick trip to the mailbox reveals some messages and an announcement about Back-to-School Night that needs to be sent home with the students that afternoon. The lunch break is concluded with a hurried gathering of equipment needed for the afternoon science lesson. As usual, several items are missing. This discovery prompts a quick search and some adjustments to the original lesson plan.

After arriving back in the classroom before it is time for the class members to return, Pat quickly cleans up things left out from the morning. A few notes are added to the plan book as reminders of things that must be done tomorrow.

Pat is still making preparations for the afternoon when the bell rings and students line up outside the classroom. They are still excited from lunch and the few minutes they have spent on the playground. They are talking loudly. To calm them, Pat instructs them to go quickly to their seats and sit quietly. Then, Pat takes a favorite children's book from the desk and begins to read aloud. There are a few groans when the reading stops.

It is time for the next lesson. This lesson and those that follow go well, but the rest of the school day seems to pass slowly. The class is restless and less attentive. Pat knows this is a typical pattern, and many afternoon activities feature active learner participation in the hope that this will keep class members focused and involved. A few minutes before the dismissal bell, Pat stops all instructional activities. Pat asks members of the class who have been assigned as workers to perform their duties. Books are placed in the bookshelves, papers are collected, and Pat takes time to make last-minute announcements and to give reminders about homework. Pat distributes the papers that need to be sent home and dismisses the class.

Today Pat has bus duty. After a hurried walk to the bus loading zone, the behavior of students who ride buses is monitored. Once all the buses have left, Pat heads back to the classroom.

The first order of business is to gather the papers that need to be taken home and corrected. Next, Pat reviews lessons for the next day and jots reminders about what needs to be done in the margins of the daily plan book. Then it is time to create, gather, and organize supplementary material that will be used. Some materials for tomorrow need work, and these are placed in the "take-home" bag. Over an hour has passed since the last child boarded the bus. Finally, Pat locks the door and heads home, carrying papers to be graded and lessons to be planned.

— DISPOSITION CHECK —

In recent years, studies about teachers have extended beyond just skill acquisition to the area of teacher dispositions. Teacher dispositions are defined as those attitudes, values, and perceptions that influence teacher behavior and decision making. In the "Day in the Life . . ." feature we will ask you to consider teacher dispositions.

This scenario indicates that the day in the life of a teacher is a busy one. The attitudes and dispositions of the teacher have a powerful influence on the lives of students. Teachers soon learn that they are the most important variable in the classroom. Their moods create the daily "weather." Teachers have tremendous power to make a student's life exciting or unpleasant. In the face of pressure, teachers must remain calm and professional as they face unexpected events and unplanned interruptions. As professionals, teachers cannot afford to "lose it."

Reflect on Pat's day.

1. What attitudes and dispositions were present?
2. What dispositions do you think are important for success in teaching?
3. Which of these dispositions do you possess?

suggests that the following features combine to make the role you will play as a teacher particularly complex:

- Multidimensionality
- Simultaneity
- Immediacy
- Unpredictability
- Publicness
- History

Multidimensionality

Multidimensionality refers to the idea that teachers' responsibilities range across a broad array of duties. When you teach, you have to know how to multi-task. In addition to planning and delivering instruction, you have to diagnose learning difficulties, spot misconceptions, monitor learner progress, make on-the-spot adjustments, respond to unanticipated events, administer standardized tests, attend meetings, keep accurate records, relate to parents, work productively with colleagues, and create materials. You may wonder, "How am I supposed to do all of these things and still teach?"

Perhaps the biggest challenge you will face as a teacher is responding adequately to young people in your classes who come to you with different backgrounds, motivations, aspirations, needs, abilities, and learning styles. Some of them will have the requisite skills and abilities to achieve success; some will not. Some learners will come from backgrounds that differ from your own. Some will come to school cheerful and well rested, but others may be tired and angry. Although many young people you teach are likely to see you as a caring and supportive mentor, a few may see you as a threatening adult who cares little for the things they deem important.

But most students who are entering the teaching profession today are Generation Y members (born between 1971 and 1995), and most Generation Y members will welcome the opportunity to serve today's many disadvantaged students (Behrstock-Sherratt & Coggshall, 2010). New teachers can bring their schools fresh ideas and energy (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010).

Simultaneity

Simultaneity refers to the idea that many things happen at once in the classroom. When you stand before students, you need to watch for indications of comprehension, interest, and attention. You should listen carefully to answers to determine their relevance and to spot misconceptions and signs of confusion. While providing assistance to one learner, you must, at the same time, monitor the behavior of the rest of the class. You also need to devise ways to keep members of your class focused on your lesson when you must deal with an unexpected interruption, such as a message from the office that requires an immediate written response. Over time, you will grow in your ability to prioritize and respond immediately to multiple stimuli.

Immediacy

Immediacy refers to the classroom reality of situations that require you as a teacher to respond at once. Often you will not have the luxury of placing things on hold until you have the time and energy to deal with them. The need to act quickly in complex situations places great stress on teachers. This kind of stress is likely to be particularly acute when you are new to the profession and inclined to worry about whether you have made appropriate decisions.

The immediacy character of the classroom requires you to develop good judgment. You cannot learn these kinds of decision-making skills from reading a book. However, you can prepare yourself by thinking about kinds of situations that might develop in the classroom and by considering possible responses you might make. Henson (2012) labels this practice proactive teaching *and* provides

activities to develop proactive skills. In essence, teachers must be problem solvers (Martinez, 2006). The process of simulating responses will help you feel more comfortable when confronted with making real decisions in your own classroom.

Unpredictability

Unpredictability refers to teachers' challenges in working with learners whose reactions do not always follow consistent patterns and with situations that may unexpectedly interfere with established routines. Neither you nor your learners are programmable computers who respond in consistent ways to similar situations. This reality contributes to making teaching both interesting and challenging. Individual learners and classes respond to the same stimuli in different ways. You will soon learn that a lesson that works well with one class may not be effective with learners in another.

Risk taking is an important indicator of professionalism (Warner, 2009/2010). Unpredictability results not just from differences among individual learners but from unexpected distractions and interruptions that occur when you are teaching. Unexpected visitors, a call over the intercom, a fire drill, a suddenly ill member of your class, or an unusual change in the daily schedule are events that often intrude just as you are trying to make an important point in your lesson.

How should you respond to unpredictable events? The answer will vary depending on your personality, philosophical views, and general orientation to teaching. In other words, different teachers respond to similar situations in various ways. For example, one of your colleagues might interpret an unexpected learner response as an act of defiance, whereas you might see it as a manifestation of nothing more than a lack of understanding. There probably will be occasions when you will view unanticipated occurrences as frustrating disruptions and other occasions when you may see them as providing interesting, though unexpected, learning opportunities.

How should you respond to unpredictability? Do you need to have things follow a predictable pattern? Do you get upset if things do not always go as planned? You need to think about your answers to these questions. Although you need to work to ensure that your classroom runs smoothly, unpredictable events will happen and will upset the best of plans. You need to be ready for this reality. If you are uncomfortable in situations that feature unpredictability, you might want to consider a career other than teaching.

Publicness

Publicness refers to the idea that teaching occurs in an arena that allows recipients of the instructional process to monitor every classroom action their instructor takes. When you teach, your learners can observe your every move. Young people are keen observers, and they will soon make personal decisions about what you are "really like." Your mannerisms, enthusiasms, biases, and values will become public knowledge in no time. Some members of your class will quickly learn what pleases you and what upsets you.

The particular character of your interaction with learners is strongly influenced by the interplay between your actions and your learners' interpretations of those actions. A ripple effect often follows your actions in the classroom. In other words, your actions will be observed and interpreted and have consequences beyond the immediate situation. For example, if you display great anger

when a learner makes a mistake in class, you may find class members increasingly fearful of volunteering responses to your questions. On the other hand, if you are willing to experiment and share your errors, your classroom will become a safe place where your students will become scientific risk takers (Phelps, 2006). If you teach in a middle school or high school, behaviors you have displayed in one class quickly become known and affect your relationships with other classes you teach.

History

The interaction you have with class members over a term or an entire year develops a class history. A class history is a kind of culture that is unique to each class of students and results from an ongoing record of interaction between the teacher and students. The manner in which you relate to learners, plan instruction, and react to unpredictable events creates this history.

Differences in particular class histories explain why apparently similar behaviors by different teachers do not always produce similar results. For example, you might find that a quiet word can stop inappropriate behavior, but another teacher using this approach can find that it fails to correct the situation. As you think about developing your own teaching style, you will not find it productive to simply mimic another teacher's behavior. Your class members will have a history that may vary considerably from the history of learners of the teacher you are trying to emulate. As a result, your learners will have a different interpretation of your actions.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

As you review the complexities of the teaching situation, reflect on the following:

- **How do you cope with unpredictable events?**
- **Which of the dimensions of the classroom worry you most?**
- **Can you think of an example when the history established by the teacher with a group of students has affected teaching and learning?**

COPING WITH SELECTED CHANGES

Education is a part of society, not separate from society. As society changes, education must also change. Not that many years ago, personal computers, the World Wide Web, cell phones, and satellite television did not exist. Now, we find it hard to imagine life without them. These technological innovations have an impact on educational practices. There have been changes in the composition of the student population. Increased mobility means that schools in every part of the nation are likely to have a diverse student population. The underlying values and beliefs of students are likely to be quite different from those of students just a few decades ago. Unfortunately, education is often slow to change and adapt to new realities. As a future teacher, you need to realize that education must constantly change. Over time, the role of the teacher may become significantly different. You need to be aware of some of the changes that are taking place in education and consider how they may affect teaching and learning. For instance, 75 percent of all kids

Cell Phones in the Classroom: Learning Tools for the 21st Century

Watch: This *YouTube* video segment—**http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXt_de2-HBE** on the controversy regarding the presence of cell phones in school illustrates how changes in society and technology have affected the classroom in unexpected ways. In this instance, the debate concerns even allowing students to bring cell phones to school. This video illustrates the difficulty that many schools have in coping with new technology.

Think: Discuss with your classmates or write in your reflective journal your responses to the following questions:

1. What is your response to the attempt to ban cell phones from schools?
2. How do you respond to the arguments against cell phones?
3. How do you respond to the concerns of parents?
4. What do you think would be a reasonable solution?

Link: What are some other innovations that have the potential to affect the classroom?

ages 12 to 17 have cell phones (Ferriter, 2010). See this chapter's *Video Viewpoints* feature to see the impact of cell phones on teaching and learning today.

Changes in the Student Population

One of the most significant changes in society has been an increase in diversity. Because of population mobility and international interdependence, you are almost certain to be teaching in communities in which schools enroll young people from varied cultural and language backgrounds. Many adults and policy-makers have not grasped the significance of this change. By the year 2020, half of the nation's public school students will be minorities, but only about 5% of the teachers will be minorities (Meyer & Rhodes, 2006). School leaders today struggle as they attempt to help the general public understand that the characteristics of learners in today's schools differ markedly from those of learners enrolled just a decade or two ago.

Today's schools enroll many young people from homes in which the primary language spoken is not English. From the 1997–1998 school year to the 2008–2009 school year, the number of English-language learners increased by 51% (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2013). In some states, these young people make up high percentages of the total school population. In California, for example, fully one-fourth of the young people in grades K–12 are nonnative speakers of English. Other states with schools that enroll extremely high percentages of these learners are Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, and Arizona. As a teacher, you will face tremendous challenges in creating an environment in which all learners can succeed. Most textbooks are written at a level above these students, and few textbooks make connections between major concepts (Curts, 2012).

Attempts to respond to this diversity in the classroom have led to several important changes. Many schools have bilingual education programs, where learners are taught in their native language for at least a part of the day until they become proficient in English. There has been a major emphasis on multicultural

education, a perspective that holds that school programs should present learners with instruction that honors and respects the contributions of many individual cultures to our nation and world.

James Banks (2001), a leading expert on multicultural education, points out that growing ethnic and cultural diversity requires rethinking school curricula. He believes that all learners should develop multicultural perspectives. Banks wants school curricula to accurately describe how different cultural groups have interacted with and influenced Western civilization.

Supporters of multicultural education have begun to exert a serious influence on educational practices. For example, many school textbooks now include multicultural content, and many states mandate the inclusion of multicultural content in the curriculum. Not everyone supports the idea that more multicultural perspectives should be included.

Critics of multicultural education worry that, at best, multicultural content replaces important substantive content in the curriculum or, at worst, it tears down the basic values of our national heritage and leads to national disunity (Schlesinger, 1995). They fear that traditional Western writers such as Shakespeare will be eliminated from the curriculum and the teaching of history will be distorted.

Bilingual education also has both supporters and critics. Advocates contend that learners' education should not be delayed until they acquire English proficiency. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was developed as a program to help nonnative speakers of English study school subjects in their home languages until they develop adequate proficiency in English. This arrangement allows young people to continue to master school subjects while their facility with English develops. Research on the bilingual arrangement supports the view that learning in one's primary language improves feelings of self-worth and helps develop an understanding of one's own culture (Macedo, 1995).

Critics contend that the effectiveness of bilingual education has not been validated (Ravitch, 1995). They believe that a common language promotes national unity. Some opponents of bilingual education also object to its high cost. Still other critics contend that allowing young people to learn in their home language delays their acquisition of English.

Some critics of bilingual education suggest that learners who come to school speaking home languages other than English should be enrolled in total immersion programs (Ravitch, 1995). Total immersion programs attempt to speed nonnative speakers' acquisition of English by surrounding them with English-language instruction. The controversy over bilingual education has sparked an effort to have English declared the official language of the United States. Some supporters of this idea would like to take money currently spent on bilingual education and reallocate it to pay for total immersion programs for learners.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- What is your response to the arguments regarding multicultural content in the curriculum? What evidence can you cite to support your view?

- How do you think the schools should accommodate students who speak a language other than English? Do you think bilingual education or immersion is the better approach? Why?

Another type of diversity that has had an impact on the classroom is the increasing presence in the classroom of learners with a range of mental and physical challenges. Inclusion refers to a commitment to the view that learners, regardless of unique personal characteristics (disabilities, for example), not only have a legal right to services in the regular classroom but are welcomed and wanted as members of these classes. Our schools have always played a major role in preventing and controlling diseases. In 1991, 270,000 Americans had been diagnosed as having contracted acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Twenty years later, this number had increased to more than 1 million (**www.cap. org**). For many years, the traditional practice was to separate learners with special needs in special education classrooms. Today, special education teachers, who have received special academic preparation related to teaching learners with varying disabilities, increasingly work with regular classroom teachers in designing and delivering instruction to these learners.

Changes in Theories of Teaching and Learning

How individuals learn has been the subject of debate for centuries. There is still much that we do not know about the human brain and what causes learning to occur. We do know that the brain is incredibly complex. In recent years, new insights into the brain and into the nature of what is termed "intelligence" have influenced educational practice. Today, many teachers are implementing instructional programs that are strongly influenced by research related to (1) constructivism and (2) multiple intelligences. To say the least, we need to think about the diverse ways students learn (Starnes, 2010).

> **WEB EXTENSION 1–2**
>
> ***Education Week* on the Web**
>
> This is the home page for a Web version of a publication that provides weekly information about a variety of educational issues. It is a good way to keep current on contemporary issues and emerging trends.
>
> *www.edweek.org*

Constructivism

Constructivism is based on the principle that individuals cannot simply be given knowledge. Rather, individuals must create knowledge as they interact with the world around them. Their constructions of knowledge are rooted in their prior knowledge. Your learners' knowledge will grow as they compare new information with what they already know. The theory holds that the mind is constantly searching for patterns and attempting to resolve discrepancies. These patterns result in broad content generalizations (concepts), as opposed to isolated facts. Any learning that does not lead to discovering these concepts will fall short (Winger, 2009). Teachers must focus on "big ideas" (Olson & Mokhtari, 2010). JoAnn Susko (2010) at Rider University uses exit cards at the end of each lesson to ensure that students remember the lesson's most important concepts.

Teachers must learn to slow down and give students time to discover the most important concepts (Anderson, 2009; Boix-Mansilla & Gardner, 2008). Australian and Japanese students, who outscore U.S. students in mathematics and science, have teachers who purposely limit the number of concepts covered per lesson to only one or two (Roth & Garnier, 2007).

Dr. Donna McCaw at Western Illinois University (2010) discourages teachers from ever using the word "cover" because she realizes the harm done by

rushing to cover content. One tool that teachers find useful for helping students discover and connect concepts is called a *concept map* (or *cognitive map*). Dr. Jaime Curts at the University of Texas Pan American (2010) uses a variation of concept maps called bilingual maps to teach vocabulary while simultaneously teaching mathematical concepts.

Students need to see the relationships among the major concepts learned in each study unit. Dr. Victoria Robinson (2010) at the University of Southern Mississippi has her teachers create mini-units and explain how their major concepts are connected.

The social and cultural contexts within which learning takes place also heavily influence what is constructed or learned.

Constructivism has several important implications. One is that the conditions that best facilitate learning are what might be described as learner centered and problem centered. This means that as a teacher, you need to provide learners with complex, complete, "authentic" problems. Once this is done, guidance is provided to class members to help them gain the knowledge needed to solve the problems. C. J. Boink (2010) describes the teacher's new role as a concierge of educational resources. This contrasts with more traditional approaches that introduce learners to small pieces of information that, in time, are put together into a whole.

For example, a traditional approach to teaching elementary children arithmetic emphasizes lessons requiring them to memorize multiplication tables. The expectation is that the information will prove useful at some future date when they need to apply these skills to solve problems that are important to them. By way of contrast, a constructivist approach to teaching multiplication tables might begin by presenting learners with a problem that requires multiplication skills in order to find a solution. The students work together to consider what they need to know to solve the problem. If you are using a constructivist approach, you help class members note patterns and develop a generalization on how multiplication processes work. The idea is to teach multiplication in the context of "real" problems when your learners need this skill.

In the same vein, constructivist approaches to teaching topics such as punctuation and spelling are embedded within larger story-writing activities that provide learners with a real need to know this kind of content. The general approach has led to a reading philosophy commonly referred to as whole language instruction, which features lessons in which reading, writing, speaking, and listening are taught as a single, integrated process. Youngsters in the earliest grades are urged to write stories and then read them to others. The focus is on encouraging them to use language, to look for patterns, and to learn writing and spelling conventions as they are needed.

Storytelling is another activity that constructivist teachers use and that works well with students of all ages and abilities. Former Virginia Teacher of the Year Mary Bicouvaris (see Henson & Eller, 2012, pp. 124–125) explains, "The smartest students love storytelling; the weakest ones worship it."

Another assumption of constructivism is that members of your class need to be actively engaged in the learning process. They must actively seek solutions to problems and share ideas. Because the social and cultural context is important, and because it is not likely that any one individual can find the solution when working alone, your learners will often work in pairs or in teams. As a result, lessons built around constructivist principles may involve members of your class in considerable talking and movement.

Constructivism also has changed conceptions of **assessment**, the process of ascertaining what members of your class have learned. If you are teaching according to this perspective, you will be interested in assessment procedures that focus on how well class members can solve problems and on their ability to explain what they have discovered and learned. You will be less interested in traditional tests that often measure largely what learners remember about what they have been told.

As you may have already noted, these approaches differ from certain popular present-day assessment practices. The current emphasis on **accountability**, the idea that teachers and schools should be held directly responsible for teaching specific information to specific learners, has relied heavily on the use of standardized tests. Standardized tests are developed by testing experts and are designed to test a large population of students. The tests specify conditions under which they are to be used. The items included in the standardized tests have been tested on a reference group and often have a set of "norms" that allow comparison of a single student to a larger population of students. The emphasis on standardized testing has caused many teachers to focus on the information that might be tested and to use practices that run counter to constructivist learning.

Accountability concerns also have led to the creation of highly controlled instructional approaches. In these approaches, the role of the teacher is to follow a provided script. Constructivists argue that this type of instruction does not take into account prior knowledge of learner differences and is based on the old idea that learning has to proceed in small, predictable steps.

Multiple Intelligences

Another important change that has influenced education relates to conceptions of intelligence. Throughout history, debates have focused on the nature of intelligence (Woolfolk, 2001). Traditionally, intelligence has been viewed as a single trait that can be measured by an intelligence quotient or IQ test. The IQ test assumes that if a person is smart in one area, he or she will be smart in other areas as well. People with higher IQ scores are assumed to have more of the "intelligence trait" and hence to be able to achieve more success in challenging academic endeavors. Most of the research on intelligence was done in the early 20th century, and many of the intelligence tests that are used today were developed at that time. Although the use of IQ scores to determine single intelligence quotients has been discredited (Murdoch, 2007), many schools still use these tests to sort students and set expectations (Olson, 2008).

In recent years, there has been growing support for the idea that intelligence has many facets or that there are **multiple intelligences**. According to this view, intelligence is not a unitary trait but rather consists of a number of separate categories. A person may have different levels of ability in individual categories. That is, a person may be smart in certain categories of intelligence and not so smart in terms of certain other categories. Most people are thought to have combinations of strengths rather than just a strength in one area and weakness in all others. Howard Gardner (1999), a leading authority in multiple intelligences, has identified at least nine distinct kinds of intelligence:

- *Logical-mathematical intelligence.* People with strengths in this area are good at seeking meaning through analytical processes that involve the use of abstract symbols.

- *Linguistic intelligence.* People with strengths in this area are especially adept at making sense of the world through language.
- *Musical intelligence.* People with strengths in this area have the capacity to communicate and create meaning that involves consideration of sound.
- *Spatial intelligence.* People with strengths in this area have facility in perceiving, transforming, and re-creating visual images that contribute to their understanding of their world.
- *Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence.* People with strengths in this area are good at using muscular and other body systems to respond to situations and to solve problems.
- *Interpersonal intelligence.* People with strengths in this area are particularly good at recognizing and responding to feelings and motivations of others.
- *Intrapersonal intelligence.* People with strengths in this area heavily weigh their own personal capacities and attitudes when determining which course of action to follow in a given situation.
- *Naturalist intelligence.* People with strengths in this area are especially good at making inferences based on classifications and analyses of features of the physical world.
- *Existential intelligence.* People with strengths in this area seek insights regarding ultimate issues such as the meaning of life and how their own existence does or should fit into this scheme.

Yet another dimension to the conception of multiple intelligence has been added by Daniel Goleman (1995). Goleman defined what he calls *emotional intelligence* as the ability to exercise self-control, remain persistent, and be self-motivating. Individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence have developed expertise in five key areas:

- *Mood management.* A person's ability to handle feelings in ways that are appropriate to and relevant for a situation.
- *Self-awareness.* A person's ability to know feelings he or she is sensing and to discriminate among them in meaningful ways.
- *Self-motivation.* A person's ability to organize feelings in ways that allow self-directed activity on behalf of a goal to go forward, even in the face of self-doubts and distracting temptations.
- *Empathy.* A person's ability to recognize verbal and nonverbal cues of others and to be sensitive to their feelings.
- *Managing relationships.* A person's ability to work productively with others to resolve conflicts, to maintain open lines of communication, and to negotiate compromises.

Multiple-intelligence theories have implications for you as a teacher. Perhaps the most important is the need to avoid labeling learners according to their IQ scores. Scholars who have studied multiple intelligences point out that there are many ways an individual can be gifted. Another implication is that you need to vary your instructional program in ways that excite and challenge learners with strengths in varying kinds of intelligences. This reality means that you need

to vary your modes of presentation. A lesson that is perfectly appropriate for a learner with great strength in the area of linguistic intelligence may not well serve the needs of another learner who is weak in this area but strong in spatial intelligence.

Debates on the Purposes of Education

As you strive for excellence in education and seek to defend your instructional decisions, one of the realities you will face is that people hold wildly different views regarding what schools and educators should be doing (Clincy, 1998). You will find that different individuals often give quite varied answers to questions such as:

- What subjects should our schools emphasize?
- Should we be primarily concerned about preparing academically proficient individuals for higher education?
- Should we be producing individuals with marketable vocational skills?
- Should schools be addressing social justice issues?
- To what extent should schools address persistent social problems such as substance abuse and healthy living?
- To what extent should schools be developing the moral and ethical character of learners?
- Should there be standardized expectations for all learners, or should there be a focus on the development of the unique potential of individuals?
- What should schools do to prepare individuals for their citizenship responsibilities?

The normal perspective in response to these issues has been that it is a part of the responsibility of the schools to address important societal concerns. When there is a prominent health concern, such as AIDS, new programs are added to schools. When there is an increase in crime, there is a call for schools to spend more time on morality and character education. In times of national crisis, more emphasis on citizenship is promoted. When the economy dips, schools are expected to produce skilled workers who can immediately enter the workplace as productive employees. Almost always, parents are worried about whether their children are being prepared to gain admission to higher education.

Because individuals have varying priorities, proposals to improve or reform education reflect a tremendous diversity. Throughout the history of American education there have always been voices criticizing the schools and calling for reform. For example, in the 1940s and 1950s, books such as *Crisis in Education: A Challenge to American Complacency* (Bell, 1949), *Educational Wastelands: The Retreat from Learning in Our Public Schools* (Bestor, 1953), *The Diminished Mind: A Study of Planned Mediocrity in Our Public Schools* (Smith, 1954), and *Quackery in the Public School* (Lynd, 1953) leveled criticisms against the schools that in some ways are similar to those we continue to hear today. During the late 1950s and 1960s, American space failures following the 1957 appearance of *Sputnik*, a satellite launched by the former Soviet Union, were blamed on poor education, and a decade of pressure for school reform followed. In the 1970s the focus changed to a concern about potential damage that highly structured school

programs might be doing to children. The view of schools as repressive, unimaginative places was reflected in widely read books, including *How Children Fail* (Holt, 1964), *Death at an Early Age* (Kozol, 1967), *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (Postman & Weingartner, 1969), and *Crisis in the Classroom* (Silberman, 1970).

One thing you will discover is that many critics of the schools have little knowledge of the history of educational reform efforts. It is interesting to hear contemporary critics call for a return to the schools of the past, a suggestion that implies that nobody complained about the quality of the schools we had 10, 20, 30, or more years ago. As the list of titles introduced in the previous paragraph attests, the idea that there was a "golden age" just a few years ago when everybody agreed the schools were excellent simply is nonsense. There has never been a time in our educational history when everybody believed our schools were performing appropriately.

Because people have varied views about which aspects of schooling are important, the evidence used to measure the success of schools varies according to the purposes that are given priority. For example, in recent decades some groups have measured the success or failure of schools by using the scores of students taking college entrance exams such as the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), international tests of learner achievement, and most recently, standardized achievement tests. Obviously, these indicators of school success focus on just a few of the purposes of education. Some critics contend that these indicators are poor measures of many important educational goals.

Standards-Based Education

As policymakers have attempted to respond to a call for school improvement and reform, they have been frustrated by the lack of valid and reliable data with which to judge the success of schools. These frustrations have led to support for standards-based education. Beginning lesson planning with standards makes the planning easier and more successful (Monroe, 2012). New teachers must align their objectives, content, and assessment with their state standards (Troyer, 2012). **Standards-based education** is an attempt to develop clear, measurable descriptions of what learners should know and be able to do as a result of their education. These descriptions typically take the form of goals to reach or levels of proficiency to be attained (Noddings, 1997). Educational specialist Elliot Eisner (1999) notes that one basic motivation behind the standards-based movement is to hold schools accountable. Accountability is facilitated when there are common standards that allow schools, classrooms, teachers, and learners to be compared. Most states and many professional associations have spent considerable time and effort defining standards. The most recent effort has been the development of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). This is a set of standards that has been adopted by nearly all of the states and is influencing the development of curriculum and achievement tests to measure student learning.

There are several different types of standards. Performance standards relate to the identification of levels of proficiency that given groups of learners are expected to attain. For example, a performance standard in reading might state that all learners will attain a certain level of reading proficiency. Content standards describe what teachers are supposed to teach and what young people in their classrooms are expected to learn (Noddings, 1997).

Many national subject-matter groups have developed content standards for what they believe to be essential learning in their subjects. Many states also have developed academic content standards for most of the subjects commonly taught in their schools.

Proponents of clearly defined content standards believe that once standards are specified, measurements can be developed that will provide data that can be used to evaluate school performance and to guide the allocation of scarce resources. They argue that this information is important to provide the public with information on the relative excellence of their schools and teachers. It is assumed that this will prompt teachers to higher levels of performance and provide parents with more information that they can use in selecting schools for their children. Jon Schnur (2010), the founder and executive officer of New Leaders for New Schools, says the second most important strategy to improve our schools (second only to improving teacher quality) is adopting college and career-ready standards and high-quality, aligned assessments.

Not everyone agrees that standards-based education is a good idea. Elliot Eisner (1999), for example, suggests that this approach is based on a faulty understanding of the educational process. He argues that proponents of standards-based education inappropriately view schooling as something like a horse race or an educational Olympics that emphasizes competition among individuals rather than as an enterprise designed to develop the distinctive talents and abilities of individuals. C. Thomas Holmes (2006, p. 58) says, "Standardized test results should be used for identifying areas in curriculum that need improvement, not for holding students accountable."

The focus on standards represents a fundamental shift in the traditional ways educational decisions have been made. It is a particular challenge to the tradition of local control. Local control has meant that (1) curriculum decisions and school improvement efforts have been made at the local community level and (2) attempts have been made to match improvement efforts with local priorities and interests (Stake, 1999). Standards applied across the entire nation or across an entire state effectively remove control from local school authorities. Robert Stake acknowledges that whole states and the entire nation do have a legitimate interest in what every child is learning. However, he argues that this does not mean that every child should learn exactly the same content.

Stake's concern raises this critical question: Who should determine the content standards for the schools? Should a group appointed by politicians such as the president, members of Congress, or governors determine them? Should the standards be decided by a group of business leaders or academic professors in higher education? Is the role of education to supply a trained workforce for industry, or should programs be designed with the expectation that all learners will qualify for admission to a college or university? At times in recent years, members of all of these groups have been involved in efforts to define educational content standards.

Efforts to establish standards have often led to divisive debates. For example, when national standards for history were proposed, there was widespread support for the project. However, once the original standards were published, many people, even those who had originally supported the project, quickly rejected them as too multicultural and unpatriotic. Hence, the seemingly logical and innocent idea of clearly defining expectations for learners quickly assumed political overtones.

In another instance, when science standards were proposed in California, a group of Nobel Prize winners in science criticized them and proposed their own set of standards. Because of the prize winners' high profiles, the media disseminated their views widely, and a debate was under way. Critics pointed out that a Nobel Prize does not necessarily confer on the winner a store of validated knowledge about what is appropriate for young people to learn at different grade levels. Others attacked the Nobel Prize winners' assumption that every public school learner should master science content at a level of sophistication necessary to qualify for admission to the most selective universities.

One of the most significant changes brought about by standards-based education has been a tremendous increase in the emphasis on testing in every subject and at every grade level (Stake, 1999). Much of this assessment consists of high-stakes testing. "High stakes" means that the results of assessments have important consequences. Scores may strongly influence the promotion or retention of learners, and retention adversely affects minority youths more than mainstream students (Holmes, 2006). Scores also influence the graduation of high school students, the evaluation and the salaries of teachers, and the levels of funding individual schools receive. Because low learner scores can have extremely negative effects, today teachers spend considerable time helping students master content that will be assessed on high-stakes tests. Today, high-stakes testing is prevalent throughout the world (Cankoy & Tut, 2005). In some schools where you might accept employment, you and your colleagues may sense pressure to "get test scores up." For an example, see the "Critical Incident: Teaching to the Test" feature at the bottom of this page. Such pressures have the potential to narrow the extent of the taught curriculum. In effect, the curriculum becomes that content most likely to be emphasized by standardized-test makers. Some critics of standardized testing assert that this tendency has given anonymous test makers more power over the content of the curriculum than they legitimately should have.

CRITICAL INCIDENT

Teaching to the Test

Maria is a first-year teacher. She wants to develop lessons that interest and motivate her students. Recently, her principal visited her classroom for an observation. Following the lesson, the principal said, "You had an interesting lesson, and everybody in your class was engaged. However, you need to remember that test scores are very important here. Our parents expect us to post high test scores, and we cannot afford to let them slip. We expect that all of the students in your classroom will do well on the test. If I were a parent and asked you how today's lesson ties to the testing program, what would you say?"

1. What are your reactions to the principal's comments?

2. Should teachers be teaching to the test?

3. Is there an inconsistency between having interesting lessons and meeting standards?

4. How would you respond?

Accountability

Although under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) each state's education agency can request flexibility in specific No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed improvement plans, the concept of accountability relates closely to standards-based education. Standards are developed to indicate what schools should be teaching and the level of performance that learners should be attaining. Accountability frequently is related to issues such as the financing and control of the schools. In many places, schools that do not demonstrate attainment of certain learner performance levels, usually measured by standardized tests, face certain consequences. For example, they may lose a portion of their funding, the principals may be replaced, learners may be allowed to transfer to other schools, and the schools or districts may even be placed under state control. In some places, a tendency has developed for teacher evaluations to be based not on general observations of their classroom performance, but rather on their learners' test scores. Recently, in the town of one of the authors, five schools were closed in one year because of low performance on standardized tests (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Accountability has developed in response to several concerns. One relates to education costs. Educational expenditures are a significant portion of any state budget. As education costs have increased, policymakers have demanded that schools be held responsible for spending the money in ways that result in improved learning. However, the accountability emphasis might end up costing the state more money for education. Some states have ruled that if the state establishes standards for student graduation, it is then responsible for providing an appropriate education for all students. This has been called "adequacy funding," and estimates are that this method of funding is more costly than current methods.

An increased emphasis on accountability has led to increased testing of students.

When considering debates regarding accountability, you need to separate the general concept of accountability from the issue of measurements that are used to make judgments about teachers and school programs. For example, few educators oppose the general idea of accountability. When you begin teaching, you will find that the majority of your colleagues are sincerely interested in using resources carefully and in working to ensure that students get the best education possible. Issues teachers have with accountability center not on the idea itself, but rather on what is used to determine whether educational services are as good as they should be. In particular, teachers argue against using standardized-test scores as the only accountability measure.

One problem with using standardized-test scores is that a judgment about a teacher's instructional effectiveness is based on what a learner does on a single day of standardized testing. Critics claim that this is too limited a sample of the learner's levels of understanding to be taken as overall evidence of what he or she has learned. In addition, critics point out that test scores depend on several variables other than the quality of instruction they receive. Further, many variables are beyond an individual teacher's control. Some variables that may affect learners' test scores and that are not subject to teacher influence include the following:

- The home language of individual learners. (Learners who speak a language at home other than English sometimes have difficulty scoring well on standardized tests.)

- The income and educational levels of learners' families. (Learners' home situations affect their school learning. There are huge differences in reading material found in individual learners' homes, levels of parental education and hence parental capacities to help with homework, noise levels in the home, and so forth. Scores on standardized tests are highly correlated with the socioeconomic status of parents. Therefore, they are probably a better indicator of parental status than of teacher performance.)

- The quality of learning materials provided to supplement instruction. (Are books available that are appropriate for the grade level? Is content of the adopted books consistent with content assessed on standardized tests?)

- The nature of the school's facilities. (Is classroom lighting adequate? Are classrooms well insulated from outside noise? And so forth.)

Even assuming none of these differences existed, problems are still associated with using learners' scores on tests as accountability measures. Critics point out that these tests are poorly suited to stand as academic-success indicators. Because so many learners take standardized tests, individual items must be presented in a form that allows for quick, mechanical scoring. This tends to limit test content to fairly unsophisticated information that can be assessed using item formats that require learners to use less complex thinking levels. Tests fail to challenge learners to use the sophisticated thinking processes they need to engage more difficult content. Another problem is that to avoid penalties for their teachers and schools, some administrators require students to spend so much time preparing for these tests that they do not have time to integrate what they are learning or apply their new knowledge (Cankoy & Tut, 2005).

How might accountability data be gathered in ways that more appropriately respond to some difficulties associated with overuse of standardized-test

results? Some critics of present practices propose that data on such topics as school dropout and graduation rates, college acceptance rates, follow-up studies of graduates, teacher-turnover rates, school safety issues (such as the number of suspensions and discipline incidents), and other variables need to be considered in addition to test scores. The problem is that gathering this information can be time consuming, difficult, and expensive.

In summary, you are certain to encounter continued discussions of concerns related to standards and accountability when you enter the profession. You and other professionals will face challenges as you seek to ensure that adopted standards are consistent with the purposes of education and that the measurements used for accountability purposes are valid and fair.

Efforts to Ensure New Teacher Quality

The focus on standards has not been confined to the K–12 schools. In recent years, a broadened accountability interest has embraced development of standards for beginning teachers. Accompanying assessments seek to evaluate higher education programs based on how well their graduates meet those standards. In previous years, state authorities issued teaching certificates to newcomers based only on their completion of a prescribed sequence of college courses. Today, many states are moving to performance-based systems that judge candidates' readiness in terms of their ability to perform in the classroom in ways consistent with adopted professional standards.

Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium

Each state has responsibility for determining what is required in order to obtain a teaching credential. This complicates the process of addressing the issue of teacher quality. In the early 1990s, more than 30 states participated in a consortium called the **Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC)**. The purpose of INTASC was to establish standards that would serve as guidelines for states as they addressed the issue of teacher quality. INTASC identified 10 standards that beginning teachers should know and be able to meet. For the past two decades, these standards have had an impact on the preparation of new teachers.

You can obtain more information about the INTASC standards and about content standards that have been developed for particular subjects by accessing the INTASC Web site (**www.ccsso.org**) and search Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium.

You may wish to review your own professional development in terms of your growing ability to understand and perform in ways consistent with the INTASC Model Core Standards.

In recent years there have been renewed calls for changing the preparation of teachers. Many of these changes mirror the changes recommended for education as a whole. There is an increased demand for more testing, stronger subject matter preparation, more field work, and in some cases fewer education courses.

Praxis Assessments for Beginning Teachers

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) developed the Praxis series of assessments to evaluate individuals preparing for careers in teaching at various points in their professional development. Many states and universities use results of these tests as a basis for making program-entry decisions; awarding teaching

certificates, licenses, or credentials (documents making it legally possible for a person to teach in a state's schools); and determining whether beginners' levels of teaching performance are acceptable. Currently, 35 states use some or all of the assessments as a credential requirement.

Praxis has three different assessment categories. Praxis I consists of academic skills assessments. These tests are used early in the academic careers of students who wish to pursue education careers. They seek to determine whether prospective teacher candidates have adequate reading, writing, and mathematics skills.

Praxis II assessments provide information about teacher candidates' knowledge of the subject(s), important pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of important learning and teaching principles. In many places, teacher candidates must receive certain minimum scores before they will be issued teaching licenses, certificates, or credentials.

Praxis III is a classroom-performance assessment that usually takes place during the first year of teaching. Local assessors use nationally validated criteria to observe and make judgments about a teacher's performance. Results often are used to help newcomers to the profession prepare professional improvement plans.

As you go through your professional development program, you may find it particularly useful to keep in mind some categories assessed by the Praxis II assessments. Because Praxis II assessments are used in a large majority of the states, at some point in your program you may be required to take these tests. Even if you are not required to do so, the Praxis II categories describe aspects of practice that are important for you to master as you work to become a professional educator.

Some of the topics covered in the Principles of Learning and Teaching Test include how learning occurs, learner motivation, learner diversity, different instructional approaches, planning instruction, effective communication, the role of the school in the community, debates on best teaching practices, major laws relating to learner and teacher rights, and personal reflection on teaching practices.

WEB EXTENSION 1–3

Investigating Praxis

More detailed information on the Praxis series of assessments and even sample questions can be found on their Web site.

www.ets.org/praxis

KEY IDEAS IN SUMMARY

- Because education is viewed as such an important societal institution, it is the subject of much debate and numerous proposals for change. Because there is no national consensus regarding the purposes of education, you are likely to find disagreements and inconsistency among proposals to improve the schools.

- School policies and practices are influenced by answers to important questions associated with the foundations of the education profession. These

questions include those associated with (1) social and philosophical foundations, (2) historical foundations, (3) political foundations, (4) curriculum foundations, (5) instructional foundations, and (6) legal foundations.

- Teachers' roles require them to discharge diverse responsibilities. These include (1) planning lessons, (2) maintaining records, (3) attending special school events, (4) working on committees, (5) participating in professional groups' activities, and (6) communicating with parents and guardians.

- The complexity of teaching relates to its *multidimensionality* (the idea that responsibilities range across a broad variety of duties), *simultaneity* (the need for teachers to work in an environment in which many things occur at the same time), *immediacy* (the necessity to respond at the same time to multiple events), *unpredictability* (the need to work in an environment in which learners' behaviors do not always follow consistent patterns), *publicness* (the need to work in an arena that is subject to constant monitoring by others), and *history* (the need to cope with classroom patterns or culture that have resulted from previous teacher-learner interactions).

- As a teacher today, you will confront challenges that change over time in important ways. These challenges require you to be flexible and to be willing to modify your teaching approaches in light of new conditions and situations.

- Instructional approaches tied to *constructivism* and *multiple intelligences* are examples of those you may encounter early in your career. Constructivism refers to the idea that people cannot simply be given new knowledge. For knowledge to become meaningful, learners must create understanding through interactions that involve prior knowledge and knowledge that is presented to them for the first time. Multiple-intelligence theory holds that intelligence is not a unitary trait. Rather, there are various kinds of intelligences, and individuals are likely to be "smarter" in terms of some intelligence types than others.

- Over time, there have been numerous debates about the appropriate purposes of schooling. There has never been a time in our educational history when everyone agreed on what constitutes a good education. You may expect to encounter debates about what we need to do to "make schools better" throughout your career in the profession.

- Today, there is great interest in establishing public standards against which to measure learners' academic progress. These standards often are accompanied by testing programs that seek to assess how well young people are mastering the prescribed content. Increasingly, school leaders and teachers are being held accountable for learner performance on these tests. Some people argue that this trend irresponsibly forces teachers to "teach to the test."

- In recent years, legislators and others responsible for overseeing the schools have become greatly interested in the issue of teacher quality. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) is an example of an entity created as a result of this interest. INTASC has developed a set of expectations for new teachers known as the *INTASC Model Core Standards*. These standards lay out knowledge and behavioral expectations for

beginning teachers. Many colleges and universities use these standards as a framework for constructing their teacher-preparation programs.

- The *Praxis* series of assessments represents another response to the desire to ensure that new teachers meet acceptable minimum standards of quality. Many states require all prospective teachers to take these tests. Individual Praxis tests are given at three points during a teacher's professional development sequence: (1) a basic understanding and skills test is given as a precondition to formal entry into the professional component of a teacher education program; (2) a test over subject matter and pedagogical knowledge is given as a prerequisite to awarding teacher certificates, licenses, or credentials; and (3) a classroom-performance assessment is given during a new teacher's first year in the classroom.

- You may wish to keep an *initial-development portfolio* as you go through your teacher-preparation program. The portfolio allows you to organize information, reflect on it, and make decisions about what important information you already know and what important information you need to obtain to adequately prepare yourself for the classroom.

REFLECTIONS

1. In this chapter, you learned that many debates about education are rooted in different perceptions about what is a good society and how education should contribute to that society. What are your views of the good society? How does your view of the good society influence your views of what education should be?

2. Schools reflect society, and changes in society influence education. What do you see as two or three changes that are occurring in society that will have an important impact on schools and education? What impact do you think they will have? How do you propose to react to these changes?

3. Review material in the chapter dealing with *constructivism*. If you decided to embrace this approach, what would your lessons be like? What is your response to constructivism, and why do you feel this way? Do you recall any of your own teachers operating in ways that are consistent with this approach? What did they do that you liked or disliked?

4. Sometimes today's critics paint pictures of so-called golden ages when the schools were excellent and everybody was happy with our educational system. In this chapter you learned that, contrary to the pronouncements of these critics, there has never been a time when there has been an absence of debate about the quality of our educational system. During your career, you are virtually certain to encounter some people who will tell you, "Our schools are much worse than they used to be." How will you respond to people who share this view?

5. The INTASC standards and Praxis examinations have become important components guiding the preparation and licensure of teachers. What is your reaction to them? How will you use information you now have about the INTASC standards and the Praxis examinations as you continue your preparation for classroom teaching?

FIELD EXPERIENCES, PROJECTS, AND ENRICHMENT

1. Interview a teacher who has taught for at least 10 years. Select someone who teaches at a grade level and in a subject area you would like to teach. Ask this person to reflect on the kinds of criticisms of teachers and schools he or she has heard over the years. What has been the general nature of this criticism? Have all critics complained about the same things? What remedies have been proposed? How have this teacher and his or her teaching colleagues dealt with these criticisms? Share responses with others in your class.

2. Observe a teacher and look for instances of *multidimensionality, unpredictability, simultaneity, immediacy*, and *history*. After your observation, ask the teacher what impact these have on planning and instructing. Which of these variables does the teacher think provided the most challenges during his or her first year of teaching? What advice does the teacher have for a newcomer to the profession who will be dealing with these challenges for the first time? Share your findings with others in your class.

3. In this chapter you read a brief explanation of *emotional intelligence*. Educators are becoming increasingly interested in this topic. To enrich your own understanding, use a good search engine such as Google (**www.google.com**), enter the search terms *emotional intelligence*, and conduct an Internet search. You will find dozens of sites with good information. One you may particularly wish to visit is the EQ International Site on Emotions, Emotional Needs, and Emotional Intelligence (**www.eqi.org**). At this site, you can follow a link to a massive table of contents including topics such as conflict resolution, emotional awareness, emotional literacy, emotional intelligence, and emotional needs. Review information at one or more Internet sites. Then, prepare a short report for others in your class that will expand their understanding of emotional intelligence.

4. Research the state standards and state assessment programs for the grade level(s) and subject(s) you plan to teach. Your instructor will be able to help you locate this information. Many state departments of education put this information on their Web sites. Then, think about these questions: Did you find any surprises? Do you agree with them? Why or why not? To conclude the exercise, prepare a personal plan of action in which you outline some specific things you intend to do to gain the knowledge and expertise you will need to deal with any standards (and related tests) for which you do not feel your present preparation is adequate.

5. Take the 10 principles outlined by the INTASC standards and create an *Already Know/Want to Learn/Learned* chart. For each standard, make three columns. At the top of the first column, write "Know." At the top of the second, write "Want to Learn." At the top of the third, write "Learned." Begin by entering what you think you already know about the principle in the first column and what you want or need to learn about it in the second column. As you progress in your development, write what you learn about each principle in the third column. You may wish to keep this in a professional-development portfolio as documentation of what you have learned.

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WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BECOME A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR?

OBJECTIVES

This chapter will help you to:

- identify the steps in the process of preparing for teaching.
- define the functions of the two large teacher organizations.
- state the components of the Code of Ethics for Teachers.
- identify the relationships among local school districts, state government, and federal government in determining educational policy and practice.
- explain changes in the influence of the federal government in recent decades.
- describe the organization of the local school district.
- explain the implications of shifts in the control of education.
- define what is required of a professional educator.

INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to be "preparing" for teaching? *To prepare* means to make oneself ready. *Preparing to be a teacher* means getting yourself ready to assume the role of a teacher. What do you need to know or be able to do to prepare for this role? Is it something that comes naturally, or is there some specialized knowledge and skill that you need to possess? Is it something that can be learned quickly, or does it require significant knowledge and experience? These questions are the focus of considerable debate as the educational reform agenda focuses on teacher preparation. There are those who claim that there is little need for specialized teacher preparation. They claim that all that is needed is subject matter knowledge. Our view is that this is the equivalent of saying that all a medical doctor needs to know is biology, and all an attorney needs to know is the Constitution. Although these are certainly important ingredients in their preparation, they are not sufficient. The same is true of teachers. Although good subject matter knowledge is important, it is not the whole story.

These same individuals often state that there is no body of knowledge that individuals need to learn outside of the content area, and therefore teacher preparation can be accomplished with little effort or time. They argue that good teaching is an art that cannot be taught. The trick, then, is not preparation, but finding a way to identify those who possess these "artistic" skills. However, it should be noted that there are schools for art and music where even the most gifted artists go to refine and develop their skills.

Others, however, make the case that there is a specialized body of knowledge and a set of skills that need to be learned in order to be qualified to be a teacher. They can point to research studies indicating that there are skills and abilities that make a difference in the classroom. Even though some individuals do possess aptitudes and skills that make it easier for them to assume the role of "teacher," they are even better teachers after they learn the body of knowledge and skills that characterize a professional educator. As we consider the role of teacher preparation, we need to remember that teachers are dealing with our most valuable natural resource—our children. Individuals should not be allowed to have authority over and responsibility for this valuable resource until they

have demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that facilitate learning and do no harm. We hold this position. We believe that there is a specialized body of knowledge that individuals must possess. In addition, we believe that preparing to be a teacher is not just a short process that is easily gone through. It is a lifelong process. Because of the great diversity of students, changes in society, and advances in knowledge about learning, teachers never reach the point where they can say that they now know all that they need to know. In essence, good teachers are lifelong learners!

In this chapter, we introduce you to different phases of the deliberative professional development sequence and to a variety of things that a person needs to know to begin preparing for the awesome responsibility of teaching the youth of our nation.

PREPARATION AS A PROCESS

In our work with a wide variety of individuals who are preparing to be teachers, we have often observed those who experience what might be termed "the shock of the familiar"—a disorientation that occurs when individuals preparing to be teachers, who have spent thousands of hours in classrooms and are very familiar with the environment, first stand *in front* of the classroom. They have always felt comfortable in this familiar environment and are shocked to find that, from the front of the classroom, things suddenly look very different!

Yes, the classroom is different when viewed from behind the teacher's desk. There are responsibilities and actions required of a teacher that students usually do not observe or understand. Each group of students is different. Unpredictable events occur. Quick decisions are required—and a teacher can't simply stop everything to look up an answer! A solid teacher preparation program can help individuals learn how to confront the diversity of the classroom and how to

Preparation programs are designed to prepare teachers for success in complex, multicultural environments.

address the unpredictable nature of an environment of 30 or more individuals, some who may not want to be there at all.

In this chapter, we emphasize the term *professional*. An important part of a preparation program is helping prospective teachers develop an understanding of what constitutes professionalism in teaching. Professionalism is more than just an application of skills. It is an understanding of the ethical, legal, and interpersonal dimensions of the role. Veteran teacher educator Patricia Phelps (2006, p. 69) says that helping students develop professionalism is "the most challenging aspect of preparing new teachers." A part of being a professional is developing a commitment to career-long growth (Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch, & Enz, 2000). That means that as a teacher, you are committed to increasing your knowledge and improving your skills so that you can better meet the needs of those you teach.

There are ethical standards to which members of the teaching profession subscribe. Those include a shared commitment to certain ethical practices; a concern for the development of the capacities of all learners who come to school; a respect for the dignity of all learners in spite of their physical, emotional, and sociological circumstances; and a sense that education should be a high-priority concern for the entire society. Professional organizations such as the **National Education Association (NEA)** and the **American Federation of Teachers (AFT)** help define these ethical standards and the development of national and state education agendas.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PHASES

Your professional development as a teacher did not begin when you entered your teacher-preparation program. The roots of your decision go all the way back to your personal set of prior experiences, your thoughts about them, and the decisions you made that ultimately resulted in your taking steps to pursue a program leading to a teaching certificate, license, or credential.

Although your teacher-preparation program helps you begin the process of becoming a professional, the preparatory process will continue throughout your career. As you think about entering the profession, you may find it helpful to know something about four important phases that characterize teachers' professional lives. They are

- the **pretraining phase**,
- the **formal-preparation phase**,
- the **induction-years phase**, and
- the **continuing-growth phase**.

Pretraining

Your personal experiences and the attitudes you developed before enrolling in any teacher-preparation program are important components of the pretraining phase of your professional development. Your attitudes probably derive in part from views that your family members hold. In addition, most teachers can cite influences on their desire to be a teacher or on the type of teacher they want to be. Some have been influenced by teachers in their past who inspired them. Others may have had negative experience with teachers and have a commitment to do better. Influences of your own school experiences are to be expected, given

that the typical high school graduate has spent more than 10,000 hours in K–12 classrooms.

Memories of your own school days may not be as helpful as you think. Schools and learners today vary tremendously. You may find that the schools you observe during your preparation program are quite different from those you attended. The young people, too, may differ from those with whom you went to school, and you may find that some instructional techniques that your favorite teachers used (and that you liked) do not work well with other learners in other settings. You need to keep an open mind about what constitutes "good teaching" and recognize that practices that are enthusiastically received by learners in some places may not be appropriate for learners in others.

Formal Preparation

You are reading this text, so you are probably in the formal-preparation phase of your professional development. Although there are some differences from institution to institution, there are common features in most teacher-preparation programs. In part, these common features have been developed in response to guidelines of state and national accrediting bodies such as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Preparation programs often have these three basic parts:

- core studies,
- teaching specialization(s)/academic major(s), and
- professional education.

Core Studies

In addition to the specific content areas you will be expected to teach, you are expected to be a well-educated person. Neither students nor parents will have confidence in a teacher who does not appear to be knowledgeable. The core-studies component of teacher-preparation programs is designed to accommodate this need. Typically, core studies requires students to take content courses from a broad academic core that usually includes mathematics, the sciences, the social sciences, and the liberal arts. These courses constitute about 30% to 40% of a typical bachelor's degree program.

Teaching Specializations/Academic Majors

If you are preparing for a career in elementary schools, you will be expected to teach a variety of content areas. You might also have a particular teaching specialization, such as reading or mathematics, that you have studied in some depth as part of your preparation program.

Prospective middle school teachers often have a teaching specialization or a formal academic major, and future high school teachers almost always have an academic major. If you are preparing to teach in high school, you probably intend to teach courses in your academic major. You may also be assigned to teach at least a few courses in another subject area. (Requirements related to teaching outside of the academic major vary greatly; however, a certain minimum number of college or university courses is often required.)

Misconceptions often exist about the role of academic specialization. Some say that teachers need academic specialization so they will have specific

knowledge and information to pass on to their future students. However, students have tremendous resources for obtaining information at their fingertips. As a result, the role of the teacher is changing from "provider of information" to more like a concierge who knows how to form the right questions and help students find information and resources as they need them (Bonk, 2010).

Professional Education

The professional-education component of your preparation program seeks to give you the expertise needed to deliver instruction and manage the classroom. In recent years, there has been a trend toward having more of this component of the preparation program offered in K–12 schools rather than on college campuses. Prospective teachers today spend much more time in the schools than was the case just a couple of decades ago. The goal is to smooth the transition from the college or university environment to the K–12 environment. Many programs today provide opportunities for prospective teachers to engage in some supervised instruction of learners during various stages throughout their preparation program. Historically, preparation programs provided prospective teachers with little direct contact with K–12 schools until student teaching, a capstone experience that often did not occur until the term just before graduation.

You may have already had some experience teaching K–12 students as part of your preparation program. If not, you probably will soon have an opportunity to do so. Successes you experience will be confidence builders. They can also broaden your appreciation of the many kinds of learners in the schools, and they can challenge your capacity for honoring and responding professionally to the diversity you probably will encounter. Work in the schools, particularly when it is approached seriously, can be a wonderful beginning to a successful teaching career.

Induction Years

The first years in teaching are sometimes called the induction-years phase. This term implies that no one assumes you will arrive on the job fully formed as a professional educator. It is another recognition that professionals are involved in a process of career-long development and that the early years are times of particularly intense learning. During this phase of development, teachers must take responsibility for their own learning (Rothman, 2009). While there may be some

FIGURE 2–1 Obtaining a Teaching Credential

Obtaining a Teaching Credential

Each state is responsible for setting standards for teachers in that state. To learn about getting a credential or license for a particular state, look at the Web site for the state. The licensing requirements are usually found on the Web site for the state department of education. They may be found under the topic of "Teacher Credentialing." This site will also address the types of credentials that can be obtained and what licensure exams you may need to pass.

Look up the requirements for the state that interests you.

- What are the specific standards for obtaining a credential?
- What is the balance of content courses, teacher education courses, and field work?

basic professional development requirements during the induction phase, individual teachers usually have much more responsibility for continuing their own professional growth. Much of the learning during the first few years of teaching centers on adapting to the special characteristics of the school, the learners, the surrounding community, the prescribed curriculum, the available resources, and the interpersonal relationships among the teachers.

Even new teachers from the finest preparation programs experience stress during the initial years of teaching. Beginners sometimes miss the support university supervisors and supervising teachers provided them during student teaching. Many school systems recognize this problem, and some respond by assigning experienced mentor teachers to work with newcomers. Some states now have laws requiring school districts to provide this kind of support to new teachers.

Much discussion about challenges facing newcomers to the profession used to focus on the first year of teaching. Today, educators recognize that beginners take several years to settle comfortably into their new roles. Increasingly, school leaders are thinking about ways to provide special assistance during the first two to four years of teachers' professional service. Some states permit teacher-education students to graduate, but they withhold teacher certification until the new teachers have experienced a successful year of supervised internship.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- **What is your response to the idea of extending the teacher-preparation process?**
- **What do you think would be helpful to teachers during their first years of teaching?**

Continuing Growth

Professional development does not end with your induction into teaching. Teaching is not a mechanical or rote process that involves merely repeating the same actions over and over. Every class is different, each year is different, and students always present new challenges. Even those of us who think we have seen it all find ourselves surprised! Good teachers discover that they need to continually learn in order to meet the challenges of teaching. Although school districts often provide incentives for continued professional growth, good teachers discover that professional growth has other rewards. Teachers learn that when they are doing a good job of teaching, their job is actually easier! When students are motivated and interested, there are fewer problems, and teaching is more rewarding. There are several opportunities for continued professional growth. Those include:

- staff-development opportunities,
- college and university courses, and
- work associated with professional organizations.

Staff Development

You may find yourself employed in one of the many school districts that organize extensive **staff-development** activities for teachers. School districts often commit funds to these activities as part of their efforts to enhance the overall

quality of instruction. The term **in-service education** often is applied to these efforts. These programs often feature special sessions to introduce new teaching techniques, introduce well-known educational speakers, give workshops to prepare materials or modify curricula, or "share" sessions in which participants exchange materials and ideas.

It is likely that you will be required to attend some staff-development sessions; others may be optional. In some districts, teachers receive staff-development credits, and when they have accumulated enough credits, they qualify for a higher step in the salary schedule. Some schools provide workshops during the school day that allow teachers and parents to work together. These workshops tend to have a positive academic impact. For example, using a survey of 18 elementary and secondary schools in seven states, Sheldon and Epstein (2005) reported that dramatic achievement gains occurred when schools offered such workshops and assigned homework that required students to show and discuss their work with their parents. American teachers will probably spend more time on faculty development in the future. Currently, American teachers spend an average of 14 to 16 hours a year engaged in faculty development activities. In contrast, teachers in academically achieving countries such as Singapore, Sweden, and the Netherlands spend at least 100 hours annually in faculty development activities (Carney, 2010). American teachers will welcome the opportunity to spend more time in faculty development workshops, but only if they center around long-term projects and programs, as opposed to short-term lingo-loaded seminars (Garcia, 2010).

College and University Courses

You may elect to take college and university courses to expand your professional knowledge. Many institutions offer night courses so teachers can take them during the school year. It is common for colleges and universities to have extensive summer-session offerings for teachers. You can often use college and university courses to fulfill requirements for an advanced degree. Frequently, school districts award increases in salaries to teachers who complete specified courses or fulfill advanced-degree requirements.

As you consider possible courses you might take during your early years in the classroom, think first about taking those that will help you meet specific challenges you might be facing in the classroom. You should focus on selecting courses that will directly help you with your work rather than those designed to meet advanced-degree requirements. You may be in the profession for a long time. There will be plenty of time to complete an advanced-degree program after you have addressed some more pressing gaps in the knowledge you need to succeed in the classroom.

Involvement with Professional Groups

You will find that many professional organizations sponsor meetings that include sessions designed to improve teachers' expertise. These groups often offer professional-development opportunities of various kinds, including workshops or more formal sessions in which individual presenters share ideas. Some professional organizations focus on specific subject areas and specific categories of learners. Some sources you may wish to contact for further information include:

- American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD)—(**www.aahperd.org**)

- Association for Middle Level Education—(**www.amle.org**)
- Council on Exceptional Children (CEC)—(**www.cec.sped.org**)
- International Reading Association (IRA)—(**www.reading.org**)
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)—(**www.iste.org**)
- Music Teachers National Association (MTNA)—(**www.mtna.org**)
- National Art Education Association (NAEA)—(**www.arteducators.org**)
- National Association for Gifted Children—(**www.nagc.org**)
- National Business Education Association (NBEA)—(**www.nbea.org**)
- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)—(**www.socialstudies.org**)
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)—(**www.ncte.org**)
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)—(**www.nctm.org**)
- National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)—(**www.nsta.org**)

Joining a professional group gives you an opportunity to meet people with shared interests. Members often get productive new ideas from even casual conversations with others in the group. Many professional organizations sponsor the publication of journals that feature excellent, practical how-to-do-it articles.

Teachers in many parts of the nation have been involved in political action demonstrations as a means for communicating their needs and wants to those in power.

TWO GENERAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR TEACHERS

In addition to the many specialty organizations that serve teachers with particular grade-level or subject-area interests, two national organizations represent the more general interests of the teaching profession. These organizations are

- the National Education Association (NEA) and
- the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

These organizations perform many services for their members. They help explain teachers' work to the public at large. They engage in lobbying activities seeking legislation thought to advance the interest of their members and oppose legislation thought to have negative implications for teachers. They provide opportunities for classroom practitioners to keep abreast of new knowledge as it relates to their professional development and practice. They also often specify standards of appropriate or ethical practice.

National Education Association

The National Education Association (NEA) is the larger of the two major teachers' organizations. Though today the NEA does recognize the strike as one legitimate course of action that teachers can use as they seek

improved conditions of practice and better salaries, in general the organization conceives of teachers as members of a learned profession such as law and medicine. The NEA has had a tradition of supporting policies that give teachers more control over their profession. This implies a role for teachers in such areas as the preparation of new teachers, qualifications for hiring teachers, selection of learning materials, teacher evaluation processes, and the choice of instructional methods.

American Federation of Teachers

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), a union affiliated with the AFL-CIO, views teachers as occupying positions similar to those of employees of large corporations. The AFT points out that teachers, unlike professionals such as lawyers, rarely are self-employed. Nearly all of them work for institutions (school districts). This employment reality creates a situation in which many teachers work at sites distant from the lead administrators in their districts. In the view of the AFT, this creates a need for teachers to have a strong organization to counter the possibility that distant administrators may make decisions that adversely affect teachers and learners.

The AFT has long embraced the strike as a legitimate bargaining tool. It seeks negotiated decisions that maximize teachers' benefits and restrict arbitrary exercise of administrative power. Negotiated agreements tend to specify in considerable detail the responsibilities and rights of both teachers and administrators. When there are differences of interpretation related to these agreements, an arbitration system is followed that is similar to those used in traditional labor-management disputes (see Essex, 2002).

The issue of teacher strikes is one that elicits heated exchanges between supporters and opponents. People opposed to strikes often argue that they undermine teachers' images. They fear that strikes will alienate middle- and upper-class citizens who traditionally have been among public education's strongest supporters. Disgust with strikes could lead these citizens to oppose needed funding for the schools.

Supporters of strikes often observe that people in general are simply unaware of the pressures teachers face. For example, they point to obligations many state legislatures have placed on teachers to raise learners' achievement levels in the absence of new commitments of state revenues to help them get the

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WEB EXTENSION 2–1

Professional Organizations

The National Education Association

You will find much information about the NEA at the organization's Web site. Click on a link titled **For and About Members**. This link will take you to a page that includes additional links to information of interest to future teachers, beginning teachers, support staff in the schools, retired teachers, and other groups. You will find information of potential interest to you as a prospective educator by following links titled **Beginning Teachers** and **Future Teachers**. At this site, you can also find a listing of the NEA's mailing address, should you wish to initiate correspondence with the group about a topic that interests you.

www.nea.org

American Federation of Teachers

This site is the home page of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). You will find information about a wide range of activities the group undertakes in support of its members. Click on the link titled **PreK–12 Teachers**. This link will take you to a page that includes a link titled **Teachers**. Click on this link to go to a page with information about becoming a teacher, staff-development opportunities for teachers, and ideas for working with learners in the classroom.

www.aft.org

job done. Proponents of strikes contend that people may "talk a good line" about the need to improve schools, but little real action is likely without pressure such as can be exerted by a strike.

> **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**
>
> - Do strike actions threaten teachers' credibility with parents and other influential members of the community? Why or why not?
> - Should the question of whether or not teachers should strike be answered "yes" in some instances and "no" in others? If so, under what circumstances might strikes be appropriate? Under what conditions might they be inappropriate?
> - Have you or any of your family members been involved in a strike, particularly one involving schools? If so, what were the reactions of various groups of people who had a stake in the outcome?
> - How do you personally feel about strikes by teachers? Have you had personal experiences that have led you to your position on this issue?

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

One of the marks of a profession is that the practitioners of that profession follow a code of ethics. *Ethics* refers to a moral code or standard embraced by individuals or groups. In the "helping" professions, such as teaching, an underlying principle of that moral code is that those in the profession act with the well-being of the client in mind rather than personal concerns or satisfactions. In law, an attorney should act in a manner that is best for the client regardless of how the attorney feels about the guilt or innocence of the person. In medicine, a physician should act in the best interest of the patient and not those of the physician, the hospital, or pharmaceutical companies. In teaching, it requires considering what is best for a student. For example, it might be personally satisfying to seek revenge on a student who has interrupted your lesson by misbehaving. However, as a teacher, you must consider your response in terms of what would be best for the education of the student.

The National Education Association Code of Ethics identifies two major areas of ethical responsibility: those related to the students and those related to the profession.

There are basically three major areas of ethical concern for educators. The first is the interactions and relationship with the students, the second is fulfilling professional responsibilities, and the third is relationships with others such as teachers and parents.

The first area is especially important in education because we are dealing with impressionable students, acknowledged to be among the most vulnerable "clients." As a teacher, you are in a position to have a profound influence on students' future well-being. You are also in a position of considerable power. That power needs to be exercised in an ethical and responsible manner.

You do not simply influence the lives of students through academic learning; you influence their moral and ethical development through your actions. Students are keen observers of teacher behavior. Everyday events have a great impact on them. For many students, teachers are significant adults in their lives. What teachers do and say has a profound influence on them. This is an awesome