

# The Future of Teacher Preparation

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**TeachingWorks**

UNIVERSITY of MICHIGAN SCHOOL of EDUCATION

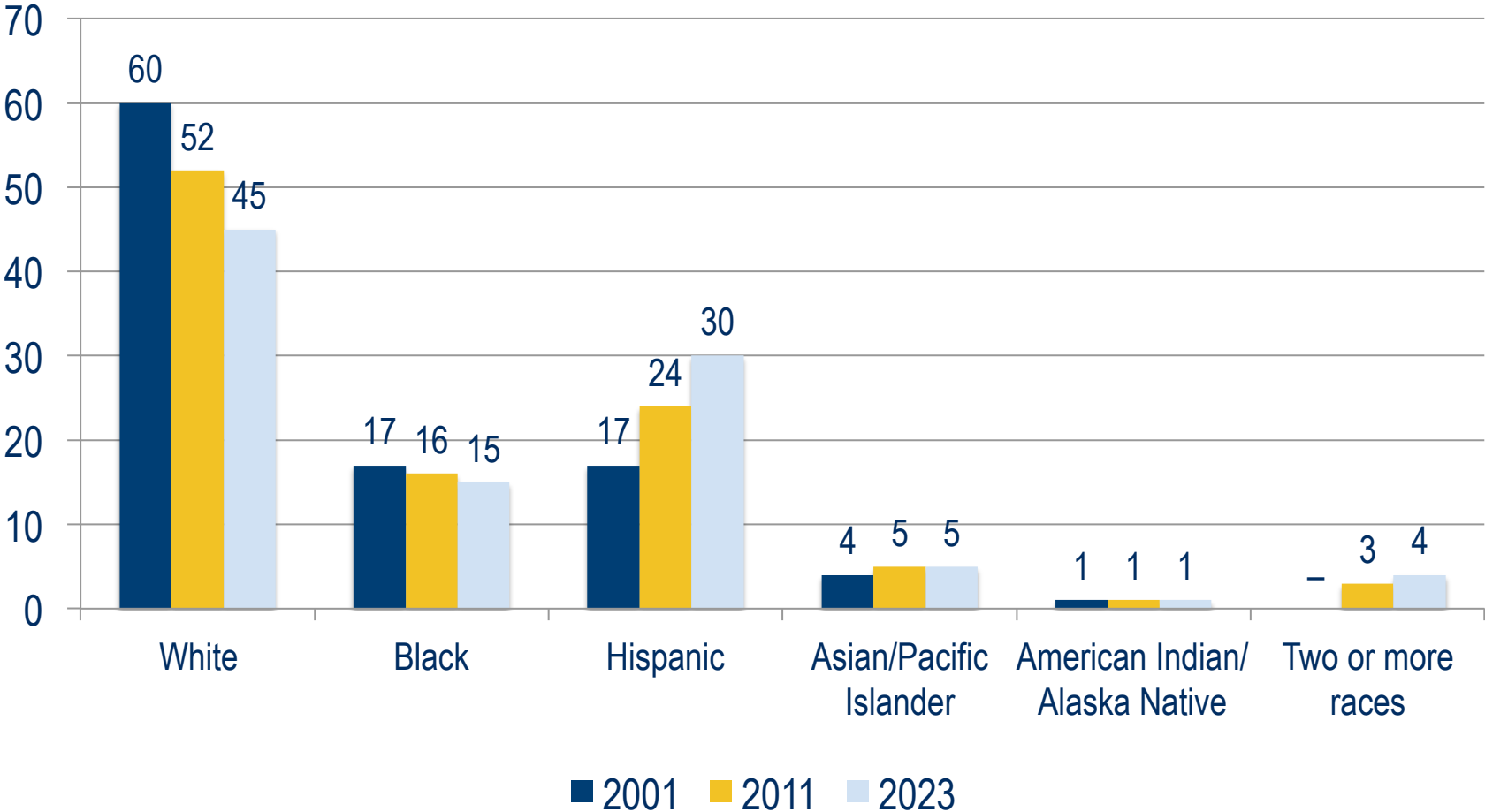
# What is Teaching Works?

- A national organization housed at the University of Michigan School of Education
- Focused on ensuring that every child gets skillful teaching every year by building strong professional infrastructure for the training, development, and assessment of teaching practice
- Based on work done at the University of Michigan in our own programs and also in partnership with other programs and organizations

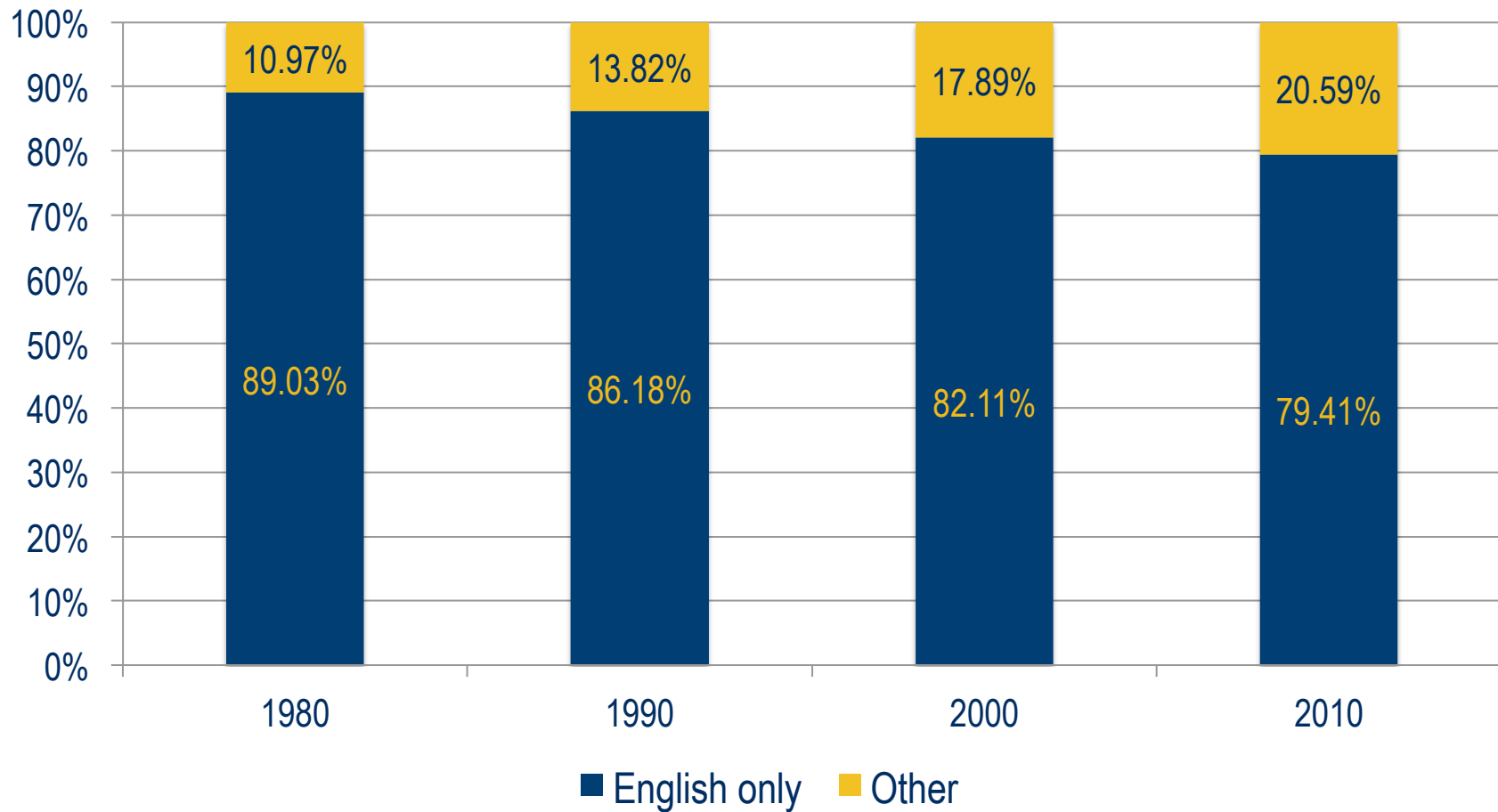


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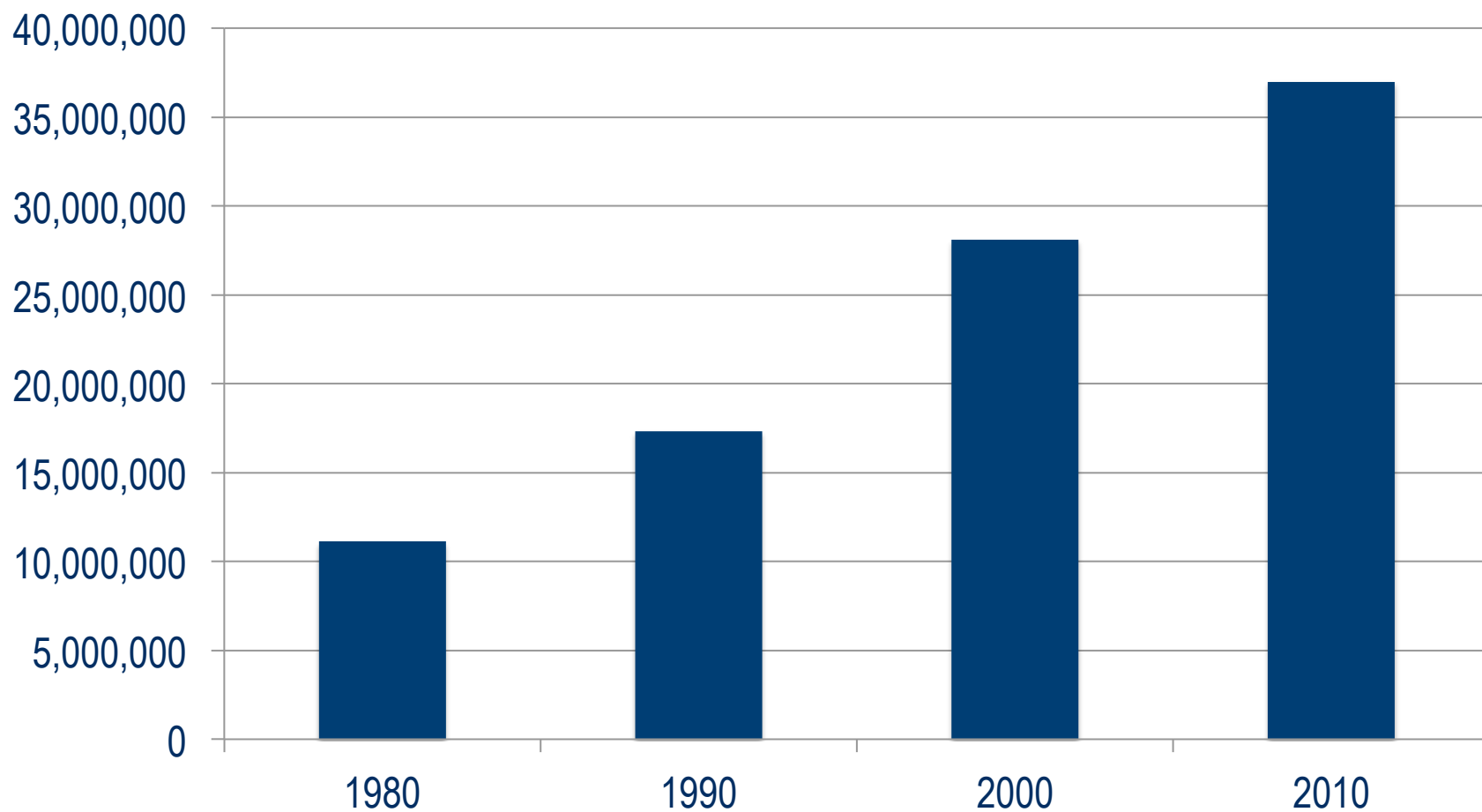
# Changing demographics of public schools



# Language spoken at home

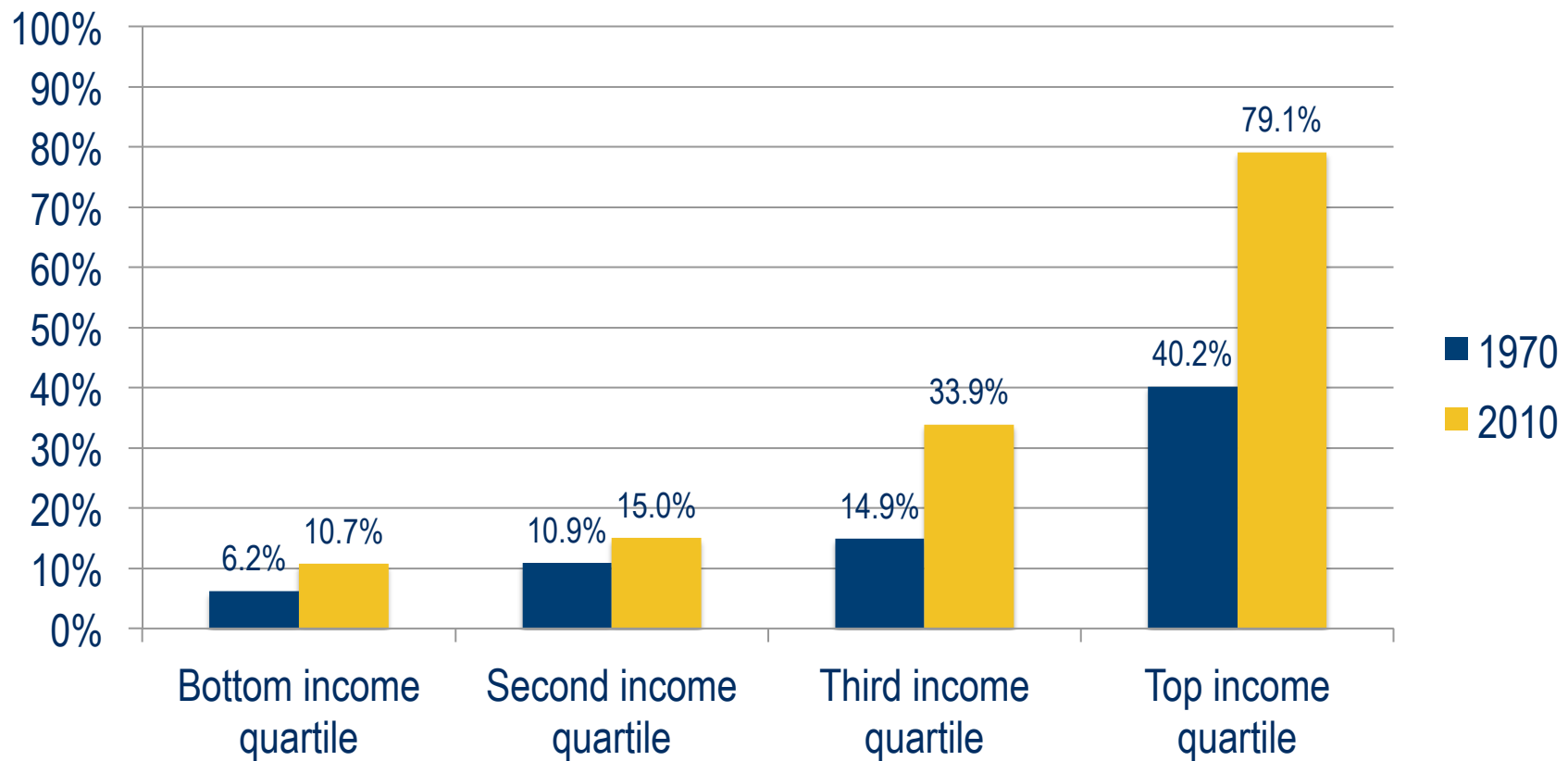


# Spanish speaking in the home

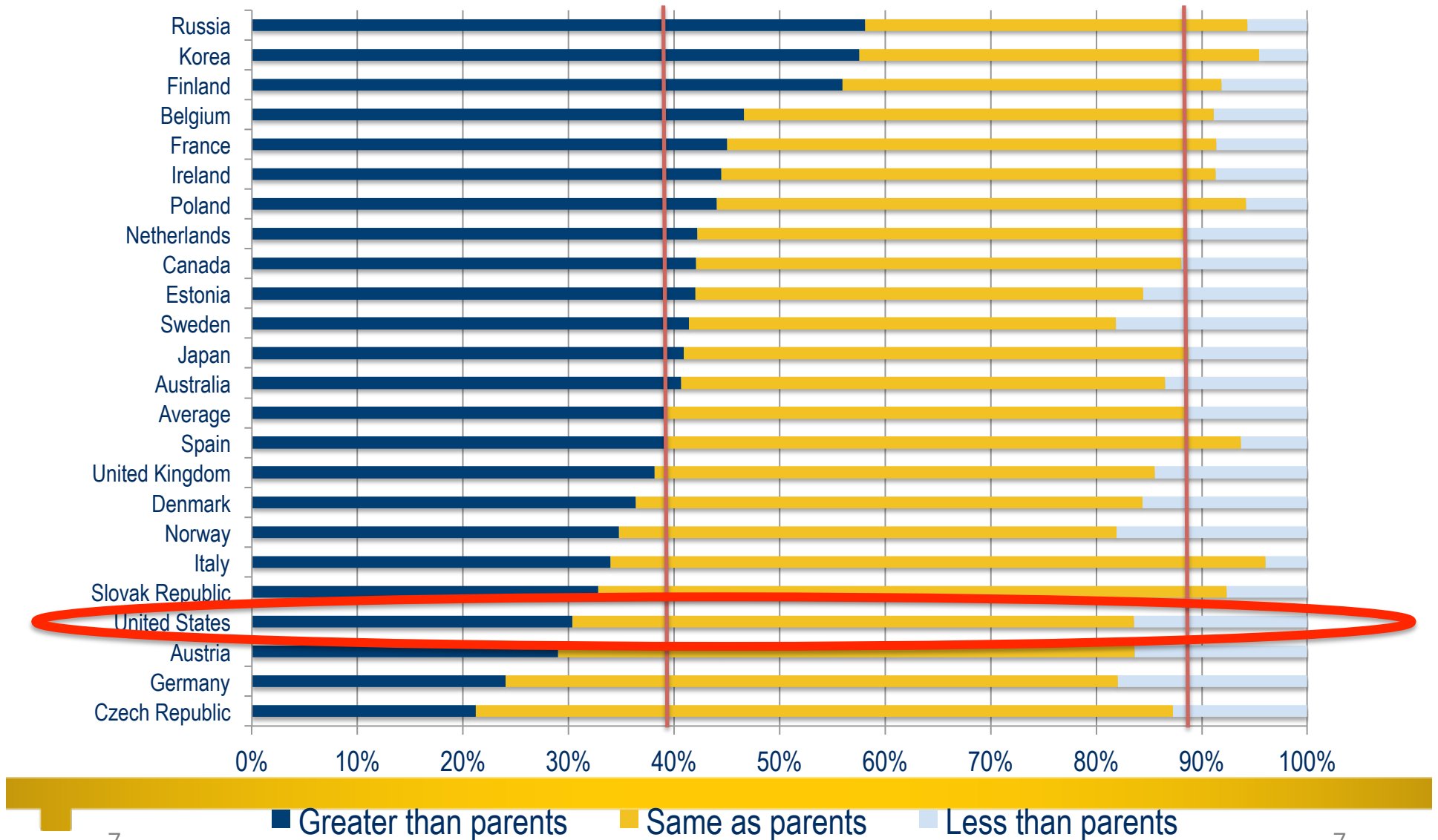


# Family income & educational attainment

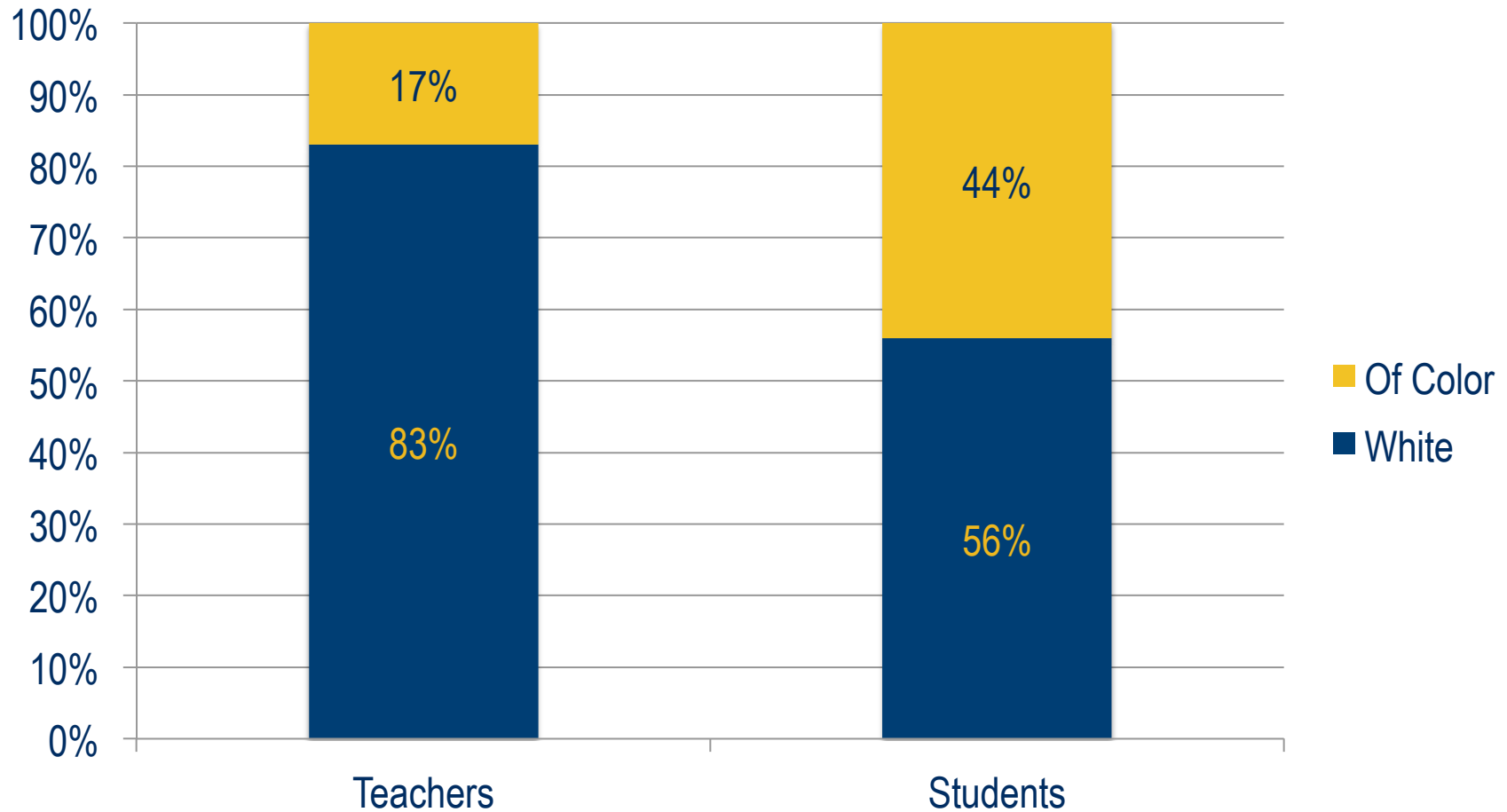
## Estimated bachelor's degree attainment by age 24



# Educational Attainment (2012)



# Demographic divide in the U.S.: K-12 teachers and students





# Three headlines:

1. We need a more diverse teaching force.
2. We need a teaching force that is much more capable at helping children from all kinds of backgrounds learn challenging and useable knowledge and skills.
3. To build such a teaching force, we need a common curriculum for learning to teach that spans pre-service training and the first years of practice and is:
  - Practices-focused
  - Serious about preparing novices to help diverse children learn meaningful academic content

# 1. Why does the teaching force need to diversify?

- It is important for children to interact with teachers with whom they can identify.
- It is important for children to interact with teachers who are different from them.
- The knowledge base of the profession requires the expertise and experience of people who are diverse with respect to SES, race, ethnicity, language, gender, and religion.
- Other reasons?

## 2. Why do we need a teaching force more capable at teaching diverse students?

- The student population is diversifying.
- The goals we hold for all students are higher now than they ever have been before:
  - We expect all students to achieve challenging academic goals, including the ability to analyze text for sophisticated purposes, to use technology, to communicate across all kinds of boundaries, and to solve complex mathematical and scientific problems.
  - Many more jobs now require these kinds of sophisticated skills.

**3. A common, practices-focused curriculum that spans pre-service and early career teaching and is serious about the need to help all kids learn:  
Why build it?  
And what does it look like?**

# Skills for plumbing

(United Association of Plumbers, Fitters, Welders, and Service Techs)

- Install copper and copper alloy piping
- Build a plumbing trap
- Vent a sanitary drainage system
- Disassemble and rebuild a centrifugal compressor
- Maintain joints, connections, supports, and hangars
- Install and maintain storm drainage systems

# Plumbing training and assessment



- Clear, detailed performance expectations
- 5 year apprenticeship
- 1700-2000 hours on-the-job training
- 246 hours related classroom instruction
- 1-year probationary period with on-the-job evaluations

# Skills for medical practice

## (American Medical Association)

Conduct a chest examination:

- Observe respiratory efforts and note presence/absence of respiratory distress
- Confirm midline tracheal position with gentle palpation anteriorly
- Percuss the chest on left and right
- Auscultate the chest using using the diaphragm of the stethoscope on both right and left sides

# Physician training and assessment





# Skills for piloting

## (Federal Aviation Administration)

- Conduct a preflight inspection
- Perform normal and cross-wind approaches and landings
- Execute straight turns and climbing turns
- Perform effective visual scanning
- Avoid a runway incursion
- Perform crossed control stalls
- Perform s-turns across a road

# Pilot training and assessment



- 100+ hours of flight-time
- Knowledge tests
- Practical tests conducted by an FAA inspector

# No equivalent in teaching

- Performance expectations for novice and more experienced teachers alike underspecified
- No common curriculum for teacher training, with specific, professionally-agreed upon learning goals
- Over 2000 independent providers of initial teacher training; over 2000 curricula
- No common standard of performance, instantiated in licensure assessments, for entry to independent practice
- Teachers report doing most of their learning on the job, with little or no coaching or formal guidance

# Why a common curriculum?

- The core work of teaching – designing lessons, leading discussions, giving explanations, building relationships with students – is not so different from one community to the next.
- To act as though it is runs the risk of significant inequities for children.
- Teachers move around, and some leave the community or even state in which they are trained.
- It is much harder to assure the public that a new teacher is safe to practice--one of our responsibilities as professional educators--when the standards vary from one place to the next, and every preparation program is free to do its own thing.
- A common curriculum would make it much easier to develop and share infrastructure for teacher preparation, including materials and other resources and training for teacher educators.

# Why a curriculum that spans pre-service preparation and early career teaching?

- It is not reasonable to expect that novices will learn everything they need to know and be able to do in two years – or less.
- It would help dissolve the disconnect so many new teachers experience between their pre-service preparation and the “realities of the classroom.”
- Professional development in many places is woefully inadequate; it is irresponsible not to provide structured opportunities for coaching and continued improvement to novices.
- Teacher preparation that continues into the first few years of practice would be an excellent place to reinforce common, essential teaching practices and also to work on elements of teaching that do legitimately vary from one community to the next – such as how to unpack content in ways that work for a particular population of students, or how to interact with parents who face particular kinds of circumstances.

# How can we develop a common curriculum for learning to teach that will help all kinds of teachers help all kinds of kids learn?

1. Start by identifying and specifying the core practices of teaching that is aimed at helping all kids learn meaningful academic content.
2. Identify the knowledge teachers need to carry out those practices, including:
  - The special ways they need to know the academic content they are teaching;
  - The professional and practical knowledge that supports good teaching, including knowing how social and cultural factors affect kids' experience in school.
3. Develop a curriculum and testing and licensure system directly focused on those practices and that knowledge.

# What does practices-focused teacher education look like?

- **Curriculum:** All coursework and field experiences focused on specific skills and practices of teaching, well-known to students, instructors, and mentor teachers, and on the knowledge and orientations that support and enable teachers to use them.
- **Instructional activities and settings:** Repeated opportunities to practice specific teaching skills, with close, detailed coaching, in settings that support professional learning.
- **Assessment:** Periodic and culminating performance assessments that provide information about novices' developing competence and readiness for independent practice.

# Curriculum: Practices as the center and source

- Practices as the central focus of a teacher education program: Everyone knows what they are and students are held accountable for showing that they can do them
- Other parts of the curriculum- namely, content knowledge and knowledge of psychology, culture, policy, sociology, etc. – are there if and only if they directly support the carrying out of practices: There's not enough time in initial teacher education to include topics that are not directly relevant to teaching.



# Foundations of the HLPs

## 5 core ideas about teaching and learning

1. The goal of classroom teaching and learning is to help students learn worthwhile knowledge and skills and develop the ability to use what they learn for their own purposes.
2. All students can learn and deserve the opportunity to learn worthwhile content.
3. Learning is an active sense-making process.
4. Teaching is interactive work.
5. The contexts of classroom teaching matter, and teachers must manage and use them well.

# How do these ideas shape the identification of HLPs?

1. The goal of classroom teaching and learning is to help students learn worthwhile knowledge and skills and develop the ability to use what they learn for their own purposes. → *group discussions, small group work, norms and routines for classroom discourse and work*
2. All students can learn and deserve the opportunity to learn worthwhile content. → *modeling and explaining content, eliciting and interpreting thinking, building respectful relationships with students, selecting and modifying tasks and texts, providing oral and written feedback, learning about students and their resources, designing lessons*
3. Learning is an active sense-making process. → *discussion, small group work, designing tasks and texts, learning about students and their resources*
4. Teaching is a contingent practice, dependent on students and their ideas and inclinations. → *eliciting student thinking, diagnosing common patterns of student thinking, checking student understanding during lessons, group discussions, small group work, implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work*
5. The contexts of classroom teaching matter, and teachers must manage and use them well. → *implementing organizational routines, talking with parents and caregivers, learning about students, designing lessons, interpreting the results of student work*

# Bundling HLPs into mini-courses

- **Children as Sense-makers** (eliciting and interpreting student thinking, diagnosing common patterns of student thinking)
- **Managing to Teach** (building relationships with students, implementing norms and routines, specifying and reinforcing student behavior, managing materials, managing participation/calling on students, use of “strong voice,” establishing a professional persona)
- **Social Foundations** (learning about students and their resources, managing participation, talking with parents and caregivers)
- **Methods** (leading group discussions, modeling and explaining content, checking student understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons, selecting and designing formal assessments)

# Example: Coursework in the U-M elementary undergraduate program

## Junior Year

### Fall (semester 1)

- Practicum and seminar - 1 credit
- Educational Psychology - 2 credits
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy - 2 credits
- Literacy I - 3 credits
- Children as Sensemakers - 1 credit
- Managing to Teach I - 1 credit
- Teaching with Curriculum Materials - 1 credit
- Teaching with Digital Technologies - 1 credit

### Winter (semester 2)

- Practicum and seminar - 1 credit
- Literacy II - 3 credits
- Children as Sensemakers II - 2 credits
- Managing to Teach II - 1 credit
- Facilitating Classroom Discussions & Teaching Social Studies - 3 credits
- Teaching Students with Exceptionalities - 1 credit

# Example: Coursework in the U-M elementary undergraduate program

## Senior Year

### Fall (semester 3)

- Practicum – 2 credits
- Working with Families– 1 credit
- Managing to Teach III: beginning the school year – 1 credit
- Teaching Elementary School Math – 2 credits
- Teaching Elementary School Science – 2 credits

### Winter (semester 4)

- Directed Teaching in the Elementary Grades – 12 credits
- Seminar: Problems and Principles of Elementary Education – 2 credits
- Teaching Students with Exceptionalities – 1 credit

# What does practices-focused teacher education look like?

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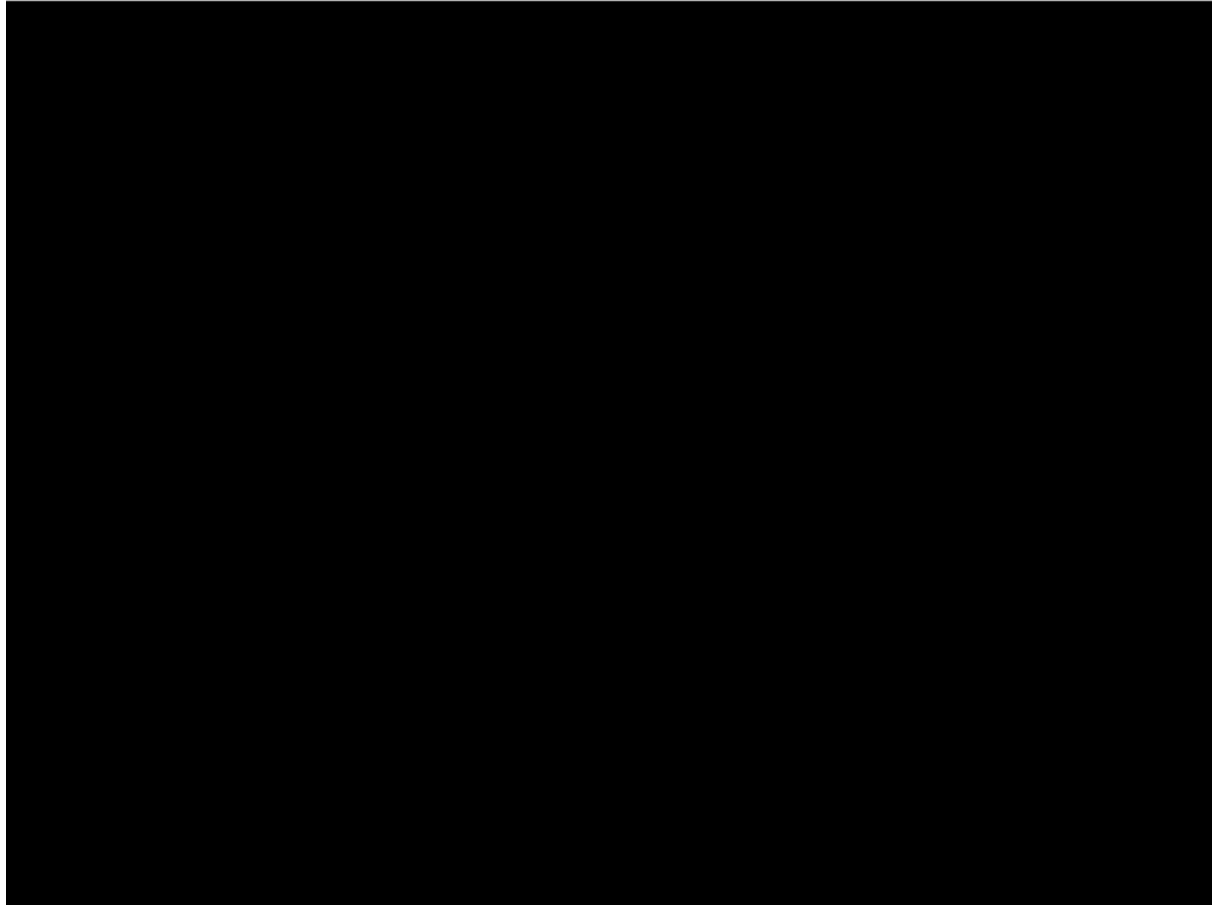
# Focus for video viewing

- What do you notice about the way the teacher educator is working with these students? What seems important?
- What are the strengths of this approach? Does anything concern you?

# Video context

- Novice elementary school teachers in their first month of professional training
- Field-based literacy methods course: Students spend each morning rehearsing the lessons they will teach in the afternoon
- In this video: Preparing to engage in a storybook read-aloud with first graders
- Teacher educator: Sarah Scott





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# Challenges of designing teacher training around high-leverage practices

- Developing consensus around core practices; building corresponding curriculum materials and assessments
- Effectively integrating work on practices with work on the knowledge and orientations needed to carry out the practices; ensuring that one doesn't overwhelm the other
- Ensuring that everyone who works with residents/interns, including classroom teachers who serve as mentors, can effectively coach the practices
- Crediting (or compensating, etc.) instructors for non-traditionally sequenced and timed teaching responsibilities
- Developing policies for handling student failure at HLP assessments

# Managing these challenges

- Working deliberately and collaboratively, and systematically compensating instructors for their work on program design and redesign
- Always keeping practices at the center of the bull's-eye; asking, “What do teachers need to know and be able to do in order to carry out X practice?”
  - If a potential piece of curriculum content isn't necessary to carrying out an HLP, it might not belong in the curriculum given the short duration of initial teacher training.
- Enlisting the support of policy people and other “higher ups” from the very beginning
- Over-communicating with residents/interns about program expectations and requirements for graduating

# Discussion

- How does this match your vision of the future of teacher preparation?
- What are the risks inherent here?
- What would it take to scale up this vision?

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# TeachingWorks

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Great teachers aren't born.  
**THEY'RE TAUGHT.**



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