

## **A proposal for Continuing Professional Development to be supported by the Florida Department of Education, Universities and Colleges**

The strength of the Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC) is that its purpose is:

...to support the academic achievement of our students by assuring that our educators are professionally qualified for highly effective instruction. Florida educators must be certified to teach in our public schools and in many of our private schools. Educators include classroom teachers, school administrators, and other support professionals, such as guidance counsellors and media specialists. The Bureau of Educator Certification (BEC) is committed to providing timely, accurate, and efficient services to all constituents.

<http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification>

This proposal is focused on what is **'educational'** in both the learning of pupils and in the professional development of teachers, together with the recognition of the significance of both teachers and learners being **educational knowledge-creators**.

The aim of the proposal is the creation of a profession of Master Educators for Florida that is based on making public and accrediting the embodied knowledge of our teachers. This knowledge includes their professional skills, information, personal knowledge and values that make them strive to teach to the best of their abilities. Master Educators will create a new knowledge base for the profession by making public their embodied knowledge and its evolution. This new knowledge can then be recognised and accredited by BEC and accredited by Universities. It can also contribute to relevant professional research and give teachers a creditable voice in School/ college partnerships.

Professional educators are continuously seeking to improve their educational influence in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing in my professional practice?' We link 'educational influence' to the responsibility of a professional educator, not only to create knowledge of educational practice by continually researching their practice to improve and explain it but to also contribute the explanation to the professional knowledge base.

We are proposing that BEC urge Universities to accredit masters programmes for **educators**. If the necessary expertise is not currently in Teacher Education Departments we can suggest how it can be accessed. These programmes would be designed to enable the teachers certified by the Bureau to become recognized as Master Educators through the completion of 4 Masters Units (Research enquiries of some 6-7000 word, 30 credit units, each) and a Dissertation (of some 20,000 words) addressing the following:

- i) **Conducting a research-based enquiry into improving professional practice - How do I improve my professional practice?** This enquiry will consider self-study, action research, living theory, narrative inquiry and autoethnographic research for a research-based enquiry into improving professional practice. As well as these methodologies and methods it will include issues of validity, rigour, objectivity, subjectivity and generalizability.
- ii) **Understanding Learning and Learners - How do I improve my professional practice?** This enquiry will integrate insights from learning theories into teacher's explanation of their own learning and into their educational influence in their pupils/students learning. Not all learning is educational so it is important to be clear about the values that distinguish the learning as educational learning.
- iii) **Investigating Curriculum Studies and Assessment - How do I improve my professional practice?** This enquiry will integrate insights from national policy documents and theoretical understandings from Curriculum Studies and Assessment into the teachers' explanation of their own learning and in their educational influences in the learning of the pupils/students.
- iv) **Enquiring into Student Diversity and Inclusion- How do I improve my professional practice?** This enquiry will integrate insights from the teachers on the learning talents of their pupils. In responding to this new understanding the teachers will demonstrate and explain their educational influence in pupils' learning. This explanation of educational influence will be offered as a gift to the professional knowledge-base of education.
- v) **The Dissertation on - How do I improve my professional practice?** will explain the master educators' educational influence, in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations that influence their practice and understandings. This explanation as their living-educational-theory will be publically shared as a contribution to the educational, professional knowledge-base of education. The explanatory principles will include the educational values that are motivating the

educator. The Dissertation will clarify the meanings of the living-standards of judgement that distinguish the educational knowledge of a professional master educator.

#### Reference

Florida Department of Education (2016) Educator Certification. Retrieved 2 February 2016 from <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification>