

Lincoln University
Education Department
Revised Early Childhood Education Program Proposal
January 30, 2010

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has recently revised the organizational structure of the Teacher Preparation and Certification Programs for those colleges and universities that offer programs leading to teacher certification. As a result, the Elementary Education certification will be eliminated as of 2013. In addition, the Early Childhood Education certification will be from PreK to 4th grade which indicates more emphasis on both preschool and school age programs with this combined certification.

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Therefore, in order to meet the new Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines for Early Childhood Education, the Education Department developed a new program. The goal of the Lincoln University Education Department has been to develop a program that is approved by PDE and provides pre-service teachers with the opportunities to develop the skills, knowledge and disposition needed to become certified as an Early Childhood Education Teacher for Pre-Kindergarten to Fourth Grade.

As the first HBCU, Lincoln University must take a leadership role in sending out African-American teachers into our school systems. Data suggest the need for teachers will increase; however, of greater significance to the Lincoln University Education Department is the need for African-American teachers.

Schools have played a crucial role in American communities since the late nineteenth century, and are a significant part of the daily lives of the vast majority of children and adolescents in the United States. Teachers are needed to provide instruction for the students attending these schools. With a growing population, the need for teachers in the classroom setting has been identified. Current projections predict that two million new teachers will be needed in schools by 2015 (Center for American Progress, 2005). At current rates of growth, this would create a nationwide shortage of 870,000 teachers (Curran, 2000), as an estimated 48 million students are expected to enroll in public schools by 2010 (Curran, 2000).

Of importance to the teaching profession is the data related to numbers of African-American students and teachers in our schools. Data indicates that 43% of students in our nation's schools come from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and in our largest school districts, at least half of the students are African American and Latino (Orefield & L22, 2007). However, in the 2003-04 academic years, African American teachers represented only 7.6% of the teaching force and sadly, the number of African-American male teachers is approximately 2.4% of the full force (Murray, 2008). The 2001-2002 results are similar in Pennsylvania with African American students comprising 14.8% of public school students while 5.3% of the teaching force is African American (Education Policy and Leadership Center, 2003). The absence of a critical mass of teachers of color is an

important matter. All students benefit from exposure to effective teachers of color who serve as role models and authority figures in the school. Decades ago, the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy claimed, “We cannot tolerate a future in which both white and minority children are confronted with almost exclusively white authority figures in their schools” (1986, p.32) Current projections predict that two million new teachers will be needed in schools by 2015 (Center for American Progress, 2005). At current rates of growth, this would create a nationwide shortage of 870,000 teachers (Curran, 2000). Urban districts are experiencing high rates of teacher burnout, which create low rates of retention.

Most of the students at Lincoln University come from urban areas and return to those areas upon graduation. To meet this growing need for teachers, particularly African-American highly qualified teachers, the Education Department developed the Early Childhood Education Program with the goal of providing our pre-service teachers with a program that meets the 19 pages of single-spaced competencies outlined in the PDE PK-4th Grade Guideline document. In order to meet both the content and field requirements, our pre-service are placed in rural, suburban and urban pre-student teaching locations at a range of venues.