

## HOW SHOULD TEACHERS BE EDUCATED?

Dr. Bette J. Soldwedel  
Interim Dean and Professor of Education  
University of North Florida

The question is deceptive in its simplicity. To perform what functions? By exposure to what content? By what methods? In what time frame? In this essay, I will treat each interpretation as it relates to the topic. I limit the discussion to teachers at the entry level of their careers.

### To Perform What Functions?

The education of teachers should directly bear on, but not be limited to, functions a teacher is expected to perform. Society has not achieved consensus on those functions; thus, the education of teachers is defined by the authority of various power groups: national and state departments of education and governing boards, teacher education institutions, political bodies, school boards and local staffs. Too often, the definitions of functions contain disparate elements. It is probably accurate to add, however, that each power group attempts to reflect its sense of the will of the people. School boards, local staffs, and political bodies tend to define teachers' functions in terms of skills and knowledge expected to be observable in the end product, the student. Teacher educators tend to emphasize the educative process and the competencies a teacher should possess as a facilitator of learning. National and state agencies tend to view teachers' functions in a more global sense, such as producing a literate and productive citizenry.

What teachers are expected to know and to do evolve from the goals of education. The goals of American public education, over time, have