

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents
From: Board Office
Subject: Status Report on Teacher Education Programs for
Hearing and Visually Impaired
Date: September 5, 2000

Recommended Action:

Receive the status report on Teacher Education Programs for Hearing and Visually Impaired.

Executive Summary:

At its July 2000 meeting, the Board received a summary report on Teacher Training Programs for the Blind and Deaf. The report included three specific options concerning training programs at Regent universities for teachers of students who are hearing or visually impaired. The Board requested that the University of Northern Iowa take the lead role in creating articulated programs for preparation of teachers of the hearing and visually impaired.

The University has assigned this task to its Graduate College and Department of Special Education. UNI intends that the two programs of study will be constructed in the following manner:

- 1) Superintendents of the Special Schools will provide UNI with illustrative curricula of appropriate graduate programs of preparation in each of the specialty areas.
- 2) UNI will review the respective example programs of study and identify which requirements of the program can be filled with courses already taught by the University. One resource already available is the White Paper developed by the Task Force in early 2000. It reflects the preliminary reflections from UNI as well as the University of Iowa and Iowa State University of what each institution could provide to meet the specific endorsement areas. See Attachment A.

- 3) The remaining requirements will be filled by establishing cooperative agreements with universities other than UNI, or the two other Regent universities.
- 4) Special attention will be given to creating programs of study in such a way that prospective students could complete the programs in a length of time similar to comparable programs in other states.
- 5) UNI intends to complete the necessary cooperative agreements, or at least identify the conditions necessary to complete such agreements, no later than the end of the 2000-2001 Academic Year. This would allow a cohort of future teachers to begin their education in the Fall of 2001.

Background and Analysis:

At its July 2000 meeting, the Board of Regents received a summary report on training programs for teachers of students who are hearing or visually impaired. In addition to receiving the report, the Board requested that UNI, as the lead institution, meet with representatives of the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the two Special Schools, for the purpose of reaching a specific recommendation to be presented to the Board in September. The group was to choose one of the following recommendations: (1) drop the proposal of providing training programs; (2) establish two collaborative Regent university programs, including needed articulation agreements with out-of-state providers; or (3) develop contracts with out-of-state providers for "slots" for Iowa teachers wishing to specialize in education of students who are hearing or visually impaired.

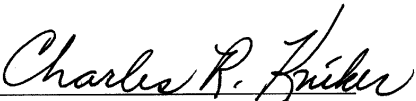
In July, President Robert Koob stated that UNI did not need additional time to consider which recommendation to propose to the Board. Rather, he recommended immediate support of the second recommendation. The Board then asked for a status report at the September meeting.

The Board Office advises that, during the initial year of this recommendation's implementation, particular attention be given to the following areas:

Cost and Convenience. One of the current assumptions is that it is likely that some courses for each of the programs of study will need to be provided by institutions in other states. The cost of importing such courses, or the out-of-state tuition required for registration, is likely to be a barrier to potential students. Students cannot reasonably be expected to leave Iowa for several periods of time to take one or two courses. The Board Office recommends that UNI and the other Regent universities develop the facilities and technological expertise to maximize use of distance education programs at in-state locations so that costs are lowered and convenience increased. In addition, consideration should be given to utilizing programs like the program offered by the University of Alabama which provides courses each summer to IBSSS staff. It may be possible to offer the needed courses at IBSSS or UNI.

Iowa Department of Education Requirements. The Board of Educational Examiners must determine whether any coursework taken from an out-of-state provider will be accepted toward an in-state endorsement area. The Board Office encourages the University to submit early drafts of programs to the Board of Educational Examiners. A question already raised is whether the programs will offer only a Master's degree, or will allow individuals to opt for an endorsement rather than a degree. The latter option is likely to increase enrollment, if offered.

Joint Program. When the Task Force was appointed in July 1999, it was the intention of the Board that any program of teacher preparation for educators of hearing and visually impaired students should be a collaborative program of the Regent universities. The Board Office appreciates the leadership of UNI and acknowledges the special burden placed on it in coordinating the program. The Board Office wishes to emphasize again that SUI and ISU are to be as involved as much as is feasible.



Charles R. Kniker

Approved:



Frank J. Stork

MEMORANDUM

To: The Board of Regents

From: Christine A. Macfarlane, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Mental Disabilities Program
Sandra K. Alper, Head, Department of Special Education
Joseph J. Smaldino, Professor of Audiology, Department of Communicative Disorders
Kenneth M. Bleile, Head, Department of Communicative Disorders
William Johnson, Superintendent, Iowa School for the Deaf

Date: January 19, 2000

Re: Feasibility Study (White Paper) for the Development of a Training Program for Teachers of the Hearing Impaired

The eye is the mirror to the soul:

The ear is its gates.

Helen Keller, 1880-1968

The following briefly presents several options for the Board of Regents to consider in reviewing the need to recruit, educate, and retain teachers of the deaf and hearing impaired.

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) has a tradition and nationally recognized programs for preparation of teachers and professionals in speech/language pathology and audiology to serve the needs of students with disabilities. These programs housed in the Department of Special Education and the Department of Communicative Disorders have a long history of preparing special education teachers and professionals with speech and hearing endorsements to specifically serve the children in Iowa schools. The quality of these programs is such that UNI graduates are highly sought after in Iowa, and nationally. Although both programs have strongly contributed to services provided to children with hearing impairments in Iowa, neither has ever had a teacher preparation program leading to one of four endorsement areas related to hearing impairments (i.e., Hearing Impaired - Prekindergarten-kindergarten, Hearing Impaired - K-6; Hearing Impaired - 7-12; Hearing Impaired - Itinerant Teacher (Birth - 21)). However, the endorsement for Special Education Consultant: Hearing Impairments can be obtained by completing established programs of study at UNI and other Iowa institutions. Several courses focused on working with students with multiple disabilities have been taken by teachers of the hearing impaired to meet requirements for endorsement in Iowa or who wished to further their knowledge of students with multiple disabilities. No university or college within the state of Iowa provides a special education teacher preparation program leading to certification in any endorsement related to hearing impairments. As a result persons seeking an endorsement to teach students with hearing impairments have gone out-of-state for their education.

Infants, toddlers, children and youth who experience hearing impairments are a diverse group. Some are considered deaf; others are considered hard of hearing; and still others are

considered at significant educational risk due to fluctuating hearing loss even though the hearing loss may be mild. Cochlear implants have impacted the field. Further, the often heated debate between advocates of an aural program versus those who advocate for a manual or total communication approach has had an effect on both preparation programs as well as educational programs for persons with hearing impairments. As a result some teacher preparation programs reflect one approach over the other. For example, Gallaudet in Washington, DC emphasizes a manual approach while the Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis focuses on the aural method. Nationally, 17 programs exist at the undergraduate level only; 30 programs are graduate only; and 19 programs provide both an undergraduate and a graduate program (1998). However, not all programs meet accreditation standards established by the Council on Education of the Deaf (CED).

Formal programs to prepare teachers of the hearing impaired do not exist in every state. Formerly, hearing impairment and deafness were considered a "low incidence" disability and few teachers were needed to meet their specific educational needs. This position has proven incorrect, especially in the last few years. Iowa has been a leader in the implementation of universal neonatal hearing screening programs and the University of Iowa Health Sciences Center has one of the most active cochlear implant programs in the country. Better screening programs and the help cochlear implants can provide students who are deaf has created a much greater need for special educational services and teachers of the hearing impaired than currently exists. The paucity of teacher of the hearing impaired preparation programs and this growing need has produced a severe national shortage of properly prepared teachers.

Need

Approximately 1300 students in Iowa are deaf or hard of hearing and require specialized educational services. Because of the national shortage, recruitment of qualified teachers of the hearing impaired is difficult and of grave concern in Iowa. Often, applicant pools do not generate properly prepared teachers and on average recruitment pools are composed of only two to three applicants for a position. During AY 96-97, 82.710 (FTE) teachers of the hearing impaired were needed. Nine of those teachers were not fully qualified and 1.250 (FTE) positions went vacant. In AY 97-98, fifteen teachers of the hearing impaired and one consultant were not fully qualified. In AY 98-99, 14 new teachers were hired; in AY 99-00, 18 new teachers were hired. As of September, 1999 one vacancy existed in AEA 16. Further, only two AEA's (i.e., 7 and 9) hire consultants for the deaf/hard of hearing. Given the number of identified students within each AEA it would appear more consultants are needed. Also, a significant number of students are served in classrooms designated as multicategorical classrooms; this may be due to the lack of certified teachers or it may be the most ideal placement. If so, the services of a qualified consultant for the hearing impaired would be of paramount importance along with the services of an itinerant teacher of the hearing impaired.

Based on estimates from the Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD), Area Education Agencies (AEA), and two school districts (i.e., Des Moines and Davenport) who have their own programs, approximately 13 teachers will retire in the next 3 - 5 years. These needs are presented in Table 1. Each year approximately 10% of teachers working with this population "burn out" or leave

necessitating new hires. Numbers representing Iowa teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing are from AY 99-00 and are presented in Table 1.

Barriers

The lack of a university-based special education preparation program in the area of hearing impairments in Iowa means qualified teachers of the hearing impaired will either receive their education from an out-of-state institution and return to Iowa; or, having received their education in another state be recruited to teach in Iowa, or because of spousal needs, locate to Iowa. In any case the first barrier will occur when application is made for an Iowa teaching license. Regardless of the presence of a teacher preparation program, Iowa's high standards for teacher preparation requires completion of certain courses or demonstration of competency in specified areas (e.g., behavior management) in order to obtain an applicable endorsement. Since there is no teacher of the hearing impaired preparation program in Iowa, it is not likely that an applicant will meet Iowa's requirements. Further, there is no reciprocity with any other state to honor a valid endorsement. Thus, most applicants for teacher of the hearing impaired can only receive a temporary teaching license to work in Iowa and are given 2 to 3 years to obtain the necessary coursework to become fully certified. Not only does this seriously hurt recruitment but, if the discrepancies occur in any coursework related to hearing impairments, the lack of a program in Iowa places unnecessary hardship on the teacher to take the required coursework. Also, students with hearing impairments may not receive the best education until the teacher obtains the necessary coursework.

Table 1
Teachers of the Hearing Impaired and Projected Needs

Agency	Consultants	HI Teachers	HI Itinerant Teachers	Anticipated Retirements
Keystone AEA 1		7	5	2
Northern Trails AEA 2		2	2	
Lakeland AEA 3		2	2	
AEA 4		3	1	
Arrowhead AEA 5		3	3	2
AEA 6		2	2	1
AEA 7	1	6	1.5	1.5
Mississippi Bend AEA 9	2	17	4	6 - 10
Grant Wood AEA 10		12	5	
Heartland AEA 11		4	4	
Des Moines Public School		11	1	1
Western Hills AEA 12		7	3	
Loess Hills AEA 13		2	2	1
Iowa School for the Deaf		48	4	
Green Valley AEA 14		1	1	
Southern Prairie AEA 15		3	2.5	
Great River AEA 16		3	2	

Faculty in the Departments of Special Education and Communicative Disorders at UNI already offer much of the coursework considered necessary for a high quality teacher of the hearing impaired preparation program. However, the area of curriculum development specially designed for students with hearing impairments is not represented. This lack of professional expertise has hampered the development of a teacher preparation program in the past.

Despite the shortage of qualified teachers of the hearing impaired, the number of students participating in this type of program would be low in number. University budget limitations at this point in time would not support a low enrollment program particularly in the summer when traditionally part-time graduate students enroll in teacher preparation programs.

The recruitment of persons for a teacher preparation program in the area of hearing impairments is also a potential barrier. Potential students already holding a teaching licensure might not be able to commit to a full-time graduate program because of professional or personal obligations. An extended option for part-time graduate students would have to exist. Also, a teacher with a temporary license could be located anywhere in the state.

Proposed Solution

Currently, a program to train undergraduate and graduate students exists at the University of Nebraska - Omaha (UNO). Given the close proximity to ISD in Council Bluffs, utilization of this program is an option. Although not necessary, it should be noted that the program at UNO is not accredited by CED. The state legislature could either negotiate in-state tuition agreements or buy slots in the program. Iowa students could then attend the program without the penalty of out-of-state tuition rates. The difference in licensure requirements and current lack of reciprocity would place additional requirements on graduates who returned to Iowa. Thus, a change in regulations regarding reciprocity would also be needed to enhance this option.

The most preferred option would be for the Department of Special Education and the Department of Communicative Disorders at UNI and with the cooperation of programs at the University of Iowa, ISU, and ISD to develop and implement a teacher preparation program in the area of hearing impairments. Currently, the vision for this program would be a graduate program. Students would be recruited from (a) undergraduates completing a special education major or minor at UNI, other Iowa institutions, or regional institutions; (b) undergraduates completing an elementary, middle school, or secondary teaching major or minor at UNI, other Iowa institutions, or regional institutions; (c) current certified special education teachers; and (d) current certified regular education teachers. The exact nature of the curriculum would be based on requirements for an Iowa endorsement and "best practice." Tables 2 through 6 show the required courses and/or competencies and identify courses currently available at the Regent's universities for each of the endorsement areas (X = available). Further thought has been given to the institution that might best develop additional courses (BD = best developed at that institution) as well as other possibilities (D = Develop). Actual programs of study and timelines for completion would depend on the individual and special education endorsements held. This option has the greatest potential to produce adequate numbers of high quality teachers of the hearing impaired who are fully qualified to serve children with hearing impairments in Iowa.. In addition, because of the

national shortage of teachers of the hearing impaired, a high quality program could impact the shortage

Table 2

Endorsement 213 --- Hearing impaired - Prekindergarten-kindergarten

Meet the requirements for the K-6 hearing impaired endorsement and complete course work in:

Course/competency	UNI	UNO	U of Iowa	ISU
Curriculum development and instructional methods for working with young hearing impaired children (birth through age six).	BD			D
A course specific to using various communication systems with hearing impaired children.	X	X	X	X
The education of hearing impaired infants and their parents to include the parent-infant relationship, parent training, social/economic issues affecting the family, and development of model parent-infant programs.	D			BD
A student teaching experience or practicum with hearing impaired children (birth through age six).	BD			

Table 3

Endorsement 214 --- Hearing impaired - K-6

Course/competency	UNI	UNO	U of Iowa	ISU
Anatomy and physiology of the hearing mechanism.	X	X	X	X
Language development and disorders.	X	X	X	
Teaching academic subjects to the hearing impaired.	BD	X		
Teaching language and speech to the deaf/hearing impaired.	X	X	X	X
A course in the use of sign language for the hearing impaired.	X	X	X	X
A course of a general survey nature in the area of exceptional children.	X	X	X	X
A course or courses in the collection and use of academic and behavioral data for the educational diagnosis, assessment, and evaluation of special education pupils which should include: (1) norm-referenced instruments (including behavioral rating measures), (2) criterion-referenced instruments, (3) ecological assessment techniques, (4) systematic observation, (5) individual trait or personality	X	X	X	X

assessments, (6) social functioning data, and (7) application of assessment results to individualized program development and management.				
Course work or evidence of competency in: (1) individual behavioral management, behavioral change strategies, and classroom management, (2) methods and strategies for working with parents, regular classroom teachers, support services personnel, paraprofessionals, and other individuals involved in the educational program, and (3) understanding the multiply handicapped child.	X	X	X	X
Student teaching specifically in a hearing impaired K-6 categorical program.	BD	X		

Table 4
Endorsement 215 --- Hearing impaired - 7-12

Course/competency	UNI	UNO	U of Iowa	ISU
Same as K-6 hearing impaired except that student teaching must be 7-12 instead of K-6.	BD	X		
A course in career-vocational programming for special education students.	X	X	X	X

Table 5
Endorsement 216 --- Hearing impaired - Itinerant teacher.

The holder of this endorsement is authorized to serve as an itinerant teacher with children from birth to twenty-one years (and to a maximum allowable age in accord with Iowa Code section 281.8). The applicant shall have met the requirements for one of the above endorsements and in addition thereto the following course work:

Course/competency	UNI	UNO	U of Iowa	ISU
Effective techniques for working with families of preschool handicapped children.	X		X	X
Consultation processes in special education	X		X	X

Table 6
Endorsement 245 --- Special education consultant: Hearing impaired

Course/competency	UNI	UNO	U of Iowa	ISU
Master's in special education in an endorsement area listed under rule 15.2.	D	X		
Master's in another area of education plus thirty	X	X	X	X

graduate semester hours in special education (instructional). These hours may have been part of, or in addition to, the degree requirements.				
Curriculum development design.	X		X	X
Consultation process in special or regular education: (a) Examination, analysis, and application of a methodological model for consulting with teachers and other adults involved in the educational program and (b) interpersonal relations, interaction patterns, interpersonal influence, and communication skills.	X		X	X
Skills required for conducting a needs assessment, delivering staff inservice needs, and evaluating inservice sessions.				
Meet the requirements for the special education teaching endorsement congruent with the consultant authorization desired.	D	X		
Four years of successful teaching experience, two of which must be congruent with the consultant authorization desired.				

Factors Supporting Development of Program at UNI

Several factors support the development and implementation of a teacher preparation program for the hearing impaired at UNI. The most obvious is that UNI is the lead teacher education institution in the Regent's system. The Department of Communicative Disorders is nationally ranked and already has within its speech/language and audiology curricula, courses desirable in a teacher of the hearing impaired preparation program. Standards set by CED require 150 practicum hours. UNI's special education teacher preparation program has an established curriculum and departmental philosophy that incorporates corequisite field-based experiences with method courses. Faculty commitment to such a model has led to innovation in the supervision of practicum students removed from campus. Also, most special education courses needed for these endorsements exist at UNI as well as the University of Iowa and Iowa State University.

UNI currently leads all institutions of higher education in Iowa in the number of graduates from the teacher education program who sign contracts in Iowa. UNI's undergraduate programs in regular and special education produce high quality teachers; Thus, a pool exists from which to recruit potential teachers of the hearing impaired.

A strong collegial relationship exists between faculty in the Department of Special Education and the Department of Communicative Disorders. Faculty interact frequently and at many levels including guest lectures, advisement of students to take each others' courses, and joint grant writing and implementation. This collegiality extends to sister programs at both the University of Iowa and ISU.

A relationship exists between the Departments of Special Education and Communicative Disorders and ISD through membership on advisory boards and as a host for practica. For example, Audiology students have completed student teaching for a hearing impairment endorsement at ISD. William Johnson, Superintendent, ISD, has outlined possible cooperative agreements including the offering of sign language courses over the ICN.

At the early childhood level, the three Regent's universities have established a successful track record of collaboration. Three federally funded grants have supported graduate students in a nationally recognized model. Students take six classes; two offered by each of the three universities based on expertise available at each institution. For example, a course on medical factors originates from the University of Iowa while a course on families is provided by faculty from Iowa State University. Students at all three institutions take the same class over the ICN. Upon completion of the 18 hours, students complete their Master's degree at the institution of choice. This precedent setting model would be appropriate to use in preparing teachers of the hearing impaired.

Given the need for collaboration among the universities and the need to prepare teachers throughout the state, utilization of the ICN would be absolutely necessary. Fortunately, expertise exists among faculty at UNI to utilize the ICN to its fullest, including for distance supervision. Training would also be available for new faculty and those unfamiliar with the system. Given the number of ICN sites now available within the state, access to this program would not be an issue. Also, newer technologies such as videoconferencing could be used along with the internet. Dr. Glenn Hansen, Dean, Continuing Education, UNI has pledged support of a program involving distance education and collaboration.

Costs

Although the potential exists at UNI to develop and implement a teacher preparation program for the hearing impaired at the graduate level, serious consideration must be given to the current situation before moving ahead. Although current faculty teach courses that would be required for a program for the hearing impaired, no faculty members at UNI have the expertise necessary to teach courses specific to curriculum and instructional methods for students birth to age 21 with hearing impairments. An additional faculty member with specific expertise in the area of hearing impairments would need to be hired. Additionally, supplies and services would have to be increased to accommodate the additional program. Also, availability of quality practicum sites close by and the distance between UNI and ISD would necessitate increased travel costs. Currently, the Department of Special Education nor UNI have the budgetary resources to implement a teacher preparation program for the hearing impaired. Also, the reality that this program would be a low-enrollment program must be acknowledged. Finally, this program must draw on expertise and resources of other universities and will, in part, be delivered at a distance.

<u>Faculty</u>	
Assistant/Associate Professor	\$55,000.00
Fringe benefits (25% of salary)	13,750.00
Supplies and services (e.g., ICN fees, distance supervision, materials, support for new faculty)	5,000.00
	\$73,750.00
<u>Graduate Assistantships</u>	
5 full-time GA's @ \$7,350.00 each	\$36,750.00
Tuition	19,950.00
\$190.00/credit hour	
21 credits/year	
5 part-time graduate stipends	7,500.00
	\$64,200.00
<u>Total Costs Requested</u>	\$137,950.00

References

(1998). Programs for training teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing. American Annals of the Deaf, 143(2).

MEMORANDUM

To: The Board of Regents

From: Christine A. Macfarlane, Coordinator, Mental Disabilities Program
Sandra Alper, Department Head
Dennis Thurman, Superintendent, Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

Date: January-19, 2000

Re: Feasibility Study (White Paper) for the Development of a Training Program for the Visually Impaired

The following briefly presents several options for the Board of Regents to consider in reviewing the need to recruit, educate, and retain teachers of the blind and visually impaired.

Visually impaired students are infants, toddlers, children, and youth who experience impairments of the eye and visual system that affect their ability to learn. They may be totally blind or they may have visual difficulties in such activities as seeing the print in the textbooks or on the chalkboard, seeing all areas of the typical visual field, or seeing enough detail to interpret the objects in their environment.

Corn, Hatlen, Huebner, Ryan, & Siller (1995, p. 1)

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) has a strong tradition of preparing teachers to serve the needs of students with disabilities. UNI special education graduates are sought after, not only in Iowa, but elsewhere. However, the special education teacher preparation program has never had a major or minor leading to one of three endorsement areas related to visual impairments (i.e., Visually Impaired - K-6; Visually Impaired - 7-12; Visually Impaired - Itinerant Teacher (Birth - 21)). Rather, teachers have opted for endorsements in Mental Disabilities: Mild/Moderate, (K-6); Mental Disabilities: Mild/Moderate, (7-12); Mental Disabilities: Moderate/Severe/Profound, (K- 21); or Early Childhood Special Education (0 - 6) to meet the needs of students with multiple disabilities or developmental disabilities, including sensory impairments. The endorsement for Visually Impaired - Prekindergarten-kindergarten and Special Education Consultant: Visual Impairments can be obtained by completing established programs of study at UNI and other Iowa institutions. Graduate students have obtained a Work Experience Coordinator endorsement that facilitates vocational programming for any student with a disability. Several UNI faculty have provided coursework or workshops specifically for teachers at the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School (IBSSS) or had teachers from IBSSS and other school districts take coursework towards one of the above mentioned endorsements. No other university or college within the state of Iowa provides a special education teacher preparation program leading to certification in any endorsement related to visual impairments. As a result persons seeking an endorsement to teach students with visual impairments have gone out-of-state for their education.

Nationally, programs to educate teachers of the visually impaired do not exist in every state and some that do exist are not considered quality programs by professionals in the field. Within special education, visual impairments is considered a "low incidence" disability. That is, few infants, toddlers, or school-age children experience this disability condition. Thus, while the need for teachers of the visually impaired is great, the number of teachers needed in proportion to other special education teachers is low. Institutions of higher education with teacher preparation programs either do not have the capability of offering a teacher preparation program in visual impairments or choose not to do so because of cost factors.

Need

Recruiting qualified teachers of the visually impaired is a national issue, not simply a concern here in Iowa. During AY96-97 and again in AY97-98, seven employed teachers of the visually impaired were but not fully certified. One position was vacant during AY96-97. Programs to provide preservice and inservice education are on the decline nationwide and cannot meet the current demand for fully trained teachers. Persons with visual impairments are underidentified and underserved. The problem is even more severe in rural areas. Further, the number of students identified with visual impairments is on the rise.

Within Iowa IBSSS and the Area Education Agencies (AEA) anticipate hiring up to 20 teachers of the visually impaired within the next 4 years. In some instances IBSSS hires the teacher and the AEA contracts with IBSSS for the service. The teacher resides in the local AEA. Also, several AEA's have cooperative agreements. AEA's 1, 2, and 3 and 4 and 12 share a teacher(s) of the visually impaired. Letters from nine of the fifteen AEA's indicated needs based on retirement and increased numbers of students. The projected needs are presented in Table 1. AEA personnel also mentioned the inability to keep qualified teachers; and, when faced with the task of hiring a new teacher, the difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers.

Table 1
Projected needs by AEA's for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

AEA	Current Needs	1 to 2 Years	3 to 4 Years
Keystone AEA 1		1 Teacher	
Northern Trails AEA 2			
Lakeland AEA 3			
AEA 4			
Arrowhead AEA 5			
AEA 6			1 Teacher
AEA 7	1 Teacher		
Mississippi Bend AEA 9			1 to 2 Teachers
Grant Wood AEA 10			3 Teachers
Heartland AEA 11			2 to 3 Teachers
Western Hills AEA 12			1 Teacher
Loess Hills AEA 13			3 Teachers
Green Valley AEA 14			
Southern Prairie AEA 15		1 Teacher	
Great River AEA 16			

Barriers

The lack of a university-based special education preparation program in the area of visual impairments in Iowa means qualified teachers of the visually impaired will either receive their education from an out-of-state institution and return to Iowa; or, having received their education in another state be recruited to teach in Iowa, or because of spousal needs, locate to Iowa. In any case the first barrier will occur when application is made for an Iowa teaching license. Regardless of the presence of a teacher preparation program, Iowa requires completion of certain courses or demonstration of competency in specified areas (e.g., behavior management) in order to obtain an applicable endorsement. Since there is no visual impairment preparation program in Iowa, the likelihood that the applicant will meet Iowa's requirements is nearly impossible. Further, there is no reciprocity with any other state to honor a valid endorsement. Thus, most applicants receive a temporary license and are given 2 to 3 years to obtain the necessary coursework to become fully certified. Even a teacher with a Master's degree in visual impairments will more than likely be required to take additional courses. Not only does this seriously hurt recruitment but, if the discrepancies occur in any coursework related to visual impairments (e.g., Braille), the lack of a program in Iowa places unnecessary hardship on the teacher to take the required coursework.

Although Department of Special Education faculty are well regarded, only a few have limited expertise related to visual impairments. Thus, coursework specific to the education needs of students with visual disabilities could not be taught by current faculty. Further, the number of students participating in this type of program would be low in number. University budget

limitations at this point in time would not support a low enrollment program particularly in the summer when traditionally part-time graduate students enroll in teacher preparation programs.

The recruitment of persons for a teacher preparation program in the area of visual impairments is also a potential barrier. Potential students might not be able to commit to a full-time graduate program because of professional or personal obligations. An extended option for part-time students would have to exist.

Proposed Solutions

Currently, IBSSS has a contractual agreement with the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) to provide graduate training in blind and deaf-blind education to qualified teachers and staff of IBSSS. Faculty provide coursework at IBSSS in Vinton, IA or at a distance through the Iowa Communications Network (ICN). Although this contract expires in 2002, the possibility exists to negotiate a new contract. This option only serves teachers currently employed and does not impact on increasing the number of qualified teachers. Also, this option does not significantly impact AEA needs.

Another option would be for the state legislature to either negotiate in-state tuition agreements or buy slots in appropriate teacher preparation programs in neighboring states (e.g., Illinois, Colorado). Iowa students could then attend their programs without the penalty of out-of-state tuition rates. However, without some kind of agreement to return to Iowa, the probability that a graduate would be recruited elsewhere is highly likely. And, as mentioned earlier, the difference in licensure requirements and current lack of reciprocity would place additional requirements on graduates who returned to Iowa. Thus, a change in regulations regarding reciprocity would also be needed to enhance this option.

The most preferred option would be for the Department of Special Education at UNI to develop and implement a teacher preparation program in the area of visual impairments in cooperation with the other Regent's institutions. Currently, the vision for this program would be a graduate program. Nationally, only two programs exist at the undergraduate level (i.e., Florida State University, Kutztown in PA). All other programs are at the graduate or post-baccalaureate level. Students would be recruited from (a) undergraduates completing a special education major or minor at UNI, other Iowa institutions, or regional institutions; (b) current certified special education teachers; and (c) current certified regular education teachers. The exact nature of the curriculum would be based on requirements for an Iowa endorsement and "best practice." Tables 2 through 6 show the required courses and/or competencies and identify courses currently available at the Regent's universities for each of the endorsement areas (X = available). As noted (N = needs to be developed), additional courses would be developed at the most appropriate institution. Actual programs of study and timelines for completion would depend on the individual and special education endorsements held. This option has the greatest potential to impact on the state of Iowa and possibly the region.

Table 2

Endorsement 217 --- Visually impaired - Prekindergarten-kindergarten

Course/competency	UNI	U of Iowa	ISU
Meet the requirements for early childhood--special education.	X	X	X

Table 3

Endorsement 218 --- Visually impaired - K-6

Course/competency	UNI	U of Iowa	ISU
Anatomy and physiology of the visual mechanism.		N	
Introduction to instruction of the visually impaired.	N		
Braille.	N		
Techniques of instruction for the visually impaired.	N		
A course of a general survey nature in the area of exceptional children.	X	X	X
A course or courses in the collection and use of academic and behavioral data for the educational diagnosis, assessment, and evaluation of special education pupils which should include: (1) norm-referenced instruments (including behavioral rating measures), (2) criterion-referenced instruments, (3) ecological assessment techniques, (4) systematic observation, (5) individual trait or personality assessments, (6) social functioning data, and (7) application of assessment results to individualized program development and management.	X	X	X
Course work or evidence of competency in: (1) individual behavioral management, behavioral change strategies, and classroom management, (2) methods and strategies for working with parents, regular classroom teachers, support services personnel, paraprofessionals, and other individuals involved in the educational program, (3) understanding the multiply handicapped child, and (4) knowledge of latest technology when working with visually impaired.	X/N	X/N	X/N
Student teaching in K-6 categorical visually impaired program.	N		

Table 4
Endorsement 219 --- Visually impaired - 7-12

Course/competency	UNI	U of Iowa	ISU
Same as K-6 visually impaired except that student teaching must be 7-12 instead of K-6.	N		
A course in career-vocational programming for special education students.	X	X	X

Table 5
Endorsement 220 --- Visually impaired - Itinerant teacher.

The holder of this endorsement is authorized to serve as an itinerant teacher with children from birth to twenty-one years (and to a maximum allowable age in accord with Iowa Code section 281.8). The applicant shall have met the requirements for one of the above endorsements and in addition thereto the following course work:

Course/competency	UNI	U of Iowa	ISU
Effective techniques for working with families of preschool handicapped children.	X	X	X
Consultation processes in special education	X	X	X

Table 6
Endorsement 246 --- Special education consultant: Visually Impaired

Course/competency	UNI	U of Iowa	ISU
Master's in special education in an endorsement area listed under rule 15.2.	N		
Master's in another area of education plus thirty graduate semester hours in special education (instructional). These hours may have been part of, or in addition to, the degree requirements.	X	X	X
Curriculum development design.	X	X	X
Consultation process in special or regular education: (a) Examination, analysis, and application of a methodological model for consulting with teachers and other adults involved in the educational program and (b) interpersonal relations, interaction patterns, interpersonal influence, and communication skills.	X	X	X
Skills required for conducting a needs assessment, delivering staff inservice needs, and evaluating inservice sessions.			
Meet the requirements for the special education teaching endorsement congruent with the consultant authorization desired.	N		
Four years of successful teaching experience, two of which must be congruent with the consultant authorization desired.			

Supports

Several factors support the development and implementation of a teacher preparation program for the visually impaired at the University of Northern Iowa. First, a collegial relationship exists between faculty and staff at IBSSS and the Department of Special Education. Faculty and staff from IBSSS have guest lectured in university classes and provided practicum placements and service learning opportunities. Departmental faculty have consulted and assisted various IBSSS faculty and staff when appropriate in addition to teaching within the above mentioned contexts. Also, the geographical proximity (i.e., 42 miles) between IBSSS and UNI makes on-going collaboration very possible and provides access to a quality practicum site.

Seventy percent of students labeled with visual impairment experience additional disabilities. Thus, the need for teachers educated to understand multiple disabilities is paramount. UNI currently offers the only undergraduate program in the state leading to an endorsement in Mental Disabilities: Moderate/Severe/Profound. Despite the program title, the students are educated to work with students with multiple disabilities. Thus, a pool exists from which to recruit potential teachers of the visually impaired. Also, potential teachers could be recruited

from other special education areas and regular education. Further, several courses currently offered at UNI are required for endorsement in visual impairments.

At the early childhood level, the three Regent's universities have established a successful track record of collaboration. Three federally funded grants have supported graduate students in a nationally recognized model. Students take six classes; two offered by each of the three universities based on expertise available at each institution. For example, a course on medical factors originates from the University of Iowa while a course on families is provided by faculty from Iowa State University. Students at all three institutions take the same class over the ICN. Upon completion of the 18 hours, students complete their Master's degree at the institution of choice. This precedent setting model would be appropriate to use in preparing teachers of the visually impaired. One required course examines the anatomy of the eye. A faculty member at the University of Iowa would be appropriate to provide the course. Members of the IBSSS Advisory Board from the University of Iowa and Iowa State University have pledged support in such a cooperative venture.

Given the need for collaboration among the universities and the need to prepare teachers throughout the state, utilization of the ICN would be absolutely necessary. Fortunately, expertise exists among faculty at UNI to utilize the ICN to its fullest, including for distance supervision. Training would also be available for new faculty and those unfamiliar with the system. Given the number of ICN sites now available within the state, access to this program would not be an issue. Also, newer technologies such as videoconferencing could be used along with the internet. Dr. Glenn Hansen, Dean, Continuing Education, UNI has pledged support of a program involving distance education and collaboration.

Costs

Although the potential exists at UNI to develop and implement a teacher preparation program for the visually impaired at the graduate level, serious consideration must be given to the current situation before moving ahead. Although current faculty have expertise that would apply to a program for the visually impaired, their current roles and responsibilities would not allow for expansion. The justified need for a new program should not jeopardize current offerings. An additional faculty member with specific expertise in the area of visual impairments would need to be hired. Additionally, supplies and services would have to be increased to accommodate the additional program. Also, serious consideration would need to be given to the availability of quality practicum sites for field-based experiences and their location. Currently, the Department of Special Education nor UNI have the budgetary resources to implement a teacher preparation program for the visually impaired. Also, the reality that this program would be a low-enrollment program must be acknowledged. Finally, this program must draw on expertise and resources of other universities and will, in part, be delivered at a distance.

<u>Faculty</u>	
Assistant/Associate Professor	\$55,000.00
Fringe benefits (25% of salary)	13,750.00
Supplies and services (e.g., ICN fees, distance supervision, materials, support for new faculty)	5,000.00
	\$73,750.00
<u>Graduate Assistantships</u>	
5 full-time GA's @ \$7,350.00 each	\$36,750.00
Tuition	19,950.00
\$190.00/credit hour	
21 credits/year	
5 part-time graduate stipends	7,500.00
	\$64,200.00
<u>Total Costs Requested</u>	\$137,950.00

References

Corn, A. L., Hatlen, P., Huebner, K. M., Ryan, F., & Siller, M. A. (1995). The national agenda for the education of children and youths with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities. New York: NY, American Foundation for the Blind Press.