Studying Teacher Education recommends a new research agenda for teacher education. This report, released as a book, cites a need for research on teacher quality that expands the concept of pupil achievement beyond standardized test scores. Educators need to know how teacher quality and demographic variables interact in the classroom to determine student learning.

What are priority research issues in teacher education?

- Research is needed to identify specific factors in teacher education that contribute to improvements in student achievement. Studies of teacher education programs have not sufficiently uncoupled the impact of teacher education from characteristics that candidates bring to their programs or from the settings in which they teach.

- Little research has attempted to study the complex relationships among teaching strategies used by teacher educators, the practices of beginning teachers, and the learning of their pupils.

- Little research exists on the effectiveness of policy mechanisms, such as teacher testing and state and national program accreditation, on teacher learning, teacher practice, and student learning or the impact of certification (except for teaching mathematics).

- There are little or no data on the effects of preparing teachers for cultural diversity and their actual teacher practices.

- Almost no research exists on preparing teachers to teach English language learners.

- More research is needed, in response to the persistent achievement gap, on teacher demographics and ways that limited numbers of minority teachers and teacher distribution among schools affect achievement.

- Research is needed to understand how to prepare teachers to work effectively with students with a spectrum of disabilities.

- To retain highly qualified teachers, research is needed that compares retention and attrition rates of teachers prepared in various alternative and
traditional routes into teaching. Teacher turnover is the largest single factor in demand for new teachers.

**What strategies are essential to strengthen the base of knowledge on teacher education?**

- Investment in long-term sustained research on teacher education and teaching and career effects.
- Investment in research training programs on teacher education.
- Investment in rich and reliable data sets and data resources.
- Better tools in the areas of data collection and data analysis for studying outcomes of teacher education and consistent use of these tools across individual studies.
- Development of research programs focused on particular questions where researchers can build on prior research and accumulate knowledge over time.
- Improvements to the peer review process.
- Formation of partnerships between teacher educators and researchers beyond their programs and field.
- Research to determine the efficacy of certain strategies, such as mentoring, at the individual classroom and program level in enhancing the achievement of particular aspects of teacher and student learning and to identify conditions under which such strategies have the desired effects.

**What approaches to research does the report recommend to expand the knowledge base?**

- Multi-disciplinary and multi-method research that builds on promising lines of research and develops topics of particular importance.

- More multi-institutional and longitudinal studies in order to distinguish the impact of teacher education programs and their components from selection and context effects.

- Better coordination and use of data that exists as a result of institutional, state and national reviews of individual teacher education programs.

- Standards for valid comparisons of research findings.
  - Consistent definitions of terms (e.g., alternative and traditional certification)
  - Common outcome measures
  - Common tools for measuring teacher and pupil learning and performance.