

# STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONALISM

We believe that all students can learn. Because of this belief, the Education Department at Hope College is committed to holding the highest standards of excellence in teacher preparation. A significant component of preparing future educators is helping them to see themselves as professionals. Becoming a teacher is far more complex than simply completing a sequence of courses. Exemplary teachers must possess the basic dispositions and behaviors needed to be members of this profession. Additionally, they must acquire a set of professional competencies and abilities during courses and fieldwork experiences which comprise the teacher education sequence.

Gary A. Griffin reminds us in his *Changes in Teacher Education: Looking to the Future* in the NSSE 1999 Yearbook:

*When most of us recall the teachers who influenced us most, we remember the teachers who consistently demonstrated personal concern for our well-being, the teachers who surrounded our work together with good humor, women and men whose warm acceptance of us demonstrated a belief that we were individuals of worth, and others who were persistent in their in- and out-of-school admonitions for us to aim higher than we may have imagined reasonable or possible.*

A major component of our teacher education program is its emphasis on the recognition and development of the personal dispositions that reflect a commitment to excellence in the profession. We have identified those dispositions that we believe are important, can be recognized in classes and field placements, and will be considered. We believe that all teachers should demonstrate or be:

- |                      |                         |                 |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| -dependable          | -energetic/enthusiastic | -passionate     |
| -honest              | -creative               | -introspective  |
| -compassionate       | -tactful                | -mature         |
| -empathetic          | -collegial              | -confident      |
| -nurturing           | -integrity              | -responsible    |
| -flexible            | -respectful             | -dedicated      |
| -optimistic          | -courageous             | -sense of humor |
| -keeping perspective | -taking initiative      | -resilient      |

All teachers are in a position to be among the most influential adults in the lives of many individuals--students and colleagues. Prospective teachers should begin to see themselves as professionals starting with their first course in education. Professional dispositions will become increasingly evident during the time an individual is preparing to enter the classroom. Because we believe that teachers should become change agents in schools and society, we expect our students to develop leadership skills throughout the course of the teacher education program.

A number of professional behaviors suggest that an individual will perform well in the school setting and will emerge as a teacher leader. These include:

- consistent class attendance,
- active class and field experience participation,
- promptness in completion of all assignments,
- engages in a variety of related field experiences,
- demonstrates sensitivity to diversity and exceptionality,

