

Abstract Submitted
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Physics Teacher Preparation as a Means for Growth¹ RON HENDERSON, Middle Tennessee State University — Physics departments across the country are experiencing pressures to increase the number of graduates. One response is to improve marketing and recruiting efforts to add students to existing pipelines. A more innovative approach is to create new pathways tied to career paths that are alternatives to graduate school. One occupation that currently needs more graduates than physics departments are supplying is physics teaching. About 3 years ago, MTSU began implementing a strategy to prepare physics majors for careers in high school teaching. These efforts included developing coursework specifically related to physics teaching, creating relationships with the college of education, moving to pedagogies that reflect physics education research (PER)-validated best practices, hiring a tenure-track PER expert, implementing new ways to reach potential majors, and seeking external funding. The cumulative result has not only added a number of physics teaching majors to our roles, but has affected our existing programs in a manner that has yielded further growth.

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