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Issue Theme: *Reforms in Teacher Preparation: From Policy Changes to Implementation*

Abstract
Teacher preparation programs are engaged in active curricular redesign in the wake of the national dialogue around teacher performance assessment and teacher leadership and state policy developments, such as the new common core standards. Whether intended to increase teacher accountability, to tighten curricular requirements, or to foster professional development, these policy initiatives reflect an intensifying emphasis on student learning outcomes, however measured, that originated with No Child Left Behind a decade ago. For ACI's *Center for Success in High-Need Schools* the goal is to improve student learning in high-need schools in order to close the achievement gap in poor, primarily inner-city schools.

This issue of *Success in High-Need Schools* reviews recent reforms and changing policies with an eye, especially, to how they are being implemented in teacher preparation programs where the next generation of teachers for high-need schools will be trained. A special focus in this issue is the movement toward teacher performance assessment (edTPA) in Illinois as part of statewide task force recommendations for improvements in school partnerships, clinical practice, and teacher leadership. The issue also contains a column on teacher education reform from a campus perspective and a review of the provocative new book, *I Got Schooled,* by famed filmmaker M. Night Shyamalan -- a perspective from outside the educational establishment.

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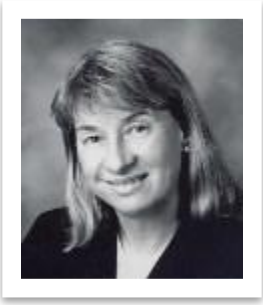

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In this issue, we again take a look at teacher education reforms. US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has identified four priorities for attention for teacher preparation reform efforts. In our last issue we examined the area of higher standards, looking specifically at the Common Core Standards. In this issue, the focus is on how "rigorous clinical practice" and "increased and improved accountability" have materialized in and around higher education teacher preparation programs.

DeBartolo, Soglin and Hunt share the work of the Illinois P-20 Council's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Committee and discuss that group's engagement in looking critically at the "factors that are necessary for preparing highly effective teachers," what the Council deems "success factors." In this article they discuss five success factors that developed from the Council's work and the research that informs that work, as well as the success factors' alignment with CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) standards.

Behrens documents the introduction of the edTPA at Quincy University**.** The edTPA is a new teacher performance assessment that pre-service candidates complete during student teaching to demonstrate their proficiency in moving from theories of planning, instruction and assessment to effective practice. Although this initial Quincy experience suggests that edTPA offers both "opportunities and challenges," Behrens says the assessment promises to demonstrate increased accountability for preparing effective teachers.

Meyer, Burke, Dauksas, Slodki, Young and Fiene move the reform conversation from a discussion of singular education reforms to that of embracing multiple education reforms to develop a meaningful program for preparing effective teachers for all classrooms. In this article, the authors share their experiences with formation of a faculty "inquiry group" which studied together over several years in order to collaborate on a teacher education program redesign that is both "meaningful" and "effective" in preparing candidates to teach in a variety of settings.

Hilsabeck, Salmon and Ross bring another lens to preparation in directing attention to alternative certification, and as they say, "the opportunities it provides for building field-intensive, experiential learning models for teacher education." The authors of this article suggest there are critical lessons that can be learned from the study of alternative certification that may be beneficial to all preparation programs.

Garrett's column encourages faculty to remember the importance of student-centered instruction for teaching to be effective. Garrett calls on faculty to consider the important role that faculty play in helping candidates to acquire this understanding. She suggests that faculty may have to change the way they approach their own classroom instruction in order to model the "student–centered philosophy" that they prescribe for their pre-service candidates.

Finally, **Berberet** reviews famed film director M. Knight Shyamalan's new book, *I Got Schooled: The Unlikely Story of How a Moonlighting Movie Maker Learned the Five Keys to Closing America's Education Gap* (2013). Although this is not a book about redesigning teacher preparation in the wake of large-scale national education reforms, it is a well-researched analysis from outside the profession that cautions against simplistic solutions for the nation's educational ills while arguing that getting teacher preparation right calls for a comprehensive approach: It is about creating the conditions that have been demonstrated to help students succeed!

Success Factors for Educator Preparation in Illinois: Improving Partnerships and Clinical Experience

by Melissa DeBartolo, Audrey Soglin and Erika Hunt, Ph.D.

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Abstract

The P-20 Council provides policy recommendations to the legislature, governor, Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and other state agencies and policymakers. In the context of multiple current state initiatives to improve teacher preparation in Illinois, the Council's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Committee engaged diverse stakeholders across Illinois in developing policy recommendations for ISBE for partnerships and clinical experience that will improve how Illinois prepares new teachers to meet the needs of 21st century students. The Illinois Success Factors, based on research and national, state and local trends and best practices,

define the quality factors necessary for preparing highly-effective teachers, with a specific focus on partnerships, clinical experience and enhancing our ability to attract and retain a diverse teacher workforce.

Introduction

Our next generation of students and teachers faces a fundamental shift in the skills that students will need to be college and career ready in the new global economy. Changing demographics also mean that students, schools and communities in Illinois are increasingly more ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse. Illinois has embarked on a number of statewide education reform initiatives focused on improving student achievement through increasing the quality of leadership, teaching and learning practices in order to meet the diverse needs of Illinois students.

Illinois is in the process of implementing several new initiatives, including the Common Core Standards, teacher and principal performance evaluation and the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (in teacher preparation). Illinois is also currently in the process of adopting new early childhood, elementary and middle school program requirements and content standards based on the Common Core. Along with significant structural changes to Illinois' licensure system, the state is implementing more rigorous pre-service teacher assessment, including the performance-based edTPA and Test of Academic Proficiency, along with new content assessments that will be developed based on the standards.

The Illinois P-20 Council has played a key role in supporting many of these statewide initiatives that also highlighted the gap in consistent expectations and requirements for program partnerships which prepare new teachers and provide clinical experience. As a result, Superintendent Chris Koch approached the P-20 Council Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Committee with a charge to convene an educator steering group to develop policy recommendations that will enhance the quality of teacher preparation in Illinois with a specific focus on partnerships, clinical experience and the teacher pipeline. The P-20 Council was uniquely positioned to engage a wide variety of statewide stakeholders in collaborating on recommendations based on data including research and surveys of the field that incorporates national, state and local standards and best practices.

The Educator Steering Group (ESG) included a wide variety of stakeholders including public/private colleges and universities that prepare teachers, districts, local education agencies, professional organizations, unions, field practitioners, researchers and policy/advocacy groups. It also included state agencies such as ISBE, IBHE and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Members of the P-20 Council Teacher and Leadership Effectiveness Committee served on the subcommittees for ESG.

Early on, the ESG recognized the complexity of factors that influence partnerships, program design, clinical experience and outcomes. Therefore, the steering group worked together to develop an approach in formulating its recommendations that included:

- Seeking out a wide variety of stakeholders for the steering group and its subcommittees. The steering group and its subcommittees grew to nearly 50 participants across Illinois representing a diverse spectrum of P-12 programs, educators and advocates. These stakeholders were able to provide research, knowledge, feedback, resources and insight from multiple constituencies with a continual focus on the needs of students first.

- Reviewing current data, research, national and state trends, as well as current requirements and practices in Illinois. This included surveys of higher education faculty to gather data around current practices, perceived obstacles and recommendations for improvement. It also included similar surveys of Illinois non-tenured teachers, cooperating teachers and school and district leaders.

- Based on the research review and surveys, the steering group developed a consensus on success factors that are necessary for effective teacher preparation in Illinois, including clinical experience. This review examined key components such as partnerships, program design, school sites, cooperating teachers, faculty supervision and the educator pipeline.

- Based on the success factors, the steering group developed a consensus on the best way to influence adoption of these success factors in Illinois. This included both recommendations to ISBE on the requirements for teacher preparation programs as well as broad policy recommendations for programs, other stakeholders and policymakers which could be implemented in the future.

Key Research Findings

The quality of program partnerships as well as clinically-focused program design has a significant impact on teacher candidate readiness for the classroom and student and teacher performance. The quality of partnerships in teacher preparation, including field and clinical experiences, also has a significant impact on the overall career development of teachers and teacher retention.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), in its 2009 *Blue Ribbon Report on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships For Improved Student Learning*, and the 2010 report of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), *The Clinical Preparation of Teachers: A Policy Brief,* recommend strengthening partnerships between multiple stakeholders to improve teacher preparation through program design that is grounded in and well-integrated with clinical practice. This also includes creating optimal learning conditions for teacher candidates such as well-integrated curriculum and clinical experiences; multiple opportunities for teacher candidate reflection, assessment and intervention; high quality school sites and systems of support; high-quality, trained mentors and faculty supervision--all having a significant impact on teacher quality and effectiveness.

Research shows that first year teachers are significantly more effective at increasing student achievement if they completed teacher preparation programs with rigorous clinical experiences and supervision and a capstone project. Although many preparation programs do an excellent job of preparing high-quality teachers, there is inconsistency in program quality. Many teachers report not feeling adequately prepared to begin teaching, specifically in areas such as selecting or adapting curriculum materials, handling a wide range of classroom management issues, meeting the needs of socio-economically, culturally and linguistically diverse learners, using instructional technology and designing student assessments.

The diversity, depth and quality of field and clinical experiences have a significant impact on how prepared new teachers are for the classroom. In addition, research highlights the need for increased alignment between programs and districts/schools in designing and supervising clinical experiences and developing systems of support for new teachers which significantly impact their readiness, efficacy and retention. This is particularly critical for minority teachers and those teaching in diverse, high-need schools which typically have lower retention rates.

At the national, state and local levels, there is an increased focus on district, school and teacher accountability for improving student outcomes. Higher performance standards for teacher performance also mean that all those who prepare future educators--teacher preparation programs, districts, and other stakeholders--have a key role in setting up aspiring teachers for success. This means clear links between standards and expected outcomes for students, standards for teacher performance and practice, so that aspiring teachers understand what will be expected of them in the classroom and how it will be measured, and have the opportunity to develop and practice the skills and competencies necessary for success. This also means greater commitment and collaboration at all levels among programs, districts, unions and other stakeholders to ensure alignment and coherency involving program curricula, standards and state/district trends and initiatives, with clinical experience as a vital bridge between teacher candidate preparation and what they will be expected to know and demonstrate on the job.

In addition, while increasing numbers of Illinois students are ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse, Illinois educators are overwhelmingly white, female and monolingual. For example, in 2012, 49 percent of the state's 2.1 million public school students were racially and ethnically diverse while just 16.7 percent of teachers were similarly diverse (2012 ISBE District Summary Report, 2011 ISBE Supply and Demand Report). Nearly 1 in 4 students in Illinois (22%) speak a language other than English in the home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-08) while nearly one out of every 10 students has been designated at one point as an English Language Learner (ELL), an amazing 83 percent growth over the last 15 years (Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education Report, 2011). While Illinois has made gains in recruiting more racially, culturally and linguistically diverse teachers, improvements are needed to identify diverse teacher candidates and attract them to the profession, as well as equitable allocation of resources for higher education, preparation, placement, and retention of diverse teachers, allocations historically lower than for teachers overall--creating barriers to the profession. At the same time, teachers and administrators report wanting more training and support

for teaching in diverse schools and support the needs of socio-economically, culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Research shows that a diverse teacher workforce trained in culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy positively impacts minority student achievement and can help close the achievement gap.

Clinically-centered program design and early, diverse field experiences can have a profound influence on the career choices of teachers, including choosing endorsements and grade levels, understanding the role of a teacher and exposing teacher candidates to a variety of diverse school and student settings and experiences. Although its primary purpose is to build the capacity of teacher candidates, student teaching is often a tool for recruitment and job placement which are vital concerns for districts and new teachers, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse teachers who traditionally have had lower placement rates even as demand for diverse teachers increases.

Survey of Teacher Preparation Programs and Field Practitioners

In addition to reviewing the research, it was critical that the Illinois P-20 Council gauge current trends and practices in Illinois. The Educator Licensure Steering Group conducted surveys of faculty of Illinois teacher preparation programs, non-tenured teachers, cooperating teachers and school and district leaders in an effort to further understand current practices, understand the perceptions of multiple stakeholders and identify Illinois-specific recommendations for improvement. The surveys focused on key areas of teacher preparation including:

- Partnerships between programs and districts/schools
- Coursework and Field Experiences
- Clinical Experiences and Student Teaching
- Mentoring and Faculty Supervision
- Student Assessment and Support
- Educator Pipeline

A survey of program leaders and faculty enabled the Educator Steering Group to collect data on current Illinois program practices in terms of overall program design, existing partnerships, clinical experience requirements and outcomes. The survey also compared program faculty perception to practitioner perception and gathered information about planned or desired areas of program improvement. The survey was conducted with the generous assistance of both Illinois Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (IACTE) and Associated Colleges of Illinois (ACI). The survey was sent to all association members. Respondents included:

% of Respondents (N=121):
Full-time Faculty: 57.9%
Part-time Faculty: 4.1 %
Dean: 11.6%
Associate/Assistant Dean: 9.1%
Faculty Supervisor: 2.5%
Other*: 14.9%

**Includes Licensure/Certification Officer, Accreditation Officer, Education Chair, Director of Clinical Practice, Student Teaching or Field Experience*

Field practitioner surveys were conducted with more than 2500+ non-tenured teachers, and cooperating teachers and school and district leaders who partner with teacher preparation programs. Non-tenured teachers were chosen in order to best capture timely feedback from those teachers whose clinical experience was most recent. Eighty-two percent of respondents had completed student teaching in the last five years, eighty-six percent completing their student teaching in Illinois.

Cooperating teachers who responded to the survey had partnered with one or more preparation programs in mentoring student teachers within the last five years and seventy-seven percent of respondents had served as a cooperating teacher within the last 2 years. The average cooperating teacher had partnered with at least two programs. Sixty-five percent of district and school leaders had partnered with two or more programs.

The practitioner surveys were conducted in association with the Illinois Education Association, Illinois Federation of Teachers, IASA, Illinois Principals Association, Midwest Principals Center, Large Unit District Association, DuPage Regional Office of Education, Chicago-area Deans, Center for Educational Policy (IL-SAELP listserv), ISBE (superintendent newsletter) and other stakeholders who helped distribute the survey to members and constituents. The breakdown of respondents who received and completed the survey:

Non-tenured Teachers: 998/600
Cooperating Teachers: 1043/808
Superintendents/District Administrators: 232/209
Principals/Assistant Principals: 300/288

The survey gathered data about respondents' experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of preparation programs and student teaching experiences in preparing new teachers. The survey also asked about program/district partnerships, as well as perceptions of teacher candidate and cooperating teacher selection, training, assessment and support. Respondents shared recommendations on how partnerships among districts, programs, teachers and other partners could be strengthened to enhance the quality of clinical experiences through improved structures and supports for teacher candidates, school sites and cooperating teachers.

Overall, faculty and practitioners agreed that more rigorous and robust field and clinical experiences, including student teaching, would enhance the effectiveness of new teachers. Both faculty and practitioners recommended higher levels of collaboration between programs, districts and schools in the design and governance of programs, and the selection and support of faculty supervisors, school sites and mentors in order to more closely align teacher preparation with multiple reform initiatives, evolving standards, as well as district trends and practices.

Detailed results from the survey can be found on the Illinois P-20 Council website at http://www2.illinois.gov/gov/P20/Documents/Teacher%20and%20Leader%20Effectiveness/Educator

%20Licensure/Educator%20Licensure%20Survey%20Results%20-%20final%20November%202012.pdf

Illinois Key Success Factors and Recommendations

Our research and survey findings identified partnerships as the key unit of change and innovation in supporting clinically-focused teacher preparation in Illinois. Identifying and leveraging partnerships in teacher recruitment, program design, operations and program evaluation are critical to preparing our next generation of teachers. As such, in formulating recommendations, the Educator Steering Group felt that it was helpful to couch them within agreed upon five key success factors for effectively preparing new teachers.

Key Success Factor One: Partnerships are opportunities for meaningful collaboration among P-12 districts and schools, community colleges, teacher preparation units and programs, other college divisions, local education agencies, unions and other stakeholders to address the needs of future educators, teacher candidates and students. This includes:

- P-12 districts and schools that are fully engaged in preparing the next generation of teachers.
- Units/programs, districts and other partners' collaboration in the design and supervision of teacher preparation programs, including clinical experience.
- Partnerships between P-12 districts, community colleges and 4-year colleges/universities, and among college divisions (e.g. College of Education and College of Arts and Sciences) to support recruitment and retention (e.g. alignment of curriculum between community colleges and teacher preparation programs).
- Guidelines for collaboration that build on existing partnerships with clear roles and expectations for the partnership.

Key Success Factor Two: A rigorous program is designed to increase the competency of teachers to implement research and evidence-based instructional strategies that meet the needs of diverse learners, including those with diverse cultural, linguistic, cognitive and physical needs. This includes:

- Program design and partnerships between units/programs, districts and partners that demonstrate collaboration in designing and delivering clinical experiences which promote development and assessment of the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and other standards (i.e. content standards, the Social-Emotional Learning Standards, assessed through edTPA) as well as performing the role of a teacher.

- Field and clinical experiences that are fully integrated into and supported by coursework exposing teaching candidates to a wide variety of learning environments, including opportunities to work in diverse schools and with diverse students (e.g., race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special education, gifted, English language learners (ELL), etc.)
- Teacher candidate engagement in authentic learning experiences that encompass an annual school year cycle for students and teachers. An annual school year cycle includes the regular events and activities of students and teachers that occur during an entire school year in a classroom or school. This includes activities such as setting up a classroom, implementing classroom norms and routines, proctoring interim and state student assessments, etc.

Success Factor Three*:* Units/programs have access to school sites, cooperating teachers and faculty supervision that promote a positive learning environment for teacher candidates and students. This includes:

- District collaboration with units and other partners that directs the optimal staffing and design and structure of clinical experience within schools and classrooms.
- Unit and district/school collaboration to identify and select cooperating teachers based on high-quality instructional practices, overall performance and ability to develop adult learners and engagement with teachers and unions.
- Cooperating teachers who are formally trained and have access to a wide variety of supports according to standards that develop efficacy.
- Frequent collaboration between faculty supervisors, schools and cooperating teachers to guide effective clinical experiences and interventions.
- Faculty supervisors who are rigorously selected to ensure they can support the needs of teacher candidates in developing high-quality instructional methods and practices.
- Faculty supervisors who are trained and have access to a wide variety of supports that develop efficacy in coaching, assessing and providing support for teacher candidates.

Success Factor Four**:** Teacher candidates have frequent, meaningful and standards-based assessments and observations in order to assess readiness and provide opportunities for meaningful reflection and feedback. This also includes:

- Programs and school sites that provide opportunities for engagement in professional learning communities, peer networks and collaboration.

- Unit/program and district collaboration to facilitate cooperating teacher, teacher candidate and faculty supervisor understanding of expectations for teacher performance, including tools used for performance evaluation by districts (e.g. instructional frameworks and student growth models).

***Key Success Factor Five*:** Partnerships between the state of Illinois, ISBE, P-12 districts, community colleges, units/programs and other stakeholders to develop and implement strategies that support the recruitment, selection, preparation and retention of a highly qualified, culturally and linguistically diverse teacher candidate pool. This also includes:

- Providing opportunities for early field experiences for teacher candidates to inform career choices.
- Developing strategies that educate and guide teacher candidates in identifying career choices which consider trends in job placements and changing student demographics.
- Creating a positive and nurturing climate that supports teaching as a noble profession in Illinois.
- Providing incentives to attract and retain high-quality and diverse teachers to Illinois.

Alignment with Draft CAEP Standards

In addition to the work occurring in Illinois, nationally the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) has met to determine accreditation standards for educator preparation programs. This spring, the draft standards were issued for public comment and will be presented to the CAEP Board of Directors this summer with planned implementation in January, 2014. Though the CAEP standards were published after the work of the Educator Steering Group was already complete, we were pleased to see that there is also significant alignment between the Illinois success factors and the CAEP Draft Standards in the area of Clinical Practice and Partnerships.

Recommendations from the Educator Licensure Steering Group subcommittee on Partnerships and Clinical Experience to ISBE

CAEP Draft Standard #2 Clinical Practice and Partnerships:

Key Success Factor One: Partnerships should include P-12 districts, community colleges, other college divisions and 4-year colleges/universities.

- Partners involved in the comprehensive design, implementation, execution and continuous improvement of teacher recruitment and preparation

- Partnerships should be developed at the unit level to allow leverage across multiple programs
- Units required to have an Advisory Committee
- Need memorandum of understanding (MOU) with clearly defined roles

2.1 Partnerships for Clinical Preparation: Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements for clinical preparation, including technology-based collaborations, and share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation.

- Mutually agreeable expectations for candidate entry, preparation and exit
- Ensure that theory and practice are linked
- Maintain coherence across clinical and academic components of preparation
- Share accountability for candidate outcomes

Key Success Factor Two: A rigorous program designed with strategies that meet the needs of diverse learners, including those with diverse cultural, linguistic, cognitive, and physical needs.

- Collaboration in designing experiences that meet IPTS standards
- Field and clinical experiences fully integrated with coursework and provide opportunities for candidates to work with diverse students including race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, special education, gifted and ELL
- Teacher candidate engagement in authentic learning experiences that encompass an annual, school year cycle

2.2 Clinical Educators: Partners co-select, prepare, evaluate, support and retain high quality clinical educators who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and P-12 student learning.

- Multiple indicators and appropriate technology-based applications are used to establish, maintain and refine criteria for selection, professional development, performance evaluation and continuous improvement and retention of clinical educators.

Key Success Factor Three: Units/programs have access to school sites, cooperating teachers and faculty supervision that promote a positive learning environment for candidates and students

- Specific selection criteria for cooperating teachers: evidence of high quality instructional practices & impact on student growth
- Partnership collaboration in providing formal training and support for cooperating teachers

- Specific selection criteria for university supervisors: evidence of ability to develop and support teacher candidates, evidence of strong instructional skills
- Units should collaborate with district partners to ensure consistency between cooperating teachers and faculty supervisors
- Partnership collaboration to list expectations for faculty supervisors including frequency of visits

2.3 Clinical Experiences: The provider works with partners to design clinical experiences of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence and duration to ensure that candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on all students' learning.

- Clinical experiences are structured to demonstrate development of knowledge, skills and dispositions that are associated with a positive impact on P-12 student learning
- "All students" includes students with disabilities or exceptionalities, who are gifted, and students who represent diversity based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, language, religion, sexual identification, and geographic origin.

Key Success Factor Four: Candidates have frequent, meaningful and standards-based assessments in order to assess readiness and provide opportunities for meaningful feedback

- Programs should demonstrate evidence of frequent, meaningful and standards-based assessments throughout program.
- Partnerships provide evidence of opportunities for engagement in professional learning communities, peer networks and collaboration
- Evidence of understanding by cooperating teacher, teacher candidate and faculty supervisor of expectations of teacher performance including assessment tools used

Examples of evidence to support standards:

- MOU's and data-sharing agreements with diverse P-12 and/or community partners
- Evidence of tracking/sharing data such as hiring patterns/job placement rates
- Evidence of actions that indicate combined resource allocation and joint decision-making: such as program and course adjustments, on-site delivery

- Plans, activities, results related to selection of diverse clinical educations and their support and retention, such as training and support protocols
- Performance data on candidates use of instructional strategies used throughout programs
- Evidence that candidates integrate technology into planning and teaching and use it to differentiate instruction

Key Success Factor Five: Partnerships between ISBE, P-12 districts, community colleges, units/programs implements strategies to recruit, select, prepare and retain highly qualified, culturally and linguistically diverse teacher candidate pool.

- Opportunities for early field experiences
- Strategies that guide and educate candidates in identifying career choices
- Create a positive and nurturing climate that supports teaching as a noble profession.
- Provide incentives to attract and retain high-quality and diverse teachers to Illinois.
- Evidence of candidates' graduated responsibility in classroom and ability to impact student learning
- Evidence of candidates' reflection upon practices
- Studies of effectiveness of diverse field experiences on candidates instructional practices
- Reliable and valid measures or innovative models of high-quality partnerships, clinical educators, or clinical experiences.

*Crosswalk completed by Cecilia J. Lauby Teacher Education Center, Illinois State University, 2013

Next Steps

In addition to these success factors, the steering group identified policy recommendations that would encourage systemic and programmatic innovation, provide flexibility to meet local needs but also acknowledge resource constraints. This included both recommendations to ISBE on requirements for teacher preparation programs and broad program and policy recommendations for implementation. The Illinois State Board of Education is currently considering the success factors and steering group's recommendations for inclusion in rules. The new proposed rules for program requirements are expected in the Fall of 2013.

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Introduction of the Illinois edTPA Capstone Licensure Requirement at Quincy University

by Ann E. Behrens, Ed.D.

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Abstract

The introduction of EdTPA as a capstone licensure assessment for prospective teachers presents both opportunities and challenges for the candidates and for the institutions that prepare them. During 2012-13, the Quincy University School of Education began implementation of this new state certification requirement. The first task before our faculty was to learn as much as possible about the assessment itself. What is expected? How will candidates be evaluated? Who will evaluate? What is the best time frame for submission? Perhaps due somewhat to our professional development school curricular model, successful implementation is far along during the current 2013-14 academic year.

Authentic assessment

The backwards design process, when applied to teacher preparation, asks what evidence is needed to prove that candidates have met the identified goals (Wiggins & McTighe, 2006). A rigorous performance assessment designed to gauge a candidate's readiness to enter the teaching field requires teacher educators to interact with students in a classroom setting, know the students in the class, plan intentionally for the variety of needs students present, assess their learning, and adjust instruction based upon that assessment. At bottom this is the real work of the teaching profession.

Effective teaching requires the integration of content knowledge, process skills, and work habits. Hibbard, et al (1996) defined process skills as higher-order thinking skills such as problem solving, analysis, and inference. Their definition of work habits included interpersonal skills as well as time management, persistence, and individual responsibility. Authentic assessment requires candidates to use what they know rather than simply measuring how much they know (Teaching Today, 2000).

In a preliminary study on the relationship between beginning teachers' scores on the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) and their teaching effectiveness, Newton (2010) found significant differences in the performance of students in classrooms taught by those achieving the highest passing score from those classrooms taught by those who achieved the lowest passing score. He found PACT to be a strong predictor of teacher success as measured by student achievement. This study measured student achievement only in English language arts and used a small sample, but the results warranted replication in other settings.

A subsequent study (Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2012) examined the PACT in the content areas of both mathematics and English language arts with the same predictive results. In addition, candidates in this later study reported that they gained additional knowledge and skills through completion of the assessment. Subscales of the PACT were associated with these measures of teaching effectiveness: planning, assessment and academic language development with English language arts, and assessment and reflection in mathematics. The authors noted the importance of teaching effectiveness in contributing to student learning, not just in covering the content of the curriculum. Wiggins and McTighe (2006) defined teaching effectiveness as teaching for student understanding rather than content coverage.

Introduction of edTPA at Quincy

Quincy University is a small, Catholic liberal arts university in the Franciscan tradition. Located in Quincy, Illinois, the main campus houses approximately 1,000 students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Undergraduate teacher preparation uses the professional development school model, with both public and parochial school partners. Programs in Springfield and Chicago, IL augment the enrollment in Quincy's School of Education.

As instructors at Quincy University began to internalize edTPA licensure requirements, a number of purely logistical questions arose. Collaboration between colleagues at other institutions became very important as a mechanism for sharing information, problem identification and problem solving, and anticipating and overcoming obstacles. Online resources proved valuable in helping disseminate program expectations, handbooks, rubrics, and specific requirements for each content area of licensure.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the coordinating faculty member revised the school of education student teaching seminar in order to pilot specific edTPA tasks with current year student teachers. By working with a group of candidates who had no targeted preparation for the tasks, she was able to determine which areas would need to be strengthened in order to prepare our students to be successful on this assessment. Quincy student teachers have always prepared a portfolio as a capstone project that includes many elements of the new assessment and formally presented it to the faculty of the School of Education. The portfolio tasks have been redesigned during the past two years to more closely align with the requirements of edTPA. Quincy University is fortunate to have a nationally Board certified teacher helping to direct the process. Her familiarity with the format has been a great help to both faculty and candidates as we become more familiar with this assessment.

One of the first changes the Quincy faculty implemented was creation of a lexicon of academic language across each licensure area. Language submissions were reviewed during faculty meetings to ensure that all instructors were using the same terminology in the same way. Recognizing that each content area features a vocabulary unique to a particular discipline, we found consistency in use of academic language regarding pedagogy to be critical to effective assessment implementation. Faculty also began to emphasize the need for candidates to use academic language, both in their lesson preparation and when teaching those lessons in the classroom.

An unexpected problem arose as a result of this new focus on academic language. Even though every methods course emphasizes a variety of instructional strategies appropriate to the discipline, some students were not able to identify more than a handful of strategies when asked. When the professors prompted them with clues, the candidates could then name additional strategies. It became clear that students were not labeling the teaching strategies they were learning as "instructional strategies." We discovered that faculty were modeling instructional strategies and using various methods of differentiation of instruction in their own teaching, but candidates were not able to engage in meta-cognitive thinking enabling them to link theory with the actual practice of their own instructors. As a result of this experience faculty became much more purposeful about their own teaching in articulating their implementation of the very methods and strategies they were using during instruction.

Some very basic questions arose about what kinds of video equipment would be needed for the assessment. One fear was that all student teaching candidates would need the equipment at approximately the same time, creating scheduling problems. Because of the strict need for confidentiality, we did not want students using their own cameras or phones to video their class. Another issue involved the need for microphones. Colleagues who had already piloted aspects of the assessment assured us that in a normal enclosed classroom, the audio quality from the camera would be acceptable. But in larger, less contained classrooms, such as a gymnasium or music rehearsal room, external microphones might be required in order to hear student responses. We are still exploring this issue.

All students are required to take a course called Media and Technology in Education. The instructor has always included assignments dealing with video editing as part of the coursework. But how to select the most appropriate sections to illustrate the candidate's teaching skills is an extremely important decision, one that the candidate will ultimately have to make. Instructors plan to include video segments from online sources as well as videos from the candidates' own teaching segments to model the thinking processes needed to choose the best teaching examples from the sample.

The most significant change we made in preparation for piloting the edTPA during fall 2013 was to embed pieces of the actual assessment into coursework as assignments on which students can receive feedback. For instance, one of the assessment tasks is now part of the curriculum in the elementary social studies methods course. The instructor will provide a pool of 30 questions and have the candidates choose ten that they feel best represent the standards to be covered in the 5th grade unit on government. Then they will administer the pre-test to a group of 5th grade students. In class, with assistance from the instructor, candidates will score and analyze the data, including which questions were missed most frequently and which incorrect responses were given most frequently. Together they will discuss how these results will impact instruction in the unit. These are not new concepts in our teacher preparation program; what is new is that instructors will purposefully relate this activity to the associated tasks on the EdTPA so that candidates make the connection between the classroom activity and the performance assessment.

Task one focuses on planning instruction and the many things that must be considered in that planning. Elements of this task, especially the description of the context of learning, have been incorporated into specific methods courses and field experiences to give candidates multiple opportunities to describe their class and the special needs of any students in the class. The addition of this description has strengthened the field experiences for our candidates by asking them to look very closely at their students early in their preparation programs. We expect candidates to focus even their early lesson planning efforts on the needs of children in a specific classroom. Our professional development school model of preparation has made this a much more authentic task, as our candidates are in actual K-12 classrooms each week working with the students as part of their coursework.

Task two focuses on instruction, including video clips of the candidate teaching and commentary on that instruction. In some methods courses, candidates have videotaped and analyzed their teaching, looking for the use of specific instructional strategies, climate and management elements, and the types of feedback given to students. Instructors are modifying this activity to focus more specifically on interactions with individual students and groups of students, as well as interactions within the class

as a whole. Reflections now call for the use of more evidence to support the conclusions that are drawn and the recommendations for improvement in the lesson that come from the analysis. In the fall, field experience instructors will begin videotaping the teaching of the candidates and analyzing these teaching segments in class to give additional practice in identifying exactly which sections most clearly illustrate what the candidate is describing in the narrative.

Perhaps our biggest challenge comes in the preparation of secondary licensure candidates. Typically, they do not have as many methods courses as the elementary and special education candidates; therefore many of the tasks which can be spread throughout the curriculum in the latter areas of certification must be compressed into fewer courses leading to the secondary licensure. Faculty are currently studying this problem and seriously considering the addition of at least one additional course to ease the pressure on secondary methods instructors and their students.

Faculty members freely share rubrics they have developed and activities that have helped candidates understand the rubrics by which their submissions will be scored. Our physical education program has candidates write a complete practice run, addressing tasks in two different methods classes. Task three, Assessment, involves looking at student work samples, evidence of feedback, assessment commentary, and evaluation criteria. These elements are specifically addressed in an assessments course. During the 2012-2013 school year, all student teaching candidates completed an edTPA portfolio in their student teaching seminar, but during the 2013-14 school year this task will be moved to the third field experience.

An in-service presentation by a trained scorer yielded some valuable, specific information about elements that candidates need to include in the assessment, pitfalls to avoid, and common mistakes such as failing to address all elements of a question or prompt. This fall the first Quincy University faculty member will have completed the initial scorer training, and her insights will be very helpful.

Preparing candidates to pass the edTPA will not mean any drastic changes to the teacher preparation program at Quincy University. Instead, the focus of the faculty will be on the rubrics and the specific requirements of the assessment and then matching assignments and writing assignments to these same expectations.

Although Quincy University has not yet formally analyzed the impact of these changes on the performance of our candidates, anecdotal evidence from the student teaching seminar, scores on the rubric used to analyze student teaching, and even the teaching segments in field experiences indicate that the more focused nature of this assessment is positively impacting instruction. Discussions are more in-depth and questions of the candidates reveal a deeper commitment to reaching each child. All preliminary evidence points to use of the edTPA as a viable tool to measure the effectiveness of prospective teachers in the classroom.

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Seeking Meaningful Reform in Educator Preparation: Adapting to Change

by Debra K. Meyer, Lisa Burke, Linda Dauksas, William Slodki, Mary Jo Young, and Judy Fiene.

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Abstract
In this article, we share how our work in a teacher educator inquiry group helped us to better understand our Elmhurst program redesign process over the last two years and how the "lessons learned" now support the redesign of our elementary education program. We begin by describing two frameworks that were instrumental in conceptualizing the change process: Heifetz and Linsky's (2004) *collaborative leadership* and Akmal and Miller's (2003) *phases of change*. Following an overview of these guiding frameworks, we provide a brief background about our teacher education programs and then share the processes we used in redesign to address the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS) and state mandated teacher performance assessments (edTPA), while moving to homegrown digital portfolios for our unit assessment system. Our article concludes with major lessons learned and the current status of our redesign.

Introduction
In Illinois, like most states across the United States, teacher preparation programs have been inundated with reforms. These changes have been driven by federal mandates, such as Race to the Top (U. S. Department of Education, 2009), increasing our nation's focus on using student outcomes to measure teacher and school effectiveness (i.e., No Child Left Behind. 2002) with national goals for teacher preparation recently emerging (i.e., U.S. Department of Education's "Our Future, Our Teachers" report, 2011). However, state-level reforms are having the most direct impact on teacher preparation. For example, a confluence of Illinois State mandates began in 2013, which include new Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS), a new state licensure system, new program rules and regulations, and mandated teacher performance assessments (edTPA). These constant and overlapping changes in teacher preparation make *meaningful* reform challenging, especially within traditional program structures in higher education.

Educational reform creates possibilities for renewal and innovation, but overlapping reforms require new approaches for working in a context of continuous change. A decade ago, Cochran-Smith (2003) urged teacher educators to take advantage of becoming "the linchpins in educational reforms of all kinds" (p. 5). Because classroom teachers are frequently cited as the primary influence on student achievement, their preparation has become a focal point in this new era of accountability. Therefore, Cochran-Smith argued that this empowerment requires new approaches for teachers and for faculty who prepare them. Specifically, she recommended that as teacher educators we must help future teachers learn to examine their practices critically in a context of accountability. To do this we, too, must assume an inquiry stance in redesigning our educator preparation programs to improve our own practices.

The Challenges of Change

There are multiple ways to examine change and build collaborative leadership networks for supporting reforms. Heifetz and Linsky (2004) presented a framework for recognizing and responding to these challenges. One of their most important recommendations was to distinguish between *technical challenges* and *adaptive challenges*. Technical challenges are solved through expertise and, although often complex, require knowledge and skills that can be readily identified and utilized. They described technical changes as those that "reside in the head" (p. 35) and are the easier of the two challenges. In contrast, *adaptive challenges* are not solved with technical answers but require teacher educators to work together and with stakeholders to address complex problems. As Heifetz and Linksy (2004) explain it, adaptive challenges "lie in the stomach and the heart" and necessitate changes in our "values, beliefs, habits, ways of working or ways of life" (p. 35). Adaptive challenges require the most effort and time, yet can be easily overshadowed by the technical. Reform efforts require *adaptive leadership strategies* that acknowledge various ways in which faculty participate in and resist change, especially fundamental change that requires adapting to new ways of preparing teachers.

Understanding the Change Process

In their case study of a secondary program's redesign, Akmal and Miller (2003) described two important components of effective change. First they shared how *external* changes must be transformed into a shared view that change is *internally* controlled. They also explained a four-step change process during their program redesign that highlights the importance of different types of faculty participation at difference phases.

One of the most important distinctions we gained from Akmal and Miller's (2003) program redesign was the transformation of external changes (i.e., state-mandated reforms) into internal reforms (i.e., programmatic decisions). As Akmal and Miller argue, all meaningful change must ultimately be viewed as internal decision-making that faculty control. For example, they describe how their content area faculty initially resisted changes to address multiple state reforms. As a result, Akmal and Miller found that it was essential to identify program advocates and bring them together early in the process to take charge of the changes. They acknowledge that teacher education program change is extremely complex on college campuses. Not only does physical space separate stakeholders, often making essential face-to-face interactions more difficult, but faculty members also can withdraw from or resist initiatives because of "academic turf." Disciplinary boundaries also lend themselves to a campus culture that often perpetuates a devaluing of teacher education as a discipline making collaboration more difficult.

Phases of Change: Akmal and Miller (2003) described four phases in their program redesign that are essential for bringing faculty together to collaborate on redesign. In phase one, the *Educative Phase*, stakeholders must become knowledgeable of programmatic changes. Although informational materials and meetings may be helpful, they are not sufficient. Akmal and Miller caution that presenting new reforms often invites pushback from faculty, especially content area faculty who are not as aware of state and federal policies or issues in teacher preparation and licensure so the educative phase must be much more than "we must do this." Akmal and Miller also caution that not everyone will be ready or can become well informed within the same timeframe. If insufficient time is spent in phase one, then phase two, the *Collaborative Construction Phase*, is jeopardized. Collaborative Construction represents the stage of the change process in which the difficult

conversations about how changes should happen occur. Essential to the success of this collaboration is that all faculty voices are heard and faculty resistance is openly addressed in a respectful way.

Once the change process moves to the third stage, the *Summative Phase,* it has entered the "bureaucratic maze of committees and leaders" for approving changes (Akmal & Miller, 2003, p. 414). This third phase seems to require many of the *technical* challenges of redesign (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004), but it also encompasses important *adaptive* challenges to ensure alignment with mission and core values. Much of the paperwork emerges in this phase because redesigns require new course and program proposals, catalog changes as well as scheduling, faculty loading, and staffing decisions. Thus, faculty ownership in reforms may wane or revert to self-focused concerns if faculty views the summative phase as administrative work rather than a continuation of curriculum design.

Finally, Akmal and Miller (2003) describe the importance of a *Recursive Phase,* the fourth step in their reform process, during which data and feedback are collected and analyzed regarding the efficacy of implemented changes. During this final phase assessment initiates a new cycle of change for continuous program improvements. As we discuss in this article, we discovered the importance of having a *recursive process* as part of every stage rather than as a separate phase. With multiple changes occurring simultaneously and multiple redesign efforts at different stages, we found that revisiting phases constantly to insure meaningfully integration of new changes with other redesign components was essential (cf. Cochran-Smith's, 2003, *critical inquiry stance*).

Context of Redesign

For this article, we critically examined the first two years of intensive redesign efforts as an educational unit with 20 undergraduate educator preparation programs. The programs are comprised of approximately 300 teacher candidates at a private master's-level college of just over 3,000 students. Eleven programs are housed in the Department of Education: early childhood, elementary, special education, broad field science (biology, chemistry, physics), and broad field social science (economics, geography, history, political science, sociology). The other nine programs reside in seven separate departments: art, communication (theatre), English, kinesiology, mathematics, music, and world languages and literatures (French, German, Spanish). Program sizes vary from a relatively large elementary education program (i.e., more than 100 candidates) and seven moderately sized programs of 25-35 candidates (early childhood, English, history, kinesiology, mathematics, music, special education) to the remaining 12 programs each with only a few teacher candidates.

We began by sharing how our unit-wide redesign process unfolded after the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS-2013) were released in December 2010. As the new IPTS emerged, we had just begun to transition to an electronic portfolio (ePortfolio) for all candidates, originally designed around the previous version of the IPTS. Then as we integrated the new IPTS with our ePortfolio system, Illinois Public Act 97-607 mandated a teacher performance assessment for licensure, and Stanford's TPA, now edTPA, had to be integrated into the redesign (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity, SCALE, 2013), propelling us into a third cycle of change while the first two cycles continued.

Change Cycle I: New Professional Teaching Standards

The IPTS-2013 initiated our first major cycle of comprehensive program redesign and immediately impacted all 20 teacher education programs. Because the unit assessment system was designed

around the former IPTS, many faculty initially approached the new standards as a *technical* rather than *adaptive* challenge (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). Without adequate attention to an *educative phase* (Akmal & Miller, 2003), we distributed the new information and quickly moved into program meetings to construct new curriculum matrices. This goal to complete the matrices produced initial confusion because some faculty focused on differences between new and old standards (i.e., what needed to be added), while others focused on similarities (i.e., how new standards could be substituted for old ones). Contributing to misinterpretations, programs began working in one of four traditional organizational groups - early childhood, elementary, secondary/K-12, and special education – using different approaches and timelines. This was especially confusing for faculty working in multiple groups.

In hindsight, we attempted to enter this first cycle of redesign using our traditional leadership and organizational structures. The department chair (i.e., unit head) worked with directors who organized program meetings around the curriculum matrices to document the course alignments. This organizational structure was inadequate for two major reasons. First, changes in faculty and program directors and coordinators meant that not everyone was well informed and able to collaborate productively on the redesigns. Rather than become well informed as a unit and then begin the process, each program developed its own working goals and meanings. Second, due to the varied sizes of the programs, redesign progressed at different rates, placing pressure on larger groups to conform to what smaller groups had decided. For example, special education had a working group of three full-time faculty members, but the secondary/K-12 program had more than 20 faculty across multiple programs to coordinate across campus.

Akmal and Miller's (2003) *Educative Phase* was essentially overlooked with faculty quickly moving through what they viewed as *Constructive Collaboration* to get to *Summative* curriculum matrices as efficiently as possible. Moreover, because meetings often were scheduled around the needs of the most informed faculty, who were also the most willing and able to attend, not everyone fully participated in the initial process.

Faculty who attended program meetings developed shared perspectives and learned more about colleagues' courses, but the IPTS redesign unfolded as a *technical* challenge (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004) with indicators being negotiated for different courses. At the same time technical and adaptive challenges were intertwined. For example, as programs worked to align courses with new IPTS indicators in developmental sequences (i.e., introductory, developing, proficient) important gaps in program outcomes and course sequencing were revealed. Therefore, when the summative phase could not be achieved, faculty began to move beyond modifying existing syllabi to substantially changing courses and ultimately programs in important ways.

However, faculty resistance was present in the IPTS redesign and initially we did not address this, which prolonged making important adaptive changes. As Heifetz and Linsky (2004) predicted, we had "casualties" (p. 6). One type of casualty was faculty who passively resisted (i.e., differing degrees of faculty unwillingness, Fairman & McLean, 2003). Some faculty approached the redesign by complying without ownership (e.g., "just tell me what indicators I'm responsible for"). Other faculty appeared to withhold opposing views and passively resist by minimizing "their loss" (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004) and keeping their courses as similar to their previous versions as possible. Another form of resistance, one from among the leadership, was seen in the scheduling of meetings. Most

importantly, however, not everyone was available for redesign meetings because the pre-scheduled meeting times within the Department of Education were used to organize groups. Thus resistance also came from unit and program leadership as well as course instructors.

When the first drafts of syllabi and curriculum matrices were reviewed, we discovered that several full-time and part-time faculty members had needed a more comprehensive *Educative Phase* to better understand our overall standards-based curriculum and assessments. As program directors sequenced the IPTS on their matrices, they found gaps and asked faculty to address them. However, some faculty voiced resistance to adding more indicators to their courses and making more changes. To quell opposition, the unit leadership team and the program directors decided to focus the next phase of IPTS redesign on three professional seminars, which had been used as an organizational sequence across all programs for completing unit assessments. As the next section describes, the redesign of the professional seminars, although a way to avoid conflict initially and fill curricular "gaps," proved to build a stronger core curriculum framework for all programs, which would later serve as a model for launching new endorsement redesigns (e.g., elementary education).

Collaborating on the Core Seminar Model

The professional seminars were designed as a four semester hour sequence with candidates completing the first seminar (two semester hours) at entrance to the program, the second seminar (one semester hour) at the beginning of upper-level methods course sequences, and the final seminar (one semester hour) during the semester prior to student teaching. The seminars housed the unit assessment system's checkpoints for evaluating candidate readiness and the successful completion of key local assessments. Across the three seminars we also had embedded the four major components of our mission and core values: Caring Classrooms (Seminar 1), Diverse Learners (Seminar 2), Professional Collaboration (Seminar 3), and Practice-centered Learning Experiences (all seminars).

The redesign of the professional seminar sequence to incorporate new IPTS was very successful. Because these unit-wide seminars were taught by a variety of teacher education faculty across departments, there was collective faculty ownership so we encountered less individual resistance and loss in redesigning them. Moreover, seminar meetings had been regularly scheduled to maintain alignment across seminars and between sections of the same seminar. Therefore, unlike the IPTS programmatic changes, the redesign of the professional seminars benefitted from a history of faculty collaboration from different programs with regular planning times. Seminar redesign also benefitted from a more comprehensive *educative phase* (Akmal & Miller, 2003) because specific meetings were held to examine the developmental sequencing of the IPTS across the seminars and to determine how seminar field experiences and assignments needed to be changed. What emerged was a re-conceptualization of the seminars' purposes and content, as well as improvements in our unit assessment rubrics.

The seminar redesign clearly reflected distinct educative and constructive collaboration phases, which promoted two major outcomes not experienced in other IPTS redesign efforts. First, seminar meetings garnered better participation among a variety of faculty because instructor-scheduled meetings were common practice and scheduled to maximize attendance. Second, as the seminars became more complex (i.e., integrating and sequencing more IPTS indicators with more focused field experiences), faculty acknowledged that having so many versions of the seminars, especially in

different departments, was no longer feasible. Thus, the seminar redesigns accommodated candidates from different programs into the same course sections. In addition, because faculty shared a seminar, there was no ownership loss of "my course" and the workload for changing the course syllabi and outcomes was shared among the group. In sum, the seminar redesign process illustrated the importance of strong educative and constructive collaboration processes that brought everyone to the table with the necessary knowledge, readiness, and willingness to make changes.

Change Cycle II: ePortfolios

By fall 2011, as the new IPTS were being implemented for the first time, all teacher education programs began transitioning to early versions of a common ePortfolio. This internal change to ePortfolios was intended to support candidates in producing more integrative and technologically advanced performance assessments. As a unit, we wanted to move away from a variety of outdated models, including "binder portfolios" and commercial digital collections of assignments. Initially, using a common ePortfolio organized around the new professional standards (IPTS) was viewed as another *technical* challenge (Heifetz & Linsky, 2004). However, the ePortfolio redesign differed from that of the IPTS in that we used a backwards design process (Wiggins & McTighe, 2001) with the shared goal across all programs to improve our candidates' senior capstone projects.

Technical challenges dominated early on in transitioning to the new ePortfolios so practical issues initially masked some of the deeper adaptive challenges (Hefitz & Linsky, 2004) that needed to be addressed. The technical aspects of the new ePortfolios, which used a Google template developed by our reference librarians, were not intuitive for some faculty members and candidates. The format allowed for candidates to change the template and avoid a "cookie cutter" or "shopping list" approach to candidate assessment. Faculty teaching the professional seminars were most impacted by the change to ePortfolios because they were responsible for supporting and assessing them. Several faculty members found that the ePortfolio consumed more time in their seminars, more time supporting candidates outside of class, and more time in conducting the ePortfolio presentations. In addition, many candidates felt pressured by the need to increase the quality and quantity of their fieldwork to upload sufficient evidence for their ePortfolio reviews (i.e., one in each seminar and then again in the capstone).

By spring 2013 we had reached the *recursive phase* with both the ePortfolios and IPTS redesigns being fully implemented in all programs. At this stage candidate feedback revealed that they wanted seminar instructors to focus more on content and spend less time on the ePortfolios. Candidates also suggested that program courses other than the seminars should utilize the ePortfolios to more fully integrate them as performance assessment tools across the program. Although the seminar redesign had successfully integrated the IPTS and the ePortfolio, we realized that we had not yet reached comprehensive program- and unit-level redesign.

Change Cycle III: Teacher Performance Assessment

Approximately midway through the redesign of our teacher education programs we learned about the forthcoming state-mandated licensure Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA). The introduction of this new reform as the IPTS and ePortfolios were being integrated caused us to search for a different process in continuing our redesign efforts. The TPA, which stemmed from a 25-year history of development in performance-based assessment of teaching quality (edTPA Handbook, 2012), seemed to be a good fit to our unit assessment system and redesign efforts. However, this particular

reform presented new challenges. First, TPA specified a common language and set of outcomes for planning, instruction, and assessment that our candidates had to be able to demonstrate to outside evaluators using video (edTPA Handbook, 2012). In addition, we realized that more stakeholders (i.e., college supervisors, mentor and cooperating teachers, and school partners) had to be involved in this new cycle of redesign. Thus the external pressure of a new standardized performance assessment introduced multiple *technical* and *adaptive* challenges. At the same time, understanding this mandated change was complicated by the fact that the performance assessment itself was going through major change cycles (i.e., moving from TPA to edTPA, SCALE, 2013). Therefore, as this third change cycle commenced, it became evident that we needed to approach additional changes differently if they were going to make a meaningful difference to our ongoing redesign efforts.

Learning from Our Past

Initially faculty viewed edTPA as yet another external driver for change and one that was high stakes and we quickly realized that preparing candidates for this new licensure performance assessment would be much easier than preparing faculty and stakeholders. Because we were steeped in redesign it was immediately evident that many components of edTPA were already integrated into our new curriculum and assessments. We also learned early that the ePortfolio could serve as a flexible platform to help candidates learn how to prepare edTPA materials to upload them for external evaluation (i.e., a commercial portfolio was not required). However, because we had not participated in any of the early TPAC pilots, the *educative phase* for implementing the new performance assessment seemed overwhelming. Unlike our previous redesign efforts, the edTPA process came fully formed to faculty and they struggled in trying to make it meaningful.

Fortunately, we had learned from the two previous change cycles and approached edTPA differently. First, we knew the importance of the *educative phase* and that implementing edTPA would need more time than simply distributing and discussing its informational resources. We also acknowledged that faculty knowledge, confidence, and willingness varied greatly. Therefore, we focused on how the edTPA component of our redesign could create a professional development model for the unit. Perhaps because we had just arrived at the point where the new ePortfolios were being used during student teaching for the capstone, we immediately focused on implementing edTPA during student teaching as part of a comprehensive backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2001). In sum, we began with the end product and worked backward to what components of edTPA needed to be introduced and developed at different stages in each program.

Planning for this third cycle of change for the first time moved our faculty through Akmal and Miller's (2003) first three distinct phases (*Educative* to *Constructive Collaboration* to *Summative*). Our initial goal was to raise awareness of faculty members both inside and outside the Department of Education as well as college administration (i.e., informing of the high stakes implications, the timeline, and requesting additional resources) and school partners. We were especially concerned about placing more stress on our relationships with content area faculty, who were still engaged in the process of redesigning programs and courses to align to ITPS, adjusting to the redesigned core seminars, and learning how to implement and support the new ePortfolios. In addition, edTPA would impact our school partners, mentor and cooperating teachers, and part-time faculty who supervised student teachers--three groups of stakeholders who had been indirectly involved in previous redesign efforts.

Initially, we were surprised that using a more deliberate *educative phase* did not seem to result in more faculty understanding or "buy in" of the edTPA changes. Instead, there appeared to be an overwhelming need for more clarification of the edTPA process, which we later realized was evidence that faculty often need a *recursive process*, even at the educative phase. To address this demand, professional development was built into a timeline that used regularly scheduled Education faculty meetings with additional differentiated meetings for college supervisors. To break down the traditional hierarchical structure a professional development edTPA team consisting of three faculty members from different programs was formed. These faculty members were the advocates and peer educators during bi-monthly workshops. Advanced agenda and resources were sent to arts and sciences faculty, part-time faculty, and college supervisors. In addition, the workshop topics were designed to demonstrate the edTPA team's goal of listening and adapting to faculty needs.

Having spent almost a year in this *educative phase* for edTPA, we then entered the phase of *collaborative construction* comprised of curriculum articulation and edTPA pilot design. During the *educative phase* faculty came to share the perspective that edTPA was everyone's responsibility (Akmal & Miller's, 2003, *reciprocity*). Moreover, the edTPA team's responsiveness to a variety of learning needs promoted a stronger culture of sharing ideas for critique and asking questions (i.e., *Constructive Collaboration*, Akmal & Miller, 2003). Workshops were frequently differentiated for participants who had different levels of background knowledge or for program-level group meetings. Most importantly, edTPA, IPTS-2013, and ePortfolios were synthesized as a *programmatic whole* to create a single working curricular framework which provided continuity for all stakeholders, regardless of program. In sum, edTPA, ePortfolios, and IPTS-2013 redesigns merged to promote a deeper collective understanding of the interdependence among programs, courses, and faculty.

Lessons Learned

Learning to take a holistic and continuous view of change has provided us with a stronger professional stance for future changes and has changed our professional culture on campus. For example, we view technical elements, like the ePortfolios, as "evolving tools." Similarly, including faculty development as a regular part of faculty meetings has provided a new organizational structure that continues to support edTPA and provides common space for new topics, such as culturally-responsive pedagogy which is an essential component in our elementary education redesign. We have learned to value *constructive* collaboration, which cannot be sent by e-mail or web links but needs to be discussed and debated with all of us in the same room. In addition, we have learned not to limit collaboration only to the stakeholders involved directly in a program--more voices result in better decision-making and wider ownership. Finally, we have learned the importance of not assuming that the educational phase is over (or not needed) before moving into collaboration, or that once we reach a decision, new information and collaborations are no longer required. In some instances changes in our processes have been much more transformative than the final product of redesigns.

Learning to Scale Up

In the case of moving to ePortfolios we learned the value of *scaling up* by selecting a group of candidates to begin the redesign process before full implementation. For example, our early childhood candidates, who had been using a commercial web-based portfolio, were the first to transition to the ePortfolio. Unlike the IPTS redesign only one program began the process first. And unlike the professional seminar redevelopment, we did not wait to implement fully a major change

before getting feedback and improving on it. The early childhood pilot group served as our "scout team" by constantly working together with two faculty and two resource librarians and giving continuous feedback from their mistakes and successes. This strategy for implementing a programmatic change was highly successful and one that we are using in future redesign efforts (i.e., the edTPA pilot in Fall 2013; the first elementary education cohort anticipated for launch in Fall 2015).

The ePortfolio redesign scaling up process also was successful because it promoted reciprocity among a group of students and faculty, something a pilot group does not necessarily do. Strong candidate-faculty constructive collaboration helped unpack changes from different perspectives. Working as a team also situated the ePortfolio as a "work in progress," which removed some of the pressure for the candidates. The faculty and candidates continuously shared their ePortfolios with each other and other program candidates. For example, one candidate shared her ePortfolio during its formative stages at a Department of Education faculty meeting and again to candidates in other program seminars who were just beginning the process.

In *scaling up* we observed the importance of a continuous recursive process and how it supported meaningful change among a variety of stakeholders. As other teacher education programs transitioned to the ePortfolios the flexibility in process and product was sustained. To support the continuous changes, we created a simple *portfolio packet* (approximately 10 pages as a PDF) that is updated every semester. The flexibility embraced by *scaling up* the ePortfolio invigorated our unit assessment system. The ePortfolio *packets* provide opportunities for the integration of edTPA components, on-going changes in edTPA, and revisions of key assessment rubrics. For example, a *context for learning* (edTPA Handbook, 2012) was added to the ePortfolio requirements prior to each teaching event. *Teaching events* in ePortfolios asked candidates to analyze *academic language*, *language demands*, and *language supports*, creating relevancy for faculty to address these concepts in their courses.

In summary, the ePortfolio became an integral part of our redesign process, which will now be key in our newly designed elementary education's program assessments. The ePortfolio in the elementary redesign will support all courses and field experiences in a more integrative way. Candidates will use their ePortfolios at the end of each of three "blocks" for a program performance assessment and then at the end of their program for their senior capstone. The ePortfoliio pilot group, like the edTPA team, became our *advocates for the change* (Akmal & Miller, 2003).

Keeping Change Relevant

A second important lesson learned was keeping candidate outcomes at the forefront of redesign efforts and connecting these clearly to our mission and core values. These constant and overlapping curriculum changes, though frustrating, quickly revealed improvements in candidates' key assessments and capstone projects. For example, integrating more edTPA components into the ePortfolio served as a springboard for collaboratively creating a more meaningful senior capstone that will launch simultaneously with the edTPA pilot in Fall 2015.

Relevancy is an essential element in faculty's constructive collaboration. For example, rather than leave the capstone design to program directors, the program directors collectively met and created six proposals for a new capstone. The directors presented the proposals to the faculty and

negotiated a consensus model for adoption. The new capstones will use a professional interview format for which faculty organized themselves into teams to design the different capstone components in which student teachers will receive a "posted teaching position" in their endorsement area and upload their professional materials and evidence of impact on student learning to their ePortfolios, then "schedule an interview." During finals week, each candidate will be interviewed by a pair of program faculty using questions aligned with our unit outcomes which connects our assessment system more explicitly to our mission, goals, and core values. The new capstone, like the new professional seminars and ePortfolio, provides candidates with more authentic and integrated learning experiences, all while providing data for improving the program. Keeping change meaningful is essential because phases of change can be complex, especially with simultaneous redesign efforts in different stages of development.

Creating Leadership Capacity

The third major lesson learned across our redesigns was to create opportunities for multiple and changing faculty leaders. Based on our efforts related to the IPTS-2013 redesign, we learned that successful change means shifting from the *technical* to the *adaptive* and from *external* mandates to *internal* choices. To do this most effectively, we had to develop new ways to organize and share responsibilities. We had to change both our style of governance as well as involve more faculty members in leadership roles. We were committed to a distributive leadership model (Deal & Peterson, 2009) but learned that before we can distribute leadership colleagues must be able, willing, and confident, not always the case during our redesign efforts. Therefore, a third major lesson has been about building leadership capacity (Lambert, 2000) and sharing accountability.

The importance of building leadership capacity became clear as we began to incorporate program redesign with edTPA. In part, this lesson was learned serendipitously because the traditional leadership hierarchy of chairs and directors was overwhelmed with IPTS-2013, new professional seminars, and ePortfolios. So, as mentioned previously, an edTPA Team emerged as a flexible leadership team structure (i.e., the membership changes slightly each semester to involve three to four faculty members from different programs). Although the primary task of the edTPA Leadership Team is to plan and conduct the edTPA workshops, this new organizational change has had a broader cultural impact about leadership and shared responsibility.

Similar to the early childhood ePortfolio group, the edTPA Team became the "scout team" and change advocates. They provided a new model of leadership and also demonstrated that knowledge is distributed throughout the faculty and not assigned to just one colleague (e.g., the edTPA coordinator, the department chairperson, the program director). The professional development was planned to be evolving (like the ePortfolios) and relevant (like the new capstones), in such a way that colleagues would continually share personal assumptions about the edTPA and infuse elements of the performance assessment into their course assignments (Cochran-Smith, 2003). The goal of the professional development was for the entire faculty to develop shared understandings of edTPA by the end of the 2012-2013 academic year. Faculty who attended the workshops discussed and debated concepts used in the edTPA such as *context for learning*, *academic language*, and *analysis of teaching*. Topics also included technical aspects such as the tasks and commentaries of the edTPA, video recording requirements, the scoring rubrics, and licensure requirements. In this way, both the *technical* and the *adaptive* challenges were interwoven, yet explicitly addressed.

The edTPA team emphasized that faculty would not be told what to do, but everyone had to assume responsibility for gaining and sharing knowledge. For example, instead of the edTPA team watching a TPA training webinar and then relaying the information, an entire faculty meeting was dedicated to watching the webinar together. These leadership changes improved the quality of the *Educative Phase* for edTPA and seamlessly transitioned our faculty into constructive collaboration as we now prepare for the edTPA local assessment pilot in Fall 2013. A variation on this professional development is being used in Fall 2013 for a series of workshops for education and arts and sciences faculty in culturally-relevant pedagogy, a major component of the Elementary Redesign.

Meeting Faculty at Their Levels of Readiness and Willingness

A fourth lesson learned, which appeared in every redesign effort, but was not recognized until we wrote this article is the importance of meeting faculty where they are and not making assumptions about their readiness or willingness without their input. This challenge in redesign became most evident during the edTPA workshops that more clearly revealed differences in faculty understanding and enthusiasm which were further complicated by our traditional meeting structures (i.e., full-time faculty, student teaching supervisors, and secondary content faculty being present in the same workshop or choosing to attend at different times). Thus, the normal variances in faculty understanding and participation became problematic, especially considering Cochran-Smith's (2003) proposition that teacher educators need a shared knowledge base to be most effective for teacher candidates' learning.

With these realities of varying degrees of participation and preparation in mind, meetings have been reconceived to address attendees' varying knowledge so that everyone can make these reforms more personally meaningful and be able to support the candidates with whom they are working. For example, the edTPA leadership team has began to focus on collaborative work within *differentiated professional development* workshops that support *technical* and *adaptive* changes. For example, the technical changes like permission letters for video recording were important for faculty to understand and accept due to their practical nature. In contrast, the adaptive changes that required re-examining faculty courses, unit assessment tools, and program sequencing of candidate outcomes were more difficult because these processes asked faculty to alter what they value about their profession and restructure their beliefs, in this case about their courses and field supervision (Heifitz & Linsky, 2004).

Finally, faculty knowledge and willingness also must be supported by simple organizational structures that maximize opportunities to become informed and collaborate. Many of the perceived differences in faculty knowledge and willingness appear to have been leadership failures to reorganize something as basic as meeting times. Although we have expanded leadership capacity, we were still struggling with ways to bring everyone to the table. One approach that we are now using is to schedule redesign meetings when everyone can be present and to utilize our meeting times differently. For example, edTPA workshops can be part of meetings that have been specifically for content faculty or supervisors. When the first three lessons--scaling up, keeping change relevant, and building leadership capacity, are combined with the fourth--meeting faculty where they are, meaningful reform is possible.

Conclusions

As a faculty critical inquiry group involved in examining simultaneous redesign efforts, we have learned that continuously to improve high quality teacher preparation programs, we must all build our

collective leadership capacity and provide adequate time and support for change. Each new redesign effort needs to begin with a comprehensive *Educative Phase*, during which we can no longer assume that faculty members have similar readiness levels or can be "brought up to speed" with the same resources and meetings. To lead quality redesigns, teacher educators must determine the ability and willingness of their colleagues to respond to initiatives or mandates (Fairman & McLean, 2003). In other words, leading change means adapting to people and tasks simultaneously (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). The quality of the *Educative Phase* in producing collaborative and meaningful programmatic change cannot be emphasized enough. We no longer delegate programmatic changes without first acknowledging whether faculty are able, willing, and confident in implementing them.

Second, redesign has become part of what we do collectively. We may not have everyone participating as fully as desirable, but we have learned the essential process of *Constructive Collaboration*. This point can be best illustrated by the way in which we are approaching the new licensure program requirements. When we began to design a new elementary education program, the entire teacher education faculty was involved, whether they taught in the program or not. We emphasized that the new program belonged to the Unit, not only to the elementary education faculty, because the program's design would have implications for everyone. The redesigned elementary education program has benefitted from the broader perspective in both *technical* ways (e.g., how to organize and supervise practicums; how to schedule college courses in blocks and provide a full day in the schools) and *adaptive* ways (e.g., whether an educational studies major should be required prior to program admissions; whether licensure programs should begin the junior year).

Finally, we have learned that the *Summative Phase* of any redesign is a phase of the cycle of change and not an end stage. Moreover, the final products of redesign must be clearly aligned to the meaningful outcomes. As a faculty we have to collaboratively establish *why* we are choosing to change our teacher preparation programs in particular ways--making external reforms internal decisions. Moreover, we need to always ask ourselves *how* our changes are fundamental to achieving our mission, vision, and core values. At the same time being comfortable with setbacks is essential, such as accepting that we will not always agree and that there will be steps backward to move forward. The hardest work in launching any teacher preparation design or redesign is the most rewarding--to remain responsive and continually connect change to core values and the quality of teachers we prepare for P-12 schools.

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Alternative Certification: an Experiential Pathway to Professional Practice

by Alison Hilsabeck, Ph.D., Diane Salmon, Ph.D., and Harry Ross, Ph.D.

Author Bios

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Abstract

Alternative routes to a teaching credential arose during the 1980s, largely in response to shortages of certified teachers, particularly within high-need, urban schools. These routes have burgeoned into a significant pathway to certification for working adults, but have been subject to much debate. In this article, we review the policy environment that has shaped the development and consideration of alternative routes. We suggest that it is time to reconsider alternative certification outside of the heated rhetoric of reform, bringing a fresh eye to it from the perspective of research on teacher learning. We believe that the development of multiple rigorous pathways into teaching represents an important area for innovation and adaptation in teacher preparation. We are particularly interested in the opportunities alternative certification presents for building field-intensive, experiential learning models for teacher education.

Introduction

The last decade has witnessed significant challenges to traditional teacher preparation within a rapidly evolving environment of reform. Concerns about the quality and outcomes of the U.S. education system dominate much of the public policy sphere. National statistics show that three in ten public school students fail to finish high school and students of color fare even worse with just over half of Latino and African-American students completing their secondary education (Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2010). Illinois mirrors this disappointing record, with just 71 of every 100 students who begin 9th grade successfully earning high school diplomas. Meanwhile, only 51% of African-American students and 62% of Latino students in Illinois who enter 9th grade will graduate.

Percentages of high school students in Illinois demonstrating college readiness on at least three subject benchmarks on the ACT are a dismal 52% for white students, 20% for Latino students, and only 11% for African-American students (Advance Illinois, 2012).

The U.S. record of student achievement relative to the international community is not auspicious either. According to the OECD's report, *Lessons from PISA for the United States*, on the 2009 PISA assessment of 15-year-olds across the 34 OECD countries, the United States students performed about average in reading (rank 14) and science (rank 17) and performed below average in mathematics (rank 25). It is worth noting that PISA assessments, unlike many commonly used U.S. standardized assessments, are not centered on rote content knowledge, but rather students' "ability to reflect on their knowledge and experience and to apply them to real-world issues."

The achievement gap related to poverty is particularly stark. In Illinois, only 17% of low-income 8th graders scored proficient or better in math in 2011, compared with 47% of non-poor students, and the gap in 8th grade reading is comparable (Advance Illinois, 2012). The effects of poverty on achievement in the U.S. are echoed in the 2009 international PISA scores. The OECD notes that a whopping 17% of the variation in student performance in the U.S. is attributable to students' socio-economic background. This is contrasted with just a 9% effect in Canada and Japan (OECD, 2011).

Further, the goals of education are evolving. In preparing students to participate in our economy, for example, it is important to consider how the nature of work has shifted in ways that privilege expert thinking and complex communication skills over routine cognitive tasks that require only basic literacy and numeracy. In Illinois, our home state, it is estimated that eight out of every ten jobs now require more than a high school diploma. Further, fewer than one-third of all high school graduates in Illinois will successfully complete a two- or four-year degree program (Advance Illinois, 2012). And this has implications for our entire nation, for there is no more significant variable in a country's economic growth than the skill of its labor force (Hanusheck, 2012). Just as important is the education of an informed citizenry able to participate actively in a democracy and enjoy fully realized lives. *Lessons from PISA* notes a convergence around the importance of providing all citizens with "the type and quality of education formerly provided only to the elite" (OECD, 2011, p. 17).

Given our new realities and professed commitment to equal opportunity, we can no longer tolerate an educational system that identifies and trains only an elite few in high-level skills and talent development (in 2010, only 10.5% of the population had achieved an advanced degree), that provides access to post-secondary education to only about 40% of our population, and that fails to prepare a significant subset of our population to earn even a high school diploma (U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012). Arguably, the education system that was good enough to sustain a broad middle class in the U.S. through previous decades is no longer appropriate to ensure economic vitality, leadership in innovation, or a knowledgeable electorate in today's rapidly changing global environment -- let alone tomorrow's.

Teacher Education in an Era of Reform

Teachers have been placed at the center of the debate about how best to improve the outcomes of our education system; by extension teacher preparation has become a focus of reform efforts. For example, the Obama Administration's Plan for Teacher Education Reform and Improvement asserts that 62% of new teachers report feeling unprepared for "classroom realities" and, among other

criticisms, suggests, "… too many [teacher preparation programs] do not provide teachers with a rigorous, clinical experience that prepares them for the schools in which they will work" (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Teacher education programs, however, face the complexity of preparing educators for schools that are frequently not organized to support excellence in teaching. In *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, & Hammerness, 2007), the authors note:

> If improvement of education is the goal, it is not enough to prepare good teachers and send them out to schools. If teachers are to be effective, they must work in settings where they can use what they know – where, for example, they can come to know students and families well; work with other teachers to provide a coherent, well-grounded curriculum; evaluate and guide student progress using information-rich assessments; and use texts and materials that support thoughtful learning. Unfortunately, given the patchwork of policies, the plethora of competing decision makers, and the fragmented design of factory-model schools, these conditions are not present in many, perhaps most, U.S. schools. (p. 4).

The issues are most starkly present in urban, high-need schools which serve disproportionately large numbers of minority and low income students and which are also disproportionately likely to be served by less-qualified teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2010) and to suffer much higher rates of teacher turnover, reaching an annual attrition rate of over 20% in urban schools (NCTAF, 2007). And the scope of poverty is expanding. The gap between the average reading and mathematical skills of children from low-income families and relatively affluent families in the U.S. has increased by one-third over the last three decades (Murnane, 2012). In 2012, 55% of Illinois public schools served populations in which at least 40% of students qualified for a free or reduced price lunch, up from 35% a decade before (Advance Illinois, 2012). Learning the skills to close the achievement gap for children in poverty must become a major factor in teacher preparation.

Alternative Certification

Because the outcomes for poor and minority students are disproportionately problematic, much of the reform agenda has been enacted in high-need, urban schools where these student populations are most highly concentrated. Alternative routes to certification are one such reform. Alternative pathways arose first in the 1980s to address projected shortages of teachers, particularly teachers for difficult-to-staff schools (National Center for Education Information, 2013). According to the National Center for Alternative Certification, by 2010, 48 states and the District of Columbia offered at least some type of alternative route to teacher certification and nationally one-third of new teachers being hired were coming through alternative routes to teacher certification (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2010).

Additionally, alternative routes have been attractive pathways into the teaching profession for adults holding a bachelor's degree and having significant work experience, and for whom a lengthy period of non-employment could make this kind of career shift difficult. The National Center for Education Information reports that "being able to teach while getting certified" and "receiving a teacher's salary and benefits" were the most important variables in candidates' choice of an alternative route to teaching (NCEI, 2005). It is not a coincidence that countries such as Finland, which are able to

attract teachers from among the highest achieving college students and whose students are among the highest scoring on PISA, also provide free teacher preparation to all admitted candidates (Sahlberg, 2011, p. 35). Paid residency models, such as the AUSL model with which NLU is affiliated, address this financial issue and provide deep, well-supported and fully engaged field experience, but are difficult to scale up without a long-term financial commitment to supporting this model in public education.

Alternative routes to teacher certification have been subject to much debate, generally focused upon whether alternative route teachers are as effective and as likely to be retained in teaching as teachers prepared through traditional routes. Research on the comparative effectiveness of alternatively and traditionally prepared teachers has been mixed (see, for example, Constantine, Player, Silva, Hallgren, Grider, & Deke, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2009; Sass, 2011). These mixed results, in part, reflect the vast variation in scope and quality of preparation within each route, making it difficult to demonstrate significant differences in effectiveness across the two categories.

In *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*, Darling-Hammond et al. argue that the route into teaching is less important than the quality of the teacher preparation program. They note, "Although program qualities, and quality, vary widely across the many contemporary routes into teaching, these do not divide neatly across categories often used to describe them. Both the so-called 'traditional' and 'nontraditional' programs can range from at best rudimentary to highly coherent and effective" (Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, & Hammerness, 2007, p. 4). Both routes offer opportunities and challenges, and each may offer a better fit for the life circumstances of a particular subset of the diverse range of teacher education candidates. In a 2009 white paper reconsidering alternative certification, Darling-Hammond identifies a set of important elements of effective programs. These include:

- a match between the context of field work and the future full-time teaching assignment
- opportunities to learn effective practices through direct clinical experience
- opportunities to study the local district's curriculum
- portfolio projects involving classroom work with students
- the amount of coursework in content and methods areas
- the program's oversight of high-quality field experience, and
- involvement of tenure-line faculty (Darling-Hammond, 2009).

We are intrigued by the degree to which most of the dimensions listed above are enhanced and enabled by deep, immersive field experiences in which the candidate has both the time AND the authority to implement research-based practices as well as to study their effectiveness in action, with coaching and support from effective teachers and university faculty.

Institutional Background

The National College of Education at National Louis University (NCE) has engaged for many years in providing multiple pathways into the teaching profession. It is our belief that the complex circumstances of our candidates and of their future students suggest the need for a variety of options. In providing multiple routes to licensure, the institution has had the unique opportunity to assess firsthand the effectiveness of various pathways in terms of preparing educators from diverse backgrounds and experiences who are capable of effective practice in the challenging circumstances of today's and tomorrow's schools. While we do not claim to have the "right" answers or to privilege our approaches above those enacted in other high-quality teacher preparation programs, we are

committed to innovation and to disciplined evaluation of our work to continually improve it. In this context, our depth of experience in preparing educators for work in high-need urban schools, notably our work with alternative certification programs, represents a prominent focus for us at this time.

NCE has been committed to preparing effective teachers since its inception in 1886. We are one of the largest education schools in the state of Illinois, with 92 full-time faculty members in the college of education. We typically prepare over 1000 candidates for teacher licensure each year. Over the past decades, NCE has been actively engaged in providing multiple pathways to licensure. These have included traditional routes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, a full-time residency model in partnership with the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), a home-grown residency model based on partnerships with elementary school districts to utilize teacher aide positions as residency placements, a partnership with multiple CPS high schools to provide a year-long part-time to full-time apprenticeship model, and a number of alternative certification programs, including an NLU-specific ARC program and partnerships with Teach for America and the Chicago Teaching Fellows. A considerable amount of teacher preparation work has been done in conjunction with placements in high-need Chicago Public Schools, as well as under-resourced schools in districts such as Waukegan, Elgin, and Rockford.

NCE has worked hard to deepen our understanding of how to prepare teachers to succeed with their students and make careers of teaching in these urban schools, despite the many challenges. At the core, we have learned it is essential to create opportunities to:

1. *Learn through Teaching*: we have gained a renewed understanding of the power of experience in the learning process, that is, the power of thoughtfully sequenced, "hands-on" learning through teaching;

2. *Negotiate the Reform Environment*: we have repeatedly witnessed the importance of preparing teachers to be resilient and creative in coping with the challenges and constraints of high need schools; and
3. *Re-envision the Role of University Faculty*: new approaches to faculty time and load are necessary to support a focus on experiential learning for candidates in the particular context of high-need, urban schools. (see Figure 1).

Learning through Teaching

Developing the coordinated set of relational skills involved in teaching cannot really be learned in the abstract. Learning such complex skills happens best over time in the contexts in which they will ultimately be applied. Research from the cognitive sciences regarding *how people learn* (e.g. Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000) identifies important facets of learning complex skills through experience. This work lends contemporary support to historical progressive theories of experiential education (see, for example, Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 1984).

Research and our own experience lead us to place experiential learning at the core of teacher preparation and direct our attention to the potential power of the alternative licensure design. We believe that the new rules for alternative licensure in Illinois, particularly the change to a required two-year model, open up opportunities to deepen and intensify the experiences and, ultimately, the effectiveness of novice teachers. A two-year field model potentially offers the time and classroom

authority necessary to provide a rich, immersive approach to teaching, maximizing the potential for candidates to learn in and for urban, high-need schools while receiving significant coaching and support from both the employing school and the university (see, for example, Anderson & Stillman, 2011, on the potential of urban, field-based learning).

Learning by doing is most effective for teacher candidates when it entails three major ingredients. First, teacher candidates need opportunities for *distributed practice coupled with well-timed and appropriately targeted feedback* (Hattie, 2007). That is, teacher candidates need repeated opportunities to practice content pedagogy that impacts student learning while receiving timely, specific feedback from their coaches and mentors. Alternative certification offers more and deeper opportunities to practice content pedagogy than can be provided in short bursts of "practice teaching" within a classroom led and structured by a cooperating teacher. It also presents challenges, as candidates must be carefully prepared for such an intense immersion experience and must be closely coached to provide adequate and appropriate instruction.
Students' response to instruction is another important dimension of feedback in an experiential learning model; however, teacher candidates need many opportunities to practice learning how to interpret this student feedback (i.e., response to instruction) in light of their articulated instructional goals (Hiebert, Morris, Berk, & Jansen, 2006; Sherin, 2002). Hiebert et al. note that teachers, especially beginning teachers, "often analyze their practice in terms of a smooth implementation of activities rather than an anticipated change in students' thinking" (Hiebert, Morris, Berk, & Jansen, 2006, p. 52). They note, however, that teachers can become increasingly proficient at collecting and analyzing student work to improve teaching. Our experience working with teachers in high-need, urban schools supports this idea, especially when candidates are personally responsible for student outcomes and have many opportunities to link outcomes specifically to the teaching practices they enact.

Along with feedback from practice, candidates need to *make connections between particular experiences in classrooms and the principles behind why and when a particular pedagogical approach is used.* This theoretical knowledge can help guard against rigid or overly procedural learning (e.g., over-application of a strategy when it may not fit). Candidates need to be explicitly guided to think through their experiences in classrooms using research-based principles in order to develop strong, flexible conceptual frameworks for practice (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Finally, learning by doing requires *metacognitive reflection.* Metacognitive learning prompts teacher candidates to examine their thinking so they can more effectively monitor and critique their own decision-making during teaching (Lin, Schwartz, & Hatano, 2005). This metacognitive dimension serves as another source of feedback and ensures flexibility, transfer, and self-directed learning (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).

The three principles above are all manifest in our newly proposed alternative certification programs. During the first year of the program, processes for documenting teaching, analyzing student outcomes, and examining the effectiveness of enacted teaching techniques will be included in candidates' preparation for the edTPA. Learning and practicing these research and metacognitive skills will be essential to candidates as they prepare for formal Lesson Study (Lewis & Tsuchida, 1997; Lewis & Hund, 2011), a protocol for instructional inquiry and improvement that will serve as the backbone of year two of the program. The Lesson Study protocol is a teacher development framework created in Japan that enables teachers to come together as a peer community and

examine their lessons' impact on student thinking and learning. Lesson Study consists of the following elements:

- Study Curriculum and Formulate Goals. Consider long term goals for student learning and development. Study curriculum and standards, identify topic of interest.
- Plan, Select or Revise Research Lesson. Write instructional plans that include:
    - o Long term goals
    - o Anticipated student thinking
    - o Data collection plan
    - o Model of learning trajectory
    - o Rationale for chosen approach
- Conduct Research Lesson. One team member conducts research lessons, while others observe and collect data.
- Reflect. Formal lesson colloquium in which observers:
    - o Share data from lesson.
    - o Use the data to illuminate student learning, disciplinary content, lesson and unit design, and broader issues in teaching-learning.
- Documentation of cycle, to consolidate and carry forward learnings/new questions into the next cycle of lesson study.

The development of Lesson Study groups offers alternative certification candidates access to a collegial network and to a formal inquiry approach that can support both novice and experienced teachers. This approach implements the cycle of planning, enacting, and analyzing that Hiebert et al. suggest (Hiebert, Morris, Berk, & Jansen, 2006). Further, Lesson Study as inquiry provides opportunities for teachers to access what Anderson and Stillman call "front-stage labor" (enacted pedagogy) and "back-stage labor" (planning and analysis for teaching), in order to grasp "what's possible" as they develop adaptive expertise (Anderson and Stillman, 2011, pp. 458, 452).

The importance of professional peer relationships to improve student achievement is documented, for example, by a study involving more than 1,000 fourth- and fifth-grade teachers in a representative sample of 130 elementary schools in New York City. Leana found that students showed higher gains in math achievement when teachers engaged in frequent conversations with trusted peers about their teaching (2011). The study controlled for teacher experience and for other forms of human capital to demonstrate the power of social capital of teachers in generating high levels of student achievement.

Finally, another significant part of the dynamic complexity of learning through teaching involves relational work with students relative to the subject matter and their experiences (Ball & Forzani, 2009). Indeed, responsive pedagogy demands that teachers acquire and use deep knowledge of their students, their students' families and the community context in order to effectively engage and support students' learning (Darling-Hammond, Bransford, LePage, & Hammerness, 2007). We believe that an understanding of the community context can be informed by exposure to research on culturally relevant teaching, but must be anchored in actual experiences. Alternative certification, with its immersive full-time teaching circumstance, provides candidates with an immediate, vested interest in their school and its community that cannot be matched by more limited clinical experiences. Further, our alternative certification design includes a community study component in the pre-clinical preparation in order to guide candidates into the initial stages of building strong student, parent, and community relations.

Negotiating the Reform Environment

We have seen that a conceptual framework for teaching focused on student learning can help novice teachers work together more effectively as they adapt to the reform constraints that frequently characterize high need schools. Novice teachers need to develop expertise in enacting high leverage practices (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009). However, they must also develop expertise in working with colleagues to adapt curricula and pedagogy to meet the specific needs of their students and the local context (Galimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009; Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001), even as they may face expectations of enacting more scripted curricula and/or test-preparation-oriented approaches to teaching.

Collegial relationships focused on professional practice may offer critical support to teachers as they attempt to negotiate the complex environment of reform in high-need, urban schools. That environment leads some teachers to abandon student centeredness as they adapt to constrained curricular environments, including, for example, the imposition of scripted curricula. Others may resist reforms but put their careers at risk by isolating themselves from their professional community and from school leadership. Anderson and Stillman note the dilemma posed when "*both* abandoning student centeredness in the name of compliance *and* disengaging from the institutional landscape in the name of responsive teaching pose potential threats to students' development and mainstream academic success" (Anderson and Stillman, 2011, p. 458). We believe that collegial relationships based upon a formal approach such as Lesson Study can lead to improvements in teaching as well as collegial support for navigating tensions between the development and use of adaptive expertise and the constraints of decontextualized curricular standardization and test-centered practices.

Another aim of our proposed programs is for candidates to stay in the classroom long enough to become master teachers. Given the high attrition rate for teachers, especially teachers in high-need schools, this is a crucial aim. Teacher retention is an issue of deep concern, with nearly half of all teachers leaving the field within five years of entry. It has been estimated that the national cost of public school teacher turnover could be as much as $7.3 billion per year, with teacher attrition "spiraling out of control," having grown significantly and reaching a rate of over 20% in urban schools (NCTAF, 2007). One of the major NCTAF recommendations to address the problem of teacher retention is to "transform schools into genuine learning organizations," in order to "share responsibility for each other's continued growth and success" (NCTAF, 2007, p. 8). High attrition rates have been a justifiable source of criticism of alternative certification programs. However, we believe that attention to the development of supportive, practice-based peer relationships will contribute to candidates' resilience in challenging settings, and hence will support teacher retention.

Re-envisioning the Role of University Faculty

Many of the standard role relationships associated with teacher preparation (e.g. university faculty, field supervisors, cooperating teachers) must be reconsidered in order to improve the preparation of teachers for high-need, urban schools. We have engaged in a systematic reconsideration of faculty roles with regard to both research and practice in urban schools. Much of this work has been precipitated by a Faculty Research Residency project, funded through the FIPSE federal grant program. In the FRR project, university faculty are situated in partnering with high need schools to: 1) engage in a research project in their discipline to better understand and/or impact student learning, and 2) use the contextual knowledge gained from this in-depth experience to inform teacher

preparation course redesign. As a result of this research, faculty have constructed more nuanced understandings of instructional practices in high-need schools, as well as new avenues for helping novices to use them. The resulting curricular redesign efforts align well with practice-based theories of education (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009).

This work informs our approach to alternative certification and has led us to re-envision the role of faculty and faculty teams across the boundaries of teaching, coaching, supervision, and field-based research. Mechanisms for continuous support, coaching, and feedback are built into our alternative certification program design to scaffold effective practice as we work to decrease the traditional lag in the development of expert practice during the first years of teaching. Our approach to coaching has involved a re-envisioning of roles among teaching faculty, cooperating teachers, and supervision models.

One of our aforementioned FIPSE-supported research residencies allowed us to study these roles as enacted in our urban teacher residency partnership with the Academy for Urban School Leadership. This study by NLU faculty members Wendy Gardiner and Janet Lorch, noted the well-researched disjunctures commonly encountered between the roles of university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and university methods instructor (Slick, 1998; Veal & Rikard, 1998; Cucena et al., 2011; Zeichner, 2011). This work led to the piloting of a faculty liaison role, replacing the old field supervisor role and promoting greater collaboration between the school-based personnel and university faculty. Results of the pilot study support the effectiveness of the new approach and note an overall increase in the "triangle of support" for candidates provided by school and university personnel (Gardiner & Lorch, 2012). Our alternative certification program will further enhance the support function of university coaches by having separate candidate assessors who function independently to allow the coaches to focus on providing support to candidates.

We have also learned the importance of creating cross-disciplinary teams of faculty who are jointly responsible for bringing candidates to high levels of effective teaching, rather than having individual faculty members responsible for teaching a single course, which risks creating a student experience of disjointed learning goals and outcomes. We successfully piloted this team approach in the design and delivery of an urban M.Ed. program and have enacted the approach from the start of planning for our new alternative certification programs. Our experience suggests that the team approach promotes confidence and a deep investment among faculty in strong program quality and successful candidate outcomes.

Conclusion

It is difficult to imagine a more complex situation for teacher preparation than the current reform context. The economic recession has further complicated the environment for P-12 and for higher education, making reform balance on the constraints of scarce resources, punitive reforms rather than positive incentives, and short-term accountability rather than research-supported, long-term goals. It is also difficult to ignore the high stakes of this environment for colleges of education as well as for besieged P-12 schools, and especially for the future of our nation's children. Many voices and agendas compete for ascendency.

Colleges of education will need to adapt to a constantly shifting environment while thoughtfully enacting improvements to teacher preparation programs. We believe that this is a period demanding

innovation and disciplined experimentation to improve the preparation of teachers. A part of that innovation should promote and study multiple pathways to teaching, pathways that are themselves adapted to the needs of different teacher candidate circumstances and to the needs and contexts of the P-12 schools and students our candidates will serve.

For us at NCE, this means using John Dewey's vision of experiential learning as a central lens for program development and implementation, consciously preparing candidates for the specific context of high-need urban schools, and rethinking the role of university faculty as teachers, coaches, mentors, assessors, P-12 liaisons, and researchers. We are engaged and committed to improving teaching in our nation's most challenged and challenging schools. We are willing ourselves to learn through teaching and to forge new professional relationships to support this mission, even as we challenge each other to explore new roles and to study and critique our own work.

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Act Like a Professor, Think Like a Student

by Kimberly A. Garrett, Ed.D.

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Abstract
Effective teaching is needed to close the achievement gap in high-need schools. This calls for teacher education programs to produce effective teachers equipped to meet the needs of students in urban schools (Robinson & West, 2012). At the heart of effective teaching is the ability to be student-centered and inclusive so learning is accessible for all students. Student-centered instruction actively involves the student in the process of learning (Felder & Brent, 1996), while inclusive education involves creating a flexible, inviting environment to respond to a diverse range of learners (EEN, 2012). Teacher educators must model this methodology for preservice teachers.

Impetus for Discussion

In August 2012, the Borra Center for Teaching and Learning (CTLE) hosted a faculty workshop on the scholarship of teaching and learning. A forum was conducted with selected students to discuss the topic: "What Students Wish Their Professors Knew". Students on the panel represented undergraduates in various fields of study. Common across the student panel were the following concerns: 1) not enough examples are being furnished to help achieve understanding; 2) mostly lecture and very little discussion or group work; 3) being required to read before class, but instructors not referencing the text in class; 4) reviewing information from the text in class but not being taught what the content means; 5) loads of assignments unrelated to what was discussed in class; 6) most assignments and tests are paper and pencil tasks; 7) assignments that don't relate to their major. Faculty expressed these concerns: 1) being able to "get through" all the material for the course; 2) removing lecture from in-class time; 3) assigning readings that students don't read; 4) students not wanting to engage in discussion; 5) students seeming more concerned with jumping through hoops than valuing the learning experience; 6) when students are given group work there are some students who "fall under the radar." The discussion prompted reflection on how these concerns directly impact teacher candidates.

A Call to Action for Teacher Educators

More than in any other field, teacher educators need to be able to transform their teaching to address student concerns. Preservice teachers stand to benefit from their instructors modeling the teaching behaviors that they are expected to implement in their future classrooms. More importantly, preservice teachers need to experience effective, inclusive teaching so their knowledge base will be strong enough to teach conceptual knowledge to urban students who need quality instruction most. The more comprehensive their knowledge, the better equipped they are to teach subject matter to students with unique challenges and in some cases severe deficits.

Integration of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into higher education teaching practices can be the key to making teacher education more effective. UDL can help establish an inclusive, student-centered environment conducive to transformative learning for students of all levels. The UDL

framework eliminates or reduces barriers to academic success. Initially proposed to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom, it is now considered an initiative that improves outcomes for all learners. The three central UDL principles suggest that each area of the curriculum should provide varied and flexible options through multiple means of representation; multiple mean of action/expression, and multiple means of engagement. UDL also takes into account goals, methods, materials and assessments (Ralabate, 2011).

What do preservice teachers need from their professors?

Using the three main concepts within Universal Design for Learning, let us examine what teacher educators can do to help preservice teachers learn deeply.

Multiple Means of Representation – An instructor can develop multiple ways of sharing conceptual information to help students process this information for their own learning. Replacing lecture with a power point led discussion based on the reading is one idea; so students are seeing, hearing and involved in the discussion of the text. The use of concept maps, models, video and podcasts are other tools to activate all the senses (Darby, 2012). This approach holds students accountable for reading, engages them as participants, not passive observers, and helps them process conceptual knowledge at a deeper level.

Multiple Means of Action and Expression – Written tests are not the only way to measure learning outcomes. Offering students multiple ways to demonstrate their knowledge capitalizes on their strengths and requires them to use higher order thinking beyond what might be required on a pencil and paper task. Students could write a paper, construct a power point or develop a video to show what they have learned. The use of rubrics and clear grading expectations will promote a high quality of work and comprehensive learning experiences for students.

Multiple Means of Engagement – Connecting the learner to content is key for transformative learning to occur. This can be achieved by developing relevant assignments that activate students' background knowledge and holds their interest. When students are assigned relevant assignments that either relate to their past or prepares them for future experiences they are motivated to learn, have greater retention of knowledge, attain a deeper understanding and more positive attitudes about the subject being taught (Felder & Brent, 1996). Varying the methods of instruction can also engage learners in different ways of knowing. Instruction can take place using one of two models: teacher-student and student-student. Providing tasks with instructor guidance as well as peer support engages students more fully than the former method alone. In this way the responsibility for learning is shifted from instructor to student, thereby intensifying the learning experience.

Implications for Change in Pedagogy

Teacher educators need professional development that includes exploration of their views and experiences with inclusive education. Partnering with practicing teachers will keep teacher educators abreast of current practices as well as issues in the field. Lastly, teacher educators need professional development that will help them to integrate new pedagogical approaches in their courses. As a result they will inform the redesign of courses that will both better prepare students by deepening their knowledge and give them the tools to reach diverse learners. In addition, such partnering will provide preservice students more opportunities to activate knowledge learned in courses through field

experiences immediately with linked courses throughout the preparatory program. These practical initiatives will help to equip preservice teachers to be effective instructors in high-need schools who are able to meet the needs of learners with diverse challenges.

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Review of M. Knight Shyamalan, *I Got Schooled: The Unlikely Story of How a Moonlighting Movie Maker Learned the Five Keys to Closing America's Education Gap.* (2013). New York: Simon & Schuster.

by Jerry Berberet, Ph.D, editor, *Success in High-Needs Schools Journal*

Famed science fiction film writer and director (*The Sixth Sense, Last Airbender, The Village, After Earth, The Happening)* M. Night Shyamalan has stepped into a new realm to write a must read new book for those who care about failing schools and closing the achievement gap. From a stance clearly outside the educational establishment, Shyamalan's *I Got Schooled* (2013), resulted from a detailed five-year review of school outcomes data and personal visits to successful K-12 schools around the country, a high percentage of which are located in New York, Texas, and California. In a refreshing and highly readable style, with no apparent agenda other than to improve poor schools where 50 percent or more of students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches, *I Got Schooled* provides persuasive evidence—both school performance statistical data and impressions of teachers and school officials--that no single approach will solve this seemingly intractable problem.

Shyamalan relentlessly uses data to demolish singular special interest solutions that have passionate adherents and tend to dominate the political debate about how to address the nation's school problems, e.g., eliminate tenure, increase teacher accountability, let teachers teach, raise teacher salaries, increase school funding, decrease class size, make schools smaller, increase school choice, increase parental involvement. Analyzing the large volume of available data meticulously, he demonstrates that each of these by itself makes a negligible contribution towards improving student achievement. Likewise, he exposes the myth that charter schools are unqualified successes, pointing out that although most schools that succeed in closing the achievement gap are, indeed, charter schools, on average they only marginally raise student test scores in science, math, and language arts. He concedes that the data shows each of these approaches has some merit, but argues that only a systemic approach incorporating all key factors that contribute to school improvement will enable under-performing and failing schools to succeed.

This is not a book about reforming college and university teacher preparation programs. Shyamalan's focus is on the schools themselves. His emphasis on the critical importance of good teachers, the key role of research targeting student and teacher performance, the pressing need to improve new teacher induction, and the negligible impact of advanced teacher education degrees in closing the achievement gap, however, have significant implications for teacher educators. Although not part of his argument, it seems clear that college and university partnerships with K-12 schools can provide valuable and desperately needed resources in the struggle to improve student learning.

The outcome that matters, Shyamalan contends, is the value-adding relationship between student achievement and lifetime earning potential, and the resulting impact on the gross domestic product (GDP) of the American economy. By this measure, raising the achievement level of the lowest 20 percent of American schools just to the level of the next lowest 20 percent would increase earning potential of the affected students by some $500,000 over their lifetimes and increase GDP by $130 billion annually or $7.8 trillion over their average sixty year lifetimes. By pitching his argument in economic terms, Shyamalan consciously seeks to appeal to conservatives who might not be so swayed by other arguments such as improved quality of life.

According to Shyamalan, educational research demonstrates that schools that succeed in closing the achievement gap focus systemically and simultaneously on five key factors:

1. *Removing weak "roadblock" teachers.* He contends that two years of comprehensive teacher performance evaluations measuring actual student progress against expected student progress is critical. Current teacher performance evaluations do not identify weak teachers, instead rating nearly all teachers as satisfactory. This plus the widespread practice of granting tenure in the second or third year of teaching results in the retention of most weak teachers. Shyamalan's analysis shows that it takes three good teachers to overcome the learning gap caused by one "bad" teacher.

2. *Achieving the right balance of leadership.* The answer here is rigorous training of principals and restructuring principal responsibilities so that nearly all of their time is spent observing and mentoring teachers and developing a positive school culture. Currently, principals spend much of their time with administrative tasks unrelated to teaching and learning, leaving many new teachers bereft of induction experiences critical to development of consistently effective teaching methods.

3. *Feedback.* Shyamalan argues that regular feedback from consistent and reliable measures of student progress are essential to improve teaching effectiveness. Although a great deal of data is often available, principals and teachers are often untrained to interpret it with the result that useful feedback falls by the wayside.

4. *Smaller schools*. The goal of smaller schools falls into the same "no brainer" category as smaller class size as an immensely popular silver bullet solution to close the achievement gap. Unlike smaller class size, however, there is substantial data that smaller schools, in concert with the other four "keys," is important to student achievement because it facilitates effective principal classroom observation and teacher evaluation and feedback, and development of healthy school culture (not the least because of the positive learning effects of students attending classes with other students they know).

5. *More time in school*. Shyamalan demonstrates that virtually all schools making progress in closing the achievement gap have significantly lengthened the school day and reduced the summer break time. The latter affects the learning retention of all students dramatically but especially poor inner-city students who most lack summer enrichment opportunities. The most successful schools commonly begin the school day between 7:00 and 8:00 am and end between 5:00 and 6:00 pm, adding up to 50% more instructional "time on task" than the traditional school year provides and in some cases achieving an additional year of student progress when all five keys are in place.

So, what would it cost to implement Shyamalan's recommendations? Although he believes the five keys could actually enable schools to save money, he argues that the return on investment benefits alone more than justify a 6-7 percent additional school expenditure--less than $50 billion nationwide. As there is little empirical evidence that reducing class size alone actually improves learning, increasing class size by 3 students could provide more than 60 percent of the amount needed, leaving a net need of $15-20 billion, less than a 3 percent increase in school spending.

The fifty highest performing schools that Shyamalan holds up as national models are profiled in Appendix A. From Connecticut, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Louisiana in addition to New York, Texas, and California, 65 percent of the students at these schools are from families that qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches. Remarkably the performance of their students exceeds that of local and state averages for *all* schools. Could the five keys—remove weak teachers, get good leadership, provide feedback, make schools smaller, and gain more time on task—be the same sort of common sense for schools that we all know is basic for good health—eat the right foods, exercise regularly, and get a good night's sleep?