

AILACTE Journal

**The Journal of the Association
Of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges
Of Teacher Education**

**Volume III
Fall 2006**

Editors

Jacqueline M. McDowell, Berry College

Kathy R. Gann, Berry College

Leigh Otting, Berry College

Officers of the Association

President: Lynn Beck

Past President: Lynne Weisenbach

Treasurer: Dwight Watson

Executive Assistant: Stacy Ernst

Publications Editor: Jacqueline M. McDowell

Editorial Board

Nancy Cerezo, Saint Leo University

John Sweeney, Freed-Hardeman University

Karen Eifler, University of Portland

Lisa Laurier, Whitworth College

Kim Koeppen, Hamline University

Sharon Teets, Carson-Newman College

Trish Parrish, Saint Leo University

Lenore Kinne, North Kentucky University

Susan Blackwell, Indiana University, Indianapolis

Trevor Hutchins, Belmont University

Karen Kaye, Baldwin Wallace College

Susan Hasseler, Calvin College

Mary Clement, Berry College

Designer, Cover and Graphics

Lynnwood Belvin, Berry College

AILACTE Journal Call for Manuscripts

The *AILACTE Journal* is a refereed journal with national representation on its editorial review board published by the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education. Each issue is nonthematic. The journal, published annually, is soliciting manuscripts concerned with teacher education, including teaching and learning, induction, in-service education, and pre-service education. Project descriptions, research reports, theoretical papers, debates, papers espousing a particular point of view, and descriptions of activities or issues in teacher education at the local, state, or national level would be appropriate topics for the journal. The cost of a copy of the journal is \$7.00.

Criteria for submitting a manuscript:

Manuscripts must be postmarked by May 1, 2007, preceding the October 2007 publication.

- APA style
- Not more than 15 pages, double-spaced
- Four copies of the manuscript
- Clipped, not stapled
- Author's name and affiliation on the title page only
- Autobiographical sketches of the authors (three to five sentences each), on one separate page
- Complete title and abstract (150-word maximum) on the first page of text
- Running head and page number on subsequent pages
- 3 x 5 index card with complete name, postal address, email address, and telephone and fax numbers of the contact person and the title of the manuscript
- An electronic file copy of the manuscript in MS Word or compatible software for Windows XP will be needed after acceptance for publication

Submit manuscripts to:

Jackie McDowell, Editor
AILACTE Journal
Berry College
P. O. Box 5019
Mount Berry, GA 30149-5019
706-236-1717 (voice)
706-238-5827 (FAX)
jmcowell@berry.edu

AILACTE Journal

Volume III

Fall 2006

Table of Contents

A New Era of Teacher Preparation: Meeting the Challenge for Alternative Certification 1
Cindy Meyers Gnadinger
Bellarmino University

Building and Sustaining Short-Term Cross-Cultural Immersion Programs in Teacher Education 11
Ruth Ference
Berry College

Feeding our Young: Helping New Teachers Grow through Comprehensive Induction 25
James L. Drexler
Covenant College

Intentional Partnerships: Generating Learning Within and Across Institutional Contexts 41
Fred L. Hamel, Amy E. Ryken, Jennice King
University of Puget Sound
Mary Kokich, Olga Lay
Pt. Defiance Elementary School

Relationship-Driven Teaching Style: The Impact of Teacher-Student Relationships on Academic Performance 61
Jacqueline Schlicte
Earlham College
James Stroud
Ball State University
Donna Girdley
Community Christian School, Richmond, Indiana

**A New Era of Teacher Preparation:
Meeting the Challenge for Alternative Certification**

**Cindy Meyers Gnadinger, Ph.D.
Bellarmine University**

Abstract

The face of teacher education is rapidly changing. Teacher shortages, legislative changes, and adult career changers have prompted colleges and universities across the nation to develop new programs or redesign existing programs for teacher preparation. For universities, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program has emerged as the panacea for alternative certification demands. MAT programs look vastly different from one institution to another. Smaller institutions are faced with additional challenges because they often lack human and financial resources to develop new programs. The purpose of this article is to outline how one liberal arts institution utilized its Master of Arts in Teaching program to provide avenues for alternative certification candidates and to discuss the benefits and challenges of this program.

Teacher shortages remain a national concern. With both high attrition and high retirement rates among teachers, the national demand for more teachers is being felt on all fronts. Since 1983, The National Center for Education Information (NCEI) has been examining alternative routes to more traditional teacher preparation programs. At that time only eight states identified alternative routes to teacher certification. By 2005, 47 states reported some form of alternative licensure for teachers (Feistritzer, 2005). A variety of alternative models

has emerged in recent years. These programs include those run by state departments of education, local school districts, and colleges and universities. The programs are quite different and vary in the time required for completion. One answer to the call for alternative teacher preparation programs, at the university level, is the Master of Arts in Teaching program (MAT).

Some higher education institutions offer MAT programs as a fifth year to their traditional undergraduate program. Increasingly, MAT programs are being offered in an accelerated format and marketed to career changers. To attract the experienced professional to the teaching profession, universities have altered delivery systems to meet the needs of the working student. Few professionals are able to quit their full-time, sometimes financially lucrative, positions to attend school full time as the traditional undergraduate has done.

Universities around the country are meeting the demands to fill the teacher shortage yet maintain the expectation of delivering highly trained professionals to the P-12 school systems. Darling-Hammond & Sclan (1996) assert these alternative programs vary greatly among the states and higher education institutions. Stoddart and Floden (1996) allege the curriculum of alternative programs is similar to that of traditional programs. The main difference appears to be in the way the content is delivered rather than the content that is taught. Many alternative programs offer university courses that are the same or similar to the courses offered in traditional teacher preparation programs. Many of today's teacher education candidates are provided with alternative teacher preparation programs that allow them to juggle the demands of a family and full-time career with becoming a full-time student in evening and weekend programs.

Diversity provides another rationale to explore the alternative routes to teacher certification. There is a great need to diversify the teaching field. Zeichner and Schulte (2001) found that alternative programs attract more teachers of color to the teaching profession. These candidates are likely to have high expectations for minority students. In addition, alternative programs appear to attract more men to the profession, a group highly underrepresented in teaching (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001).

A New Era of Teacher Preparation

MAT vs. Alternative Certification

One significant characteristic of the alternative certification program that may differ from the traditional MAT program is that students in these programs are able to obtain a teaching job while they are attending the university's teacher education program. This on-the-job training has obvious benefits and challenges for the student. For some students the benefit includes the opportunity to put theory into practice immediately. Ideas and strategies learned in their evening class may be implemented the very next day in their own classroom. Also, students may find it easier to complete their field hour requirements when they are actually employed in a school.

For other teacher candidates, this "baptism by fire" approach has proven to be a daunting challenge. Candidates in the alternative program often begin their teaching careers with no preparation and find dealing with issues such as classroom management and struggling readers an overwhelming experience. For candidates teaching students with learning and behavior disabilities, the myriad of paper work and administrative meetings can compound the problem. These issues combined with the fact that alternative certification candidates often receive little or inadequate mentoring (Chesley, Wood, and Zepeda, 1997) continue to be a challenge. Institutions are reevaluating their programs to ensure that they are meeting the demands of alternatively certified candidates.

One Institution's Journey

One small liberal arts institution is meeting the challenge for alternative certification. This university is located in the southeast region of the U.S. and has been preparing teachers since its inception just over 50 years ago. A Master of Arts in Teaching program has been offered at this university since 1985. This original MAT program offered courses leading toward teacher certification in the traditional one course per semester format. The timeline for completion of this program was lengthy, often taking several years to complete.

Nearly a decade ago, the institution revised their MAT program to attract career changers and fill the growing need for

Gnadinger

more certified teachers. This new “MAT Accelerated Program” included a nights and weekends format with program completion in five semesters. The School of Education experienced immediate growth in student enrollment and the MAT quickly became the School of Education’s largest program.

Nationally, the need for greater numbers of certified classroom teachers continued and the demands for universities to offer alternative certification programs to fill the shortage were noted. This call came simultaneously with the need for “highly qualified teachers” as outlined by the No Child Left Behind Act. While universities around the country were developing alternative certification programs to meet the demands, many smaller institutions struggled to compete. With limited resources many small private colleges are unable to dedicate the necessary time and faculty required to develop new programs.

This particular School of Education serves the largest school system in the state. The local school district urged all of the nearby universities to consider developing alternative programs to train more teachers. Many of the public institutions in the state developed alternative programs. This posed specific challenges to the smaller, private institutions in terms of human and financial resources.

The education faculty members at this institution examined their popular MAT program to look for ways to meet the alternative certification demands. Recognizing that this MAT program already had an alternative delivery system, faculty looked for ways to meet the local school district’s need for filling the teacher shortage. While local demands often call for schools of education to produce more teachers as quickly as possible, the mission of this institution is to ensure that teachers are well prepared for the challenges they face in 21st century schools. The education faculty members were resistant to the idea of training teachers as quickly as possible and were outspoken about the multifaceted demands on teachers. It is a challenge to adequately train teachers for the complexities they will face in the schools in just a few short semesters. Therefore, the faculty and administration in the School of Education approached the idea developing an alternative certification program cautiously. While local area administrators have an

A New Era of Teacher Preparation

urgent need for certified teachers, they too want teachers who have been thoroughly trained. The faculty decided to examine the existing MAT program as a starting point for exploring the possibility of an alternative certification program. Table 1 illustrates the MAT program delivery system and timeline prior to consideration of alternative certification.

Fall (Module I)	
Foundations of Education	(3 credit hours)
Advanced Child Development	(3 credit hours)
Curriculum Design & Methods	(2 credit hours)
Field Placement	(1 credit hour)
Spring (Module II)	
Parallel Culture Education	(3 credit hours)
Parents School & Community	(3 credit hours)
Summer (Module III)	
Education Research	(3 credit hours)
Computer Applications in Education	(3 credit hours)
Classroom Management	(3 credit hours)
Fall (Module IV)	
Reading in the Content Areas	(3 credit hours)
Specialized Content Methods	(3 credit hours)
Spring (Module V)	
Professional Semester	(6 credit hours)

Table 1 demonstrates the typical module format used at this institution. Students in the program complete one module per semester. In this format, several courses are integrated and delivered on evenings and weekends. In Module I, three courses are required in addition to the field placement component. However, one faculty member will teach this entire module as opposed to three separate professors. Students attend class one night each week and one full Saturday per

Gnadinger

month, throughout the semester. In addition to this contact time with the professor, the students are often assigned group projects that require additional meeting times outside of class.

The level of integration for these courses varies according to the instructor. For example, students may encounter topics in the Foundations of Middle/Secondary Education course during Module I that deal with curricular decisions and issues. These topics might be incorporated within the Curriculum Design & Methods course and a student's assignment in Module I might include objectives for both courses. In Module II, students explore issues of diversity including, among other topics, race and class in the Parallel Culture Education class. These issues will often be addressed within the context of the students' service learning component as required in the Parents Schools & Community course in the same module. The integration and assessment of courses in the modules requires a great deal of planning for professors in the MAT program but provides a more holistic approach to the teacher education program.

Course integration was a consideration when proposing changes to the MAT. The program was slightly redesigned to alter when some of the courses were offered. Table 2 outlines the alternative certification program derived from the MAT program.

Table 2	
MAT Accelerated Program: Secondary Certification (Revised for Alternative Certification)	
Summer (Module I)	
Foundations of Education	(3 credit hours)
Classroom Management	(3 credit hours)
Curriculum Design & Methods	(2 credit hours)
Fall (Module II)	
Parallel Culture Education	(3 credit hours)
Parents, School & Community	(3 credit hours)
Field Placement	(1 credit hour)

A New Era of Teacher Preparation

Spring (Module IV)	
Reading in the Content Areas	(3 credit hours)
Specialized Content Methods	(3 credit hours)
Summer (Module III)	
Education Research	(3 credit hours)
Computer Applications in Education	(3 credit hours)
Advanced Child Development	(3 credit hours)
Fall (Module V)	
Professional Semester	(6 credit hours)

As Table 2 illustrates, the central changes to the program included incorporating a summer start session for the alternative certification candidates. In this first module, candidates would receive instruction in classroom management, something that had not been offered previously until the third semester of coursework. Faculty members felt that substituting a classroom management course for the child development course would still allow for course content and assignments to integrate easily with the Foundations and Curriculum class. These changes provided an opportunity for candidates to get some foundational coursework in the summer before they began their new teaching positions in the fall. These changes provided a common ground for the program faculty and administrators who felt strongly that the program could not be delivered any more quickly than what already existed, and also satisfied the needs of the local school district administrators, who requested that candidates receive some initial instruction prior to their new teaching positions in August.

Initial feedback has been positive regarding the introduction of classroom management theories and strategies in the first semester. However, as more students complete the program, analysis of student exit surveys will provide additional evidence regarding the effectiveness of this programmatic change.

In the revised program, candidates would take Module IV prior to taking Module III. This change of sequence is because Module IV includes the methodology coursework and requires candidates to complete course assignments throughout the

Gnadinger

semester that relate to their classroom teaching. Therefore, offering this module in the summer would not be sufficient, as schools are not open due to summer intersession.

Challenges and Benefits of an Alternative Program

The benefits of the MAT program are obvious. The alternative program offers universities an opportunity to prepare those candidates for whom a traditional undergraduate program would not be possible. Career changers bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the classrooms, which add to rich discussions in the university courses and move classroom discourse toward cognitive complexity. Experienced career changers often bring an understanding of how to work with people of diverse backgrounds. According to Eifler and Potthaf (1998), older students, in general, have had opportunities to develop interpersonal skills such as flexibility and dealing with change. These experiences enable the faculty members to deliver content at an accelerated pace.

For any accelerated program, some program elements are certain to be condensed or eliminated. Although MAT candidates may possess a great deal of experience and knowledge, faculty still struggle with determining what aspects of the program can easily be accelerated. Many Schools of Education are committed to ensuring that candidates see teaching as an art form not merely a technical skill. Developing effective teachers is difficult with traditional programs and it certainly remains a challenge in accelerated programs.

Field experiences also prove to be a special challenge for candidates seeking an alternative route to certification. Candidates often get fewer experiences observing veteran teachers because of the demands of their own teaching schedule. As a result, universities have been forced to create unique, valuable field experiences for their candidates. The institution addressed this by speaking with the local school district officials who employ the alternative certification candidates. An agreement was made between the university and the district to provide four release days per year (two each semester) to allow candidates an opportunity to observe veteran teachers. This agreement allows candidates to complete some field hours

A New Era of Teacher Preparation

in another school setting which the university faculty find essential. Other opportunities still exist for candidates to obtain the remaining field hour requirements. First, candidates may observe a veteran teacher in the school in which they teach during some of their scheduled planning periods. This allows the candidate to observe a veteran teacher and provides a forum in which the candidate can pose questions and share problems with an experienced professional. Candidates find this option convenient but it has an obvious disadvantage in that the candidate loses some valuable planning time. As another alternative, candidates may complete field requirements in neighboring districts that have a different academic calendar than the district in which they teach. When the candidate's school is not in session, they are able to travel to a nearby school and complete field hours on those days. This often includes schools which operate on a year-round schedule and begin their academic year in July when the candidate's school is on summer intersession.

Universities continue to mediate the challenges of legislative decisions and demands from local districts with their professional knowledge of how to best prepare teachers. Expanding the workforce and ensuring that teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to effectively teach in diverse classrooms should remain the goal for all teacher education programs. Alternative programs can help to meet that goal.

References

- Chesley, L. S., Wood, F. H. & Zepeda, S. J. (1997). Meeting the needs of alternatively certified teachers. *Journal of Staff Development, 18 (1)*, 28-32.
- Darling-Hammond, L. & Sclan, E. M. (1996). Who teaches and why: Dilemmas of building a profession for twenty-first century schools. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 67-101). New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

Gnadinger

- Eifler, K. & Potthaf, D. E. (1998). Nontraditional teacher education students: A synthesis of literature. *Journal of Teacher Education, 49*, 187-195.
- Feistritzer, E. C. (2005). *Alternative teacher certification*. National Center for Education Information, Washington, DC.
- Stoddart, T. & Floden, R. (1996). Traditional and alternative routes to certification: Issues, assumptions and misconceptions. In K. Zeichner, S. Melneck, and M. L. Gomez (Eds.), *Currents of reform in preservice teacher education* (pp. 80-106). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Zeichner, K. M. & Schulte, A. K. (2001). What we know and don't know from peer-reviewed research about alternative certification programs. *Journal of Teacher Education, 52*, 4, 266-282.

Cindy Meyers Gnadinger, Ed.D., is Associate Professor of Education at Bellarmine University in Louisville, KY. She is the former Graduate Director and is actively involved in alternative certification initiatives. She teaches courses in literacy at the undergraduate and graduate level. Her research interests include teacher quality, issues related to struggling readers and underrepresented populations.

Building and Sustaining Short-Term Cross-Cultural Immersion Programs in Teacher Education

**Ruth Ference
Berry College**

Abstract

Cross-cultural experiences in teacher education are an important part of multicultural education because they allow preservice teachers to examine their world view and develop culturally sensitive dispositions critical for teaching in our diverse society. Research has shown that effective cross-cultural experiences can lead to personal development, cultural understanding and sensitivity, and openness to cultural diversity. This article will describe how one college has successfully maintained a cross-cultural program for all education students since 1999. It will also discuss the effect of two immersion experiences on students' knowledge and dispositions about cultures different from their own. These experiences led to personal development, knowledge about other cultures, and more global understandings and allowed students to experience what it is like to be an outsider with language and communication barriers. Students also examined their world view and preconceived stereotypes as well as issues of social justice and racism.

The need for cross-cultural programs as an integral part of teacher education has been discussed since the 1970's (Howsam, 1976; Taylor, 1969). But now with the diversity of school

Ference

populations increasing at a rate faster than ever before, it is important that preservice teachers develop culturally sensitive dispositions if they are to be effective teachers. Effective teachers develop these dispositions with the understanding that their world view is the result of their life experiences and is well developed by the time that they are in a teacher education program (Sleeter, 1995). Unfortunately for some preservice teachers, their world view is oftentimes in conflict with multicultural education coursework. As a result, this population finds it difficult to change their world views based only on textbook instruction. Many preservice teachers end up with an oversimplification of the meaning of “culture” and its implications to the success of all students. Cross-cultural immersion programs can counteract these oversimplified meanings and bring the depth of knowledge and experiences that students need to change their dispositions toward students of other cultures.

Research has shown that effective cross-cultural experiences can lead to personal development, cultural understanding and sensitivity, and openness to cultural diversity (Wilson, 2001). While cross-cultural experiences can include student teaching abroad, they also can be short-term intensive immersions where students are accompanied by faculty who can help students process and reflect on their experiences and bridge those experiences to their future classrooms. Building and sustaining a cross-cultural immersion program requires dedicated faculty and administration who believe that intensive cross-cultural experiences and reflections can affect students’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions toward culturally diverse K-12 students (Ference & Bell, 2004). There is no substitute for experience in multicultural teacher education. Students cannot reflect deeply unless they have something meaningful on which to reflect (Tellez, Hlebowitsh, Cohen, & Norwood, 1995).

In this article, I will describe how one college has successfully maintained a cross-cultural program for all education students since 1999. I will also discuss the effect of two immersion experiences (one in a Latino community in Dalton, Georgia, and another in Italy) during May 2003 on students’ knowledge and dispositions about cultures different from their own.

Building and Sustaining the Program

The cross-cultural program at Berry College began when the teacher education curriculum was restructured in 1999. This restructuring included the addition of the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) endorsement program. All education majors at Berry are required to have this endorsement and included in the curriculum is “Exploration in Diverse Cultures,” the cultural immersion course. Scheduled during Maymester, all students choose from a list of sites offered each year. These sites include in-country and out-of-country destinations and depend on faculty interest and development. In previous years, students have traveled to Italy, Greece, S. Korea, Costa Rica, Mexico, Louisiana, and Georgia. Institutional support for the program includes faculty grants to travel to the sites beforehand and summer pay. The cost of the instructor’s travel to the site is built into the student cost of the trip.

After site approval, the faculty member joins a Maymester committee to develop syllabi and confirm plans. The committee decides on common objectives and readings for all groups that meet the standards for the ESOL endorsement, along with specific assignments and assessments. Next, faculty leaders of trips develop objectives and readings specific to each site. Trips are then advertised in the fall and students pre-register in October. Our experience has shown that when beginning a cross-cultural program, it is advisable to start small and only offer one or two sites the first year so that unforeseen problems might be kept to a minimum. Since trip costs have ranged from \$300 for Dalton, GA, to \$2700 for Italy, offering an in-country site can significantly reduce the cost to students making them affordable to all. The costs of the trips are usually all-inclusive and also cover the cost of the instructor’s travel. The instructor makes all the arrangements, sometimes with the help of a travel agent.

Method

Participants

Of the 54 education majors in the study, 27 (23 female, 4 male) went to Dalton and 27 (22 female, 5 male) went to Italy.

Ference

All participants were white and from the Southeast United States with the exception of two from the Midwest. Eighteen students had previously traveled overseas but mostly for pleasure or mission trips.

Data collection and analysis

The author acted as a participant observer for the Dalton site and collected data from student journals, final reflection papers, and observations using field notes. The author also obtained the journals and reflection papers from the Italy group, as well as interviewed the professor who was also a participant observer. Student focus group interviews lasting for 1½ hours were then conducted with six volunteer students from each trip. The journals and reflection papers were analyzed first by highlighting and grouping data. Using a constant-comparative method for coding and grouping themes, categories emerged that were in common from all data sources (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The results were used to guide the student and professor interviews, which served as triangulation and member checks. Triangulation using a variety of data sources increased validity of the findings.

The immersion experiences

In this section, the activities of each immersion experience will be briefly described, but keep in mind that the activities are unique to each site. However, there are several essential activities that will help to ensure a successful experience, and these will be described in the conclusions and implications section.

Pre-trip seminars. Students in both the Dalton and Italy sites were required to attend at least six 90-minute pre-trip orientation seminars. During the seminars, students read, write in journals, and discuss books and articles related to the culture they will be visiting. Other topics discussed included ethnographic field study, culture and customs, living with a host family (Dalton only), and language study. These pre-trip seminars are essential for a successful experience because instructors can begin to help students confront their biases and stereotypes and begin the process of examining their world views by including case studies and simulations.

Cross-Cultural Immersions

In Dalton, students were placed in groups of up to four with Latino host families who were obtained by consulting contacts in local schools and who were paid \$250 per student. The families shared their culture with the students and told stories about their lives and coming to America. In return, the students learned about the culture by being participant observers and developing close relationships with the families. Students also observed in the International Inclusion Center (IIC), a newcomer school within the city school system. The IIC serves new immigrant Latino ESOL students in fourth through twelfth grades. It also houses several P-K classes that are predominately Latino. Our students observed and taught lessons in the IIC for the two weeks. Other activities included visiting job sites where Latino immigrants were primarily employed, such as poultry and carpet mills. Students also went on a neighborhood walk in the Latino area visiting restaurants and shops. Students were required to keep a daily journal and debriefed the day's activities during afternoon seminars with professors.

In Italy, students did not live with host families but used a hotel in Florence as their home base, traveling to Rome, Tuscany, and Assisi. Before the trip, the students had put together their own cultural identity project to present to Italian students. While in Rome, they visited Montessori schools, the Jane Goodall Institute, and primary, middle, and secondary schools. Rather than host families, students relied on an Italian educator with the Montessori school to explain Italian culture and customs. This contact also joined the group for informal evening seminars to help students debrief what they were experiencing. While the group did visit some tourist locations, the students were encouraged to interact with locals and speak the language. They also split up into small groups to minimize the impact of only interacting with their fellow students. Students were also required to keep a daily journal and were given specific journal prompts that were to be turned in after the experience was over.

Results

Results from the students' journal entries, final papers, and interviews showed that the immersion had affected them in

Ference

substantial ways. I will discuss results from both immersions as well as results specific to each immersion. I will include student voices from journals and interviews along with analysis.

Both immersions

Being the outsider. Students in both immersions experienced feeling like an outsider and were often out of their comfort zone. For these members of a majority race, being in the minority was a memorable experience. Many described feeling uncomfortable and that this feeling helped them relate to the immigrants (particularly those of minorities) upon arrival in America. This experience gave students increased feelings of empathy for those students who will be in their future classroom and felt they would make an effort to make all students feel welcome. By thinking about how they would feel more comfortable in a different culture, students were able to acquire the strategies they could transfer to the new immigrant students. These ideas included making an effort to communicate through language, body language, and facial expressions. Positive facial expressions, such as smiling, give people reassurance and acceptance. Students also benefited from making sure they were included in the activities of the family and community. Being left out or made to sit in the back of the class increased their feelings of being the outsider.

Dalton: An experience that caused me to feel like an outsider occurred at 7-year-old Raphita's soccer game. When we showed up we noticed that we were the only white people there, everyone else was Latino. I felt like everyone was looking at us and wondering why we were there. This experience definitely was an eye-opener in understanding how minorities feel among us.

Italy: Being where I was the minority and the different one was so refreshing to me and it forced me to do things that may not have been especially easy or comfortable, but that is what made this trip for me.

Dalton: I felt completely out of my element. After a few days, I did in fact become homesick for not only my family and friends but also simply a familiar environment. I actually got physically sick one night.

The dramatic change of environment proved to be too much in just two weeks. I got only a glimpse of the overwhelming experience of Latino immigrants' transition into American culture.

Educational experiences. Students in both immersions were able to observe different educational experiences. In Italy, students were exposed to Montessori, Roots and Shoots and Italian education. In Dalton, students experienced different types of schooling for new immigrants. In addition to the newcomer program at the IIC, they observed ESOL programs in the regular schools. These experiences opened their minds to the variety of educational programs available for students of other cultures and languages. Many students were excited about the possibilities these experiences opened up to them. In previous field experiences, they had already observed that ESOL students often sat in the back of the classroom without interacting and other students in the class didn't even know their name. They became determined to change that in their own classrooms.

Italy: By observing both the Montessori school and regular public schools while in Italy, I have developed new ideas about my own future teaching methods. I feel that more hands-on activities for American students will benefit their learning process. I plan to emphasize the importance of art and creativity in all the subjects I teach.

Italy: Italian education emphasized the importance of allowing children freedom to explore the world and learn at their own pace. Students are not compared to one another.

Dalton: Observing different types of educational experiences allowed us to see beyond our own limited experiences. Since most people in our group were only familiar with the typical American school, we were able to consider other viable options. The changing demographics of America require that we study ways to best educate all children including those whose first language is not English.

Ference

Culture. Students going to both Italy and Dalton learned about a culture different from their own. By acting as participant observers, students were able to learn about family, relationships, traditions, and student roles. They learned to accept without judgment different ways of life. Living and working in close proximity to people of other cultures brings students beyond the shallow exploration of culture and allows students to see the complexity within a culture.

In the seminars before the immersion, we discussed cultural norms and behaviors typically found in the culture. For example, literature on Latino culture explained that most children have respect for teachers and some do not like to look a teacher in the eye. Preservice students found that to be true for the most part in the IIC, but also realized that there were many exceptions to the rule. By getting to know individuals, they were able to see the importance of accepting people with an open mind to differences. In both Italy and Dalton, our preservice teachers came to understand individuals within a culture, as well as to understand the culture of a group of people. Our students' cross-cultural competence was enhanced by comparing and contrasting ways in which cultures are similar and different.

Language immersion and communication problems.

Immersion in a culture different from one's own is made even more difficult when the language is different as well. Students find out how hard it is to communicate when they don't speak the language. Because of the length of the immersion there was no expectation to learn the language, although those who had some prior training did experience some growth. However, the objective of these short-term immersions was to acquire ways to communicate and to increase sensitivity to students whose language is not English. Preservice teachers in both Dalton and Italy developed strategies that would help them communicate and became aware of the stress induced by not understanding the language. They felt they would be able to better help their ESOL students feel more comfortable in their classrooms.

Italy: It amazed me how much body language, facial expressions and tones helped me communicate. I will

definitely be able to use these methods in my classroom.

Personal development. Students in both immersions believed they grew as people and the experience will influence their future teaching. Many students felt that the experience has been the most powerful course they've had in their teacher preparation program. While skeptical and anxious before the experience, all students interviewed were changed afterwards. They now believe it to be an essential part of their teacher training as well as their personal growth.

Dalton: I believe that I have grown so much personally and feel better equipped to serve my future ESOL students as well as their communities. Because I had created stereotypes about my family that were proven wrong, I've realized that stereotypes should be avoided. I realized that each child has different background experiences, whether it's cultural or economic.

Italy: I think that the culmination of all these experiences will benefit my future teaching, especially when it comes to recognizing cultural differences. I feel as if I am now better qualified to take on the world in general, and especially the classroom. In Italy, I felt that the world did not seem so big. Hopefully, I will be able to communicate that to my students.

Results for Dalton

Relationships. Since students stayed for 10 days with host families, they began to develop close, reciprocal relationships. The families accepted the students as part of the family, cooking huge traditional meals for them, taking them shopping, speaking Spanish, and teaching them about their lives and the immigration experience. The students, in turn, shared their lives and brought cultural gifts as tokens of appreciation. Through the host family experience, the students were able to get an insider perspective and experience the meaningful interaction that is necessary to the holistic development of cross-cultural understanding.

Ference

Dalton: I have learned to have a greater respect for an entire culture that has been right under my nose my whole life. I have learned to appreciate and admire people that are willing to risk their lives to go somewhere to have a better life.

Dalton: Americans take so much for granted. We are able to be rude to immigrants just because we were here first. After this experience, I've realized that none of that makes sense. This immersion into Latino culture has taught me much about tolerance, sympathy, the importance of educating the whole child, and equality in education. I will become a teacher that represents equity and equality in my classroom.

Preconceived stereotypes. Through immersion in the Latino community in Dalton, students were able to examine and dispel preconceived stereotypes about Latinos. Stereotypes acquired through the media, family, and friends were the source of apprehension and fear toward Latinos. Students were able to change their attitudes as they learned about the strong family values, the work ethic, and the desire Latinos have to make a better life for their families.

Dalton: Overall, the cultural immersion was overwhelming. The knowledge I gained from those two weeks was probably more than I would gain in a whole semester. Before going, I was skeptical of what I was supposed to learn. Stereotypes lurked in my head, but by the end of the trip my attitude did a 180 degree turn.

Social justice and racism. Finally, the experience in Dalton caused students to become more aware of social justice issues and racism. Many young students in today's society believe that racial discrimination is no longer an issue. When white preservice teachers are asked about racism, they often sincerely believe there is no color barrier. The immersion opened their eyes to the realities of racism. They observed firsthand barriers in the work place, schools, and the community. They resolved to make their classrooms a place where these attitudes would not persist.

Dalton: One of the most important things I have learned from this experience is to never lower my academic standards for ESOL students. I've realized the truth in this statement from *Affirming Diversity* (Nieto, 2000): The problem is educational systems have not adapted successfully to such diversity, have not looked into the face of a child and seen beauty and potential, but function instead in a deficit finding mode.

Results for Italy

American in another country. Going to Italy as an American offered a different experience than the in-country Dalton trip. While in Dalton, students were still the dominant culture and still enjoyed the privilege that status affords. Students going to Italy experienced feelings of being the minority and were apprehensive about facing hostility towards Americans. They learned quickly that those feelings were unsubstantiated.

Italy: Being an American tourist, I definitely stuck out in the crowd. I was expecting to receive a lot of hostility. However, the Italians did not treat me badly or show dislike towards me. The only place I was treated differently was in the market place as vendors seemed to target Americans as most likely to make purchases.

Italy: As the trip progressed, I adjusted more to the experience of being an American abroad. I no longer felt as threatened.

Global perspective. Students going to Italy also developed a more global perspective. They felt the world wasn't so big, and they became more aware of the diversity of our world. This awareness helped to change their world view by opening up new possibilities. Students who went to Italy also experienced an increased desire to travel more. It seemed to whet their appetites to see and experience more. The cross-cultural experience, while much shorter than study abroad experiences, seemed to impact the students' attitudes toward people of other nations. They seemed less xenophobic and less prejudiced.

Ference

Italy: For me, it is hard to imagine that other cultures really exist and that there are other lifestyles besides my own. Being in Italy opened my eyes to so many things. I think I had a sense of cultural elitism. I now see the world in a different way and have a passion for discovering other cultures.

Italy: I think the difference in Americans and Italians is the extent to which each is exposed to other cultures that are drastically different than their own. America maintains its virtual isolation on a continent where our culture dominates. Italy is surrounded by other countries whose cultures are as old and as rich as their own.

Italy: It challenged me to learn more, not just about Italian culture, but every culture and their history. I want to go everywhere and soak it all in. It opened my eyes to the world outside of the U.S. and has made me excited about visiting other parts of the world.

Conclusions and Implications

Researchers (Cushner, 2004) have said that an immersion experience may not have the desired effect if the immersion is too short in duration and intensity, is too superficial, and does not include living within the community. However, the results of these two experiences suggest that short-term immersions that include several key elements can have a positive effect on preservice teachers' dispositions towards teaching ESOL students and towards changing their world view. It is possible in only two weeks to engage the student physically, cognitively, and holistically as long as there has been deliberate planning and reflection and direct engagement with the local host culture. Short-term immersions can be an integral part of a multicultural teacher education program when these criteria are met. These types of immersions can jumpstart preservice teachers' thinking about issues of diversity and social justice in a way classroom instruction cannot.

The immersion experience must include planning and reflecting as well as physical, cognitive, and emotional engagement of the student with the host culture. Students must build trust and mutual respect within the community by giving gifts,

listening to their stories, and being a participant observer. Tourist spots and tour guides should be avoided and more rural areas should be emphasized. Students need meaningful interactions with locals in order to be engaged holistically, both physically and psychologically (Cushner, 2004). Traveling with large groups of Americans and rarely stepping outside tourist areas significantly reduces the impact of the cross-cultural experience. Instructors must plan visits to rural areas and one-on-one contact with locals, often through host family arrangements. Some studies have shown immersion participants can become more xenophobic if they spend most of their time with their fellow students visiting tourist attractions (Cushner). A personal contact, such as a host family or at the very least a native person that will spend time giving the insider perspective, is essential. However, students need home culture “anchors” such as the security of small groups and a professor who will be there to guide reflections. Meaningful cross-cultural experiences must be meticulously planned. Finally, schedule time to write, reflect, and rest. Immersions, especially the short-term kind, are exhausting.

The following recommendations will help to guide a successful cross-cultural teacher education program. First, let faculty design trips according to their interests and student needs. If faculties are reluctant to take students who are reluctant to go, the experience may not be successful. Second, form a committee made up of faculty to plan, share ideas, and decide on common goals and objectives. Third, make sure there are native-speaking insiders who will be able to spend time helping the group interpret what they are experiencing. Fourth, allow for home culture anchors that include having the security of the group. It is not necessary to go it alone in order to have a successful experience. Fifth, avoid tourist spots and tour guides and opt for visiting rural areas where you will get a real taste of the culture. Sixth, make sure students are thoroughly prepared prior to the immersion through seminars, readings, and discussions. And finally, schedule time to rest and reflect. The immersion experience, however long, is exhausting. Student growth will occur while they are reflecting and engaging in critical discussions with professors and fellow students. The result will be new teachers who enter the

Ference

profession with a world view that will help, not hinder, the successful education of all students.

References

- Cushner, K. (2004). *Beyond tourism: A practical guide to meaningful educational travel*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Education.
- Ference, R., & Bell, S. (2004). A cross-cultural immersion in the U.S.: Changing preservice teacher attitudes toward Latino ESOL students. *Equity and Excellence in Education, 37*, 343-350.
- Howsam, R. (1976). *Educating a profession*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.
- LeCompte, M., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research* (2nd Ed.). New York: Academic.
- Nieto, S. (2000). *Affirming diversity* (3rd ed.). New York: Longman.
- Sleeter, C. (1995). White preservice students and multicultural education coursework. In J. Larkin and C. Sleeter (Eds.), *Developing multicultural teacher education curricula* (pp. 17-29). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Taylor, H. (1969). *The world as teacher*. New York: Doubleday.
- Tellez, K., Hlebowitsh, P., Cohen, M., & Norwood, P. (1995). Social service field experiences and teacher education. In J. Larkin and C. Sleeter (Eds.), *Developing multicultural teacher education curricula* (pp. 65-78). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Wilson, A. (2001). Cross-cultural experiential learning for teachers. *Theory into Practice, 21*(3), 184-192.

Dr. Ruth Ference is an Associate Professor at Berry College. She has a Ph.D. in Middle Grades Education from the University of Georgia and teaches Middle Grades Curriculum and Methods, Literacy, and Social Studies. Her research interests include cross-cultural immersion programs, middle grades literacy, and middle level teacher preparation. She is the recipient of the AILACTE Scholar Award, 2003.

Feeding our Young: Helping New Teachers Grow through Comprehensive Induction

Jim Drexel, Ph.D.
Covenant College

Abstract

Research, reports and studies all confirm the fact that American schools are facing a crisis: not enough teachers to fill positions in schools. One critical component of this crisis is the fact that many newer teachers to the profession quit after only one or two years. A common factor for many of those new teachers who quit is the lack of mentoring and comprehensive induction to support, nurture and help new teachers develop professionally. This paper reviews the literature related to the needs of new teachers, the growing teacher shortages, along with definitions and key components of both mentoring and induction. The paper concludes with descriptions of successful induction programs and initiatives along with a number of questions for further discussion.

Introduction

Sam was a natural in the classroom. With his deep belly laugh, his captivating baritone voice, a strong intellect, and a love for children, he was a great addition for our school. He was well trained with both bachelor and master degrees in his field, and having played college basketball, was a logical

Drexler

choice for a coaching position. As one of our few minority teachers, this friendly and eager 6'4" African American was a school administrator's dream hire.

And teaching and coaching is exactly what we assigned him to do—6 sections of teaching each day (out of 7 periods) with 4 preps, eventually nearly 150 students, many of whom were freshmen, since he was so personable and popular. Added to this load was coaching the JV boys and girls basketball teams and serving on several committees (After all, don't we want to expose the new black teacher to as many of our students and parents as possible?). And Sam was a willing and hard worker, never one to say "No" or "That's too much." He worked long hours during the week, and sometimes even worked harder over the weekends, in a vain attempt to keep up with all the grading and other paperwork.

And by the way, Sam received no induction and no formal mentoring other than the on-again, off-again contact with his department head. After one year of teaching Sam left and to this day, twenty years later, he has not returned to the classroom. Sam was a classic case of burnout or, as one author defined it, new teacher "hazing:" "institutional practices and policies that result in new teachers experiencing poorer working conditions than their veteran colleagues" (Patterson).

Some might hear this account and conclude that this unfortunate incident happened twenty years ago—things have certainly improved since then. In some schools and in some districts perhaps they have, but the statistics indicate that by and large, effective and comprehensive induction and mentoring programs are still few and far between.

On top of not being effectively inducted and mentored, new teachers are often overloaded with too many preps, given some of the more difficult classes and students, and assigned extra duties which often exasperate the already existing feelings of inadequacy, fear, uncertainty, and frustration. It's no wonder that many first- and second-year teachers quit the profession. Educational leaders, therefore, find themselves co-conspirators in perpetuating an unjust and inhumane practice: programming new teachers for failure. It's not surprising that "some observers have dubbed education 'the profession that eats its young'" (Halford, 1998).

“In the 1999-2000 school year, approximately 500,000 public and private school teachers left the teaching profession, with more than 123,000 of them attributing their departure to a lack of appropriate administrative support. . . . Nearly one-fourth of new teachers leave the profession after only two years, and one-third after three years” (Millinger, 2004).

The Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE) in their significant 80-page report, “Tapping the Potential: Retaining and Developing High-Quality New Teachers,” paint an even bleaker picture when they assert that almost 50% of new teachers leave the profession within five years (AEE, 2004) a staggering statistic that has titanic financial, social, and academic implications for schools. Financially, the cost of replacing a teacher can be as much as \$1.35 on the dollar when the whole process of advertising, interviewing, travel, moving expenses and other costs to the school are considered. In terms of social capital, the cohesiveness of the teaching faculty will likely be weakened by a high attrition rate among teachers. And, most importantly, the students’ academic achievement will be shortchanged as they experience a “revolving door” of teachers.

Some have argued that not enough new teachers are entering the market, suggesting that the teacher shortages are due to numbers. Recent national studies, however, including the Schools and Staffing Survey and the Teacher Follow-up Survey, indicate that the annual scramble for teachers is negatively affected by the high attrition among new teachers. New teachers who leave the profession identify (1) job dissatisfaction and (2) the pursuit of other careers as key factors in their decision to quit teaching. Efforts just to recruit new teachers while at the same time not addressing new teacher attrition is, as one author notes, like pouring more water into a bucket filled with holes (Ingersoll, May, 2003).

With this introduction in mind, this article will proceed to highlight the unique needs of new teachers, followed by working definitions of terms focusing on how mentoring and induction relate to one another, and finally describing the key components of comprehensive induction. Retaining effective teachers in our schools is job #1 for the school administrator.

The Needs Of New Teachers

Teachers new to the profession, despite the strength of their teacher preparation programs, come to the classroom with many fears, uncertainties, doubts, and questions. Despite the facts that new teachers are professionals and may have earned certification, they need opportunities to grow professionally and develop into effective teachers. Teachers, like professionals in other fields, “need time to improve their skills under the watchful eye of experts and time to reflect, learn from mistakes, and work with colleagues as they acquire good judgment and tacit knowledge about teaching and learning” (Black, 2004). New teachers in particular have strong emotional needs along with desires for security, acceptance, and assurance (Doerger, 2003). They also need help in developing effective lesson and unit plans, plans for sequential learning, a variety of classroom management techniques, and other skills in the art of teaching.

The Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, led by the University of Santa Cruz since 1988, has determined that new teachers “move through several phases: from anticipation, to disillusionment, to rejuvenation, to reflection, then back to anticipation.” One of the important roles of school leaders, therefore, is to “assist new teachers and ease the transition from student teacher to full-time professional” (Moir, 2000). Further, “recent research shows that most beginning teachers learn through an ‘idiosyncratic process’ that is actually more in keeping with constructivist theories of learning and more like the surgeon’s learning curve” (Black, 2004). One analogy is to view the first year of teaching as a period of grieving—“one must give up utopian dreams of teaching for a time to adjust ideals with reality” (Johnson, 2004).

“The major concerns of most new teachers include classroom management, student motivation, differentiation for individual student needs, assessment and evaluation of learning, and dealing effectively with parents” (Renard, 2003). Another key need of new (and experienced teachers as well) is intellectual stimulation since effective and successful practitioners are life-long learners. New teachers need to learn how to view teaching as a creative art, how and when to take risks, experience the satisfaction of personal relationships within

community, and the importance of professional growth. “The ongoing challenges, the creativity inherent in the teaching process, and the round-the-clock learning are significant forces in the rejuvenation of our best teachers” (Williams, 2003).

In 2003, 140 teachers in six districts were interviewed through the Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) and were asked what most helps beginning teachers. Their responses, in rank order, were:

1. Giving new teachers the opportunity to observe other teachers.
2. Assigning mentors to new teachers.
3. Providing new teachers with feedback based on classroom observations.
4. Providing new teachers with co-planning time with other teachers.
5. Assigning new teachers to smaller classes (Gilbert, 2005).

One of the distinctive characteristics of effective teachers is the skill of what Jacob Kounin called “withitness,” the awareness an experienced teacher has of all that is happening in the classroom. Others have labeled this phenomenon as “having eyes in the back of her head.” Although usually associated with effective classroom management and prevention, it has come to be more inclusive of student behavior and work together. Withitness is a form of reflection-in-practice in that a teacher perceives cues from students, ponders what they mean, then makes decisions and modifications while at the same time continuing with instruction. This is a difficult task to master, and most beginning teachers do not accomplish this easily. It takes practice, dedication, reflection, and the assistance of others (Schon, 1990).

Related to the need to develop the skill of withitness is the concept of “flow” described by Csikszentmihalyi (1997), as “the sense of effortless action” that people “feel in moments that stand out as the best in their lives.” For “flow” to occur for teachers, they need “clear goals, skills to meet the level of challenge, and immediate feedback” (Williams, 2003), features that can be facilitated through mentoring and induction.

Coupled with all of this is the reality that beginning teachers are adults and any effective mentoring, induction, or

Drexler

professional development plans need to be made in light of current views of androgogy, the philosophy of adult education. According to Malcolm Knowles, the father of androgogy, adults learn in different ways than children, so four main principles need to be considered:

1. Adults need to know why they are learning or doing something and how it will directly effect them;
2. Adults bring their own lifetime experiences that should be tapped as a resource for their continued learning along with a recognition that “one size” doesn’t fit all;
3. Adults tend to be hands-on learners (problem-solving as opposed to rote memorization);
4. Adults want and need to apply new knowledge immediately (Knowles, 1981).

In summary, then, new teachers bring a variety of needs and expectations into the school, so the necessity for effective mentoring and comprehensive induction programs is critical. “To stay in teaching, today’s—and tomorrow’s—teachers need school conditions where they are successful and supported, opportunities to work with other educators in professional learning communities rather than in isolation, differentiated leadership and advancement prospects during the course of the career, and good pay for what they do” (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

Defining Terms

A. Mentoring

“Ecologists tell us that a tree planted in a clearing of an old forest will grow more successfully than one planted in an open field. The reason, it seems, is that the roots of the forest tree are able to follow the intricate pathways created by former trees and thus embed themselves more deeply. Indeed, over time, the roots of many trees may actually graft themselves to one another, creating an interdependent mat of life hidden beneath the earth. This literally enables the stronger trees to share resources with the weaker so the whole forest becomes healthier” (Zachary, 2000).

The purpose of mentoring is to provide support, encouragement, knowledge, and feedback for new teachers as well as professional development, learning and growth for the mentor. The term originated in Homer's *Odyssey*. When Odysseus, King of Ithaca, went to fight in the Trojan War, he entrusted his home, his wife, and his son Telemachus to the care of Mentor who served as his teacher and overseer. After the war, Telemachus goes in search of his father and is able to overcome numerous obstacles because of his training under Mentor, thus demonstrating the effectiveness of the process. In time, the word "mentor" became synonymous with a trusted friend, advisor, teacher, guide, and wise person.

In school settings, mentors have often been veteran teachers who were linked rather informally with a new teacher in the department. The mentor was encouraged to meet with the new teacher periodically, answer questions, observe classes occasionally, help to anticipate problems, and generally be a friend who could help. Certainly better than nothing at all, the traditional mentoring program in schools met some needs but left many unattended. Some of the common weaknesses of traditional mentoring programs include (1) no training for the mentor, (2) no formal process for choosing the mentor, (3) no compensation or other incentives for mentoring, (4) lack of formal structures to insure successful mentoring, and (5) ending the mentoring process too soon.

In schools where these weaknesses have been addressed, mentoring has proven to be an effective part of helping novice teachers grow and improve. New teachers interviewed by the Public Education Network reported that mentoring was "the most effective form of assistance and support in their first years" (Makkonen, 2004). In order for mentoring to be effective, however, systematic support in terms of administrative endorsement, stipends, release time, training for the mentor, and careful attention to the matches between mentors and novices are needed (Halford, 1998). The mentor and novice must have clear and attainable goals with accountability, and both need to anticipate growth professionally through the process.

Further, in a lengthy evaluation of 10 mentoring programs, Richard Ingersoll and Jeffrey Kralik concluded that "assistance for new teachers—and in particular, teacher mentoring

Drexler

programs—have a positive impact on teachers and their retention” (2004). Effective mentoring must go beyond just emotional support and include a strong emphasis on the development of professional accountability. To that end, Carver and Katz argue that (1) mentors must be trained and have at their disposal a wide repertoire of effective strategies, (2) a change in expectations is needed in the teaching profession as mentors guide and instruct novice teachers, and (3) mentors will need to take on more of an assessment-oriented role as they hold themselves and their novices to high standards. Too many programs “are narrowly focused on providing short-term support for immediate problems rather than on ongoing commitment to teacher development” (Carver, 2004). An undisputed key to all of this is strong administrative support, time, and financing which will clearly demonstrate that mentoring is a high priority.

Finally, McCann, et al, summarize the research on mentoring and offer the following list of common components of an effective mentoring program:

1. careful selection and training of mentors, including training in communication and peer coaching techniques;
2. attention to the expressed concerns of beginning teachers;
3. special consideration for the inevitable exhaustion and decline that teachers experience after the first 9-10 weeks of school;
4. a program of regularly scheduled contacts between the new teacher and the mentor; and
5. assistance in acclimating the new teacher to the school community (McCann, 2004).

B. Comprehensive Induction

Induction for some consists of planned programs that provide “systematic and sustained assistance, specifically to beginning teachers for at least one school year” (Huling-Austin, 1992). Other definitions are more general: a “guidance and orientation program for beginning elementary and secondary teachers during the transition into their first teaching jobs” (Ingersoll, 2004). “Phrases like ‘learning the ropes’ and

‘eased entry’ suggest that induction is about helping new teachers fit into the existing system” (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). Harry Wong offers a more detailed definition:

Induction is the process of training, supporting, and retaining new teachers by:

- providing instruction in classroom management and effective teaching techniques,
- reducing the difficulty of the transition into teaching, and
- maximizing the retention rate of highly qualified teachers.

A good induction process begins before the first day of school and typically runs for two to three years (Wong, 2002).

Johnson and Kardos suggest several strategies for schools to develop more comprehensive induction programs. Their suggestions include:

- treat the hiring process as the first step in induction;
- assign new teachers to work alongside experienced teachers;
- schedule time for new and veteran teachers to meet;
- provide more than one-on-one mentoring;
- develop school-based induction programs led by experienced teachers;
- organize ongoing professional development on the curriculum; and
- encourage teacher leadership and differentiated roles (Johnson and Kardos, 2005).

“All successful induction programs help new teachers establish effective classroom management procedures, routines, and instructional practices. . . We must go beyond mentoring to comprehensive induction programs. . . Induction includes all the activities that train and support new teachers, and it acculturates them to the mission and philosophy of their new school. . . And the good news is that teachers stay where they feel successful, supported, and part of a working team” (Wong, 2002). As an example, the Partners in Education (PIE) Program, an induction program jointly administered by the

Drexler

University of Colorado at Boulder and six neighboring school districts, has successfully utilized a three-part program since 1987. The three prongs of their induction include (1) intensive mentoring, (2) cohort group networking, and (3) ongoing inquiry into practice. After years of success, they conclude that “induction does indeed matter, that a meaningful induction experience has lasting effects on teacher quality and retention” (Kelley, 2004).

The differences between mentoring and comprehensive induction listed below demonstrate how mentoring is actually only a small part of a fully developed induction program:

<u>Mentoring</u>	<u>Comprehensive Induction</u>
Focuses on survival and support	Promotes career learning professional development
Relies on a single mentor	Provides multiple support
Mentoring as an isolated event	Comprehensive and part of life-long professional growth
Limited resources	Investment in an extensive, comprehensive and sustained program
Reacts to events	Acculturates a vision and aligns to standards
Short term (usually a year)	Long term, recurrent, sustained. (Wong, 2004)

The Key Components for Comprehensive Induction

“The goal of a structured, comprehensive, sustained induction program is to produce effective teachers. Effective teachers are successful; students of effective teachers are successful; and, most important, successful teachers stay” (Wong, 2002). For Harry Wong and others, mentoring is only

one part of a comprehensive induction program. Included in most lists of essential components of such a program are the following:

- Three to five days of induction/enculturation workshops before full faculty orientation;
- Professional development through a structured, comprehensive, and sequenced plan over two to three years;
- Assigned to a veteran teacher as a mentor for two to three years;
- Strong administrative support and encouragement;
- Opportunities to observe master teachers in action;
- Regular feedback on their own teaching, including the use of video taping;
- Small collegial groups for common planning and instruction; and
- Assign new teachers to small classes with a limited number of preparations and no co-curricular assignments for the first year.

The reason that enculturation is so important for new teachers relates to the climate and culture of the individual school. One author has suggested that schools possess a type of DNA, “an organizational genetic code,” that must be passed on to all new teachers. The current administration and faculty are “carriers” of that DNA and induction will allow them to “reproduce” those cells in new teachers. “Faculty members who become carriers of the organization’s DNA replicate it in other faculty members as well as in the students and parents” (Keenan, 2001).

One innovative way to encourage enculturation, strong relationships, and collaborative groups is for schools to consider common work spaces for teachers. Instead of traditional models that isolate teachers in their own classrooms, a common work space forces teachers to interact and form collegial learning communities. New teachers can do common planning with veteran teachers while at the same time benefiting from the more informal, spontaneous conversations that occur every day. In settings like this, induction becomes “not only a set of separate interventions but also a set of structural conditions”

Drexler

(Shank, 2005). In addition to common work spaces, schools should consider assigning new teachers to a “triad” of mentors: a formal mentor, a lead teacher, and a department head. This “triad” approach, along with various administrative supports and small groups, will go a long way in helping new teachers grow and succeed professionally.

A crucial factor in all of this, of course, is strong administrative support and encouragement coupled with the time, resources and space to provide comprehensive induction. One study group credited the administrative support they received through induction “with setting the right mix of challenge and support that enables schools to become joyful, creative, productive places” (Williams, 2003).

“For first year teachers, then, the induction year can be crucial to their decision to continue teaching . . . Induction programs, therefore, should not only provide assistance with technical educational issues, they should also provide the new teacher with opportunities to begin to understand the school’s culture and the effects of that culture on the school’s climate” (Ingersoll, 2001). There is “an emerging consensus among U.S. educators and policymakers that the retention of new teachers depends on effective mentors and induction programs” (Feiman-Nemser, 2003).

Comprehensive induction programs take time, cost money, and utilize valuable resources in a school, but the investment will more than pay for itself in the long-term development of effective teachers in our schools, a stronger sense of collegiality and community among the staff, and academic gains for our students.

References

- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2004). *Tapping the potential: Retaining and developing high-quality new teachers*. Alliance for Excellent Education. Washington, DC.
- Black, Susan. (2004). Helping teachers helps keep them around. *The Education Digest*. 70 (4), 46-52.

- Carver, Cynthia L. and Katz, Daniel S. (2004). Teaching at the boundary of acceptable practice: What is a new teacher mentor to do? *Journal of Teacher Education*. 55 (5), 449-462.
- Cochran-Smith, Marilyn. (2004). Stayers, leavers, lovers, and dreamers: Insights about teacher retention. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 55 (5), 387-391.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. (1997). *Finding flow*. New York: Harper-Collins.
- Doerger, Daniel W (2003). The importance of beginning teacher induction in your school. *International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning*. 7 (21), 1-12.
- Feiman-Nemser. (2003). What new teachers need to learn. *Educational Leadership*. 60 (8), 25-29.
- Gilbert, Linda. (2005). What helps beginning teachers? *Educational Leadership*. 62 (8), 36-39.
- Halford, Joan M. (1998). Easing the way for new teachers. *Educational Leadership*. 55 (5), 33-36.
- Hare, D. and Heep, J. L. (2001). *Effective teacher recruitment and retention strategies in the Midwest: Who is making use of them?* North Central Regional Education Library. Naperville, IL.
- Huling-Austin, L. (1992). Research on learning to teach: Implications for teacher induction and mentoring programs. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 43 (3), 173-180.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*. 38, 499-534.
- Ingersoll, Richard M. and Smith, Thomas M. (May, 2003). The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. *Educational Leadership*. 60 (8), 30-33.
- Ingersoll, Richard M. (Sept. 2003) Is there really a teacher shortage? *Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy*. University of Washington.
- Ingersoll, Richard and Kralik, Jeffrey M. (2004). The impact of mentoring on teacher retention: What the research Says. *Education Commission of the States*. Denver, CO.
- Johnson, Shelly J. (2004). Feeding, not eating, our young: Creating effective induction programs for first-year teachers. Unpublished manuscript, Covenant College Master of Education program.

Drexler

- Johnson, Susan Moore, and Kardos, Susan M. (2005). Bridging the generation gap. *Educational Leadership*. 62 (8), 8-14.
- Keenan, Derek. (2001). Cultivating belonging in the school staff. *Christian School Education*. 4 (5), 16-18.
- Kelley, Linda Molner. (2004). Why induction matters. *Journal of Teacher Education*. 55 (5), 438-448.
- Knowles, Malcolm S. (1981). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to androgogy*. Cambridge Book Company.
- Makkonen, Reino. (2004). Taking care of novice teachers. *Harvard Education Letter*. May/June, 2004, pages 1-5.
- McCann, Thomas M., Johannessen, Larry R., and Ricca, Bernard. (2005). Responding to new teachers' concerns. *Educational Leadership*. 62 (8), 30-34.
- Millinger, Cynthia Simon. (2004). Helping new teachers cope. *Educational Leadership*, 61 (8), 66-69.
- Moir, Ellen. (2000). The stages of a teacher's first year. *Help me! I'm new! Inducting and mentoring teachers new to your Christian school*. Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools. Pages 18-22.
- Morgan, Jill, and Ashbaker, Betty. (2001). Supporting new teachers: Practical suggestions for experienced staff. *Rural Educator*. 22 (1), 35-37.
- Peterson, Mary. (2005). Hazed! *Educational Leadership*, 62 (8), 20-23.
- Renard, Lisa. (2003). Setting new teachers up for failure. . . or success. *Educational Leadership*. 60 (8), 62-64.
- Schon, Donald A. (1990). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco.
- Shank, Melody J. (2005). Common space, Common time, Common work. *Educational Leadership*. 62 (8), 16-19.
- Williams, Jackie S. (2003). Why great teachers stay. *Educational Leadership*. 60 (8), 71-74.
- Wong, Harry K. (2002). Induction: The best form of professional development. *Educational Leadership*. 59 (7), 52-54.
- Wong, Harry K. (2002). Play for keeps. *Principal Leadership*. September, 55-58.

- Wong, Harry K. (2004). Induction programs that keep new teachers teaching and improving. *NASSP Bulletin*. 88 (638), 45.
- Wong, Harry K., Britton, Ted, and Ganser, Tom. (2005). What the world can teach us about new teacher induction. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 86 (1), 379-384.
- Wong, Harry K. (2005). Significant research and readings on comprehensive induction. Retrieved from author's website, pages 1-10.
- Zachary, Lois (2000). *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*.

James L. Drexler, Ph.D., is the Chair of the Education Department and Dean of the Master of Education program at Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, Georgia. He earned his doctorate in Educational Leadership at Saint Louis University, and prior to coming to Covenant served for 23 years as a middle and high school teacher, coach and administrator in St. Louis.

**Intentional Partnerships: Generating Learning Within and
Across Institutional Contexts**

**Fred Hamel, Ph.D.
Amy E. Ryken, Ph.D.
Jennice King, M.Ed.
University of Puget Sound**

**Mary Kokich and Olga Lay
Pt. Defiance Elementary School**

Abstract

What defines a strong connection between university and school-based experiences for a small teacher education program? This paper explores the creation of “intentional partnerships,” which involves the systematic crossing of multiple voices (preservice, mentor, university professor, principal, supervisor) to build mutual understandings across institutions, to generate new thinking about teacher development, and to better support the transition preservice teachers must make into schools. In this paper, we document our early efforts to create intentional partnerships—describing our conceptual model and aims, identifying the complications of selected partnership features, and describing a recent partnership meeting. Our purpose is to spark discussion about the ways in which small teacher education programs like ours might enact capacity-building relationships with schools—in ways that support mutual growth and programmatic re-thinking about the learning needs of preservice teachers.

It was a preservice teacher who first made the point, indirectly. Various members of our partnership group were gathering for an initial morning meeting in a local classroom—at a school in which this preservice teacher was an observer. Two mentor teachers

Hamel & Ryken

entered the room, followed by a couple of education professors, the school principal, and a university instructional supervisor. Soon two more teachers from the school walked in, followed by two more preservice teachers, two more professors, and another instructional supervisor. Our student looked around and remarked: “This is so weird to have this group of people together.”

Intersections of Universities and Schools

Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) articulated long ago that preservice teachers often experience some version of having separated parents: “The two-worlds pitfall,” they claim, “arises from the fact that teacher education goes on in *two distinct settings*” (p. 63, emphasis added). Curriculum and instruction courses typically occur at the university, where professors may have limited connection with the daily, changing practice of the schools—even if those professors were once schoolteachers or administrators themselves. Practical teaching experience occurs in the schools, with teachers who are invested in different forces and problems than those emphasized by preservice professors. As one mentor teacher related to us at a recent meeting: “When you enter the schools, your priorities change.” Even coming together to understand one another remains problematic; individuals working hard in schools and universities simply and practically may not have the time. As our student’s comment indicates above, there is essentially no expectation that members of such disparate realms even get together in the same room.

Preservice teachers stand at the crossroads of these two worlds, traversing back and forth, experiencing a dual reality that is not immediately present to either professors or mentoring teachers. Yet, we see in this reality both pitfall and promise, taking hope from a recent comment by Cochran-Smith (2005), namely, that “...many goals of teacher preparation are best met in the *intersections* of universities, schools, and communities” (p. 13, emphasis added). Exploring intersections differs somewhat from the assumption that the lines between schools and colleges will increasingly “blur” in the future (Hickok, 2006, p. B48). For us, the term “intersection” assumes differences and tensions between existing institutional worlds, as well as opportunities and locations where professionals in different contexts hold mutual investment and good will toward one another. In general, the notion of intersection has helped us re-approach the two-world problem and to see within it renewed opportunities for teacher learning and university program growth.

Describing Intentional Partnerships

An “intentional partnership” is our name for a planned, generative relationship with a select school, characterized by two-way communication between university and school-based professionals. In such partnerships, we occasionally and selectively fill the space of a specific intersection, so that the crossing of multiple voices is made possible. In our model, such interaction occurs through a purposeful set of meetings where teacher development and classroom artifacts are the center of discussion. Our partnership goal is, in the words of Cochran-Smith (2000), to “help make visible and accessible everyday events and practices and the ways they are differently understood by different stakeholders in the educational process” (p. 167). We are particularly interested in how the crossing of voices (preservice, principal, professor, mentor, dean, principal, and supervisor) generates new thinking about teacher development and challenges the usual institutional lines we place around the process called “learning to teach.”

In this paper, we document our early efforts to create an intentional partnership with one local elementary school, describing our conceptual model and aims, identifying the complications of selected features, and describing a recent partnership meeting.

Developing a New Model

Intentional partnerships are not professional development schools but provide focused opportunities for shared work and conversation across institutions. In this sense, an intentional partnership is a capacity-building structure—aimed at expanding dialogue between teacher educators, mentors, principals, and preservice teachers, where we hear more and see more than we otherwise might. An intentional partnership model attempts to first make visible selected intersections. However, through partner interactions, we aim to support not just selected partnership schools but overall program growth within our school of education.

For us, developing intentional partnerships has been largely a practical affair. We are a fifth-year MAT program within a small liberal arts university, graduating roughly 50 students each year. As a faculty, we have six full-time professors, most of whom play multiple roles in the program and across campus. We employ three full-time instructional supervisors who do the vast majority of supervision in the schools. Students spend about 27 weeks of our 14-month program in three school-based internships across 25 to 30 local school sites. Roughly 50 to 60 mentor teachers work with our

Hamel & Ryken

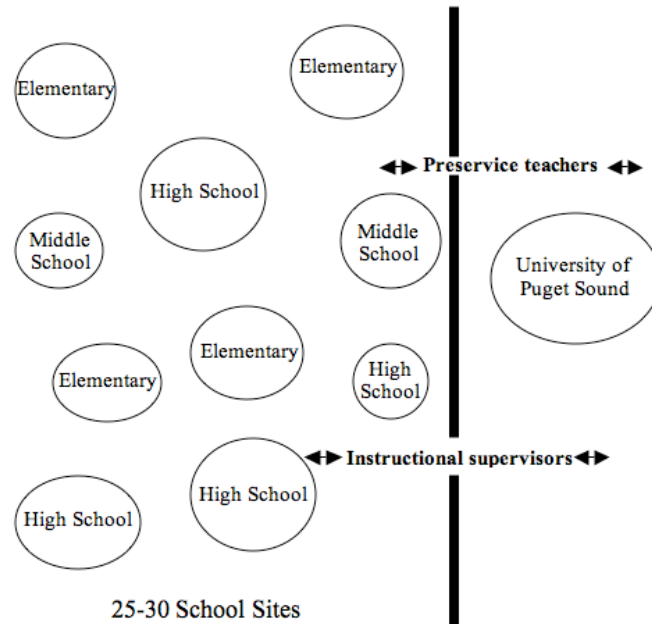
interns daily throughout the school year. Fifteen weeks are devoted to student teaching.

The idea for an intentional partnership began as we, as university teacher educators, acknowledged unique features of our program structure and relationship with local schools. We understood that we have *informal* partnerships with several schools, where a history of positive placements connects us with many principals and teachers who choose to work with our program. Such informality has been beneficial, as it allows both university and school to moderate participation year to year based on our small numbers, teacher interest, staffing, and candidate endorsement areas. Flexibility is crucial and, along with our small faculty, has led us away from attempting a more formal professional development school arrangement.

Our small size is both negative and positive in terms of school-university relationships. We do not believe we have the capacity, at least at this time, to develop a more fully integrated professional development school. Yet, smallness supports cooperation within our program. Faculty members share the same students and often coordinate assignments. Those who play multiple roles (secondary/elementary; general/subject-specific) can perceive program issues from varied perspectives. A smaller cohort also makes it possible for us to work with fewer schools, where less guesswork is involved in making placements.

Still, we characterize our school-university relationship as a persistent “two-worlds” model, characterized in Figure 1. In this model, “teachers” and “professors” exist in largely different worlds, even as they understand that their work is intimately connected to those on the other side. The critical feature of this model is that preservice teachers and instructional supervisors do the work of moving back and forth, translating and connecting from one setting to the other. In other words, while interaction and communication occur actively across settings, the intersection points are narrow and the range of intersecting players few. Beginning teacher education students and instructional supervisors carry the load of “translation” across settings; and while connections are celebrated, the dissonances experienced between school practice and university expectation are many, and sometimes treated as surreptitious, hidden knowledge—not easily or openly discussed.

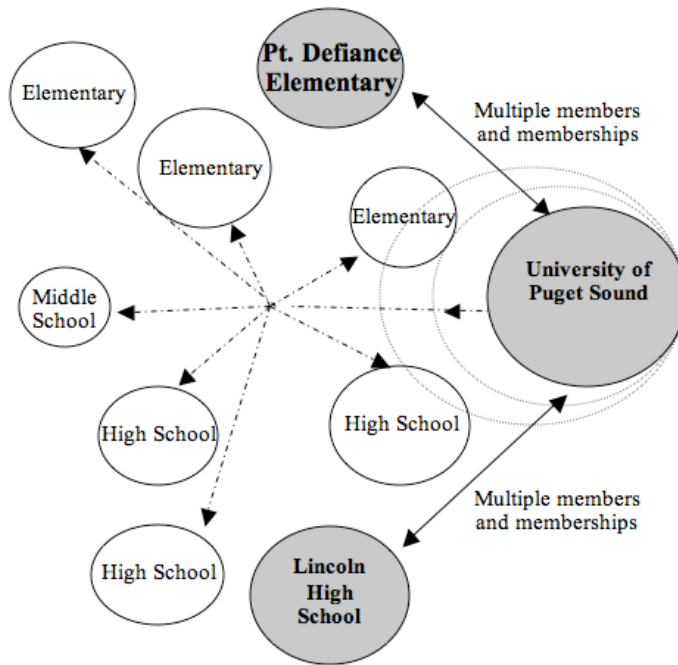
Figure 1: Two Worlds Model



Teacher educators in our program express a high interest in better connections with the “field,” and directed efforts are made toward this end. University courses include discussion of school-based experiences, use of classroom-based artifacts, and examination of mandated curriculum in the local district. Moreover, individual professors have relationships with particular teachers, engaging with local classrooms for research, volunteer, or class-assignment purposes. These positive efforts, however, fall short of relationships that are systematic in terms of program growth. We have thus looked for practical and realistic ways, within our resources, to create intentional moments of what can be called “co-habitation” – where diverse stakeholders in our preservice teacher education process come together to share the same space, to listen, and to discuss issues and questions around teacher development.

Figure 2 illustrates our intentional partnership model from a university perspective. In this model, we expand the aperture between the university and the intentional partner school, so that more members have an opportunity to move between the two worlds and to interact together.

Figure 2: Intentional Partnership Model



As an example, this year at our elementary intentional partnership school, we invited mentor teachers actively working with interns at the school, partner school interns, university professors teaching elementary curriculum and instruction courses to these interns (one of these professors is also dean of our school of education), the school principal, all of our instructional supervisors, and other interested university or school faculty. We believe that the interaction of these multiple members enhances our ability to understand mentor and intern experiences and to ask better questions about preservice learning needs across our entire program. The added concentric circles in the diagram thus represent the ideal of increased vision and revised understandings by university faculty. The dotted lines proceeding outward toward the remaining schools represent our intention and ability to leverage what we learn from intentional partner relationships, that is, to distribute that learning toward, or in relation to, the rest of our school-based program. Finally, we have narrowed the boundary line in the diagram between institutions to suggest that while the two worlds of teacher education do not disappear, intentional partnerships help us experience the barrier as less formidable.

Selected Features

We emphasize that the new model does not *replace* the first model or eliminate the ongoing work/movement back and forth of instructional supervisors and student teachers shown in Figure 1. Rather our intentional partnership model *adds* dimensions to our repertoire of connections with schools and, we hope, builds capacity for those connections. Three further aspects of this model are significant:

Purposefully Selected Schools

In this model we do not pretend to enhance directly our relationship with every school with whom we work. Instead, we focus on two schools, where we believe collaborative, productive working relationships can be achieved. Our goal is to work within our capacity to build capacity—not to bite off more than we can digest. In our case, we have selected one elementary and one secondary site.

Our selections have been purposefully grounded in existing relationships. In considering schools, we thought first about schools where our student teachers and supervisors have worked successfully for several years and where mentor teachers have already made an investment in our program. We thought hard about school leadership: Which principals are positive about our program goals, work well with our students and supervisors, are committed to early teacher learning, and work closely with mentors in their own buildings?

We considered individual mentor teachers. We wanted quality mentors (highly rated by our students and supervisors), but we also leaned toward schools in which mentors had some existing connection to our university program beyond mentoring (graduated from our university, collaborated on a project, etc.). In our elementary school partner above, for example, five mentor teachers have worked exclusively with students from our university for several years. One mentor had recently completed our elementary program after having been certified in secondary education with us many years before and had presented with one of our professors at a conference. Another teacher participates in a mentor advisory council which gives advice to our internship program. The principal, also, is a graduate of our university. Overall, such relationships with our program ranged from thin to more substantial, but they allowed for a foundation of initial trust.

Pros & Cons. Our purposeful selection allows us to limit our focus, work within our capacity, and start from an existing foundation. These aspects have made the initiation of an active partnership

Hamel & Ryken

less daunting, reducing fears of “commitment overload” and general guardedness across institutions. However, our approach also limits our partner experience to school contexts with strong leadership and to teachers more open to university-based teaching philosophies. We are less likely to interact with teachers or school contexts where perspectives are more rigid or even opposed to what we believe. Thus, interactions at our partner elementary school, for example, may not make visible the kinds of issues and complications preservice interns experience in other elementary settings. Although we believe our capacity is enhanced, our ability to extrapolate from a single positive setting cannot be overdrawn.

Two-Way Communication

The bi-directional arrows between partner schools and university indicate that we assume that information and perspective-sharing will flow both ways—e.g., not simply *from* the university *to* the school, or vice versa. We believe each institution has much to learn about the other, including the practical work, underlying assumptions, and the outside pressures/forces we experience. We thus negotiate our meeting agenda, and university professors, principal, teachers, and student teachers have all had turns at leading/facilitating meetings. As we discuss issues, we look to hear from a variety of voices rather than assume a single authoritative answer or line of expertise.

We have been especially interested in developing collaborative practices that allow for mutual thinking and exchange about teaching. In this sense, we have opted for artifact-based discussions as a central practice. As Deborah Ball (1997) suggests, one of the best things teachers can do to develop their thinking about students is to “look together” at student work. Our meetings have thus moved toward discussion of concrete classroom artifacts as a medium for shared communication. For example, this year we have observed and discussed a videotaped writing lesson co-taught by two partnership members (a fifth grade teacher and a university professor), observed and discussed a math observation videotape shared by the principal of our partner school (she had videotaped one of her teachers who was completing National Board requirements), and examined student artifacts gathered by one student teacher.

Complications. Two-way communication creates a democratic space where all members have a voice and all must listen. Yet, attempts to maintain such a space are not without difficulty. Trust is crucial, yet individuals have different expectations about how we might talk about teaching, and about the relative importance of “critique,” “politeness,” and/or “support.” Two-way communication means that our direction and goals tend to be more tentative, open to

change and negotiation. We are less driven toward explicit, pre-determined outcomes, less able to be efficient. Negotiating meeting agendas, for example, may take time, and we have not always agreed on what the focus of the partnership meeting should be. At a mid-year meeting, for example, one mentor suggested that we were spending too much time discussing issues relevant to experienced teachers but not relevant enough to student teachers.

In addition, no group functions without power. Even as we aim for two-way communication, we are not all equal members. Partnership activities have been driven by a university faculty member (our director of school-based experiences) who, with the building principal, takes initiative in setting up meetings, making the agenda, and often facilitating. Various participating members hold positions that may give them more of a voice (e.g., university subject matter specialist, national board applicant, principal, etc.). Experienced teachers and professors, we have seen, often feel more able to talk openly at meetings than interning student teachers. This reality raises questions for us: What does it mean to have “two-way communication” when some members hold less power, and/or when all participants rely on someone to be organizing and planning partnership activities?

Multiple Memberships

As seen in Figure 2, we aim to create a wider channel to our selected locations and to populate these intersections with more stakeholders. An intersection, in our view, is represented concretely by our teaching interns and the mutual investment we (mentors, supervisors, principals, and professors) have in their growth. Thus, at partnership sites, we invite a wider range of players to gather.

However, “multiple membership” has come to have two meanings for us. On the one hand, multiple membership means that more stakeholders, especially those not always expected to do so, come together in the same place. On the other hand, we have come to realize that multiple membership is an “individual” phenomenon as well. That is, our shared interaction has helped to reinforce for us that our memberships are not simply exclusive (school-based or university-based) but plural—especially if we think about our own educational and life histories. School-based mentors have significant roots in university culture, identify with their subject area specialties, and sometimes work on continuing projects with individual professors or participate in other university activities. In addition, some participate in district boards as leaders, interacting with a range of professionals and community members. Some participate in professional organizations and work on community-based boards. Our university-based faculty, on the other hand, each have extensive

Hamel & Ryken

history in the schools, have taught and worked as administrators, and are often invited to work on district-based initiatives. Some, again, have working relationships with individual teachers or local classrooms.

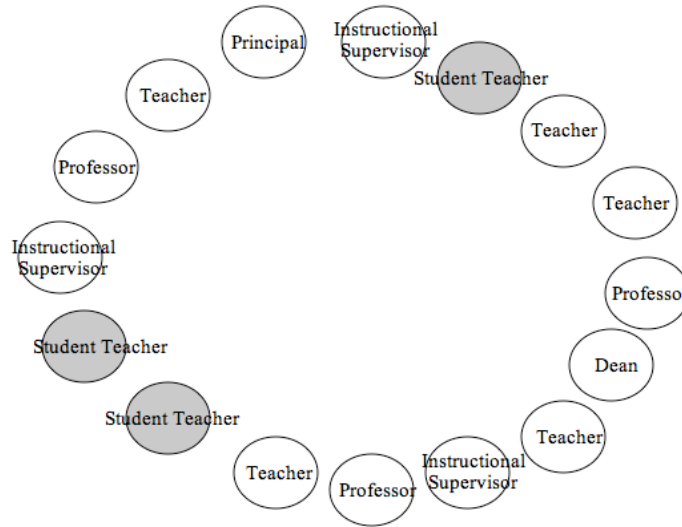
Such activities are no surprise. Yet, by making our multiple activities and histories explicit, we have come to see our own individual “multiple memberships” and that it is too simplistic to claim that each of us is exclusively “school-based” or “university-based.” We believe that partnership activities help to awaken a sense of diverse or hybrid history, which helps members find more commonality than we otherwise might—and also previously invisible differences. Alsup (2006), for example, highlights that teacher identity is complex and “establishing such a rich, multi-faceted identity is difficult—it requires the acceptance of ambiguity, multiple subjectivities, shifting contexts, and uncomfortable tension among ideological perspectives” (p.192). Without being naïve to the forces that create the two-worlds reality, the notion of multiple membership challenges simple versions of our teacher identities—especially the dichotomies of teacher/professor or school-based/university-based—and renders them as social constructs. We thus speak explicitly about multiple memberships in partnership meetings, even if we cannot deny how a particular institutional “home” shapes us now. Such discourse adds complexity to a beginning teacher’s identity development and helps us re-think the assumed rigidity of the two-worlds reality.

The Partnership Meeting Experience

In this next section of the paper we describe a typical partnership meeting which took place seven months into the partnership. For this meeting there were three items on the agenda: 1) teaching issues, 2) student artifacts, and 3) reflecting on the partnership experience. By taking a zoom-lens look at one meeting we demonstrate how meeting time is organized and share how participants come to see teaching and learning in new ways.

Figure 3 shows the participants’ seating arrangements in an elementary school classroom: preservice teachers, mentor teachers, the school principal, instructional supervisors, and university professors sit in a circle. Typically around fifteen partnership members attend. Student teachers are shown with gray shading below to highlight that they are a central intersection between school and university. Although meetings do not simply focus on student teaching, we gather in this circle because of them.

Figure 3: Partnership Seating Arrangement



Teaching Issues

The meeting began with a 20-minute conversation of teaching issues. Although the events shared were particular to the context of the school (e.g., a call to police when a primary grade student fled the building, interaction with a parent about a student note found in the classroom), each event raised larger issues for consideration of the whole group—such as the role of parents in a child’s education and the differential power that student teachers, mentor teachers, and parents have within schools. Such discussions also apprise university-based faculty of the complicated daily experiences that MAT students and mentors experience beyond classroom-based instruction.

Student Artifacts

As previously described, one central feature of our practice is the analysis of artifacts. Based our ongoing experience both in university classrooms and at two partnership schools, we have developed the following protocol to guide our sharing of artifacts: 1) Teacher gives background (assignment & context); 2) Teacher provides “provocative pairing” of artifacts to group; 3) Teacher identifies a question; 4) Groups of two or three examine artifacts; 5) Whole group participates in discussion, and “take-aways” from a range of perspectives are elicited.

At this particular meeting, one preservice teacher, who was in her twelfth week of student teaching at this elementary school, talked

Hamel & Ryken

about artifacts she'd selected from a third grade math unit, entitled "Fair Shares," in the district-adopted curriculum (*Investigations in Number, Data, and Space*). The student learning artifacts were taken from the end-of-unit assessment task. Figure 4 shows the provocative pairing of artifacts presented by the preservice teacher.

The student teacher began by providing background and context. She noted that the class had not studied fifths and that during the assessment a number of students said in frustration, "but there is no such thing as fifths!" However, students had spent many weeks examining relationships between halves, fourths, eighths, and sixteenths, as well as thirds and sixths. She said she was puzzled by these student responses. Before the small group discussions began, she said that the only question she wanted to pose was: "What were they thinking?"

Small groups discussed the two artifacts for ten minutes before the whole group came back together to share findings. The whole group discussion began with a sharing about the patterns noticed—both students used visual diagrams to explain their thinking; and believing there is no such thing as fifths, both students began the partitioning process with fraction values they had previously studied (thirds and fourths). The whole group discussion led to a number of questions about the curriculum materials, and student thinking, which were then discussed: What are the pros and cons of assessment tasks that involve fractional units that students have not yet studied? Is partitioning easier when fraction values result in an equal number of parts? Is the ability to erase important to students?

After the discussion a range of participants shared their insights. For example, a preservice teacher related that the conversation had helped her see all that the students *were* doing, rather than what they were not doing. An instructional supervisor highlighted that although she is in classrooms observing preservice teachers on a regular basis, she cannot see student work; thus she felt she had learned about the expectations of the district curriculum. One professor noted how it was fascinating to use collegial conversation to go from confusion about the artifacts to "a semblance of understanding" of how these two students were thinking mathematically.

Figure 4: Artifact Pairing Presented by Preservice Teacher

<p>Imagine that you have 7 brownies to share equally among 5 people. How many brownies will each person get? Explain how you got your answer.</p>	
<p>One person's share is $1\frac{1}{5}$, and $\frac{1}{9}$</p> <p>Each person gets 1 whole brownie, $\frac{1}{3}$ of a brownie, and $\frac{1}{9}$ of a brownie which is this.</p>	<p>One person's share is $1\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, a forth of a forth</p> <p>I made 7 brownes and gave 1 to each person then dividded like the picture.</p>

Written Reflections

At the end this meeting, we invited written reflections on the intentional partnership from all participants. Since preservice growth is at the center of our work, we share three preservice reflections here. The student teacher who led the artifact discussion wrote that she saw herself as a peer in a professional conversation, saw shifts in her power relationships with professional others, and felt empowered when given a specific leadership role at a meeting:

For me, being in a partnership with people who I usually only get to relate to in a professor-student or experienced teacher-novice way, this time in more of a peer way, has been very positive. I love getting to hear the many different perspectives on the same issues. It really helps to get over the two-worlds pitfall.

Hamel & Ryken

A preservice teacher who had not attended any previous meetings wrote:

This was my first meeting since I usually work during this time, but I thought it was great! Having some of my teachers here, my supervisors, and my mentors talk about what I am doing everyday is such a great opportunity.

This candidate appreciated that the partnership conversation connected to the work she is “doing everyday.” Her comments also remind us of the time constraints that impact collaboration across different institutional contexts. A third preservice teacher wrote:

Benefits: seeing other teachers at work, looking at student work, and talking this through is always helpful.
Suggestions: maybe have specific areas/topics to talk about beforehand so we can be thinking of incidents.

Her comments, like those above, reflect the importance of creating points of connection between other teachers’ work and incidents within and/or artifacts from preservice teacher’s classrooms. She suggests that our choice to discuss a range of topics (e.g. writing, math) at partnership meetings, rather than staying focused on one area, may make participation of preservice teachers more difficult.

Hearing Other Professional Perspectives

Below we share varied participant perspectives on the partnership experience. By sharing these professional voices, our mutual purpose is to spark discussion about the ways in which small teacher education programs and local schools might enact capacity-building relationships—in ways that support mutual growth and programmatic re-thinking about the learning needs of preservice teachers. In what follows, a university instructional supervisor emphasizes an “increased feeling of connectedness;” the school principal highlights how she no longer has to “catch” field supervisors on the fly because the partnership creates an ongoing conversation; and, finally, an elementary teacher describes how specific partnership activities helped her to reflect on and improve her classroom instruction and assessment practices.

Instructional Supervisor Perspective

Below, Jennice King, an instructional supervisor who has worked at the university for over 10 years, comments on her role in relation to the partnership:

In addition to the supervision and evaluation of the student teacher, my role as instructional supervisor is to facilitate communication between student teacher and mentor teacher as well as to be a liaison between the university and the cooperating school. This includes defining and communicating the purposes and expectations to be fulfilled by the student teacher to mentor teachers and administrators, and in turn, communicating teaching concerns and issues in the schools back to the university. The intentional partnership has increased our knowledge and understanding of one another in our differing roles and has illuminated many of the commonalities we share. Preservice and mentor teachers, the principal, instructional supervisors, and university professors spending time together in a level playing field setting where we worked collaboratively on agreed-upon endeavors resulted in an increased feeling of connectedness, support, and trust as well as a deeper understanding of what each of us does and what we believe about our work in the preparation of teachers. Communication, mutual growth, and program improvements are facilitated as a result of this intentional intersection of public school and university professionals.

School Principal Perspective

Olga Lay, Principal of Pt. Defiance Elementary School and a graduate of the university, shares her sense of how the partnership benefits her school and the student teachers who work there:

What an opportunity for our school to have the chance to work so closely with the University of Puget Sound. This intentional partnership has strengthened the communication and relationship between our school and the university, to the benefit of all involved. For example, in the event of a situation or celebration that involves the student teacher, communication with the supervisor is easier because of the foundation that has been created by the partnership. The exchange of information between our school and the university has grown as we better understand the uniqueness of each of our worlds. The student teacher travels back and forth between these worlds during their time in our school.

Hamel & Ryken

It only makes sense to have a partnership where we can converse freely. This often does not exist within the student teaching experience because conversation generally happens when we “catch” the field supervisor in our school. Having been a member of this intentional partnership, it makes a difference in our school. It benefits student teachers who are actively involved in the partnership when educators act as a team and invest in their growth of preparation and learning. The value and impact for student teaching is huge when all collaborate. It is only natural that it begins in a teacher preparation program. It has been a gift to watch our new educators, teaching staff and university grow and learn together.

Elementary Teacher Perspective

Mary Kokich, a 5th grade teacher at Pt. Defiance Elementary and a graduate of the university, emphasizes how collaborating with a range of people helps her re-think her classroom practices:

Since I left my Master’s in Teaching program eight years ago, I have been thirsting for the environment that it provided: a place to analyze and discuss best practices with a group of committed educators. This partnership combines the expertise of all involved, whose perspectives are both intriguing and enlightening. Through our time together, I have found that experience is relative. I have learned a great deal from both student teachers and professors, alike. Though each meeting has merit, two particular experiences were notable for me. First, I was able to collaborate with one of the university professors to team-teach a writing lesson with my fifth graders. The experience was quite powerful in my classroom. As the students engaged with our “guest writer,” their approaches and efforts were valued, and they were validated as writers. In addition, we videotaped our lesson to share at our next intentional partnership meeting. This meeting was beneficial for me because it allowed others a glimpse into my classroom, which we seldom get as teachers. We also had the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of our lesson and its impact on student learning, which I was able to implement my classroom. The second experience that stands out is a lesson in which one of the third grade student teachers brought samples of student work from a particular math lesson. We collaborated in small groups, identifying mathematical understandings in three or four samples of student work.

Then we convened as a whole group to discuss our findings. This meeting influenced my approach to student work and assessment in my classroom. After modeling this strategy of looking at work with my own students, I am now hearing them notice similar understandings in their own and each other's work. What has been perhaps the most rewarding is that I am able to collaborate regularly with such a wonderful range of people in education. Our different experiences and perspectives, regardless of our individual histories in education, have been instrumental in opening my eyes to new ideas and approaches to the practice of teaching and learning.

Discussion/Conclusion

Our approach to intentional partnerships relies on Cochran-Smith's (2005) notion of "intersections" as a productive re-framing of the two-worlds reality in teacher education. The language of intersections helps us see possibilities that we otherwise miss if we consider only boundaries or differences between the two worlds. Our approach is also distinguished by its focus on programmatic growth rather than simply enhancing a particular location. Intentional partnerships differ conceptually, in other words, from individual collaborations with particular teachers, principals, or classrooms, as important as these kinds of collaborations are. In our approach, we aim for multiple membership and to work productively with the friction that occurs at intersections. An important byproduct of such friction is something we call "generative sparks"—i.e., new thoughts, conversations, questions, or activities that emerge *because* we have entered into an intersection space with multiple members.

For instance, partner meetings have led directly to spontaneous, whole group discussions in methods classes at the university (on whether we should allow more afternoon observations in the fall), unsolicited preservice teacher writing on the impact of partner meetings, faculty interaction about ways of using student artifacts with teachers, individual teacher/professor initiatives, and even a shared conference presentation by the authors listed on this paper.

In addition, our process has been served by developing visual representations. Model-building has helped us see program intersections in new ways, has made existing assumptions explicit, helps us identify particular features of our work, and provides for possibility. Making visual representations and re-presenting them in alternative formats is central to communication, we believe. In the words of McGinn and Roth (1999), "re-presentations enlist the participation

Hamel & Ryken

of others in their creation, and provide shared interactional spaces to talk over and about the re-presentations” (p. 21). Our models are thus open to change. They may evolve or look very different as we continue to develop and consider our intentional partnerships.

Finally, partnership meetings have confirmed for us the value of investigating classroom-based artifacts as vehicles for professional development. They are natural problem-solving texts, they are contextualized within a particular building’s own practice/ curriculum, and they make student thinking central to teachers’ talk and professional growth. We also find that artifacts allow for needed safety. Sharing exhibits of students’ math thinking was far less risky for our student teacher, for example, than showing a videotape excerpt of her own teaching. The artifact activity described above allowed us to bring a student teacher’s classroom practice, questioning, and personal voice to the center of the partnership in ways that alleviated unproductive discomfort. After this activity, we see potential to complete such artifact-sharing activities earlier in the year, where our beginning students might co-select and co-present artifacts with mentor teachers.

Although early in our efforts to create intentional partnerships, we have found that the concept of “intersections” helps us see our relationships with schools in new ways; making visual representations helps us build and refine our partnership model; and discussing classroom-based artifacts creates a powerful participation structure for both experienced educators and preservice teachers.

References

- Alsup, J. (2006). *Teacher identity discourses: Negotiating personal and professional Spaces*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Ball, D. L. (1997). From the general to the particular: Knowing our own students as learners of mathematics. *The Mathematics Teacher*, 90 (9), 732-736.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2005). The new teacher education: For better or for worse? *Educational Researcher*, 34 (7), 3-17.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2000). Blind vision: Unlearning racism in teacher education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 70 (2), 157-190.
- Feiman-Nemser, S. & Buchmann, M. (1985). Pitfalls of experience in teacher preparation. *Teachers College Record*, 87 (1), 53-65.
- Hickok, E. (2006). Higher education needs reform too. *School & College: The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Section B. March 10: B48-B49.

McGinn, M. & Roth, W.M. (1999). Preparing students for competent scientific practice: Implications of recent research in science and technology studies. *Educational Researcher*, 28 (3), 14-24.

Fred L. Hamel teaches secondary literacy and directs the school-based experience program at the University of Puget Sound. He worked for 12 years as an English teacher and department chair in secondary schools in Illinois and Washington.

Amy E. Ryken teaches mathematics and science education at the University of Puget Sound. Amy taught high school science for seven years and directed a biotechnology career academy and internship program for seven years in California.

Jennice King is an Instructional Supervisor at the University Puget Sound. She works with preservice teachers in school-based placements and teaches seminars focused on school-based experiences. She taught secondary English and math for seven years in Washington, and elementary grades for 16 years in Washington, Colorado, and California.

Mary Kokich is a fifth grade teacher at Pt. Defiance Elementary School in Tacoma, Washington. Mary taught High School English for 2 years and has been teaching fourth and fifth grade for 5 years.

Olga Lay is the principal of Pt. Defiance Elementary School in the Tacoma School District. She taught Special Education, Learning Resource Center, Physical Education, Third Grade and was Magnet Liaison in the district before she became Principal at a Middle School and now at the Elementary for the past nine years.

**Relationship-Driven Teaching Style:
The Impact of Teacher-Student Relationships on Academic
Performance**

**Jacqueline Schlichte, Ph.D.
Earlham College**

**James Stroud, Ph.D.
Ball State University**

**Donna Girdley
Community Christian School**

Abstract

Numbers of At-risk students are rising in the public classrooms of our day. Standardized testing is a reality that is clearly defining the great chasm that stands between the performance of these children and what is expected of their age mates. Public junior and senior high schools face the quandary: How are At-risk students to be aided in their effort to meet academic standards now required for graduation? Theory is substantial that offers strategies that work for some At-risk students. Within that body of literature is the inherent foundational strategy that is critical to the success of this strategy implementation. Understanding of relationship, as well as the affective and academic results determined by its role, is the X factor in the redefinition of the child currently labeled 'At-risk reader.'

***Keywords:** Affective impact on academic performance, at-risk, dispositions, field notes, blended study, reading, Relationship-Driven Teaching Style, self-efficacy, and teaching styles*

Introduction

My mouth was wide open in shock as I watched the seventh grade class of a co-worker. I'd been asked to observe a group of students, who by her description, could not read. As Department Head, I had been informed that this excellent teacher was ready to quit. I could now see her dilemma.

Seated before her were 20 of 44 At-risk students that had somehow found their way into her classroom. My attention was immediately drawn to Devin. As the teacher began to read, Devin obviously became stressed. His face distorted into a frown, his head bobbing up and down between text and teacher. He followed, or tried to follow, along with his finger. That did not work.

Suddenly, Devin jumped from his seat and ran to get a Kleenex tissue. He tried to use it as a liner under his text, until his face became a deep, flushed red. It became apparent that he was going to cry.

At this point, I dashed from the room and got him a bookmark from my personal stash. I presented it to Devin, with a note about "how hard he was trying" written on the back. I had never seen a kid so happy. Although he could not keep with the text, Devin seemed pleased that someone had noticed his plight. His face returned to a normal color, and he was able to complete the period without another episode of anxiety.

Taken from Department Head Notes

What Literature Says About the Affective Role

How important is the affective role in the academic performance of the student? Studies of the struggling reader indicate that this understanding is critical to strategy implementation that will narrow the gap between student expectation and performance. Provision of schema presents the opportunity for strugglers to grasp the concept of reading in ways that

Relationship-Driven Teaching Style

are personally identifiable to them (Anderson, 1984). Schema devoid of human relationship is at best, ineffectual.

Researchers propose that the personal connection to the task at hand directly correlates to the performance of the reader (Sridhar & Vaughn, 2000). Proposed strategies that increase academic performance have one commonality: relationship and the affective feelings of understanding and knowing.

As educators stand before their classes the question becomes: "What do I know about these students?" It is in the answer that the defining strategy is born. At-risk students, by definition, are known to many by label, socioeconomic background, ethnic or racial classification; they become statistical numbers found on the testing review published in local newspapers for public perusal. For many educators, that is as far as the "knowing" of the "other" goes. In hand are modifications to be met, standards to teach, and horror stories to overcome. Motivation, effort, and desire to know: these are attributes that are necessary to all student achievement; all have their birthing in the womb of student interaction within his community (Singer, 1983). It can be said that without a connection to others, the At-risk student will not survive.

Intent behind the knowing drives appropriate instruction. Strategies that fuel feelings of connection form the threshing floor of increased reading accomplishment. Central to achievement is that text is of personal importance to the student and has its roots steeped in self-efficacy, character, and personal value. By changing the relationship given teacher and student, self-esteem will be realized, as will syntax as a result (Lee & Neal, 1993).

Self-definition is directly related to performance (Whitney-Thomas, & Moloney, 2001). Students who are not known, who are not treated as well as others, are completely aware of their anonymity (Brown, Palincsar, & Armbruster, 1984). The value of the reciprocal relationship is seen in this awareness. Without that characteristic, the student, the teacher, and the educational community experience the hollowness that negates the learning process. Text never gains life until life initiates the desire for text. Educators who desire to see change must modify the approach to associations with students in their own neighborhood: the classroom. The culture in the classroom

constructs meaning that will connect its participants to the literature at hand (Alvermann, 2001).

All the strategies in the world will not help to close the achievement gap, if you don't believe it can be done (Bell, 2003). It is necessary for teachers to believe in the students that they teach. At-risk students need to participate, become emotionally involved, and feel the patient concern of their teachers. Larry Bell said it best when he summarized: "These specific strategies can help. But one factor is more essential to closing the achievement gap than any strategy or technique: establishing a good relationship with every student. As the saying goes, 'Kids don't care how much we know, until they know how much we care.' Once you demonstrate caring, you can then take your teaching to the highest level: inspirational teaching (Bell, 2003)."

Motivating students to learn comes from connection to text on a personal level (Bearman, 2002). The challenge for many educators is to address this at the secondary level. At-risk students in grades eight to twelve need to develop a new identity. Central to the remaking of this identity is the relationship that is developed between each At-risk reader and the members of their culture within the classroom. For students to make new understandings, they must regard them as personally, socially, and historically valuable (Rex, 2001).

Socially constructed learning environments are critical to performance. At the secondary level, students can experience up to eight classroom cultures each day. Literacy within those cultures cannot flourish devoid of meaningful interactions with human beings. A teacher who is committed to his or her students, and reaches out to build a rapport with them, will help them to succeed academically (Moje, 1996).

Literacy is every child's right (McGill-Franzen & Allington, 1991). Acquiring access to his or her personal right to achieve is often just a relationship away. Building on the research of those before, this study purposes to take a closer look at a Relationship-driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005) and its effect on the academic performance of students labeled At-risk and unable to read beyond third grade level.

Relationship-Driven Teaching Style

Definition

As “Relationship-Driven Teaching Style” is a term copyrighted by the researcher, its definition bears noting here. By definition, Relationship-driven Teaching Style has self-belief as an affective product, and syntax is seen as the result (Lee & Neal, 1993). Provision of schema presented affords the opportunity for strugglers to grasp the concept of content area reading in ways that are personally identifiable to them (Anderson, 1984). Schema devoid of human relationships are, at best, ineffectual (Sridhar & Vaughn, 2000). Relationship-Driven Teaching Style is an approach to teaching whereby the teacher, through a formulation of personal relationships with all students, constructs schema that are meaningful and will produce the affective feelings of understanding and knowing.

Intent, behind this knowing, is used to drive appropriate instruction. Strategies that have fostered feelings of connection have become those particular to Relationship-Driven Teaching Style. Central to achievement is that context is of personal importance to the student and has its roots steeped in self-affirmation, other-affirmation, character, and personal value. Relatedness, as given by teacher to student, is used as the primary strategy, producing self-efficacy (Furrer & Skinner, 2003).

Strategies used by teachers who adhere to the Relationship-Driven Teaching Style were designed to close the achievement gap through emotional, but not entangled, connections to students. Connections are made on a personal level to drive achievement (Bell, 2003). Simply summarized, the Relationship-Driven Teaching Style was deemed, by the researcher as participant-observer, a personal and fully affective focus to teaching that places content and academic strategies in a secondary position. This was coupled with the belief that the former has impact on academic performance that supersedes traditional methodology.

Methods and Procedures

This study was designed to explore the association between overall student learning of At-risk students and a Relationship-

Schlicte, Stroud & Girdley

Driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005) in an eighth grade middle school classroom. As stated, the study's intention was to investigate the implementation of a relationship-based culture and compare that implementation with the resulting academic performance.

Sample

Subjects in the pilot study were 44 eighth graders from a small, rural mid-western, junior- senior high school environment. These students represented 46 percent of the eighth grade population that totaled 94 students. These students were labeled with the description At-risk due to low reading, lower SES levels, and learning disabled diagnoses. Student achievement in reading ranged from first grade, third month to third grade levels. Students were enrolled in Grade Eight English B, an English class designed to remediate reading instruction within the English content area classroom. The curriculum was written specifically to address challenges faced by these students due to their low literacy levels. Based on current research and the elementary Four Block Model, academic strategies used with the students were inclusive of: word block, self-selected reading, guided reading, and writing responses. All lessons were frontloaded with teacher questioning to determine goals and objectives for the daily exercises.

The 44 middle school students, both male and female, were divided by computer selection into two general English classes with a letter label that distinguished them from the general English and the Honors English classes. Students were not aware that they were placed for remediation due to the need to affirm personal value and efficacy within the classroom culture. From these two general English classes, a sub-culture of 17 eighth graders was randomly selected to participate in a relationship-driven, relationally based English extension. The eighth graders in this group were exposed to both general English formatted to academic needs and the relationship-driven approach to learning. The extension was non-graded, although report cards designated a P for pass, and F for fail. Participants received a P provided that they remained in the class for whatever time they were a part of the school community. All effort and performance were addressed in this sub-

Relationship-Driven Teaching Style

culture with Relationship-driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005). The control group also had an extension for enhancing skills, with a pass-fail format with another teacher. Control students, however, received no relationship-driven treatment.

Instruments

Instruments of comparison between the academic-only and relationally exposed groups were English tests designed to address skills or tasks taught during a given two-week period. These tests included: content comprehension, literacy skill analysis as determined by ISTEP, and artistic response to literature. Additionally, a separate writing exam was used to look at the overall improvement in the written composition relative to reading remediation within the eighth grade English content area classroom environment. These exams were given in general English.

All exams were evaluated using percentages, with a score of 100 percent marking those exams labeled as having a perfect score. Quantitative data were obtained by averaging individual performances from the six exams taken over the course of one semester by all 44 students.

The instruments were designed in such a way as to make grading consistent over the semester as differentiated skills were tested. Questions on the instrument were primarily rubric-graded essays with other sections constructed to assess other literacy skills as previously mentioned. For example, a skill for the week might be *summarizing*. Questions for that exam revolved around the newly exposed skill, but remained consistent in format for students.

Surveys and Conferencing

Qualitative data were gathered through two sources: informal interviewing and short survey questionnaires that monitored the affective and attitudinal changes that took place during the time that this study took place. Students were asked to note their feelings about English Class and reading in general on several occasions during the semester-long study. It was observed that attitudes of those exposed to both the general English class and the relationship-driven extension class shifted in connection to participation and personal academic performance.

Schlicte, Stroud & Girdley

Relationship Extension

The relationship-driven extension was designed to take the students to an environment that was based entirely upon who they were as people. Non-graded, as stated previously, the extension class included activities that centered upon developing relationships with the teacher, peers, and other students in the sub-culture. Students were expected to maintain the same rigorous standards as was expected in any extension class. The difference was seen in the substitution of notes, cards, phone calls, and relationship-driven rubrics that were not driven by points for traditional percent/point total grades. Wording contained in the syllabus was relationship-driven in nature and academic work was maintained as rigorous for the population included in the class.

Date Analysis Procedures and Results:

It was decided to conduct an independent two-sample T-Test to show academic progress by students in general English-only (B) and those exposed to both general English and the relationship-driven extension (A). Seventeen randomly selected students from two morning general English content area classes participated in the latter grouping (A). The academic status of both group A and group B was considered to have equitable labels of At-risk abilities prior to this study. No significant difference was distinguished between students in either group. All were failing; zero percent had been able to pass the ISTEP at the previous sixth grade testing.

The T-test was taken to compare the means of overall academic performance on all student exams taken in the general English classes. The students who were exposed to only the developed English/reading program implementation were compared to those that additionally were exposed to the Relationship-Driven Teaching Style approach.

Table One: Group Statistics

	ID	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Average	A	17	87.2157	5.9570	1.4448
	B	23	77.3551	10.9520	2.2836

Table Two: Independent Samples Study

		Levene Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differ	Std. Error Differ	95% Confidence Interval of the Differ	
								Lower	Upper	
A V E	Equal variances assumed	14.565	.000	3.356	38	.002	9.8606	2.9381	3.9127	15.8085
	Equal variances not assumed			3.649	35.349	.001	9.8606	2.7023	4.3766	15.3446

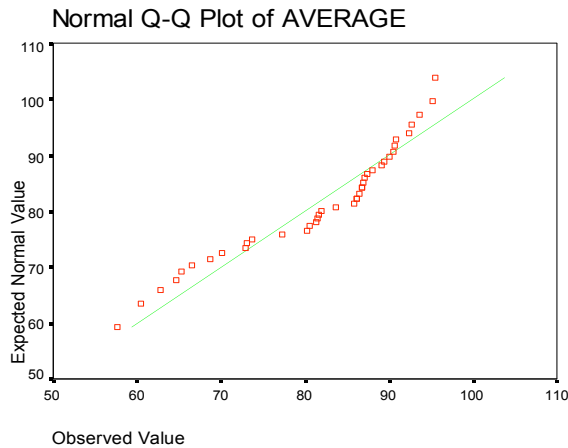
The researcher wanted to compare the academic performance of students in group A to those in group B based on exam performance. Hypothesis testing was performed to compare the means of the two independent samples. The test was conducted based on the following results from SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

The Hypothesis Test was made in light of the following assumptions: All students and their exam score averages were completely independent of one another; the T-test had a normal distribution for the entire group together (see Table Four); equal variances were not assumed; the t-statistic accommodating for unequal variances was calculated, with the p-value increasing in significance.

Table Three:

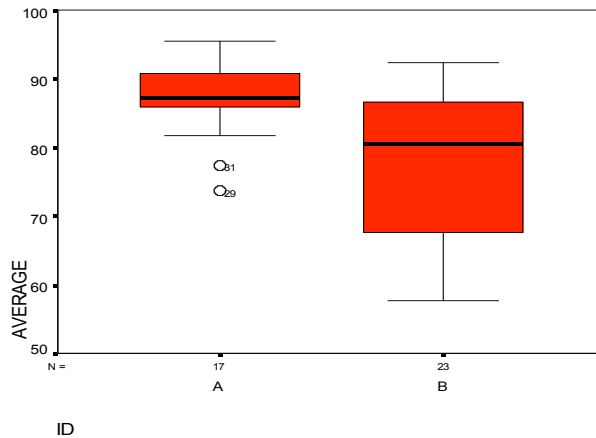
1.	Ha	The μ of A is GREATER THAN the μ of B
	Ho	The μ s of A is LESS THAN or EQUAL TO the μ of B
2.		Alpha = .05
3.		P-value is .001
4.		We can reject the null
<p>It could be argued that the relationship driven extension has a very significant positive effect on the academic performance of at-risk eighth graders on bi-weekly exams in a General English class designed to remediate in reading.</p>		
<p>EFFECT SIZE: $\mu_A - \mu_B$ divide by the Standard Deviation (16.909) (87.2157 – 77.3551) divided by 16.909 = .583</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MODERATE EFFECT SIZE ACCORDING TO COHEN</p>		

Table Four:



It was found that those students that were in group A, exposed to both general English and the non-graded relationship-driven extension had a mean average that exceeded the general English (only) group. The findings revealed that the non-graded relationship-driven extension had a large significant impact on the academic performance of students in At-risk classes on exams. The mean for group A (Relationship Extension) was 87.2157; the mean for group B (general English only) was 77.3551. Based on an alpha value of .05, the p-value was .001, which was significant based upon the established alpha of .05. The effect size was calculated at .583, considered a moderate effect size according to Cohen.

Table Five: Box Plot Analysis



Looking at the Box Plot Analysis (see Table Five), it could be seen that group A students exposed to both general English and the relationship-driven extension scored significantly higher on exams than did their peers in group B. Additionally, the range of mean scores was smaller, with more mean scores falling in the 85-92% performance level. Although there were two outlier averages that fell outside the whiskers, as seen above, it is notable that even outliers fall in areas above that of the lower end of the range in the Box Plot of mean scores for individuals in group B.

Informal Interviews: One participant's story

Devin's first interview regarding his thoughts about reading was with the researcher at the end of his seventh grade year. She read questions to Devin, and he checked the boxes that correlated with his answers, narrating at the same time (see Appendix C).

“How much do you like reading at school?”

Devin, not hesitating replied, “I hate it. I'm not too good at it.”

“How good does your teacher think you are at reading?” asked Mrs. S.

“So, so. She never tells me that I am good. I just think I am so, so.”

“What would you think of getting a book for a present?”

Devin replied emphatically, “Yuck.”

The remainder of the interview indicated Devin's perspective of reading and himself; all comments were negative with the exception of one answer. He mentioned that he loved to listen to a teacher read. The teacher stopped and looked at Devin and said, “You are an incredible person. I remember you from last year. It is so apparent to me that you desire to do well. You are going to do just fine in here.” The reference to the prior year, and the Kleenex incident prompted a positive look to travel across his face.

As the study began, Devin experienced critical initial struggles. The first day that literature teams met, Devin was almost sick during small group reading. His face was red, and

Schlicte, Stroud & Girdley

he was observed running his hands repeatedly through his hair. He kept apologizing for himself saying, "I don't read so good." His first artifact was a piece of writing on the sequence of events in the story. Boxed is his response (see Appendix A). Eraser marks were indicative of many tries and no recorded thought. Devin's group leader excused him as he had tried so hard. Devin looked up, and it appeared he read his leader's face.

One day the following week when Devin arrived in class, a post-it note was on his portfolio. It said, "I can't wait to see what you say today in Lit Team. Mrs. S." Devin orally responded to the story that his team read. The theme of the text was racism, and he offered his opinion about the topic. When asked what the definition of racism was, Devin had replied, "It's wrong." This was Devin's first verbal contribution. He was, by observation, totally engaged. His eyes followed the conversation, his face registered that he was thinking when others had asked questions. The text was open, and his finger ran along the lines. When asked to write about how the author set up the story, he spoke volumes more than the day before. Although Devin wrote a summary, he wrote.

An epiphany occurred when Devin began to believe that he had a voice, or as he stated, "She cares what I think." He mentioned how English had become his favorite class. That's when Devin brought in his best "thing," as he described it to his teacher. After hearing the book, *September 12th*, read by the librarian, Devin had written a book. Enclosed in the box is an excerpt from Devin's first publication for class (see Appendix A). His teacher ran to the shelf and made a trade with him: "A book for a book," she said. He beamed. Devin carried his new book with him everywhere. The teacher bragged on her new book as well.

Teacher-student conferences were a part of every other day for Devin. During conference time, Devin shared his writing with his teacher. Devin accurately named the conflict and complications of his newest "favorite book," *Cardiac Arrest*. It was noted that more and more details were present in his reader responses. Devin began to connect with the main characters in the text. During one particular conference, Devin asked if he could be moved to the back row to read so that, "nobody in the class can bother me." On the November sheet

Relationship-Driven Teaching Style

his leader marked him as saying that he liked to read, felt that he read “just great,” and that reading was somewhat fun.

By the time that the attitude and writing indicators were re-evaluated at the end of the first six weeks, Devin had shown remarkable improvement. He read aloud fluently, and would only stop if he wanted to comment, or “think aloud.” Every story began to have a personal connection. March brought with it a recorded event that was marked in Devin’s own words: “I want to read,” he said, as his hand was flapping in the air.

On one occasion, Devin came in with a poem. It was the first one that he had ever written. In this poem, Devin wrote of how grateful he was that someone had taught him to read. Positive reading indicators were apparent regardless of who interviewed Devin. More importantly, the gap between his ability and his performance decreased.

Inspired by a study of Edgar Allan Poe, Devin discovered he could put his feelings on paper. When asked what he liked about Edgar Allan Poe, Devin replied, “I like Edgar Allan Poe’s poems—the way he expresses himself about his feelings, and didn’t care about what people thought about him.”

Devin’s progress continued to be evident throughout the rest of his eighth grade year in the Relationship-Driven English Extension. As a final project, Devin chose to author a story called “The Loss of War.” In this story Devin became a respected hero for his actions to defend his country. He read his story to the class, and each student responded to his project. One student, named Laura wrote, “I rated it a 10, because the story was incredible. He read through it slow, and I was able to understand everything he said. Devin is a clear and able reader, and I didn’t know it. And, he is really a good writer.”

Devin ended the pilot study with a C+ average in English. He was more able to comprehend grade level text at the end, closing the gap between his seventh grade year to the beginning of ninth by raising himself almost four grade levels (from his first grade, third month status). His writing had been noted to continue to need editing, and Devin’s spelling was still a problem. It was thought that some of this was connected to his learning disability. However, this student maintained that the following lines excerpted from his story (The excerpt was later published in an anthology of poetry used by educators state-

wide; see Appendix B), said what he had become: “a respected leader.”

Discussion and Implications

The findings of this study strongly indicated that Relationship-Driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005) positively impacted academic performance. All students in the population sample were exposed to innovative research-based basic English instruction with a heavy emphasis on reading and writing. However, it was noted that those who were additionally exposed to a class that was primarily built on establishing relationships in a cultural community performed in a way that was superior academically to the mean score performances of their peers.

These results were important to remember, as was the fact that the relationship extension was a non-graded time period. Yet, general English exams showed the critical effects of the affective on learning and performance. The primary teacher in both General English and the extension remained consistent. The emphasis on relationship activities was the key difference. It was observed that the schema provided in the extension wrought the syntax needed for performance. As Alvermann (2002) indicated, the culture in the classroom constructed meaning that connected those within its walls to available literature.

Informal interviews, as well as pre-study and post-study surveys called “Attitude Indicator Checklists,” showed that students in group A experienced more positive changes in their feelings about English class and reading in general. This affective attitude change was supported by quantitative results in the findings of this study. Devin’s personal story, gained through informal interviews, suggested that what he felt was reflected in how he performed academically.

Summary and Conclusion

The impact of the relationship extension on student performance as seen in this study merits further exploration. These findings imply that a significant impact could be made on the performance of At-risk students using Relationship-

Relationship-Driven Teaching Style

Driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005). This is considered very encouraging to those who understood the importance of knowing students and giving them more than content. Larry Bell (2003), and those who share his philosophical method, are driven by the one factor that can make teaching inspirational and can enhance student learning: the affective strategy inherent in Relationship-Driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005).

Devin's personal story suggests that there would be much to learn by exploring the personal lives of students exposed to Relationship-Driven Teaching Style (Schlichte, 2005) within the content area classroom. The use of narrative in an intense qualitative review of exposed students would gain great insight into the phenomenological approach used to effectively impact the performance of At-risk students in English or other content areas of study.

Appreciation to Dr. Holmes Finch, Statistics Professor of Ball State University, who encouraged Dr. Schlichte to explore the Relationship-driven phenomenon statistically.

Addendum:

Students who participated in this study took the GQE (Graduation Qualification Exam, 2006) this year. This class thought to be un-teachable secured a passing rate that surpassed all tenth graders in schools of their mid-western area. It is thought by this mid-western school corporation that the Relationship-Driven Teaching Style implemented in the pilot study and classes that were implemented as a result impacted student performance in such a way as to positively impact student ISTEP results. Relationship-Driven Teaching Style is still implemented by a trained teacher at the freshman level.

Works Cited

- Allington, R. L. (2002). You can't learn from Books you can't read. *Educational Leadership/November 2002*. 16-19.
- McGill-Franzen, A. & Allington, R. (1991). Every child's right: Literacy. *Reading Teacher/October 1991*, 223-233.

Schlichte, Stroud & Girdley

- Alvermann, D. (2001). Reading adolescent's reading identities: Looking back to see ahead. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 44:8*, 676-695.
- Anderson, R.C. (1984). Role of reader's schema in comprehension, learning, and memory. In Ruddell, R.B., Ruddel, M.R., Singer, H. (Eds.). *Theoretical models & processes of reading* (469-495). Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- Bearman, G. (2002). Guiding the inquiry of young adolescent minds. *Middle School Journal, January 2002*.
- Bell, L. (2003). Strategies that lose the gap: Teachers who succeed with at-risk students use these practical strategies and back them up with patience and caring. *Educational Leadership, December 2002/January 2003*, 32-34.
- Brown, A., Palincsar, A., & Armbruster, B. (1984). Instruction comprehension-fostering activities. In *interactive learning situations*. In Ruddell, R., Ruddell, M. & Singer, H. (Eds.), *Theoretical models & processes of reading*, Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 83-495.
- Furrer, C. & Skinner, E. (2003). Sense of relatedness as a factor in children's academic engagement and performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95(1)*, 148-162. Retrieved February 23, 2004, from the EBSCO host database.
- Lee, N. & Neal, J. (1993). Reading rescue: Intervention for a student "at promise." *Journal of Reading, 36:4*, 276-282.
- McGill-Franzen, A. & Allington, R.L. (1991). Every child's right: Literacy. *The Reading Teacher; 45:2*, 86-90.
- Moje, E. (1996). I teach students, not subjects: Teacher-student relationships as contexts for Secondary literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly: 31:5, April/May/June* 172-190.
- Rex, L. (2001). The remaking of a high school reader. *Reading Research Quarterly: 36:3, July/August/September*, 288-313.
- Schlichte, J. M. (2005). The Effect of a Relationship-driven Teaching Style on the Academic Performance off At-Risk Ninth Graders in the English Content Area Classroom: A Case Study: *April*, Copyrighted Dissertation, Ball State University: Muncie, Indiana.

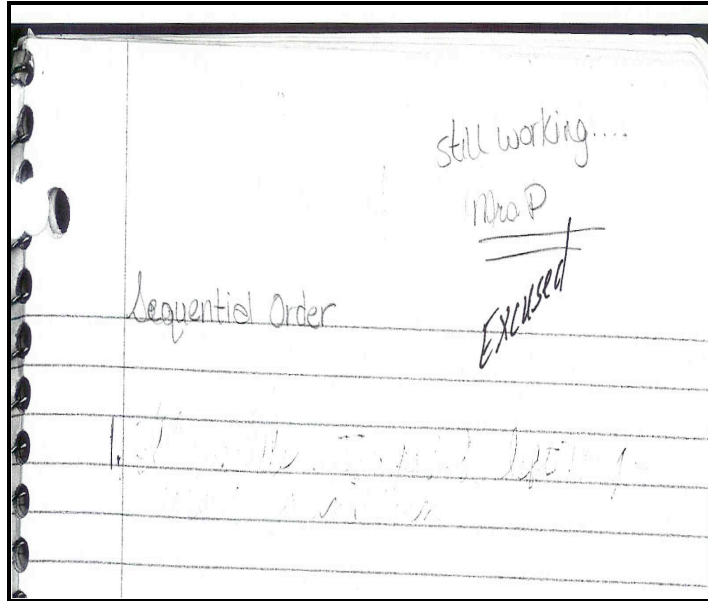
Relationship-Driven Teaching Style

- Singer, The substrata-factor theory of reading and its history and conceptual relationship to interaction theory. *Reading Research Revisited, Merrill, 1983.*
- Sridhar, D., & Vaughn, S. (2000). Bibliotherapy for all: Enhancing reading comprehension, self-concept, and behavior. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 33:2, 74-83.*
- Whitney-Thomas, M. & Moloney, M. (2001). What I am and what I want: Adolescents' self-definition and struggles. *The Council for Exceptional Children, 67:3, 375-389.*

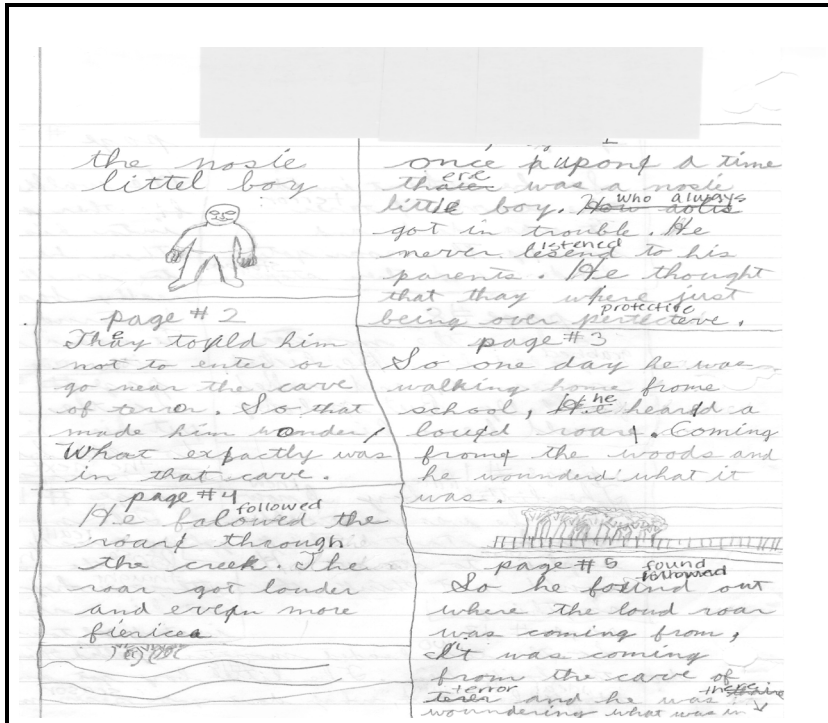
Dr. Jacqueline Schlichte, now instructor and field supervisor in the Earlham College Graduate Programs in Education, was a Relationship-drive instructor for 24 years in the field. This blended study was conducted to explore a phenomenon that Dr. Schlichte found to be uncharted territory in educational research. Her entire desire was to give a voice to the students she had opportunity to learn from in her years experience of elementary and secondary practice.

Dr. James Stroud, professor at Ball State University, introduced Dr. Schlichte to the qualitative/statistical blend form of research that is new on the horizon. Dr. Stroud now teaches all preservice teachers within his teacher education classes Relationship-drive Teaching Style.

Donna Girdley, Primary Unit Coordinator, is a first grade teacher at Community Christian School, a private institution in Richmond, Indiana, that prides itself in its teaching for excellence. Donna edited the primary document for this publication. As a result, she and her students are currently the subjects of a third study on the Relationship-driven Teaching phenomenon.



Devin's First Book



Relationship-Driven Teaching Style


APPENDIX B

Devin's Published Poem

Publish with no changes – Please sign and return this proofsheet.

Publish with changes as marked below – Highlight changes and make corrections. Do not rewrite your poem.

Sign and return this proofsheet to: Creative Communication, 90 North 100 East, Logan, UT 84321

Proof ID: DB150621IN 

The Loss of War
The battlefield was turning red
On the land, a man searching for his arm
Was being victorious in the fighting
He was struggling to conquer and prevail
There was a man breaking down into tears
From all the slaughtering

Everybody was cheering
Because we had won the battle
We were so excited
We had our land back
Before the war, I thought myself an outcast

I was the one to slaughter the last soldier
What can I say, except I feel bad
I haven't ever killed a man before

And now, I am a respected leader

In case you are a Top Ten Winner, please complete and/or correct any changes in your home mailing address.

Address _____, City _____, State _____ Zip Code _____

Signing this form does not relinquish the poet's rights to the poem, it only gives the publisher the rights to use this poem in its anthologies.

Please print poet's name for our index: (Last) _____ (First) _____
Poet's Signature _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____

In case we have any questions before printing your poem, please fill in poet's home phone number _____ - _____ - _____
Giving Creative Communication permission to publish this poem verifies that the poem is the poet's original work and is obtained for publication. Submitting non-original work is plagiarism and is against the law.

