AILACTE Journal

Volume XII, Number 1, Fall 2015

The official journal of the
Association of Independent Liberal Arts
Colleges for Teacher Education

AILACTE Journal

The Journal of the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education

Volume XII
Fall 2015

Amelia El-Hindi Trail, Transylvania University, **Editor**
Frankie Kozicky, Transylvania University, **Editorial Assistant**
Kaitlin Haggard, Transylvania University, **Student Editor**
Barbara Grinnell, Transylvania University, **Graphic/Design Editor**

Officers of the Association
President: Mike Hillis, California Lutheran University
President-Elect: Kim Koeppen, Hamline University
Secretary: Sam Hausfather, Maryville University
Treasurer: David E. Coffman, Bridgewater College
Publication Editor: Jacqueline McDowell, Berry College
East Region Representative: Janet Arndt, Gordon College
Midwest Region Representative: Jackie Crawford, Simpson College
South Region Representative: Jennie Carr, Bridgewater College
West Region Representative: David Denton, Seattle Pacific University

Executive Assistant
Jennifer Knox

2015* AILACTE Journal *Editorial Review Board
Nancy Cerezo, Ph.D., Saint Leo University
Jacqueline K. Crawford, Ed.D., Simpson College
Amy L. Eva, Ph.D., Seattle University
Janis D. Flint-Ferguson, D.A., Gordon College
Rebecca L. Harris, Ph.D., Bridgewater College
Stacy Hill, Ed.D., Whitworth University
Julie Shalhope Kalnin, Ph.D., University of Portland
Doreen M. Keller, Ed.D., Whitworth University
Lenore J. Kinne, Ph.D., Northern Kentucky University
Joe Lewis, Ed.D., Hamline University
D. Mark Meyers, Ph.D., Xavier University
Kathryn Picanco, Ed.D., Whitworth University
Kevin M. Thomas, Ph.D., Bellarmine University

AILACTE Journal Volume XIII 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 addressing issues related to teacher education within the liberal arts context; including teaching and learning, preservice and inservice education, research and practice related to the preparation and development of teachers, and other related topics. Project descriptions, research reports, theoretical papers, papers espousing a particular point of view and descriptions of activities or issues pertinent to the education and professional development of teachers at the local, state or national level would be appropriate topics for the journal.

Criteria for submitting a manuscript:

Authors must submit their manuscripts electronically as email attachments by July 1, 2016, to the following email address: ailactejournal@gmail.com. Manuscripts must comply with *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition* (2010) for format and style and not exceed 15 pages, double spaced. Within the body of the manuscript, authors must disguise all identifying information that could compromise our blind review process. Manuscripts must contain the following:

- a cover page that contains the title, abstract, keywords, and all authors' names, highest degree earned, titles, and institutional affiliations, in order of authorship;
- a title page that contains only the complete manuscript title, abstract (150-word maximum), and keywords, and;
- the body of the manuscript that also contains a running head (no more than 50 characters) and uses a pagination format that adheres to APA style guidelines.

In a separate file, authors are requested to send the following:

- complete name, postal mailing address, email address, and

telephone numbers (including cell phones if appropriate) of each author on the manuscript, and;
- a separate page that contains autobiographical sketches of each author (comprised of three to five sentences for each).

In light of our blind review process, please address all correspondence to *ailactejournal@gmail.com.*

AILACTE Journal

Volume XII
Fall 2015

Table of Contents

Cultivating Preservice Secondary Teachers for Project-Based Learning: A Four-Step Model 1

Gaoming Zhang, Ph.D., *University of Indianapolis*
Angelia J. Ridgway, Ph.D., *University of Indianapolis*
Deb Sachs, M.S., *University of Indianapolis*

They *Really* Don't Speak ENGLISH: Helping Preservice Teachers Experience Cultural and Linguistic Diversity. 17

Jill Scott, Ph.D., *Abilene Christian University*
Bruce Scott, Ed.D., *Abilene Christian University*

Enacting Diversity at a Single Gender Liberal Arts HBCU Educator Preparation Program 35

Andrea Lewis, Ph.D., *Spelman College*
Nicole Taylor, Ph.D., *Spelman College*

A Reflection on Lessons Learned from Implementation of a State-Mandated Co-Teaching Model for Student Teaching . . 53

Dottie Willis, Ed.D., *Bellarmine University*

Embodying Justice: Supporting Teacher Candidates with Disabilities. 73

Julie Antilla-Garza, Ph.D., *Seattle Pacific University*

University-Based Literacy Center: Benefits for the College and the Community 93

Kathleen McGrath, Ph.D., *Niagara University College of Education*
Rob Erwin, Ph.D., *Niagara University College of Education*

From the Editor

Once again I am happy to present the *AILACTE Journal*, now in its twelfth volume, and featuring an impressive array of articles. Many thanks are due for this volume; including the 2015 AILACTE Journal Editorial Review Board and the AILACTE Executive Committee. In particular, Jackie McDowell, Publication Editor, has given so much in terms of insight, guidance, and support. I also want to thank Frankie Kozicky, Kaitlin Haggard, and Barbara Grinnell who have done outstanding work on the editorial team for the past four years. Finally, sincere thanks to the many authors who submitted such strong manuscripts for review. We are experiencing an 'embarrassment of riches' in terms of the variety and quality of submissions and we hope that will continue.

The opening article, by Gaoming Zhang, Angelia Ridgway, and Deb Sachs presents an effective model for project-based-learning (PBL) along with insights on the implementation of PBL for other liberal arts institutions. Jill Scott and Bruce Scott present insights on the impact of a multicultural immersion experience on preservice teachers, who also witnessed the power of culturally diverse texts in supporting culturally and linguistically diverse learners. An article by Andrea Lewis and Nicole Taylor also focuses on diversity in presenting an approach to preparing culturally responsive teachers from the perspective of a single-gender, Historically Black College. Dottie Willis, who has served as a co-teaching trainer at a Kentucky liberal arts university since 2012, reflects on the challenges faced and the lessons learned from the implementation of the co-teaching mandate for teacher education in Kentucky. The focus of the fifth article, by Julie Antilla-Garza, is on preservice teacher candidates with disabilities and the extent to which teacher education programs should be enacting ways to support such candidates in their learning. Finally, the last article of this volume, by Kathleen McGrath and Rob Erwin, reports on the impact of an on-campus literacy center for both teacher candidates and the families of the students served effectively by the center.

The energetic work of these authors illustrates the significant role of AILACTE in promoting excellence in teacher education. At the nexus of individual and collective responsibility, we hold fast to our vision of teaching as a noble enterprise for an enlightened, democratic society. The voices presented here demonstrate the power of that vision.

Amelia El-Hindi Trail

Cultivating Preservice Secondary Teachers for Project-Based Learning: A Four-Step Model

Gaoming Zhang, Ph.D.
University of Indianapolis

Angelia J. Ridgway, Ph.D.
University of Indianapolis

Deb Sachs, M.S.
University of Indianapolis

Abstract

This article describes four different mechanisms for preparing teacher candidates from a liberal arts institution to teach in project based learning (PBL) classrooms: Observe it, Experience it, Create it, and Become it. For each of the four mechanisms, the authors also provide concrete examples of candidates' PBL experiences and candidates' feedback about the process. From observation to mini-teaches in schools to field placements, the authors suggest a variety of methods for engaging both undergraduate and graduate students in learning about PBL instruction. The four-step mechanism could also provide suggestions for how to implement PBL in similar liberal arts institutions.

Keywords: **teacher education, project-based learning**

Students, teachers, and parents gather in an open field between the school and the fire station. Chatter resonates throughout the crowd and there is noticeable excitement in the air. The firefighters next door have been notified and are "on call" and the nearby international airport a couple of miles away has been notified. Is this an emergency situation? No! It's launch day for the miniature hot air balloons students have developed as part of their project-based learning (PBL) unit exploring gas laws. Students have been anxiously looking forward to this day since the launch of their PBL unit that included a visit from a professional hot air balloon pilot. Student engagement has been at an all-time high for the past two weeks as students explored gas laws in their science class and then designed and built miniature hot air balloons that they think will fly based on their understanding of those gas laws. Finally, it is time to test their creations!

Nestled on the south side of a large, metropolitan area, it has been our university's experience that schools are aggressively seeking candidates who can actively engage students in their own learning. PBL is unquestionably one way to do this.

Our four-year liberal arts university, the University of Indianapolis, has the fortunate circumstance of choosing from a number of school configurations in which to place our preservice teacher candidates. An existing partnership in a local, urban-fringe school district provided us the setting to launch initial conversations and experiences with and for our teacher candidates about new ways to prepare future teachers. From these conversations came our university's strong desire to integrate PBL approaches in the preparation of secondary teachers at all levels, in all programs.

Our integration of PBL has spanned immersive clinical experiences for undergraduate sophomores to graduate students' preparation of PBL experiences and interactions with our city's Mayor's Office. In this article we will discuss the systematic way in which we prepare preservice teachers to incorporate PBL into their professional practice using a four-step approach: Observe it, Experience it, Create it, Become it. Each of these steps will be discussed in detail in the remainder of this article.

Contextual Background

PBL was not a foreign concept to the School of Education and College of Arts and Sciences Faculty at the University of Indianapolis. Through a PBL Institute that has been jointly offered by our university, another local university and a K-12 partner district, many college faculty have engaged in the process of using PBL to not only teach content knowledge, but also to prepare future teachers. Thus, content area experts in the College of Arts and Sciences are able to provide subject-specific expertise for teacher education candidates as they develop PBL units.

While there is no single definition of PBL, there are criteria that are recognized as commonalities for defining PBL. The Buck Institute for Education (BIE), a leader in the development and implementation of using PBL as a framework for teaching, identifies the following eight elements as being essential to PBL: significant content; 21st century competencies; in-depth inquiry; a driving question; a need to know; student voice and choice; critique and revision; and student presentations of work to a public audience (Buck Institute for Education). In a review of research about project-based learning, Thomas (2000) uses the following five criteria to determine what a project must have in order to be considered as project-based learning: (a) PBL projects are the curriculum, not an add on or end; (b) PBL projects drive students to pursue learning related to the desired concepts and principles of the content; (c) PBL projects require students to construct knowledge as a result of participating in inquiries; (d) rather than being teacher-led and scripted, PBL projects are driven by students; and, (e) PBL projects are authentic and incorporate real-life challenges. As can be seen, there is significant overlap in the two sets of criteria provided here and these criteria meet the majority of descriptors used by Daniels and Bizar (2005) to describe best practice teaching.

Preparing preservice candidates to teach using PBL is critical for several reasons. Research has shown that PBL has positive effects on student content knowledge and their ability to apply knowledge to solve real world problems. In a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of PBL in teaching content knowledge, Strobel and van

Barneveld (2009) concluded that students in PBL learning environments outperformed their counterparts in traditional instructional settings on knowledge and real-world skills. “PBL is significantly more effective than traditional instruction to train competent and skilled practitioners and to promote long-term retention of knowledge and skills” (Strobel & van Barneveld, 2009, p. 55). Boaler (1997) found that students with immersive PBL learning experiences emerge with more content knowledge that can be applied to a variety of real-world tasks. In an experimental study of 76 PBL classroom teachers, Finkelstein, Hanson, Huang, Hirschman, & Huang (2010) reported that PBL learning led to higher scores on not only standardized exams, but also ability tests that focused on problem-solving skills and application to real-world problems.

PBL learning experiences are also found to lead to improved critical-thinking and problem-solving skills (Shepherd, 1998; Treten & Zachariou, 1995). Research suggests that PBL is a successful approach for 21st-century skills and that students with immersive PBL learning experiences show more initiative by utilizing resources and revising work (Barron et al., 1998).

Higher levels of student motivation and engagement are also found to be associated with PBL learning experiences. For example, secondary students were more excited about marine engineering and physical science when they participated in an applied shipbuilding project (Verma, Dickerson, & McKinney, 2011). Similarly, in a study of an economics class, both the lowest- and highest-performing students were engaged in a PBL unit, including students who showed no or minimal interest in economics at the start of the unit (Ravitz & Mergendoller, 2005). One explanation of higher levels of engagement and motivation is that PBL places students in a real-world problem context and helps students to see the value of the learning experiences (Blumenfeld et al., 1991).

In summary, PBL offers many advantages, including: increasing student engagement; providing authentic, real-world learning experiences for students; and teaching students the skills they will need to continue to be life-long learners and contributors to their communities. There are specific pedagogical strategies that teachers

must know in order to be successful using the PBL approach. In addition, because this approach is often new for not only secondary teachers but also for their students, teachers need to know how to structure time, space and resources in order to promote a classroom culture that will lead to student success when using PBL. Thus, we have implemented the four-step approach described below to enable our candidates and the teachers and students with whom they are working to successfully employ PBL in their teaching and learning.

Observe It

The first step is to observe PBL. Field observation has been widely adopted in teacher education programs and is esteemed as an essential component in teacher preparation (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). In a typical early field observation experience, prospective teachers are exposed to cooperating teachers' application of theory and instructional approaches, which are usually connected to the university's educational courses. The goal is for preservice teachers to develop their theoretical understanding and pedagogical knowledge, in part through close, guided observation of the cooperating teacher.

Besides the traditional value of an early field observation experience in teacher education programs, field observation of PBL carries additional meaning and plays an even more critical role. Research shows that teachers tend to teach the way they were taught (Ball, 1990; Vrasidas & McIsaac, 2001). Since PBL is still relatively new in schools, many teacher candidates have little to no prior experience or knowledge about it. For many of them, observing PBL is a culture shock. Many components of PBL classrooms are different and sometimes even opposite to the traditional model that pre- and in-service teachers have been through in their own learning experiences. Therefore, PBL field experience needs to provide in-depth opportunities for teacher candidates to develop their understanding of PBL.

With the partnership between a local secondary school in the New Tech Network, teacher candidates in the Secondary Education program from this four-year liberal arts university are introduced to

PBL and start their field experience in their sophomore year. This PBL experience is embedded in a required educational psychology course. The course is offered in the PBL middle school twice weekly. As part of the course requirement, every week each teacher candidate spends two hours (over two visits) in the PBL school. This semester-long field experience provides a variety of opportunities for teacher candidates to observe, participate in, and reflect on PBL. Here are some examples of these opportunities.

Observing PBL Learning in all Content Areas

In this field experience, teacher candidates work with 7th graders in all content areas (e.g., English language, math, science, and social studies). Since many projects are designed to promote students' knowledge in multiple content areas, teachers of these content areas collaborate with each other in planning, teaching, and evaluating projects. An example of collaboration between social studies and English teachers is for students to write a fictional story, at the request of a classroom teacher of younger students, to introduce a selected Asian culture to the students. Another example of social studies and English collaboration is for students to explore different countries and cultures and discern which country they may want to live in if they are forced to leave the United States due to some natural disaster. An example of collaboration between math and science is to design and create math and science games. The games are eventually played and reviewed by peers on a Game Day.

Immersive field experience also allows teacher candidates to observe a variety of PBL activities. For instance, teacher candidates are able to observe PBL teachers co-teaching cross-curricular projects, which is another key component of PBL but is not usually present in traditional classrooms and may be new to teacher candidates.

Tutoring and Workshops

In addition to observation, teacher candidates are also part of the students' PBL learning experiences. Teacher candidates are asked to interact with a small group of students, such as tutoring within

their projects, being an audience for and judges of student presentations, and giving workshops on the topics that are identified from the "what needs to know" analysis conducted by students when they started a project.

Candidates generally felt that immersive observation experiences in a PBL school significantly improved their understanding of PBL. When asked about their understanding of PBL, candidates emphasized its connection to the real world. One candidate said, "Through research and creating projects, students are not only doing work according to standards, but are learning real-world application skills through them." Another candidate commented that PBL "allowed students to see how school subjects relate to the real world" and that PBL is "more about problem-solution." Candidates also commented on the potential of PBL learning in improving non-cognitive skills, such as helping students "gain confidence" and "collaboration skills." Overall, candidates expressed positive feelings about the impact of PBL for students. As one candidate put it, "PBL better prepares middle school students for higher education, future careers, and even the workforce." However, many candidates also mentioned that PBL is a new instructional model and prompts their need for more pedagogical knowledge, skills and clinical experiences to be prepared to teach in PBL settings.

The course instructor of the educational psychology course designed the PBL experiences not only to improve teacher candidates' understanding of PBL, but also to develop their understanding of major educational theories and concepts. First, many field observation forms were modified to address candidates' unique field experiences in this PBL setting (e.g., co-teaching across different content areas, integrating technology in small group research projects, etc.). Second, during class-time conversations, the instructor used specific prompt questions about the connections to PBL and educational theories. For instance, when teacher candidates were learning Piaget's cognitive development theory, they talked about the stage of cognitive development of those 7th grade PBL learners they had been observing. Teacher candidates also discussed the advantages (as well as challenges) of incorporating

inquiry-based PBL research projects with young teens, given where they are in terms of cognitive development. Third, students were given opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas about PBL in a variety of learning activities. In such learning activities, the instructor tended to use general guidelines and did not ask, specifically, about connections to candidates' PBL experience. However, when teacher candidates made connections to PBL experiences, they were asked to elaborate on their thoughts and ideas. For example, all teacher candidates were asked to draw a concept map of memory. Two out of three groups included "PBL" in their concept map. They were asked to explain why they believed that PBL plays a positive role in helping students remember information. Additionally, during class discussion about meta-cognition, a teacher candidate made a comment, "That's why they were doing need-to-know analysis in PBL!" Her "aha moment" soon inspired others to look at metacognition from a PBL perspective.

Experience It

There are multiple means in which we have our teacher candidates experience PBL lessons from the introductory phase of observation to being the learners in a course that is designed entirely around the PBL model. In our multi-step approach we affirm Kolmos' (2002) notion that PBL enables students to draw upon prior skills and knowledge while partaking in real-world problem-solving situations, arguing that this approach allows students to transfer knowledge into unknown and new situations.

Our undergraduate educational psychology students have the fortunate opportunity to have their college course and articulated field experience set in a New Tech Middle School in a local school township. The experience actually begins with a flipped model wherein the middle school students instruct the teacher candidates in the essentials of PBL. As both the course and the clinical experience progress, teacher candidates learn via observation and through the creation of mini-lessons, which they eventually create to support PBL projects at this clinical site.

In a more in-depth way, all secondary candidates in our teacher

education programs have a course or a major portion of a course that is taught in a PBL format. For example, in one of our graduate programs, candidates take a class about designing PBL units that is taught using PBL as the delivery mechanism. The advantage of this approach is that candidates are experiencing the same thing their own students will experience as they each progress through a PBL unit. This gives them a greater understanding of the PBL process and of both the scaffolding and the freedom for student choice that are necessary for the design of a successful PBL unit. Graduate students commented, “PBL allows for student choice within the project. It gives the teacher the ability to find ways to allow students to pick their topic within the concept.” In addition, a graduate student added, “Instructors (in PBL environments) must allow students to complete their work in ways that appeal to the students, but checkpoints are essential.”

Undergraduate Secondary and Master of Arts in Teaching candidates learn content in their Social and Political Contexts of Education courses via the delivery of a PBL portion of the course wherein they create a charter school prospectus that aims to serve a certain K-12 student population. This prospectus is presented to an authentic audience, our Mayor’s Office, which is one of the two State charter agencies. The entirety of this experience affirms educational research that the acquisition of knowledge is embedded in experiential, active engagement that challenges students to assess situations from analytical and critical perspectives in order to reach a proposed outcome (Savin-Baden & Wilkie, 2004).

Create It

Once our candidates observe and experience PBL, it is time for them to move on to the third step of our model: creating their own PBL units for use with secondary students. The PBL units designed by our candidates include the standards and 21st-century skills that will be addressed in the unit: a driving question; scenario and entry documents; assessment plans including a description of products and artifacts along with rubrics for assessing products; artifacts and 21st-century skills; and a map of the project including daily

student activities, ideas for how the teacher will scaffold the project both academically and procedurally including possible resources, potential workshops, task lists, group supports and progress checks (Buck Institute for Education).

The creation of PBL units varies from program to program with some candidates designing and delivering a portion of a PBL unit and others designing and delivering an entire unit. In our undergraduate secondary program, upperclassmen are asked to design a PBL unit while in their intense middle school field practicum. During this time, candidates design a PBL unit that has a focus on promoting literacy in the content area they will prepare to teach. At the graduate level, candidates consult with their cooperating teacher during their full-time student teaching to come up with a topic for their unit. They are then tasked with designing an entire PBL unit to address the agreed upon content. Once they have designed the entire PBL unit, the candidates have the opportunity to present their PBL unit design at a public exhibition where they receive feedback about the unit from both content area professors and education professors as well as from community members with real-life expertise in the content area of the candidate's PBL unit. They then have a chance to make revisions to the unit before implementing it with students during student teaching. Following the implementation of their PBL unit, candidates are required to do another revision of the unit based on what they learned from implementing it in an actual classroom. The revised PBL units are shared with other teacher candidates who, in turn, can revise these units for use in their own classrooms once they have teaching positions. Ideas for the development of PBL units are as varied as the content areas secondary students' experience. Some examples of units that candidates have designed include students exploring polynomials by considering the cost, type and amount of flooring materials it would take to install floors in a new home, creating and launching miniature hot air balloons to explore gas laws, teaching exponents and logarithms in the context of buying a car, and exploring parabolas by designing an efficient solar powered cooker.

While creating and implementing their PBL units, candidates

collaborated with a variety of community partners. Such partners included local professionals from the business, medical, and nonprofit sectors. These community members added real-world application and community involvement components to the PBL unit which promoted intrinsic motivation in our candidates' students. One candidate commented that PBL "challenges the students to seek more knowledge outside the walls of the classroom. It provides room for them to interact professionally with the community." Another candidate stated, "Creating my first PBL unit without having seen it play out in the classroom first was challenging. Once I was able to implement my PBL unit, I realized that PBL brought even more purpose and direction to my teaching."

Become It

Whether it is via observation or an entire program based almost entirely on PBL, our candidates are entering the teaching profession armed with knowledge of PBL as a creative and authentic methodology for engaging secondary learners. In addition, they are better prepared to solve the multi-faceted problems that are encountered by today's secondary teachers. According to researchers (e.g., Spiro, Feltovich, Jacobson, & Coulsen, 1992), this approach helps prospective teachers form networks of ideas and see patterns across problems and issues so they extend and transfer their thinking from what they encounter in the university to their work as teachers.

The majority of secondary candidates from the university have the chance to not only experience PBL, but also to design PBL experiences. In addition, by having such close ties to grassroots movements in our state, such as #PBLChat (i.e., a social media platform for PBL), the State Collaborative for PBL that is housed in the University of Indianapolis and a local summer PBL Institute (see more details at http://magnifylearningin.org/), our graduates have the means to always be on the journey toward becoming better PBL educators. Because of their PBL experiences, our candidates are actively recruited by districts who have shown an interest in PBL and other formats of instruction that are especially engaging.

Conclusion

In short, throughout our teacher education programs, in collaboration with the College of Arts and Sciences, our teacher candidates are provided with numerous opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of PBL and integrate that into their teaching practice. The four-step approach—Observe it, Experience it, Create it, and Become it—is embedded in clinical experiences based on the university's collaboration with local agents, including PBL schools, programs, and nonprofit organizations. The collaboration also benefits students and residents in the community as many of the PBL projects are designed to serve their various needs.

The preliminary findings of this approach are promising. The university is increasingly recognized as a hub for developing PBL teachers. The unique PBL component in both undergraduate and graduate programs answers the call for more PBL teachers in the metropolitan area and the state. Partnership schools and programs express interest in maintaining and in some cases expanding their collaboration with the university.

References

Ball, D. L. (1990). The mathematical understandings that prospective teachers bring to teacher education. *The Elementary School Journal, 90*(4), 449-466.

Barron, B., Swartz, D., Vye, N., Moore, A., Petrosino, A., Zech, L., Bransford, J., & Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt. (1998). Doing with understanding: Lessons from research on problem and project-based learning. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences, 7*(3&4), 271-311.

Blumenfeld, P., Soloway, E., Marx, R., Krajcik, J., Guzdial, M., & Palincsar, A. (1991). Motivating project-based learning: Sustaining the doing, supporting the learning. *Educational Psychologist, 26*(3&4), 369-398.

Boaler, J. (1997). *Experiencing school mathematics: Teaching styles, sex, and settings*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Buck Institute for Education. (n.d.). *What is project-based learning*. Retrieved from http://bie.org/about/what_pbl

Daniels, H., & Bizar, M. (2005). *Teaching the best practice way: Methods that matter, K-12*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Finkelstein, N., Hanson, T., Huang, C., Hirschman, B., & Huang, M. (2010). *Effects of problem based economics on high school economics instruction.* (NCEE 2010-4002). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

Guyton, E., & McIntyre, D. J. (1990). Student teaching and school experiences. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 514-534). New York, NY: Macmillan.

Kolmos, A. (2002). Facilitating change to a problem-based model. *International Journal for Academic Development, 7*(1), 63-74.

Ravitz, J., & Mergendoller, J. (2005). *Evaluating implementation and impacts of problem-based economics in U.S. high schools*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

Savin-Baden, M., & Wilkie, K. (2004). *Challenging research in problem-based learning*. Maidenhead: SRHE and Open University Press.

Shepherd, H. G. (1998). The probe method: A problem-based learning model's effect on critical thinking skills of fourth- and fifth-grade social studies students. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 59, 3-A.

Spiro, R. J., Feltovich, P. J., Jacobson, M. J., & Coulsen, R. L. (1992). Cognitive flexibility, constructivism, and hypertext: Random access instruction for advanced knowledge acquisition in ill-structured domains. In T. M. Duffy & D. H. Jonassen (Eds.), *Constructivism and the technology of instruction: A conversation* (57-75). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Strobel, J., & van Barneveld, A. (2009). When is PBL more effective? A meta-synthesis of meta-analyses comparing PBL to conventional classrooms. *Interdisciplinary Journal of*

Problem-based Learning, 3(1), 44-58.
Thomas, J. W. (2000). *A review of research on project-based learning*. Retrieved from http://www.edutopia.org/pbl-research-annotated-bibliography
Treten, R., & Zachariou, P. (1995). *Learning about project-based learning: Assessment of project-based learning in Tinkertech schools.* San Rafael, CA: The Autodesk Foundation.
Verma, A., Dickerson, D., & McKinney, S. (2011). Engaging students in STEM careers with project-based learning-Marine tech project. *Technology and Engineering Teacher*, 71(1), 25-31.
Vrasidas, C., & McIsaac, M. (2001). Integrating technology in teaching and teacher education: Implications for policy and curriculum reform. *Educational Media International*, 38(2/3), 127-132.

• • •

Gaoming Zhang is an assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Indianapolis. She teaches educational psychology and educational technology courses in undergraduate and graduate programs. Her research interests include technology integration, teacher preparation, and comparative education. Her work has appeared in *On the Horizon, the Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Educause Review,* and the *International Encyclopedia of Education*. Her recent publications include two chapters in the book of *Never Send a Human to Do a Machine's Job: Correcting the Top 5 EdTech Mistakes.*

Angelia Ridgway is an associate professor and the Director of Secondary Education at the University of Indianapolis. She teaches adolescent development, methods of teaching modern languages, and courses in creating positive climates in secondary schools. Her research interests are in studying methods of learning second languages, the engagement of learners, and teacher candidate growth

in cultural competencies. Her work includes several publications on creating lessons for learner engagement.

Deb Sachs is an assistant professor in the School of Education and the Director of the Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowship Program at the University of Indianapolis. Deb has worked extensively with teachers, youth, and adults in a variety of K-12, university, and professional settings. She is a member of several professional organizations and has presented at numerous state, regional and national education conferences. Her specific areas of professional interest include brain compatible teaching strategies, hands-on, minds-on teaching and presentation strategies, and science education.

They *Really* Don't Speak ENGLISH: Helping Preservice Teachers Experience Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Jill Scott, Ph.D.
Abilene Christian University

Bruce Scott, Ed.D.
Abilene Christian University

Abstract

The needs of urban schools are the focus of educators. Of primary concern is the lack of qualified teachers who are prepared to meet the needs of learners in U.S. classrooms. One factor of policymakers' concern is the mismatch between the experiences and backgrounds of many teachers versus those of students they will teach. Preservice teachers continue to mirror this mismatch. Preparing preservice teachers to enter the profession as culturally relevant teachers is a goal of teacher preparation programs. This article looks at one university's program to help preservice teachers develop cultural competence. The study was designed to investigate the university's efforts to provide preservice teachers with opportunities to experience cultural and linguistic diversity. This article, developed from a larger study, focuses on developing culturally relevant practice among preservice teachers.

Keywords: **preservice teachers; multicultural education, multicultural literature, culturally relevant texts, culturally relevant pedagogy, English Language Learners**

Public schools in the United States are becoming more and more diverse. In 2007–2008, English Language Learners made up 9% of the student population. In 2011 the percentage rose to over 15% (Feistritzer, 2011). The *National Journal* reports that "when schools reopen in August and September, (2014) Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American students will together make up a narrow majority of the nation's public school students" (Ross & Bell, 2014). These statistics emphasize the need for teacher education programs to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to have experiences with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. Furthermore, this need is compounded by the fact that the National Center for Education Information reports that 87% of our public teachers are White females (Feistritzer, 2011; Nieto, 2002). Preservice teachers mirror these statistics. Sleeter (2001) notes that most White preservice teachers "bring little awareness or understanding of discrimination, especially racism" (p. 95) further underscoring the need for developing opportunities for preservice teachers to cultivate cultural awareness and competence. Furthermore, Ladson-Billings (2006) argues the importance of cultural competence as a tenant of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Using this conceptual framework, the study presented in this article looked at ways that preservice teachers were immersed in diverse experiences and their reflections. The basis of this study was not to "teach" being culturally relevant, but to provide a catalyst for the preservice teachers to make cultural competency part of their being. This idea of not "teaching" cultural competency is expressed by Ladson-Billings in her discussion of one teacher's probing statement. She recalls a teacher commenting, "Everybody keeps telling us about multicultural education, but nobody is telling us how to do it!" (2006, p. 30). Ladson-Billings' response was, "Even if we could tell you how to do it, I would not want us to tell you how to do it" (2006, p. 39). Thus, the premise of the intervention utilized in this project was not to tell the preservice teachers how to "do cultural competence," but to provide opportunities for this to happen. Gay (2000) supports this stance, noting that teachers must develop a knowledge base about cultural diversity in order to

become culturally responsive teachers. Further strengthening this overarching concept, Ladson-Billings argues that having cultural competence is much like practicing democracy—you do it. It has become part of your decision-making process, the way you live your life, and has become a state of being (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Milner, 2011). Gay (2000) further states that cultural education must be comprehensive in its form, and it must be an integral part of everything that happens in the education enterprise. Although one experience cannot produce this level of being, the project was developed to address this need and is supported by Dewey's (1938) assertion that there is a "fundamental unity in the idea that there is an intimate and necessary relation between the process of actual experience and education" (p. 7). Furthermore, paraphrasing Dewey (1916) in *Democracy and Education*, learning in the schools of education should be continuous with learning in the schools of practice. Noddings (2012) underscores the need for schools of education to prepare teacher candidates for the diversity of today's public schools by involving them in diverse living experiences.

The Study

The study was conducted in the summers of 2013 and 2014. Specifically, the study was designed to investigate how one university teacher preparatory program provided its mainstream preservice teachers with opportunities to experience cultural and linguistic diversity in order to develop their foundation for culturally relevant practice. The university, understanding the need to provide qualified teachers prepared to meet the diverse needs of the school populations, designed an inner city immersion experience for their preservice teachers. The intent of this activity was to address the current research stating that there is a mismatch between the experiences and backgrounds of the university's preservice teachers and those of students they will teach. While their likely future classroom populations will be more than half culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students, at this university, over 90% of the preservice teachers are White and come

from middle class and advantaged backgrounds. Knowing that the learners the preservice teachers will encounter in their classrooms will look very different from them and have not experienced the same advantages, the university undertook this project. The preparation of teachers equipped to connect with these learners and to effectively deal with the challenges in urban settings is a critical need. This requires meaningful and repeated engagement in urban contexts as part of the teacher preparation program.

Three central questions were investigated in the larger study. They were:

1. How can an immersion experience in a diverse environment impact the understanding and philosophy of a group of mainstream preservice teachers?
2. What are some of the perceptions of mainstream preservice teachers about cultural and linguistic diversity?
3. How do these perceptions impact the preservice teachers' curriculum choices?

This article will focus on the findings surrounding the preservice teachers'perceptions that guided their curriculum choices; specifically, in their choice of books or texts.

Framework

The study looked specifically at one university's summer program for preservice teachers established to develop cultural awareness. This challenge of equipping preservice teachers with effective tools to meet the challenges of teaching students who have cultural backgrounds different from their own has been noted as an important element in teacher preparation (Banks, 2000; Gay, 2000; Gollnick & Chin, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2001; Riley, 1999). White female teachers are often not aware of their own culture and see themselves as "just American" (Ladson-Billings 1995; Nieto, 2002). Howard (1999) notes that you cannot teach what you don't know. According to Gay (2000) this statement applies to knowledge about both the students and the subject matter. The university summer program pushed to provide opportunities to allow

preservice teachers to acquire real knowledge and understanding about their own culture and the cultures of their future students.

This article focuses on the data from the larger study as it relates to the use of books or texts to bridge the culture and understanding of teachers and the students. The importance of using culturally relevant texts is documented in the research (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Freeman & Freeman, 2004; Valdez, 1999). Ladson-Billings (2006) encourages that students using culturally relevant pedagogy can help students maintain their own cultures as they navigate the dominant culture through the use of culturally relevant texts. She also points out that the books or texts that are commonly used in the classrooms may have a negative effect on this effort. She states that "negative effects are brought about, for example, by not seeing one's history, culture, or background represented in the textbooks" (p. 17-18). She also adds that it is imperative that we develop a pedagogy that empowers students not only intellectually but socially and emotionally. This study expands that concept to the use of culturally diverse texts to help preservice teachers form their own cultural awareness.

The importance of providing texts with which CLD students can relate is foundational to student engagement and learning, but the availability of these texts is lacking. The Cooperative Children's Book Center at the University of Wisconsin in 2013 reported that of the 3,200 children's books published that year only 93 were about Black people. Myers (2014) referred to this as "The Apartheid of Children's Literature." Additionally, the ability for preservice teachers to acknowledge the need for culturally relevant texts as an important focal point in their instructional planning and teaching is lacking. The inexperience that the majority of our White, middle class preservice teachers have with CLD students interferes with the automaticity of including culturally relevant activities and texts. This study adds to the current literature by focusing on the experiences the preservice teachers had with culturally diverse students and the impact the experience has on their thoughts about their future teaching practice.

Methods

The findings in this article are from the larger qualitative case study conducted in July 2013 and June 2014. The study focused on the reactions and reflections of preservice teachers engaged in cultural experiences as part of their course on teaching English Language Learners (ELLs). Yin (2009, p. 3) states that case studies offer researchers "how" questions about "a contemporary set of events" over which they "[have] little or no control." The choice of this qualitative method matches the set of events surrounding the preservice teachers and the development of cultural awareness. Multiple sources of data were used to increase the credibility of the study. Data were reviewed by experts to insure accuracy.

Participants

The participants in this study were preservice teachers preparing to do their student teaching either in the following fall or spring. They were enrolled in a university course titled "Effective Teaching Strategies for English Language Learners." As part of the course, the students spent five days living together in a highly diverse, high poverty area. The Summer 2013 course was conducted in a large urban setting with a population of more than one million residents. Participating were 11 female students and two professors, one male and one female. The professors were also the researchers. Ten of the students self-identified as White and one as mixed race, and both professors where White. All participants were given pseudonyms.

The Summer 2014 course was held in a medium size city with a population of more than 100,000 people where the university was located; students lived in a high poverty area that was linguistically and culturally diverse. They moved several times during the five days to different kinds of housing. There were seven female students and the same two professors; eight self-identified as White and one Hispanic. The university students spent time in their university classroom and time working with elementary school CLD students as well as interactions with the communities. The study was explained to all students and each submitted a participant consent form under the requirements of the Internal Review Board at the university.

Data

Qualitative data was collected from groups meetings, structured journals, literature circles, class assignments, and field notes. As part of the university course, students participated in group meetings every evening after their daily experiences which were audio recorded and then transcribed and studied. Using internal and external codes, the transcripts were coded (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Field notes were taken by the researchers during the experiences, including the literature circle discussions on a required reading, *Girl in Translation*. Final sources of data were the students' structured journals and reflections that they completed as part of the course. Using these multiple data gathering sources strengthens the credibility of the study (Yin, 2009).

Several themes developed from the coding of the data. The themes that informed the question studied in this article were:

1. The understanding of the reality of cultural and linguistic variety that exists among the students that will be the children in the chairs of their classrooms
2. The scaffolding that literature (text) provided for the preservice teachers
3. The connections that literature (text) provided for the preservice teachers and the ELL

Findings

Significance of Authentic Experiences

The first theme that emerged from the data was the concept that while the preservice teachers intellectually knew about linguistic and cultural diversity, they did not have sufficient practical understanding. They had studied about students with different home languages, students in the culture of poverty, and students with different ethnic and nationality cultures, but they had no first-hand experience. The professors of the courses had given multiple examples from their past, the current literature, and current events, but the information was too abstract. Their personal background did not provide a scheme for this information. For example, after the first day of working with children, one student, Karen, looked at

the professor and said, "They **really** don't speak ENGLISH." And this student was not alone in her epiphany. Another student, Tara, commented that "they don't know any English. They have only been here two weeks and they are in school." For these preservice teachers, the authentic experiences were what made the connection between their classroom learning and the reality of the CLDs that will be in their classrooms.

Although discussed in classroom activities, the concept of cultural fatigue and poverty fatigue was made clear through this experience (Diaz-Rico, 2012; Donahue & Parsons, 1982). One student, Angela, said, "We had used public transportation so I was naturally tired. I was so tired. I was sitting on my bed in the room when I realized that this is a normal day for some people." She continued to say that she realized that she did not understand anything about the lives some people live and she never would, but she got a little taste of how tiring it can be, and she will be watchful of this in her teaching.

Another student, Mary, focused her thoughts on how she thought all English Language Learners would have Spanish as their home language. She reported that her classroom she was in had ten different languages. Another student, Sarah, stated that working with an ELL student was a "mind-blowing" experience. She was playing jump rope with a group of children on hot asphalt at an apartment complex (The outside temperature that day was 104 degrees). Jump rope was a new game for the children. This experience of trying to teach a simple game using all her strategies was much more difficult than she thought it would be. She said, "I'm just trying to talk to them and get a little message across. I was just trying to figure out how to tell them to jump. How much harder is it going to be as a teacher to get not just the language across but the content I have to teach them?" Sarah found that it was an exhausting experience. She said, "When they're not understanding... when I'm using all my energy just to get them to jump. What if I was trying to teach them to divide?" Karen summed up the importance of providing the authentic experiences for our student teachers to make their intellectual understanding match their true understandings when

she said, "That (playing with the children) was probably one of the highlights. Being able to actually use what we've kinda talked about. It was harder! It's good to think that it was hard."

Interactions with ELLs around Picture Books

A second theme that emerged from the data revolved around the preservice teachers' interactions with ELLs and picture books both in formal and informal settings. Before the preservice teachers worked with the students they participated in activities in their classroom settings learning about culturally relevant texts for marginalized students, including all types of diversity. When the preservice teacher had opportunities to engage with the students they were surprised at the choice of "favorite books" the students were drawn to.

In one situation a preservice teacher found the lack of English vocabulary was evident. "I loved getting to make use of my rusty Spanish and actually get a response from the children. My favorite part of the whole experience was when I sat down with the little boy in the flannel pajamas and read books with him and looked at the "I Spy" book with him." The student went on to express that she never thought "I Spy" books were good literature or appropriate for the classroom until it provided a way for her to interact with the little boy. "He would point to the picture, I would say the name, and then together we would find it in the big picture. My favorite part."

Different types of texts provide different opportunities. "I Spy" books provided a natural bridge from picture to labeling vocabulary appropriate for pre-production or beginner level students. The students found that students at higher levels were drawn to books that provided opportunities for them to make a connection between themselves and the books. Mary Helen, one of the preservice teachers, was planning an activity for a group of 4th and 5th grade ELLs that followed the activities that the students had been doing in the classroom. However, instead of using the classroom library of leveled readers, she chose to pick a book especially for each child. Even though she had only been with them three days, she felt that

she could choose a book that each student could relate to. Mary Helen shared the experience with the group. She explained how she picked the book for one girl, Keza, from Rwanda. She noted that Keza loved putting things in her hair. Each day she had something different in her hair. Sometimes it was beads, other times it was colorful clips, and there was even one day when she had tiny ribbons tied around the end of each braid. Mary Helen chose the book, *I Love My Hair* by Natasha Tarpley. The cover picture shows an African American girl with braids that looked almost exact like the student's hair. Mary Helen said that she knew that the student would love the book, but was not ready for what happened. In her journal, Mary Helen captured the experience:

> When I handed it to her the next day in class after we had explained the exercise, she just kind of looked at it the front cover. After I had passed out the other books, I came back, and she was still looking at it. I assumed she just had not understood the directions, and so I knelt down beside her and asked if she needed help. She shook her head. I asked if she was ok. She started turning some of the pages in the book, then looked at me and said, "They have books like this?" She had never seen or read a book that had a little girl in it that looked like her. We read that book together and she loved it. She pointed out all of the parts that reminded her of herself, and then wrote a sentence about how the little girl in the book had hair just like hers.

When Mary Helen shared this from her journal with the preservice teachers in her class, there was silence in the room and many tears. She went on to draw a very important conclusion. She noted, "This was a very touching experience, but it also proved to me how important it is to choose items for teaching and to teach in such a way that is diversified. One book made a world of difference to this child, and it is incredible to think about what one year could do if you were that child's teacher."

This experience confirmed what the preservice teachers had

been learning in class about choosing culturally relevant texts in a meaningful way. Furthermore, the connection between knowing your students and knowing the literature was an important understanding that was provided by the experience. In addition, the sharing of experiences in group discussion allowed for shared learning that could follow them into their student teaching experience and future practice.

"*Girl in Translation* Gave Me an Experience to Pull From."

Not only did texts provide connections between the preservice teachers and the ELL students, they provided a scaffold for the preservice teachers to develop more understanding about CLD students and the diverse situations that are part of their life. As a class assignment, the students read *Girl in Translation* by Jean Kwok and engaged in literature circles. The book chronicles the story of a ten-year-old girl, Kimberly, and her mother who move to New York City from Hong Kong. The story follows Kimberly from her first day in a U.S. public school with a not-so-culturally relevant teacher to Kimberly's becoming a doctor and assimilating into the American culture. Kwok gives Kimberly a strong, personal voice that draws the students into her life. The connections from the preservice teachers' engagement with the book were varied. Ally, one of the preservice teachers, noted that she had a lack of knowledge about immigrants and the difficulties than they face. She said, "Because of this lack of knowledge I was culturally insensitive, but after reading *Girl In Translation*, I suddenly had an experience to pull from, Kimberly's experience." She continued to reflect that "if it were not for *Girl In Translation*, I would not be able to see my students this way, and I would not be able to provide the support that I know they so desperately yearn for."

The preservice teachers noted that the text provided opportunities for them to see the importance of the teacher through the eyes of the students, a place that they can never be. Mary Helen added, "Reading this book really humbled me as I was able to see a child persevere through something I have a hard time even imaging and succeed." She capsulated the idea saying, "Reading *Girl In*

Translation and then reading our class text and learning about the language levels really made the learning more meaningful as I was able to connect the aspects to an actual student who I had read all about." The text provided the scaffolding the preservice teachers needed to make the information they were learning meaningful. The use of a mentor text provided the important structure that the preservice teachers needed to use as they approach their interactions with CLD students.

Implications

The findings from the study points to several implications for teacher preparation programs to prepare preservice teachers for their future teaching practice. These implications include the need for teacher preparation programs to provide meaningful experiences with students of diverse backgrounds and the inherent educational value found in the use of culturally relevant literature.

With the fact that there is a mismatch between the cultures of the majority of the next generation of teachers and their students, preservice teachers need to have first-hand knowledge and experience with CLD students. The four-day experience of immersion into a different culture provided multiple experiences. These experiences can be within the community of the university or in nearby settings. Having professors with experience teaching or living in diverse situations offers the opportunities for students to debrief about their new learning and feelings. An example of this was when the students during the class time discussed the need for developing relationships with the families and community where they teach to develop credibility. Later that day, the students were able to see it in action when a community member protected the professor's van because "You bring food to our kids. I got your back." This type of experience provided the teachable moment that the classroom could not provide.

Programs that are not able to incorporate these types of experiences can look to texts to provide a scaffold for the preservice teachers to understand the concepts presented in the classroom. Jean Kwok's *Girl in Translation* was chosen for this university's

ELL course with purposeful intention because it related the events of a young girl from Hong Kong—not a Spanish speaking country. This enabled the preservice teachers to expand on the expressed concept that they immediately thought an ELL's native language was Spanish. In reality the ELLs in the area of the university are diverse with more than 12 different languages in one summer school class. The literacy circles provided opportunities for the preservice teachers to share their current thoughts on CLD students and conditions. Ally commented that she had gone to Kwok's website to see when this book was set. She said, "I thought this was written about Kimberly in the early 1900s, but no, the time was much more current like in the 1990s." Providing texts that help students develop empathy with the story of ELLs can provide opportunities for connection between preservice teachers and CLD students.

A second implication of this study was the importance of providing multicultural texts for CLD students. The comment "They really make things like this?" is powerful support for the comment of Christopher Myer (2014) that there is an apartheid in children's literature. With the limited number of quality culturally relevant texts, teachers and preservice teachers must carefully evaluate available texts and choose wisely. There are several tools available for helping preservice teachers make good decisions about texts for CLD students. Lu (1998) studied the importance of multicultural books and how to evaluate these texts. She argues that a good book for children can transcend time, space, and language. She continues to count the benefits of multicultural literature to include the opportunities to see how others grow, see how there are similarities between themselves and others, develop strategies to cope with challenges, and to help them identify themselves with their own culture. This study expands on Lu's thoughts to include the power of multicultural texts for preservice teachers to learn to relate to other cultures and for CLDs to connect with texts and their new culture. Simply seeing children in their texts that "look like them" makes connections possible. Based on these concepts, Lu (1998) provides several characteristics that should be used

when determining the quality of multi-cultural texts. Lu's qualifiers include:

1. Positive portrayals of characters with authentic and realistic behaviors, to avoid stereotypes of a particular cultural group.
2. Authentic illustrations to enhance the quality of the text, since illustrations can have a strong impact on children.
3. Pluralistic themes to foster belief in cultural diversity as a national asset as well as reflect the changing nature of this country's population.
4. Contemporary as well as historical fiction that captures changing trends in the roles played by minority groups in America.
5. High literary quality, including strong plots and well-developed characterization.
6. Historical accuracy when appropriate.
7. Reflections of the cultural values of the characters.

These criteria provide a precise tool for helping preservice teachers choose multicultural books for their classroom.

Another tool that can provide preservice teachers with a guide for choosing appropriate multi-cultural books comes from the work of Freeman and Freeman (2004). Their work asserts that culturally relevant literature can be the bridge between CLD students and the negotiating of their identity. Providing CLD students with opportunities to read texts that they can relate to is ultimate to providing opportunities for students to learn and develop. Cummins (2000) points out "that schools are places where students negotiate identities. Schools can either affirm or deny those identities" (p. 8). This affirmation or denial can be found in texts. One example of the power of culturally relevant texts from Freeman and Freeman's work is the story of Francisco, an immigrant from San Salvador. Francisco said, "That was the first book I ever read from the beginning to the end. It was amazing. I kept reliving my own experiences." (2004, p. 7). The similar experience in this study when the student expressed that it was the first time that she had seen anyone like her in a book provides more evidence to the importance for using culturally relevant texts. When provided with culturally

relevant texts, the students more fully understand and they are more engaged in their reading resulting in more reading. To help students and teachers choose meaningful texts, Freeman (2000) identified a set of questions that teachers or students can use when making their choices. These questions include:

- Are the characters in the story like you and your family?
- Have you ever had an experience like the one described in this story?
- Have you lived in or visited places like those in the story?
- Could this story take place this year?
- How close do you think the main characters are to you in age?
- Are the main characters in the story boys or girls?
- Do the characters talk like you and your family do?
- How often do you read stories like this? (Freeman & Freeman, 2004, p. 9-10)

Freeman and Freeman (2004) have taken these questions and placed them on a Likert scale for students to use. Using these questions with their students in mind teachers and preservice teachers can provide meaningful texts for their students.

Conclusion

The results of this study described the importance of helping preservice teachers prepare to teach in diverse learning environments. Realizing that there is a mismatch between the university's preservice teachers and the children they will teach, the university implemented a course to help provide real life experiences to develop more cultural awareness. The program took the theory taught in the classroom and transformed it into practical learning. This program formed a framework to enhance preservice teachers' cultural experiences and therefore inform their culturally relevant pedagogy. Caitlyn, a preservice teacher, shared her feelings about the experiences. She said, "At first I was very uncomfortable…It is easy to live in your own little bubble and forget all of the people around you who are living life so differently from you. This experience caused me to rethink the way I see things. I gained a perspective that will help me be a more effective and compassionate

teacher." Another student, Becky, simply said "The concrete experiences made what we are learning in class real to me." Through the real life experiences, using a mentor text, and working with ELLs and multicultural books the preservice teachers moved from reading about being culturally relevant to "just doing it."

References

Banks, J. A. (2000). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum, and teaching*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Banks, J. A. & Banks, C. A. M. (2001). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (4th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: The MacMillian Company.

Diaz-Rico, L. (2012). *A course for teaching English learners* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Donahue, M., & Parsons, A. (1982). The use of role play to overcome cultural fatigue. *TESOL Quarterly, 16*(3), 359-365.

Feistritzer, C. E. (2011). *Profile of teachers in the U.S. 2011*. Retrieved from www.ncei.com/Profile_Teachers_US_2011.pdf

Freeman, Y. (2000). *Considerations for the selection of culturally relevant text.* Unpublished manuscript. University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.

Freeman, Y., & Freeman. D. (2004). Connecting students to culturally relevant texts. *Talking Points, 15*(2) 7-11.

Freeman, D., & Freeman, Y. (2007). *English Language Learners: The essential guide*. New York, NY: Scholastic.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory research, and practice*. New York, NY: Teacher College Press.

Gay, G. (2004, January 1). New Needs, New Curriculum - The Importance of Multicultural Education - Why we must weave

real and relevant examples of minority contributions throughout the curriculum. Educational Leadership: *Journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, N.e.a, 61, 4, 30*.

Gollnick, D., & Chin, P. (2004). *Multicultural education in a pluralistic society* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Jenkins, E. C., & Austin, M. C. (1987). *Literature for children about Asians and Asian Americans: Analysis and annotated bibliography, with additional readings for adults*. New York: Greenwood Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teaching for African-American students*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). Yes, but how do we do it? Practicing culturally relevant pedagogy. In J. Landsman & C. W. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: A guide to building inclusive schools, promoting high expectations and eliminating racism* (pp. 29-42). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishers.

Lu, M. (1998). *Multicultural children's literature in the elementary classroom*. (ERIC Digest No. 133) Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED423552).

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Milner, H. R., IV. (2011). Culturally relevant pedagogy in a diverse urban classroom. *Urban Review, 43*(1), 66-69.

Myers, C. (2014, March 14). The apartheid of children's literature. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com

Nieto, S. (2002). *Language, culture, and teaching: Critical perspectives for a new century* (Vol. 1). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Noddings, N. (2012). *Philosophy of Education* (3rd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Riley, R. (1999, October). Improving America's schools. Speech

delivered at the Improving America's Schools Conference, Tampa, FL.

Ross, A., & Bell, P. (2014). School is over for the summer. So is the era of majority White U.S. public schools. *National Journal*. Retrieved from http:www.nationaljournal.com/next-america/education/school-is-over-for-the-summer-so-is-the-era-of-majority-white-u-s-public-schools-20140701

Sleeter, C. (2001). Preparing teachers for culturally diverse schools: Research and the overwhelming presence of Whiteness. *Journal of Teacher Education, 52*(94) 94-106.

Valdez, A. (1999). *Learning in living color: Using literature to incorporate multicultural education into the primary curriculum*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

• • •

Jill Scott is an assistant professor in the Teacher Education Program at Abilene Christian University in Abilene. Texas. She received her Ph.D. in 2010 from The University of Texas at Austin. She works with preservice teachers and novice teachers during their first three years. Her research interests include preservice teachers, multi-cultural education, and mentoring new teachers.

Bruce Scott is the associate dean for the College of Education and Human Services and an associate professor of education at Abilene Christian University. He received his Ed.D. in 1995 from the joint university program in Educational Leadership from Texas A & M University–Kingsville and Texas A & M University –Corpus Christi. His research interests include preservice teachers, mentoring new teachers, organizational change, and ethics in education.

Enacting Diversity at a Single-Gender Liberal Arts HBCU Educator Preparation Program

Andrea Lewis, Ph.D.
Spelman College

Nicole Taylor, Ph.D.
Spelman College

Abstract

It is widely recognized by state and national teacher accrediting agencies that there is the need for preservice teachers to have dynamic experiences in working with diverse student populations (i.e., English Language Learners, varying socioeconomic statuses, exceptionalities, different family structures) in order to appropriately address the needs of diverse students when they have their own classrooms. However, it is not uncommon for preservice teachers to have superficial experiences with diversity, where the experiences may reside in one course (i.e., Multicultural Education) or may be reminiscent of their childhood experiences (i.e., White preservice teachers working with White students and Black preservice teachers working with Black students). This article provides an overview of an approach to diversity taken by our Educator Preparation Program as we recognize that preservice teachers need to have well-designed experiences in order to be well equipped and prepared for the diversity of the unexpected upon entering the teaching profession. We address this notion from the lens of a single gender, liberal arts, Historically Black College, as we strive to engage preservice teachers in rich experiences to challenge existing cultural perspectives and ignite new knowledge, as they are prepared to be culturally competent teachers who have the ability to effectively teach students across the country.

Keywords: **diversity, educator preparation program, Historically Black College, liberal arts**

According to recent research, the K–12 student population has become increasingly diverse, but the teacher workforce is not representative of the student body it serves (Banks, 2015; National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Similarly, there is literature that addresses the importance of preparing preservice teachers to experience success in diverse classrooms; however, much of this literature has been done with mostly Caucasian preservice teachers and focuses on the need for cultural awareness, responsiveness, and skills when working with students of a dissimilar culture (Banks, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Vaughan, 2005). Furthermore, as very few studies have examined the experiences of African American preservice teachers, one study found that these students may benefit from more knowledge and in-depth experiences especially in urban schools (Mawhinney, Mulero, & Perez, 2012). Therefore there is a need for research that examines the experiences of African American preservice teachers, especially those at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and how we can address the complexities of providing experiences in diversity for teacher candidates. Specifically, these specialized institutions may encounter difficulties in (1) providing a strong diversity curriculum and experiences, and (2) recruiting and retaining diverse faculty and candidates. As Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) move towards Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards, diversity components are embedded throughout all standards, instead of as stand-alone core standards as in previous accreditation documents.

We consider these factors in light of the United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2014) citing HBCUs as becoming more essential in meeting our nation's educational and economic goals. HBCUs remain necessary because of the disproportionate impact of HBCUs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematic (STEM) fields and teaching. Although HBCUs comprise only three percent of America's colleges and universities, they produce half of the nation's African-American teachers. Creating a more diverse teaching force, especially one that includes many more teachers of color, is a necessary course of action for our nation. The purpose of

this article is to give voice to the experiences of African American preservice teachers at Spelman College, an HBCU with a long and significant history of preparing teachers, in addressing how we may best implement practices of diversity in teacher preparation given our composition as a single-gender HBCU. The following section will provide an overview of the current demographics in education and will explore themes from current literature pertaining to how preservice teachers are prepared to teach in diverse classrooms across the nation.

Current Demographics in Education

The current demographics of teachers compared to the ever-changing composition of today's public schools demonstrate an increasing and immediate need for a paradigm shift in traditional EPPs. Research suggests that teachers cannot just be aware of changing demographics, but must be equipped with knowledge, skills, and values to meet the needs of diverse learners (Feng, 2010). The field of education is facing a demographic shift and needs to recognize and address the growing diversity in our nation. For example, data from a 2014 Center for American Progress report (Ahmad & Boser, 2014) echoed that over the past 50 years, teaching has become a predominately White profession. Eighty-two percent of public school teachers are White, but students of color make up nearly half of the nation's public school population. Approximately 52 percent of the 50 million students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools are White. Furthermore, the National Center for Education Statistics (2013) states that only 7% of full-time teachers are Black.

Recent literature and reports demonstrate that the majority of American teachers are female, have been reared in predominately White middle class communities across the United States, and are unaware of the social injustices and education inequities that are going to confront them and be a barrier to reaching all learners in their future classrooms (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Vaughan, 2005). In contrast to the current demographics of American teachers, the

composition of teacher education candidates at Spelman College is 100% African American and 99% female.

Another issue that compounds the problem of unprepared teachers is the lack of diversity among faculty in EPPs. Gay (1997) describes how many teachers implement a teaching style based on the ways in which they were taught. Results of research further shed light on this topic, revealing that 90% of EPP faculty members are White, have not taught P-12 or college students with diverse backgrounds, and received their formal education when schools were monocultural and segregated (Gasbarro & Matthews, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 2001). These statistics are also in contrast to the EPP faculty at Spelman College which is comprised of 91% African American and 9% Asian.

Similar to the difficulty Predominately White Institutions (PWI) have in meeting diversity standards or threads of state and national accreditation organizations, HBCUs are confronted with comparable challenges. HBCUs are also mandated to provide substantive and diverse field experiences for their teacher candidates to experience success in diverse classrooms across the United States.

Teacher Education Diversity Practices

Beginning as early as 1976, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) recommended that all teacher education candidates experience local, regional, or national subcultures different from their own in newly created diversity standards (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007). As a result, EPPs often include class work and field experiences consisting of an assigned numbers of hours observing in public or private school classroom. Questions have been raised regarding the effectiveness of these practices due to the fact that they often avoid critical reflection and questioning surrounding issues of access, equity, and social justice, as well as preserve conservative ideologies that emphasize assimilation and perpetuation of the status quo (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Nieto, 2006). Furthermore, candidates often dislike traditional classroom observations and lack analytical self-reflections related to these experiences (Darling-Hammond,

2012; Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007). There is also the idea that teachers cling to prior knowledge and beliefs about others, and it is often difficult for them to unlearn preconceived notions regarding diversity characteristics such as race, class, gender, ableism, geographic region, and sexual orientation (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007).

These negative stereotypes are perpetuated during traditional field experience observations. However, when teachers are able to immerse themselves in more intense and meaningful field and clinical placements, they gain a better understanding of the cultural life of the school and community, as well as cultural norms of its children (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Wiggins, Follo, & Eberly, 2007). Examples of program immersion include ensuring that candidates have increased field and clinical experiences, attend college courses that are situated in school buildings, and attend faculty and PTA meetings.

Culturally Responsive Preparation of Teacher Education Candidates

Led by James Banks, multicultural education is most likely the most eminent and vastly cited diversity framework that conceptualizes the school as a social system that consists of several variables that need to be changed simultaneously (Banks, 2015). Multicultural education is not an identifiable program or course; rather it is a movement that emerged out of a need to respond to diversity. It is a broad term encompassing the educational programs and practices confronting educational equity, women, ethnic groups, language minorities, low income groups, and those with exceptionalities.

Included within the boundaries of multicultural education is a theoretical framework developed by Gloria Ladson-Billings. Culturally responsive pedagogy is a fusion and enhancement of the terms culturally appropriate, culturally compatible, and culturally congruent (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Early on, Ladson-Billings suggested using a culturally responsive pedagogy to address increasing the achievement of diverse students, as well as changing

the mindset of teachers who will serve these students (1995). She voiced that in addition to being familiar with how students of color learn, "by observing the students in their home/community environment, teachers were able to include aspects of the students' cultural environment in the organization and instruction of the classroom" (p. 467). As generations have changed, Ladson-Billings (2014) enhanced her classic theory to include culturally sustaining pedagogy, which focuses on pushing candidates to explore policies and practices that have direct implications on the lives and communities of P-12 student learners. For example, this new pedagogy would encompass discussions on racism, rising incarceration rates, increased violence towards African Americans, police brutality, White supremacy, and a myriad of topics that surface daily. Ladson-Billings' classic work and suggested format provides a context for illuminating instructional practices that facilitate the academic success and cultural competence of traditionally underserved student populations. Teachers who recognize who they are as individuals, understand the context in which they teach, and are able to critically question their knowledge base and perceived assumptions have a solid foundation and will begin their careers as effective teachers (Nieto, 2006). Further elements of culturally responsive teaching include dismantling unequal distributions of power and privilege, and teaching diverse students cultural competence about themselves and each other (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Synchronously, teachers who become the authors of their own stories and reflections grow to be change agents and realize the powerful influence that culture and previous experience have on present thoughts and actions (Aminy & Neophytos-Richardson, 2002; Nieto, 2006).

Experiential and Service Learning

In addition to truly integrating diversity practices such as enhancing and embedding multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy, and culturally sustaining pedagogy into all EPP courses, additional frameworks of teaching are beneficial to assisting preservice candidates in changing preconceived notions

and learning best practices to work in diverse communities. Experiential learning and service learning are two examples of instructional models in teacher education programs.

Experiential learning in higher education provides students holistic and effective opportunities to raise their awareness of and reflect on an unfamiliar culture (Kolb, 2014; Wilson, 2001). Examples of experiential learning include cross-cultural experiences either in the community, across the country, or around the world. Darling-Hammond (2008) suggests that to best meet the cognitive, social, physical, and emotional needs of students, teachers must collaborate to create powerful learning and discuss the connection between differences that arise due to cultural and family backgrounds and student achievement. She defines experiential learning as the "rub between theory and practice" that questions the context of learning with real students versus textbook examples (p. 93). In addition to providing hands on learning, experiential learning reinforces social and ethical values, improves reflection and collaboration, results in better trained workers, and leads to a seamless transition of incorporating service learning into college courses (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Kolb, 2014).

Service learning, or community-based learning, in teacher education is described as a practice that blends mutually beneficial community service with academic learning (O'Grady, 2014). When teacher educators mentor students through a community organization the process is mutually beneficial since both the mentor and mentee learn, grow, and interact to form a greater appreciation for each other's experiences. By exposing teacher educators to the personal lives of students from a culture different from their own, their changed perceptions positively affect their approaches to teaching and learning. Additionally, service learning fosters interaction between diverse socio-cultural groups and leads to insightful reflection and a deeper analysis of issues in the community through a social justice lens (O'Grady, 2014). Studies conducted on service learning demonstrate that service learning and teaching is a lifelong commitment, can broaden and increase a community's potential for growth, assists teachers in gaining insights on a community's

values and behaviors, is a sociocontextual process, and promotes the value of collaboration and reciprocity (Swick, 2001).

In reviewing accreditation-related diversity standards and literature focused on diversity practices, the faculty of the EPP at Spelman decided to make a shift in the teacher certification curriculum to prepare preservice teachers for diverse classrooms and set a standard for excellence among teacher education programs. The following outlines how the EPP has revised the curriculum, to demonstrate hooks's (1994) Engaging Pedagogy, which instructs candidates "in a manner that respects and cares for their souls as opposed to "a rote, assembly line approach" (p. 13). As a contrast to traditional lecture and invited response, hooks advocates for an education that extends beyond the classroom and relates to the candidates as whole human beings.

Program Overview

Curriculum and Experiences

Much of our focus is heralded in our conceptual framework theme, *The Teacher as a Leader: An Advocate for Diverse Learners,* as it represents a shared vision and a singular focus—preparing candidates to become leaders who are committed to bring about improvement in the world. Within our EPP, we recognize that our conceptual framework cannot be addressed by limiting our candidates to one course or one field experience, but that it must be expressed throughout the entire curriculum. We understand that our experiences must be authentic and that the students' attitudes and behaviors toward diversity need to be shaped. We consider how preservice teachers have past schooling experiences, which may inhibit their ability to work with diverse learners, and also consider the need for greater exposure in diversity (i.e., linguistic, ethnic) as a single-gender, HBCU situated in an urban area.

Experiences with Diverse Faculty

Colleges and universities recognize the importance of employing a diverse faculty that can substantially contribute to the growth and development of teacher candidates. As attention has been

drawn to the various ethnicities that are represented at institutions, it is recognized that there is often a lack of diverse faculty represented (Weinberg, 2008). Within Spelman College, teacher candidates have opportunities to learn from diverse faculty members at the college and diverse P-12 school faculty.

Due to the liberal arts nature of Spelman College, candidates in the EPP have the opportunity to interact with diverse faculty throughout campus as they satisfy general education courses (i.e., African Diaspora and the World, International Studies, Women's Studies, Foreign Language, Fine Arts), enroll in electives, and participate in campus activities. The current Spelman faculty is comprised of the following: 66.5% Black, 18.2% White, 4.7% Hispanic, 7.6% Asian, and 3.5% who classify themselves as other. Furthermore, it is the intent of the program to affirm and maintain diversity among its education faculty members, as currently the demographics demonstrate the faculty to be 91% Black and 9% Asian; 80% Female, 20% Male. The majority of the full-time faculty have earned doctorate degrees from culturally diverse institutions in various fields of Education (i.e., Early Childhood Education, Educational Policy, Educational Psychology). Due to these varied experiences, the faculty members of the EPP have broad experiences in education research and in teaching, which enable them to assist in the preparation of candidates to work in diverse settings, including English Language Learners and learners with exceptionalities.

The faculty members also have experiences working in P-12 schools with learners of varying ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, and exceptionalities. Additionally, faculty have experiences leading academic presentations, seminars, conducting research, and engaging in professional development activities central to areas that highlight diversity among learners.

Even though we believe that the faculty our candidates interact with represent various diversities, we also recognize the need to include greater diversity and establish and monitor progress related to building a more robust faculty as we assess the needs of our candidates and the program as a whole. Faculty members play a

tremendous role in supporting and preparing the teacher candidates, and as we prepare our candidates for the challenges of teaching in a global society, faculty need to be well-equipped to take on this task.

Collaboration

In order to address the needs of the EPP we believe there must be a substantial level of meaningful collaboration with the arts and sciences faculty and partnering P-12 schools. The EPP curriculum builds upon Spelman's liberal arts coursework, which is aimed at developing multicultural and global perspectives. For example, all candidates take a course in African Diaspora and the World and Comparative Women's Studies or International Studies. We are able to build upon the candidates' experiences in these courses as we attempt to bridge knowledge attained in these courses with their understanding of the historical, social, political, and economic contexts that impact diverse learners. Another unique feature of the EPP is in the re-designing of the courses candidates must take and the structure for their delivery. At the introductory level of the teacher preparation program, students must complete the course, Orientation to Education, which has been re-designed to have a strong focus on the social and political issues that impact overall schooling in the United States. Furthermore, upon admittance to a certification program we have created a model where candidates are in classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays and in the field Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The EPP created this model to strengthen the amount of engagement candidates are able to have with diverse learners in diverse placements. For example, within the same semester candidates take courses in Exceptional Learners and Educational Psychology and have accompanying field placements. In addition to candidates being placed in a general education environment and a special education environment in public schools, we have also partnered with the Atlanta International School. This experience allows candidates to interact with students on various diversity levels including racial, linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic, as the school has student and faculty populations representing over 90 cultural backgrounds. Having

a model that provides more immersion into the field and more designated experiences (i.e., all candidates are placed at the Atlanta International School), faculty who teach corresponding courses provide curriculum experiences that relate directly to the candidates' experiences that challenge them to interrogate their existing beliefs and knowledge about racially, linguistically, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse students and classrooms. Additionally, the assignments candidates complete extend beyond simple journal reflections but consider the needs of the learners through activities such as case-study analysis, assessment of culturally responsive strategies, and the designing and implementation of instruction and assessment to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Experiential and Service Learning

There are studies that indicate the benefits of using experiential and service-learning in the classroom to promote greater social awareness and strengthen students' ability to thoughtfully question their perspectives regarding social inequalities and relevant issues (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Kolb, 2014). According to Darling-Hammond (2008), preservice teachers who actively engage in experiential learning experiences that are different from their own are able to grasp the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy and the importance of connecting to cultural and family backgrounds in a more meaningful way.

Within our EPP at Spelman, we utilize a blend of experiential and service learning within our curriculum. For example, there are two mandatory courses, Multicultural Education and Advocacy in Urban Schools, where we implement this model. Within Multicultural Education, candidates are challenged by the notion of observing and participating in an experience within a culture where they may hold stereotypes or biases. Candidates also participate in "community walks" where they have a first-hand look at the differences in communities based on geographical location (i.e., urban to suburban) and how this may impact education and schooling. We have found these experiences improve candidates' ability to reflect on and identify biases as well as the social and ethical values they

may bring to the classroom. Additionally, in the course Advocacy in Urban Schools candidates participate in a service learning experience where they are placed within a community-based agency for at-risk youth. They also participate in a "community walk" to further understand the environmental conditions in which the students they work with live. This experience allows candidates to witness and examine the social, political, and economic complexities that influence youth in urban areas and how this may impact their academic achievement.

The EPP has also designed and currently offers an opportunity for candidates to complete a service learning elective course. This course is an introductory analysis of the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. This course examines interdisciplinary themes surrounding the impact of the hurricane on the Gulf Coast and its survivors. Furthermore, the course examines themes of education, psychology, history, political science, economics, sociology, environmental justice, and the arts. As a component of the course, candidates are also afforded the opportunity to participate in a study tour to New Orleans to bridge course content with the ongoing challenges that impact schools, students, and families.

In restructuring our curriculum, we agree with research (i.e., Kolb, 2014) which indicates the importance of candidates being able to experience the connections between the learners and their communities, and how these factors may impact them as they strive to be culturally competent teachers who are advocates for diverse learners.

Extracurricular Programming

The EPP has also included extracurricular programming for candidates that occurs during each academic year, to further achieve the program's diversity outcomes of preparing candidates who are knowledgeable about and committed to diversity. For example, the program has an agreement with Young Harris College, a PWI in a rural southeastern region of the United States where the two institutions rotate hosting a day-long, interactive diversity conference designed to have candidates from both institutions interact

with diverse peers and encourage deep thinking about the impact of language, sexual orientation, religion, race, class, and gender on the teaching and learning process. Candidates are also able to establish connections so that they can communicate throughout the academic year to share strategies, insights and perspectives on addressing the impact of diversity in the schooling process.

To further ensure that candidates have educational experiences with diverse faculty and peers, candidates also participate in sessions via video conferencing with Westfield State University, a PWI in the northeastern part of the United States. Through these sessions, candidates enrolled in the multicultural education course for each institution, along with faculty, discuss shared concepts related to diversity topics embedded within the course content. Through participation in the interactive video conferencing, candidates have the opportunity to engage in an innovative and unique learning experience that focuses on diverse perspectives. To ensure that the program outcomes are met, candidates complete surveys about their participation in these experiences. Faculty from the EPP utilize the survey results to assess the knowledge candidates have gained and also to guide future planning of diversity-related extracurricular events.

Moreover, as we recognize the need to offer a myriad of opportunities for candidates to develop cultural competence, the EPP has also included a global experience to study the intersection of education, politics, and history in Havana, Cuba. Implementing this international experience is the EPP's way of recognizing the need for candidates to be prepared to address an array of educational environments, as teaching is quickly becoming a global profession.

Assessment

To assess candidates' learning, course instructors require candidates to complete assignments (i.e., case-studies, unit plans, assessment creation) to demonstrate their understanding as it relates to their knowledge and experiences. Completion of assignments that acknowledge diversity in teaching and learning, provide anecdotal evidence to supplement formal assessments used by the EPP (i.e.,

rubrics) and enable faculty to arrive at decisions related to candidates' diversity competence. In addition to candidates receiving instruction and hands-on experiences, assessments were developed or adopted that include the assessment of diversity at multiple points during the program. These assessments included measuring proficiencies in several areas, including: encouraging all students to achieve to their full potential; modeling respect for students' diverse cultures, language, skills, and experiences; recognizing characteristics of diverse learners (i.e., exceptionalities); analyzing data to plan and differentiate instruction; applying knowledge for how students think and learn towards instruction and delivery; and treating all students fairly by establishing an environment that supports diverse learners. At designated points, candidates are formally assessed by faculty and cooperating teachers on diversity competencies, and as a result, proficiency scores are generated. Candidates are considered proficient based on the proficiency rating of the rubric. The assessment results guide the faculty in their knowledge about candidate's diversity competence and provide evidence regarding remediation for those who are not proficient.

Concluding Thoughts

The implications of restructuring the EPP were paramount to ensure our candidate's success in diverse communities. As a single-gender, HBCU we recognized the needs and challenges for incorporating experiences related to diversity in our curriculum. Additionally, changes in the mindsets of college administrators and faculty members who approved the curriculum changes and paradigms of thought, reflected a more rigorous and heartfelt alignment between increasing the number of African American teachers in schools, as well as teaching practices to make our teacher candidates successful. Hilliard (1991) believed, "Just as there is vast untapped potential, yes, genius, among the children, there is also untapped potential among the teachers who serve the children" (p. 35). If we expect teachers to be excellent, we must instill excellence and the will to educate all students in the hearts and minds of teacher candidates.

References

Ahmad, F. Z., & Boser, U. (2014) *America's leaky pipeline for teachers of color: Getting more teachers of color into the classroom*. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.

Aminy, M., & Neophytos-Richardson, A. (2002, April). *Shaping teachers' minds: Reflections on cultural discourse*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Banks, J. A. (2015). *Cultural diversity and education: Foundations, curriculum and teaching*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (2007). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2008). Teacher learning that supports student learning. In Presseisen, D., Editor, *Teaching for Intelligence* (pp. 91-100), 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Cormin Press.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2012). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Duncan, A. (2014). *The HBCU Value Proposition*. Speech presented the 2014 National HBCU Conference, Washington DC.

Feng, L. (2010). Hire today, gone tomorrow: New teacher classroom assignments and teacher mobility. *Education, 5*(3), 278-316. http://dx.doi.org/10.1162/EDFP_a_00002

Gasbarro S., & Matthews, D. (1994). *New teachers' perceptions of the meaning of the term multiculturalism and their perspectives of the need for multiculturalism in preservice education*. Paper presented at American Educational Research Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Gay, G. (1997). Multicultural infusion in teacher education: Foundations and applications. *Peabody Research Journal of Education, 72*(1), 150-177.

Gay, G., & Kirkland, K. (2003). Developing cultural critical consciousness and self-reflection in inservice teacher education. *Theory into Practice, 42*(3), 181-187.

Hilliard, A., III. (1991). Do we have the will to educate all children? *Educational Leadership, 49*(1), 31-36.

hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kolb, D. A. (2014). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. New York, NY: Josey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: A.k.a. the remix. *Harvard Educational Review, 84*(1), 74-84, 135.

Mawhinney, L., Mulero, L., & Perez, C. (2012). African American preservice teachers' perspectives on urban education: An exploration at an HBCU. *The Urban Review, 44.5*, 612-627.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *Projections of education statistics to 2021*. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/projections/projections2021/sec1b.asp(2001).

NCATE's Technical Assistance Network Helps Improve Teacher Preparation at HBCUs.*Black Issues in Higher Education, 18*(2), 26.

Nieto, S. (2006). *Teaching as political work: Learning from courageous and caring teachers*. Lecture presented at the Child Development Institute, Sarah Lawrence College, Yonkers, NY.

O'Grady, C. R. (Ed.). (2014). *Integrating service learning and multicultural education in colleges and universities*. London: Routledge.

Swick, K. (2001). Service-learning in teacher education: Building learning communities. *The Clearing House, 74*(5), 261-264.

Vaughan, W. (2005). Educating for diversity, social responsibility and action: Inservice teachers engage in immersion experiences. *Journal of Cultural Diversity, 12*(1), 26-30.

Weinberg, S. L. (2008). Monitoring faculty diversity: The need for a more granular approach. *Journal of Higher Education, 79*(4), 365-387.

Wiggins, R. A., Follo, E. J., & Eberly, M. B. (2007). The impact of a field immersion program on preservice teachers' attitudes toward teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 23*(5), 653-663.

Wilson, A. H. (2001). Cross-cultural experiential learning for teachers. *Theory Into Practice, 21*(3), 184-192.

• • •

Dr. Andrea Lewis, a graduate of Spelman College, University of Pennsylvania, and Georgia State University, is Chair and an assistant professor in the Education Studies Program at Spelman College. Her professional experiences include elementary school teacher, public and private school administrator, and college faculty. Her research interests include the effects of social class in teacher preparation, the history of school segregation, and racial identity in young children.

Dr. Nicole Taylor is an assistant professor at Spelman College in the Education Studies Program. Her research interests include the language and literacy practices of diverse families who have emergent readers and the impact of struggling adult readers on children's emergent literacy. She has experience as an elementary teacher and has worked with different programs to develop appropriate instruction and practices for at-risk readers. Dr. Taylor earned her doctorate degree from Georgia State University in Educational Psychology.

A Reflection on Lessons Learned from Implementation of a State-Mandated Co-Teaching Model for Student Teaching

Dottie Willis, Ed.D.
Bellarmine University

Abstract

The author reflects on challenges faced by teacher educators when Kentucky's Educational Professional Standards Board mandated a new Co-Teaching model for all of the state's student teachers in 2013. This article analyzes the overwhelmingly positive responses of cooperating teachers and the experiences of teacher candidates (student teachers) with co-planning and co-teaching. The article also analyzes the intra-university as well as inter-university collaboration that has resulted to implement Kentucky's unfunded mandated which has shifted student teaching from a traditional apprenticeship model to a co-teaching partnership model in order to assure more consistent clinical experiences for student teachers, raise achievement levels, and improve retention and success of classroom teachers.

Keywords: **co-teaching, student teaching, special education, education reform, clinical practice, university supervisors, cooperating teachers**

Autonomy and academic freedom are rights cherished by university educators, particularly by professors at independent liberal arts institutions. Consensus building and collegial buy-in precede most dramatic changes in higher education, where faculty councils regard the phrase *top-down* in much the same way that Kentucky Senator Rand Paul utters the word *liberal*.

Unlike university teacher educators, who are accustomed to deliberating and debating significant policy or program revisions, public school teachers have grown accustomed to top-down mandates for educational reform. The federally imposed No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is just one prime example. Individual states may have adopted Common Core State Standards, but P-12 teachers as individuals often have little voice in making curricular decisions that impact not only their instruction but also their accountability. In 2013, Kentucky, the first state in the nation to adopt Common Core Standards in Mathematics, Language Arts, and Science, also became the first to mandate a dramatic reform of student teaching practices throughout the entire Commonwealth. The Kentucky Educational Professional Standards Board enacted a new regulation requiring all educational preparation programs throughout the entire state to adopt the same clinical model. This collaborative co-teaching model developed at St. Cloud State (Minnesota) University was named the *only* certifiable culminating experience for all Kentucky student teachers: “Beginning September 1, 2013, education preparation programs shall support the student teacher’s placement and classroom experiences by… providing opportunities for the student teacher to engage in extended co-teaching experiences with experienced teachers” (Kentucky Educational Professional Standards Board,16 KAR 5:040, § 6[5]) The new partnership model replaced a traditional apprenticeship model experienced by preservice teachers for decades. The ruling impacted not only P-12 public school teachers but also teacher educators at every college and university in the state and even neighboring states that seek to place student teachers in Kentucky schools.

Kentucky's Educational Professional Standards Board (EPSB) also decreed that all cooperating teachers and university supervisors (no matter how many years they had successfully served in their roles) would have to be retrained, pass an online test, and earn a state-issued certificate in order to be eligible to serve as mentors to student teachers. Furthermore, university teacher preparation programs, which relied on the services of these cooperating teachers, were largely responsible for communicating this news and providing the mandatory training for all stakeholders (Kentucky Educational Professional Standards Board,16 KAR 5:040, § 6[5]).

Since the adopted model for mentoring Kentucky student teachers had been developed at St. Cloud State University through a United States Department of Education Teacher Quality Enhancement Partnership Grant, Kentucky's EPSB also mandated that only teacher educators who had been trained directly by St. Cloud State University educators were eligible to conduct the state-approved training sessions required for every P-12 cooperating teacher and every university supervisor throughout Kentucky. Although no funding for conducting mandatory training sessions was provided, an EPSB-monitored system was designed to monitor the fidelity of educator preparation programs in statewide implementation of Co-Teaching.

Teacher educators at small independent liberal arts colleges, where financial resources and personnel are already stretched thin, as well as teacher educators at large public universities where student teachers may be assigned to broad geographical regions within the state and sometimes even in schools abroad, faced a daunting challenge: accomplish a systemic change in clinical preparation of all Kentucky preservice teachers in less than two years. In this narrative, the author, who has served as a Co-Teaching trainer at an independent liberal arts university in Kentucky's largest metropolitan area since 2012, reflects upon challenges faced and valuable lessons learned in implementation of a dramatic reform in teacher education. It is hoped that the reflections of this teacher educator will inform and inspire others who are striving to improve teacher preparation throughout the nation.

Motivation for Mandated Model

Student teaching, the capstone experience in teacher preparation, has long been recognized as the common rite of passage for preservice teachers in each of the fifty states. While classroom demographics and teacher expectations dramatically changed, the traditional apprenticeship model for student teaching changed little for over four decades, (Oakes, Lipton, Anderson & Stillman, 2013). Confronted by research showing both weaknesses and widespread inconsistencies in student teachers' clinical experiences (Darling-Hammond, 2006; National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2010; Platt, Walker-Knight, Lee, & Hewitt, 2001), Kentucky's Educational Professional Standards Board deliberated these questions: How can clinical experiences in student teaching become more consistent and effective statewide? What research and best practices can be incorporated into student teaching experiences to best prepare twenty-first century educators for success in diverse, high-need schools? EPSB determined that one promising solution would be statewide implementation of a research-based co-teaching model from student teaching.

Although Kentucky was the first state to mandate a partnership model for student teaching that is most commonly associated with collaboration between certified regular and special education teachers, school districts and universities in at least thirty-five states across the U.S. have attempted to incorporate co-teaching methods into clinical experiences. (Bacharach, Heck, & Dank, 2004; Cramer, Nevin, Thousand, & Liston, 2006; Darragh, Picanco, Tully, & Henning, 2011). In other states, co-teaching may be more loosely defined and may even refer to two or more certified teachers of different disciplines who work together across the curriculum to demonstrate connections between subject areas, such as social studies and science. In Kentucky's mandated model for clinical preparation, however, co-teaching is strictly defined as "two teachers (a cooperating mentor teacher and *teacher candidate*) working together with groups of students—sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction as well as the physical space" of a classroom throughout an entire student

teaching experience (Heck & Bacharach, 2010, p. 3). *Teacher candidates*, as student teachers must be addressed in the St. Cloud Co-Teaching Model, are expected to collaborate and co-plan with veteran cooperating teachers, assuming an active instructional role as partners from their first day in a classroom. Therefore, they must immediately transition from being students in schools of education to co-teachers in P-12 schools who are responsible for co-planning and co-delivering rigorous Common Core lessons.

In addition to providing consistency in preparing more capable teachers, a prime objective of Kentucky's mandated partnership model is to improve academic achievement of all P-12 students through co-teaching. Positive achievement outcomes during each year of St. Cloud University's four-year study of its Co-Teaching Mentoring Model influenced Kentucky's Educational Professional Standards Board to select this approach, where in both reading and math proficiency "students taught in classrooms that used the co-teaching model statistically outperformed their peers in classrooms with one teacher as well as those classrooms utilizing the traditional model of student teaching" (Heck & Bacharach, 2010, p. 35). Through intentional utilization of seven co-teaching strategies, St. Cloud mentor teachers and teacher candidates were better able to differentiate instruction and increase learning. Thus, it was hoped, that through adopting the St. Cloud Model, Kentucky mentor teachers and teacher candidates working as partners might also be able to engage more students, more often and increase student learning.

Connections to Cook and Friend's Co-Teaching Model

Though recently institutionalized in Kentucky as the required practice for mentoring all Kentucky student teachers, co-teaching is far from a new classroom practice. In fact, St. Cloud's model for mentoring student teachers is grounded in both theories and techniques of the widely used collaborative teaching model that Cook and Friend (1995) first designed for use by regular education and special education teachers in inclusive classrooms. In their original co-teaching model, Cook and Friend recommend that two or more *certified* teachers, both a general educator and a special educator,

share instructional responsibility, resources and accountability for meeting specific content objectives in an inclusive classroom. The following six strategies for co-teaching practices are utilized in Friend and Cook's model: one teach, one observe; one teach, one assist; station teaching; parallel teaching; team teaching; and alternative teaching.

In the St. Cloud Co-Teaching Model adopted by Kentucky, a seventh strategy, supplemental teaching, has been added. Supplemental teaching is designed to allow "one teacher to work with students at their expected grade level while the other teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials re-taught, extended, or remediated" because their work is below or above the expected standard (Heck & Bacharach, 2010, p. 52). This seventh co-teaching strategy encourages differentiation to meet students' diverse needs and facilitates enrichment with more challenging learning opportunities for gifted students who exceed expectations.

Numerous studies touting instructional benefits of co-teaching in special education appear in professional literature (Conderman, 2011; Egodawatte, McDougall, and Stoilescu, 2011; Hughes and Murawski, 2001; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Ploessl, Rock, Schoenfeld, and Blanks, 2010). In addition, research has supported Friend and Cook's (2003) argument that the flexibility of co-taught classrooms increases instructional options for all students, improves program intensity and continuity, reduces the stigma for students with special needs, and increases support for teachers expected to meet individual needs of special education students under the Individual with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (Chandler-Olcott, Burnash, Donahue, DeChick, Gendron, et al., 2012; Cramer, Nevin, Thousand, & Liston, 2006; Mastropieri et al., 2005; Sims, 2008). Yet, academic outcomes associated with co-teaching both in special education (Mastropieri et al., 2005) and in English Language Learner classrooms (Abdallah, 2009; Pappamihiel, 2012) do vary greatly. Inconsistent co-teaching outcomes are commonly attributed to factors such as the co-teachers' compatibility, previous training, and/or administrative support.

(Mastropieri et al., 2005) Aware of these formidable challenges for certified co-teachers, Kentucky teacher educators were concerned that unequally yoked partners—veteran teachers and novice student teachers—might find it even more difficult to establish communication and collaboration necessary for effective co-teaching.

Furthermore, Friend, Embury, and Clarke (2015) even express serious concerns about potential confusion among preservice teachers associated with use of the term *co-teaching* to label this alternative approach to student teaching. They prefer to identify St. Cloud's Model as *apprentice teaching* because co-teaching, as originally conceived, is a service delivery option for students rather than a clinical training model for student teachers. Since a mentor teacher not only has more knowledge but also more power to evaluate a teacher candidate's performance, Friend et al. (2015) caution: "Co-teaching relies on parity…Apprentice teaching may include specific instances of parity, as when the teachers are both working with students with responsibilities divided. This, however, does not imply that the entire relationship can or should have parity as the foundation" (p. 84).

Research and Reflection

Insights shared in this narrative are informed by both academic research and hands-on experience in implementation of Kentucky's state-mandated co-teaching model. The author acknowledges that she has served as a university supervisor in the co-teaching model. This lens adds valuable first-hand knowledge, as well as potential for bias in analysis of data. Another limitation of this report is that outcomes of co-teaching implementation at an urban independent liberal arts university may not be generalizable to co-teaching experiences at all other colleges or universities either in Kentucky or in other states. Nevertheless, the reflections that follow do offer an important contribution to the scant literature examining stakeholders' responses to Kentucky's mandated reform of clinical experiences in educator preparation and the use of a co-teaching model for student teaching. The following three questions are examined:

1. How have Kentucky's cooperating teachers responded to mandatory co-teaching training?
2. How effectively have teacher candidates performed as co-teachers?
3. How have teacher educators at an independent liberal arts university supported Kentucky's co-teaching mandate?

Methodology

Reflections upon the impact of the co-teaching mandate and responses to the three research questions about co-teaching have been gleaned from a variety of sources. The design for this study is a mixed-research model in which compatible qualitative and quantitative data are analyzed and triangulated. According to Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989), mixed model research answers a broader and more complete range of questions, provides stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings, and adds insights and details that can be missed when only a single method is utilized. A brief description of sources used in data-gathering includes the following:

- In spring and summer 2013, a total of over 500 P-12 cooperating teachers took a four question survey after mandated trainings to assess their initial responses to co-teaching. Three clear, consistent themes emerged from a qualitative analysis of participants' anonymous responses on exit slips submitted at the conclusion of each training session.
- In fall 2013, when Kentucky's Co-Teaching Model was piloted at an independent liberal arts university, 46 teacher candidates submitted weekly journal entries about their co-teaching experiences to university supervisors. They reflected via email specifically upon progress and problems encountered in their co-teaching. Journal entries were collected, coded, and then analyzed for trends by the researcher. Using qualitative coding strategies, the researcher identified repetitive themes that clearly echoed from candidates' journals (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The validity of themes from teacher candidates' experiences was corroborated by interviews with their university supervisors.

- In 2013-2014, near the conclusion of their professional semester, a total of 66 teacher candidates at an independent liberal arts university responded to a questionnaire with ten items. Forty-six teacher candidates participated in the fall, while 20 candidates participated in the spring semester. The purpose of this quantitative instrument, an end-of-term inquiry, was to assess program effectiveness and design future support as needed for more successful implementation of co-teaching.
- In fall 2014, a small case study at the same liberal arts university focused on two pairs of co-teachers, one highly effective partnership and one struggling partnership. This qualitative research included classroom observations as well as one-on-one interviews with both mentor teachers and teacher candidates.
- In spring 2015, a questionnaire was distributed to 21 university supervisors at the independent liberal arts university. This quantitative instrument asked them to evaluate their perceptions of co-teaching in the classrooms where they had observed and collaborated since 2013 when Kentucky's co-teaching mandate took effect. Many of these supervisors supplemented their numerical ratings with richly detailed comments that were used to draw conclusions.

Reflections

Reflection One: Cooperating Teachers Value Co-Teaching Training

Cooperating teachers trained by our university have been almost 100% positive in exit responses after the state's mandated co-teaching training. In fact, most mentor teachers (91%) voice appreciation for their newly required training as cooperating teachers. Mentor teachers consistently comment on exit slips or during co-teaching trainings that although they have previously served as cooperating teachers, their past *training* focused only on completing evaluation forms rather than learning helpful new strategies for coaching, communicating, and collaborating with a novice teacher. Instead of expressing resistance to unpaid training sessions after school hours or during summer vacation, as university teacher educators had

anticipated, cooperating teachers write: "I like the new structure that using these seven strategies gives to my work with a student teacher." Appreciative responses to co-teaching training echo research on master teachers by Grote (2013): "Although teaching adult STs [student teachers] is quite different from teaching children or youth, MTs [master teachers] are often given a large burden for beginning teacher growth with very little training in how to do so…Consequently, MTs are almost always on their own, seemingly undervalued by the universities, and attempting to single-handedly sort out a method for directing their ST" (p. 23).

Teacher educators at our independent liberal arts university have been gratified to witness veteran cooperating teachers' spirit of openness in implementation of the new co-teaching model for student teaching. When asked about her feelings concerning co-teaching, one mentor teacher volunteered, "I feel so invigorated and renewed when working alongside my candidate. I am learning so much about technology from her." Unfortunately, mentor teachers often report that they themselves experienced a "sink or swim model" as student teachers because their assigned cooperating teachers had exited the class as soon as a student teacher entered. Most frequently mentor teachers report that they volunteered for co-teaching with the goal of "giving a future teacher a better introduction to teaching than the one that I received," "growing as a professional," "learning more about technology," and "looking at methods in a new way and brainstorming new lesson ideas with my teacher candidate." Kentucky's Co-Teaching Model appears to be attracting teachers who are more eager to share instruction than to abandon their classes to an apprentice. Exit slips overwhelmingly communicate mentor teachers' commitment rather than compliance to the co-teaching model: "I look forward to having a partner who will help to shoulder the heavy work load and help me meet students' diverse needs."

A second most commonly echoed perception about co-teaching is that most cooperating teachers do not view the state's newly adopted student teaching model as markedly different from the collaboration with special education colleagues that they are already

practicing. A representative response is "I have really been doing a lot of these [strategies] before, just did not know the labels." The author has co-facilitated eight co-teaching workshops, and in every session, a cooperating teacher has testified to the entire group about benefits of collaborative teaching with a special educator. One teacher at a June 15, 2015 training volunteered what she considered an advantage of co-teaching with a student teacher as opposed to collaborating with a special education colleague: "When I plan lessons with my ECE (special education) co-teacher, we never know whether she will get called away to work in another classroom. Planning with a teacher candidate will be less frustrating because we'll always be teaching the same kids together." During a recent co-teaching workshop, another elementary teacher announced, "I wish we'd done this kind of collaboration when I went through student teaching. It wouldn't have taken me five years to get to be a competent teacher."

To prevent the possibility of confusion with co-teaching in special education addressed by Friend et al. (2015), teacher educators have recently added to our mandatory training agenda a brief but basic review of the different purposes between the two co-teaching models now practiced in Kentucky classrooms. Cooperating teachers are reminded that while they work as partners, mentor teachers must function as *senior* partners with power to guide and responsibility to explain to teacher candidates why past experience has taught them that some instructional strategies are simply more effective than others. Viewed through the lens of current cooperating teachers, similarities between co-teaching as a service delivery option (Friend & Cook, 2003) and a student teaching model (Heck & Bachrach, 2010) have actually seemed to reinforce each other rather than cause confusion. In fact, one cooperating teacher, after serving as a mentor teacher under the state-mandated St. Cloud model, shared these comments on her candidate's final evaluation:

> I have learned some important lessons about collaborating with my special ed colleagues by working as a mentor teacher. I never had any co-teaching experience until my

> first teaching job, so I am thinking that my teacher candidate will find it easier and less threatening to collaborate next year because she's already learned how important it is to iron out communication issues. When you co-teach, you have to park your ego at the door.

Perhaps the strongest evidence of cooperating teachers' positive response to the state's mandated co-teaching training, however, is the fact that for the past three summers (2013-2015) as soon as co-teaching sessions are posted on our school district's professional development website, they immediately fill to capacity. In fact, local principals have even invited teacher educators to deliver co-teaching training to their entire faculty as a means of promoting differentiation and more effective collaboration between general and special educators.

Reflection Two: Co-Teaching has Increased Success, not Failures, of Candidates

When Kentucky mandated a Co-Teaching model for student teachers, university teacher educators feared increased failures among our candidates. In the traditional apprentice model, after all, student teachers had enjoyed a slow, easy transition into teaching duties by first watching—sometimes for weeks—and then imitating methods that the cooperating teacher modeled to design instruction and manage behavior. The co-teaching model instead demands that all candidates assume an active supporting role in the classroom on their first day.

The five colleges in this geographic region who collaborate to offer co-teaching trainings have graduated a total of 315 teacher candidates since 2013. Unanimously we can report that not one of our student teachers has failed the professional semester (student teaching) as a result of the state's new co-teaching expectations. While, unfortunately, there have been some unsuccessful teacher candidates at each of our institutions, supervisors do not attribute teacher candidates' lack of success directly to co-teaching. What university teacher educators and placement directors have observed

is that a teacher candidate's lack of knowledge, professionalism, or work ethic does become more quickly apparent in the new co-teaching model. In all but one case, supervisors at our small independent liberal arts university have been able to intervene and eventually remediate candidates' problems in knowledge, skills, or dispositions primarily because these concerns surfaced so early in the co-teaching semester.

Teacher candidates' weekly reflective journals as well as their responses to questionnaires administered at the end of their student teaching semester confirm the powerful impact of co-planning upon a successful partnership between mentor and candidate. In fact, surveys reveal a direct correlation between the number of hours that teacher candidates report devoting to co-planning and the candidates' overall satisfaction with the co-teaching relationship. Candidates who rated their co-teaching experience "very successful" reported spending an average of at least 2 ½ hours in face-to-face co-planning with their mentor teacher each week. This total does not include individual planning or preparation after the school day, which candidates noted was even more labor-intensive. On the other hand, teacher candidates (7 of 66 respondents) who estimated spending an hour or less in weekly co-planning admitted that they "did not feel comfortable in their classroom" or that "students regarded me more like an assistant than a teacher." Reflections by both teacher candidates and their university supervisors confirm that the effectiveness of the co-teaching model depends upon the effectiveness of co-teachers planning together.

Mentor teachers have also reported some valuable co-planning insights gleaned from their successful partnerships. Reflecting on the value of co-planning, one mentor teacher wrote: "Assuming at the beginning that my teacher candidate knew the content well enough to teach it was a big mistake. I learned to ask him in planning for a quick preview of his explanations to prevent confusion of our students." A teacher candidate also reflected in her required weekly journal: "It was so valuable for my cooperating teacher to discuss with me not just *what* we were planning to teach but also

why and *how*." As the professional semester progresses, "very successful" candidates assume more leadership in co-planning; but daily debriefing and clear delineation of each partner's responsibility consistently continue.

Student teachers who perceived themselves as "very successful" also mention communicating daily with their cooperating teacher by text, email, and phone. Their strong, positive relationship, in some cases, even continued after student teaching ended. It is too soon to determine whether this personal-professional bond forged between mentor and teacher candidate will help to improve teacher retention, another state goal for implementation of co-teaching; but this is a question worthy of future exploration.

Instead of increasing failures, as feared, co-planning and co-teaching seem to be promoting preservice teachers' success and growth in the classroom. Fourteen university supervisors at an independent liberal arts university who responded to a 2015 questionnaire "strongly agree" [4 on a 4-point scale] that our school's teacher candidates are 1) developing more effective lessons and 2) developing more collaborative dispositions as a result of practicing co-planning with mentor teachers.

Reflection Three: Co-Teaching is Practiced and Supported through Collaboration

The first line of support for co-teaching has come from university supervisors. Kentucky's mandated model emphasizes a triad approach that has transformed the role played by university supervisors as well as the roles played by mentor teachers and teacher candidates (Heck & Bachrach, 2010). Instead of functioning primarily as an evaluator whose chief duty in the traditional model is to assess a student teacher's performance, the university supervisor must also become more of a collaborator. Supervisors at our independent liberal arts college have welcomed the opportunity to work more collaboratively as an integral member of a three-person co-teaching team. Teacher educators anticipated that university supervisors would bear the initial burden of the state's co-teaching mandate because both teacher candidates and

cooperating teachers were unfamiliar with this newly adopted model. On a 2015 questionnaire about their perceptions of co-teaching, university supervisors answered "disagree" (an average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale) in response to the statement: "Working as a supervisor in the co-teaching model requires more time than in the traditional student teaching model." Yet, the supervisors did clarify that more time and communication are necessary at the initiation of co-teaching relationships. One supervisor elaborated on a common sentiment: "Supervisors have to be attuned to signs of incompatibility or frustration at first." Early conversations and meetings with the cooperating teacher plus close reading of candidates' weekly journals prove helpful. University supervisors report that they must also support co-teaching by "stepping in to mediate problems if possible before they become barriers to developing a compatible working relationship." Our School of Education is fortunate to have a cadre of experienced supervisors, many of whom are retired public school teachers, who have embraced the importance of their new supporting roles in the co-teaching triad.

Working in a college of education at an independent liberal arts university facilitates communication, and collaboration is more often the norm than the exception. In 2012, to prepare for the state's mandate, our entire faculty engaged in co-teaching training. Since that time, co-teaching pedagogy has been intentionally incorporated into education classes required of all initial certification candidates. Successful intra-departmental partnerships have formed, inspired—not mandated—by Kentucky's Co-Teaching Model. Mathematics and Science Methods professors, who supervise teacher candidates, have recently merged their two courses to model STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). Another co-teaching partnership is Science and Social Studies Methods for elementary teachers. Not only do teacher educators at our liberal arts university intentionally model the seven co-teaching strategies, they also assign students to co-present interdisciplinary lessons. By experiencing co-teaching pedagogy first-hand, teacher educators learn better how to help our candidates develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions that they will need to succeed

in the state's mandated student teaching model. Cross-content partnerships have not only proved to teacher candidates that we can practice what we preach about co-teaching; collaboration has enriched our instruction and enhanced our own professional growth as teachers of teachers.

Another unexpected but most beneficial outcome of state-mandated co-teaching is our formation of an alliance consisting of a representative from the local school district and teacher educators from five very different colleges in our geographical region. Three of the institutions are small independent liberal arts universities, while two are large public universities. All of the schools benefit from this partnership that originated as a result of Kentucky's Co-Teaching Mandate. Since February, 2013, our inter-university support group has become a true professional learning community. We meet regularly to share ideas, experiences, and resources; discuss policy questions; and divide responsibilities for the area's co-teaching workshops. By disseminating training dates, fielding participants' questions, registering cooperating teachers and recording attendance, our local school district partner has helped us to achieve what each of us working alone had viewed as a mission impossible—to fulfill an unfunded state mandate requiring transformation of a long-established student teaching model by retraining all Kentucky teacher educators, cooperating teachers, and teacher candidates.

Conclusion

We do not yet know how Kentucky's mandated Co-Teaching Model for student teaching will impact student achievement, especially because our state like many others is in the midst of transition to new accountability standards. Teacher educators do not yet know how the student teaching model may affect future utilization of the collaborative co-teaching model practiced by certified special and general educators. It is also too soon to judge whether knowledge, skills, and dispositions developed by the Co-Teaching Model will increase teacher efficacy and retention within the state. Anecdotal reports on the efficacy of co-teaching are surprisingly

positive, but quantifiable data must be systematically collected to evaluate outcomes of Kentucky's statewide model. Critical voices continue to ask whether a co-teaching model adequately prepares teacher candidates for independence later in their own classroom when a partner is unavailable. Again, current anecdotal data appears positive, but long-term research is necessary to corroborate or refute beliefs that a co-teaching model for student teaching is superior.

The reflections of this teacher educator are intended neither to criticize nor to endorse more top-down educational reform. The author's purpose instead is to report lessons learned and celebrate the commitment shown by Kentucky educators who are uniting to meet the many challenges of an unfunded state mandate. By working together, teacher educators at an independent liberal arts university in Kentucky are increasing expertise, redefining perceptions of teaching, differentiating instruction, and exhibiting a collaborative spirit that can never be quenched — or mandated.

References

Abdallah, J. (2009). Benefits of co-teaching for ESL classrooms. *Academic Leadership: The Online Journal, 7*(1). Retrieved from http://contentcat.fhsu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p15732coll4/id/363

Bacharach, N., Heck, T., & Dahlberg, K. (2010). Changing the face of student teaching through co-teaching. *Action in Teacher Education, 32*(1), 3-13.

Bacharach, N., Heck, T., & Dank, M. (2004, February). *Co-teaching in student teaching: A case study*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, Dallas, TX.

Chandler-Olcott, K., Burnash, J., Donahue, D., DeChick, M., Gendron, M., Smith, J., Taylor, M., Zeleznik, J. (December 01, 2012). Grouping Lessons We Learned from Co-Teaching in a Summer Writing Institute. *Voices from the Middle, 20,* 2, 10-15.

Cook, L., & Friend, M. (1995). Co-teaching: Guidelines for creating effective practices. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 28*(3), 1-17.

Cramer, E., Nevin, A., Thousand, J., & Liston, A. (2006, January). *Co-teaching in urban school districts to meet the needs of all teachers and learners: Implications for teacher education reform*. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, San Diego, CA.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 57*(10), 1-15.

Darragh, J., Picanco, K., Tully, D., & Henning, A. (2011). "When teachers collaborate, good things happen:" Teacher candidate perspectives of the co-teach model for the student teaching internship. *AILACTE Journal, 8*(1), 83-103.

Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2003). Interactions: *Collaboration skills for school professionals* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Friend, M., Embury, D., & Clarke, L. (2015).Co-teaching versus apprentice teaching: An analysis of similarities and differences. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 38*(2), 79-87.

Greene, J., Caracelli, V., & Graham, W. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Foundation and Policy Analysis, 11*(3), 255-274.

Grote, K. (2013). *Dynamics of the relationship between student teachers and master teachers within the co-teaching model* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Biola University, LaMirada, CA.

Guyton, E., & McIntyre, D. (1990). Student teaching and school experiences. In W. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 514-534). New York: Macmillan.

Hayes, J. (2007). Circle time: Two teachers can be better than one. *Essential Teacher, 4*(3).

Heck, T., & Bacharach N. (2010). *Mentoring teacher candidates through co-teaching: Collaboration that makes a difference*. St. Cloud, MN: Teacher Quality Enhancement Center.

Honigsfeld, A., & Dove, M. (2010). *Collaboration and*

co-teaching: Strategies for English learners. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hughes, C. E., & Murawski, W. W. (2001). Lessons from another field: Applying co-teaching strategies to gifted education. *Gifted Child Quarterly, 45*, 195–204.

KY EPSB Admission, Placement, and Supervision in Student Teaching Regulation, 16 KAR 5:040 § 6(5 e 1) (2013).

Mastropieri, M. A., Scruggs, T. E., Gretz, J., Norland, J., Gardizi, W., & McDuffie, K. (2005). Case studies in co-teaching in the content areas: Successes, failures, and challenges. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 40*(5), 260-270.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994).*Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2010). *Transforming teacher education through clinical practice. A national strategy to prepare effective teachers*. Washington, DC: Author.

Oakes, J., Lipton, M., Stillman, J., & Anderson, L. (2013). *Teaching to change the world*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Pappamihiel, N. E. (2012). Benefits and challenges of co-teaching English learners in one elementary school in transition. *The Tapestry Journal, 4*(1), 1-13.

Platt, J., Walker-Knight, D., Lee, T., & Hewitt, R. (2001). *Shaping future teacher education practices through collaboration and co-teaching*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education, Dallas, TX.

Ploessl, D. M., Rock, M. A., Schoenfeld, N., & Blanks, B. (2010). On the same page: Practical techniques to enhance co-teaching. *Intervention in School & Clinic, 45*(3), 158-168.

Sims, E. (2008). Sharing command of the co-teaching ship: How to play nicely with others. *The English Journal, 97*(5), 58-63.

Warren, R. L. (1959). In behalf of student teachers. *Peabody Journal of Education, 36*(5), 264-267.

• • •

Dottie Willis is an associate professor of Education at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky, where she teaches English Language Arts Methods in the Master of Arts in Teaching Program. She is the former Writing Specialist of the Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools and author of NPR's This I Believe High School Writing Curriculum. Dr. Willis received the 2016 College Teacher of the Year Award from the Kentucky Council of the Teachers of English.

Embodying Justice: Supporting Teacher Candidates with Disabilities

Julie Antilla-Garza, Ph.D.
Seattle Pacific University

Abstract

Teacher Education Departments at most liberal arts colleges serve as professional certification programs as much as departments with academic majors. We train our students to work in P-12 education in an era of inclusion and require them to support their students with disabilities in preparation for college and career. The federal government protects individuals with disabilities while they are students in school and while they are employees in the workplace. Are we doing our part to support our teacher candidates while they are in our programs? As professional certification gatekeepers, do we unnecessarily block students with disabilities from completing their internship? In this article the author discusses these questions and invites readers to support teacher candidates with disabilities as a way to embody justice in education.

Keywords: **teacher preparation, disabilities, accommodations, ADA**

A glance at many liberal arts college websites reveals that departments and schools of education serve as professional certification programs for future P-12 teachers. With this unique responsibility of providing a symbol of eligibility for employment, in addition to "developing intellectual and moral virtues" (Lederhouse, 2014, p. 3) resulting from any major in a liberal arts institution, teacher preparation programs position themselves as gatekeepers for the P-12 educational field. A closer look into the required courses for teacher certification reveals that teacher candidates take one or more courses about working with students with diverse abilities, language proficiencies, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds. A common conceptual framework in these courses is that the labels used in school settings are socially constructed, and situational. Given that stance, with its intention of preparing teachers to maintain student-first language and perspectives, we in teacher education do our part to move away from the dominant social discourse of the medical model with disabilities being an individual deficit (Ferri, Connor, Solis, Valle, & Volpitta, 2005; Hahn, 1998; Keller, 1998; Valle, Solis, Volpitta, & Connor, 2010). While we teach our students the basics of various federally-funded title programs that shape the P-12 educational scene, we often do little to integrate these systems of support into our work with those who will be teaching in these settings. In this article, I will expand on this idea in three sections: first, by giving a brief explanation of support students are legally entitled to under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); then, by describing the communal aspects promoted in contemporary teacher preparation programs; and finally, by issuing a vision of teacher education programs and the teaching field as settings for embodying justice through disability support and accommodations for teachers in learning communities. A list of suggested accommodations for educators with disabilities is included as an appendix.

Throughout the article, I use the word *disabilities* as that is the term most often used in legislation and in the resources I cite. I

always phrase the discourse using person-first language by identifying students as *individuals with disabilities*, as opposed to *disabled students*.

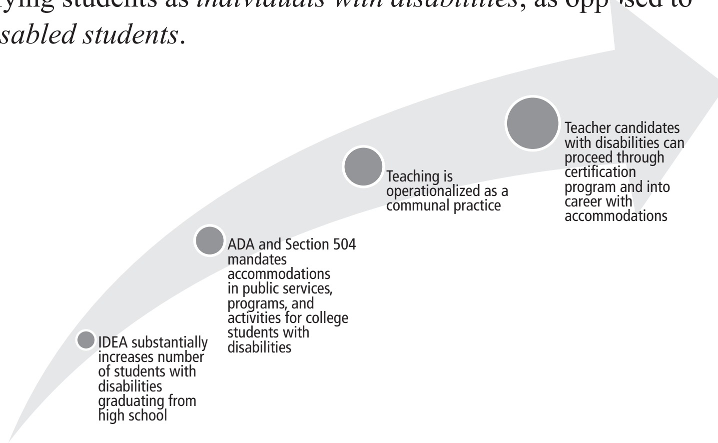

Figure 1. Progression toward Embodied Justice for Teachers with Disabilities

Federal Protections for Individuals with Disabilities

Federal government data of occupational employment and wages from May 2014 show that elementary and secondary schools employ over 5.5 million educators and that 249,250 people who have disclosed that they have a disability are employed as educators, trainers, or librarians. The occupation of education ranked as the 8th most popular for people with disabilities out of the 22 occupations listed by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014). Other government reports use census data of individuals with disabilities to conclude that there may be over 1 million educators with disabilities working in U.S. schools (Whetzel & Goddard, 2010).

The National Center for Learning Disabilities reported on postsecondary education statistics in 2014. Students with learning disabilities currently enroll in postsecondary education at the same rate as the general population. However, only 17% of those with learning disabilities received disability support in institutions of higher education. The current college completion rate for students with learning disabilities is 41%, approaching the 52% rate for the

general population (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014).

Since the introduction of IDEA's predecessor, Public Law 94-142 in 1975 when only 20% of students with disabilities attended school (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2010), the percentage of students with disabilities graduating from high school has increased to 61% (Diament, 2014). Of these graduates, more than 60% enroll in institutions of higher education (Resmovits, 2014). IDEA mandates that all P-12 schools receiving federal funds provide a free and appropriate public education for students identified as having one of 14 federally recognized disabilities. In public elementary and secondary schools, students who qualify under IDEA receive an individualized education plan (IEP), and those who have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity are protected under Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2010). These plans list accommodations, modifications, and, if needed, services that all who interact with the student must provide. The plans exist to provide equity in schools for the students between the ages of 3 and 22 who have them.

The educators and administrators who have worked with P-12 students in the era of IDEA have been encouraged to foster a sense of ability and hope in students with disabilities. Currently, many students with disabilities are told that they can achieve what their typically-developing peers hope to achieve academically and in careers. Schools are required to place students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and with the general education population as much as possible. Students with IEPs have their goals based on grade level standards of their typically-developing peers, which are then unpacked to the individual student's level of performance. It is no surprise then that the percentage of students with disabilities graduating from high school has increased 16 percent between 1997 and 2008 (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2010).

Once the students reach college or university, they are no longer

provided with an IEP, but are federally protected by ADA, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 in particular (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2011). ADA prohibits discrimination against students with a disability that substantially limits a major life activity or bodily function such as, but not limited to: learning, reading, concentrating, communicating, interacting with others, functions of the immune system, neurological functions, and respiratory functions (for a longer, non-exhaustive list, see the Federal Register of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2011). Many institutions of higher education have a department or center dedicated to supporting students with disabilities, and the employees of the center often provide assistance to instructors who need to provide accommodations for students with disabilities. Classroom accommodations include, but are not limited to: accessible classrooms and housing, books and other printed materials in alternative formats, exam accommodations (such as extra time on exams or readers for exams), sign language interpreters or FM system, notetakers, and use of assistive technology (Seattle Pacific University Center for Learning, 2015).

Title I of the ADA protects employees from discrimination in the workplace including discrimination during hiring, work, and promotion processes. Once teacher education students are licensed and begin working, they are eligible to receive accommodations for mobility, sensory, allergies/chemical, mental health, and cognitive impairments. Examples of accommodations in their workplace include: ergonomic chairs, closed captioned videos, air purification devices, written as well as verbal instructions, organization tools and software, and mentors for guidance (Whetzel & Goddard, 2010).

The federal government protects individuals with disabilities while they are students in school and while they are employees in the workplace. Are we doing our part to support these individuals while they are in our teacher preparation programs? Multiple researchers found that teacher education programs provide the least support in the areas of field experience and course substitutions to students with learning disabilities (Baldwin, 2007; Bowman

& Barr, 2001; Csoli & Gallagher, 2012). As teacher educators, we have the opportunity and the obligation to provide equitable conditions for our students as they work through their licensure requirements.

Teaching as a Professional Community

Teacher candidates in most preparation programs are taught about professional learning communities. Starting with the writing and professional development workshops offered by Richard and Becky DuFours and Bob Eaker in the late 1990s, the P-12 teaching community made explicit efforts to transform the concept of teaching from being a solitary exercise to one requiring active membership in a group that focuses on student learning. With each successive cohort of novice teachers, the image of a teacher being someone who goes into a classroom, closes the door, and singularly rules the realm fades into history. This generation of teachers knows that one part of being a teacher is working with colleagues on planning, instruction, and assessment. Today's teacher may share students during leveled teaching or intervention activities, may share the classroom through co-teaching with special education or general education staff, and may share student data with a grade level team for reflection and further planning. In all of these circumstances, the teacher is engaged with other adults, and therefore has others who can provide feedback, assistance, and insight when needed. Today's teacher is not an island.

As teacher educators, we teach the communal nature of education to our students, and we expect that they will experience this during their internship. We build on Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of communities of practice and the notion of learning and teaching as a communal process (Matusov, Julien, Lacasa & Candela, 2007). If mutual support among teachers is an expectation and a practice we introduce to our students, do we unnecessarily act as gatekeepers keeping out students with disabilities who might be successful teachers if only they were able to rely on collegial support during the licensure process and in the P-12 school setting?

Some institutions have started formalizing such support, through

dyad and triad placements for internship or through comprehensive assistance in applying for accommodations on state licensure testing such as the edTPA. Often though, we counsel students with disabilities out of our programs. When we do, P-12 students lose the opportunity to feel accepted in their school when they see their teacher(s) with disabilities being accepted there (for example, see Wills, 2007). The P-12 students miss out on role models of people with disabilities being successful. We fail to provide the schools with teachers who can relate to the life circumstances of students with disabilities (Bowman & Barr, 2001; Ferri, Keefe, & Gregg, 2001; Valle, Solis, Volpitta, & Connor, 2010).

A Vision for Teacher Education Programs

Teacher education programs provide the least support in the areas of field experience and course substitutions to students with learning disabilities (Baldwin, 2007; Bowman & Barr, 2001; Csoli & Gallagher, 2012). Colleges and universities have significant autonomy in determining essential elements in their degree programs, and for that reason, many decisions affecting students' success in teacher education are impacted by faculty bias. Attitudes toward the ethics of accommodations and personal experience with individuals with disabilities influence instructors' classroom and program decisions (Leyser, Greenberger, Sharoni, & Vogel, 2011). Some faculty bias stems from ignorance, with faculty "doubting the existence of less visible conditions such as learning and psychiatric disabilities" (Papalia-Beerardi, Hughes, & Papalia, 2002, p.28). Some lack of student success in teacher education programs stems from faculty's low expectations of students identified as having disabilities (Ferri, Keefe, & Gregg, 2001). For these reasons, some students in institutions of higher education are tempted to "pass" as typically-developing students rather than risk disclosing their disabilities.

Teacher education programs can address these issues in all three of the "complex and dynamic communities" described in Lederhouse's (2014) article on teacher preparation in liberal arts colleges. Researchers call for training on disability awareness and

advocacy for all those working in Community #1, the traditional academy's teacher education programs—instructors, directors, field supervisors, and mentor teachers (Csoli & Gallagher, 2012; Leyser, Greenberge, Sharoni, & Vogel, 2011; Valle, Solis, Volpitta, & Connor, 2010). Training could be provided by educators with disabilities to promote relational understanding of individuals with disabilities. Employees in college and university Learning Centers/ Disability Support Services could teach those in the teacher education programs about federal legislation, legal accommodations, and the ethics of equity.

Members of Community #2—Institutions of higher education and P-12 organizations—could work together to facilitate collegial support for teacher candidates with disabilities at school sites. Professional Learning Communities could use some of their time together to support individual teachers' needs, such as double-checking numbers for those with dyscalculia, checking the pre-written phrases or sentences of those with learning disabilities, or setting up productivity software for those with expressive writing disorders or with organizational challenges (Searchable Online Accommodation Resources, 2015). Educators who are proficient in teaching as a communal practice could split their duties accordingly so that disabilities are rescripted, not as individual deficits, but as a normal part of the discourse of planning and teaching.

All of those working with teacher education students could be informed of current statistics on the less-visible disabilities, such as those with mental and cognitive components. Through interaction with Community #3—state and federal regulatory agencies—those working in teacher education programs should be held accountable for providing accommodations and they should hold accountable the licensure exam organizations to ensure equitable opportunities for students with disabilities. One member of Community #3, The U.S. Department of Education is in the process of funding an information center to help students with disabilities in institutions of higher education and to help colleges and universities improve their disability support services (McIntire, 2015).

Conclusion

The future teachers, students succeeding with disabilities, are out there, and they are entering our teacher education programs. The more we know, the more we can explicitly shape the dominant discourse on abilities of individuals with disabilities. We have been teaching our students to promote this among the P-12 population; now it is our turn to promote this for our teacher education participants. If liberal arts education "aspires to promote human flourishing, [and] explores what it means to be fully human in order to experience a more enriched life" (Lederhouse, 2014, p. 6), and if we believe in a sociopolitical construct that positions disability within the parameter of full humanity, then we must model for our teacher education students what it means to support those with disabilities in our educational communities. This is how we embody justice in our teacher education programs.

References

Baldwin, J. L. (2007). Teacher candidates with learning disabilities: Effective and ethical accommodations. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 30*(3), 128-141.

Bowman, C. A., & Barr, K. (2001, April). Negotiating the tensions in the preparation of teachers with disabilities. *English Education, 33*(3), 252-256.

Cortiella, C., & Horowitz, S. H. (2014). *The state of learning disabilities: Facts, trends and emerging issues*. New York, NY: National Center for Learning Disabilities.

Csoli, K., & Gallagher, T. L. (2012). Accommodations in teacher education: Perspectives of teacher candidates with learning disabilities and their faculty advisors. *Exceptionality Education International, 22*(2), 60-76.

Diament, M. (2014, April 29). Graduation rates fall short for students with disabilities. *Disability Scoop*. Retrieved from http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2014/04/29/graduation-rates-disabilities/19317/

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2011). *Federal Register, 76*(58), 16978-17017.

Ferri, B. A., Connor, D. J., Solis, S., Valle, J., & Volpitta, D. (2005). Teachers with LD: Ongoing negotiations with discourses of disability. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 38*(1), 62-78.

Ferri, B. A., Keefe, C. H., & Gregg, N. (2001). Teachers with learning disabilities: A view from both sides of the desk. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 34*(1), 22-32.

Hahn, H. (1998). Advocacy and educators with disabilities: Emerging issues and opportunities. In R. J. Anderson, C. E. Keller, and J. M. Karp (Eds.), *Enhancing diversity: Educators with disabilities* (pp. 225-236). Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Keller, C. E. (1998). Understanding and improving the career development of educators with disabilities. In R. J. Anderson, C. E. Keller, and J. M. Karp (Eds.), *Enhancing diversity: Educators with disabilities*. (pp. 98-114). Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation. New York, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lederhouse, J. N. (2014). Teaching and leading for human flourishing: Creating a liberal arts framework for teacher preparation. *AILACTE Journal, XI*, 1-17.

Leyser, Y., Greenberger, L., Sharoni, V., & Vogel, G. (2011). Students with disabilities in teacher education: Changes in faculty attitudes toward accommodations over ten years. *International Journal of Special Education, 26*(1), 162-174.

Library of Congress. (1998). Individuals with disabilities education act amendments of 1997. Retrieved from http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/

Matusov, E., St. Julien, J., Lacasa, P., & Candela, M. A. (2007). Learning as a communal process and as a byproduct of social activism. *Critical Social Studies, 1*, 21-37.

McIntire, M. E. (2015, July 2). Colleges face calls for better support of students with learning disabilities. *The Chronicle of*

Higher Education. Retrieved from http://chronicle.com/article/Colleges-Face-Calls-for-Better/231329/

Papalia-Beerardi, A., Hughes, C. A., & Papalia, A. S. (2002). Teacher education students with disabilities: Participation and achievement factors. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 25*(1), 23-31.

Resmovits, J. (2014, February 27). Students with disabilities aim for a college degree, but often get stuck. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/27/students-with-disabilities-college_n_4869793.html

Searchable Online Accommodation Resource. (2015, June 22). Learning disabilities. *Job Assistance Network*. Retrieved from http://askjan.org/soar/LD/LDex.html

Seattle Pacific University Center for Learning. (2015). *Welcome to disability support services*. Retrieved from http://spu.edu/depts/cfl/dss/index.asp

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014). *Table 3. Employed persons by disability status, occupation, and sex, 2014 annual averages*. Retrieved from http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/print.pll/news.release/disabl.t03.htm

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. (2010). *Thirty-five years of progress in educating children with disabilities through IDEA*. Washington, DC: Author.

Valle, J. W., Solis, S., Volpitta, D., & Connor, D. J. (2010). The disability closet: Teachers with learning disabilities evaluate the risks and benefits of "coming out." *Equity & Excellence in Education, 37*(1), 4-17.

Whetzel, M., & Goddard, T. M. (2010). *Accommodating educators with disabilities.* Morgantown, WV: Job Accommodation Network.

Wills, D. K. (2007, August 31). The advantage of disadvantage: Teachers with disabilities are not a handicap. *Edutopia*. Retrieved from http://www.edutopia.org/disabled-teachers

Appendix A
Accommodations for Educators with Disabilities

Accommodation Ideas from Job Accommodation Network (Searchable Online Accommodation Resource, 2015; Whetzel & Goddard, 2010):

Motor/Mobility Impairments

Motor and mobility impairment refers to limitations in motor movements such as walking, lifting, sitting, standing, typing, writing, gripping, and maintaining stamina. Many conditions cause motor or mobility impairment, including but not limited to multiple sclerosis, cancer, stroke, spinal cord injury, cumulative trauma disorder, back condition, arthritis, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's disease, and heart condition.

Difficulty standing in front of class:

- Use sit/stand stool
- Use anti-fatigue mat/carpeting with extra padding
- Use counter height stool
- Alternate often between sitting and standing
- Rearrange student seating so the individual may sit, but still be viewed easily by all students, e.g., semi-circle
- Adjust height of chalk board, white board, or interactive white board
- Allow use of supportive foot wear
- Difficulty bending to assist students:
- Have student come to individual when needed or when directed to do so
- Use teacher's aide and student teachers
- Use student assistants to help others
- Allow use of portable desk height stool so that individual can sit next to a student's desk

Difficulty bending to obtain materials or access files:

- Use automatic shelves and file systems so that materials are brought to appropriate height with a push of a button

- Have most commonly used materials on easy to access shelves or drawers
- Have shelves lowered or raised
- Have student helpers to assist with tasks
- Sit on a low stool when accessing lower shelves, cabinets, and drawers
- Use a reacher to access out of reach shelves
- Consider allowing use of a service animal

Difficulty sitting for long periods of time at desk:

- Use ergonomic chair so that seat can be adjusted to fit the person using it
- Use adjustable height desk for the option to sit or stand while working
- Take frequent rest breaks and alternate between sitting and standing

Difficulty moving around room, building, or grounds:

- Make sure appropriate mobility aids are being used for the condition experienced by the person with a disability and for the environment
- Have accessible path of travel and make sure it is clear at all times
- Make sure floor surface is appropriate (even and slip resistant, and if carpeted, no more than 1/2 inch thick, securely attached, and firm padding underneath)
- Locate work station and planning area near restrooms, individual's work room, and emergency exit
- Develop a plan to signal for help in an emergency so that the individual does not have to physically go to office to get assistance
- Provide appropriate parking

Difficulty writing on whiteboard:

- Use writing aid to hold marker
- Use PC projector
- Use overhead projector
- Use flip chart
- Use pocket chart

Difficulty writing on papers:

- Provide writing aid to assist in holding writing device
- Allow frequent rest breaks and alternate between tasks
- Provide writing line guides, clip board/paper holders, tactile paper with raised lines
- Use typewriter
- Convert forms to digital format when possible and allow computer based data entry
- Use stamps for comments, dates, and signatures when practical
- Provide an ergonomic workstation

Difficulty keyboarding:

- Use key guards
- Provide voice recognition software
- Use ergonomic keyboard
- Provide other alternative input: head stick, scanning systems, etc.
- Use wrist rests
- Provide ergonomic chair with arm/elbow support
- Allow frequent rest breaks/alternate between tasks

Sensory Impairments

Sensory impairments are any conditions that affect hearing, speech, vision, or respiration.

Difficulty viewing computer screen due to low vision:

- Provide larger sized monitor
- Provide external magnification (fits over existing monitor)
- Use screen magnification software
- Reduce glare via glare guards, blinds on windows, or adjusting lighting in the work area
- Provide monitor with high resolution, high contrast, and flicker free features
- Allow frequent rest breaks for eyes
- Change font size
- Provide a keyboard with large print on keys

Difficulty viewing papers due to low vision:

- Provide hand/stand/optical magnifier

- Provide closed circuit television system
- Provide electronic magnifier
- Enlarge information on copier
- Provide task lighting
- Reduce glare in area, via overhead lights, windows, etc.
- Install adjustable light switch or other alternative lighting
- Change font size
- Allow frequent rest breaks for eyes
- Use a document camera and computer projector to project pages onto a wall screen

Difficulty obtaining information from computer screen due to no vision:

- Provide screen reading software
- Provide Braille display terminal
- Provide reader (clerical staff, etc.)

Difficulty viewing papers due to no vision:

- Provide optical character recognition system
- Use reader/assistant

Difficulty communicating with others due to hearing loss or no hearing:

- Provide assistive listening devices (FM, infrared, power loop)
- Provide real-time captioning via computer/PC projector
- Use hearing aids
- Implement appropriate positioning and lighting to assist with lip reading
- Reduce background noise and improve acoustics by shutting classroom doors and windows, adding carpet and acoustical wall/ceiling coverings, improving etiquette at meetings, and reducing air rush sound from air and heating ducts
- Allow written communication
- Consider use of a sign language interpreter
- Use electronic mail (via computer)

Difficulty accessing information from video tape/DVD:

- Have equipment capable of providing closed captioning when it is available (new television, decoder)

- Use assistive listening devices
- Provide closed captioned (either in house or by using a service)

Difficulty communicating over the telephone due to hearing impairment:

- Provide text telephone
- Provide telephone amplification via amplified phone (handset or via in-line or portable amplifiers)
- Use relay service
- Use captioned telephone and Cap-tel service
- Use voice carry over phone
- Use video phone

Difficulty responding to fire and emergency signals:

- Add visual signals to auditory alarms
- Use vibrating pager
- Consider allowing use of a service animal
- Have students or another employee alert person that alarm has sounded
- Use Signtel Intercom System

Difficulty speaking loudly enough for others to hear:

- Provide portable voice amplifier
- Provide stationary PA system or FM system when portable systems do not provide enough gain
- Provide communication board or other communication device with speech output
- Use signals with special meaning to reduce amount of speaking needed
- Prerecord frequently used instructions and store on computer (CD or interactive whiteboard) to reduce amount of speaking needed
- Use supplementary teaching materials such as videos DVDs and computer software
- Use the narration feature in PowerPoint or a similar program to add sound to presentations that will be used frequently
- Provide a computer with screen reading software so that the individual can type instructions rather than speaking

Allergies/Multiple Chemical Sensitivities

Sensitivities to cleaning agents, smoke, pesticides, perfumes, paint, carpet, and other building furnishings:

- Use air purification device
- Avoid the irritant to the extent possible
- Use non-toxic paint and other cleaning products that are less irritating alternatives
- Remove, replace, or detoxify existing carpet and select other less toxic building furnishings and supplies
- Improve ventilation within the worksite
- Notify in advance of painting or use of pesticides so that alternative work arrangements can be made
- Educate others concerning the nature of multiple chemical sensitivities and how fragrances can affect the condition
- Move work area away from such areas as the shop class, chemistry lab, cafeteria, or parking lot
- Have cleaning, maintenance, and remodeling jobs performed while the building is unoccupied
- Consider implementing a fragrance policy
- Provide a dehumidifier to prevent build-up of mold
- Provide access to a list of ingredients in cleaning products and other chemical agents used on school grounds

Mental Health Impairments

Mental health impairment refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders. Mental disorders are health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning. Examples of mental health impairments include depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, schizophrenia, and addiction.

Difficulty handling stress, emotions, and change:

- Have mentor to assist when stress levels become high
- Provide administrative and coworker support with open communication

- Allow time off for counseling and stress management support groups
- Limit number of subjects to be taught (e.g., specialize in one or two subjects)
- Consider limiting number of students in class if feasible
- Have plan period at the same time everyday
- Have own classroom instead of having to change rooms
- Use stress management techniques effectively
- Use soothing music or environmental sound machine to block out background noise when doing paperwork
- Allow additional time and training to learn new responsibilities
- Allow telephone calls to emotional supports
- Schedule meetings with supervisor to discuss workplace issues, production levels, effectiveness of accommodations
- Develop strategies to deal with problems before they arise
- Obtain clear expectations of responsibilities and the consequences of not meeting them
- Provide sensitivity training to co-workers
- Provide to-do lists and written instructions
- Consider providing in-service training on stress management

Difficulty with organization, staying on task, finishing paperwork, managing time:

- Provide organization tools such as electronic schedulers, pace setters, memo recorders, software organizers, calendars, and grade books
- Assign permanent classroom instead of having to change rooms
- Schedule structured plan period at the same time everyday
- Use color code files, papers, books
- Create detailed lesson plans and outline
- Use specialized lesson plan books
- Limit number of subjects and classes to be taught
- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps
- Assign a mentor to assist with determining goals, providing daily guidelines, reminding of important deadlines
- Consider providing in-service training on time management

Cognitive Impairments

Cognitive impairment refers to disturbances in brain functions, such as memory loss, problems with orientation, distractibility, perception problems, and difficulty thinking logically. Cognitive impairment is a syndrome, not a diagnosis. Many conditions can cause cognitive impairment, including multiple sclerosis, depression, alcoholism, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, traumatic brain injury, chronic fatigue syndrome, and stroke.

Difficulty with concentration:

- Increase natural lighting or provide full spectrum lighting
- Reduce clutter in the classroom
- Plan for uninterrupted work time
- Divide large assignments into smaller tasks and steps
- Restructure job to include only essential functions

Memory deficits:

- Allow individual to tape record meetings
- Provide printed minutes of each meeting
- Provide written as well as verbal instructions
- Allow additional training time for new programs and initiatives
- Provide reminders of important deadlines via e-mails, memos, and weekly supervision
- Provide mentor for daily guidance
- Use notebooks, planners, or sticky notes to record information for easy retrieval
- Provide cues to assist in location of items by using labels, color coding, or bulletin boards

• • •

Julie Antilla-Garza is an assistant professor of curriculum and instruction in the School of Education at Seattle Pacific University where she has served as chair of undergraduate teacher education for the past two years. Prior to joining the faculty at Seattle Pacific University, Dr. Antilla-Garza worked as an elementary school principal, district program coordinator, and classroom teacher for 16 years in public schools in California.

University-Based Literacy Center: Benefits for the College and the Community

Kathleen McGrath, Ph.D.
Niagara University College of Education

Rob Erwin, Ph.D.
Niagara University College of Education

Abstract

One of the greatest challenges in literacy education is the ability to provide a practical environment for candidates to apply their knowledge, while still working with their peers and under close faculty supervision. One of the greatest needs of resource-stretched schools is the ability to provide students with additional help in literacy learning. A university-based community literacy center is a proposition that can mutually benefit both groups. Literacy education candidates can grow in their abilities through practical experience combined with interactive, socially mediated learning techniques. Children gain additional instruction time geared toward developing the reading and writing skills needed to not only survive, but thrive in today's schools. This paper highlights how our College of Education established an on-campus literacy learning center, the programs we offer, and the impact this center has had on both our literacy candidates and the families of the students entrusted to our program.

Keywords: **literacy education, community literacy centers, university-based literacy centers, reading, literacy, children, socially mediated learning**

In an era in which everyone is being expected to do more with less, how may teacher educators of future literacy specialists prepare highly qualified leaders? One crucial element of this preparation involves field experiences in which candidates teach real learners with real literacy needs. This authenticity is the foundation for the meaningful rigor needed in the candidates' program of preparation in order to gain true competency. Therefore, when faced with accomplishing more with less, field-based experiences rise from important to foundational and critical.

At the same time, there are real children and adolescents who could positively benefit from what Richard Allington has referred to as "more and better" literacy instruction (1994). An ideal and logical way to provide this literacy instruction is through a university-based literacy center that serves the community. Learners could receive supplemental instruction above and beyond their regular school day (more), and could receive targeted instruction based on analyses of individual assessments (better). As a result, children and adolescents who are at risk for failure in literacy learning may gain more instructional time on appropriate tasks.

Literacy specialist candidates are learning skills in assessment, analysis of learner needs, instructional strategies and skills, and professional dispositions. Candidates need an opportunity to employ these additional professional abilities in a real-world setting, with the student population for whom these skills are designed to benefit. Without this experience, the candidate will not sufficiently gain the experience needed to become competent in these areas, confirm mastery, and develop confidence as a professional. A university-based community literacy center offers candidates an optimal setting for developing these abilities.

In considering the prospects for a win/win dynamic, some graduate programs geared toward literacy instruction have already established reading or literacy clinics to serve community needs; other programs may be considering this option as well. In either case, the experiences in developing this community service gained by one university may be of benefit to other programs as they create or continue to develop their own literacy centers.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the unique and rich context the Family Literacy Center provides for the training of teacher candidates seeking an advanced degree in literacy, as well as the effective resource it provides the community through remedial and enrichment literacy programs. In this paper, we first provide an overview of the literature on university-community partnerships and how the Family Literacy Center fits into the university's mission of serving the community. Then we describe the theoretical underpinnings of the Family Literacy Center as related to teacher training in the advanced literacy program. Next, we describe the process we underwent as we developed the Family Literacy Center. We provide a description of the programs offered to children and their families and how each program is aligned to coursework in the Advanced Literacy program. Finally, we analyze the impact of the Family Literacy Center through the experiences of the advanced candidates, children, and their families, articulating the mutual benefits to teacher candidates and the community for incorporating this type of fieldwork into a teacher preparation program.

Literature Review

In what reads like a gradually rising crescendo of voices, scholars are forcefully challenging universities to be collaborators and partners with their local communities in solving important problems, arguing that universities have a civic duty to serve their local communities (Boyer, 1994), that universities should be involved in civic engagement (Checkoway, 2001), that universities are expected to contribute to their neighboring communities (Anyon & Fernández, 2007), and even that "universities have increasingly come to recognize that their destinies are inextricably linked with their communities" (Harkavy & Hartley, 2009, p. 9)

To be sure, universities are poised to offer their local communities unique and powerful benefits. Speaking to the needs of urban communities, Harkavy & Hartley suggest that "universities are well positioned to play a role in responding to the challenges facing our nation's cities. Over half of all institutions of higher learning are located within or immediately outside urban areas. Universities

are resource rich. In many cities, universities and hospitals are the largest private employers." (2009, p. 8)

When universities partner with local communities on significant projects, this also benefits the universities themselves in that "[community] engagement contributes to the core values of academia and strengthens science" (Glover & Silka, 2013, p. 41). Ferman and Hill (2004) note many benefits that faculty and students derive from engaging in work of partnering with local communities, with opportunities for consolidating student learning, connecting academic learning to local needs, applying scholarly ideas to real world problems, as well as opportunities for authentic research scholarship.

However, there are cautions. Ferman and Hill warn that "Just as all politics is local, all partnerships are personal" (2004, p. 251). Nye and Schramm's (1999) interviews with both community partners and academics indicated that in too many cases academic partners are not good partners for communities, and Ferman & Hill explain that this is often because there is a "mismatch of incentives" (2004, p. 248). Glover and Silka also observe that these projects are not driven by genuine commitment to the community need but by the need to show accomplishments on vitae (2013, p. 42). Explaining how a distrust of partnering with the nearby university had developed in a local community, Anyon & Fernández explained (2007, p. 41) that the university they studied had not taken the time to know the community, care about the community needs, or commit to long-term community goals.

Given these cautions, what should collaborators in university-community partnerships do? Nyden urges that when collaborating on research or service projects, both the university and the community representatives must be involved and sharing decision making along every step of the development process, and that failure to do this is one of the typical features of failing partnerships (2006, p. 16).

Nyden further argues that the partnering entities may capitalize on higher education's culture of questioning and seek to advance this approach in community-university research partnerships.

"The culture of questioning is at the core of academic teaching and research," and "In the classroom, teachers and academic researchers pose challenging questions to students to make sure they understand course materials and develop the critical thinking skills needed to understand, shape, and change the world in which they live and work" (2006, p. 12–13).

In his examination of 10 respected university-community partnerships, Reardon observed that "all of the projects studied were developed slowly and organically over time. Considerable time was required to enable the community and campus leaders involved in these partnerships to establish trusting relationships" (2006, p. 106).

Mahoney, Levine, and Hinga report on a university-community partnership that involved after school programs for local children, reporting that the partnership and the service to children were worthwhile and effective, but much depended on the quality of the adult instruction and management of the program. They also observed that such a program does not "run itself" and does not automatically result in effective contributions to constituents (2010, p. 90). They also noted that if training for afterschool instruction providers is offered at all, it is typically brief and superficial. Yet these authors point out that in an increasingly global and diverse world, the ability to understand and work effectively with a variety of populations is an important outcome of teacher preparation programs. Institutions of higher education can play an important role in developing these competencies through guided opportunities for students to become engaged with diverse children and families in the surrounding communities.

A synthesis of the reviewed literature yields encouragement for genuine, respectful, collaborative partnerships between higher education institutions and community entities, with warnings that the best partnerships have appropriately balanced power equity and investment of resources among partners. Effective and sustainable partnerships also require commitment and compromise among the partners, but the benefits may well be highly valuable to the constituents.

Institutional Context

Niagara University is a small, private university, situated on the picturesque border of the United States and Canada. Through emphasis on the Vincentian mission within Catholicism, the university has a long and rich history of service to the community, particularly the poor and marginalized. The area surrounding the university is unique in that it includes a large urban public school district to its south, a reservation to the east, and a rural school district to the north. The College of Education has a longstanding partnership with the community surrounding the university. For example, preservice teachers participate each semester in a "Learn and Serve Program," a coordinated service learning activity that places candidates in partner schools as volunteers assisting teachers. This program has been a beneficial collaboration in that the local schools receive the classroom contributions of volunteers who are committed and prepared to help in classrooms, and the teacher candidates gain professional experience that adds much to their teacher preparation program.

Like the "Learn and Serve" partnerships, the Family Literacy Center fits naturally into the university mission. The FLC provides for the candidates a professional context for serving academically and culturally diverse students as well as enabling partnerships with families. For the families and K-12 students, it reinforces and substantially extends the learning already occurring through the regular school curriculum.

Theoretical and Pedagogical Principles

The principles of constructivism undergird the framework of the Family Literacy Center and provide the theoretical rationale for curriculum and fieldwork development. Constructivism has a long and well documented history, although many different perspectives coexist within it (e.g. Bruner, Goodnow & Austin, 1986; Freire, 2000; Piaget 1951; Von Glaserfeld, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978; Wells, 2000). In fact, Phillips (1995) identified six distinct views of constructivism; however, according to Fenwick (2008), all views share one central premise: "a learner is believed to construct, through

reflection, a personal understanding of relevant structures of meaning derived from his or her action in the world" (p. 10).

Translating this theory to the educational setting, Vygotsky (1978) conceptualizes how interactions between teacher and child or between peers can support learning through what he refers to as the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD): "the distance between the actual developmental level of the learner and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Wood, Bruner, & Ross, (1976) describe this adult or peer support of the learning processing as *scaffolding*; scaffolding represents the supportive interactions between adult and child that enable the child to do something beyond his or her independent efforts. Lambert (2002), suggests the social interaction between novice and more capable peer becomes crucial to the learning process; individuals extend and transform the knowledge they bring to a situation through interaction with others. However, Mayer (1999) points out that although social contexts of learning provide opportunities for constructivist learning, not all social contexts promote constructivist learning and more importantly, not all constructivist learning depends on social contexts.

Rooted in the constructivist paradigm is the phenomenon of "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, p. 59), which emphasizes the ongoing learning of professionals whereby "practitioners learn by noticing and framing problems of interest to them in particular ways, then inquiring and experimenting with solutions" (Fenwick, 2008, p. 12). According to Schön (1983), reflection-in-action is a rigorous professional process involving acknowledgement of and reflection on uncertainty and complexity in one's practice leading to "a legitimate form of professional knowing" (p.69).

Reflective practice is seen by many teacher educators to be the core of effective teacher preparation programs and the development of professional competence. Loughran (2002) writes, "It is through the development of knowledge and understanding of the practice setting and the ability to recognize and respond to such knowledge that the reflective practitioner becomes truly responsive

to the needs, issues, and concerns that are so important in shaping practice" (p.9).

Together, these elements are actualized through fieldwork, within the context of the Family Literacy Center, that affords teacher candidates opportunities to link theory with instruction, assimilate new learning through instructor guidance, self-reflect, and work through problems collaboratively, as they acquire essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions of professional educators. Further discussion of these constructs relative to the context of the Family Literacy Center ensues in the description of the process we underwent as we developed the Family Literacy Center, the description of the programs offered to children and their families, and the analysis of the impact of the Family Literacy Center on both the community and our teacher candidates.

The Process

Development and Allocation of Resources

In 2005, as a once-in-a-generation opportunity, the university offered the College of Education a new campus building dedicated to the College of Education's mission. Over the previous decades, the College had expanded and outgrown its spatial boundaries and was in need of new facilities. To address this, the university conducted a capital campaign that yielded sufficient funds targeted to meet these needs.

During the early planning stages, College administrators and faculty were afforded the opportunity to provide input to the architecture team and collaboratively discuss our dreams for the new facility. Although budget and space constraints were key considerations, these dreams were heard, collected, and incorporated into the new building design in numerous appropriate ways. For example, as part of the building plan, a center for community outreach was designed on the first floor of the building as a place to conveniently welcome the community into the College's space and to serve community needs, including literacy learning. The upper floors of the new building were designed for classrooms and offices, along with some regular classrooms on the first floor. The envisioned

community center offered instructional rooms with one-way mirrors for observation, small group meeting rooms, a library/central space, storage space, and offices, all sized to the overall building. Although not especially large, it was highly useable and designed to meet our needs, with very attractive features and appointments. Instructional technology was considered and incorporated into all spaces.

In addition to donations for the building's construction, there were donors who dedicated funds for the startup and operation of community literacy services. These funds were intended to seed the literacy center budget, and provided crucial funding for most of the capital and personnel expenses incurred during the initial startup and functioning of the center.

Assessment of Local Community Needs

As we considered the development of a university-based community literacy center, we sought to confirm the need for such services. Our analysis yielded evidence of a high need for literacy services in the areas neighboring the university, as based on statistics including the proportion of local adult population functioning at basic levels of literacy, poverty rates for adults and children, unemployment rates, and proportion of first generation college students. Furthermore, there were no other postsecondary institutions that offered literacy services to the community in the local county. The only supplementary literacy services accessible to the community were for-profit tutoring businesses and free church-sponsored, after-school programs that offered general academic support for children at risk. As potentially helpful as those existing services were, we envisioned more analytical and targeted literacy instruction services for the local community. Our analysis confirmed there was a real need that we were poised to address in a unique manner.

Creation of a Family Literacy Center Work Group

Recognizing the potential for university, school, and community collaboration to address identified community needs, the literacy faculty came together to explore how the university might meet these needs, while providing a unique context in which to train for

candidates in the advanced literacy program. We first convened all literacy faculty members to brainstorm, analyze, and synthesize important values that we wanted to use as our guiding principles. For example, we discussed questions such as, "What will be our mission? What will be our governance structure? How will we select student clients? What courses will supply candidate tutors? Who will serve as director? What resources are required?" After a few sessions to discuss and achieve consensus on these issues and principles, we presented them to our supervisors and administrators for their feedback and suggestions, and further developed these guiding principles into a working document.

With these guiding principles in place, we formed a development workgroup comprised of a few key members of the literacy faculty and relevant administrators to further study the opportunities and challenges of opening a literacy center. This group further investigated local literacy needs, considered the potential roles of literacy candidates who would serve as teachers, explored various configurations and governance structures, determined which courses would be aligned to the services provided by the literacy center, and estimated expenses and potential revenue. The workgroup met frequently over a ten month period, and began to obtain input from community leaders outside the university, including local adult basic literacy leaders, local school leaders, and community agency leaders. Their input not only confirmed the needs, but also opened productive conversations with area leaders and offered insightful suggestions on how to work with schools and families.

With these developments evolving, we considered a variety of governance and delivery models. We explored varieties of administration and sustained funding of the literacy center, the kinds of literacy services to offer, and a range of local school partnerships. We eventually selected a preferred model of literacy instruction offerings for the community. This model included a faculty director who would oversee four key components: community outreach; literacy services (including comprehensive assessment and instruction); family support for literacy; and professional training for literacy specialist candidates.

Consideration of Candidate Abilities and Needs

As university faculty concerned about the training of tomorrow's teachers and literacy specialists, we are particularly concerned with ensuring that our candidates embody the important characteristics and professional competencies necessary to meet the current challenges in schools. We want them to graduate effectively empowered to help their students develop literacy competencies, and make a powerful difference in the communities in which they teach.

As noted in Teaching Reading Well (IRA, 2007) the commissioned study and collaborative effort between the International Reading Association (IRA) and Teacher Education Task Force (TETF), "Putting a quality teacher in every classroom is key to addressing the challenges of reading achievement in schools. Knowledgeable, strategic, adaptive, and reflective teachers make a difference in student learning" (p. 2). This remains a formidable task, particularly in light of recent educational initiatives such No Child Left Behind and the reauthorization of IDEA; developing the technical and interpersonal skills necessary to be an effective literacy specialist takes time and practice. Opportunities for practical, hands-on applications of theory become crucial to the learning and training process, as we believe learning is an interactive process in which individuals extend and transform the knowledge they bring to a situation through interaction with others (Lambert 2002). We also believed the FLC would be instrumental in providing the context for facilitating this interactive, socially mediated learning, whereby literacy specialist candidates would have opportunities to put theory to practice, as well as to reflect upon and challenge their prior understandings of literacy development, assessment, and instruction.

Alignment of Courses and Programs

With these ideals in mind we examined the existing programmatic curriculum, looking for opportunities to align coursework with the context of the FLC. The table below outlines the courses that were aligned to programs we would pilot:

Course Title	Course Description	Program Description
Applied Children's & Adolescent Literature	This course examines a variety of teaching strategies using literature written for children and adolescents. Among the topics addressed are how to evaluate the text and illustrations in children's books, how to integrate literature into the K-12 curriculum across multiple content areas, and how to stimulate and evaluate a variety of student responses to literature	**Children's Book Club** *(students in grades 3-8)* In small group settings, children partake in activities centered on popular children's novels. Through open discussions about books, exchanging points of view, and interacting together to complete hands-on activities graduate students work with the children to generate a life-long love for reading.
Language & Literacy Development for Diverse Young Learners	This course presents the emergent literacy view of early reading which acknowledges children as active participants in the process of becoming literate long before formal reading and writing instruction begins. It recognizes the dynamic relation between oral and written language such that reading and writing each influence the course of development of the other. Ongoing research by the Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) is presented to provide the prospective teacher with empirical foundations for sound practices to increase children's early reading achievement. In addition, a flexible, organizational framework for establishing a balanced early literacy program will be presented as a way of thinking about the range of reading and writing activities essential for promoting early literacy. The following components, of a balanced early literacy program, will be examined in depth: read aloud; shared reading; guided reading; independent reading; shared writing, guided writing; writers' workshop; independent writing; and letter and word study.	**Primary Remedial Reading Program** *(students in grades K-2)* In a one-to-one setting, children receive an evaluation of literacy skills, followed by five instructional sessions that focus on individual student strengths to address areas of need. The program culminates with a family celebration where all participants engage in games and activities that can be incorporated into daily routines at home.
Reading Difficulties: Identification & Intervention	This course is designed to help practicing teachers effectively teach reading diagnostically in K-12 classrooms, especially individualized or small group settings. Teacher participants will examine a variety of factors that influence literacy acquisition, discuss and identify various reading difficulties, learn to conduct a diagnostic assessment of a student's reading abilities, analyze the assessment, and plan for, implement, and reflect upon appropriate reading instruction. Participants will write a summative report that contains the assessment results, instructional goals, and professional recommendations for future reading instruction.	**Remedial Reading Program** *(students in grades 3-8)* In a one-to-one setting, children receive two evaluation sessions, followed by six instructional sessions that focus on individual student strengths to address areas of need. At the conclusion of the program, each family receives results from the initial evaluation, along with recommendations for future family/home instructional support.

Development of Curricular Methodology

Darling-Hammond (2006) notes that several elements make a difference in the design of a teacher education program, including: (1) the content of teacher education – what is taught and how it is connected; (2) the learning process – the extent to which the curriculum builds on and enables candidates' readiness; and, (3) the context – the extent to which teacher learning is situated in contexts that allow the development of expert practice. These elements were considered as we developed and aligned courses to the context of the FLC. For example, framed within the gradual release model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983), each course follows a consistent, weekly, three-hour format and affords candidates opportunities to work directly with children, link theory to practice, engage in self-reflection, and collaborate on instructional issues. The first five weeks of the semester are spent engaging in course readings, assessment training, discussion, and program preparation. The remainder of the semester's weekly classes is spent working directly with children and their families for 60 minutes, followed by 90-minute debriefing sessions where candidates engage in self-reflection and collaborative problem-solving.

Across programs, candidates begin work with children first by assessing current literacy abilities, including oral language development, phonemic awareness, concepts about print, phonics skills, sight word vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, reader motivation, and reading level. After the initial assessment, candidates sift through the data, engage in rigorous discussion about individual cases, and begin to design instructional programs that build on student strengths to address areas of need. In other, words, candidates begin instruction having ascertained their students' ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978) and thus, are positioned to begin instructional scaffolding (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976).

Because the student enrollment is ethnically, culturally, socioeconomically, and academically diverse, candidates are encouraged to differentiate instruction, explore multiple instructional approaches and work through paradigmatic barriers and personal bias (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; IRA, 2007). The result is an

organic, dynamic experience contextualized within authentic practice, which allows for social interactions, as described by Lambert (2002) between novice (student) and expert (candidate) that extends and transforms knowledge.

Embedded at the end of each instructional session is time for candidates to meet with parents, to discuss students' strengths, needs, and gains, as well as ways families can reinforce literacy development at home. These conversations allow opportunities for candidates and families to form effective partnerships where the unique contribution that families can make to their child's literacy development is recognized and valued (McGrath, 2013).

Following the instructional sessions is a structured debriefing where candidates have opportunities to engage in "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, p. 59). The debriefing is a balance of candidate-led discussions on the challenges and triumphs discovered during the instructional session, a sharing session on effective instructional techniques, whole-class brainstorming on a particular student or issue, and instructor-led discussions or presentations on relevant theoretical and practical implications. Inevitably, a lively, collaborative conversation ensues where candidates and instructor work as a team to problem-solve issues raised during self-reflection. This deliberate reflection provides literacy-specialists-in-training with a process to develop professional judgment. Casey (2014) notes,

> "This deliberate process of reflection is necessary because new professionals cannot rely on intuition or "gut" in the same manner as an expert. While the seasoned professional integrates seamlessly thought and action, the new professional must de-couple the action from the thinking about the action; the new professional must consciously activate a process to guide the rendering of professional judgment" (p. 321).

Thus, the collective experiences of the group, coupled with the expertise of the instructor, result in much richer problem-solving and the development of instructional resolutions. In sum, the debriefing discussions provide the socially mediated learning

experiences that research substantiates as critical to teacher-learning (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Determination of the Dimensions of Impact: Children, Families, Advanced Candidates

Methods

Sixty-six graduate students, thirty-three children, and thirty parents participated in the pilot programs. In order to examine program impact, exit surveys were developed for the children, their families, and the advanced candidates (see Appendix A). Although the surveys included several open-ended questions, for the purpose of this paper, we analyzed for themes that emerged from the following questions: (1) children's answer to the question, "*How have you grown as a reader?"* (2) parents' answers to the question, "*What were the outcomes you observed after your child attended the Family Literacy Center?"* and, (3) candidates' answers to the question, "*How have you grown as a teacher as a result of your experiences at the Family Literacy Center?"*

For ease of distribution and participant anonymity, the exit surveys were loaded onto iPads, and given to each child and parent participant during the last session. Advanced candidates were given the survey via the iPads during their final debriefing session.

The open-ended survey questions were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) including open, axial, and selective coding procedures - raw data was coded, then grouped by similar codes, as recommended by Creswell (1998). An example of these coding procedures is included in appendix 2. Verification procedures included triangulating the data through intercoder agreement, as well as reviewing and resolving disconfirming evidence (Creswell, 1998; Creswell & Miller, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1983; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Results

Impact on children. Analysis of the children's survey responses to the question: *"How have you grown as a reader?"* suggests that all thirty-three of our participating students perceived an

improvement in their literacy skills. The following table illuminates their common responses:

Theme	Exemplars
Perception of increased literacy skills	*"I learned new sight words and how to sound out words better."* *"I read more fluently."* *"I spell better."* *"I learned better reading habits, and I increased my reading level."*
Perception of increased literacy strategies	*"I chunk words to figure them out."* *"I learned how to use graphic organizers to sort ideas."* *"I learned to read like the character."*

Thus, children not only perceived their own growth in literacy abilities, but were able to articulate specific areas of improvement.

Impact on families. Thirty out of thirty parents would participate in the Family Literacy Center again, would recommend the Family Literacy Center to friends and family members and noted that their child/children benefited from services. Several themes, summarized in the table below, emerged from the question: *"What were the outcomes you observed after your child attended the Family Literacy Center?"*

Theme	Exemplars
Increased literacy abilities (sight word vocabulary, phonics, fluency, comprehension)	*"Our son's comprehension skills have improved a great deal since coming here."* *"Our daughter has improved her retells. That is something they have been working on."* *"I have seen an improvement in Ben's (pseudonym) sight words and he spells better."*
Increased confidence in how to reinforce literacy development at home	*"I really appreciated the time his teachers took with me after every session. They went over the lesson and what they were focusing on. Then they always had suggestions for ways I could continue working with him at home. The suggestions were so easy to incorporate into our daily routine."*
Increase in reading level	*"He moved up four reading levels, from E to H!"*
Increased motivation for reading and school	*"She enjoys reading way more than she did before she started this program! She has even joined a school book club!"* *"Again, the improvements with both children can easily be measured with the gains they made with their report cards this term as well as (their) excitability to want to read. When they actually pick reading a nightly story over TV. . . well quite honestly WOW."*

Thus, not only parents could see the literacy gains made by their children, but were empowered with the information and knowledge to articulate specific areas. As noted across surveys, we attribute this to the weekly interactions with the advanced candidates, where there were opportunities to discuss instructional goals and progress with parents, as well as ways to reinforce reading development at home. Perhaps most importantly, parents noted the improvement in their child's motivation to read. This is a tremendous accomplishment as much research substantiates motivation is a key factor in reading success (Quirk & Schwanenflugel, 2004).

Impact on candidates. All advanced candidates expressed that the practical experiences and opportunities to apply course concepts to an authentic audience enhanced their training, and found these experiences very valuable. The following themes emerged from their survey responses:

Theme	Exemplars
Increased ability to administer and interpret assessment data, target student strengths and needs, and use assessment data to develop targeted and strategic lessons	*"I learned all about reading and writing assessments and how to implement them correctly. I definitely grew as a teacher in that aspect. I also learned how to target my students' needs and really focus on that specific target. I also learned about great teaching strategies that I can use in my classroom."*
Greater flexibility in lesson planning and execution as result of increased knowledge of instructional techniques and the authentic context	*"I became a lot more flexible with my planning and a lot of the (course) concepts became more concrete for me."*
Increased confidence in their teaching abilities as a result of the practical experience embedded into coursework and witnessing the weekly progress their students made	*"I now have a HUGE stockpile of quick fun activities to use to help students who are struggling readers as well as to use with an entire classroom of students. My confidence in one-on-one literacy instruction has grown immensely. I was able to see what a struggling reader looks like and how important it is to find ways to help them and tailor instruction to fit their needs. After completing this class, I feel more confident and ready to tackle the needs of struggling readers. I could really see the difference in my student from day one (until) now."*

continued

Theme	Exemplars
Greater ability to motivate reticent, struggling readers as a result of a wider breadth of instructional technique and collaboration with peers during after-tutoring debriefing sessions and the authentic context for instruction	*"It is so, so important to take into account what the students like! I definitely knew this before, but I was able to put this into practice and see how effective it is."* *"Brainstorming together after the instructional sessions was so beneficial. I have learned so much from my peers and really felt that team-effort was one of the best aspects of this course."*
Greater ability to modify instruction to meet the needs of students with multiple learning disabilities	*"I definitely learned to take a step back before determining a child's reading needs. After working with my child, I learned that the needs I think she might have might not be the end of her needs. The needs that I noticed right away might be stemming from another problem that I have to tackle first."*
Greater confidence and ability to collaborate with parents	*"This was a career changing experience. I had the opportunity to not only strengthen my diagnostic and instructional skills but also my communication skills with parents."*

Data indicates that the Family Literacy Center provided an authentic context for candidates to explore issues of pedagogy and diversity, collaboratively problem solve, and reflect on the process. Similar to the dynamic created between child and candidate, opportunities for the co-construction of knowledge between candidate and instructor were rich and deep (Fenwick, 2008). As illuminated by the data, opportunities to link theory to practice allowed for shifts in how candidates responded to the needs of struggling readers and propelled the development of professional competencies and dispositions.

Limitations and Areas for Future Research

The reflective data from our pilot programs suggests that participating children, their families, and the literacy specialist candidates benefited from the unique context provided by the FLC. Thus, the win-win synergy for university-school-community collaboration has been fully engaged. However, while our pilot year data provides meaningful insight into the preliminary impact the FLC has had on our candidates, the children, and their families, there are several limitations which may guide potential expansions of our

research. First, our data is limited by the number of participants, including sixty-six graduate students, thirty-three children, and thirty parents. We plan to replicate the exit survey in subsequent programs over multiple semesters to investigate the longitudinal impact of the FLC, as well as the transferability of the themes illuminated in our initial inquiry. Secondly, though we examined the children's perceptions of growth in their literacy abilities, we plan to build upon this inquiry through an exploration of learning gains across the pre and post formal and informal reading assessments. This will allow for determinations of individual growth and individual benefits for each child from our various instructional programs. Third, we plan to conduct a longitudinal study that follows literacy candidates through their practica and into their own classrooms. This would provide greater insight into the longitudinal impact on teaching practice of field experiences such as those offered through the FLC.

Continuing the Cycle of Collaboration

As we reflect upon our pilot year, the positive momentum propels us to "think big" in terms of our commitment to providing a first class literacy center that inspires local children to become strong readers and supports their families in providing literate environments, while allowing candidates to gain the real world practice they needed to become the next generation of literacy educators.

Appendix A

Parent Survey

- What is the age of the child/children you brought to the Family Literacy Center?
- Has your child attended the Family Literacy Center before?
- What were your expectations of the Family Literacy Center?
- What were the outcomes you observed after your child attended the Family Literacy Center?
- Did you feel your child benefited from the Family Literacy Center?
- What did you like most about the Family Literacy Center?
- What did you like least about the Family Literacy Center?
- Would you participate in the Family Literacy Center in the future?
- Would you refer a friend or family member to the Family Literacy Center?

Child Survey

- What did you like most about the Family Literacy Center?
- What did you like least about the Family Literacy Center?
- Explain one thing you learned about reading and writing at the Family Literacy Center.

Advanced Candidate Survey

- How have you grown as a teacher as a result of your experience at the Family Literacy Center?
- What worked well for you during the sessions?
- What would you do differently?
- How would you describe this experience to a colleague who had not participated?
- Please give one concrete example of how your practice has changed as a result of this experience.
- What could we do differently to further enhance your learning experience?
- What new thinking have you obtained from this experience?
- What have you learned about children?

Appendix B

Initial code (open)	Axial Code	Selective Code
Assessment Understand student strengths and needs Use assessment data to develop targeted and strategic lessons	Increased understanding of how assessment drives instruction	*Increased ability to administer and interpret assessment data, target student strengths and needs, and use assessment data to develop targeted and strategic lessons*
Flexibility in planning Knowledge of instructional techniques	Knowledge of instructional techniques allows for greater flexibility in lesson planning	*Greater flexibility in lesson planning and execution as result of increased knowledge of instructional techniques and the authentic context*
Motivate struggling readers	Wider knowledge of instructional techniques Collaboration with peers Debriefing sessions	*Greater ability to motivate reticent, struggling readers as a result of a wider breadth of instructional technique and collaboration with peers during after-tutoring debriefing sessions and the authentic context for instruction*

References

Allington, R. L. (1994). The schools we have. The schools we need. *Reading Teacher, 48*, 14-14.

Anyon, Y., & Fernández, M. A. (2007). Realizing the potential of community-university partnerships. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 39*(6), 40-45.

Boyer, E. L. (1994, March 9). Creating the new American college. *The Chronicle of Higher Education, 40* (27), A48.

Bruner, J. S., Goodnow, J. J., & Austin, G. A. (1986). *A study of thinking*. New Brunswick, NJ, U.S.A: Transaction Books.

Casey, T. (2014). Reflective Practice in Legal Education: The Stages of Reflection (2014, March 15). 20 Clin. L. Rev. 317 (2014). Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2472451

Checkoway, B. (2001). Renewing the civic mission of the American research university. *Journal of Higher Education, 72* (2), 125-147.

Cochran-Smith, M., Shakman, K., Jong, C., Terrell, D., Barnatt, J., & McQuillan, P. (2009). Good and just teaching: The case for social justice in teacher education. *American Journal of Education, 115*(3), 347-377.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. (2002). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice, 39*(3), 124-130.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Reforming teacher preparation and licensing: Debating evidence. *Teachers College Record, 102*(1), 28-57.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (2007). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fenwick, T. (2008). Workplace learning: Emerging trends and new perspectives. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 2008*(119), 17-26.

Ferman, B., & Hill, T. L. (2004). The challenges of agenda conflict in higher education community research partnerships: Views

from the community side. *Journal of Urban Affairs, 26*(2), 241-257.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed, 30th anniversary edition*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.

Glover, R. W., & Silka, L. (2013). Choice, power and perspective: The neglected question of who initiates engaged campus-community partnerships. Gateways: *International Journal of Community Research and Engagement, 6*(1), 38-56.

Harkavy, I., & Hartley, M. (2009). University-school-community partnerships for youth development and democratic renewal. *New directions for youth development, 2009*(122), 7-18.

International Reading Association. (IRA, 2003). *Investment in teacher preparation in the United States: A position statement of the International Reading Association*. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Position_Statements_and_Resolutions/ps1060_teacher_preparation_2.sflb.ashx

International Reading Association. (IRA, 2007). *Teaching reading well: A synthesis of the International Reading Association's research on teacher preparation for reading instruction*. Retrieved from http://www.reading. org/Libraries/SRII/teaching_reading_ well.sflb.ashx

International Reading Association. (IRA, 2010). *Standards for reading professionals: A reference for the preparation of educators in the United States*. Newark, DE.

Lambert, L. (2002). *The constructivist leader*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Loughran, J. J. (2002). Effective reflective practice in search of meaning in learning about teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(1), 33-43.

Mahoney, J. L., Levine, M. D., & Hinga, B. (2010). The development of after-school program educators through university-community partnerships. *Applied Developmental Science*, *14*(2), 89-105.

Mayer, R. E. (1999). Designing instruction for constructivist learning. *Instructional-design Theories and Models: A New Paradigm of Instructional Theory, 2*, 141-159.

McGrath, K. (2013). Developing effective, healthy family-school partnerships: What can we learn from parents? In S. Szabo, L. Martin, T. Morrison, L. Haas, & L. Garza-Garcia (Eds.), *Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers Yearbook, Volume 35* (pp.173-188). Louisville, Kentucky: ALER.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nyden, P. 2006. 'The challenges and opportunities of engaged scholarship,' in L. Silka (Ed.), *Scholarship in action: Applied research and community change*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC, pp. 9–20.

Nye, N., & Schramm, R. (1999). *Building higher education - community development corporation partnerships*. New York, NY: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Pearson, P. D., & Gallagher, M. C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary educational psychology, 8*(3), 317-344.

Piaget, J. (1951). *The child's conception of the world* (Vol. 213). Rowman & Littlefield.

Phillips, D. C. (1995, October 1). The good, the bad, and the ugly: The many faces of constructivism. *Educational Researcher, 24*, 7.)

Quirk, M. P., & Schwanenflugel, P. J. (2004). Do supplemental remedial reading programs address the motivational issues of struggling readers? An analysis of five popular programs. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 43*(3), 1-19.

Reardon, K. M. (2006). Promoting reciprocity within community/university development partnerships: Lessons from the field. *Planning, Practice & Research, 21*(1), 95-107.

Roskos, K., Boehlen, S., Walker, B. J. (2000). Learning the art of the instructional conversation: The influence of self-assessment on teachers' instructional discourse in a reading clinic. *The Elementary School Journal, 100*, 229-253.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Von Glasersfeld, E. (1984). An introduction to radical constructivism. In Paul Waltlawick (Ed.) *The invented reality: How do we know what we believe we know?: Contributions to constructivism*. (pp.17-40). New York: Norton.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wells, G. (2000). Dialogic inquiry in education: Building the legacy of Vygotsky. In Carol D. Lee and Paul Smagorinsky (Eds.) *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research: Constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry* (pp. 51-85). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 17*(2), 89-100.

• • •

Dr. Kathleen McGrath is an assistant professor and the Faculty Director of the Family Literacy Center at Niagara University, where she teaches graduate courses in primary and intermediate level literacy, diagnostic assessment and instruction, and children's and adolescent literature. Dr. McGrath's research has focused on family literacy, struggling readers, and teacher training in diagnostic assessment and clinical instruction.

Dr. Rob Erwin is an associate professor who serves as the coordinator of the graduate literacy program and Chair of the Department of Professional Studies at Niagara University. He earned his Doctorate in Reading Education from SUNY at Buffalo, and has taught at a variety of levels including elementary and middle grades, clinical reading settings, and university settings.