AILACTE Journal

Volume XIII, Number 1, Fall 2016

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 XIII
Fall 2016

AILACTE Journal Volume XIV 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 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 (in MS Word or MS Word Compatible format) as email attachments by July 1, 2017 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 20 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 title page that contains the title, abstract, keywords, and all authors' names, highest degree earned, titles, and institutional affiliations, in order of authorship;
- 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;
- a reference section that has been thoroughly checked for APA compliance; and
- a last section containing autobiographical sketches for each author in authorship order (comprised of a short paragraph for each).

In a separate file, entitled 'Author Information,' authors are requested to provide the following:

- complete name, institutional postal mailing address, email address, and telephone numbers (including cell phones if appropriate) of each author on the manuscript in authorship order.

Considering our blind review process, please address all correspondence to the AILACTE Journal *email address ailactejournal@gmail.com.*

AILACTE Journal

Volume XIII
Fall 2016

Table of Contents

Early Field Experience Innovations to Increase Positive Impact on K–12 Students

Anny Fritzen Case, Ph.D.
John Traynor, Ph.D.

Gonzaga University

Abstract

This paper describes several innovations to an early field experience emerging from a community, school, and university partnership focused on a middle school serving diverse students from low-income neighborhoods. With the primary goal of utilizing teaching candidates to provide direct academic, social, and instructional support to the middle school students, university faculty and middle school educators worked in collaboration to simultaneously provide rich professional learning experiences for the preservice teachers. Preliminary assessment of the model suggests promising practices of clustering, hybrid roles of university and school-based educators, and expanding contexts for field experiences beyond the traditional classroom.

Keywords: **field experience, middle school partnerships**

The clinical component of learning to teach, whether in the form of observations, practicums, or student teaching, has long been considered an essential pillar of teacher preparation, and our field has placed considerable attention on identifying the most effective ways to craft these crucial field experiences. In the current political environment, however, external mandates on classroom teachers and schools have in some cases discouraged their involvement in preservice teacher preparation. For example, with test scores tied to evaluations, some teachers are reticent to turn over their students to novice teachers. More commonly, teachers and administrators feel stretched too thin and without time and energy to host preservice teachers or engage in partnerships with teacher preparation programs. Yet without access to field placements, mentor teachers, and K–12 partnerships, teacher preparation programs (TPPs) are eviscerated. At the same time, with diminished involvement with teacher education, K–12 schools also stand to lose valuable human and intellectual resources.

In short, K–12 schools and teacher preparation programs share a symbiotic relationship—one worth cultivating and preserving. The many challenges notwithstanding, the current educational landscape also presents new opportunities to re-imagine K–12/TPP relationships such that teacher education programs "engage ever more closely with schools in a mutual transformation agenda, with all of the struggle and messiness that implies" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 302). In this article, I describe one university-based TPP's ongoing attempts to do just that. Our experience suggests that the struggle and messiness is real, but so is the positive potential of field experiences intentionally re-designed to provide direct academic and social support for K–12 students, contribute to the larger goals and missions of the school, energize classroom teachers, and provide varied, intentional, and powerful professional learning experiences for preservice teacher candidates.

Learning to Teach in the Field

Field-based or clinical elements of teacher preparation have long been acknowledged as central to the work of teacher preparation

(Darling-Hammond, 2006; Zeichner & Bier, 2015). However, simply gaining experience in classrooms or schools does not ensure that candidates will acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively and equitably teach diverse learners and professionally engage with colleagues, families, and the community. Accordingly, researchers have identified several elements of effective field experience as well as new and promising directions.

First, candidates need extensive time in classrooms with purposeful supervision and mentoring (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Prior to the culminating student teaching experience, preservice teachers should participate in carefully designed field experiences early and often throughout the course of their training (Ronfeldt & Reininger, 2012). In addition to extensive time in classrooms, the context of those classrooms also matters. Ideally, candidates would be placed in classrooms where they are exposed to strong models of pedagogy and professionalism (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Moreover, preservice teachers need well-structured experience in schools that represent such diversity to be prepared with the skill, vision, and commitment to teach well the children they will encounter – many of whom live in poverty, come from a variety of cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds, and embody a range of specific learning needs and characteristics (Lavadenz & Hollins, 2015; Pohan, Ward, Kouzekanani, & Boatright, 2009). Finally, a close linkage between teacher education coursework and fieldwork can contribute greatly to candidates' learning and professional growth (Zeichner, 2010). While the literature is quite clear and consistent on the features of well-structured field experiences, in many cases achieving these recommendations will require a "radical overhaul of the status quo" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 8). In the same way that learning to teach is highly complex, situated, and involves multiple stakeholders, so is designing and enacting truly high quality, transformative field experiences.

In addition to the gold standard of extensive, supervised experience in diverse classrooms with strong models of teaching, several new directions for clinical practice have been proposed. These recommendations invite teacher educators to consider new ways

of framing the school and community partnerships essential to field experience. Traditionally, knowledge construction and sharing related to the theory and research of education has been located primarily in higher education while K–12 schools have been positioned as the sites where the "practical" aspects of teaching get worked out (Zeichner, 2010). As an alternative to the traditional construction of separate, but related spheres of influence on preservice teachers, Zeichner (2010) proposes the creation of "hybrid spaces…where academic and practitioner knowledge and knowledge that exists in communities come together in new less hierarchical ways in the service of teacher learning" (p. 480). This assumes a greater degree of dialogue between schools and higher education. It also invites college/university-based teacher educators to spend more time in schools and school-based educators to spend more time on campus. Zeichner argues that "this shift toward more democratic and inclusive ways of working with schools and communities is necessary for colleges and universities to fulfill their mission in the education of teachers" (p. 480).

This shift also has the potential to facilitate another opportunity within field experiences that remains largely untapped: prioritizing the impact of preservice clinical experience on K–12 student learning (Hollins, 2015). Historically, field experiences have been viewed as primarily for teacher candidate learning—a place for them to "try out" teaching. However, the combination of recent policy mandates that intend to link teacher preparation to student learning outcomes and a renewed focus on ensuring that schools meet the needs of *all* children, has drawn attention to the possibility—and the imperative—that preservice teachers legitimately add value to the classrooms where they are placed. One way preservice teachers are being productively utilized is through co-teaching models. Such models tend to occur in student teaching experiences and are characterized by the cooperating teacher and the student teacher teaming up to provide two streams of instruction and support for K–12 students. Co-teaching stands in contrast to traditional models in which student teachers spend much of their time engaged in solo teaching with the cooperating teacher peripherally engaged

in the background, or vice versa. In addition to providing more intentional support for the student teacher (in contrast to the "sink or swim" mentality), research on co-teaching also suggests direct benefits to the K–12 students by virtue of having two educators in the room instead of just one (Bacharach, Heck, & Dahlberg, 2010).

A shared focus on K–12 student learning and development both enables and is enabled by more egalitarian and collaborative relationships among university/college-based teacher educators and school-based educators. This focus on students involves facilitating high quality instruction, but it also extends to other aspects of the profession of teaching, including engaging families and communities. As a result, teacher education programs are increasingly involving candidates in community-based field experiences located both inside and outside of schools. The potential of community-based field experiences includes helping preservice teachers gain a more holistic view of children, to recognize the important intersection of home, school, and community assets, and in some cases, to also refine pedagogical practices (Brayko, 2013; McDonald et al., 2011).

In order to achieve these aspirations of quality, field-based teacher preparation and high-functioning university/school partnerships are essential. University and school partnerships are long standing traditions in both the preparation of teachers and in the work of providing additional supports to K–12 students through collaboration initiatives (Bell, Brandon, & Weinhold, 2007). These partnerships are anchored in a reciprocal relationship whereby the teaching candidates provide additional direct academic, social and instructional support to K–12 students while simultaneously operating in a rich learning environment that helps with the growth and development of preservice teachers, and are often referred to as Professional Development Schools (PDS). The National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) "…serves as an advocate for the educational community that is dedicated to promoting the continuous development of collaborative school/higher education/community relationships…" (National Association for Professional Development Schools,

2016). A component part of this advocacy is the publication and advancement of nine essential elements of the work of Professional Development Schools. While components of all nine NAPDS elements exist in this project, three of the high-leverage elements stand out. In particular, elements 2 (a school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community), 4 (a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants) and 8 (work by college/university faculty and P–12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings) are critically important.

Context, Institutions, and Brief History

Two years ago, the convergence of circumstances, funding, and overlapping needs positioned our teacher preparation program to innovate along the lines recommended in the literature described above. In particular, a community/school/university partnership invited us to craft a relationship with a local middle school that was closer to an egalitarian, negotiated, hybrid space Zeichner (2010) advocates. By co-constructing an early field experience that was first focused on what the middle school wanted and needed to better support their students, we took up Hollins' (2015) challenge to prioritize K–12 student learning as an important outcome of our teacher preparation efforts. Another request of the school was that our TPP help support after-school programs overseen by a community organization to provide wrap-around services and enrichment activities for the middle school students. Thus, we also expanded our candidates' experience with community organizations advocated by McDonald, et al. (2011). One aspect of the partnership that is still emerging is the use of data to evaluate the innovations. The grant that is helping to fund this work has led to the development of a data tool (housed by the district) titled the "Progress Tracker." Like an early warning system, this tool will determine progress trends in the areas of attendance, behavior and academics. In the future, these data will be used to conduct a more thorough analysis of the impact the project may have had on students.

In response to the newly resourced and re-imagined partnership

with Perry Middle School (a pseudonym), "a radical overhaul" along the lines of what Darling-Hammond (2006) advocated has taken place in the curriculum, pedagogy, structure, and mediation of this early field experience. With the markedly different structure of the field experience that was co-constructed and overseen in collaboration with the principal, literacy coach, and teachers at the middle school, our roles as teacher educators and course instructors have also changed dramatically. The project is a work in progress with much still to be learned, but two years into it we have discovered several promising innovations related to the design of early field experiences. In the next section, I offer a brief history of the project followed by a description and analysis of three key innovations: clustering, co-teaching, and after-school programs.

Five years ago, we had a conventional secondary education program. Teacher candidates took foundational coursework followed by two semesters of field experiences and additional teaching methods courses, culminating in a semester-long student teaching placement. While there were attempts to connect university-based courses to field experiences, the scope and quality of that connection varied depending on the professor, the candidate, and the placement. Like other similar TPPs, we were affected by the larger, shifting context of teacher education. State and outside accreditation demands sapped considerable energy of faculty and prompted new layers of assessment and alignment across the program. The downturn in the economy brought new pressures to our institution and following national trends, we experienced a decline in enrollment as fewer college students chose to enter the teaching profession.

A few miles down the street, Perry Middle School was grappling with intensive school improvement plans imposed by the state as they struggled under the triple burden of inadequate resources, new curriculum standards and the associated high-stakes assessments, and the overwhelming needs of their students—many of whom lived in poverty. Located adjacent to a park in the heart of an older, residential neighborhood, Perry Middle School serves approximately 600 students in grades seven and eight. The student

body is comprised of about 60% of students who identify as White, 12% as Hispanic, and the remainder are evenly distributed across other racial/ethnic subgroups. 83% of Perry students are on free and reduced lunch, 21% have been classified for special education services, and 5% are English Language Learners. For several years, faculty, staff, and administrators have been working very hard to create a culture that supports their school goal for every child to progress, without making excuses or exceptions. To this end, the school was an early adopter in the district of a nationally known framework to prepare students for college. They also have focused considerable energy on bringing students to grade level in reading and math through the support of instructional coaches, new curriculum, and collaborative teams. Because Perry students scored in the bottom 5% of the state on math and reading assessments, the school was required to participate in a school improvement plan with oversight from the state.

Despite the challenges faced by our teacher preparation program and the middle school, there was also cause for optimism. Both schools had a cadre of determined and skillful faculty, staff, and administrators. The middle schoolers were bright, energetic, and capable. The community was committed to supporting the students and their families and the educators serving them. The university mission inspired and supported community outreach and solidarity with the poor and marginalized of society. Another critical asset was a newly created community-school-university partnership funded by local philanthropic organizations. The purpose of the grant was to provide additional individual, social, and academic support to middle-school students whose records of school attendance, grades, and behavior suggested that they were at risk of dropping out of high school. Informed by research and the grant's focus on creating new avenues of support for middle schoolers by bringing together the collective resources and energies of the schools, community organizations, and the university, our TPP gained new resources and a rare opportunity to innovate how we structured early field experiences.

The early field experience that is the focus of this article is

linked to the introductory secondary education course in planning, instruction, and assessment (PIA). I taught this one-semester course for secondary candidates across the content areas (most of whom are sophomores). The class introduces standards-based curriculum, lesson planning, the basics of formative and summative assessment, and several common instructional approaches (e.g. direct instruction, text-based instruction, inquiry-based instruction, and cooperative learning). Alongside the PIA course, candidates typically enroll simultaneously in a course taught by my colleague titled, "Teaching in the Middle School" that focuses on adolescent development, middle school reform, and the social context of education, particularly the effects of trauma and poverty. The field experience linked to the PIA and middle school courses is the first classroom-based field experience for most candidates. One year prior to the grant, I had begun placing all the candidates in PIA at Perry and the course was scheduled such that all of them were at the middle school at the same time, though in different classrooms. Having already built relationships with Perry administrators and some of the teachers, we were poised to expand and innovate our presence at the school when the grant resources became available.

The configuration of the field experience underwent multiple iterations over the course of several semesters. Each of these iterations was organically conceived in conversation with colleagues at Perry in response to what we had learned the prior semester and was guided by two key questions: (a) How can the candidates be utilized to provide the maximum academic and social support for the middle school students? and, (b) What types of structures, experiences, and mediation are developmentally appropriate for an early field experience and are most likely to lay a strong foundation for future professional growth? Knowing that we wanted to improve both preservice teacher learning and K–12 student learning, we began experimenting with alternative models. The grant's focus on middle school student support prompted our gaze to become even more fixed on how we could provide academic and social support to the students. Instead of imposing our curriculum of teacher preparation on the schools, we started with the school's agenda and

then creatively considered together how our teacher preparation goals could be woven in. As a result of these conversations among university-based teacher educators and Perry administrators and faculty, the following three key innovations were made to the field experience: (a) a shift from one candidate in a classroom to **clustering** with multiple candidates in a classroom at the same time, (b) the roles of school-based educators and university-based teacher educators evolved from distinct to **hybrid roles**, with the university teacher educator on-site at the middle school with her students and Perry's instructional coach regularly debriefing and teaching the preservice teachers, and, (c) candidates' gained experience in **expanded contexts** moving beyond the traditional classroom setting to involvement in other school-related events within and outside the school day, including after-school programs overseen by community organizations.

Clustering

In early versions of this work, one candidate was placed in one classroom for one or two class periods and taught two lessons observed by a university supervisor over the course of the semester. The candidate's role was largely observational with occasional opportunities to teach and/or work directly with students. While hopefully gaining some valuable professional insight, his/her impact on the middle school (MS) students was typically quite minimal. By responding first to the question of how 10-20 university students could positively support the middle-schoolers, we recognized that this potentially was largely going untapped. Through dialogue with the instructional coach at Perry, we decided to focus on a particular group of MS students and saturate those classrooms. The instructional coach purposefully selected a teacher working with a group of students whose test scores indicated significant academic risk. The hope was that a consistent presence of college students could be motivating and supportive. Additionally, because the PIA class was taught both fall and spring semesters, we were positioned to provide nearly a full year of support.

The positive influence of the candidates on MS students seemed

to be rooted in the relationships they built and the decreased adult/child ratio which allowed the candidates to offer "just in time" individualized support and accountability. Clustering seemed to work best when candidates were assigned to the same group of students for the entire semester. With 5–7 adults in the room, it was very difficult for a MS student to fly under the radar. Knowing that twice a week there would be additional adults in the room, the classroom teachers were encouraged to organize lessons using cooperative learning and other effective instructional models such as a readers and writers workshop that they may have been hesitant to try without the additional support. To further evaluate the impact of clustering on MS students, we are collecting data related to academic growth, attendance, behavior, and non-academic growth indicators. While this evaluation is still underway, our initial observation and the sense of Perry teachers is that the MS students in the classrooms where the preservice teachers are clustered are more engaged in the instruction and benefit from the individualized attention.

In addition to providing support to MS students and their teachers, preliminary assessment suggests that clustering can also be an effective model for professional learning. The shared experience in the same classroom provided opportunities for candidates to collaborate, collectively reflect on their experiences, and enter into teaching as a team sport rather than an individual one. Forging this mindset early on creates a foundation for teachers who are comfortable with making their practice public and engaging colleagues with teaching challenges and successes. It also provided a safe space for candidates to try out teaching and to learn from each other. Additionally, assigning candidates to work with a small group of students afforded rich professional learning as they could get to know a few students well and observe them over time. Focusing on a small group of students rather than 30 also appropriately broke down the complexity of making sense of what's going on in a classroom for a novice teacher. Because they were forging relationships with a small group of students, candidates seemed to become more invested in and more curious about "their" students'

learning and well-being.

Clustering also opened up (and required) a new set of professional skills for candidates to develop. For example, extended work with small groups of students required candidates to regularly engage in instructional conversations with their students. Candidates needed to learn to ask open-ended questions, elicit and build on student responses, and to check for understanding—all of which are essential to strong teaching, but a marked departure from both casual conversation and traditional IRE (initiate-respond-evaluate) patterns of classroom discourse. Another essential professional skill that quickly came to the forefront was the ability to motivate students reluctant to participate in learning activities. Each of these professional skills, including leading instructional conversations, checking for understanding, and motivating students, had been a part of the PIA course prior to these field experience innovations. However, they had largely been experienced and practiced more superficially through either observation or isolated whole-class teaching events. Clustering required candidates to practice and reflect on these essential skills repeatedly, providing sufficient practice that they could experience both failure and success and see the situational and individual nuance embedded in deploying them.

While the advantages of clustering have thus far outweighed the disadvantages, there are challenges with this model. First, the success of clustering is largely dependent on the classroom teacher enacting instruction that takes advantage of having extra adults in the room. If the classroom teacher was giving a lecture-based lesson, for instance, or the students were taking a test, the candidates easily became bored and felt extraneous. Clear communication between the instructional coach, the teachers, and the professor was necessary to ensure that candidates were actively contributing, not passively observing. Second, clustering meant that not all candidates would be teaching in their endorsement area (i.e. math candidates were teaching English and vice versa). Because this was an early field experience focusing on general pedagogical skills that transfer to any subject area, the professional learning was still

relevant but I had to explicitly "sell" candidates on the value of teaching outside of their areas of expertise. We also arranged for candidates to spend several class periods over the course of the semester observing in their content areas.

Hybrid Roles

When I first began teaching the PIA course, I taught on campus and wove conversations about field experiences into our class discussions. Now, the course and I have moved entirely to Perry and my role has changed dramatically. After experimenting with a few different configurations, our last two semesters were configured as follows: We were at Perry for the first three periods of their school day. During the first period, half the class was clustered in a classroom with the classroom teacher and often, the literacy coach. The other half of the class met with me and held a modified version of the university course. During the second period, the groups were reversed. In the third period, all the candidates and I met together for a debriefing session, most often with the literacy coach. There were variations on this model scattered throughout the semester. For example, when candidates team-taught lessons, the other candidates observed them teach. On other occasions, everyone assisted with student writing conferences or observed one of the classroom teachers, or the literacy coach give a demonstration lesson. The schedule was also adjusted to allow time for me to observe and work with candidates clustered in classrooms and for the candidates to observe in their endorsement areas.

While the candidates were having rich learning experiences, the three hour per week PIA course contact time was cut down to one hour per week. Additionally, whereas I had originally been the primary teacher educator, now the candidates were working with and for at least two other school-based educators. Because one of our central goals was to provide direct academic, social, and instructional support to the MS students, everything we did in the PIA course had to be directly linked to what was going on at Perry, and that was constantly changing. To adapt, I moved most of the PIA course content to online modules that the candidates

completed outside of class, making the course essentially a "flipped classroom." In addition, I met regularly with Marie, the literacy coach at Perry, to plan. This collaboration was essential. Initially, Marie and I collaborated to merge the objectives of the PIA course with the curriculum and goals of the middle school classrooms. As the project progressed, our collaboration increasingly informed the middle-school instruction, as well. Marie would make suggestions for what the candidates needed to know, do, and understand and I would similarly make recommendations for how the middle school lessons might be organized to support both student and candidate learning. Because Marie led the debriefing sessions, candidates came to view her as their instructor as much as I was.

The benefits of our collaboration were plentiful. I was energized by working hands-on with children in schools and the "real world" experience kept me grounded and relevant in how I taught my university courses. In similar fashion, Marie and the classroom teachers reported that working with the teaching candidates also provided new energy, insight, and perspective into their work. Of course, there are logistical, philosophical, and relational challenges in this level of collaboration, and it is time-consuming and humbling. However, candidates in the PIA course no longer complain about a disconnect between what is taught in university courses and what they experience in K–12 schools. They seem to see the theory and practice of teaching as one complex entity rather than as separate constructs.

Expanding Contexts

Because the grant involves community organizations and because we (university faculty and teaching candidates) have become so invested in and a part of the work at Perry, several new opportunities arose for candidates to both contribute and gain valuable professional experience. For example, during a testing period when the school needed additional people to help students operate the computers, facilitate bathroom breaks, and offer encouragement, the candidates were invited to help. They could experience first-hand how middle school students respond to high-stakes,

standardized testing and how schools organize these events. On other occasions, candidates were invited to attend early morning faculty meetings and collaboration team meetings. Candidates typically don't get to experience these aspects of the culture of teaching until student teaching, but at Perry they were introduced to them early on. Beyond the school walls, candidates engaged in another type of community involvement by participating in a neighborhood asset-mapping project (Kretzmann, McKnight, & Puntenney, 2005). For this project, they walked the streets within Perry's school boundaries looking for community-based resources that could contribute to the well-being of Perry students and families. Documenting the resources in a neighborhood known more for its lack of resources helped candidates better understand Perry students' out-of-school environment and to leverage these resources in their work with students and teachers.

Beyond these types of professional experiences, several candidates participated in after-school programming sponsored by both the school and community-based organizations. When we asked the administrators at Perry what they needed, one of their primary desires was increased enrichment activities, especially for students who had to participate in literacy or math interventions instead of electives. In response, candidates organized an after-school book club and a drama club. In the summer, university students who worked at Perry during the academic year assisted with summer school and another group of PIA candidates are organizing a mentoring program to support the Perry students they worked with in their classrooms as they transition to high school. Each of these projects offer a greater degree of professional autonomy than the regular field experience, but because they were linked to the same Perry context and many of the same students, the candidates seemed to be able and willing to rise to the challenge.

Discussion and Next Steps

At this point, we are optimistic that our TPP's investment in Perry Middle School and Perry's investment in our candidates and program has allowed both institutions to begin to collaboratively

engage in the sort of "mutual transformation agenda" Linda Darling-Hammond may have envisioned. By focusing first on how this early field experience might positively affect K–12 students, the quality of our teacher preparation has improved. Recognizing the need to substantiate and/or challenge our initial hunches, we are collecting written reflections and teaching evaluations from candidates who have participated in the project during the past two years. In the meantime, data from course evaluations indicate that the university students feel better prepared and more engaged in their professional development. During the first two semesters, some students wrote comments expressing that they felt confused and overwhelmed by the "messiness" of the project's evolution. However, as the structure of the project has stabilized, their feedback has been positive with the majority of students ranking the course as a 6 or 7 on a seven-point scale. Moreover, university supervisors mentoring candidates in later field experiences report that the candidates coming out of the Perry experience seem more confident, committed, and have a stronger skill set than those who participated in a traditional early field experience. As professors, we have also observed new levels of professional efficacy, competence, and investment emerge among the candidates participating in the new model. We hypothesize that part of this possible sense of efficacy may be rooted in the model's structure that places candidates in concentric layers of professional learning communities including the classroom clustering, the circle of peers in the PIA class, and then reaching to the larger conversations with Marie and the cooperating teachers. Some similar findings have been observed in a study of pairs of preservice teachers working with one cooperating teacher (Goodnough, Osmond, Dibbon, Glassman, & Stevens, 2009). However, future research is necessary to add texture and substance to our initial interpretation of this experience.

From the perspective of faculty and administrators at Perry, this model also seems to be viewed positively. Thus far, we only have anecdotal evidence to support this assertion, but the ongoing allocation of resources to the project indicates that they value the work. For example, Mary's (the instructional coach) involvement

and collaboration has become a portion of her regular workload. Additionally, teachers who have hosted candidates in prior semesters continue to invite new groups in their classrooms and informally report that they are professionally rejuvenated by the additional support and energy of the university students. In addition to the evaluation plan that is required by grant funders, we are planning to collect and analyze one classroom-based assessment per month from each class participating in the project and compare the outcomes to students with the same teacher and same course, but without the bi-weekly presence of university teaching candidates.

While the critical stakeholders at the university, the school, and the community are largely supportive and optimistic about these early field experienced innovations, there is much still to be learned. As we move forward with conducting formal research to describe how the consistent presence of the teaching candidates might be affecting MS student academic growth and well-being, we suspect that much of the benefit may be intangible, but we are also hopeful that students are learning more than they would have without the additional support. That has yet to be empirically documented. It will be interesting, for example, to learn if the presence of multiple preservice teachers in one classroom yields additional or different benefits than those identified with co-teaching models.

We also continue to grapple with how best to describe and assess candidate learning, particularly in an ever-changing context that seems to demand ongoing improvisation in response to whatever is happening at the moment. Additionally, we recognize that this type of intensive partnership work can be vulnerable to changing personnel, funding, or other circumstances. It is a challenge to build sustainable structures that go beyond current personal/professional relationships and presently-available resources. It can also be difficult to figure out how to align the differing schedules, calendars, institutional priorities, and cultures that characterize universities and K–12 schools. Yet even if the structures are in place to sustain this work, it is very time and labor intensive. Finally, this model demands that the traditional borders between university-based teacher educators and K–12 faculty and administrator colleagues be

broken down as they venture into this hybrid space. The resulting fluid and changing roles can be both empowering and disconcerting (Cook-Sather, 2006). Yet relinquishing and adding facets of our work drives effective, mutually beneficial partnerships (Martin, Snow, & Torrez, 2011; Sandholz & Finan, 1998).

Both the promising and challenging aspects of this example of an intensive early field experience enacted in close collaboration with the school-based stakeholders resonate with descriptions of similar projects at other TPPs. In many ways, our story is a familiar one. However, the project described in this article also offers two possibilities infrequently discussed in the professional literature. First, clustering candidates with a major goal of providing academic and social support to students during early field experiences is a logical extension/variation of co-teaching models, but one that has rarely been reported on. This structure is also ripe for further exploring what brand new teaching candidates are poised to both learn and contribute in the context of a field experience. Another aspect for further exploration is the incorporation of non-conventional sites for early preservice teacher learning such as extended learning opportunities before and after school, exposure to what teachers do outside of regular classroom instruction (i.e. faculty meetings, testing, etc.), and community-based initiatives. While preservice teachers may have opportunities to participate in these other contexts, the opportunities often seem to occur primarily in student teaching (the culminating field experience) or detached from traditional teacher preparation coursework.

Despite the complexities of the work, like others, we see promising potential in teacher preparation programs asking first, "What do K–12 teachers and students want and need?" and secondly, "How can responding to these wants/needs be leveraged to provide strong preservice teacher preparation?" Indeed, the reciprocal nature of the early field experience innovations described in this paper seemed to be at the heart of any positive outcomes. As one candidate wrote about her experience at Perry, "I learned the power of not only your roles as a teacher and teaching your students, but also to remember to take a step back and see how your students have the

power to teach you." In short, the middle school, Perry teachers, students, staff, and administrators provided a vivid, living curriculum for learning to teach.

References

Bacharach, N., Heck, T. W., & Dahlberg, K. (2010). Changing the face of student teaching through coteaching. *Action in Teacher Education, 32*(1), 3-14.

Bell, C., Brandon, L., & Weinhold, M. W. (2007). New directions: The evolution of professional development relationships. *School-University Partnerships: The Journal of the National Association for Professional Development Schools, 1*(1), 45-49.

Brayko, K. (2013). Community-based placements as contexts for disciplinary learning a study of literacy teacher education outside of school. *Journal of Teacher Education, 64*(1), 47-59.

Cook-Sather, A. (2006). The "constant changing of myself": Revising roles in undergraduate teacher preparation. *The Teacher Educator, 41*(3), 187-206.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Constructing 21st-century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 57*(3), 300-314.

Goodnough, K., Osmond, P., Dibbon, D., Glassman, M., & Stevens, K. (2009). Exploring a triad model of student teaching: Pre-service teacher and cooperating teacher perceptions. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(2), 285-296.

Hollins, E. R. (2015). Preface. In E. R. Hollins (Ed.), *Rethinking field experiences in preservice teacher preparation: Meeting new challenges for accountability* (pp. ix-xv). New York: Routledge.

Kretzmann, J. P., McKnight, J., & Puntenney, D. (2005). *Discovering community power: A guide to mobilizing local assets and your organization's capacity*. Asset-Based Community Development Institute, School of Education and Social Policy, Northwestern University.

Lavadenz, M., & Hollins, E. R. (2015, March). Urban schools as a context for learning teaching. In E.R. Hollins (Ed.), *Rethinking Field Experiences in Preservice Teacher Preparation: Meeting*

New Challenges for Accountability (pp. 1-14). New York: Routledge.

Martin, S. D., Snow, J. L., & Torrez, C. A. F. (2011). Navigating the terrain of third space: Tensions with/in relationships in school-university partnerships. *Journal of Teacher Education, 62*(3), 299-311.

McDonald, M., Tyson, K., Brayko, K., Bowman, M., Delport, J., & Shimomura, F. (2011). Innovation and impact in teacher education: Community-based organizations as field placements for preservice teachers. *Teachers College Record, 113*(8), 1668-1700.

National Association for Professional Development Schools. (2016). Vision/Purpose/History. Retrieved from: http://napds.org/visionpurposehistory/

National Association for Professional Development Schools. (2008). What it means to be a professional development school: A statement by the Executive Council and Board of Directors of the National Association for Professional Development Schools. Retrieved from: http://napds.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Nine-Essentials.pdf

Pohan, C. A., Ward, M., Kouzekanani, K., & Boatright, C. (2009). The Impact of Field Placement Sites on Preservice Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Diverse Students. *School-University Partnerships, 3*(1), 43-53.

Ronfeldt, M., & Reininger, M. (2012). More or better student teaching? *Teaching and Teacher Education, 28*(8), 1091-1106.

Sandholtz, J. H., & Finan, E. C. (1998). Blurring the boundaries to promote school-university partnerships. *Journal of Teacher Education, 49*(1), 13-26.

Zeichner, K. (2010). Rethinking the connections between campus courses and field experiences in college-and university-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1-2), 89-99.

Zeichner, K., & Bier, M. (2015). Opportunities and pitfalls in the turn toward clinical experience in US teacher education. In E. R. Hollins (Ed.), *Rethinking field experiences in preservice*

teacher preparation: Meeting new challenges for accountability (pp. 20-46).

• • •

Anny Fritzen Case is an assistant professor at Gonzaga University where she teaches courses in secondary education, discipline specific literacy, and second language literacy. A former middle and high school ESL teacher, she enjoys spending much of her professional time and energy working alongside her students in local schools. Her research interests include field-based secondary teacher preparation and immigrant and refugee education.

John Traynor is an associate professor in the Department of Teacher Education at Gonzaga University where he teaches courses in foundations of education and middle level education. John is active as an organizer in the community around child and youth issues through partnership efforts with K–12 schools, higher education and community-based organizations. His research interests include school-community partnerships and place-based teacher education.

Black Teachers Matter: Qualitative Study of Factors Influencing African American Candidates Success in a Teacher Preparation Program

Elizabeth Dinkins, Ph.D.
Kevin Thomas, Ph.D.

Bellarmine University

Abstract

This qualitative study examined the perspectives and experiences of ten African American students at a predominantly White institution to understand why students persisted or discontinued in the teacher preparation program. Findings indicate three predominant factors influence Black candidates' decision to complete or leave the program: the role K–16 teachers play in inspiring African American candidates to become educators, a desire for social justice that motivates African American undergraduate students to embrace or reject teaching as a career, and the role of standardized exams and financial barriers in preventing African Americans from completing education programs.

Keywords: **African American preservice teachers, teacher preparation program, diversity**

There is a lack of parity in our nation's classrooms and teacher preparation programs for African Americans. While Black teachers account for 6.8% of classroom teachers (Goldring, Gray & Bitterman, 2013), Blacks represent 12% of the overall population and 16% of K–12 students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015). Furthermore, the percentage of male Black students is three times as high as the number of male Black teachers (Toldson, 2013). Unfortunately, this disparity seems likely to persist. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2013), only 9% of the students enrolled in teacher preparation programs in 2009-2010 identified as Black. Therefore, it comes as no shock that our school of education struggles to attract African American students, averaging 1–2 Black candidates in each cohort. However, the authors were shocked in the Spring 2015 when the first Black candidate since 2008 graduated from the program. For an institution with a mission of social justice and "educating talented and diverse students of many faiths, ages, nations, and cultures," the lack of African Americans graduating from our program was a serious concern.

The purpose of this study was to examine the reasons African American students entered our teacher preparation program (TPP) as well as why they left. Findings will inform teacher preparation programs (TPPs) about trends in African American candidates' enrollment and matriculation, which could have implications for policies and programming. Additionally, this study will contribute to the professional literature on recruiting and retaining African American candidates in TPPs.

Factors Influencing African American Candidates

Today, it is hard to fathom that in 1950 almost half of the African American professionals in the U. S. were teachers (Foster, 1989). In the ensuing years, several factors have contributed to fewer African American students entering TPPs and the teaching profession.

Barriers to Blacks Entering the Teacher Preparation Programs

Scott and Rodriguez (2015) assert that the shortage of African American teachers starts in high schools with the "pervasive academic underachievement" of Black students due to "contemporary forms of racism and hegemonic ideologies" manifest in practices like "high stakes testing, academic tracking, disciplinary practices and teacher perceptions of minority students" (p. 2). Thus, many African American students never graduate from high school or enter college. For students who do graduate and go to college, their negative high school experience often discourages them from considering teaching. African American high school students perceived schools to be oppressive institutions and that teachers devalued their experiences and voices. Students attribute these factors to the reason they encountered so few Black teachers (Graham & Erwin, 2011).

The lack of teachers of color in their own K–12 classrooms is a barrier to Black students entering TPPs (Bianco, Leech & Mitchell, 2011; Graham & Erwin, 2011). In over 40 percent of public schools there is not a single teacher of color (United Negro College Fund, 2008). Most notable is the absence in the classroom of African American male teachers. Black males represent less than 2% of teachers, and the percentage of Black male students is more than three times the percentage of Black male teachers (Toldson, 2013). Research indicates a number of reasons African American males do not enter TPPs: perceived low levels of respect for the teaching profession, low college enrollment for African American males, and the perception that teaching is not a masculine profession (Bianco, Leech & Mitchell, 2011).

The literature points to several other barriers to African Americans entering the teaching profession. Black students perceive teaching salaries as low (Smith, Mack & Akyea, 2004) and working conditions, including disciplinary problems, as difficult (King, 1993). Since the middle of the 20th century, career opportunities have been increasing for African Americans. Teachers often discourage academically gifted students from pursuing teaching as a career (Sullivan & Dzluban, 1987), and many Blacks are pursuing

careers in more financially lucrative careers with higher prestige and more opportunities for growth (Gordon, 1994; Shipp, 1999).

Barriers to Blacks Graduating from Teacher Preparation Programs

Despite the barriers, a percentage of students entering colleges and universities do choose to enter teacher preparation programs (TPPs); however, once in TPPs, barriers still exist. For many students of color, high school has not properly prepared them for higher education. The six-year graduation rate for African American college students is 40.5 percent. The high cost of college also forces some African American students to leave and others to pursue majors in more lucrative careers in order to repay student loans (Bireda & Chait, 2011). Additional barriers include increased requirements for getting into, staying in and exiting TPPs. In the state of Kentucky, the Education Professional Standards Board increased the GPA required to enter, remain in, and exit a TPP from 2.5 to 2.75, which has negatively impacted students of color (Ahern et al., 2014). This governing body also began requiring students to pass the Praxis I test of basic skills to enter a TPP. Minority candidates have traditionally had lower pass rates than White candidates (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Consistent with this literature, African American students' passing rates on the Praxis I exam are 35% lower than their White counterparts (Tyler et al., 2011). Teacher licensure exams (Praxis II) also negatively impact Black candidates.

Another barrier for African American teacher candidates is stereotype threat, which is defined as "the threat of being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype or the fear of doing something that would inadvertently confirm the stereotype" (Steele, 2003, p. 111). In a study of three African American male students enrolled in a TPP, Scott and Rodriguez (2015) found that Black students were negatively affected by stereotype threats through racial microaggressions embedded in the culture of higher education where Whiteness is communicated as the norm. These microaggressions included professors who abused their power and privilege, made derogatory remarks about students, communicated low expectations

and perceptions of inferiority to African American candidates, and enabled White students to speak openly about their racial bias to students of color. These microaggressions had a detrimental impact on African American preservice teachers' academic performance and consideration for continuing in the program. While the research of Scott and Rodriquez (2015) focused on Black males, research "supports that stereotype threat can harm the academic performance of any individual for whom the situation invokes a stereotype-based expectation of poor performance" (Stroessner & Good, 2011). The impact of stereotype threat on the academic performance of all Black students is supported by Kellow and Jones (2008) who found that stereotype threat has the potential to negatively impact African American students in testing situations. Likewise, the research of Osborne and Walker (2006) supports the negative impact of stereotype threat on academic retention. Osborne and Walker found that stereotype threat can result in the physical and psychological withdrawal of minority students. African American students in TPPs must also overcome what King (1991) identified as "dysconscious racism"—a form of racism that tacitly accepts and thereby reifies dominant White norms and privileges (Kornfield, 1999). In a study of female African American students, Kornfield (1999) found Black students were often confronted by the classmates and professors who were indifferent, and sometimes openly hostile, to their experiences and perspectives. Successful African American preservice teachers identified role models who provided the motivation to help them persist. In a study of six African American female teachers, Farinde, LeBlanc and Otten (2015) found that support and positive feedback from their cooperating teachers and professors assisted them in completion of their TPPs.

Method

This study used a qualitative approach to understand why African American students at one predominantly White midwestern liberal arts university selected education as their major of study and why they either remained in education or opted to leave. African American undergraduate students between 2005 and 2015 were

considered for inclusion. The university, where both authors are professors, enrolled 2,651 undergraduate students with 335 students of color, and 147 education students as of spring 2016.

Participants

To identify African American students who enrolled as education majors at any point in their undergraduate career from 2005 to 2015, we (a) systematically examined university data bases, (b) searched class rolls, and (c) confirmed these results with past and present education school administrators. This purposeful sampling yielded 20 possible participants. Ten participants agreed to participate: seven females and three males. Four are active teachers, one is a preservice teacher enrolled in the program, four left the education program in or after their first two years of coursework, and one graduated from the education program but opted not to teach. Table 1 displays each participant's experience and current standing. All participants' names are disguised as pseudonyms.

Table 1

Participant Academic Experience and Current Standing

Active& Pre-Service Teachers		
Participant[1]	**Academic Experience**	**Current Standing**
Tiffany	Math & Special Education major Traditional student	First year of teaching: 7th grade math
Jennifer	Math & Special Education major Traditional student	10 years of teaching: 8th grade pre-algebra
Michael	Secondary School Social Studies major Non-traditional student	10 years of teaching: social studies
Lawrence	Elementary & Special Education major Traditional student	First year of teaching: 4th grade
Robin	Elementary & Special Education major Traditional student	One year to program completion Goal of being a special educator Left Teaching

[1] Pseudonyms are used through the report

Table 1, cont.

Left Teaching		
Participant	**Academic Experience**	**Current Standing**
Kevin	Graduated with English major Left education after second semester	Employed as a full-time groundskeeper
Brandie	Graduated with Education major Opted not to teach	Enrolled in speech language pathologist master's program
Monique	Sociology major Left education after first semester	Enrolled undergraduate
Tamara	History major Left after fourth semester Non-traditional student	Enrolled undergraduate; working as a substitute teacher; plans to enroll in the MAT program
Daria	Liberal Studies major Left after fourth semester	Enrolled undergraduate; working in an EBD room; plans to enroll in the MAT program

Data Collection and Analysis

Data consisted of individually-conducted interviews with each participant. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and followed a semi-structured protocol. In addition to open-ended questions about participant backgrounds, each interview inquired into academic, social, and field-based experiences that influenced each participant's decision to stay or leave education. Questions also sought participant insight into what motivates and deters Black students from selecting education as a major. The semi-structured protocol enabled researchers to ask follow-up questions, providing space for participants to explore ideas and reconstruct experiences.

Data were analyzed within and across participants using a multistage approach. First cycle coding employed provisional codes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) reflected in the extant literature and insights that emerged in the interview process. These provisional codes included the role of financial burdens, peer and professor relationships, key mentors, academic pressures, beliefs about schools, field experiences, and experiences of racism. In the

subsequent cycles, these large, deductive codes were examined inductively across participants with the goal of identifying patterns. For example, the categories of 'key mentors' and 'professor relationships' were reduced and redefined as 'key teachers who inspired.' The final level of analysis involved examining the relationships between patterns to capture the dynamic and complex interaction of factors influencing students to remain in or leave education. Memos were used throughout to clarify relationships and test the strength of each final theme.

Findings

Data analysis yielded three core themes: a) the role K–16 teachers play in inspiring future educators, b) how a desire for social justice motivates African American undergraduate students to embrace or reject teaching as a career, and c) the role of standardized exams and financial barriers in preventing African Americans from completing TPPs.

Teachers, Particularly Black teachers, Motivated Participants

The majority of participants reported how teachers, particularly Black teachers, influenced their decision to major in education with all five active and preservice teachers reporting the positive influence of these mentors. While relationships with these teachers ranged from student-teacher relationships at the K–12 or collegiate levels to family members who were teachers, each active and preservice teacher credited these mentors with providing an example they wanted to replicate. For Lawrence and Tiffany, these teachers were family members and role models. Teachers in Lawrence's family "kind of pushed me towards that too." Tiffany's experience helped her see how teaching is "just kind of in my blood." Jennifer and Michael had African American teachers who made them think differently about themselves and infused them with a sense of mission. Jennifer described her 5th grade teacher, the only Black teacher she had:

> She wasn't going to allow us to use being poor or being disadvantaged as an excuse. She pushed us. When you grow up a certain way it's not so much what people say but

> how people treat you. When a kid hears that they are stupid through words or actions, those kids believe it. She was the first person who would not accept less from me. I had someone who set high expectations for me and what I do now is pay it forward.

Michael described a similar experience at the community college level with a professor who helped him see how education "can help us not just get a better job but give life more meaning." From this professor, Michael decided he "wanted to do what he did for me—making the world have more sense." Robin described how her father, a substitute teacher, encouraged the boys who sought him out at football games to know "they can be just as powerful as anybody else and that they shouldn't feel less," setting a benchmark for her to build "positive relationships with students." An African American cooperating teacher in the field, however, was Robin's strongest mentor: "she wants me to succeed more than anything." For these participants, interactions with Black teachers contextualized the profession as both viable and important.

Of the five participants who opted out of teaching, Tamara and Daria described the influence of secondary teachers and Monique described the role of a university professor. Tamara's sister is a special educator who, along with her parents, "are really encouraging me to do special education," but it is her high school history teacher "who wasn't African American" that gave her a note stating: "you will be a great teacher." Daria identified her eighth grade teacher, "the only African American female teacher that I've ever had," as "the most influential person in my educational career" because "as an African American woman I saw myself in her." Similar to the students who persisted to become teachers, Tamara and Daria's experiences demonstrate how interactions with teachers supported teaching as a career path.

Monique, a sociology major, described a comparably influential experience with a university professor who inspired her decision to leave education:

> I don't know if I would have found my love of sociology

> if it wasn't for [this professor] and I don't know if I would have been able to really dig into the topic if she wasn't African American. Seeing her—it's representation. I'm like, I can do that.

Monique's story echoes sentiments from Jennifer, Michael, Robin, and Daria who all encountered a Black educator who acted as a model and inspiration. Tiffany, Lawrence, and Tamara, on the other hand, saw Black educators as core pieces of their family life. Brandie and Kevin, who left teaching, did not feel inspired by a teacher.

A Sense of Social Justice Motivated Participants to Embrace and Reject Teaching

Every participant in this study made decisions about their college major based on a sense of social justice. Active teachers described this desire as an imperative to help Black students recognize their potential, understand their identity, and transcend poverty. For Lawrence and Tiffany, this meant being a role model. Lawrence described how "Kids need someone to look up to, especially someone of color because they do not really see that all the time." Tiffany recognized that her students "might not see an African American teacher again." She explained:

> I want to educate them so they know how to respond to things appropriately and they don't always have to take what other students are dishing out. One of my white students likes to put her fingers in the Black students' hair. She thinks it feels nice, which to her is a compliment. I have to explain 'you can't do that if they're telling you no, don't touch my hair.' Then I have to explain to Black students, 'you don't have to let her do that.'

Jennifer explained why she worked in "tough schools."

> Specifically, in impoverished neighborhoods, if you don't see someone that looks like you, you don't think you can ever leave that situation. Part of the reason why I work at

at-risk schools is because I am what they need to see.

Michael envisioned teaching as a way to positively impact the lives of other Black males:

> I wanted to do it at a high school level because most of my friends never escaped the trap of the condition we find ourselves in. You know, generational poverty, everything stereotypical of being a Black male applies, having multiple children with different women, still living at your mom's house even though you're old enough.

While Lawrence, Tiffany, Jessica, and Michael considered teaching to promote positive Black identity and student potential, Robin envisioned teaching in "rougher neighborhood public schools" designed for students with emotional-behavioral disorders: "I want to be at schools where I can help as much as I can and give these kids the education they deserve."

Tamara and Daria, who both hope to return to teaching, described how they could expand possibilities for the next generation. Tamara's motivation to teach is to be that person: "Just maybe they can look at me and say 'I can be as great as my teacher is, I can be that teacher.'" Daria emphasized the current demand: "I clung to the person that I saw myself in and, you look at students now, and they are not around someone they can relate to on every level, academically and culturally, and there is a lack there."

The same social justice imperative motivated participants to leave teaching. Brandie, whose goal is to become a speech therapist, explained her drive to give individuals "access to communication." She majored in education because she "saw an element of teaching within speech therapy" and realized she might decide "to take it into the schools." Monique's interest in social justice helped motivate her to choose sociology over education. She recognized that teachers make a difference but believed she "could be better for the community" if she made change on a "community, countrywide, state kind of scale." Kevin described how his social idealism empowered him to recognize how schools contribute to "devaluing

the Black male":

> The lack of educational resources, financial resources, economic, even down to the food we're given. For me, going into the classroom—'cause we learn a lot of this stuff in school—I didn't want to be someone that pushed that agenda. I didn't want to be the one who told my class that certain things were true or certain things had happened when really they didn't. I just didn't want to lie to my students, basically.

He also rejected the roles that he had seen many African American male teachers play in schools:

> I didn't want to be a disciplinarian. The stigma of you're a Black male, so you must have friends that act like this, you may come from a neighborhood where these kids come from. You're expected to automatically relate to these kids and to try to change the way that they think. I wasn't up to that task.

Kevin's withdrawal from teaching was interwoven with his identity. By refusing to participate in a system he viewed as racially biased, he refused to participate in the oppression of others. While the outcomes of their decisions were different, each participant was motivated by a desire to make the world better.

Financial Barriers and Standardized Exams Pushed Two Participants out of Education

The majority of participants discussed the financial challenges of college: Eight reported receiving scholarships and two reported being encumbered by debt. Of the eight who received scholarships, six reported selecting the university because it was the best scholarship package they received. One participant, Robin, who received a small scholarship package and reported "like $40,000 in debt," plans to teach in a low-income school to qualify for loan repayment. Daria is the only participant who identified financial burdens as "her sole reason" for leaving in the teacher education program

but not as an obstacle to becoming a teacher. As a non-traditional student, Daria entered the education program with "70–80 credit hours already." She described how the structure of the program "basically put me in a place where I would have to start all over again." Her financial aid package would not sustain this extra burden so she decided "to change my major to liberal studies and come back" for the Masters of Arts in Teaching program. While Daria was not the only student to discuss financial pressures, she was the only student who reported financial challenges as her reason for leaving education.

Tamara identified the Praxis I entrance exam as her only barrier to continuing in the school of education: "I've took it three times. I was struggling with the math and that was it." After taking the test a third time, Tamara opted to complete her bachelor's degree in history. Feeling "frustrated…and a little defeated," Tamara insisted, "I have to just pass it because I want to be a teacher." While other participants recalled their anxiety over these entrance exams and several shared the financial strain these tests placed on them, no other participant reported struggling to pass.

Discussion

While the findings of this study cannot be generalized, the perceptions and experiences of participants are consistent with much of the extant literature about African Americans and TPPs.

All the participants in the study indicated that social justice motivated their decision to enter as well as leave the School of Education. Research on preservice teachers consistently demonstrates that teachers of color enter the profession to improve the education and lives of students of color (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Furthermore, Black teachers view teaching as a "calling" and often return to their communities to teach (Lynn, 2006), thereby practicing the philosophy of "lifting as we climb" (Irvine, 2002).

The lack of Black teachers serving as mentors in the classroom may be the most significant barrier to Blacks entering teaching (Bianco, Leech & Mitchell, 2011; Graham & Erwin, 2011). All five participants who remained in education discussed the importance

of encountering a Black teacher who inspired them. Four of these participants discussed the influence of Black K–12 teachers, emphasizing the need for Black teachers in K–12 schools. Two participants indicated the importance of Black teachers in higher education. Michael, who began his post-secondary career at a community college, selected education as his major after encountering a Black professor. Monique switched her major from education to sociology after encountering a Black sociology professor. Clearly, the need for Black teachers reaches beyond the K–12 classroom into higher education. Because of the influence Black teachers have on students, this dearth creates a cyclical problem. As noted by Smith, Mack and Akyea (2004), the lack of African American teachers leads Black students to conclude that teaching is "better suited for Whites" (p. 77) and that education is not a career option for African American students. TPPs can address this problem by placing candidates in the field with African American teachers (Scott & Rodriguez, 2014) and by recruiting and hiring more African American faculty (Talbert-Johnson & Tillman, 1999).

Literature also supports the role of financial challenges (Bireda & Chait, 2011). Financial challenges were a primary concern for most of our participants; however, because eight participants received some form of scholarships the university successfully ameliorated this pressure. Even with the university being proactively supportive of Black students, finances still proved a significant barrier for one participant. TPPs must work on the state and national level to increase scholarships and support for loan forgiveness for African American teachers (Villegas & Davis, 2007). Standardized tests for admission to TPPs and teacher licensure are also barriers to African American candidates (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Institutional support can greatly assist students in passing teacher licensure exams (Farinde, LeBlanc & Otten, 2015); TPPs can support African American students by developing test preparation programs (Hunter, 2009) and by providing training for faculty to assist them in preparing candidates for success on licensure exams during their coursework (Fuller & Scheft, n.d).

Today's K–12 classrooms illustrate the disparity between the

number of Black students and Black teachers. With this disparity in mind, we sought to understand the lack of Black teachers exiting our own teacher preparation program. Specifically, we wanted to understand why Black teacher candidates opted to persist in education or leave the major. Our findings support the importance of Black K–12 and higher education teachers who serve as mentors to teacher candidates. Additionally, findings indicate the need for institutional support in both finances and test preparation. Findings from this study can assist other predominantly white institutions in supporting the matriculation of Black teacher education candidates.

References

Ahern, S., Anderson, G., Dumas, M. J., Havlin, N., Lee, S. & Seraus, M. (2014). *The disappearance of Black and Latino teachers in New York City: Toward an agenda for action.* Teacher Unite: Fighting for Our Communities, Fighting for Our Schools. American Educational Research Association Research Service Project Award.

Bianco, M., Leech, N. L., & Mitchell, K. (2011). Pathways to teaching: African American male teens explore teaching as a career. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(3), 368-383.

Bireda, S. and Chait, R. (November 2011). *Increasing Teacher Diversity: Strategies to Improve the Teacher Workforce.* Washington: Center for American Progress.

Farinde, A. A., LeBlanc, J. K., & Otten, A. S. (2015). Pathways to Teaching: An Examination of Black Females' Pursuits of Careers as K–12 Teachers. *Educational Research Quarterly, 38*(3), 32-50.

Foster, M. (1989). *Recruiting teachers of color: Problems, programs and possibilities*. Paper presented at the Fall Conference of the Far West Holmes Group, Reno, NV.

Fuller, V., & Scheft, T. (n.d.). Re-educating teachers about testing: Providing better assessment while preparing students for Praxis II. Retrieved from http://www.uscupstate.edu/academics/education/issues/praxiswrkshp.

Goldring, R., Gray, L. & Bitterman, A. (2013). Characteristics of

public and private elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States: Results from the 2011-2012 schools and staffing survey (NCES 2013-2014). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

Gordon, J. A. (1994). Why students of color are not entering the field of teaching: Reflections from minority teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education, 45*(5), 346-353.

Graham, A., & Erwin, K. D. (2011). "I don't think Black men teach because how they get treated as students": High-achieving African American boys' perceptions of teaching as a career. *The Journal of Negro Education, 80*(3), 398-416.

Hunter, M. S. (2009). *A triangular approach to Praxis I preparation at Virginia's largest historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU)*. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database. (Publication AA3373636).

Ingersoll, R. M., & May, H. (2011). The minority teacher shortage: Fact or fable? *Phi Delta Kappan, 93*(1), 62-65.

Irvine, J. J. (2002). *In Search of Wholeness: African American Teachers and Their Culturally Specific Classroom Practices*. NY: Palgrave.

Kellow, J. T., & Jones, B. D. (2008). The effects of stereotypes on the achievement gap: Reexamining the academic performance of African American high school students. *Journal of Black Psychology, 34*(1), 94-120.

King, S. H. (1991). *Exploring the early career experiences of the African American teaching pool*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Teachers College, Columbia University.

King, S. H. (1993). Why did we choose teaching careers and what will enable us to stay?: Insights from one cohort of the African American teaching pool. *The Journal of Negro Education, 62*(4), 475-492.

Kornfeld, J. (1999). Sharing stories: A study of African American students in a predominantly White teacher education program. *The Teacher Educator, 35*(1), 19-40.

Lynn, M. (2006). Education for the community: Exploring the

culturally relevant practices of Black male teachers. *Teachers College Record, 108*(12), 2497-2522.

Miles, M. B., Huberman A. M. & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2015). *Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools*. U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences.

Osborne, J. W. & Walker, C. (2006). Stereotype threat, indication with academics, and withdrawal from school: Why the most successful students of color might be most likely to withdraw. *Educational Psychology, 26*(4), 563-577.

Scott, S. V. & Rodriguez, L. F. (2015). A fly in the ointment: African American male preservice teachers' experiences with stereotype threat in teacher education. *Urban Education, 50*(6), 1-29.

Shipp, V. H. (1999). Factors influencing the career choices of African American collegians: Implications for minority teacher recruitment. *Journal of Negro Education, 68*(3), 343-351.

Smith, V.G., Mack, F. & Akyea, S. (2004, Spring). African-American male honor students' views of teaching as a career choice. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 31*(2), 75-88.

Steele, C. (2003). Stereotype threat and African-American student achievement. In T. Perry, C. Steele, & A. G. Hilliard, III, (Eds.) *Young, gifted, and Black: Promoting high achievement among African-American students* (109-130). Boston: Beacon Press.

Stroessner, S., & Good, C. (2011). *Stereotype threat: An overview*. Retrieved from http://www.arizona.edu/sites/arizona.edu/files/users/user14/Stereotype%20Threat%20Overview.pdf.

Sullivan, T. & Dzluban, C. (1987). *A study of the current manner in which public teaching is portrayed to our most able young people.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teachers, Houston, TX.

Talbert-Johnson, C., & Tillman, B. (1999). Perspectives on color in teacher education programs: Prominent issues. *Journal of teacher education, 50*(3), 200-200.

Toldson, I. (2013) More black men in jail than in college? Wrong.

The Root. Retrieved from http://tinyurl.com/o4jqn6m

Tyler, L., Whiting, B., Ferguson, S., Eubanks, S., Steinberg, J., Scatton, L. & Bassett, K. (2011). *Toward increasing teacher diversity: Targeting support and intervention for teacher licensure candidates*. Educational Testing Service and National Education Association Report.

United Negro College Fund, "Promising Practices for Building an African American Teaching Force" (2008). Fairfax, VA: Author

U. S. Department of Education. (2013). Preparing and credentialing the nation's teachers: The Secretary's ninth report on teacher quality. Washington, DC: Office of Postsecondary Education.

Villegas, A. M., & Davis, D. E. (2007). Approaches to diversifying the teaching force: Attending to issues of recruitment, preparation, and retention. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 34*(4), 137-147.

Villegas, A. M. & Irvine, J. J. (2010). Diversifying the teaching force: An examination of major arguments. *The Urban Review, 42*(3), 175-192.

• • •

Dr. Elizabeth Dinkins is an assistant professor of literacy education and the chair of the Ph.D. in Education and Social Change Program at Bellarmine University. Her research focuses on critical perspectives in education including LGBTQ issues and identities in classroom instruction and the use of young adult literature to foster disciplinary thinking. Previously, she taught English language arts and coordinated school-wide literacy instruction in an urban middle school.

Dr. Kevin M. Thomas is an associate professor and the chair of the Master of Arts in Education Program at Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky. Prior to entering higher education, Dr. Thomas taught high school English for 15 years in Tennessee. His research examines teacher and student perceptions regarding the instructional benefits and barriers related to the classroom integration of personal mobile devices.

Teachers' Views on Integrating Faith into Their Professional Lives: A Cross-Cultural Glimpse

Joonkil Ahn, B.A.
Danny W. Hinson, Ph.D.
Sharon T. Teets, Ph.D.

Carson-Newman University

Abstract

AILACTE institutions are often linked to faith-based traditions, and teacher education candidates may attend these institutions as a result of their sense of calling to the profession. However, most graduates of teacher education programs teach in religiously neutral environments. With the high expectations of professional standards for the profession, and increasing cultural diversity of the school population, attention to issues of integration of faith and work may be limited. The present study provides insight into how preservice teachers, graduates of a teacher education program, and teachers in Korea view the integration of their faith with their professional lives. Teachers report various ways in which they draw upon their own faith, and they suggest that the examination of moral dilemmas from a faith-based perspective has been largely ignored in an effort to prepare candidates to function in religiously neutral environments. They also indicate that the examination of case studies and scenarios for moral and ethical implications may be of value to them as they seek to live out their faith in culturally sensitive and appropriate ways.

Keywords: **moral dimensions of teaching**

AILACTE, the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education, is committed to the liberal arts as the basis for teacher education. Of the 165 current member institutions, the majority began as faith-based institutions. Many remain intentionally faith-based, and others maintain loose ties to their faith tradition. While many of these institutions provide advanced programs for graduate study, initial preparation for teaching remains as a central focus. Students who choose to attend institutions such as these often make their choice based on the faith-tradition of the institution. Almost all of these students indicate that they enter the teaching profession out of a deep sense of calling (Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2000). Once enrolled in a teacher education program, these candidates soon learn that they are being prepared primarily for careers in schools that are increasingly culturally diverse, and therefore, intentionally religiously neutral environments. Moreover, many faculty in teacher education programs in faith-based institutions have completed their own professional preparation in large, public institutions. For teacher education candidates and faculty members alike, the question then becomes, "How does one prepare to live out one's calling, which includes a faith basis, in environments that are religiously neutral?" In addition to the importance of this question to candidates in traditional teacher education programs, this question arises as institutions provide professional development in other countries, too.

The current research is being presented as a demonstration of faculty members' attempts to investigate an issue that lies at the core of teacher candidate professional development and institutional mission. The questions used to frame the research were:

- How do teachers view moral dilemmas within the context of their teaching experience?
- How do teachers draw upon their faith to provide solutions for the moral dilemmas they face?
- How do teachers perceive their preparation to integrate their faith in their resolution of work-based moral dilemmas?

Literature Review

Studying the history of education in the United States is a part of teacher education programs throughout the country. Historically, from the time of the Protestant Reformation with Martin Luther's call for German public schools and to the first school started by the Puritans in the 1600s, religious belief has driven public education (Luther, 2005). The study of schooling in colonial days, especially in New England, shows that schools were established primarily to teach people reading for the purpose of salvation. With American independence, the focus changed from education for salvation to education for citizenry. From the founding of the United States, the separation of church and state has been explicit. The courts have repeatedly supported this mutual protection of state from church and church from state. "Public schools may not inculcate nor inhibit religion. They must be places where religion and religious conviction are treated with fairness and respect" (Haynes, 2008, p. 1). As the culture becomes increasingly culturally diverse (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2016) teacher education programs are committed to the principle of religious neutrality. Trust has been placed in public school teachers that they will not indoctrinate or proselytize students.

Teaching as a moral activity has been studied from a variety of perspectives (Goodlad & Soder, 1990), and a majority of teachers, regardless of faith orientation, report that they enter the profession with a sense of calling (Eckert, 2011; Farkas et al., 2000; Palmer, 2007). AILACTE has identified Moral and Ethical Dimensions of the Learning Community as one of its four Models of Excellence. Themes of social justice are often found in the unit conceptual frameworks of AILACTE-based institutions (Teets, 2011; Lederhouse, 2011–2012). Moreover, though the current standard-based accountability system puts academic content and student learning as the overarching objectives of schooling (Howard, 2005), schools continue to address issues of character development through character education programs or specifically targeted issues, such as anti-bullying. Despite the interest in character education in teacher education programs, little has been written about

the preparation of teachers to implement developmentally appropriate character education programs or to draw upon their faith traditions as they conceptualize moral dilemmas (Beachum, McCray, Yawn, & Obiakor, 2013; Jones, Ryan, & Bohlin, 1998).

The moral and ethical dimension of the Korean education system has a different background. Unlike U.S. public schools, where teacher participation in student-initiated religious clubs is only in a "nonparticipatory capacity" (Haynes & Thomas, 2007, p. 85), teachers can initiate a religious club, participate in it, and share ideas with students in the Korean public school system. The teaching profession is highly respected by the Korean people with the salary of teachers ranked at the top of the scale in public schools worldwide (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). However, unlike many western countries where teachers are not expected to do non-teaching work (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2011), Korean teachers are often required to deal with significant administrative tasks and work 12–16 hours a day (Ahn, 2016). Organizational silence in the Korean public sector is an element that exacerbates the dilemmas experienced by teachers. Organizational silence is believed to originate from authoritarianism which emphasizes hierarchy, dominance, and obedience in organization; it often forces familism, which is a habit of mind that regards official work as a family affair, forcing its members to cover up or ignore conflict and illegal practice (Kang & Ko, 2014).

Methodology

Participants

Survey respondents included 31 American local teachers who were graduates of a small liberal arts university with a strong faith tradition, 36 preservice student teachers from the same institution, and 33 Korean teachers who were participating in a professional development seminar, sponsored by a Christian teacher association and led by one of the researchers. Korean teachers were included to obtain perspectives regarding how Christian teachers in another

culture (a) view moral dilemmas within the context of their teaching experience, (b) draw upon their faith to provide solutions for the moral dilemmas they face, and (c) perceive their preparation to integrate their faith in their resolution of work-based moral dilemmas. It was intended that we could obtain implications for teacher education programs in faith-based institutions in the U.S. by having insights from the similarities and differences between the two cultures regarding the three research questions.

Korean teachers were also included in the research due to the historical connections with the researchers at an AILACTE liberal arts university. Ten Korean students completed initial teacher's licensure at this institution, and many other Korean exchange students and visiting Korean faculty members have spent a significant time studying at the university. Including the Korean teachers in the research provides an international perspective on teacher preparation programs at our institution. Preservice teachers were included in the study to see if there are any similarities and/or discrepancies with inservice teachers in their perception of the effectiveness of their teacher education program in a faith-based institution. These findings can provide insights on what should be added to improve teacher education programs regarding the issue of moral/ethical dilemmas in the field. Both preservice and experienced domestic teachers were included to observe potential developmental differences in how teachers view moral dilemmas.

Data Collecting

Data were collected through an electronic survey that contained four open-ended questions regarding the kinds of ethical/moral dilemmas which participants have experienced, the resources to resolve them, and the perceived effectiveness of their teacher education programs in preparing them for dealing with their dilemmas. The survey also contained ten closed response items for which teachers were asked to indicate on a Likert-type scale their views about how they use their faith in the resolution of moral/ethical dilemmas. All responses were anonymous.

Data Analysis

Frequencies and means were computed for each of the groups of teachers for each item on the questionnaire (see Table 1). Qualitative data were analyzed through the repetitive review process of identifying patterns of words and phrases which later became the coding categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

Findings

The findings are organized per the three research questions that guided the study. Specifically, the findings reflect: (a) observations about the moral dilemmas experienced by teachers, (b) their reported strategies for dealing with the dilemmas, and (c) their perceptions of their preparedness for handling moral dilemmas by their teacher education programs.

Moral Dilemmas Experienced by Teachers

Twenty-nine of 31 domestic teachers identified situations considered to be moral and/or ethical dilemmas related to their personal religious beliefs. Domestic teachers expressed a concern with balancing their personal religious beliefs in a public-school setting where their actions could be perceived as a proponent of a particular faith. One teacher expressed her frustration with teaching children tolerance when the situation goes against everything that her religious faith teaches: "We are supposed to teach children to tolerate all different religions, beliefs, etc., but we cannot openly share our faith."

Prayer in the school was a specific dilemma mentioned by several participants. One local teacher noted that she could not tell her student "No" when one of her students asked her to pray aloud for her dad. Half of the preservice teachers responded that they found it difficult to know how to respond to a child-initiated comment about matters involving religious content.

In the survey, only four of the American participants noted inappropriate/illegal administrative leadership problems, with the main issue being the pressure exerted on teachers and their role during standardized testing. One participant shared about being asked to do

illegal things with a student's IEP by the principal when no testing or permission forms from parents were there to back it up to make the school look good. The teacher replied: "Not only was this illegal by the state, it went against my morals as a person. I don't lie!"

Unlike the types of dilemmas experienced by domestic teachers, those perceived by the clear majority of Korean participants were related to their administrators. Administrators were reported to impose undue pressure on teachers by ordering them to be overly harsh in disciplining students, stop teaching and finish up the paperwork for reporting to higher authorities even during the class, and object to teachers leading Christian student clubs, which is allowed in Korean public schools. Some of their orders which were reported by six participants were even illegal, which included telling the teachers to make a purchasing contract with certain commercial providers he/she appointed for the sake of administration's personal benefit. Some of them ordered their teachers to tell the answers to students while administering national tests, and made the teachers do the paperwork for principals' embezzling school budget for personal use.

Taking expedient ways to complete their work was a type of dilemma expressed by several Korean participants, which might originate from dealing with the overwhelming amount of administrative work and the limited amount of time to complete the work. For some of the Korean participants, the heavy drinking culture was the main source of their dilemmas, which often caused conflict with religious, personal, and family values.

Nineteen out of the 36 preservice teachers did not identify any situations that they would have considered to be ethical and/or moral dilemmas. Of those reporting dilemmas, the responses were about equally divided between concerns about other teachers' behavior and issues related to separation of church and state. An example of the kind of dilemma about teachers' behaviors is reflected in the following statements reported: "Teachers gossiping or sharing snapchats of their students," or "Teachers discussing 'problem' students from different cultural backgrounds—students being punished for being different, but not wrong." An example

of an issue related to separation of church and state was expressed by this comment: "Students often bring up church and Jesus, and I'm not sure how to respond." In the question asking preservice teachers to identify resources used for dealing with dilemmas, four more students shared a resource, even though they did not describe specific moral dilemmas they had encountered.

Teachers' Responses to Moral Dilemmas

Teachers were asked to report on how they responded to moral dilemmas in the school setting. Twenty-four of the 31 domestic teachers reported that they consulted administrators, other teachers, or teacher mentors. Many of the participants cited the importance of drawing upon the experience of co-workers of faith who had more experience in teaching than they had; as indicated by a participant who said, "I turn to a few key mentor teachers to think through difficult situations." Half of the preservice teachers identified the cooperating teacher as the most helpful resource for dealing with moral dilemmas.

Thirty out of 31 responded that they pray for students or families about whom they have a concern. They often pray with coworkers of faith, family, friends, and through individual daily prayers for the dilemmas they face in their work. Only 17 of the domestic respondents mentioned reading or studying scripture for guidance in these difficult situations. However, it is important to note that many of the domestic teachers wrote that it was important to share their faith by example, as implied by the following statement: "Did my kiddos see Christ through me today?" Preservice teachers also indicated that seeing the modeling of culturally and morally responsive strategies by faculty members was of great value.

Responding to the same question of resources, half of the 33 Korean teachers reported that they consulted with leaders and teachers who belonged to Christian teacher organizations. It is reported that there are 12 Christian teacher organizations in Korea with national networks and weekly meetings. Participants said they talked, shared, and consulted with people in those organizations and shared their dilemmas as prayer requests in those meetings.

For slightly more than ten Korean teachers, their colleagues in their schools were the people who they shared their dilemmas, and others used Christian resources such as praying and reading the Bible, and religious books.

Teachers' Views of Preparation for Moral Dilemmas

In response to the question about how their teacher education programs prepared them for integrating their faith with their work, overwhelmingly both domestic teachers and preservice teachers indicated that the modeling by faculty members was the most salient factor in their understanding of how to integrate faith in religiously neutral environments. When asked how their programs could have prepared them better, the most commonly reported suggestion by both domestic and preservice teachers was the use of case studies and/or scenarios that could be examined through a variety of lenses, including a faith-based perspective. The areas of providing scenarios and specific advice about legal issues were suggested to be effective, such as teachers' rights and responsibilities, conflict resolution, and dealing with religious issues in schools. In all three groups surveyed, discussions about what is acceptable and not acceptable concerning the sharing of their personal religious beliefs in public school settings were suggested to be addressed in their teacher education program. Understanding cultural differences of the students and their families was another recommended area of study to be included in their teacher preparation program.

Regarding the efficacy of their teacher education program in dealing with their moral/ethical dilemmas in school, more than 20 out of 33 Korean participants responded that their teacher education courses did not help them in dealing with issues and dilemmas in school. One of the participants even said: "I don't remember a single piece of curriculum that helped me to deal with ethical dilemmas."

The participants said the courses in their teacher education program were mainly about education theories, rather than dealing with more real issues such as student discipline. They reported that

they never discussed issues such as teachers' rights/responsibilities in relationship to education laws, the value of teacher collaboration and shared leadership, conflict resolution, or dealing with religious issues in schools. Many of them said their Christian student clubs in college, church retreats, Christian world view books, and Christian teacher organizations have been, and are more helpful to them to deal with their moral/ethical dilemmas in school.

Discussion

The report of this study has been the result of several years of informal research and discussion. This work has culminated in a formal study of preservice and domestic U.S. teachers, with the addition of a Korean sample of teachers of Christian orientation.

As the data were reviewed for the three different groups of participants, it became clear that the three groups of educators have varying degrees of interest and/or concern about the integration of faith in their professional practice. Some think it should not even be considered; others express the views of frustration of not being able to discuss religion openly. Many express the view that their own personal example is the best way to integrate their faith in their practice.

The findings regarding the first research question reveal that while the clear majority of domestic teachers indicated that their moral/ethical dilemmas were related to their personal religious beliefs, the dilemmas experienced by Korean teachers were predominantly related to their administrators who were reported to impose undue pressure in disciplining students, prioritize paper work over teaching, and even ask them to commit illegal acts in some cases. Unlike Korean teachers' being mostly concerned about their administration, only four of local teachers noted inappropriate or illegal administrative leadership problems. While half of the preservice teachers indicated concern about how to respond to child-initiated comments about matters regarding religious content, the other half of them did not identify any situations of moral/ethical dilemmas. Though the high rate of failure to identify dilemmas may not truly represent the actual presence of dilemmas for

preservice teachers, we envision this study as a springboard for further research about whether incorporating more elements of analyzing moral dilemmas into teacher education programs in the form of case studies and/or scenarios could be a way to raise awareness of preservice teachers in these issues.

The findings for the second research question indicate that while the clear majority of domestic teachers reported that they consulted administrators, other teachers, teacher mentors, and their cooperating teachers (in the case of preservice teachers), the majority of Korean teachers reported they consulted with leaders and teachers who belonged to Christian teacher organizations. The 12 nation-wide Christian teacher associations with more than 150 regional branches are reported to be one of the most influential and supportive community for Christian teachers in Korea. As shown in the survey data, while more Korean teachers resorted to groups of teacher friends for Christian response/solutions than prayer, a relatively greater number of American teachers responded that they pray for the dilemmas they face in their work, with a smaller percentage of them seeking solutions from groups of teacher friends (See Table 1). Contrary to their seeking guidance from either praying, groups of teacher friends, or their cooperating teachers, it was somewhat surprising that relatively few among all three groups of educators mentioned reading or studying scripture for guidance.

Implications

Insights from this study can be applied to teacher education programs that are rooted in faith-based institutions. First, as the culture becomes increasingly diverse, candidates will benefit from greater attention to issues of cultural diversity, as well as understanding how their faith traditions support the inclusion and acceptance of all P–12 students and their families. Second, preservice teachers can benefit from an open discussion of the realities of the teaching profession and how their own faith may be used as a resource for dealing with difficult issues. Furthermore, preservice teachers will benefit from greater understanding of the increasing cultural diversity of the P–12 school population, and the implications for living

out their own faith, by example, in the classroom. For preservice teachers who have a limited view of their own faith tradition, open discussion may help facilitate greater understanding of the multiple faith traditions that are represented in P–12 children and their families.

In addition to these benefits for preservice teachers, graduates of programs may be invited to share moral and ethical dilemmas faced in the classroom, and currently enrolled candidates can analyze those dilemmas from different points of view. A collection of dilemmas that are collected anonymously from practitioners may be used as case studies for preservice teachers. Preservice teachers can also benefit from active engagement in role-play situations in which legal and culturally sensitive strategies may be practiced and modeled.

Conclusion

The findings from this study demonstrate that faith is of importance to both preservice and practicing teachers, and that teacher education programs could be doing more to provide support for preservice teachers to integrate their faith traditions in their professional lives, in legally and culturally sensitive ways (Elliott, 2015; Lee, 2010). When it comes to teachers' views of preparation for moral dilemmas, preservice and domestic teachers reported no other examples of preparation regarding integrating faith/practice than modeling by their faculty members. Korean teachers also reported very little preparation for dealing with moral and ethical dilemmas from any perspective. Although the sample size in this study was small, the evidence seems relatively clear. In an effort to prepare candidates to function in religiously neutral environments, the examination of moral dilemmas from a faith-based perspective has been largely ignored. Korea has a very few number of faith-based higher-education institutions, some of which do not have teacher education programs in them. Given that, Korean Christian preservice/inservice teachers are known to deal with their moral, religious, and, ethical dilemmas in other venues such as Christian teacher associations and churches. On the other hand, AILACTE

institutions can be thought of as being more favorable in providing support for preservice teachers regarding the analysis of dilemmas from professional and faith-based perspectives as preparation for dealing with dilemmas in the P–12 classroom. Support for being more active in helping candidates to think about moral and ethical dilemmas is consistent with Palmer's central theme, that "good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher," (2007, p. 10). Analysis of cases through the lenses of various theoretical, philosophical, and faith-based positions may help teachers to develop that sense of integrity, which as Parker Palmer suggests, is essential to good teaching.

References

Ahn, J. K. (2016). Taking a step to identify how to create and develop professional learning community in school. Paper presented at the 14th Hawaii International Conference on Education. Jan 3-6, 2016. Honolulu, HI. Retrieved from http://www.hiceducation.org/EDU2016.pdf

Beachum, F. D., McCray, C. R., Yawn, C. D., & Obiakor, F. E. (2013). Support and importance of character education: Preservice teacher perceptions. *Education,133*(4), 470-480.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (2006). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods (5th Ed.)*. New York, NY: Pearson.

Eckert, J. (2011). Teachers and faith. *Phi Delta Kappan, 93*(4), 20-23. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/003172171109300405

Elliott, D. C. (2015). Toward an agenda for teacher education in Christian colleges and universities. *A Journal of the International Christian Community for Teacher Education, 7*(2), 1-11.

Farkas, S., Johnson, J., & Foleno, T. (2000). *A sense of calling: Who teaches and why*. New York, NY: Public Agenda Foundation. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED443815.pdf

Goodlad, J. I., & Soder, R. (1990). *The moral dimensions of teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Haynes, C. C. (2008). *A teacher's guide to religion in the public schools*. Nashville, TN: First Amendment Center. Retrieved from http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/madison/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/teachersguide.pdf

Haynes, C. C., Thomas, O. (2007). Finding common ground: A First Amendment guide to religion and public schools. Nashville, TN: First Amendment Center. Retrieved from http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/madison/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/FCGcomplete.pdf

Howard, R. W. (2005). Preparing moral educators of standards-based reform. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 32*(4), 43-58.

Jones, E. N., Ryan, K., & Bohlin, K. (1998). Character education & teacher education: How are prospective teachers being prepared to foster good character in students? *Action in Teacher Education, 20*(4), 11-28.http//dx.doi.org/10.1080/01626620.1999.10462931

Kang, J. S., & Ko, T. Y. (2014). The concept of Korean organizational silence and verification of measuring instrument. *The Korean Society for Public Personnel Administration. 13*(1). 141-159. Retrieved from http://www.hrm.or.kr/newhrm/sub06

Lederhouse, J. N. (2011-2012). Personal faith and professional practice. *Educational Horizons, 90*(2), 13-15.

Lee, H., Ed. (2010). *Faith-based education that constructs: A creative dialogue between constructivism and faith-based education*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock.

Luther, M. (2005). To the councilmen of all cities in Germany that they establish and maintain Christian schools. In Lull M. (Ed.), *Martin Luther's basic theological writings. (2nd Ed.)* (pp. 460-464). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress. (Original published 1524).

National Center for Educational Statistics (May, 2016). *Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Education.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2011). *Education at a Glance 2011, OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from https://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/48631582.pdf

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2015). *Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators*. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2015-en

Palmer, P. J. (2007). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life, 10th Anniversary Edition*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Teets, S. T. (2011, February). Teacher education in faith-based institutions: What difference does it make? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education. San Diego, CA.

Appendix

Table 1.

Perception of Integration of Faith with Professional Life

Statement	Likert Scale	Local N=31 Frequency	%	Mean	Korean N=33 Frequency	%	Mean	Pre-Service N=36 Frequency	%	Mean
I think about my faith with regard to moral dilemmas in the classroom with students.	N/A	0	0		0	0		1	2.7	
	1	2	6.5	2.65	0	0	2.72	1	2.7	2.58
	2	7	22.6		9	27.3		10	27.0	
	3	22	71.0		24	72.7		24	64.9	
I would like to integrate my faith with classroom discussions, but I am not allowed to do so.	N/A	0	0		0	0		1	2.7	
	1	12	38.7	1.84	5	15.2	2.12	5	13.5	2.25
	2	12	38.7		19	57.6		14	37.8	
	3	7	22.6		9	27.3		16	43.2	
I think about my faith with regard to interactions with colleagues and peers in the school.	1	3	9.7	2.58	0	0	2.51	2	5.4	2.61
	2	7	22.6		16	48.5		10	27.0	
	3	21	67.7		17	51.5		24	64.9	
I often think about what Jesus would do if he were a teacher in the classroom.	1	3	9.7	2.39	1	3.0	2.55	2	5.4	2.50
	2	13	41.9		13	39.4		14	37.8	
	3	15	48.4		19	57.6		20	54.1	
I have a group of teacher friends with whom I share dilemmas, and we try to think about what a Christian response/solution might be.	1	7	22.6	2.13	4	12.1	2.61	7	18.9	2.28
	2	13	41.9		5	15.2		12	32.4	
	3	11	35.5		24	72.7		17	45.9	
I have a support group outside of my professional work life that helps me integrate my faith with my work.	1	6	19.4	2.35	3	9.1	2.52	4	10.8	2.50
	2	8	25.8		10	30.3		10	27.0	
	3	17	54.8		20	60.6		22	59.5	
I pray about students or families about whom I have a concern.	N/A	0	0		1	30.		4	10.8	
	1	1	3.2	2.81	1	3.0	2.24	1	2.7	2.31
	2	4	12.9		20	60.6		11	29.7	
	3	26	83.9		11	33.3		20	54.1	
I read or study scripture for guidance in difficult situations.	N/A	0	0		0	0		4	10.8	
	1	5	16.1	2.39	1	3.0	2.55	2	5.4	2.25
	2	9	29.0		13	39.4		11	29.7	
	3	17	54.8		19	57.6		19	51.4	
I read or study other texts that have a faith basis to guide me in my work.	N/A	0	0		0	0		4	10.8	
	1	7	22.6	2.55	4	12.1	2.33	3	8.1	2.11
	2	12	38.7		14	42.4		14	37.8	
	3	12	38.7		15	45.5		15	40.5	

Note. Likert Scale 1 = Does not represent what I say, do, or think at all; 2 = Represents what I say, do, or think some of the time; 3 = Represents what I say, do or think most of the time

• • •

Joonkil Ahn is a graduate student at Carson-Newman University. Joonkil taught in several high schools in South Korea for 17 years, and joined Carson-Newman in 2014. He enjoyed the privilege of serving as the President of TCF (Teachers' Christian Fellowship) Korea for three years, and learned the value of Christian teachers' fellowship in it. During his educational journey at Carson-Newman, he found passion in education research. He presented his paper in the 14th Hawaii International Conference on Education (Jan. 2016), and was awarded the AILACTE Graduate Student Scholar Award in Las Vegas this year.

Danny W. Hinson is an associate professor of TESL at Carson-Newman University in the Education and Counseling Department where he teaches graduate courses in language assessment, phonology, language curriculum development, and second language acquisition theory. Danny has presented and been involved in teacher training seminars in numerous international settings including: South Korea, North Korea, China, Japan, Thailand, Russia, and most recently in Poland and the Czech Republic.

Sharon T. Teets is a professor of education at Carson-Newman University in the Education and Counseling Department where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in human development, early childhood and elementary education, and foundations of education. Sharon served as a Foxfire course facilitator and coordinator of the East Tennessee Teachers Network for many years and continues to be an advocate of learner-centered and community-based education.

The Partnership Pact: Fulfilling School Districts' Research Needs with University-District Partnerships

Nicole Ralston, Ph.D.
Bruce Weitzel, Ph.D.
Jacqueline Waggoner, Ed.D.
Zulema Naegele, M.Ed.
Rebecca Smith, M.Ed.

University of Portland

Abstract

There has been a recent shift in university-district partnership models from traditional transactional partnerships, which lack a shared purpose, to transformational partnerships that are mutually beneficial to both universities and school districts. These transformational research-practice partnerships have gained popularity in the United States as a means of extending university research resources. To date, limited research has investigated the impact of district-driven research on the community. This qualitative study helps fill that gap by examining the impacts of one newly formed research-practice partnership on district stakeholders. Our findings suggest that authentic district-driven research projects have the potential to provide rigorous and timely research deliverables for school district partners in the community through the production of public scholarship. The themes that emerged suggest that these projects can both meet the district needs in an era of dwindling budgets and can result in a change of practice.

Keywords: **research-practice partnerships, transformational partnerships, liberal arts education**

Throughout the past two decades, independent liberal arts institutions have remained integral parts of their communities, sharing strong values and goals congruent with the community needs and with their university missions. Liberally trained educators are dedicated to creating an educated society and promoting equitable access for all students; they promote learning by utilizing best practices and making decisions based on evidence. Thus, it is natural for liberal arts universities to develop formal partnerships with local schools, and the role of these partnerships between universities and school districts has been gaining national and state interest. Even the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which oversees the accrediting of educator preparation providers (EPPs) in the United States, adopted in 2013 as one of its five new standards for EPP accreditation, a standard that is focused on partnerships between universities and school districts. Specifically, CAEP's Standard 2 clearly states that EPPs must develop "effective partnerships" in which "partners co-construct mutually beneficial P–12 school and community arrangements" (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2015, para. 2).

University-district partnerships are abundant across the United States; however, they are most commonly traditional *transactional partnerships*, in which the institutions pursue their own goals without a shared purpose. These traditional partnerships usually have one or more of the following three goals: (a) to educate and prepare future teachers and administrators; (b) to provide professional development experiences for current teachers and administrators; and, (c) to collaborate in conducting *university*-driven research projects (Coburn, Penuel, & Geil, 2013; Holen & Yunk, 2014).

These transactional partnerships are certainly necessary and evolve from some individual need (i.e., universities need student teaching placements or districts need professional development providers); however, the missions of liberal arts institutions, as well as CAEP's new standards, are also calling for developing more *mutually* beneficial partnerships. This shift from transactional partnerships to more *transformational partnerships* focuses on building common goals and mutual benefits among stakeholders (Butcher,

Bezzina, & Moran, 2011; Orr, 2006, 2011). Such transformational partnerships are ongoing, expansive, ever growing, relationship-oriented, and "expand the capacity of each institution for educating students, conducting research, and serving communities" (Sutton, 2010, p. 62). Additionally, transformational partnerships have a shared purpose, collaborative leadership, feelings of trust, adequate resources to meet partnership goals, and openness to learning and change by the partners (Butcher et al., 2011).

One potentially transformational partnership is the *research-practice partnership*, which occurs "when researchers and district leaders develop long term collaborations [where] they leverage research to address persistent problems of practice and policy" (William T. Grant Foundation, n.d., para. 1). Research-practice partnerships exhibit the following characteristics: "1) long term, 2) focused on problems of practice, 3) committed to mutualism, 4) use intentional strategies to foster partnership, and 5) produce original analyses" (Coburn et al., 2013, p. 2). Examples of such partnerships include the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, the Houston Education Research Consortium, and the Los Angeles Education Research Institute.

Butcher and colleagues' work (2011) extending theories of leadership (i.e., Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978) into theories of partnerships, and Coburn and colleagues' (2013) research-practice partnership framework, form the theoretical basis for this work. Beyond these, though, this is also an investigation of how research-practice partnerships can be seen as *joint work at boundaries* (i.e., "across institutional, cultural, and professional divides"), as defined by Penuel, Allen, Coburn, and Farrell (2015, p. 194). This theoretical framework argues against the translation metaphor, a process aimed at reducing the gap between research and practice only in a one-way fashion; this framework views it not only as research to practice but also as practice to research. Further, this work seeks to investigate whether "researchers and practitioners working in partnership are engaged in processes of collaboration and exchange that are both messier and potentially more transformative than

the one-way translation of knowledge of research into practice" (Penuel et al., 2015, p. 183).

Developing a Transformational Research-Practice Partnership

Despite the growing popularity of transformational research-practice partnerships, to date limited research has examined the claims that school district and university partnerships are truly *mutually* beneficial (Coburn & Penuel, 2016). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study was to examine if and how one new research-practice partnership met district research needs by examining the perspectives of district leaders.

The partnership in this endeavor was developed in conjunction with the creation of a new Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) program at the University of Portland, a small (approximately 5000 students), private, Catholic, liberal arts university with an urban campus located in Portland, Oregon. It was established in 2013 by the School of Education in collaboration with a non-profit evaluation association and six public school districts that collectively serve over 90,000 students. A strong feature of the composition of the partnership was the addition of one full-time university faculty member and two doctoral research fellows, in addition to the creation of a specific partnership-devoted Ed.D. course, *Research for Evaluation and Action*. The six participating school districts are among the most diverse and high-need districts in the state; up to 74 different languages are spoken in these districts' schools, and approximately 65% of the students are economically disadvantaged.

This partnership seeks to capitalize on *boundary crossing*; to facilitate a method for the six districts and the university to jointly plan and produce high quality research focused on learning, equity, and results. The partnership's goals also reflect the mission of our liberal arts university, which emphasizes service to the community (i.e., the human family) as reflected by the Mission Statement of the University of Portland (2016) as it is featured on its website:

> …we pursue teaching and learning, faith and formation,

> service and leadership in the classroom, residence halls, and the world. Because we value the development of the whole person, the University honors faith and reason as ways of knowing, promotes ethical reflection, and prepares people who respond to the needs of the world and its human family.

To align with this mission, the research questions for each of our projects are identified first by the school districts, not by the university, before being jointly conceptualized. This identification procedure involves four to five university faculty members and non-profit research scientists meeting with school district superintendents and their top cabinet members to learn of district research needs. These district requests varied from literature reviews on effective language interventions, progress monitoring and assessment tools for English Language Learners, and how educators can address the mental health needs of students who have experienced trauma. There were also requests for data analyses on topics including the relationship between exclusionary practices and high school graduation, school climates for males of color, and summer school program evaluations. These research questions were answered during the school year by the doctoral fellows and the faculty member and during the summer in the *Research for Evaluation and Action* course by Ed.D. students. Faculty members conducted school onsite observations and interviews. After the research was completed, the university faculty members and non-profit research scientists met again with the school district superintendents and their top cabinet members to present formal reports. The success of these efforts is detailed in the results section.

Conducting the research through the summer course provides an opportunity for students to learn how to conduct research in inherently messy and complex situations, situations they will soon or presently encounter in their current positions. Further, this model actively engages the doctoral students in the university's foundational value of giving back to one's community. While it is evident

that this model offers many such benefits to the university and its doctoral students, the benefits to the districts have not yet been studied until now.

Methodology

Since a multi-dimensional perspective was desired, the opinions of 13 senior district leaders who participated in the partnership were examined to investigate the perceived value placed on the research deliverables. Therefore, faculty members of the university asked district leaders three open-ended questions to gather feedback to help identify areas for improvement in the partnership. These questions are listed as follows:

- To what degree is the research partnership meeting the research needs of the district?
- How is your district using the information provided by the research partnership?
- What else do we need to know about improving this partnership?

The questions were distributed to the district leaders over a two-week period in both paper/pencil and in-person interview format, depending on preference, and 65% of the 20 possible district leaders participated. Positions held by the district leaders included: Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and various department directors. District leaders had varying degrees of prior connection to the university; yet all of them joined the partnership upon its inception and had equal access to the research capacity the partnership provided. The participant responses revealed perceptions and experiences supporting a perceived benefit to the districts (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009). Results were compared to theoretical perspectives highlighted in earlier partnership research, including an emphasis on examining examples of boundary crossings and joint work at boundaries (Penuel et al., 2015). All responses were open coded by two raters to ensure reliability and agreement to identify potential themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Results and Discussion

District leader perspectives were examined to investigate to what extent the research-practice partnership was addressing the research needs of the districts. Emergent themes, detailed below, suggest that authentic district-driven research projects have the potential to both meet the district needs in an era of dwindling budgets and can result in a change of practice.

Meeting District Needs for Research Capacity

First, it appears that this partnership is one method to engage the local districts in teaching and research with mutually beneficial results, while employing values congruent with a liberal arts school of education. Not only is the university benefiting from this community engagement by providing authentic program evaluation experiences for its Ed.D. students, but the district leaders also described reciprocal district benefits: "We are very appreciative of the partnership, and the communication has been stellar" and "Having actual analysis completed with our data lends relevance and credibility." Positive feedback included: "We feel very fortunate to be a part of this partnership," "This partnership has been invaluable," "To us this is the gold standard in partnership," and "The whole concept is brilliant." Further, it appears that district leaders valued the partnership in its ability to make data meaningful, both to themselves at the district level and to teachers. One superintendent said:

> I think we're all grappling with having so much data. Being… data rich, information poor. Just feels like we're layering assessment upon assessment upon assessment. And our teachers are frustrated, and we're just trying to move ahead. [The partnership] talked me through the various data results [from the assessments], which helped me realize that some of the assessments weren't useful and could be dropped while others provide a lot of information and we might want to drill down some more.

This was an example of the *joint work at the boundaries* (Penuel et al., 2015), in that this work is performed collaboratively and was not merely provided to the districts with a one-way directionality of research to practice. It also is an example of how oversimplified the translation metaphor can be, and how much more complex the decisions of what to "do" with research in practice truly are.

Moreover, it appears the partnership helped districts in organizing and analyzing existent, often exhaustive, data. District leaders described how the partnership "synthesized a lot of information that was collected over time in multiple databases." Many districts have limited resources for research in regards to the implementation and management of new and existing programs in their schools. For example, one respondent said the partnership "allows our district to expand our research and evaluation capacity with a strong and credible partner." Additionally, districts have felt the burden of dwindling budgets in recent years: "Our district's ability to do the research is limited and the partnership's support has been invaluable to helping us shift paradigms in supporting our youth." The partnership seemed to fill a research needs gap for districts by providing high-quality, yet affordable, data analysis and scholarly research.

In an age of assessment and accountability, the partnership also seems to be helping districts use data in meaningful ways. The partnership may therefore be helping with implementation science, as indicated by district leader statements such as: "Their recommendations about data collection will be very helpful as we try to streamline information so data collection across systems aligns," and "I feel that the partnership went over and above expectations because they provided us not only the data we needed, but an improved template for going forward." This feedback demonstrates how the partnership has provided the opportunity for Ed.D. students and district leaders alike to develop great expertise in program evaluation design, data alignment needs, and the practices necessary if causal statements are desired.

How Districts Used the Data in Practice

This study about community-engaged education also explored how districts used the research provided by the research-practice partnership. Thematic analysis indicated that district participants used the provided information in multiple ways. Decision-making is one of the significant ways that various stakeholders used the recommendations. For example, one district's report on balanced assessment led them to determine and publicize their philosophy of assessment, develop an official assessment calendar, and determine a professional development plan around assessment literacy for their teachers. The district reported that this work helped them determine a direction and move forward, with an emphasis on the joint work conducted across the boundaries of university and district: "You got us going on what we needed to do. We had bits and pieces but not the momentum, so thank you."

Other stakeholders reported that the work helped them decide whether or not to continue implementing a current program: "This report helps us to better understand [the program] and, specifically, whether we should continue to invest in this program at all, maintain the current program, or expand the program." In other cases, the research helped district personnel design future implementation plans or "how to adjust current practice." One district leader emphasized how the work will directly impact the community: "This will help us improve the overall program and thus increase the positive impacts on families." Another data analysis on a back-to-school conference helped the district determine first if they should repeat the experience in the subsequent year, and then what changes should be made: "I'm going to take this information and I'm working with our leadership this week to start to draft a plan for next year. So we're going to learn from what we didn't do well and absolutely capitalize on what we did do well to build it again. It's nice to legitimize a great big effort." Conversely, the faculty, doctoral fellows, and Ed.D. students learn about the effects of new and innovative practices like this professional development initiative, leading to further cycles of practice-to-research and research-to-practice.

Overall, much of this work was cyclical, beginning with the districts wanting to learn more about best practices, then working within the partnership to make instructional decisions about programs and policies, and finally leading them to develop, to implement, and to analyze the results of the implementation plans. One district, for example, requested a report on how to diversify the Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered at their schools to better accommodate low-income students and students of color. The district leader said, "[The partnership is] looking at how do we take these [AP] classes and make them help students be more successful. What are the barriers in the classes?" This information then led to disaggregating the data for the district, which then led the university and district to create a data-driven action plan focused on making advanced courses attainable for all students. This research allowed the district to investigate their own equity policies and practices: "This project is really leading to some deep future work that we're planning, particularly for underrepresented groups, so we're really diving in deep with this now and having conversations at our schools." In this particular instance, the partnership research had practical and meaningful application in working for more equitable student outcomes that led to action and future research. The flow of knowledge was two-way, across the boundaries of the different institutions (i.e., Penuel et al., 2015), with the research ideas stemming from practice, flowing to research and back to practice, and often leading back again to further research and evaluation.

Recommendations

This study examined the impacts of one research-practice partnership between a liberal arts university's school of education, a non-profit research organization, and six public school districts. Our findings suggest that this partnership is mutually beneficial as defined by Coburn et al. (2013), in that these district-driven research projects comprise a method of providing rigorous and timely research deliverables for public school district partners, while the university's Ed.D. students gain imperative and authentic knowledge about conducting research in real contexts. This work

is even more important given that most of the Ed.D students also work in the participating six districts as teachers and administrators, providing a 'trickle-down effect' of the knowledge gained through conducting the research. There is also a 'trickle-up effect' when these Ed.D. students take knowledge back to their districts that they have learned during completion of these district research reports, such as best practices in program evaluation and planning, creating effective databases, and effective data collection procedures.

As others, have found, this partnership model may be a means of extending university intellectual resources to the larger community (Coburn et al., 2013). It is clear, however, that more research is needed. Subsequent phases of the research should track the long-term perceptions and outcomes of district leaders as well as investigate the impact on other stakeholders (e.g., students and teachers). Current research efforts beyond this paper's scope seek to explicitly understand the perspectives of the Ed.D. students.

Although transformational partnerships are growing in popularity, they can be difficult to establish and maintain (Turley & Stevens, 2015). Despite well-intentioned goals, both universities and school districts may struggle with collaboratively developing the desired experiences, curriculum, professional development opportunities, and/or research projects that improve the profession. Research-practice partnerships are inherently more messy, complex, and challenging than the translation metaphor of "research to practice" implies (Penuel et al., 2015); however, scholars remain optimistic in the potential of authentic, *transformational* collaborations between universities and public school districts (Orr, 2011).

Several key recommendations for implementation of a university-district partnership have emerged from our research and are suggested to those interested in implementing a transformational research-practice partnership. We present these recommendations here.

- **Secure sustainable funding for an extended period.** Our funding partnership involves a six-year rollout that included the addition of a full-time faculty member and two

doctoral fellows. The importance of both setting-up and maintaining research-practice partnerships has been emphasized through funding initiatives sponsored by prestigious institutes and foundations (e.g., the Institute of Education Sciences, Spencer Foundation, William T. Grant Foundation) and funding can therefore be sought through either outside agency sponsorship, institutionalized as part of the college or university, or developed as a new model of shared funding to ensure longevity of the partnership. Traditional funding models typically place the researcher as the authority figure; therefore, secured funding is necessary for successful boundary practices to truly allow joint partnerships between the district and the university (Penuel et al., 2015).

- **Engage district leaders both collectively and individually.** The university hosts a breakfast for all partner district leaders each year to report on overall project completion and allows members to share feedback with the whole group; individually: university faculty meet with district leaders at the district administrative offices to receive RFPs and to provide reports with well designed (or "engaging") visual research briefs.
- **Establish strong communication networks.** Determine the most effective means of securing timely meetings, obtaining data, and knowing whom to contact for clarification in data analysis, as district data are often "messy;" Schon (1983) described engagement in solving real-world problems as the "swampy lowlands" of professional practice. Strategic and explicit boundary practice planning is necessary to "better understand the cultural worlds of participants in the partnership" (Penuel et al., 2015).
- **Empower graduate students.** Engage graduate students in partnership research projects that relate directly to their own professional practice.
- **Strike the appropriate balance.** Continuously strive to achieve a balance between seeking meaningful research projects from the districts and not over-promising project completion, recognizing the limited capacity

of the university partners in providing research for districts.

- **Mutually prioritize the highest need areas in district-driven research projects to ensure a successful partnership.** Continue to work on mutual understandings regarding the limited university research capacity and the research needs of districts that can never be fully realized within the partnership alone.

A university-district partnership that engages community partners may be a viable means of providing school districts with needed research resources, particularly in an era of tightening district budgets and the reduction and/or elimination of their research and evaluation departments. The findings of this report reveal that this university-district based partnership may truly be transformational as defined by Coburn et al. (2013, p. 2), in that it is (a) long term (i.e., the partnership is currently in its third year, and many of the research projects are also on-going and long term), (b) focused on problems of practice (i.e., the research conducted all stem from district problems of practice jointly navigated between the institutions), (c) committed to mutualism (i.e., the partnership strives to serve the district while also meeting the needs of its Ed.D. students), (d) uses intentional strategies to foster partnership (i.e., explicit methods of boundary crossing are prescribed, utilized, and documented), and (e) produces original analyses (i.e., all joint work is original). While the districts reported benefits, as described above, the university benefits through the hands-on, real-world research experiences afforded its Ed.D. students. Further, as increased numbers of Ed.D. students graduate from the program with these experiences, especially those who already work in the six partner districts, these practitioners now have the capacity to evaluate their own programs, which extends the capacity of the district itself. In this way, this work meets the needs of our university's mission to "respond to the needs of the world" by directly addressing the needs of the local, highly diverse, K–12 schools. This beneficial partnership capitalizes on the strengths of higher education and the needs of K–12 schools in a mutual

and meaningful way. One district leader summed it up well: "The partnership highlights how our systems should support one another and learn how to implement best practices more effectively." As such, the university research reports can help guide effective district instructional practices and can evaluate each district's current programs in a time-sensitive manner. In essence, the partnership provides authentic program evaluation learning experiences for doctoral candidates while enculturating them into the vital mission of a liberal arts university.

References

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership (2nd Ed.)*. Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum.

Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership.* New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Butcher, J., Bezzina, M., & Moran, W. (2011). Transformational partnership: A new agenda for higher education. *Innovative Higher Education, 36*(1), 29-40.

Coburn, C. E., Penuel, W. R., & Geil, K. E. (2013). Research-practice partnerships: A strategy for leveraging research for educational improvement in school districts. *William T. Grant Foundation*, New York, NY.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. (2015). Retrieved from http://caepnet.org/standards/standard-2

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches, Third Edition*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Holen, M.C. & Yunk, D.C. (2014). Benefits of 25 years of school district-university partnerships to improve teacher preparation and advance school renewal. *Educational Considerations, 42*(1), 49-54.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis (2nd Ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Orr, M. T. (2006). Mapping innovation in leadership preparation in our nation's schools of education. *Phi Delta Kappan, 87*, 492-499.

Orr, M. T. (2011). Pipeline to preparation to advancement: Graduates experiences in, through, and beyond leadership preparation. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 47*(1), 114-172.

Penuel, W. R., Allen, A., Coburn, C. E., & Farrell, C. (2015). Conceptualizing research-practice partnerships as joint work at boundaries. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 20*(1-2), 182-197.

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

Sutton, S. B. (2010). Transforming internationalization through partnerships. *International Educator, 19*(1), 60-63.

Turley, R. N. & Stevens, C. (2015). Lessons from a school district-university research partnership: The Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC). *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 37*(1S):6S-15S.

University of Portland. (2016). Mission. Retrieved from: https://www1.up.edu/about/mission.html

William T. Grant Foundation. (n.d.). *Research practice partnerships*. Retrieved from http://rpp.wtgrantfoundation.org/

• • •

Dr. Nicole Ralston is an assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Portland in Portland, Oregon. She received her Ph.D. in educational psychology with an emphasis in measurement, statistics, and research design from the University of Washington. An elementary school teacher at heart, she now teaches educational research and assessment courses to undergraduate and graduate students; researches in the areas of diagnostic assessment, algebraic thinking, and teacher coaching models. She also co-directs the Multnomah County Partnership for Education Research.

Dr. Bruce Weitzel has served as a secondary school teacher and administrator for over three decades, and received his Ph.D. In educational leadership from Michigan State University. Currently, he is an associate professor and the Associate Dean of the School of Education at the University of Portland in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Weitzel's research and teaching interests lie in the areas of school improvement and change theory, instructional leadership, and the neuroscience of learning.

Dr. Jacqueline Waggoner is a tenured professor in the School of Education at the University of Portland in Portland, Oregon. She received her bi-university Ed.D. from the University of Oregon and Portland State University in Public School Administration and Supervision and has worked in higher education and public P–12 education for over 25 years. Her research areas are teacher education, measurement, instrumentation; assessment; and data-driven decision making. Additionally, Dr. Waggoner co-led the University of Portland School of Education's 2013 successful NCATE and State of Oregon accreditation efforts, receiving commendations in Standard 2, Assessment and Standard 4, Diversity.

Zulema Naegele is a doctoral fellow at the University of Portland and middle school Spanish teacher in Portland, Oregon. She has over ten years of experience teaching in both K–12 and university settings and currently conducts district-driven research through the Multnomah County Partnership for Education. Her research interests include ethnic studies implementation and culturally responsive teaching practices.

Rebecca Smith is a doctoral fellow at the University of Portland in Portland, Oregon. She has ten years of teaching experience and currently works with university faculty to perform district-driven research through the Multnomah County Partnership for Education Research. Her own studies focus on education leadership and teacher professional development and learning.

Teacher Education Reform: Listening to Voices from the Inside

Deborah Roose, Ed.D.

Oberlin College

Abstract

For decades, teacher educators and others have looked critically at the way teachers are initially prepared and during the last ten years the calls for reform in teacher education have become even more frequent. Some programs have responded to those demands and made substantial and long lasting changes. This qualitative study reports on data gathered during interviews with deans and other senior teacher education program heads who have been leaders of major long term programmatic changes in their institutions. Interviewees described the major reforms that occurred under their leadership and described the origins of each initiative and the positive and negative influences on these reform efforts. Conclusions focus on the importance of faculty development and a coherent program foundation, the centrality of context, and the re-visioning of relationships between states and teacher education programs.

Keywords: **preservice teacher education, program development, interviews, deans, reform, barriers**

Over the last few decades, teacher educators, and many outside of teacher education, have looked critically at the way teachers are initially prepared (e.g. National Commission on Excellence in Teacher Education, 1985; Holmes Group, 1986; Goodlad, 1990; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996; Tom, 1997; Larabee, 2004; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Zeichner, 2014).

In response to that criticism, state and national groups began introducing specific reform requirements for program approval. Both large and small institutions have been affected by reform ideas and accreditation demands. Many have worked hard to go beyond changing their programs to meet accreditation requirements; they have built on the suggestions of the critics to re-invent their programs. A few program changes have been documented (e.g. Mezeske & Mezeske, 2004; Carroll, Featherstone, Featherstone, Feiman-Nemser & Roosevelt, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006). But more documentation and analysis is needed about how change is made (Wang, Odell, Klecka, Spalding, & Lin, 2010) and what types of internal and external forces and decisions support and hinder reform in teacher education programs.

Literature about teacher education administrators and deans of education in the United States is sparse and focuses mostly on schools of education in large institutions (Anderson & King, 1987; Denemark, 1983; Bush, 1987; Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Judge, 1982; Goodlad, 1990; Valli 1992; Bowen, 1995; Gardner, 1992; Gmelch, 2002; Wepner, D'Onofrio, & Wilhite 2008; Clift, Loughran, Mills, & Craig, 2015) and there is a lack of research on what teacher education administrators know about their profession. Even less research has been conducted examining specifically what they have learned about what supports or hinders teacher education reform. This study addresses that need for understanding the nature of reform efforts. The question guiding the research was "what can experienced leaders in teacher education reform tell us about the composition of reform and what are key influences and supports needed for that reform to happen successfully?"

Design

To fill the gap in the literature on the anatomy of teacher education reform, I examined reform efforts in nine liberal arts teacher education programs from different parts of the United States through intensive interviews with their senior teacher education administrator—the dean, department chairperson or director of teacher education. This qualitative study is not an analysis of policy or a description of programs, rather an initial exploration of the composition of reform from an insider's perspective and what we learn when we pay attention to those initiating and leading the efforts.

Description of the Participants and Institutions

Because of their size and their flexibility and nimbleness when responding to challenges and changes (Roose, 2013), the focus of this study about teacher education reform is on liberal arts teacher education programs. I used "purposeful sampling" (Patton, 1990) to locate interviewees who had been senior teacher education administrators at different types of liberal arts institutions for at least ten years, had experience with reform in teacher preparation and worked in different parts of the country—two each from the west, mid-west and south and three from the east. Also, "snowball sampling" (Goodman, 1961) was utilized as initial interviewees suggested others.

Three of the nine institutions are classified as regional schools and six as national. One is an HBCU (Historically Black College or University), five are religiously affiliated, five are more selective in their admissions and three combine liberal arts with an emphasis on research. Either the interviewee or the institution's website described their institutions as focused on liberal arts. Institution size ranged widely, while the range in size of the preparation programs was much narrower, with 25-225 teachers licensed per year. All the administrators considered their programs small.

Interviews and Analysis

All the initial interviews were conducted in person and were

digitally recorded. Three questions formed the basis of the standardized open-ended and guided interview: (a) What reform efforts had they been a part of during their years involved with teacher education? (b) What supported those efforts? and, (c) What were hindrances in the efforts? The open-ended interviews allowed for exploration of the initial questions as well as any emergent topics.

Consistent with general qualitative methodology and grounded theory (Patton, 1990; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), I utilized a reflective and comparative process of analysis throughout the data collection. Doing so allowed for the honing of follow-up questions and exploration of emerging concepts with the interviewees. I also collected data about the institutions and teacher education preparation programs from their websites, curriculum vita and additional documents that interviewees or their faculty had written about their programs.

Starting with a generative open analysis then moving to more focused classifications (Patton, 1990), I read the interviews multiple times, allowing patterns, themes and categories of analysis to come from the data. Because the questions were open-ended, a variety of responses were possible. When a similar response was repeated, I regarded it as significant and employed constant comparison analysis (Strauss, 1987) to identify divergent responses for each question.

Discussion

The interviewees were asked to talk about reform initiatives or mandates coming from within or outside the institution and most chose to talk about both. For each example, interviewees talked about origins of the reform and influences, both positive and negative, on reform efforts.

Following the common language usage of teacher educators and of those outside education, the word "reform" was used in the interviews to ask about changes the administrators had overseen in their programs over the years – changes that would help their preparation of stronger, more competent beginning teachers. The reform initiatives the interviewees discuss might be placed in a

political light (Imig, D., Wiseman, & Imig, J., 2011) but most often the administrators did not bring that orientation to the study.

The Reforms

Altogether, the interviewees talked about nine different reforms. Four reforms were introduced and discussed in-depth by at least four of the interviewees: (a) learning about and focusing on multiculturalism/diversity, (b) the redesigning or re-conceptualizing of the program, (c) changing expectations and/or deepening content, and (d) changing assessment. Other reforms chosen by fewer than four of the interviewees included: developing K–12 partnerships, incorporating special education issues and learning into the program, changing programs to support students' needs in passing state tests, and developing support structures for alumni.

For the majority of the programs the key reforms were conceptual, rather than structural in nature (Tom, 1997, p.97). This study focuses on what supported and hindered these reform efforts rather than exploring the reforms themselves. The idea or need for reform came from a variety of sources, from inside and outside the institution and sometimes from a combination of both. State mandates impacted five efforts, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)[1] requirements sparked change and ideas for reform within institutions came from the faculty. Often reforms originating within an institution dovetailed with changing expectations of an outside force such as NCATE.

Key Elements that Impact Reform

The interviewees referenced reform efforts they led decades ago and some that were more recent. I identified four major elements that impacted the success of their reform efforts. Two of these elements focus on what programs can do for themselves, and two of the elements focus on contexts and relationships that are central to reform, and which also need to be cultivated. These selected elements cut across time and programs and, as a teacher education

[1]As of 2013, NCATE has been subsumed under the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The interviewees often spoke of efforts begun before 2013.

administrator myself, I can attest that they are germane, applicable and significant when considering reform efforts of today.

The role of faculty and professional development. The first key element emerging from this study is the centrality of faculty in reform efforts. Knowing the faculty is crucial to reform efforts might seem like it goes without saying, but it is essential to recognize the ways teacher educators can and do contribute to reform efforts and the significance in supporting them.

In most cases, the vision and energy of faculty members was an essential component of the reforms—they were their own experts. They, and the administrators, brought new ideas from their graduate and K–12 work experiences to the reform discussions. In addition, they found ideas about reform and support for their initiatives through scouring the literature to find research, theory and best practices and then shared information with colleagues. During the 1980s and 90s many reform ideas were introduced nationally and one leader said that even her rural southern college was influenced. "Those things were in our air and in our minds and we would say we aren't doing as well as we should be doing. So we [were] always looking to do better by our students."

Some of the works they mentioned that impacted their work included major reports by national groups, such as the Holmes Group's and John Goodlad's Renewal Network, and leaders in the field such as Linda Darling-Hammond, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, and Gloria Ladson-Billings. "We were always reading and we met and talked." One administrator and her faculty members all read the same texts and then explored how to bring new ideas to the education curricula.

> [W]e integrated all of our courses and so in our conversations and our faculty meetings…We educated ourselves. We'd say, ok, this year, we are going to think about race as an issue and for the whole year we would read and think and talk about it.

As they read they accepted some ideas and rejected others. Along with continual reading of professional literature,

attendance at national conferences and meetings introduced and supported ideas teacher education faculty members brought to their programs. It was during those national meetings they learned about latest research and best practices—about new masters' programs, about social justice topics, the latest about teaching subject matter, assessment tools and orientations, professional development school initiatives and building communities of teachers. For the faculty from schools that drew their students from a more regional population and were more limited in their national view, going to conferences and hearing from others who were doing teacher education differently or were conducting research in an area of interest, were central ways these faculty members gained support for their reform work.

Besides bringing expertise and vision to the reforms, faculty at all the institutions put much time and energy into the reform efforts. Most leaders talked about the number of hours their faculty members met each week and month to work on reform efforts, in addition to time and energy personnel spent on other demands from the program and the rest of the institution.

Although the leaders did not dwell on the financial supports needed for the reforms, several interviewees said outside funding plus internal funds for professional development and travel were key supports for innovation. And one leader noted, their reform efforts benefited doubly when she found outside funding to send multiple faculty members to a national conference together and they collaboratively brought back research and best practice ideas to their local context.

The encouragement, promotion, and financial underwriting of individual expertise and further professional development opportunities of the people responsible for enacting the changes in a program seems to be fundamental and essential to the success of any reform effort. We have most often seen in the reform efforts directed at K–12 education that honoring teacher knowledge and their professional development has not been front and center (e.g. Rose, 2010; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011). This study is a vital reminder of where the power and energy of reform efforts

lie and why faculty expertise and professional development need to be cultivated.

Coherent foundation. A second factor that emerged as a significant support of reform efforts was the development of defining principles or a philosophical framework. The majority of interviewees spoke to the importance of a clear institutional philosophy program faculty used to support their reform efforts. Alternatively, the teacher educators themselves developed a solid conceptual framework of their own, sometimes building on stated institutional goals.

The administrators showed a range of thinking about and articulation of the conceptual basis of their programs. Some had specific language that referred to principles, pillars, or abilities underlying and informing the reforms. Others spoke less about an explicit framework, but spoke of the centrality of a framework or philosophy to their efforts. Several did not talk about philosophical or conceptual guidelines but cited program goals and needing to work towards those outcomes. A few programs built on the conceptual thinking of the college as a whole (e.g. a developmental perspective), while others tied reform efforts to fundamental strengths of the institution (e.g. a progressive philosophy, the centrality of the liberal arts, being of service).

The administrators of the five NCATE accredited programs more often used the specific language of "conceptual framework" because such a framework was required for accreditation. But of the four non-NCATE programs, three interviewees talked about some type of conceptual grounding or guiding principles that supported program reform. Administrators from NCATE schools who used NCATE language still talked about the need for such a foundation beyond a requirement for accreditation. One interviewee said, "[Our guiding principles] came from how we were working together because we were essentially democratic in our thinking, respected each other's thinking. So when NCATE required a conceptual framework, 'community of inquiry' seemed one just right for us."

The leaders spoke about how having a conceptual grounding helped support all reform efforts through strengthening the programs, helping them articulate more coherently to their students, colleagues and administrators about the changes, giving them a stronger base from which to seek inside and outside funding, and helping them stay focused when bombarded with numerous new demands and suggestions about how to change teacher education.

One dean talked about their framework guiding all that they do and helping them get better at what they do.

> We are true to our framework; it gives us our moral purpose. And it really came out of our own work…Here is our educational philosophy, you are always on a journey…and hopefully moving to better and better. But it doesn't mean you scrap everything. You build on where you have come from.

Some of the leaders also noted that sound grounding helped them use or incorporate outside mandates and resources in ways that supported what they were doing.

Some reform efforts presented in the study did not last as long as others and often those were spearheaded by a single faculty member and not rooted in a clear set of overall program principles. The institutions that seemed to have made the most profound, long-term and systematic reforms were those that had a clear institutional and/or program philosophy the teacher preparation programs used to support their reform efforts.

The Importance of Context. It is often easy to think about reform using broad strokes, with one size fitting all programs. There may be fundamental pieces in teacher education that need to be the same in all programs, but this research points up the importance of each program's context, both in the nature of the institutions offering teacher preparation and their individual local contexts. As one interviewee said, "[T]eacher education is always contextual, both in terms of who the students are, what the program is and what the schools that we are preparing them for." All the reform efforts were impacted by their context.

Liberal arts context. The size and type of the institution was found to be a critical element in support for reform. Because most liberal arts institutions are small, teacher administrators usually have working relationships with their provost, academic deans and/or presidents (Roose, 2013). The interviewees spoke of working with or at least communicating with key administrators. Therefore, when reform efforts were initiated they had already been included in the thinking and planning and understood and/or had ownership of the changes. Size also allowed programs to be flexible and nimble as they explored and experimented with reform.

Being liberal arts institutions and often interdisciplinary in outlook, the nature of the institutions made their acceptance of reforms, which often entailed integrated courses and new ways of thinking about learning and teaching, easier. Interviewees remarked they found acceptance of the reforms from their liberal arts colleagues and sometimes those colleagues were part of the teams developing and implementing the changes.

In some cases, the mission of the institution supported the reform vision or the faculty doing the reform work. One institution, located in an urban center, had, as part of its mission, to work collaboratively with the city, so the president's vision dovetailed with and supported the urban-focused reform of the preparation program. One leader talked about her institution's way of functioning in the world as a model for the beginning teachers coming from the institution: "I don't think you can prepare teachers who will be able to function in a democratic setting or help create a democratic setting if they don't come from one."

There were differences in how interviewees talked about the liberal arts context impacting their reform efforts. For some, small size and communication between arts and science faculty, institution administrators and teacher education personnel was important in supporting changes, while others also focused on how including liberal arts perspectives and ways of thinking, exploring, reflecting, creating and problem-solving impacted their thinking and actions (Roose, 2013) as they worked on programmatic changes.

Local PreK–12 Context. Most administrators talked about how

their programs and reform were entwined with the local schools. One leader said it "was certainly their knowledge, K–12 working with higher ed., that really helped us [with assessment reform]." Another said how one reform effort, changing the program's culture to include higher expectations, benefited from knowledge and experience gained as a science faculty member worked with K–12 science supervisors—"the synergy of combining university and school perspectives and expertise."

Local context also impacted reform efforts as teacher educators saw changes in the population demographics of their region or watched and listened more closely to what community people, parents, school personnel and students in their urban area said they needed and wanted, which was better learning and teaching to happen. As one leader noted:

> [Our part of the state] was seeing a huge influx of Hispanics…and those changes were happening quickly around us and teachers were struggling… I guess you could say—how are we responding to the local context? We looked at what California was doing and because they were further ahead in preparing teachers to work with second language learners…we sent people to conferences specifically with that research in mind.

Although local school connections provided many advantages for the reform efforts, the administrators also pointed out how those relationships could hinder program reform. Several talked about the limitations, especially in urban areas, of using local classrooms for field experiences. They spoke of students not seeing good teaching models in their placements. Another major issue was the use, in some districts, of scripted curricula. One leader remarked, "We have so few placements where students can actually teach… where they aren't teaching to the test or given scripted curriculum…[T]hey know coverage isn't learning, but feel pressure from the school, teacher and kids. They have to pass the [state exams]." Many reforms called for consistency between what programs taught and what students experienced in schools and when there

was not congruence reform was harder to accomplish.

Although work with local districts could be difficult, on balance all the administrators welcomed collaboration with their local schools on reform efforts. While the national dialogue often calls for programs to be more similar than different, this study indicates different programs shared similar reform goals but the ways they proceeded with their reforms were greatly influenced by their local communities' needs and expertise.

> Teacher ed[ucation] programs seem like they are always changing depending on what the local, what the current, context is. Or they always should be. I assume most of them are. So that is always the [basis] for reflection and change.

Relationship with the State. In addition to relationships with local K–12 districts, interviewees talked about the critical nature of the relationship of states to their teacher education programs. Whether the state was top-down or collaborative in its relationship with the programs mattered greatly with regards to reform efforts and the interviewees were concerned about the direction most of the states were headed.

Most of the programs seemed to be impacted frequently and strongly by state actions. In states where they thought programs had a good, two-way relationship with the state education department, the leaders spoke of positive effects of such collaborative efforts.

Most other interviewees did not see their states' initiatives as strongly supporting reform efforts. And often they saw new state requirements, additions to an already crowded set of demands, as hurdles to developing competent teachers and reforming programs. One leader complained, "We are being told now…students have to take three state exams and they have to do something on child abuse and violence prevention and teaching drugs and alcohol… [T]he state never takes anything away, they keep adding and adding and adding."

State mandates often constricted reform initiatives because they worked in opposition to what the programs were trying to do. One such example is imposing mandates for more high stakes testing of preservice teachers when programs were wanting to spend more time on development and implementation of alternative, authentic performance assessments.

Some interviewees spoke of the state education agencies often having the best interests of teacher education in mind. But because of fluctuating directives from their state legislators who, without knowledge of research or historical trends, jumped in with their ideas, demands and timelines, the agencies could not give open, consistent support. More positive and constructive change seemed to occur in those states allowing programs choice of how to implement a mandate rather than the state being prescriptive, not integrating input and involvement from programs or having unrealistic time frames for implementation.

The interviewees spoke of being wary of trusting state support. Agencies might be helpful one year and then, often with a new administration, that support would be changed or withdrawn. Some administrators said state agencies were making some demands that were in line with what research and education experts were saying, but other demands seemed more politically driven, less knowledgeable and highly variable, even capricious in nature.

During this time of political maneuvering and public debates about teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Earley, 2005), it is important to understand the reforms examined here occurred more often when states worked with programs rather than being more prescriptive and top-down with their requirements. Therefore, it behooves teacher educators to work continually on communicating with state departments of education—to be proactive in developing relationships with state officials and giving them input about what the faculty knows about reform—so the states can be more consistently supportive of institutional reform efforts. At the same time, those interested in reform may need to work around the state and its more "one size fits all" reform thinking, tweaking state requirements to correspond more closely with program goals and local needs.

Conclusions

By dissecting examples of teacher education reform in the United States and examining their influences, several important elements needed for successful reform emerged. Building on a congruent program philosophy and supporting the professional growth of faculty were central and foundational for the reform efforts. In addition, the study points up the importance of both listening and responding to the needs of local K–12 schools and communities as stimuli for reform and factors to work with and around in the implementation of reforms. Also, because of size, purpose and constitution, liberal arts institutions are often conducive contexts for reform to be initiated and to succeed.

Conclusions from this study also suggest need for a wider critical discussion about ways states support and limit reform efforts. These results suggest that for programs to change, states need either to work collaboratively with them or need to define desired outcomes and then support programs getting to those results in their own ways.

Leaders who have been immersed in teacher education transformation during the last few decades have unique perspectives and much wisdom to contribute to the conversation about reforming teacher education. This study has begun the process of dissecting reform efforts and finding patterns of knowledge. More researchers and policy-makers need to examine and tap into the insight of those who have, and are now, living and leading, teacher education program and practice reform. At the end of her interview, one administrator reflected on the knowledge she and others had gained over the years about teacher education reform, "We have learned a lot…if only someone would listen." An important next step is for others to pay attention.

References

Anderson, D.A., & King, J.P. (1987). The dean of education: A demographic analysis. *Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(6), 9-12.

Bowen, L.S. (Ed.). (1995). *The wizards of odds: Leadership journeys of education deans*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

Bush, R.N. (1987). Teacher education reform: Lessons from the past half-century. *Journal of Teacher Education, 38*(3), 1-19.

Carroll, D., Featherstone, H., Featherstone, J., Feiman-Nemser, S. & Roosevelt, D. (2007). *Transforming teacher education: Reflections from the field*. Boston: Harvard Education Press.

Clifford, G.J., & Guthrie, J.W. (1988). *Ed school*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Clift, R.T., Loughran, J., Mills, G.E. & Craig, C. J. (2015). *Inside the role of dean*. New York: Routledge.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2005). The politics of teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 56*(3), 179-180.

Darling-Hammond, L. (Ed.). (2000). *Studies of excellence in teacher education*. Washington, DC: American Association of colleges for Teacher Education.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (Eds.). (2005). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (2011). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan, 92*(6), 81-92.

Denemark, G. (1983). Coping with declining resources in teacher education: What deans can do. *Journal of Teacher Education, 34*(3), 36-42.

Earley, P. M. (2005). Meaning, silos, and high-stakes advocacy. *Journal of Teacher Education, 56*(3), 214-220.

Gardner, W. E. (1992). Once a dean: Some reflections. *Journal of Teacher Education. 43*(5), 357-366.

Gmelch, W.H. (Ed.). (2002). *Deans' balancing acts: Education leaders and the challenges they face*. Washington DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

Goodlad, J. L. (1990). *Teachers for our nations' schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Goodman, L. A. (1961). Snowball Sampling. *Annual of Mathematical Statistics. 32*(1), 148-170.

Holmes Group. (1986). *Tomorrow's teachers*. East Lansing, MI: Author.

Imig, D., Wiseman, D. & Imig, S. (2011). Teacher education in the United States of America: 2011. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 37*(4), 399-408.

Judge, H. (1982). *American graduate schools of education: A view from abroad*. NY: Ford Foundation.

Larabee, D. F. (2004). *The trouble with ed schools.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Mezeske, R. J. & Mezeske, B. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Finding our way: Teacher education reform in the liberal arts setting*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

National Commission on Excellence in Teacher Education. (1985). *A call for change in teacher education*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. New York: National Commission of Teaching and America's Future.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods. (2nd Ed.)*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Roose, D. (2013). Beyond Small and Nurturing: Tapping the Potential of Liberal Arts Teacher Education. *AILACTE Journal, X(*1), 1-18.

Rose, M. (2010). Reform: To what end? *Educational Leadership, 67*(7), 6-11.

Strauss, A. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (2nd Ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tom, A. R. (1997). *Redesigning Teacher Education.* New York: SUNY.

Valli, L. (1992). *Reflective teacher education: Cases and critiques.* New York: SUNY.

Wang, J., Odell, S.J., Klecka, C.L., Spalding, E. & Lin, E. (2010). Understanding teacher education reform. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(5), 395-402.

Wepner, S.B., D'Onofrio, A., & Wilhite, S.C. (2008). The leadership dimensions of education deans. *Journal of Teacher Education, 59*(2), 153-169.

Zeichner, K. (2014). The struggle for the soul of teaching and teacher education in the USA. *Journal of Education for Teaching. 40*(5), 551-568.

• • •

Deborah Roose is Professor of Education and the co-chair of the Education Studies Committee at Oberlin College located in Oberlin, Ohio. She has chaired teacher education programs at Guilford College, Greensboro, NC and Albion College in Albion, MI. She was the former chair of the Models of Excellence Committee for AILACTE and served that organization as a member of the Joint Governmental Relations Committee of AACTE.

Let's Go to Camp: A Model for Clinical Practice

Dr. Mary Ellen Bardsley, Ph.D.
Dr. Kathleen McGrath, Ph.D.

Niagara University

Abstract

This article describes an alternative venue clinical experience that provides advanced literacy specialist candidates and preservice teacher candidates at a small liberal arts university context for advancing their roles and understanding of effective teaching. The article situates our conceptual and pedagogical understandings of teaching and learning in a body of theoretical work, upon which we have relied to craft the clinical experience. This article also describes the multi-layered field experience, and shares lessons learned from the course instructors, literacy coaches, and preservice candidates. Finally, we discuss next steps in our quest to improve clinically rich practice.

Keywords: **alternative venue clinical experience, literacy coaching, preservice teachers, dispositions**

Many challenges face teacher educators as we seek to create clinically rich fieldwork experiences and community partnerships that will prepare new teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to meet the expectations of teachers in the 21st century. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards require effective clinical partnerships asserting "effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P–12 students' learning and development" (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2016, p. 24). Although CAEP focuses on preservice teachers, as university faculty, we are deeply concerned about translating these experiences to include candidates in our professional programs, while at the same time fulfilling real community needs. As such, we seek to craft clinically rich field experiences that fulfill two goals: (a) provide aspiring teachers and teacher-leaders opportunities to develop professional abilities in a real-world setting, while also (b) serving the community.

The goal of this paper is to describe an alternative venue for a clinical fieldwork experience that has provided our advanced literacy specialist candidates and graduate preservice candidates the context for advancing their respective roles and for building their understanding of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective teaching. Concurrently, this venue also addresses the needs of struggling readers in our community. The field experience we describe is born out of the ongoing work of teacher educators at a small liberal arts university in the northeastern United States and a collaborative effort between the university and a neighboring urban school district. First, we situate our conceptual and pedagogical understandings of teaching and learning in a body of theoretical work upon which we have relied to craft the field experience. We next describe the multi-layered field experience. Then, we share lessons learned, through the reflections of the course instructors, preservice candidates, and literacy coaches. Lastly, we discuss the next steps in our quest to improve clinically rich practice to

teach the leadership dispositions and technical skills necessary for our advanced literacy candidates and preservice teachers to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Although this is an alternative venue experience, we believe this model can be replicated by other programs. We believe this model can be relevant to others charged with training teachers and who are interested in servicing community needs.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The principles of constructivism undergird the framework of the fieldwork experience at this small liberal arts university in the northeastern United States. Constructivism has a long and well documented history, although many different perspectives coexist within it (e.g. Bruner & Austin, 1986; Freire, 2000; Piaget 1951; Von Glaserfeld, 1984; Vygotsky, 1978; Wells, 2000). According to Fenwick (2000), all views share one central theme: "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. 248). Social constructivism adds to this notion, explaining learning as a collaborative process. In this view, learning is considered a process where knowledge is co-created through social interaction (Lipponen, 2000). To facilitate knowledge construction, the role of the teacher is not to transfer knowledge, but to create an environment for students to construct knowledge. Therefore, the learning context becomes critical for the facilitation of socially mediated learning.

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, 2001, 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 competencies. To this end, Loughran (2002) notes that it is through the development of knowledge and understanding of the practice setting and the ability to negotiate and respond to such knowledge that the reflective practitioner becomes truly responsive to the needs, issues, and concerns that are critical to shaping practice. Furthermore, Myers (2012) asserts that it is through the process of reflection that beginning teachers begin to connect theory to practice and to develop more sophisticated conceptions of teaching and learning. Thus, fostering reflection and nurturing reflective practitioners has become a critical focus for teacher education programs. Together these elements are actualized through the context of the fieldwork experience, allowing 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.

The Multi-layered Context

Two settings, a small liberal arts college in the northeastern United States, and an urban elementary school also in the northeast, are the context for this study. Due to budgetary cuts, the school district approached the liberal arts college in 2010 about creating a summer reading program to address summer learning loss. The Primary Enrichment Program (PEP) was developed based on these conversations. The PEP Program provides the district's elementary students completing kindergarten to grade three, support services to help increase or maintain student reading levels. The program's goal is to provide response to intervention (RTI), tier 2 students with remediation during their two-week summer enrollment. These students are ethnically, culturally, and socioeconomically, diverse, and represent three of the eight elementary schools in the district. A total of forty children are invited to participate in the PEP summer program (hereafter referred to as the PEP Camp).

The authors have been involved in the PEP Camp for three years. Over time the PEP program has evolved into a multi-layered

partnership with various roles represented by district administration, university faculty and administration, graduate level preservice candidates, and graduate level advanced literacy candidates (see Table 1).

Table 1: *Roles and Responsibility of District, University Faculty and Administration, and Candidates*

School District	Identify eligible students and invite these students to participate. Provide bus transportation (school to university). Provide files for each child -latest DRA and AIMS summary. Provide several guest readers during Camp.
University Administrator	Liaison between school district, university and families. Organizes field trips & guest readers. Provides snacks, study bags for students and supplies candidates need for lessons.
University Faculty	Prepare & train preservice candidates in assessment and instructional techniques as part of foundational course requirements. Prepare and train Advanced candidates to act as literacy coaches. Present during Camp to support candidates.
Preservice Candidates	Assess camp participants and/or analyzed information from school Develop an engaging instructional program based upon children's strengths and needs. Prepare materials for instruction. In pairs or teams, plan whole group portions of the day.
Literacy Coaches	Supported preservice teachers in assessment and instructional techniques. Provided modeling and scaffolding as necessary Provided preservice candidates with resources, reference lists, etc. Observed preservice candidates; shared observations with faculty and observed candidate Facilitated some debriefing sessions

Graduate candidates in advanced literacy and the early childhood/childhood preservice teacher education programs at the liberal arts university prepare and facilitate the PEP Camp sessions that occur on the university campus. The advanced literacy candidates are certified teachers seeking certification and have nearly completed their program, making them eligible to participate in a special topics course entitled *Literacy Coaching*. The preservice teachers (PSTs) are working on their initial teaching certification in a master's degree program and have completed their foundation courses including *The Foundations of Reading*. Two university

faculty provide oversight of the candidates. One faculty works directly with the PSTs, while the other works directly with the literacy coaches.

School district personnel are involved in planning the camp and for facilitating transportation to the campers. Meetings are held in the spring that involve university administration and faculty as well as school district administration, to strategize recruitment of the campers and compile useful information such as assessment data. Throughout the PEP Camp, district personnel visit daily providing support for their students and the candidates.

The camp takes place over the course of two weeks, running from 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. The camp experience includes elements of a balanced literacy program such as interactive read-alouds, guided reading and writing, independent reading, and writing. Field trips utilizing campus facilities, such as the post office, an art museum, or a youth theatre performance, provide opportunities for oral language and listening skills development.

Each day, the PEP Campers meet as a group for a welcome activity and snack. Then the campers join their pre-assigned small groups for 90 minutes of instruction. Small groups include five children, two preservice candidates, and one literacy coach. After small group instruction, the campers meet again as a whole group for an interactive read-aloud from a community "celebrity." The day concludes with another whole group activity or game that supports literacy development.

The advanced literacy specialist candidates act as literacy coaches, providing support for assessment and instruction, and for professional development as well. For example, prior to the camp session, the advanced literacy specialist candidates provide a workshop on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) for the PSTs. During the camp, the advanced literacy specialist candidates are assigned a specific group and are responsible for supporting their assigned PST through consultation, providing resources, and if asked, modeling or assisting with administering Developmental Reading Assessments (DRAs). The literacy coaches also encourage

the PSTs to differentiate instruction, explore multiple instructional approaches and work through paradigmatic barriers and personal bias (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; International Reading Association, 2007). The result is an organic, dynamic experience contextualized within authentic practice, which allows for social interactions, as described by Lambert et al. (2002) between novice (student) and expert (candidate) that extends and transforms knowledge.

During the small-group instructional time, PSTs are encouraged to explore elements of a balanced literacy program. Instructional materials prepared by the PSTs are aligned to the New York State Common Core Standards and are catered towards each camper's individual strengths and areas in need of improvement. Heavy emphasis is also placed on literacy skills development, career exploration and cultural awareness. In addition, campers' interests are considered. For example, based on information illuminated by interest and attitude surveys provided by the district, one group incorporated a superheroes theme into instruction for a group of 2nd grade boys. The week's lessons included working with onomatopoeia, writing comic strips, investigating cartoon and historical heroes, and other elements.

Lessons Learned

Methods

Across three years, a total of twenty-eight PSTs and twelve literacy coaches have participated in the PEP Camp. Data has been collected across three years and includes Daily Guided Reflections (DGRs), as well as a final reflection. Daily Guided Reflections were responses to several open-ended questions including the following:

- What went well/not-so-well today?
- What would you do differently?
- How are you understanding professional collaboration?
- What is going well/not-so-well for you relative to professional collaboration?

- What is a concrete way you are growing as a teacher/ teacher-leader?
- In what ways is this experience shaping your practice?

The final reflection was also open-ended in that PSTs and literacy coaches were asked to reflect on the overall experience. They are also asked about how they have grown in terms of their professional development, and how their practice has changed as a result of the experience.

Data 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). Verification procedures included triangulating the data through intercoder agreement, as well as reviewing and resolving disconfirming evidence (Creswell, 1998; Creswell & Miller, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Analyses provided valuable insights from the perspectives of the literacy coaches, PSTs and course instructors. What follows is a description of lessons learned from the lenses of the literacy coaches, PSTs, and course instructors.

From the Lens of Literacy Coaches

Building solid relationships is the foundation for successful literacy coaching. As per the literacy coaches, the most critical lesson learned during the PEP Camp is that building good relationships is the foundation for successful literacy coaching. One of the coaches expressed it in this way:

> After reading the articles and books (on literacy coaching), I came to realize that the relationship between a coach and almost everyone else in the building affects how well they are able to do the work of their role…A coach has to find a balance between being an authority on reading, being a coach to help other teachers improve their skills as teachers of reading, and not coming across as superior. Each relationship with teachers is different…After participating

> in the PEP Camp as a literacy coach, I saw just how true and challenging relationships with other teachers can be. Some teachers may only want to consult with the coach on their time. Some teacher may want to be coached intensely and take up all the coach's time. Other teachers might not like the idea of "being coached", but see the resources the coach has as valuable enough to look the coach up on their own time…figuring out the right balance while developing effective relationships is tricky.

This lesson corroborates results from a national survey of literacy coaches conducted by Calo, Sturtevant, and Kopfman (2015). Randomly seeking the perceptions of 1,900 literacy coaches, representing a wide range of contexts, and receiving 270 responses, they conclude that being a literacy coach today is as much about character, or coaches' dispositions, as it is about competence (Covey, 2001, 2007; Fullan, 2007). Furthermore, participants reported that to be effective literacy leaders they needed dispositions that included the ability to build trust, collaborate, be flexible, and have a positive attitude.

Calo et al. (2015) also point out that while participants reported these attributes greatly impact their role as literacy coach, few participants received specific training in how to develop these abilities. In contrast, our candidates expressed that the PEP Camp provided them with a 'microcosm of the real world' enabling them to develop, discuss, and reflect on the abilities as perceived as being critical to effective literacy coaching. One of the coaches expressed it this way:

> I had concluded [before PEP started] that coaching was maybe too much for me to handle. After going through camp, seeing, and facing the different challenges I read about, I know that I can not only 'handle' being a coach. My career plans and goals in the education field have changed from wanting to be a special education or English teacher to wanting to be a literacy coach.

Indeed, 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).

The context of the PEP Camp has provided our advanced literacy specialist candidates with opportunities to link theory with instruction, assimilate new learning through instructor guidance, self-reflect, and work through problems collaboratively, as they acquire the essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions of literacy leaders.

From the Lens of the Literacy Coaching Course Instructor

Dispositions need to be thoughtfully considered and embedded into the literacy coaching course. Not only are technical skills critical for effective literacy coaching, but as one candidate put it: "You need to be a relationship genius!" Effective relationships are the foundation for effective coaching, yet teaching the dispositions necessary for developing these abilities is easier said than done. For example, although care was taken to clearly define the role of the literacy coaches which was to create a warm, welcoming, atmosphere for collaboration, and provide myriad resources for the PSTs, it took a few days for the PSTs to answer, in their own minds, the questions: Who are these coaches? What role do they play? And, how am I to work with them?

We found the openness to collaborate with the coaches varied in degree across the PSTs, much as practicing literacy coaches describe the situation in school contexts. Thus, the coaches and the second author spent a good deal of our 45-minute morning debriefing time talking through "how" to develop trust, which ultimately undergirds effective relationships. Those conversations were critical to the scaffolding process (Moran, 2007). One coach describes it this way:

> Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look

at it, I was able to work with a group who was not receptive to my coaching, help, or guidance. I quickly learned how difficult it is to try to help someone who is closed off to the process. The feeling of being observed and 'critiqued' was overwhelming for those new to teaching. I learned through the experience, and particularly the daily debriefings with the other coaches and our professor, that the best thing you can do when dealing with teachers who are hesitant about collaborating is to reiterate each and every day that you are only there to learn alongside them and grow together. As the Camp came to an end, I did see a shift in the one preservice teacher who was initially reluctant to consider any of my suggestions. My constant reminders that we are in it together and my openness to work within his comfort zone showed this teacher the last thing I wanted to do was judge.

From the Lens of the PST Instructor

Debriefing sessions allowed for the powerful modeling of structured professional development. Embedded into every camp day, is an hour-long debriefing session that includes the two faculty, literacy coaches, and the PST. Facilitated by the literacy coaches, this structured debriefing provides the candidates with opportunities to engage in "reflection-in-action" (Schön, 1983, p. 59). For example, PSTs often share the challenges and triumphs discovered during the instructional session and particularly effective instructional techniques, which then serves as the foundation for whole-group brainstorming on a particular student or issue. Inevitably, a lively, collaborative conversation ensues where PST and literacy coaches work as a team to problem-solve issues, as well as to consider pedagogical theory raised during self-reflection. A PST stated that during Camp, "I was able to practice collaboration with others I had no previous relationship with. I became more reflective of not only my teaching style but my personality and how to turn my weaknesses into my strengths." This deliberate reflection provides the PST teachers with a process to develop professional judgment.

Casey (2014, p. 231) 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.

Encouraging the PSTs to reflect on their practice and its impact on student engagement and learning was a constant theme during the debriefing sessions. The PSTs began thinking about their practice. After one debriefing, one PST wrote,

> Yesterday there was some constructive feedback about classroom management techniques. It was also mentioned that this [camp] is a safe place in which to try new things. With that in mind, last night I reflected upon ways to target individual assessment of student reading while maintaining a managed group.

Thus, the collective experiences of the group, coupled with the expertise of the literacy coaches, 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).

One of the coaches described it in this way:

> As a literacy coach, I learned how powerful discussion is. After PEP Camp, each day, there was a debriefing session. Some of the debriefing sessions brought tears to my eyes because it was amazing to hear how much the teachers were helping the students improve their reading skills in such a short time and recognizing the role the other coaches and I played in this.

From the Lens s of the Preservice Teachers

Teaching is not a solo activity. According to the PSTs, the most critical lesson they learned is that teaching is not an isolated activity. One of the preservice teachers summarized this lesson:

> I can't think of a better environment in which to start the process of teaching and managing a classroom. The small group numbers, ample support from peers/coaches/professors and overall warm, open and accepting atmosphere has allowed me to test my skills, try new things and feel confident and eager to take the next step.

This lesson echoes recommendations included in *Transforming Teacher Education Through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers* (2010). This Report states that preservice teachers need to "learn in an interactive professional community" (p. 5) stressing the need for preservice teachers to learn how to collaborate and receive feedback.

The context of Camp and the demands of "being the teacher" differed from the PSTs' previous field work. In their earlier field experience the PSTs were in elementary classroom settings where they primarily worked with small groups of students providing practice or individualized instruction. For the camp, they were the teachers, not assisting in someone else's classroom. This allowed the preservice teacher candidates to see how teachers must work with other educational professionals and paraprofessionals to impact children's learning. As one PST stated, "Based on my experience of camp my vision and understanding of teaching has changed. I realize that it is more of a team setting rather than solo." This statement illustrates how the camp experience allowed the PSTs to begin to understand the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they would need to be part of a professional teaching community.

The camp experience also allowed the PSTs to become active members of a learning community. The Blue-Ribbon report (2010) notes that experts state that school embedded experiences help preservice teachers and, "will provide the prospective teacher with real responsibilities, the opportunity to make decisions and to

develop skills to analyze student needs and adjust practices using student performance data while receiving continuous monitoring and feedback from mentors" (p.10). Camp was not a school based field experience but having to assume the roles of literacy coaches and teachers provided candidates with many opportunities to make decisions, analyze student needs, and adjust their practice to ensure the children were engaged. Because this occurred in an alternative venue that became a microcosm of a school, candidates were involved in clinically rich practice.

Next Steps

As we reflect upon the collective learning of the PSTs, literacy coaches, and university instructors, as well as the evolution of the fieldwork experience the PEP Camp has provided, there are areas we will focus further development. For example, because the context becomes a microcosm of the "real world," leadership theory needs to be thoughtfully embedded into the coaching course. For next summer, the instructor plans to explore some of Steven Covey's work, including *The Four Roles of Leadership* (2001). Because Covey has worked with leaders in business and education alike, an exploration of his work will provide the aspiring Literacy Coaches foundational theory upon which to build.

Secondly, considering our analysis of the reflective data collected from both the literacy coaches and the PSTs, we have realized that models of collaboration need to be incorporated more explicitly into coursework across both programs. From the coaching course perspective, we will continue to focus on the importance of relationship building, the basis of which is trust and effective communication. One of the ways we hope to build trust with the PSTs is to begin the summer with a needs survey. This way, literacy coaches can more effectively work with individual PSTs as well as with the collective whole. From the perspective of the preservice teaching course, when reading programs are addressed in literacy foundations and methods courses, working with literacy coaches needs to be discussed. This will help the PSTs focus on relationship building, including asking for assistance and using feedback.

Conclusion

Clinically rich fieldwork experiences in alternative venues offer myriad opportunities for service to the community, while simultaneously providing teacher candidates with an authentic context by which to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to for teaching competence. However, time and care must be taken in the development of these partnerships. When the university-community partnerships are nurtured with forward thinking, cohesive policy, and commitment on both sides of the fence, as has been the case with the PEP Camp, the result is a win-win.

References

Blue Ribbon Panel on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning (2010). *Transforming Teacher education through clinical practice: A national strategy to prepare effective teachers*. Washington, DC: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

Bruner, J. S., & Austin, G. A. (1986). *A study of thinking*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Calo, K. M., Sturtevant, E. G., & Kopfman, K. M. (2015). Literacy coaches' perspectives of themselves as literacy leaders: Results from a national study of K–12 literacy coaching and leadership. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 54*(1), 1-18.

Casey, T. (2014). Reflective practice in legal education: The stages of reflection. Retrieved from: http://migration.nyulaw.me/sites/default/files/upload_documents/Timothy%20Casey%20-%20Stages%20of%20Reflection_0.pdf

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.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (2016). CAEP Accreditation Handbook, Version 3. Retrieved from http://caepnet.org/accreditation/caep-accreditation/caep-accreditation-handbook%20.

Covey, S. (2001). *The four roles of leadership*. Salt Lake City, UT: Author.

Covey, S. (2007). The leader formula: The four things that make a good leader. [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.stephencovey.com/blog/?p=6

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

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

Darling-Hammond (2006). Constructing 21rst century teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 57*(3), 300-314. doi: 10.1177/0022487105285962

Fenwick, T. J. (2000). Expanding conceptions of experiential learning: A review of the five contemporary perspectives on cognition. *Adult Education Quarterly, 50*(4), 243-272.

Fenwick, T. J. (2001). *Experiential learning: A theoretical critique from five perspectives* (Vol. 385). ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Center on Education and Training for Employment, College of Education, The Ohio State University.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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

International Reading Association. (2007). *Teaching reading well: A synthesis of the International Reading Association's research on teacher preparation for reading instruction*. Retrieved from http://www.readingrockets.org/content/pdfs/article-22980.pdf

Lambert, L., Walker, D., Zimmerman, D.P., Cooper, J.E., Lambert, M.D., Gardner, M.E., et al. (2002). *The constructivist leader (2nd Ed.)*. New York: Teachers College Columbia University Press.

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Lipponen, L. (2000). Towards knowledge building discourse: From facts to explanations in primary students' computer mediated discourse. *Learning Environments* Research, 3, 179-199.

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

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis (2nd Ed.)*. London: Sage Publications.

Moran, M. C. (2007). *Differentiated literacy coaching: Scaffolding for student and teacher success*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Myers, J. (2012). Lesson study as a means for facilitating preservice teacher reflectivity. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 6*(1), 15.

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

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

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory (2nd Ed.)*. London: Sage Publications. Thompson (2013)

Von Glasersfeld, E. (1984). An introduction to radical constructivism. In Watzlawick, P. (Ed.), *The invented reality* (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. In C.D. Lee & P. Smagorinski (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research* (pp. 51-85). New York: Cambridge University Press.

• • •

Mary Ellen Bardsley is an associate professor and the Associate Dean at the College of Education, Niagara University. She teaches graduate and undergraduate and early childhood education and elementary methods courses and courses for the Niagara Quality

Improvement Project. Her research interests include how early childhood educators use and view art and teacher candidate growth. She has several publications in these areas.

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.