

Report of the Expert Panel on Doctoral Programs for Future Teacher Educators
Reflecting AED

Annual Meeting of The National Network for Educational Renewal
Bellevue, WA
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This report summarizes recommendations made in the course of several meetings at the NNER Annual meeting on the question of doctoral programs to prepare teacher educators who understand the Agenda for Education in a Democracy (AED) issues. Two of these meetings were meetings of the expert panel, held on Friday and Saturday mornings. Prior to these meetings members of the NNER Tripartite Council, representing faculty in education, arts and science, and the schools met to discuss their perspectives on the question and provide input to the group. Finally, a presentation on the program of the NNER, which included members of the Panel with some additions discussed the question and made some additional suggestions.

Background on the Issue: Where do teacher educators come from? Our perception as we went into these discussions was that students who entered the professoriate after completing a doctorate in education of some from often came from programs with little or no attention to the issues surrounding teacher education. In a sense, they are “accidental” teacher educators. Perhaps they entered their programs with the intent of becoming teacher educators, or perhaps they had other views. In any event many had no formal education on teacher education. Some of us thought it ironic, given the concern often expressed by teacher educators about teachers entering K-12 teaching with no formal preparation, that there are few formal paths for teacher educators entering the profession.

Our goal was to examine the state of the field from our limited set of experiences and knowledge, identify recommendations to the NNER for programmatic ideas, and to suggest further research that was needed.

The panel, co-chaired by Nick Michelli, Maris Bier, and Ken Zeichner, included experienced teacher educators and faculty from doctoral programs (Frances Rust, David Imig, Bill McDiarmid, Bernard Baladai). It included recent Ph.D. graduates who have entered teacher education, including Laura Gellert, Darla Linville and Lidia Gonzales and Ph.D. students in the final stages of their study and who have not yet determined their future career interest with certainty, including Liza Pappas and Gene Fellner. Ada Beth Cutler joined the group for the formal presentation.

The central theme of the discussion was moving towards “intentionality” in preparing teacher educators not just strong in content but also those who understand AED issues. Gene Fellner, who kept the records of the meetings, summarizes this section of our discussion as follow and suggests the flavor of the work:

Intentionality

Nick began the discussion speaking about the fact that there are very few doctoral programs that *intentionally* prepare teacher educators. CUNY, for example, has 120 students many of whom will probably become teacher educators, and CUNY offers some courses on teacher-education, but there is no systematic sequence for future teacher educators. Nick posed the questions, “Should we have intentional teacher education programs? What should such programs look like? What recommendations should we make to the executive committee?” It was suggested that, an intentional program must be committed to social justice, understanding of democracy and deep subject knowledge and other elements of the AED if we are preparing future teacher educators to support the Agenda.

Ken designed and taught in an intentional Ph.D teacher education program when he was in Wisconsin. It included courses on supervising teachers, educational policy, history of teacher education, comparative international perspectives on teacher ed, professional development and induction and pre-service policy debates. “That was one component. The other part was working in the program as instructor or supervisor and meeting regularly with faculty. The third component was a research component... I realized I needed to model what I wanted them to do. I would employ grad students in professional schools programs that I developed. The grads had to be around teacher educators who were mentoring.” Ken said that the place of teacher education at a research university has always been a struggle, that it is often not taken seriously as a field of study.

Bill added that it was hard for people to understand that research and teacher education are compatible and interdependent. Nick added that almost all the CUNY students teach in teacher education programs and yet they have no seminar on college teaching.

David said that very few of the students at the University of Maryland go into higher education. Most become staff developers, few of them in public institutions. “What population are we attracting? How do we prepare them for different roles in different institutions? I believe everyone should have a clinical teaching experience off campus.” Marisa said, “We have students who haven’t taught in public schools who end up being teacher educators.” Liza said she was one of those teachers, “I’m teaching a masters level course and I just got my masters degree. I would have liked to learn teaching methodology or at least be able to reflect on my teaching but no one ever came to observe me.” Ken added that the clinical element was necessary.

Programs Discussed

We had the benefit of representatives of several programs which prepared teacher educators and a representative of one of the major studies of the Ed.D. carried out by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching which has engaged in an examination of the education doctorate, although not specifically on programs for preparing teacher educators. The Carnegie work, in which David Imig participates, is found at <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/education-doctorate>. One of our settings, The University of Connecticut participates in the Carnegie project as do a group of other

research universities. In addition we discussed the University of Wisconsin program (mentioned above), the Pennsylvania State University Program (also a Carnegie program), the Montclair State University program (just approved), and the City University of New York's Ph.D. in Urban Education. Time limited the depth of our discussion of specific programs, but our recommendations suggest follow-up.

Recommendations to the NNER

The major conclusion of discussions, and the force behind our recommendations, is that the preparation of teacher educators should be intentional, especially if we seek future faculty members who understand the work of the NNER and the Agenda for Education in a Democracy. Here are our recommendations:

- Survey NNER institutions with doctoral programs to determine where “intentional” programs for the preparation of teacher educators exist. Also ask for the proportion of graduates who enter teacher education for all programs.
- Ask for rich descriptions of such programs including course descriptions, requirements, organizational patterns, expected research, and placement of students where available.
- After reviewing the descriptions, recommend structures, content, and experiences to be considered.
- Do follow-up studies of doctoral graduates of NNER settings. Where are they, what are they doing, how are they doing? Where possible, disaggregate these data from data already collected by institutions.
- Include a strand on preparing teacher educators in future NNER meetings.
- Examine the idea of an institute for practicing teacher-educators.
- Include elements in programs specifically related to the NNER principles, for example the nature of the tripartite along with the community. Involve future teacher educators in the negotiations required to establish partner school relationships.
- Prepare graduate students who will teach in teacher education programs for their work. Build seminars for teaching assistants to debrief and enhance their experiences.
- Include clinical faculty and administrators in the planning of and execution of the program.

- Continue outreach to policy makers and engage in research that informs our work. Gather stories of programs that work and successful efforts to influence policy makers and our own institutions.
- Present an annual award for the outstanding dissertation that focuses on teacher education at the NNER meeting.
- Actively use the NNER to recruit and employ graduates of programs in line with the principles through job fairs and other devices.

Conclusion

We believe it is critically important that we engage in succession planning and not leave the future to chance. These recommendations leading to programs that intentionally prepare teacher educators are a good first step. We recommend convening the expert panels each year to report on progress.

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