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EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY:

A Journal of the NNER

National Network for Educational Renewal
NNER

Editor

Josefina V. Tinajero, University of Texas at El Paso
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About the cover photo: The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) sits on the border of the United States and Mexico, and this photo shows a view from the university extending into downtown El Paso and across into the city of Juárez, Mexico. It is part of UTEP's mission to extend the ideals of education in a democracy through access and excellence throughout the Paso del Norte region. The photo, cover artwork, journal formatting and layout courtesy of Academic Technologies (<http://at.utep.edu>) at UTEP.

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A Letter from the Editor

In this issue of *Education in a Democracy, A Journal of the NNER*, members continue to document and disseminate the outstanding work taking place in universities and school campuses across the nation as they engage in various types of activities associated with the NNER agenda—from collaborative inquiry, curriculum development, teacher/leader preparation, and professional development to policy development and advocacy. As authors share the ongoing research and inquiry in schools and universities, they continue to advance the NNER Agenda for Education in a Democracy and its four-part mission—promoting responsible stewardship of schools and universities; improving teaching and learning through challenging and nurturing pedagogy for all learners; providing equal access to quality learning for all students; and providing students with the knowledge, skills and disposition to become fully engaged participants in our democratic society.

The presentation of articles in this issue would not be possible without the dedicated professionals involved with the publication of Volume 6. Special thanks are due to members of the Editorial and Review Boards for their assistance in reviewing manuscripts in a timely manner—in particular Ann Foster and Greg Bernhardt who assisted in reviewing numerous manuscripts, and provided advice and guidance. Special thanks are also due to colleagues and members of the Editorial Board at UTEP who took on additional editorial and design responsibilities—Arturo Olivarez, Pat Witherspoon, Reynaldo Reyes, and Bill Robertson, and to my Editorial Assistant, Diana M. Bernal, a student in the Community Counseling program in the College of Education. Thanks also to the University of Texas at El Paso Printing Press.

In addition, this issue would not be possible without the individuals who were successful in having their manuscripts accepted for publication. Their work reflects the successful, informative and innovative research currently underway in the NNER member sites.

Dr. Josefina V. Tinajero, Editor
The University of Texas at El Paso

**Hybrid Educators in Communities of Practice:
Advancing Simultaneous Renewal**

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This exploratory qualitative study examined hybrid educators' and university teacher education colleagues' experiences for alignment to simultaneous renewal aims as advanced by the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER). Sixteen semi-structured interviews revealed individual, course/program, and classroom/school-based examples of renewal as well as renewal that extended beyond partner settings. Examination of policies and practices, role conceptualizations, and renewal outcomes suggested that a greater focus on cross-institutional communities of practice may support heightened collaboration, hybrids' preparation for teaching adult learners, and more effective utilization of hybrids' expertise. Opportunities to maximize simultaneous renewal outcomes through cultivation of communities of practice are advanced.

Hybrid Educators in Communities of Practice

It is well known that classroom teachers as school-based teacher educators are key influences upon teacher candidates' practice during and after program completion (Clarke, Triggs & Neilsen, 2013; Dunne & Bennett, 1997; Ramsey & Bulger, 2011). However, reform-based mandates distance p-12 educators from university-based teacher educators by focusing each on different priorities. Current measures increasingly compel classroom teachers and administrators to focus on value-added student data (ODE, 2013). Assessments of teacher preparation units, however, examine "program data about candidates, graduates, and clinical practice" with little focus on p-12 student/classroom outcomes (NCATE, 2014, p.3; see also NCATE, 2008). Systematic collaborations may reveal and support attainment of goals common to p-12 and university educators.

A college of education in a midwestern university affiliated with the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER) developed the hybrid educator role as an innovative approach to collaborative stewardship of schooling and simultaneous renewal. As hybrid educators, p-12 school teachers (typically cooperating teachers from partner districts), each serve as a full-time university-based faculty member for one year. In addition to assuming programmatic teaching and/or supervision roles (assigned on the basis of programmatic need), the hybrid educator gathers, initiates, and reports on ideas, strategies, and resources to enhance educational offerings across contexts.

Simultaneous Renewal as Compared to School Reform

Simultaneous renewal of teacher preparation programs and p-12 schools, a key focus of the Agenda for Education in a Democracy advanced by the NNER, focuses on cultivating mutual benefits for both entities (Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley, & Goodlad, 2004). Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley, and Goodlad contrast renewal and reform stating:

Whereas school reform attempts to include in daily educational fare something that presumably was not there before, school renewal creates an environment—a whole culture—that routinely conducts diagnoses to determine what is going well and what is not. The locus of power and influence shifts dramatically. Opportunities arise to capitalize on what’s already working and to build on current successes, to zero in on those areas in need of particular attention and to formulate and pursue over a time a vision of what an institution might be. (p. 156-157)

This university attempts simultaneous renewal through sustained democratic boundary spanning opportunities which promote interactions Zeichner (2010) identifies as third spaces. Third spaces “bring practitioner and academic knowledge together in less hierarchal ways to create new learning opportunities for prospective teachers”(p. 92). Additionally, the hybrid educator role seeks to extend benefits to arts and sciences faculty, as well as teacher education faculty, p-12 teachers, and their students.

Why Classroom Teachers as Hybrid Educators?

As cooperating teachers, classroom teachers have greater impact on beginning teacher practice than field supervisors or academic program faculty (Anderson, 2007). However, teacher education reform places increasing demands on cooperating teachers as field-based teacher educators. Programs now require flexibility in teaching approaches, openness to leadership by student teachers, and acceptance of new assessment tools including classroom videotaping. Partnership for mutual understanding, exchange of insights, and building upon strengths is essential. The present study critically examines the hybrid educator role as experienced by hybrid educators and university colleagues to identify strengths and opportunities for increased simultaneous renewal. Much research articulates the strong influence of cooperating teachers on teacher candidates’ instructional practices (Anderson, 2007; Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Dunne & Bennett, 1997).

Method

To generate findings rooted in the data rather than confirming or refuting a priori hypotheses, grounded theory approaches (Creswell, 1998) were utilized. Constant comparison of data, extensive memoing, and member checking for accuracy of interpretation, and reservation of the review of the literature until after data analysis were hallmarks of our approach. Borrowing from phenomenology (Creswell, 1998), conducting individual semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data enabled us to understand how individuals' lived experiences informed the meanings they made of the hybrid role. Three broad research objectives emerged to frame the study:

1. To illuminate policies and practices framing the hybrid educator experience.
2. To understand hybrid educator and university colleague conceptualizations of hybrid educator roles and how these conceptualizations informed their interactions.
3. To explore mechanisms, scope, and duration of simultaneous renewal through the hybrid educator roles as enacted within the university setting.

Data Sources

Individual semi-structured interviews of six hybrid educators and ten university faculty colleagues served as primary data sources. All participants are referred to by pseudonyms in this report. Interviews were one to two hours long and occurred over four months. Specifically, each hybrid educator articulated his or her perceptions of roles, responsibilities, preparations, supports, and challenges. Collaborations and relationship development were also shared and led to discussion of perceived contributions, benefits, and suggestions for future implementation.

Interviews with university faculty colleagues addressed understandings of the purposes and development of the hybrid educator role as well as inter-

actions with specific hybrid educators. In particular, conceptualizations of the hybrid role, supports and challenges to hybrid educators, and associated benefits and struggles were a focus. Changes to individual or programmatic perspectives, practices, and policies as a result of interactions with hybrid educators were also a central aspect of the faculty members’ conversations. Faculty members made suggestions for improvement. The ten university faculty interviews included conversations with faculty spanning all position titles and tenure ranks and included both teaching and administrative faculty.

Participants provided artifacts and communications emergent from their experiences surrounding the hybrid educator position. These included annual reports, position descriptions, records of collaborations, meeting minutes, emails, and course assignments developed by or with hybrid educators. Researcher notes and memos also informed the study.

Demographic information on the hybrid educators is provided in Table 1.

Table 1- Hybrid Educators - Demographic Information

Hybrid Educators			
Pseudonym	P-12 Role(s)	University Assignment	Partner District Type
Dan	Upper Elementary (Math Focus)	Middle Childhood	Suburban
Rich	High School Social Studies	AYA Social Studies	Urban

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Danielle	Early Childhood	Foundations of Education; Educa- tional Psychology	Suburban
Laura	Early Child- hood/ Middle Childhood	Foundations of Education; Educa- tional Psychology; Diversity	Urban
Margaret	Early Childhood	Foundations of Education	Suburban
Tabitha	Elementa- ry Gener- alist	Foundations of Education	Urban

Data Analysis

A constant comparative approach to the qualitative data analysis was utilized. Throughout the research process new data were compared to existing emergent themes for theme refinement and data categorization (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As data were analyzed, emergent themes informed the research process. During the open coding pass (Creswell, 1998), (a) experiences of preparation, mentorship, and support; (b) the context and scope of personal and professional benefits of the experience; and (c) the scope and duration of post hybrid-year interactions were identified as key categories within the data. Before engaging in axial coding to identify relationships among themes, coding for perceived roles and qualities contributing to success in hybrid educator roles was conducted. Salient interactions which revealed these views, and outcomes which stemmed from conceptualizations advanced were also noted. This coding enhanced our understandings of what was going on within the data and supported our ability to understand differences in the lived experiences across all hybrid educators. A selective coding pass identified statements that exemplified categories and best illustrated the developing theory of how authentic engagement of hybrid educators as professional partners shaped simultaneous

renewal outcomes. Finally, in theoretical coding, connections were extended from the theoretical model grounded in the data to the extant literature on legitimate peripheral participation with communities of practice (Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002) and how such participation may support teacher educator development (Murray & Male, 2005; Zeichner, 2005; Kosnik et al., 2011).

Findings

Consistency of the Hybrid Educator Framework with Simultaneous Renewal Aims

Analysis revealed the hybrid educator framework as fundamentally consistent with the aims of simultaneous renewal. As the program was developed, attention was paid to creating environments that would shift power dynamics. As stated by the initiating Dean:

...if you focus only on any one of those [arts and sciences, teacher education, and the public schools] at any given time, you're sub-optimizing the chances of having great educator preparation programs, good relationships with the arts and sciences, and wonderful schools that are really making maximum efforts to improve students' ability to succeed...ability to achieve, grow, learn. So, you really have to do all that at once....

Specifically, this Dean worked to gain the partnership of classroom teachers from the public schools, and articulated:

If we were really going to be true to this notion of how do we get people from the public schools to interact with us and the people from the arts and sciences, you have to free them up so that they can engage. So we thought that we would try to do that.

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A key element of the distributed power relationship was the development of a formalized cost-sharing mechanism. By Memorandum of Understanding, each participating district agreed to continue to employ the hybrid educator, supporting their salary and benefits, while the university paid for the long-term substitute (often a recent teacher education graduate) who would fulfill the hybrid educator's school-based roles. This arrangement also fostered collaboration by creating a mechanism by which university faculty would gain insights from close and ongoing interactions with a district teacher while the school/district would gain insights from close and ongoing interactions with a recent program graduate. Discourse to support renewal across stakeholder groups was stewarded through regularly occurring dialogue, and collaborative analysis of shortcomings, strengths, and possible solutions. Specifically, a prior head of partnerships articulated:

We had frequent get togethers at the Berry Room [campus formal dining] where we brought the faculty here and administration and school liaisons and the partnership coordinators, everyone together for a breakfast, and during that partnership meeting we would have people from a partnership share something that they're doing that will help everyone.... We had those, I think it was, either three or four times a year. The first enactment of the hybrid educator position was consistently regarded as highly successful in terms of simultaneous renewal aims and was identified as a guide or "high bar [to which] other hybrid years were compared" (Brett, Tenured Faculty Member). As described by a faculty member who worked closely with Dan, the first hybrid educator, "All intentions were to replicate this type of experience...." Mutual benefits of the first enactment of the hybrid educator role were distributed across the teacher education faculty, the arts and sciences faculty, particularly within the mathematics department, and the home school of the hybrid educator. Across conversations with faculty representing all tenure categories, administrative and teaching roles, similar reasons for regarding the first-year enactment of the hybrid educator role as a model and success signaled shared goals.

Multiply acknowledged successes included the development of ongoing sustained lesson study groups between the mathematics department faculty and the hybrid educator's school faculty, co-planning and co-teaching between the hybrid educator and a university faculty colleague, and academic presentations and publications based on the co-teaching work. Additionally, several faculty members were aware that the hybrid educator's p-12 students received tutoring by teacher candidates each term across the 6 years since Dan's hybrid year.

Dan's engagement with the university also extended beyond his assigned program area and content discipline to include development of a Workshop on Disabilities collaboratively developed with a field placement director. This workshop has been conducted each year and has been expanded to include all foundations courses and associated faculty. The relationship between Dan, his school and district, and the university has continued since his hybrid year and has resulted in his work as an ongoing adjunct faculty member, participation in several departmental committees, ongoing research, and ongoing cross-context collaborations. Recently, Natalia, the co-teaching faculty member from Dan's hybrid year, has taken a sabbatical to engage in Dan's classroom as a co-teacher. In addition to these professional benefits, faculty members who interacted with Dan discussed personal benefits, such as coming to better understand the strengths and needs of a current classroom teacher and developing an in-depth friendship in addition to a healthy working relationship. Dan echoed this sentiment. This hybrid partnership was highly anticipated to serve as a model and to ground the hybrid educator role in simultaneous renewal.

This enactment, however, characterized the most rich and in depth of the collaborations between a hybrid educator and university faculty and the most significant evidence of simultaneous renewal. Enactments of the hybrid educator role, which were less robust in terms of simultaneous renewal aims, were attributed by hybrid educators and faculty colleagues to issues of clarity of expectations, responses to mandates, and external pressures. In particular, hybrid educators and faculty colleagues spoke extensively to how issues related to

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clarity of expectations and response to mandates were evidenced in the policies and practices which shaped the ongoing development of the hybrid educator role. Lesson learned: The hybrid educator role was developed with attention to simultaneous renewal aims and stakeholder collaboration. Maximal renewal outcomes were associated with the engagement of multiple stakeholders and attentive to the demands of one another's contexts.

Policies and Practices: Influences on Collaborations and Contributions

Each of the six hybrid educators identified policies and practices enacted during their hybrid year as essential to the types of collaborations and contributions achieved toward simultaneous renewal aims. The Dean who initiated the hybrid educator role saw it as one built upon Howey and Zimpher's (2006) notion of boundary spanners: They [Howey and Zimpher] called the people who could have conversations with arts and sciences, education, community people Boundary Spanners. Hybrid educators were people that could teach kids in third grade, but they could also teach college students reading literacy skills. But they could also then have conversations with people from the language arts and English department about like linguistic analysis if they needed to. And they could move across those different dimensions and be an effective professional. Hence, the term hybrid educator—doing these different roles.

Course assignments. Few hybrid educators, however, saw the Dean's notion of intended hybrid educator roles mirrored in their lived experiences. With teaching as a primary role, hybrid educators typically expected to teach courses directly tied to classroom expertise and strengths they articulated during the interview process. However, most were assigned to teach courses they perceived as minimally related to their expertise. For example, as a second-grade teacher, Danielle expected that she might teach "content classes how to interact with students and maybe teach specific skills that she employed with her own students." Instead, she found that she was assigned to "Educational Psychology, Community Diversity, Phonics,

and Content Area Literacy courses.” Feeling out of her element, she recognized courses as “assigned on the basis of what needs to be covered, not on areas of hybrid educators’ expertise.” Additionally, she struggled to find models and supports for her first experience of teaching adults. Lesson learned: teaching assignments for hybrid educators should blend responsiveness to programmatic needs and hybrid educator expertise.

Preparing to teach adult learners--instructional materials and strategies. Each hybrid educator received course descriptions and most received master syllabi before courses began. Working syllabi distributed to teacher candidates by prior instructors were also made available to some of the hybrid educators. Danielle’s statement summarized the experience relayed by the majority of the hybrid educators: “I just kept emailing and knocking on doors of friendly faces, and two really helpful people took me under their wing. I have lots of skills and ideas, but I couldn’t have made the day-to-day work without them.” Danielle also relayed an early communication with a tenured faculty member in which she asked for “a syllabus, and maybe a few activities to get started.” The faculty member declined stating that the documents were their “own intellectual property.” The electronic teaching tools used also proved challenging. “I wish I had known there was an orientation for using CourseStudio.... Just uploading assignments and knowing how to make them viewable to students was baffling.... By the time I got started, I guess the orientations had already happened.”

Gaining a foothold into the practice of teaching adults in the university setting proved challenging for four of the six hybrid educators. Statements indicating this viewpoint included, “It is just so different from teaching at school... figuring out how much to scaffold...how much independence to expect” (Danielle). Systematic processes for consultation with prior hybrid educators were not enacted. Absence of such structures was largely attributed to prior hybrids’ having returned to their full-time teaching positions. The most recent hybrid educator stated, “One of the key benefits for me of conducting these interviews

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was getting to know the other hybrid educators—learning from their experiences.” All hybrid educators agreed that conferring with prior hybrids regarding roles, responsibilities, and successful strategies for transitioning to university-level teaching would have been beneficial. Lesson learned: Partnership with faculty colleagues is desired by hybrid educators and supports the development of appropriate expectations of adult learners. Instructional technologies and data management individually built, informal mentoring relationships shaped the extent to which hybrid educators readily learned university-based technologies for assessment and data-management. Faculty colleague availability to provide support was closely tied to hybrid educators’ acclimation to the university setting. For Rich, managing the accreditation data that came from student work was particularly challenging. As he retold his experience, it was clear that he valued the support of the program director for the program he was assigned to, but found that his hybrid year was the year the NCATE assessment was due and the professor was on sabbatical. Establishing regular contact became an issue. Because the program director was the main faculty responsible for managing student data as well as teaching subject matter courses, Rich took on these responsibilities with minimal guidance during this particularly challenging time. He described most faculty as “really wanting me to do well, but just caught up in a very high-stakes assessment for the College...there was little time to teach me how to send out assignments, what data was important, or how to really get into teaching adults.” Rich spent the majority of his time navigating the new terrain of teaching and managing data in the university context. Four hybrid educators discussed the stress of learning to teach adults as limiting attention to identifying and acting on potential benefits to their schools and districts and on reaching out to arts and sciences faculty. Lesson learned: Hybrid educators need lead time and faculty supports to effectively prepare for the logistic aspects of teaching in the university context.

Meetings as a forum for collaboration, hybrid educators commented on involvement in college, department, and program meetings in terms of their potential for fostering collaboration and guidance. Meetings were typically held on Wednesdays, but most hybrid educators were assigned to teaching during meeting times. Those who were available did not experience a consistent set of expectations regarding program, department, or college meeting attendance. Most shared that they rarely attended department or college meetings because they either felt that their input was not welcomed or did not understand the protocol for meeting participation in terms of who should demonstrate voice. “The meetings had a pretty strict agenda, and titles seemed important. I didn’t think my ideas were what they were looking for, so I stayed more to my teaching” (Danielle). In contrast, Dan recalled “attending every meeting I could. I wanted to learn and contribute; just listen and get ideas and try to share to really be a part of the group.” Dan’s attendance and participation was recognized and appreciated by university faculty colleagues. His personal disposition was often highlighted as a contributor to his success. One faculty member commented, “He was always there and sharing ideas. He just stands out...someone who really got into things....” Two hybrid educators engaged in field supervision and associated meetings. Meetings increased notably over the course of the six years. Laura for example stated, “By the time I got toward the end of my hybrid year, they started to have more meetings because of all the things that were coming down the pike in education....”

Laura preferred field supervision meetings over program meetings: “I attended the ones that were relevant [mainly field supervision meetings], but stayed out of the really hierarchical stuff that I didn’t feel pertained to me” [described to include department and college meetings]. Laura shared, “I went to a couple of meetings every week or two weeks to talk about observations and going out [field supervision].... Everybody who went out to do supervision came to one big meeting.... They brought everybody up to par on what was going on.” In most recent years, hybrid educators have been consistently assigned to

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teaching roles on meeting days. Because most cross-program collaborations occur in the context of department meetings, limited meeting attendance may have hindered hybrid educators' opportunities to develop relationships with faculty colleagues. Lesson learned: Hybrid educator participation in relevant meetings should be encouraged and supported through scheduling practices and interactional protocols.

Conceptualizations of the Hybrid Role— University Faculty Colleagues

Three key perceptions emerged from the interviews of the Across interviews with hybrid educators and university faculty colleagues, relationship building and opportunities for collaboration and contribution were closely linked to hybrid and faculty perceptions of the hybrid educator role. Faculty colleagues—hybrid as “guest,” hybrid as “learner,” and hybrid as “partner.” Notably, conceptualizations tended to vary by faculty classification and promotion and tenure rank. Tenured/tenure-track faculty tended to view hybrid educators as guests. For these faculty members, the goal was “to provide the hybrid educator with a positive experience which built the partnership.” Little focus, however, was placed on assessment or development of hybrid educators' capacities as teacher educators within the campus setting. Most faculty advancing this conceptualization recognized that hybrid educators may need help with getting started, but tended to be unsure of specific needs and expressed having offered limited assistance to “not offend” the hybrid educator. “We don't know what they know and don't know” (Aline, Tenured Faculty Colleague).”

Non-tenure track faculty colleagues expressed greater comfort with differentiated and scaffolded identification and addressing hybrid educators' needs. However, their comments often reflected feelings of guilt related to knowing how to help, but not having the time to implement what they knew. These faculty members discussed multiple responsibilities and increasing time pressures of completing their own tasks and cited taking on more responsibil-

ity for stewarding programs. These faculty members often suggested that the hybrid educator role should begin earlier to allow for modeling, partnering, or co-teaching, and should end later, “perhaps being a two-year commitment” to allow for hybrid educators to have more time, practice, and support in enacting campus-based roles and cross-context collaborations.

Notably one tenured faculty member, Natalia, stood out in that she explicitly discussed the hybrid educator role as rooted in partnership—that the hybrid and associated faculty colleagues should be developing materials, selecting texts, and devising activities jointly: “Dan and I met about weekly. We planned every session together...figured out how to show the theories through artifacts and examples from his classroom...engaged our candidates in data analysis to move the students’ learning forward.” Conversations with other faculty colleagues shed additional light on her conceptualization of the hybrid role. At the time of Natalia’s initial interactions with Dan, she was pre-tenure and was actively envisioning new teaching methods and partnerships. “Like Dan, she was finding her way...didn’t really have a set plan yet, so collaboration, particularly with someone so willing like Dan, was perfect” (Brett, Tenured Faculty Colleague).

Conceptualizations of the Hybrid Role--Hybrid Educators

Hybrid educators described conceptualizations of their roles as changing across their hybrid year. Prior to taking on the hybrid role, all hybrid educators viewed themselves as partners and contributors. Strong, positive recommendations from their building and district administrators and selection for the position bolstered their confidence and pride and contributed to early conceptualizations. During the experience, however, most hybrid educators came to identify themselves as “teachers/instructors” rather than as “partners,” often citing the hierarchical differences of the university and school settings and uncertainty regarding territorial boundaries of content areas and logistical processes. Five of the six hybrid educators mentioned lack of assessment/feedback by faculty

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as a challenge which exacerbated their feelings of uncertainty. Though students provided feedback through largely quantitative ratings, few offered narrative comments on course evaluations. Four hybrid educators relayed that qualitative feedback and advice related to their performance would have helped them to know “whether they were doing a good job.” In addition, most hybrid educators were informed that one of their roles was to conduct a “research project,” but few completed the project or had a firm grasp of its intended scope. Lack of research experience or faculty assistance was frequently cited as a barrier to successful project completion and contributed to hybrids’ tendency to question their progress. Lesson learned: A clear, consistent conceptualization of the hybrid educator role should be advanced by program leadership. Specifically, attention should be paid to developing faculty partnerships which enrich both hybrid educator and faculty strengths, contributions to teaching, student and candidate learning and sustained cultivation of benefits to both programs and schools.

Mechanisms, Scope, and Duration of Simultaneous Renewal Outcomes

Renewal of individuals, hybrid educators and university faculty colleagues discussed renewal in terms of renewal of individuals and renewal of classrooms/schools/programs. All hybrid educators participating in this study identified the experience as promoting individual renewal. Three main types of renewal of individually held perspectives were articulated. All hybrid educators discussed individual renewal which centered upon new understandings gained from having challenged themselves to take on the campus-based role and developing a greater understanding of student teachers’ emotions and experience. Margaret stated,

Scaffolding and honest conversation is really important. Context is important, and we need to take that seriously. That was really my biggest takeaway, that I need to scaffold more in the beginning as my student teachers get the hang of how our school works and how it is similar to or different from what they know.

Some also experienced individual renewal as they developed heightened connections between theory and practice. For example, Dan stated, “I used educational psychology with my 5th graders, but being able to explain it explicitly and connect it to the theories was something that came from the hybrid work.” A third form of individual renewal, goal clarification, was expressed by three hybrid educators who considered future full-time, campus-based roles in teacher education. Danielle shared,

I was exploring change in my life. I had battled cancer. I had taught in the same context for years. I was wondering if it was time for me to move on to teacher education. I found out that I love my classroom and that’s where I need to be. I grew in my understanding of how to be a better cooperating teacher. I learned that my classroom is the best place for me to make impacts and be a model as a teacher educator.

For most university faculty colleagues, renewal most centered on increased candidate awareness of school-based mandates from a practicing teacher’s point of view. One lecturer remarked, “Many of our faculties haven’t taught in a school in years. It is helpful to have someone around who can share today’s classroom issues with the candidates firsthand.”

Renewal of courses/programs, classrooms/schools. Longevity of simultaneous renewal outcomes for courses, programs, classrooms, and schools varied from intermittent, short-term forms of renewal to ongoing engagement across multiple years. Both the scope and longevity of renewal outcomes evidenced influences of conceptualizations of the hybrid role and impacts of these conceptualizations on the extent to which hybrid educators articulated their ideas regarding renewal. Enacted and hoped-for but unrealized forms of simultaneous renewal at the courses/programs and classrooms/schools levels were identified. The previously described outcomes of Dan and Natalia’s collaborations exemplified renewal across courses/programs and classrooms/schools within a “partner” conceptualization. As the partnership expanded, their lesson-study project

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was scaled-up to address the needs of practicing teachers across multiple districts and ultimately led to significant grant funding. Stewarded collaboratively with arts and sciences faculty, this program continues to provide benefits to school partners. Faculty colleagues who viewed hybrid educators as “learners” or “guests” on occasion arranged for their students to visit hybrids’ schools/districts to see course content in action. For most, however, such school-based interactions were limited to the hybrid year and were largely contingent upon the extent to which hybrid educators were encouraged to maintain interactions with their schools/districts during their hybrid year.

Hybrid educators described as “guests” or “learners” by university faculty colleagues recognized offering fewer contributions to lasting renewal and typically attributed the limitations of their contributions to minimal authentic opportunities for collaboration with university and/or home district faculty colleagues. For example, Danielle described how her district could serve as an exemplar and offer extensive modeling to student teachers if the university held classes for p-12 students on campus. She suggested that teacher candidates could teach lessons to the students after team-based instruction between classroom teachers and university faculty. Danielle presented an extensive rationale, suggested teachers for participation, and articulated a plan for the financial support of such a program. However, she shared that in her role as “guest... it was not my position to suggest innovative changes.” She felt that she “shouldn’t step on faculty toes.” Margaret articulated similar stifling of ideas which could have led to simultaneous renewal. During her year at the university, new state-level assessments of both teachers and candidates were under development. Also a teacher leader endorsement student during her hybrid year, she worked closely with one university faculty colleague to develop a research project which “could have informed programmatic approaches to preparing teachers and candidates for the new assessments.” Margaret shared that she “never encountered an opportunity to offer [her] findings to the department faculty; there just wasn’t that type of voice for a visitor.”

Each of the hybrid educators continued to partner with the university after their hybrid year through employment as an adjunct faculty member. Most, however, mirrored the sentiment best captured in Laura's words: "I loved being able to contribute and stay connected as an adjunct, but I must say it is lonely. Most of the faculty is gone before adjuncts come in. We're like passing ships." Notably, each hybrid educator said that given the chance, they would return to take on the hybrid role again. Danielle's remark summed it up well: "By the time I got good, I was gone." Laura relayed that she would also love to make contact with some of the students she taught--"to see if renewal went into their classrooms; to see if they are using any of the ideas I tried to expose them to." Lesson learned: across enactments of the hybrid educator experience, hybrid educators as well as faculty colleagues should be made aware of the different levels at which renewal can occur and should be encouraged to use this information to undergird individual and collaborative goal setting.

Discussion/Conclusions

Responding to the charge to "determine what is going well and what is not" to "build on successes" (Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley, & Goodlad, 2004, p. 156-157), we identified strengths and areas for growth within the hybrid educator role as enacted. This research identified the hybrid educator role as rooted in simultaneous renewal aims and as having realized benefits for hybrid educators, university colleagues, and programs/schools. Funding structures, hybrid educator involvement in individual programs and field experiences, and individual relationships forged toward shared aims were key hallmarks of renewal. Ongoing stewardship will be essential to maintaining the strengths of the hybrid educator role. Key areas for enhancement of the role centered upon attention to cultivation of communities of practice across teacher educator groups to consistently deepen the scope and duration of simultaneous renewal. Specifically, we argue for the cultivation of a climate supportive of collaborative development and embracing of the contributions and learning needs of hybrid educators as expert classroom teachers and novice campus-based teacher educators.

Hybrid Educators in Communities of Practice

The hybrid educator role, like other efforts toward collaborative stewardship of education and its outcomes, exists within a structural and cultural context deeply entrenched in institutional boundaries.

Communities Settings and University Departments and Programs

We suggest increased attention to the articulation of domains of interest such that interests shared between hybrids and university colleagues may be identified. “A well-developed domain becomes a statement of what knowledge the community will steward, it is a commitment to take responsibility for an area of expertise and to provide the organization[s] with the best knowledge and skills that can be found” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 32). To facilitate achievement of this goal, we suggest that hybrid educators be afforded opportunities to consider and articulate research aims relevant to their roles in their p-12 settings prior to campus-based engagement. Opportunities to discuss research interests or overarching professional goals should be embedded into the interview process, so university faculty know the extent to which they share domains of interest with incoming hybrid educators. In this way, the hybrid educator role may become an experiential learning setting for both hybrid educators and university faculty alike.

Hybrid educators and university faculty colleagues alike should be positioned as both learners and contributors and should be actively encouraged to lead in the areas of their expertise. We argue that bi-directional experiences of legitimate peripheral participation are essential to maximized simultaneous renewal outcomes. Legitimate peripheral participation denotes a mode of engagement of “a learner who participates in the actual practice of an expert, but only to a limited degree and with limited responsibility for the ultimate product as a whole. . . . This means among other things that it [learning] is mediated by the differences in perspective among the co-participants” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 14-15). Thus, hybrid educators and university faculty colleagues would share responsibility for the development and outcomes of collaborative research, teaching, projects, and initiatives.

Teaching of adults is an element of hybrid educators' work which supports the programmatic aims of university faculty colleagues and provides hybrids a unique experience of campus-based teacher educator roles. This primary role of hybrid educators is an authentic experience of the teaching responsibilities of beginning campus-based teacher educators. Notably, however, Berry and VanDriel (2013) identify "very limited, if any, support for beginning teacher educators, let alone a certain learning trajectory" (p. 125). Attention must be paid to cultivating the teaching capacity of hybrid educators within the university context through mentorship, induction, and ongoing support. Our conversations with hybrid educators identified contextual scaffolds and professional relationship-building as hallmarks of collaboratively developed learning trajectories and shared responsibility for outcomes. Because most hybrid educators spent significant amounts of time independently learning to teach adult learners, they found little time for innovation or initiating collaborations. For example, upon completion of his hybrid year, Rich did not return to his school able to articulate and share a product of the experience that benefitted the school or district. Ultimately, the district administration declined to engage in subsequent hybrid educator partnership with the university. Future studies should explore school administrators' perspectives on the hybrid educator role to facilitate partnership in building upon strengths and addressing perceived shortcomings.

Often absent, shared enterprises and domains of interest, hybrid educators often worked in relative solitude, at a significant distance from university faculty colleagues, mirroring challenges faced by many cooperating teachers. Limitations to cooperating teachers' access to university faculty has been well documented in the academic literature, and preparation and feedback have been described as "woefully inadequate" (Clarke, 2007, p.9; see also Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Byrd & Fogelman, 2012; Mitchell, Clarke, & Nutthall, 2007). Specifically, the lack of training or feedback to classroom teachers functioning as teacher educators (Boudreau, 1999; Koskela & Ganser, 1995; Ramsey & Bulger, 2011; RATE IV, 1990) coincides with cooperating teachers' lack of identity

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as teacher educators. Experiences of minimal training or feedback were evidenced in the hybrid educator context. This finding was particularly problematic because hybrid educators returned to work as classroom/cooperating teachers, to play essential roles as classroom models, mentors, guides (Graham, 2006; Nguyen, 2009), providers of feedback (Ralph 2003; Sim, 2011), and key contributors to student teachers' emotional support, and classroom resources (Butler & Cuenca, 2012). Ideally, the hybrid educator role would provide p-12 educators with stronger networks with university faculty and stimulate positive change by fostering collaboration through mutual recognition of strengths and contributions by educators across contexts. Unaddressed, such challenges may inhibit hybrid educators' ability to steward improvements to teacher preparation, student learning, or the partnership upon their return to their home districts.

Rooted in the literature on communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002) and support of novice teacher educators (Kosnik et al., 2011; Zeichner, 2005), we argue that the hybrid year should begin earlier, in the summer of the preceding academic year, to allow for observation, technological and procedural familiarization, and collaboration around strategies for teaching of adult learners. Additionally, we argue that to promote simultaneous renewal, university faculty should be introduced to and engaged with the faculty from the hybrid educator's home district prior to and throughout the hybrid year. Funding sources should be examined to determine whether the hybrid experience may extend across a two-year period. An increased early focus on cultivating shared understanding of policies, procedures, and techniques associated with teacher educator roles promotes the later availability of time and attention to innovation. As Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) assert, "One of the primary tasks of a community of practice is to establish this common baseline and standardize what is well understood so that people can focus their creative energies on the more advanced issues. Meeting this baseline is essential to even be in the game...." (p. 11)

Consistent with the enactment of effective communities of practice, and with Zeichner's (2010) notion of shifting power dynamics, the hybrid educator experience should include bi-directional forms of mentoring guidelines as a framework for early interactions between partnering faculty as well as informal, flexible, and ongoing engagement in shared practice. Conversations with hybrid educators and university faculty identified both tacit and/or explicit hierarchical structures as inhibiting renewal outcomes. For example, concerns with offending hybrid educators ultimately resulted in withholding of information which may have benefitted them.

All teacher educators involved in hybrid roles should feel free to make their tacit knowledge explicit to their colleagues. "Sharing tacit knowledge requires interaction and informal learning processes such as storytelling, conversation, coaching and apprenticeship of the kind that communities of practice provide" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 9). Within a context of trust, colleagues will be able to express what they already know, explore connections between theory and practice, and propose new ideas. Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) aptly state, "...what makes managing knowledge a challenge is that it is not an object that can be stored, owned, and moved around like a piece of equipment or a document. It resides in the skills, understanding and relationships of its members as well as in the told, documents and processes that embody aspects of this knowledge" (p. 11). The challenge of conflicting views of the hybrid educator role emerged as connected to collaboration and in turn limited simultaneous renewal outcomes. Hybrid educators' initial confidence based on classroom practice and potential contributions often shifted toward stress, self-doubt, and withholding ideas as hybrids internalized university colleagues perceptions of them as learners/guests. As one way to address this challenge, we advance that a foundational framework of hybrid role interactions should be the free exchange of ideas. "In fact, the best communities welcome strong personalities and encourage disagreements and debates. Controversy is part of what makes a community vital, effective and productive" (Wenger, Mc-

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Dermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 10). Without recognition of the unique skills and abilities both hybrid educator and university faculty bring, the level of trust needed to engage in of practice are more prevalent and are often more robust within than across institutions. We suggest that this condition of education is at least in part due to governmental mandates which fragment educator groups by institutional type and often fail to provide for feedback loops or mechanisms which may unify p-12 and higher education settings as partners toward shared aims. In the coming years, we will continue to implement the hybrid educator role by partnering with school faculty. In addition, we will encourage bi-directionality by supporting faculty who wish to take on hybrid educators' p-12 roles. Whereas the hybrid educator role may appear to suggest the development of a partnership akin to the now-rare campus laboratory school, our goal is not to replicate such endeavors. Rather, we seek to create a network of local and distributed expertise which enables practicing educators and teacher candidates to engage with schools and communities in authentic contexts which mirror schools in which our candidates will most likely be employed. To steward this aim, we will enact new approaches to establishing communities of practice with our partner school faculty through the hybrid educator role.

Communities of practice engage in collective learning by attending to both the pursuit of shared enterprises and attendant social relations (Wenger, 1998). As reform-based mandates continue to emerge, communities of practice hold growing promise as a tool for unifying educator groups toward simultaneous renewal aims. As stated by Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002),

Appreciating the collective nature of knowledge is especially important in an age when almost every field changes too much, too fast for individuals to master. Today's complex problem solving requires multiple perspectives.... We need others to complement and develop our own expertise... (p. 10)

These articulations mirror the Association of Teacher Educators' Standards for Teacher Educators, which focus on collaboration and development of vision as

hallmarks of the professional practice of teacher educators (ATE, 2008).

Our findings suggest that waning attention to the cultivation of communities of practice led to unintended shifts in hybrid educator roles. Re-instituting prior initiatives, such as regularly occurring opportunities for dialogue and celebration of successes, may help to extend renewal of individual hybrid educators and university colleagues to cultivate shared domains of interest among additional school disagreements, debates, or controversy with the aim of enhanced effectiveness and productivity is unlikely.

In short, examination of hybrid educator experiences has revealed that engagement in collaboration is essential to sustaining communities of practice and to promoting in-depth and enduring simultaneous renewal. Interactions between hybrid educators and university faculty colleagues will vary across experiences and will require ongoing stewardship. As Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) assert, some communities of practice grow spontaneously while others may require careful seeding. Yet in both cases, organizations can do a lot to create an environment in which they can prosper: valuing the learning they do, making time and other resources available for their work, encouraging participation, and removing barriers. Creating such a context also entails integrating communities in the organization—giving them a voice in decisions and legitimacy in influencing operating units, and developing internal processes for managing the value they create.... If organizations fail to take active steps in this direction, communities of practice will still exist, but they are unlikely to achieve their full potential. (p. 13)

This research suggests that the university and others engaging in cross contextual partnerships should enact focused and sustained efforts to cultivate communities of practice among teacher educator groups. The hybrid educator role, rooted in simultaneous renewal aims, holds significant promise to maximize the individual and classroom/school/program benefits and support cross-contextual commitment, mentorship, and self-diagnosis through attention to shared aims and collaborative action.

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Win-Win Field Experiences in Our Partner Schools

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This article is based on a presentation given at the 2013 National Network for Education Renewal Annual (NNER) Conference in Albuquerque, NM. The University of Nebraska - Kearney elementary education program partners with area K-5 schools to assure quality schooling for a democracy and quality preparation of educators. As a member of NNER, our department values the renewal process and has continued to adjust and improve field experiences that will benefit everyone involved. This article focuses on four key field experiences in partner schools settings: Math Methods I, Math Methods II, The Science/ Social Studies/Content Reading Block, and The Primary Literacy Block.

Win-Win Field Experiences

As a member of the National Network for Educational Renewal, the University of Nebraska – Kearney elementary education program, partnered with a number of area K-5 schools, agree on the four-part mission to assure quality schooling for a democracy and quality preparation of educators. **Equity and Excellence** (providing access to knowledge for all children), **Enculturation** (educate the young for thoughtful participation in a social and political democracy), **Nurturing Pedagogy** (bases teaching on knowledge of the subjects taught, established principles of learning, and sensitivity to the unique potential of learners) and **Stewardship** (take responsibility for improving the condition for learning in P-12 schools, institutions of higher education and communities) are the foundation upon which all field experiences are built (Goodlad, Soder & Sirotnik, 1990).

Our university recognizes strong partnerships as the foundation to effective teacher preparation. All participants are engaged in the moral dimensions and the advancement of the democratic ideal. Lucero (2011) concluded that:

Partner schools serve as clinical laboratories for effective instruction that involve University professors as theoretical and pedagogical experts; Schools administrators as curricular leaders in their buildings; PK-12 teachers are the practitioners of theory; university students as the beneficiaries of the marriage between theory and practice; and ultimately, and most important the PK-12 students who are the recipients of and participants in a thoughtful intentionally developed, focused, curriculum reflective of Goodlad's moral dimensions. (pp. 42-43).

“Unlike reforms or projects that have a beginning and an end, the renewal work of the NNER assumes that we must question assumptions and continue to make changes as we see where improvements can be made and gaps in quality education exist” (www.nnerpartnerships.org). In 1995, UNK joined NNER and in 1998 the initial renewal process began. More than fifteen years later, our

elementary education program has continued to adjust to improve field experiences that will benefit everyone involved. The goal is to create real world application of the theoretical framework. Providing preservice teachers (PSTs) with opportunities to apply what they are learning in methods courses is often a goal of teacher educators (Cooper, 1996). “Real classrooms, with real children, in a real school” (Lucero, 2011, p. 41).

The elementary education program at the University of Nebraska – Kearney focuses on four key field experiences in partner school settings: Math Methods I, Math Methods II, The Science/Social Studies/Content Reading Block, and The Primary Literacy Block. This paper will describe each of the field experiences. Although the particulars may slightly change each semester, the key component is the ongoing and responsive relationship between all those involved (teacher educators, partner school teachers, PSTs, and elementary students) creating a “Win-Win” learning opportunity.

Math Methods I

For many PSTs, the field experience that accompanies Math Methods I is their first actual teaching experience. Additionally, many PSTs enter teacher education programs with preconceived notions they formed as elementary students about the teaching and learning of mathematics (Brown & Borko, 1992; Lubinski & Otto, 2004) and based upon their perceived success as elementary students. Furthermore, many PSTs often envision teaching mathematics as they were taught, mostly through the verbal transmission of knowledge and pre-existing methods and procedures (Coffey, 2004; McDiarmid, 1990; Smith, 1996; Thompson, 1992). These combine for a situation where teacher education faculty often face resistance from PSTs to learning and teaching mathematics in a conceptual or more reform-based manner (Lubinski & Otto, 2004; McDiarmid, 1990; Mewborn, 1999; Timmerman, 2004).

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With this seemingly impossible feat at hand, roughly 60 PSTs enroll in Math Methods I each semester. The PSTs not only enroll in Math Methods and the accompanying field experience, but also Math 230 (Mathematics for Elementary Teachers I). This three front approach; or having PSTs concurrently enrolled in a math methods course, a field experience, and a math content course; has shown significant gains in PST's mathematical content knowledge, as well as their views of mathematics becoming more consistent with that of reform mathematics (Strawhecker, 2004).

Collaboration, Assessment, Differentiation, and Reflection

Approximately one month into the Math Block courses, the PSTs are randomly paired and then assigned one to two first graders, as well as one to two fifth graders. The partner school where the field experience takes place, with 86.2% of the students receiving free or reduced lunch, is considered a school of poverty, as defined so by having more than 75% of students receiving free or reduced priced lunch (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). The PST "Planning Partners" will work with their grade-level "Math Buddies" throughout the semester, thus providing the PSTs a wonderful opportunity to be able to see and document how the different students learn over the eight visits, as well as see the benefits of developing positive relationships with their Math Buddies. Though the teaching materials in the form of grade level-specific, research-based *Partner Games*, are given to the PSTs, each PST is responsible for preparing to teach one fifth grade game and one first grade game during the 40-minute sessions with each grade level. The Partner Games are conceptually based and can be differentiated to three different levels to better meet the needs of the Math Buddies. Alternately, while one Planning Partner is teaching, the other will gather assessment data regarding the Math Buddies' knowledge and understanding as it relates to two game-specific learning indicators or objectives for each game. The gathered assessment data, recorded on Field Notes forms, must capture at least two detailed examples from gameplay, including quotes and commen-

tary, for each learning indicator. After each teaching session, the PSTs collaborate to make data-driven decisions regarding whether the students need more practice on each given objective or if the data suggests student mastery. This assessment data will also be used for to make informed decisions regarding differentiation of the games PSTs will teach and play with their Math Buddies on subsequent visits.

Additionally, after each session, students are guided to purposefully reflect on the session, including their Math Buddies' learning and response to teaching methods, as well as the PSTs' perceptions of the effectiveness of their own teaching and assessing skills. McDiarmid (1990) noted that purposeful experiences paired with reflection opportunities help PSTs attend to what is important and establish a more immediate need for increasing their personal knowledge, which ultimately should increase the likelihood the PSTs will be effective, reform-based teachers when they get their own classrooms.

Math Methods II

After PSTs at this Midwestern University complete the first required mathematical experience (Math Methods I, Math Field I, and Math for Elementary Teachers I) those in pursuit of an endorsement in elementary education proceed to the second level. This requires yet another content course specific to elementary math, and the integrated Math Methods II/Math Field Experience. PSTs will focus on more advanced teaching skills such as lesson planning, assessing, providing feedback, and reflecting.

For the field experience, collaborative groups of four PSTs are placed in one elementary math classroom for the duration of the semester, with the methods course preceding or following the field time. As typical for this university, the Math Methods II instructor also serves as the field supervisor. The 25-clock hour field experience, completed in six elementary partner schools, provides PSTs with the opportunity to apply what they are learning in mathematical

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content and pedagogy. For example, many PSTs have limited experiences with manipulatives and fail to understand how the use of a concrete model may impact student learning. After seeing firsthand how manipulatives benefited young learners, one PST reflected:

When I was in elementary, the teachers stood at the board and wrote down the material and tried to explain it to us. This worked ok. However, in my field experiences, I had the opportunity to teach mathematics through the use of manipulatives. It worked much better. Several times I heard third graders comment, “Oh, I get it.” It was very encouraging. In my future classroom, hands-on experience and manipulatives will be essential.

Another important consideration for connecting a field experience with a methods course emerges in the development of course assignments. The ability to integrate work between a university classroom and field experience setting places professors in an advantageous position, one where they can aid in PSTs understanding (Cooper, 1996). Some of these integrated Math Methods II assignments include the development of assessment items, lesson plans with and without SMARTboard interactivity and authentic reflections. In addition to the time spent working directly with elementary children, the Math Methods II PSTs have two planned opportunities, one at each end of the semester, where they talk one-on-one with the classroom teacher while the elementary children engage in math station activities planned by the other PSTs. Heaton and Lewis (2001) found that PSTs engaged in a math field experience not only gained appreciation for the difficulty of teaching “basic” mathematics, but also became more receptive to learning math back in the university classroom.

Yet another key to success with the Math Methods II field experience has been the collaboration that takes place between the university professor/field supervisor and the elementary school faculty. Annually, a one-day summer workshop is scheduled for professional development as well as reflection. Since the field experience model was first conceptualized more than a dozen years

ago, minor improvements and a shared vision have transpired.

Science Methods

Each semester, approximately fifty PSTs enroll in a nine-hour “content block,” consisting of Reading in the Content Areas, Elementary Social Studies Methods, Elementary Science Methods, and Field Experience. Traditionally, each of the fifty PSTs were placed in a nearby K-6 classroom to complete their field experience component of content block; however, it soon became evident that due to the pressures of No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) and/or scheduling issues, classroom teachers were not teaching science or social studies during the time the PSTs were scheduled to be in the elementary classrooms for field experiences. (NCLB, 2001)

Therefore, the format of the field experience was restructured to allow all PSTs the opportunity to observe and teach science and social studies during the course of the semester. As a result, the content block now prepares PSTs to teach science and social studies through a variety of opportunities including field trips, outdoor education, and co-teaching. A brief description of each learning opportunity pertaining to the Science Methods course follows.

Field Trips and Outdoor Education

PSTs currently partake in a field trip to the local Audubon Center located approximately twenty miles from campus. Depending on the semester, PSTs experience various inquiry-based learning opportunities facilitated by the education director during the field trip. For instance, in the spring, PSTs observe and learn about Sandhill Crane migration, while in the fall, PSTs wade in the Platte River looking for macro-invertebrates, and sweep-net the tall prairie grasses to locate and identify insects and seeds. Additionally, PSTs re-

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ceive two days of on-campus training for Project Wild and Aquatic Wild during the semester. As certified instructors for the program, the education director and the course instructor, facilitate the workshops. Once PSTs successfully complete the workshops, they receive free Project Wild and Aquatic Wild lesson plan resources courtesy of the Council of Environmental Education to use during field experience opportunities, as well as their future classroom.

Co-Teaching Opportunities

PSTs are then able to collaborate with peers to develop and teach one of the Project Wild and Aquatic Wild lessons to K-5 students during university-hosted outdoor education days at some of the local elementary partner schools. Since many PSTs report having low self-efficacy with science content (Lee & Housteal, 2003), co-teaching and Project Wild Workshops collectively build PSTs' confidence to teach inquiry-based science.

Throughout the semester, PSTs are provided opportunities to co-plan and co-teach six consecutive 5E lesson plans (BSCS [Biological Sciences Curriculum Study], 1989) to a small group of fourth graders at a nearby elementary partner school. The 5E model is a scaffolded lesson plan format that supports teachers' use of inquiry-based instruction. The topics for the 5E lessons are selected according to partner school teachers' recommendations, so that the PSTs' instruction aligns with current science standards. Recently taught topics include electricity and animal adaptations.

Teaching the same small group of fourth graders on six consecutive school days enables the PSTs to get to know their students' academic and social needs, so they can better differentiate and prepare instruction on a day-to-day basis. Furthermore, this format allows PSTs to build rapport and develop critical student-teacher relationships (Pianta, 1999).

Yet another one-on-one instructional format used during the elementary science methods field experience over the past two years has allowed PSTs to facilitate learning with one or two fifth-grader(s). Over the course of ten days, PSTs assist fifth graders as they generate investigable questions, plan and conduct investigations, collect data, and report the results of their inquiry-based investigation during a science convention or science expo (Barth, 2007). Unlike the traditional “science fair,” the science convention or science expo focuses on standards-based learning, which includes teaching science as inquiry (NGSS [Next Generation Science Standards], 2013). Furthermore, the science convention format is more representative of authentic science conferences where scientists share recent findings, rather than competing for first place or conducting an experiment over and over again in front of an audience. As PSTs work with the same student(s) to prepare for the science convention, they are able to use ongoing assessment to differentiate the learning process based on their fifth graders’ readiness, interests, and learning styles (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010).

Primary Literacy Block

The Primary Literacy Block, which has approximately fifty students enrolled each semester, is a seven-credit hour block of classes that includes Phonics and Word Study, Literacy Assessment, Primary Literacy and Field Experience in Kindergarten through Third Grade classrooms. The courses are required of all elementary, early childhood, and special education majors. All of the courses must be taken at the same time and are taught with an integrated approach.

In order to provide PSTs with a diverse field experience as well as meet accreditation requirements, the field experience for this block requires students to travel 45 miles to the east or west. These partner schools have an English Language Learner population ranging from 80-85%.

The field experience for the Primary Literacy Block is usually one of the last field experiences before student teaching. Traditionally, this was a morning

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field experience with PSTs rushing back to campus to take an afternoon class. There was a definite need for a full day field experience in order to witness an authentic elementary school day. Darling-Hammond (2010) found that “the most powerful programs require students to spend extensive time in the field throughout the entire program, examining and applying the concepts and strategies they are simultaneously learning about in their courses” (p.40). Providing a full day field experience allows PSTs to witness transitions, observe reading integrated throughout the curriculum/subject areas, participate in classroom management, implement whole group and small group literacy lessons, and be a resource to allow for differentiated instruction in the primary grade classrooms.

Scheduling issues were the first concern in the transition to a full day field experience. It took buy in from the entire teacher education faculty to allow for the Primary Literacy Block to have an entire school day designated with no other Monday course conflicts. Once the scheduling issues were minimized, the transition took several semesters with occasional time constraints as PSTs were converting to the new, all day field experience.

Regardless of the placement, all PSTs have the opportunity to administer an assessment and interpret the results. Some of the assessments include, Informal Reading Inventories, sight word lists, letter identification, motivation to read surveys, and spelling inventories. PSTs also plan and teach whole-class literacy based lessons. Depending on the cooperating teacher, some of these lessons are directly from the basal while others are literature based. Many PSTs share that this field experience provides their first opportunity to teach to a lesson to an entire classroom of elementary students. The hope is that the PSTs will also have multiple opportunities to provide one on one intervention, facilitate small group instruction, and teach to the whole class when feasible.

According to Holm and Horn (2003), reflection should be an important component throughout the entire teaching and learning process. PSTs use a blog tool to post weekly reflections in a purposeful effort to bridge classroom learning with experiences in the field. Blog prompts are provided but PSTs are

encouraged to reflect on anything pertinent that they witnessed or experienced in their field experience. The inclusion of pictures is also beneficial and feasible since all PSTs have an iPad to use. Topics include classroom libraries, organization of literacy instruction, assessment, spelling, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The reflection allows students to connect theory into practice. One PST's reflected in her final post:

My cooperating teacher at this point feels very comfortable with me working with individual students, small groups, and even whole class teaching. In the beginning, I helped with bulletin boards, correcting papers, etc. but now I am teaching lessons, working with small groups in timed readings, giving spelling tests to students who may have been absent, leading Math time. The transition from the beginning of field experience until now has been so wonderful.

Conclusion

Although there remains limited large-scale research on effective field experience models, anecdotal reports from teacher educators, employers, and teaching candidates confirm the belief that more and earlier field experiences can result in better-prepared teachers and prolonged work in the profession (Hurling, 1998). After surveying cooperating teachers in our partner schools, 76% rated the overall quality of our teacher education program as high quality and the remaining 24% rated it as good quality, with no responses at the level of poor quality. Additionally, 83% of the cooperating teachers indicated that our PSTs are very well prepared to teach, 17% felt our PSTs were somewhat prepared, while 0% identified our PSTs as being unprepared to teach. Moreover, 100% stated that they are likely to host PSTs again.

Purposeful field experiences in elementary education courses, such as those described, have the potential to prepare PSTs to successfully teach in their future classrooms. Arranging in tiers, the field experiences and providing

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PSTs with increased time in partner school classrooms also supports the classroom teacher's ability to provide the means for all elementary students to meet targeted standards. As a result of our ongoing field experience renewal with partner school input, PSTs, K-5 classroom teachers, and teacher educators now frequently describe our field experiences as being "Win-Win" opportunities.

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**Beginning to Dream with Families, School, University and Community:
Starting Collaborative Partnerships for Everyone's Learning**

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This article describes the establishment of a school, community and higher education partnership in a rural US community. It examines an educational partnership through reflections on the hopes and dreams of families, teachers, and teacher-candidates striving to provide access to equitable education for all learners in one school community. Understanding the goals of frequently marginalized families motivated an educational community to come together to plan to achieve them. Reflections revealed the potential to foster everyone's learning when trusting relationships and sharing power are at the center of partnership practices.

Introduction

How should a school district-university partnership begin to work toward the challenging goals of both improving educational opportunities for families and children of an elementary school located in a high poverty, agricultural valley, while also growing future teachers who are well prepared to partner with multilingual, immigrant families?

This article describes a network of family-school-university relationships that resulted in commitment by a teacher education program and a P-6 school to join with parents to learn their hopes and dreams and to share power in order to achieve them. The reflections by participants on their interactions, dialogue and decision making processes were used as the basis for analysis. The evidence suggests that one way to nurture simultaneous renewal in both a teacher education program and in a primary school is to begin by listening to families' hopes and dreams while also fostering a process for collaborative family-school-university decision making.

The teacher and teacher-candidate reflections reveal how attitudes and beliefs about culturally and linguistically diverse families and children are mediated by the process of listening and learning *from and with* families. The sharing of power in order to identify and work toward achieving mutually beneficial educational priorities is documented in this examination of the first year of the family engagement processes of a wider school-university partnership. The partnership will be studied for an additional four years beyond this account.

Background

The school-university partnership formally began with a state award of a *Collaborative Schools for Innovation and Success (CSIS)* grant (2011). This new state initiative funded several university elementary education faculty as

well as teachers and administrators from one high need, diverse elementary school, to begin semi-monthly meetings in the summer of 2012 (Carney, Carroll, Nutting, Chu, Timmons & Flores, 2012). The meetings began an ongoing dialogue for how to work toward the goals of increasing academic outcomes for P-6 students and to better prepare future teachers to do the same. A university faculty member and the school principal had a history of previous partnerships to support school district instructional assistants to become certified teachers. Other past university-school relationships included limited student teaching placements and episodes of university sponsored teacher professional development. Also, several teacher-leaders in the school were alumni of the university partner. The challenges of almost an hour of travel time between institutions and a lack of resources to engage in partnership planning were cited by university faculty as barriers to sustaining an ongoing partnership.

In 2010, two years prior to obtaining the CSIS grant, the school of education adopted a teacher candidate recruitment and retention plan and began new initiatives designed to live up to the institution's mission of "fostering a culture of learning that advances knowledge, embraces diversity, and promotes social justice" (Chu & Carroll, 2010). This document served as a strong rationale, two years later, to embrace the proposed university grant and long term partnership with this low income, and linguistically/culturally diverse school. At the same time, a new dean of the college of education encouraged faculty and school partners to see the common goals of the college of education's mission with the larger goals for all students to receive a high quality, equitable education, found in *NNER's Agenda for Education in a Democracy*, inspired by the work of John Goodlad (Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley & Goodlad, 2004).

This article will focus on the first year of a family engagement subcommittee that began with a focus on ways to (1) learn what families wanted for themselves and their children as members of the school community, (2) involve teacher candidates in family engagement field experiences at the beginning of their university teacher preparation program, and (3) engage local bilingual/

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bicultural high school and community college students in service learning experiences involving these families.

Demographics

The 2012-2013 elementary school demographics reveal a majority Latino student population (66.5%). In this group, 34% of the students received bilingual services with 13% identified as migrant families. An unknown portion of families identifying as Latino, originate from the Oaxaca region of Mexico and speak an indigenous dialect in addition to Spanish. The school has 81% of all families living in poverty.

Table 1. Student K-6 Demographics (2012-2013)

Family Ethnicity	Percentage
Latino – American	66.5
European – American	30
Native-American	2
Asian-American	1
African-American	.5

N = 440 total students

The university teacher candidate demographics were very different from the school population, with approximately two thirds being European-American and slightly less than one third being members of underrepresented popula-

tions in careers in teaching (e.g., culturally and linguistically diverse, persons of color or men). Consequently a goal to recruit more bilingual/bicultural future teachers from the local high school and community college was central to the ‘grow our own’ partnership vision of having future educators more closely reflect the demographics of local families. The partnership group was committed to wrestling with the complexities of teaching and learning in collaboration with all members of the school community, including those often left out of the conversation -- families and future teachers (e.g., community college service learning students, and university teacher candidates in beginning field experiences).

Purpose, Objectives and Methods

Reflective research questions

When the university and school grant leadership group began to discuss a partnership goal of engaging multilingual families more fully with the life of the elementary school community, the following questions arose from discussions: (1) What are the current approaches to building relationships, engaging and supporting decision making by families? (2) What is the best way to open up dialogue and learn the perspectives of families? How might families be invited to share their hopes and dreams for their children and their school community? (3) How could teacher-educators, teacher-leaders, and a principal plan for new ways of partnering with families and community? (4) How might service learning experiences impact teacher candidates’ and college students’ beliefs and attitudes about the role of the teacher in working with families?

Searching for a methodology to understand family perspectives

In the fall of 2012, the CSIS grant funded a consultant to administer a written needs assessment survey to teachers, school staff and a representative

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sample of parents. The survey questions were based on the characteristics of effective schools (Marzano, 2003). In the area of “parent and community involvement”, questions for teachers focused on whether the school: encouraged involvement by families; effectively communicated student progress to parents; had activities to celebrate the diversity of the community; and collaborated and communicated effectively with families of all cultures. These areas of parental involvement (Epstein, 2001) are sometimes referred to as “the greatest hits” by many practitioners (Hong, 2012, p.19). Traditional ways to engage families are currently being critiqued by members of diverse schools with large immigrant populations because the strategies are often implemented in ways that seem designed to most effectively engage middle class families who have had positive past schooling experiences (McWayne, Melzi, Schick, Kennedy & Mundt, 2013; Warren, Hog, Rubin, & Uy, 2009).

In addition, families were asked if they felt respected and encouraged to participate, and if children were encouraged to meet high expectations. Upon review of the written survey results, the subcommittee felt additional ways of learning teacher and family perspectives were required because the responses were so extremely positive (three quarters to 90% affirmative) that the assessments did not shed insight into areas for family-school partnership growth. The family subcommittee of faculty and teachers wondered, “*Do families feel uncomfortable sharing their perspectives or their suggestions for changes in a written survey?*”

In reviewing actual teacher comments a few responses hinted at areas for the partnership to begin its efforts: “*(We) must find more effective ways to reach parents of other cultures and non-English speaking families...*” and “*(I have a) strong desire to work to make all families full partners and active participants in a child’s education*”. Some parent comments related to the need for more consistent home-school communication and the need for all materials to be translated into Spanish. A parent stated, “*Call us more and tell us what is going on at school...*”

The family engagement committee wondered if families would more freely share their perspectives, values, goals and interests if teachers offered home visits or school based family–teacher meetings. If teachers facilitated a more reciprocal face to face dialogue would parent perspectives be shared and could this lead to an increase in parent engagement in the school? The principal cited the school district goal to “*engage families to provide encouragement and support to students, ensuring that student needs are met and their educational opportunities are enhanced*” as support for trying a new approach.

Data and Narrative Analysis

Participant comments from family focus groups, individual interviews, field notes during family engagement subcommittee meetings and family literacy classes, as well as university student reflective course writings were analyzed using grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz, 2011). Specific themes were identified through narrative analysis (Pushor & Clandinin, 2009). The identified themes suggested key ideas for the family engagement subcommittee to test with parent participants, which fostered new cycles of analysis of participant comments about family engagement strategies.

Participants

Participants in the activities detailed in this article are described below with reference to their local language and cultural knowledge since the ability to communicate in the families’ home languages was central to this partnership.

- *The family engagement partnership subcommittee:* Two university faculty members, two teacher-leaders (one was bilingual), a kindergarten teacher, a bilingual paraeducator, the school counselor, the principal and the university funded grant coordinator.
- *The families:* Thirteen multilingual Spanish and/or Mixteco or Triqui

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speaking families (originating from Oaxaco, Mexico) and three monolingual English speaking families participated in home visits or teacher-family visits at the school. Twelve of the sixteen families later participated consistently in a twelve week family literacy course.

- *The teachers:* Nineteen teachers participated in home visits with an average of three teachers visiting one family per visit. The voluntary participation was supported by each small home visit group having at least one Spanish speaking member, and one teacher with home visiting experience. Forty teachers and paraeducators attended professional development on home visiting protocols and culturally relevant interactions with families.
- *The college students:* Four university teacher candidates and three community college education students took a *Family and Community Relationships* course while engaging in service learning at the school. Four of the seven students were bilingual, with three students speaking the Spanish dialect of the families.

Activities and Results

First home visits

In the spring of 2013, sixteen families volunteered to have teachers come to their home or to meet privately at school to learn their hopes and dreams for their child. The family engagement subcommittee adopted this simple focus in order to focus on understanding how multilingual families wanted to communicate with the school and to put into practice the belief that parent partnerships would emerge if all families participated in a process in which they were treated with respect and listened to as people who are rich in ideas. A focus on teachers listening to families in their homes was in contrast to the school's usual

approaches of all school events such as ‘back to school fairs’, and literacy or math nights. While highly attended, these events centered on one-way school to family communication of important school practices, policies or goals. A fun, activity based climate pervaded at these school events with an additional focus on supplying low income families with access to needed school materials and links to community resources. The other major family engagement opportunity was the Parent-Teacher Organization meetings. These meetings were usually sparsely attended with fewer than ten mostly middle class parents attending.

Professional development for teachers

The decision to use home visits to learn about family goals was met with an expression of anxiety by many teachers. While excited to go out into the community, many teachers admitted they had only gone to family homes to hand out information at the front door, had never been inside of homes, or scheduled home visit appointments in advance of dropping off school information. In response to these concerns, teacher participants were offered professional development on home visiting protocols and ways of engaging families in a dialogue rather than employing the usual teacher stance of the ‘expert’ talking at families (Scheinfeld, Haigh & Scheinfeld, 2008, pp. 115-128). Before and during the professional development session on home visits, teachers were asked what they wanted to learn or if they had concerns. Comments included:

Will families be uncomfortable? Will I be uncomfortable? How will I structure the visit? Will families feel the need to take time off work to prepare food or clean the house? Is this worth the time/resources it requires?

However, the most common request from teachers was to learn more about the perspectives of families originating from the Oaxaca region of Mexico. Teachers noted that these were families who did not participate in school events very often despite the availability of paraeducator translation partners. A cultural insider and graduate of this district, currently working as a district paraeducator,

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agreed to partner with two bilingual teachers and answer teacher questions and share experiences. He candidly described his struggles with some of his former teachers who did not understand his culture, his language or his families' values. He also shared his current satisfaction at making a difference for families like his own as an instructional assistant and partnering with more culturally responsive teachers today. He and the two teachers offered ideas for engaging in culturally respectful dialogue within the roles and family structures of local families from indigenous cultures. By the end of the professional development session, a common teacher understanding of the goals of the home visits was documented as:

1. A primary focus on teachers beginning to listen to families in ways that would foster stronger trust, build relationships and encourage shared decision making.
2. To develop a reciprocal family-school partnership that represents the families 'voice' in the school. A second home visit was made to document family comments to be posted in the school hallways with family permission.
3. Invitations for parents to consider how they might want to engage in meeting educational goals for themselves, for their children, and how they might want to participate in the school.

After the visits, every participating family had their 'hopes and dreams' quotes displayed in the elementary school hallway with their child's drawings and photos from the visit. Common hopes were for finishing school or going to college and many mentioned specific qualities they hoped their child would develop. For example,

Our dream is that she respects all she encounters and is respected in return. We hope that she ...reaches the dreams she sets for herself... not the dreams others may have...

Additional parent comment themes were similar to the following:

- *They were well organized and had a flexible schedule that worked for my family.*
- *I feel as though it helped me feel better about reaching out to the teacher with concerns.*
- *Communication existed but this is much better.*
- *My only hope is that all of the teachers get to visit homes and are more incorporated in the education of our children. I hope that all parents allow this time for their children.*

After the home visits, analysis of teacher survey comments resulted in the following themes emerging:

- The experience was comfortable and very meaningful.
(“I was surprised how open families were”).
- The expanded conversations went into the ‘life’ of the family and beyond only academic achievement (*“Listening to family stories is what good teachers should do...”*).

The principal reflected on the professional development and the new focus on listening to families. He felt this was a large shift in perspective for how to think about starting to partner with families. He noted that the school district, drawing on the home visit and family engagement professional development (PD) work being done at his school choose to have a similar family engagement focus to their district-wide PD:

It’s a huge commitment of time, money and other resources (for home visits and professional development for teachers). and in year’s past,

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this day has been dedicated to content based professional development (PD) or instructional strategy PD....pretty traditional stuff. To see the district hand over this day to a teacher planned set of school-based family engagement efforts and then to see the district leadership encourage and support the various plans was quite a change

During this process several university teacher candidates shadowed one of the bilingual, teachers on home visits. Reflective writing from one monolingual, English speaking teacher candidates, who was not from this community, describes her learning.

Over the course of this quarter, I have realized that my idea of what a culturally competent educator is has expanded greatly....Prior to accompanying a teacher on a home visit, I thought of the process as possibly invasive and overbearing. Now I am able to appreciate the positive impact that it has on the students and their families. I can say with confidence that in the future I plan on including home visits into my practices.... This process has given me the opportunity to develop an understanding of how to communicate with the families of my students in a supportive, yet professional manner.

I recognize the importance of having families involved in my classroom, and establishing a relationship with them is essential for this to happen. "As a teacher in this position, I find every opportunity available to help families understand the value in their culture and the importance of keeping their language alive through their children." The teacher's understanding and openness to the needs and concerns of her students and their families serves as inspiration to me. I hope in the future I can be equally as sensitive and responsive to the families as Anne has demonstrated.

Second home visits decide on beginning a ‘family night’ at school

In the fall of 2013, teachers returned to the same family homes visited the previous winter and spring and requested the families critique a menu of choices coming from home visit and family engagement subcommittee discussions. A once a week story sharing, family literacy group for parents of children in preschool to first grade, and an afterschool heritage language club or *Club de Lectura* (Prospera Initiatives, 2012) for second to sixth graders was chosen by families from a list of options. Families identified that beginning with dinner in the school cafeteria would bring the school community together at the six pm start of the weekly, two hour family nights.

The family literacy group, co-facilitated by a monolingual English speaking kindergarten teacher and a multilingual paraeducator, began each night with a read aloud of a (Spanish/English) bilingual children’s book, such as *Hairs/Pelitos* (Cisneros,1997). Children then separated to another room with university teacher candidates and a mentor teacher. Both the parent and children’s groups were encouraged to make connections between the book of the night and their own experiences using a culturally embedded, open-ended questioning approach that brought out familiar songs and stories. Each family literacy group ended with parents and children coming back together to share what they had experienced. Participants included bilingual community college students as small group family discussion facilitators (with prompting questions written by the kindergarten teacher) and university teacher candidates as children’s program assistants to a classroom teacher. In the *Club de Lectura*, multilingual high school students acted as Spanish literacy tutors to an average weekly attendance of twenty elementary students. This program is ongoing and is being researched in a separate study.

The entire family night focus was based on connecting classroom teachers, university, community college and high school students with families to build trust and cultural pride while also strengthening oral language and vo-

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cabulary skills in Spanish (Castro, Mendez, Garcia, & Westerberg, 2012). The design of the evening was a collaborative outcome of identified family goals and family practical suggestions (e.g., time, day, schedule) with family literacy practices provided by university faculty, overseen by two teacher-leaders with the support of high school and college students, who were mostly from the same community and cultural groups as the families.

The first two nights of the family literacy group were quiet, with the teacher mostly giving story sharing suggestions, while parents quietly listened. In the third week, the kindergarten teacher took the risk to come only with open ended questions. She also introduced three bilingual community college students as “future teachers” who would facilitate discussion in Spanish in small groups. That evening and for ten weeks after that, the room was full of excited talk, laughter and sharing. One of the parents had known several of the college students since childhood and expressed pride that they could one day be teaching their children.

In week four, the teacher asked her usual question of how sharing the books at home was going for the parents. Parents shared tips for getting their children engaged with the books and ways to have conversations about the pictures. Finally one mother shared she had “only one problem.” Her problem she said, was she could not read in Spanish or in English. Other parents suggested they each take turns reading pages of the book in Spanish so that this mother could learn the story. They then reread the book, as everyone listened intensely, with the teacher completely silent as the parents took over the class.

At the end of the class, another mother shared, that she knew that most of the families also wanted classes to improve their reading and speaking in English. The teacher said she would share this with the principal. By the tenth week, a survey was created asking the parents exactly what they wanted for their education, with ten of the twelve parents stating they wanted English classes at the school. Common reasons noted for taking classes to increase English

skills were to be able “to help children with their homework . . . to make my dreams reality, . . . to be able to communicate with teachers, . . . (and) to work in my children’s school.” At the end of the scheduled family literacy twelve week session, English classes began being offered three nights a week at the school, with an associated children’s program staffed, in part, by future multilingual teachers from the local community college. The school hoped to develop that program to continue to have a focus on early literacy using high quality bilingual children’s literature.

During the tenth week, the university teacher candidates reflected on their experience observing and interviewing families in the family literacy discussion group and working with their young children. Two of the bilingual teacher candidates (identified as TC 1 and 2) were from immigrant backgrounds different from the families (e.g., from Vietnam and Iran), and they reflected on their learning:

TC1: Throughout our family-partnership class, we have talked about talking to parents about topics that interest them and are relevant to their lives.... When (the teacher) asked about these aspects, a lot of families were responsive...and they shared out their experiences of leaving family behind in Mexico or not being able to provide enough because there are too many people living at home. Watching (the teacher) lead this discussion was an eye opening experience because ... the only goal was to help families understand that they have a partner at school who wants to listen.

I observed that (the teacher) worked to create an atmosphere where parents could share and discuss some of these issues that rise up. One of the parents shared that she was “happy that her son sat down and listened to her tell a story at home... which is something she never thought would happen.”

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TC2: I felt as though I can relate to many of the challenges these families face as I look back on my childhood. It is so great to see (the teacher) working with other staff to communicate with the families when she doesn't speak their primary language. Some teachers probably wouldn't try or go through this amount of effort...I observed many powerful strategies I want to use in my own teaching...I know my own parents would have benefited a great deal if a program like this was provided in my childhood school.

Two of the monolingual English speaking teacher candidates noted,

TC3: I could tell over the course of the class that the parents were becoming more comfortable as the weeks of the program progressed because they were opening up more and feeling free to contribute.

TC4: ...there are many myths about low-income families that as teachers we must confront to ensure every child is treated equally. One myth some teachers have is how parents are unsupportive of their children's education. ...while speaking to the staff at the school, I learned that many of the families work on farms which means the winter months are when they are most available for participating in school. This program (talked to the families) and understands they may not be available during the busy times of farming and harvesting....Many social justice issues came up for me because these families deserve the right to an education.

I interviewed one of the parents after several weeks of the program and she praised the connections she had with other parents and said she now felt welcome in the school. She was happy to see other parents in public now and felt comfortable talking to them as friends...The parent mentioned how she never thought she would be able to sit down with her children to talk or read a book together....Being able to see this transfor-

mation was a remarkable and unforgettable experience for me and I will carry it with me into my own future as an educator....oh and ten of the parents went to the PTO meeting (parent teacher organization). I heard that never happened before!

The university faculty member involved in the family engagement subcommittee was also teaching these students in a course on *Families and Community Relationships*. She had presented to them the work of other long term professional development schools with similar initiatives and visions of having a belief in culturally and linguistically diverse students, a conviction to co-construct knowledge with families and the willingness to work in collaboration with an entire school community (Delgado-Gaitan, 2004; Lawson & Alameda-Lawson, 2013; Salazar, Lowenstein, & Brill, 2010; Tang, Dearing & Weiss, 2012).

This teacher-educator wondered if the teacher candidates' attitudes would be impacted by observing a process of teachers striving to be culturally responsive by listening to families and using a 'facilitative', rather than an 'expert' stance (Roggman, Boyce, & Innocenti, 2008). The reflective writing of the teacher candidates indicated they were able to observe change over time, especially in the parents comfort in participation in the family literacy group. After analyzing the university students' weekly journal writing responses and their final reflective papers, it was clear that they had developed in several areas: (1) understanding that trusting relationships are a part of being culturally responsive; (2) identification of the complexities of social justice issues in everyday interactions; and (3) willingness to work toward gaining knowledge, skills and understanding of the complex environments of children and families' lives.

Discussion

After each round of home visits, the voices of the families were represented in the school with a display of the families' words, family photos, and children's drawings of their family. This documentation on the walls of the

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elementary school stood as evidence of the commitment to the collaborative work of teachers, teacher-educators and teacher candidates to join with families as partners in setting goals, working together and reflecting on mutual needs, interests and goals. Other participants also felt the shift in perspectives as the principal noted the commitment of everyone involved, which convinced him to dedicate resources, teacher release time and professional development hours to work on common understandings of family engagement strategies. This account is similar to other documented partnership case studies in which funds and resources followed only after commitment was demonstrated by the participants (Shiveley, 2010; Zeichner, 2006). It supports the idea of program development as part of an iterative process involving shared decision making by all participants.

Finally, this account demonstrates the power of building on prior professional relationships of trust while gradually learning how to become more true to a group democratic process including the often neglected voices of families and the learning of teacher candidates. Teacher educators often worry if their field based experiences live up to professional standards to prepare students to understand the complex contexts of young children and families. The reflective comments from the teacher candidates indicate they shifted their attitudes and beliefs as a result of wrestling with making meaning of observed changes of a new school-family-university partnership.

In summary, the partnership began a *process* of dialogue between teachers and families that was comfortable, respectful, thought provoking and highly meaningful. Teachers worked to increase their cultural responsiveness with professional development before and debriefing after home visits, and to increase their awareness of ways to incorporate families as partners in school decision making. The home visit interviews conveyed the school's belief in the importance of the families' knowledge about their child, and as a partner in the child's future academic, social and life journey. Both the teacher and the family became more committed to meet again to develop future specific goals for their

student and for greater participation in the school community. This change was in contrast to a past emphasis on large school events and activities in which families mostly listened to school staff. The partnership learning in the first year was summarized as:

Figure 1: Partnership Learning Process

This account described the first year of a new approach to a family engagement process embedded in a school-university partnership. The teachers and teacher-candidates shifted from focusing only on *what activities to begin*, to valuing *investigating their own thinking* about the school and wider social context *while* engaging families (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 30). Valuing a process of listening, learning and being responsive to the needs and perspectives of families is the beginning of a long process of supporting the work of both, to better prepare future teachers and increase educational opportunities for all involved.

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**From Co-Teaching to Co-Supervision:
Collaboration for Teacher Candidate Success**

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Teacher education is experiencing a transformation to increase candidate engagement in multiple school-based experiences. Such experience is critical to developing the ability to nurture the learning and well-being of every student. However, as the number and variation of field experiences increases, typical models of supervision remain limited to “one candidate, one supervisor.” While such a model may be effective in some cases, a re-examination of supervisory roles and methods is necessary. This study examines the planning and implementation of a co-supervision model in which two university faculty supervisors worked with multiple teacher candidates in a professional development school. Using a co-teaching model as a foundation, logistics of planning for co-supervision, processes and procedures for the internship experience, and results of participant perceptions provide support for the continued improvement and further implementation of co-supervision.

From Co-Teaching to Co-Supervision

As the diversity of classrooms increases, so do the needs of teacher candidates preparing to be the next generation of educators. Clinical experiences such as field observations and internships are perhaps the most critical factor in teacher preparation; however, the variation of supervision models for such experiences is narrow. Limited to “one teacher candidate, one supervisor,” the field is slowly expanding to other support methods including technology-based evaluation, school-based oversight, and co-supervision. Co-supervision also engages teacher candidates in the collaboration skills and dispositions necessary to be successful in today’s schools as well as to participate in a social and political democracy.

This study focuses on the planning and implementation of a co-supervision model in which two university faculty supervisors worked with multiple teacher candidates in a professional development school. As a strategy to develop quality educators who nurture the learning and well-being of every student and new method for evaluating teacher candidate success, many logistical and procedural questions were researched and addressed prior to and during the experience with lessons learned for future implementation.

Literature Review

According to evaluations provided by classroom teachers, the field experience portion of educator preparation programs consistently rate as the most influential factor of the curriculum (Steadman & Brown, 2011). University supervisors are a key component of this experience, serving as a mentor, evaluator, professional source, and interpreter. As a mentor, the supervisor provides guidance and feedback, challenging and encouraging the candidate to examine and reflect on teaching and to experiment with alternative methods (Bates & Burbank, 2008; Caires & Almeida, 2007). Unlike the cooperating teacher, supervisors are objective outsiders who can provide an alternate perspective and input beyond those who are active members of the classroom. Therefore, they have a distinct mentor role that enables them to ob-

serve and assess areas for reflection and improvement (Steadman & Brown, 2011). This familiar detachment allows emotional support systems to develop between supervisor and teacher candidate. Intimate with the needs and concerns of the candidate, yet removed from the classroom, the supervisor can encourage, collaborate, and aid the candidate in a unique mentoring relationship (Caires & Almeida, 2007).

Field experience supervisors also play crucial roles as professional sources and interpreters (Caires & Almeida, 2007). As university faculty members, these partners have access to current resources and best practices, serving as liaisons between the two academic worlds of university and school (Steadman & Brown, 2011). Furthermore, as experienced experts, they have the knowledge and proficiency of years of study and practice to aid as guides to newcomers in the educational realm (Soslau, 2012). Finally, as interpreters, supervisors bridge the gap between school and university by facilitating the teacher candidate's transition and serving as translator of theory to practice (Cuenca, Schmeichel, Butler, Dinkelman, & Nichols, 2011). This is especially significant when a mediator is required for difficulties or potential conflicts that arise in the field experience (Caires & Almeida, 2007; Steadman & Brown, 2011). In addition, the role of interpreter is bi-beneficial, with the university profiting from the supervisors' input from the field, communications that are necessary for program improvement (Steadman & Brown, 2011).

If one university supervisor's knowledge and experience prove advantageous to a teacher candidate, team supervision will bestow greater expertise, with multiple backgrounds, viewpoints, and supervisory input to assist the teacher candidate's growth. The diversity of two supervisors with unique strengths and skill sets complement one another, providing the teacher candidate with the option of a second opinion, the opportunity for deeper critical reflection about his or her teaching, and less dependence on one teaching style or approach. Even when conflicting advice is given, the student will be more compelled to question the options, demonstrate deeper understanding and knowledge, and establish professional opinions and ideas (Spooner-Lane, Henderson, Price, & Hill, 2007; Watts, 2010). Studies have shown that teachers are more likely to examine their

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teaching and come up with alternate methods and practices when they are faced with dilemmas (Bates & Burbank, 2008).

In addition to the multiple benefits of co-supervision for a teacher candidate, the supervisors and their departments also benefit from this arrangement. For novice supervisors, the team scheme can serve as training, having the opportunity to “learn the ropes” from an experienced supervisor. Moreover, for pairs of veteran supervisors, there is the potential for professional development. By collaborating, sharing ideas, feeding off the other’s thoughts, and either reinforcing or contesting the other’s views, supervisors are given the occasion to grow in their field and profession. With a focus on collegiality and mutual support, co-supervision not only can provide teacher candidates with additional support, feedback, resources, expertise, and opportunities for reflection and growth, the team relationship can prove valuable for both novice and veteran supervisors in their professional development, thus benefiting the entire teacher education program (Spooner-Lane et al., 2007; Watts, 2010).

Since the university supervisor is generally the primary evaluator of the internship, assigning a teacher candidate only one supervisor may limit professional growth opportunity. Additionally, teamwork is widely recognized as an essential skill to learn and implement in many professions. Co-teaching and collaboration with colleagues are included as significant components in the higher education curriculum (Drake, Goldsmith, & Strachan, 2006). Yet, there is limited literature on the practices of university supervisors, much less on the use of co-supervision and its potential benefits (Steadman & Brown, 2011).

Context

The Winthrop University Model of Internship

Through a recently instituted year-long internship, teacher candidates serve as “junior faculty members” for an entire school year. Working with a highly trained mentor teacher, candidates follow the public school calendar starting on the first teacher workday in August and finishing upon graduation in May. Candidates work with their mentors to set up the classroom, meet the students and their parents at the beginning of the school year, and remain in the same classroom for an entire school year developing the essential proficiencies and dispositions to be highly effective teachers prepared to meet the challenges faced by today’s teachers. Having both the mentor and junior faculty in the classroom also provides additional opportunities for differentiated instruction which can positively impact P12 student learning.

As a structure, the year-long internship allows teacher candidates to “learn by doing,” an approach to learning advocated by John Dewey and supported by contemporary educational research. As noted in the Standards for Professional Learning of teachers, internships should be designed to include (a) application of theory and research to classroom practice and (b) work-embedded learning communities that involve day-to-day engagement in classroom inquiry, analysis of student learning data, planning, implementation, reflection, and evaluation (Learning Forward, 2011). To support teacher candidates in the “learn by doing” approach, field placements are with trained mentor teachers in schools within the University-School Partnership Network who share their expertise and daily professional experiences with the teacher candidates through a co-teaching model of internship. Originally developed by Marilyn Friend and Lynne Cook (2007), co-teachers share instructional responsibility and accountability for a single group of students for whom they both have ownership. Friend and Cook’s model was adapted for student teaching by faculty at St. Cloud State

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University who promoted allowing the mentor teachers to remain actively engaged in the classroom while assisting the teacher candidate to develop essential teaching skills. Dr. Julia Espe, an Assistant Superintendent in the St. Cloud Public Schools, observed:

The compelling evidence is clear. Traditional student teaching is not conducive to maximizing education benefits for our students. Co-teaching, however, has transformed the student teacher and teacher relationship. Instead of throwing a student teacher into the complexities of teaching without a lifeline, student teachers are coached as they practice the art of teaching. (Bacharach & Heck, 2011, slide 34)

The Winthrop Mentorship and Evaluation Model

The Winthrop University model of mentorship incorporates a trained school-site teacher as a non-evaluative mentor (sometimes called a cooperating or supervising teacher) who, in coordination with a university supervisor, is responsible for leading the teacher candidate through progressively challenging activities and structuring the activities so that the candidate applies theory, pedagogical concepts, and content knowledge while developing practical professional skills and dispositions. In addition to developing a plan for co-teaching and supporting the candidate as he or she takes on more planning and instructional responsibilities building to full-time teaching, the mentor is also responsible for reviewing the candidate's lesson plans throughout the semester. The mentor's continuous formative feedback delivered in a non-evaluative context regarding effectiveness in preparing lessons, delivering instruction, managing the classroom, providing meaningful feedback to students, and demonstrating professional dispositions is critical to the success of the internship. In addition, the mentor teacher must be open and honest about areas needing improvement, and provide assistance as appropriate.

The university supervisor plays a key role in the internship triad and serves as a link between the school and the university. Often, the university supervisor role is facilitative; however, the role is also one of mentoring the candidate, supporting the mentor teacher, and building a relationship with the assigned schools. The university supervisor facilitates a team approach and effective communication between the candidate and the mentor teacher. In addition, the university supervisor assists the candidate in developing teaching competencies. The supervisor must determine the assistance needed and then use knowledge, skills, and resources to help the candidate.

The evaluation of teacher candidates is an important component of the teacher education program and is a rigorous, multi-dimensional process. The mentor teacher is responsible for conducting six formative observations of the candidate's teaching throughout the semester. The observation records are discussed with the candidate but are not shared with the university supervisor unless done so by the candidate, thus supporting the trusting relationship between the mentor and candidate. The university supervisor completes a minimum of three summative observations of the candidate's teaching that are also discussed with the candidate, but are then used for evaluation and grading purposes. In addition, teacher candidates complete a work sample during the internship that demonstrates proficiency in short and long range planning for instruction and analysis of student learning. The Internship Work Sample (IWS) is prepared under the guidance of the mentor teacher and the university supervisor. The university supervisor and other university faculty are responsible for grading the work sample.

Process

Within the design of the year-long, co-teaching model of internship, university supervision shifted to include increased time spent with candidates in schools. Details such as certification requirements, faculty credentials, and workload expectations posed challenges for supervisory assignments that called

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for creative use of faculty time and expertise. In this specific situation, six teacher candidates were placed at one of the professional development schools in the University-School Partnership Network. Because the candidates varied in their certification area, it was apparent one supervisor would not fulfill the requirements to support the different program area needs; thus, two faculty supervisors were assigned to the school and told to work together to evaluate the teacher candidates. With little direction or research-based co-supervision strategies, the two supervisors turned to the model of co-teaching so successful between teacher candidates and mentor teachers as a strategy to meet the needs of all six teacher candidates. Although they did not use the specific practices of co-teaching in their supervision work, they modified the foundation of partnership planning and decision-making in three specific areas: communication, consistency, and collaboration.

Communication

Before having an initial meeting with the teacher candidates, the co-supervisors discussed their supervisory styles and collaborated to develop the course syllabus. Several methods of maintaining constant communication with each other, the candidates, and the mentors were established. One method used to ensure consistent communication was that both supervisors were copied on all e-mails to teacher candidates and mentor teachers, while the latter also sent all correspondence to both supervisors. Furthermore, if a candidate or mentor forgot to do this, the supervisors forwarded the messages to each other. The supervisors also met weekly to plan observations, ensure they both had the most updated information on each candidate's progress, and coordinate the records and other paperwork. Throughout the internship experience, the candidates demonstrated different levels of performance and required different levels of support. While they all successfully completed the internship, several candidates quickly progressed to a high level of involvement in instructional planning and teaching, and other candidates required more support and guidance from their mentors and university supervisors.

Consistency

At the beginning of the internship, the supervisors met with each teacher candidate and his or her mentor to review the syllabus outlining the expectations and requirements for the internship. Anticipating that the candidates might be a bit overwhelmed with being observed by both supervisors at the same time, it was decided that the supervisors would alternate to complete each of the required observations. The supervisors shared the data from each observation and discussed it before conducting the post-observation conferences with the candidates. Each post-observation conference began with the candidates discussing their reflections and analyses. Candidates summarized their strengths and areas for improvement and created goals for the next observation. Although the supervisor who observed the lesson took the lead in the conference, both

supervisors participated fully in all discussions using data from lesson planning, observation walk-throughs, and other sources. While this might be seen as increasing the “load” of each supervisor, it actually made the work more efficient and improved the validity of the assessments. Instead of contemplating to oneself how the candidates should be graded, the professional conversations were structured, timely, and resulted in immediate completion of required documentation.

Collaboration

In this specific case, the university supervisors had a very positive relationship prior to beginning the co-supervisory experience, but had to fine tune the relationship and collaborative roles. They also had similar work styles, methods of organization, and comparable professional and encouraging manners with teacher candidates and mentor teachers. This allowed for a congenial and professional atmosphere. Throughout the semester, the candidates completed several assignments for internship courses beyond required teaching observations. The university supervisors individually assessed the assignments and then met to collaboratively grade the assignments and provide feedback to

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the candidates. Furthermore, the university supervisors divided the responsibility for completing the initial paperwork for the midterm and final evaluations, each taking the lead for three conferences, and collaboratively developed the final grade for the internship.

Process Evaluation

As co-supervisors, the two university faculty continuously discussed the benefits and challenges of implementing the new model and made modifications where needed throughout the semester. However, feedback from those with whom the model was being used (teacher candidates and mentor teachers) is the true measure of success.

Teacher Candidate Feedback

An anonymous survey administered to the program participants provided quantitative and qualitative data on the efforts of the co-supervisors. Quantitative data stemmed from Likert Scale questions (1 to 4 on a Likert Scale, 4 being “strongly agree”) and were averaged across participants I was rarely confused or unsure about how to have my questions or concerns addressed.

1. My questions/concerns were addressed in a timely fashion.
2. My two supervisors, as a team, seemed to “be on the same page” with feedback and evaluation.
3. The midterm and final evaluation conferences provided an opportunity to reflect on my professional growth and share future goals.

In addition to providing comments related to the questions above, candidates were also asked to respond to four open-ended questions:

1. Describe your thoughts prior to the internship regarding having two supervisors.

2. Describe your thoughts at the end of the internship regarding having two supervisors.
3. Describe the benefits of having two supervisors.
4. Provide two suggestions for making the co-supervision model stronger.

Qualitative data gathered from teacher candidate answers were organized by the three areas of the initial co-supervision experience design: communication, consistency, and collaboration.

Communication (questions 1-2). Results indicated effective processes and procedures for communication. Clarity and timeliness of communication rated 3.67. Open-ended responses included statements such as “provided such wonderful feedback,” “I felt as if I had a team on my side rather than just a supervisor,” and “all of my e-mails were responded to within a few hours.” One candidate did comment that some of the expectations were unclear, although details regarding specific expectations were not included in the feedback.

Consistency (question 3). Again, candidates appreciated the consistency between the two supervisors, returning a rating of 3.67. Qualitative comments included “the supervisors worked well together” and were “on the same page.” One candidate acknowledged that the supervisors must have frequent communication: “Both supervisors seemed to have discussed how I was doing and what they would like to see me do more of before our meetings. I like this because both of them were in agreement.” The feedback highlighted the positive nature of having two different perspectives. When asked for improvements for the co-supervision model, suggestions included having both supervisors observe the same lesson to increase reliability of evaluation results.

Collaboration (question 4). Using a co-supervision model, it seemed natural to emphasize the collaborative nature of the experience, although this

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is not something that is automatic. As supervisors, the two colleagues wanted collaboration to be part of the supportive aspects of the internship and carry over into the evaluation conferences in which all parties involved would engage in professional discourse. All respondents strongly agreed (4.00) that this was the case. One candidate responded, “The feedback dealt with positive growth... as well as positive guidance towards growth.” Another commented, “They provided a time for me to set some goals and discuss them with both supervisors and change them slightly if needed.” However, one suggestion was made by a teacher candidate to provide time at the beginning of the experience for more extensive relationship building between the candidates and both supervisors as a collaborative group.

Mentor Teacher Feedback

After analyzing teacher candidate data, the two supervisors solicited qualitative feedback from mentor teachers based upon the same three categories: communication, consistency, and collaboration.

Communication. Mentors stressed the need to be in constant contact with the supervisors. The co-supervision model facilitated this “readily available” mentality, since if one supervisor was not accessible; the other was present to offer support. In addition, the immediacy and clarity with which communication took place improved with co-supervision as demonstrated in the following comments:

- “Both [supervisors] had very open communication. They were readily available via e-mail or in person on days they were here. They made sure we knew their expectations for us as well as the candidates. If there were problems, they both were very open to listening and handling the problems immediately.”
- “From a mentor’s perspective, the co-supervision provided by [faculty] was very beneficial as answers to questions were quickly provided

and elaborated upon as needed.”

- “It was very easy to talk to these supervisors and one was always available to provide timely responses to our questions.”

Consistency. One concern of mentor teachers was the potential for receiving “mixed messages.” The possibility of having two supervisors providing different directions, requirements, and expectations can result in frustration for teacher candidates and mentors. Constant discussions prior to, during, and after the internship experience were critical to the success of the co-supervision model as explained by mentor teachers:

- “Expectations from the candidates and the mentors were consistent over time and with each of them. I could tell they were on the same page when it came to lesson plans, reflections, and classroom instruction.”
- “There was never any time where one said one thing and the other said something else. They were always both right on the money with everything and supported each other.”

Collaboration. Finally, data from mentor teachers emphasized the collaborative nature of the co-supervision model. Demonstrating a “united front” provided comfort and stability to the internship experience as well as additional perspective in challenging situations.

- “During meetings you could tell that they had talked with each other about my candidate’s strengths and weaknesses and they were prepared as a team to make suggestions.”
- Having two supervisors provided another set of suggestions to help both my candidate improve as a teacher and me as a mentor. I never heard my candidate mention that she felt uncomfortable with having co-supervisors.”

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- “For my candidate and me, it was a very good situation. My candidate had some areas that required support and correction. It was helpful to have an extra professional to offer advice and provide support. Because both supervisors are very knowledgeable and experienced in working with candidates, we had no difficulties coming up with a plan to help the candidate improve.”

Discussion and Next Steps

Overall, responses from teacher candidates and mentor teachers indicated overwhelmingly positive experiences with the co-supervision reliability” exercise. In addition, more time will be spent prior to the internship experience building a trusting relationship between teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and university supervisors. Although the co-supervisors met with each individual team to cover expectations, having additional time with the entire group will enhance the collaborative nature of the co-teaching/co-supervision environment.

As the nature of teacher education shifts to a clinical, work-based program, new models of supervision should be explored in order to provide teacher candidates the support and expertise necessary to become effective educators. Co-supervision is a model that can fulfill university regulations while establishing a collaborative, team-based approach to teacher development

model. Having multiple communication structures and varying expertise provided both the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher with support needed to develop professionally. Engaging in extensive co-planning prior to the internship semester proved critical to success, including:

- Establishing communication procedures between and among all participants;

- Creating, sharing, and maintaining common expectations; and
- Forming collaborative structures to solicit feedback from various structures.

For future implementation, changes to the co-supervision model will include conducting the first observation as a team. As suggested by one of the teacher candidates, this will enhance consistency as an “inter-rater reliability exercise. In addition, more time will be spent prior to the internship experience building a trusting relationship between teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and university supervisor. Although the co-supervisors met with each individual team to cover expectations, having additional time with the entire group will enhance the collaborative nature of the co-teaching/co-supervision environment.

As the nature of teacher education shifts to a clinical, work-based program, new models of supervision should be explored in order to provide teacher candidates the support and expertise necessary to become effective educators. Co-supervision is a model that can fulfill university regulations while establishing a collaborative, team-based approach to teacher development.

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**The Missing Middle: Describing a Professional Development Model
Convening Secondary and Postsecondary Faculty
to Examine Student Writing**

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The authors describe a school-university partnership Lost in Transition model that invites secondary and postsecondary faculty to examine and learn from student work, specifically student writing in English/language arts courses. The impetus for Lost in Transition arises from countless local, state, and national reports and policy documents. The documents, in tandem with increased public pressure, identify system-wide learning gaps that prevent too many high school students from making successful transitions to college-level work. The Lost in Transition initiative showcases a democratically framed professional development approach that constitutes what the authors identify as the missing

The Missing Middle

*middle: cross-level conversations among secondary and postsecondary faculty. The missing middle spans top-down policy mandates such as the Common Core State Standards and bottom-up cultural contexts of local control and teacher autonomy. The Lost in Transition model has developed over seven years based on planners' analysis of session feedback and ongoing reflection-in-action by the planners. Three themes emerge from the **analysis**: a) changing the tone from mutual blaming by diffusing power through language use and voluntary participation in a neutral work space; b) sharing information by expanding and redefining educational networks and communities in the missing middle; and, c) creating a deeper understanding of each other's work through professional opportunities to explore the language of instruction and assessment around key transition topics.*

A Lost in Transition Vignette

Bending over poster-sized sheets of paper, seventy faculty divided into multi-level groups fill the room with chatter. Around each table, secondary faculty who teach language arts or writing-focused classes fill the paper with words that inform their teaching every day. Also sitting at the tables, community college and university writing faculty look on with puzzlement and amazement as their middle school and high school peers share the terms that guide their teaching: Body of Evidence, Step up to Reading, Common Core State Standards, Six Traits of Writing, Proficiency Assessments for Wyoming Students...the lists are lengthy within ten minutes. The assigned task: share the terms or language that faculty in your school must consider in teaching and assessing student work. College faculty have exhausted their parameters after two or three. They gaze with new knowledge and admiration at the secondary faculty in their group after seeing the complex host of assessments and teaching strategies that junior high and high school faculty must navi-

gate. Next on the agenda: brainstorm how faculty at multiple levels can better understand and approach their classes with the insight they're gaining about the parameters guiding teaching at different levels—levels that can and should work together, but rarely have the opportunity since such learning communities do not exist.

While there are increasing pressures for secondary and postsecondary faculty to close student learning gaps, there are few, if any, opportunities for faculty across levels to convene, articulate expectations, examine student work, and better understand each other's challenges. That dearth of faculty opportunity stands in stark contrast to calls for educational reform from virtually all quarters. Faculty face top-down legislative and administrative pressures from federal, state, and local levels to improve student performance and prepare every student to continue on to postsecondary education. Policy makers want to improve retention rates at both secondary and postsecondary levels and decrease developmental classes at the college level. The problems, along with a range of solutions, are presented in a broad array of reports and policy documents, many of which are highlighted in the popular media. Here, we focus on several key reports to illustrate the mounting top-down pressure. The reports include those published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (www.carnegiefoundation.org), the ACT's College Readiness Standards (2010), Common Core State Standards (2010), Hoffman, Vargas, and Santo (2008), Lee (2012), and Ruppert (2003). Simultaneously, American society and local control encourage the mindset that teaching is an individual endeavor, and far too often, faculty at all levels don't have opportunities to step outside of their classrooms for meaningful discussion instead of more dictates. This lack of interaction between secondary and postsecondary levels is a space we call the missing middle.

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In this article, we address a promising model for closing the gap that represents the missing middle which exists between top-down national education policies and bottom-up individual faculty independence and autonomy. The scene described above came from a colloquium that is part of a statewide Wyoming effort to bring together faculty from high schools, community colleges, and the University of Wyoming with the goal of helping students transition from high school to college. These colloquia, part of an initiative titled *Lost in Transition* through the Wyoming School-University Partnership, provide a space for faculty across levels to communicate with each other and to create a kind of community that does not exist otherwise. This communication shows how the levels are different, how they are similar, and what kinds of expertise each faculty member can bring to the field.¹ We call the model *Lost in Transition*, a powerful metaphor describing many students who struggle or fail to make the move from high school to college/university study.

We will be describing the *Lost in Transition* model and the *Teaching Writing in Wyoming* series in particular, outlining the theoretical grounding, history, and structure. The *Teaching Writing in Wyoming* work, as part of the larger *Lost in Transition* initiative, features three components: a) changing the tone from mutual blaming by diffusing power through language use and voluntary participation in a neutral work space; b) creating a deeper understanding of each other's work by expanding and redefining educational networks and communities in the missing middle; and, c) sharing information by creating professional opportunities to explore the language of instruction and assessment around key transition topics. The *Lost in Transition* model the seamless secondary to postsecondary education hope to develop looks to a future where these kinds of meeting spaces for the missing middle might provide a way to open conversations and create relationships requisite for

¹ Throughout the article, we use the term *faculty* to identify all participants regardless of teaching level.

The Model:

Theoretical Grounding for a Community of Practice

While ongoing professional development is a common component of elementary and secondary work and a way for a teacher to advance in the profession, the work of K-12 teaching stands in stark contrast to that of a college or university professor. The university professor's credential is a terminal degree in an academic discipline and based on original research or creative activity. In the U.S. it is still the case that very few tenure track professors have formal course work in teaching or learning. Colleges and schools of education may be one exception, though some faculties in these settings have never taught in K-12 schools. Thus, the work of teaching, or perhaps more accurately, the work of learning to teach and understanding student learning could not be more different for a high school teacher compared to a university professor. Each is called by a different name and enjoys a different status.

The role of teachers and the status of teaching is a significant topic and, in fact, the focus of much works in sociology, organizational theory, cultural anthropology, and other fields. That work won't be addressed here. It is striking, however, to consider how difficult it will be to meet the challenge of a seamless education system if the work of teaching is so different across educational levels. The challenge becomes even greater when we acknowledge that the approaches to learning to teach and understanding human learning are not just different, they are largely non-existent in post-secondary settings.

If it's important to create a community of secondary and postsecondary faculty to better serve students and to address the escalating concerns of policy makers and others, a different kind of model is needed. What kind of model would enable complex work? Do any models exist?

Cognitive Learning Theory and Socially Constructed Knowledge: Toward a More Sophisticated Model of Professional Learning

Given differences in the secondary and postsecondary work cultures, a sensible professional development model must be engaging and intellectually compelling to both groups, neither too theoretical nor too application-oriented, yet practical enough to address immediate needs. To this end, cognitive learning theory and learning as a social construction provide theoretical grounding. The examples below illustrate learning communities created in non-profit organizations such as school systems, but also for profit companies. All examples focus on the professional work and learning of someone in a professional role.

Donald Schon's work illustrates the kind of decision-making that a professional (e.g. nurse, architect, manager), makes daily (1987; 1983). Schon, who was a MIT professor of urban studies and education, brought terms such as reflective practice and reflection-in-action into common usage. The fields of teacher education (Zeichner and Liston, 1996) and higher education were receptive in particular. In essence, reflection-in-action is a word for the actions of professionals as they make sense of work dilemmas, then share questions and solutions within a work group or community.

In higher education, the scholarship of teaching and learning initiative took full advantage of insights developed by Schon to promote reflective practice across the higher education disciplines. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/>) provided key support to launch the scholarship of teaching and learning initiative, starting with Ernest Boyer's seminal work *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990). The International Alliance of Teacher Scholars now supports the work through summer institutes for postsecondary faculty (<http://www.iats.com/>).

To engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning, postsecondary faculty examine their practice in intentional ways and submit to peer review. Within this body of work, it is common to see terms such as faculty study circles, reading groups, and learning communities. The terms exemplify how faculty form groups and work to improve their practice. Going public, the gold standard of peer-reviewed research is always the desired end point of scholarship about teaching and learning efforts. For examples of the way postsecondary faculty anchor questions about teaching and learning in a community of scholars, go to Hutchings (2000), Hutchings, Huber, and Ciccone (2011), and Edgerton, Hutchings, and Quinlan (1995).

The scholarship of teaching movement demonstrates how elements of cognitive learning theory can be applied by postsecondary faculty working in communities. For more than 30 years, anthropologist Jean Lave has been examining formal and informal learning through the lens of cognitive learning theory. With Etienne Wenger (a computer scientist), Lave (1991) developed and then Wenger (1998) expanded the concept of communities of practice, a way for organizations to promote adult learning and for researchers to study it.

According to Wenger (1998) a community of practice has three components: domain, community, and practice. The domain provides identity. Wenger (1998) explains that the community does not necessarily convene every day, but does have regular meetings. For the purpose of model described in this article, the domain is, for example, writing which pulls together secondary and postsecondary faculty into a community.

Kerno and Mace (2010) lean heavily on Wenger using the concept of situated learning to better understand organizational performance and knowledge management in the context of a professional learning community. The researchers observe that learning is actually mediated by differences of the community members and their various perspectives and claim that “communities of practice are essential for understanding learning in the work place” (p. 80). Kerno

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and Mace (2010) also examine social and organization barriers to forming a community. Those barriers include time demands and constraints and some kind of pre-existing organizational structure. At the same time, they observe that the communities of practice that have gained the most recognition and acceptance for successful outcomes develop from the bottom-up. Readers interested in more examples might go to Gaff (2007), Harris and Jones (2010), Retna and Ng (2011), Supovitz (2002), and Fulton and Britton (2011). Each of these empirical studies supports the power of learning in a community.

Last, a third leg of the theoretical grounding for convening secondary and postsecondary faculty comes from a set of principles that undergird professional development schools (Clark, 1999) and school-university partnership agreements. Such complex partnerships are anchored in a commitment to democratic practices by faculty in K-12, teacher education, and general education settings that prepare the next generation of teachers (Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley, Goodlad, 2004). Much of this work is ongoing in the National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER) of which the Wyoming School-University Partnership is a member (www.nnerpartnerships.org). In this model, each of the three partners has an equal stake and voice. Convened to honor multiple perspectives through work can be characterized as simultaneous educational renewal. Renewal, in contrast to reform, suggests ongoing effort within the complex culture of schooling as opposed to a quick fix.

What can be concluded from the theoretical and empirical research cited above? First, we see that professionals are organized into small and large networks or systems and that thinking systemically is important to success in those networks. In educational settings, this makes learning multi-dimensional as faculty must continue to learn just as they must help students learn. The theoretical work of Lave and Wenger (1998, 1991) persuades us that the learning of adults in a professional community is situated in a particular domain, is overwhelmingly social, and occurs formally and informally. From the work of Kerno and Mace (2010) and Harris and Jones (2010), we see evidence that

collaboration deepens satisfaction in work, builds trust, and prizes the kind of decision-making intrinsic to democratic societies. Schon (1996, 1993) and the scholarship of teaching and learning proponents (Hutchings, Huber, & Ciccone, 2011; Hutchings, 1998) document specific skills of reflective practice that serve knowledge-building of individuals and the community while promoting sustainability. Work conducted by the NNER and related initiatives (Goodlad, Bromley, & Goodlad, 2004; Clark, 1999) demonstrates how a school-university partnership structure offers a community of practice model that values inclusion representing K-12, teacher education, and general education faculty. Our model is grounded in these theoretical underpinnings, especially that of reflective practice and democratic principles. In the section that follows, we move from theory to practice, explaining the development of a model in the context of a statewide school-university partnership.

Background of the model. The Wyoming School-University Partnership is a statewide consortium composed of 50% of the state's 48 school districts (about 80% of the state's K-12 student population), the community college and university systems, the Wyoming Education Association, and the Wyoming Department of Education. More information can be found at <http://www.uwyo.edu/wsup>.

Membership requires yearly institutional dues (\$2,500 per year for a school district). In part, dues sustain Partnership initiatives. The larger initiative described here was also supported by \$45,000 in external funds from the University of Wyoming President's Office, the Qwest Foundation, the Wyoming P-16 Education Council, and the University of Wyoming's Learning Resource Networks (www.uwyo.edu/lrn). The Partnership governing board consists of superintendents from member school districts and representatives from the other members.

By 2005, several superintendents were preoccupied with college and university success. In an effort to find ways to address the difficult high school to

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college transition, the district superintendents proposed an initiative that the Partnership would develop, implement, and come to call *Lost in Transition*. The superintendents wanted to convene secondary and postsecondary faculty in specific disciplines for a one-day meeting to examine actual student work. The superintendents were optimistic that the student work could change the focus from defensiveness and mutual blaming to information sharing and deeper understanding of systemic challenges. The approach was consistent with school-university partnership principles and practices, all of which brought together relevant constituencies for collaborative work that might, if successful, improve communication across educational levels about student learning and academic success.

The Partnership began Lost in Transition meetings in 2006 with the life sciences. Lost in Transition meetings are now held yearly for the following disciplines: English/language arts, mathematics, life sciences, and world languages. The English/language arts Lost in Transition series a bottom-up, democratic approach which began in 2008 has focused on writing, although we added literature in October, 2013 as a separate meeting.

As some meeting costs are borne by the Partnership through dues, planners have made a strong commitment that the meetings will have no registration fees. Planners provide meeting materials, refreshments and breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner. Expertise for meeting sessions comes from the secondary and postsecondary planners and participants themselves.

The Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquium is held during March or April at a centralized location in our state. The colloquium draws between 40 and 70 secondary and postsecondary faculty. Each year, colloquium planners try to choose a theme that incorporates student success transition issues to help shape the discussions. At the same time, planners have focused on local and state concerns as well as national standards, such as the Common Core State Standards. Refer to Table 1 for a full list of meeting themes.

Structure of the Model

Since its inception in 2008, the Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquium has included multiple themes and formats for generating productive discussion among faculty across levels. However, most of those iterations have intentionally included the following elements:

- *A two-day timeline.* In our geographically expansive and sparsely populated state, travel time is a consideration for most, and a colloquium broken over two days allows many participants to drive long distances. Faculty participation in all meetings is voluntary. None of the participants receives stipends for attending.
- *An evening dinner discussion.* The first day of the colloquium has often included an optional dinner discussion and networking time. This dinner is paid for by the colloquium sponsors, and has included an invited speaker as well as guided table discussions about a broad theme related to the topics of the main day.
- *Sessions facilitated by faculty from a variety of settings and roles.* Planners invite secondary and postsecondary facilitators from multiple disciplines and roles to lead sessions throughout the colloquium. In the selection process, planners aim for a balance of facilitators, considering factors such as visibility, voice, expertise, and responsibility.
- *A blend of formats, emphasizing a non-threatening environment.* Formats include small-group table talk, break-out sessions, guided work time, large-group synthesis sessions, and short presentations. The Lost in Transition model is premised on the foundational principle that all participants have important things to say, deserve the opportunity to say them, and are owed serious discussion.
- *Pre-colloquium readings.* Participants read several short articles that

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spark thinking about the topics of the colloquium and that provide a common reference point for session facilitators and participants.

- *Immediate feedback.* In keeping with the principle that participants have distinct viewpoints, planners elicit and transcribe anonymous session feedback. Interviews with participants have not been conducted to date.
- *Themes that draw faculty from different levels and disciplines.* Colloquium planners aim to attract faculty from a variety of contexts with topics that relate to their work and also hit on current pressures in secondary teaching, such as the Common Core State Standards. As we seek to attract participants from secondary and postsecondary levels, we generally try to ensure that each year's colloquium offers a blend of topics relevant to these constituencies. A full list of colloquium themes and session topics is provided in Table 2.

These structural elements are all based on the theoretical grounding of school-university partnerships presented earlier and ways to work together respectfully. Also, while many of the structural elements were present early in the Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquia, they have evolved over the years and continue to evolve as planners strive to find the best ways to address the missing middle. However, in line with the original vision of the school superintendents, some elements of the Lost in Transition initiative and the Teaching Writing in Wyoming series have been a driving force behind the planning that goes into these colloquia. While the structure and history of Teaching Writing in Wyoming might be the bones for building the colloquia, these three components get more at the heart of our model. In the next section, we articulate and expound on three components: a) changing the tone from mutual blaming by diffusing power through language use and voluntary participation in a neutral work space; b) creating a deeper understanding

of each other's work by expanding and redefining educational networks and communities in the missing middle; and, c) sharing information by creating professional opportunities to explore the language of instruction and assessment around key transition topics. Together, these components form a foundation for creating a space for the missing middle.

Three Components of the Model to Create a Space for the Missing Middle

In this section, we illustrate in detail each of the model's components. Suggestions of promise and success are referenced from representative anonymous participant comments from feedback. We begin with changing the tone from mutual blaming by diffusing power through language use and voluntary participation in a neutral work space.

Changing the tone from mutual blaming by diffusing power through language use and voluntary participation in a neutral work space

In the Teaching Writing in Wyoming series, planners have paid particular attention to language use. For example, instead of describing high school instructors as teachers and college/university instructors as faculty, we describe all participants as faculty. To complement our references to participants, we ensure that the nametags participants wear do not showcase markers of status, such as professor or high school teacher. In meeting materials, we provide a contact list of participants that includes their affiliations for networking purposes.

In addition, facilitators remind participants that the purpose of the colloquium is renewal, and as such there is no room available for language that places blame or for grousing without providing suggestions for improvement. This promotes an atmosphere in which blame-placing is less likely. Each meet-

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ing packet includes a page of ground rules for our work together. Refer to Table 3 for our ground rules.

In addition, Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquia are held in neutral spaces such as community centers or community colleges. As a result, over the years we have found an absence of a sense of entitlement among the university faculty members and an increase in the number of local faculty members who chose to attend. The importance of choosing a neutral location in terms of offsetting perceived power differentials cannot be overstated; participants repeatedly refer to the importance of interacting with educators from many levels. A common pattern in the colloquia feedback is represented by the following comment: “I found the collaboration among the attendees fantastic. Hammering out methods to improve reading/writing with educators from many levels was valuable and will undoubtedly help Wyoming students.”

Sharing Information by Expanding and Redefining Educational Networks and Communities in the Missing Middle

As part of its mission to develop meaningful communication among faculty from different levels, buildings, and even disciplines, Teaching Writing in Wyoming features a variety of ways faculty can share information and create lasting work outside of traditional networks. First, it is important to note that participants represent a range of disciplines and specializations. Although most faculty come from English/language arts departments, nearly all other disciplines are represented at the meetings, with strong contingents participating from sciences, world languages, special education, and social studies. Faculty sit at small tables during the sessions that are intentionally organized around interdisciplinary and multi-level groupings. The sessions themselves include topics that foster interdisciplinary brainstorming.

To foster information sharing that lasts longer than the meeting days, colloquium planners designed grant opportunities that hinge on multi-level and multi-discipline partnerships. Grant funds were small, ranging from \$300-\$500. Grant recipients garnered support from their institutions as well as stayed on top of the work over the course of a semester- or year-long project. The three grant projects offered by the Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquia so far were *Collaborative Grants for Multi-level or Interdisciplinary Writing Projects* (2008), *Teaching Critical Reading* (2009), and *Developing Social Media Technologies Across the Curriculum* (2010). These opportunities have drawn strong interest, with up to six groups developing projects in a given year. For example, in response to the collaborative grant call requiring that grant project teams include at least one participant from a differing discipline, level, district, and/or institution, grant awardees proposed projects that blended a) language arts and social studies, b) life sciences with language arts mapping concepts, and c) a team comprising English, math, science, and social studies faculty. All of the grant projects developed assignments that helped students bridge concepts among disciplines, and some included collaborations spanning levels. Grant recipients were encouraged to share their work at future meetings and sometimes use wikis or other technology to talk to each other about projects based in different cities or educational settings.

Another key network that develops from Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquia are continuing dialogues at statewide meetings such as the Wyoming School Improvement Conference and the University of Wyoming's College of Education annual literacy education conference. These yearly events allow Teaching Writing in Wyoming planners to organize formal and informal follow-up dialogue about topics pertaining to themes from the year's colloquium, or to introduce topics planned for future meetings. The outside opportunities also offer sites for faculty who participated in grant activities or follow-up projects to present their work to colleagues across the state. In some small ways, the writing colloquia act as seeding ground for faculty to engage in exciting peer

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conversations that likely would not have occurred otherwise. At the same time, conversations about student learning are deepened in faculty members' immediate workplaces and traditional meeting spaces.

Creating a deeper understanding of each other's work through professional opportunities to explore the language of instruction and assessment around key transition topics. In efforts to deepen the collaborative impacts of Teaching Writing in Wyoming—and to achieve the goals of trust and democratic decision-making—colloquium coordinators have increasingly tried to value various languages of writing instruction and assessment that circulate at multiple levels. Rather than asserting the language of one setting over another, planners want to deepen the understanding of the numerous languages at multiple levels.

At times, participants have expressed an expectation in their anonymous feedback that the colloquia would make a stronger effort to create shared language. For example, one 2008 attendee asked, “Is it possible to dream of a higher level of statewide alignment? Or do we, at all levels, have to adjust better to the fact that the standards are not very standard?”

However, it seems that most participants appreciate the planners' orientation toward deepening understanding rather than alignment of language. Comments from several years of colloquia attendees indicate their appreciation of a professional conversation among secondary and postsecondary faculty. Every year, feedback suggests that participants value Teaching Writing in Wyoming for the opportunity to talk about ideas with one another across sites and institutional levels, rather than as an opportunity for top-down instruction cloaked as professional development.

Additionally, participant feedback suggests that the colloquia are valuable primarily for providing a greater understanding of the goals, challenges, and struggles happening at various levels, instead of a focus on increasing common language. For example, after attending a breakout session about the role of research in writing classes, one 2013 attendee commented, “It was very inter-

esting to consider what research means (sic) and recall why it is essential and exciting.” Here, the participant seems to be recognizing that a common term, research, still doesn’t necessarily carry the same meaning among different locations of writing—a realization that draws attention to the fact that a goal of common language may still not produce aligned curriculum and instruction. Another participant at the same session echoed this realization, commenting, “K-12 and college have *completely different concepts* (authors’ emphasis) of how the process of research works and should be taught.” Through the colloquia, participants are able to articulate as well as compare the language, terminology, and assumptions they have when they teach writing.

Certainly, some faculty leave the colloquia with a desire to more directly align their instruction and terminology with other stages of writing development. A typical feedback comment is, “[I] liked to see what professors are giving so that my students can understand and know how to approach it when they get there – also how we need to tune ours up to make them closer.” But even in this feedback, there is a type of ownership about planned changes, a sense of renewal and possibilities, or what can be done rather than what external forces are demanding must be done.

Conclusions

In this article, we have explained the model we use to address a gap that represents the missing middle existing between top-down national education policies and bottom-up individual faculty independence and autonomy, along with local control of education. The need is great for secondary and postsecondary faculty to better understand student learning and be mindful of the significant differences and similarities in each other’s teaching-learning cultures. Our work is premised on the principle that faculty across levels deserve to work together in a respectful atmosphere that fosters both student learning and faculty growth. This respectful atmosphere is built around three components of

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the Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquia, a) changing the tone from mutual blaming by diffusing power through language use and voluntary participation in a neutral work space; b) creating a deeper understanding of each other's work by expanding and redefining educational networks and communities in the missing middle; and, c) sharing information by creating professional opportunities to explore the language of instruction and assessment around key transition topics. These components provide the means to address what we identify as the missing middle.

Creating intentional However, cross-level conversations address a vital missing middle for any effort to improve students' transitions from secondary to postsecondary settings. The model we describe here is applicable to any setting or discipline as long as participants are committed to professional practice that is fundamentally democratic, prizes shared expertise, and results in a professional conversation.

The Lost in Transition model and the Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquium in particular, offer a promising approach to a complex set of problems facing secondary and postsecondary faculty. In its first generation, Lost in Transition cannot assess for improved student performance as determined by standardized measures at the secondary level or dramatic improvements in the performance of first-year college and university students. What has occurred, however, are more formal and informal interactions between secondary and postsecondary faculty that focus on the specifics of instruction and pay close attention to the language of instruction. We are building relationships for hard work ahead.

The school-university partnership model presented here is just one way to create a space for the missing middle. It seems expected, indeed necessary, for secondary and postsecondary faculty to have open channels of communication and regular opportunities to work together on a specific issue. To address a complex, systemic range of challenges, faculty across levels need the wisdom

of each other's practice and the passion of each other's voices to help students succeed academically. It matters little to describe or advocate for a seamless educational system if that same system bypasses faculty who represent the missing middle in a difficult national debate about improved student achievement.

Space for the missing middle is not easy. Genuine collaboration across multiple levels is unusual and faces the challenges we have identified in this article.

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Table 1 - Teaching Writing in Wyoming colloquia themes, 2008-2013

Year	Meeting Theme
2013	What does “College and Career-Ready Research” Look Like?
2012	Exploring Transfer of Writing Skills
2011	Exploring Core Competencies in Reading and Writing
2010	Developing Social Media Across the Curriculum
2009	Bridging the Reading Gap – Working towards Critical Literacy
2008	Talking About Writing Across Levels and Disciplines

Table 2 - Teaching Writing in Wyoming Session Themes

<p><i>Contextual issues: political, affective, and cultural</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation: Dual/Concurrent Enrollment• Presentation: The State of Reading in Wyoming• Dinner discussion: Teaching Civility in the Classroom• Presentation: Evolving implications of literacy acquisition• Small-group facilitated session: Encouraging persistence in re-search projects• Small-group facilitated session: Developing engaging purposes and audiences for research (Common Core State Standards)• Reading discussion: <i>Limbo: Blue-Collar Roots, White-Collar Dreams</i> (Libran, 2004)
<p><i>Technology</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dinner discussion: Life in the “Information Economy”• Presentation: Rise of social media• Table discussion: How can schools use social media to help reluctant readers?• Panel discussion: Samples of social media projects (Common Core State Standards)• Hands-on exploration: Technology and social media in the classroom

Transfer of skills and knowledge

- Presentation: What does the research say about how to facilitate learning?
- Panel discussion: Teaching for vertical transfer (Common Core State Standards)
- Small-group facilitated session: Exploring college-level research assignment prompts
- Presentation: Critical Reading
- Presentation: “College and Career Ready” research skills
- Table discussion: What do we mean by learning transfer, and how do we measure transfer?
- Reading discussion: Examining assignments and student writing across levels

Synthesis and research

- Panel discussion: Successful models and tips for teaching summary, synthesis, and analysis (Common Core State Standards)
- Small-group facilitated session: Moving students past comprehension to synthesis/evaluation
- Small-group facilitated session: Promoting critical evaluation of sources and rethinking the research process
- Small-group facilitated session: Promoting an understanding of diverse perspectives through research

The Missing Middle

Interdisciplinary considerations

- Small-group facilitated session: Sharing Writing Across the Curriculum approaches within buildings
- Small-group facilitated session: Building interdisciplinary projects
- Table discussion: Common Core State Standards and what they mean for interdisciplinary writing
- Panel discussion: Using writing in the disciplines to teach transfer of learning

Table 3

Ground rules for cross-level disciplinary meetings

Shared Policies for Group Work

Shared policies answer the question: How do we want to work together in order to learn, respect one another, and accomplish our meeting goal?

1. Keep the purpose of the meeting in mind: *What do we learn from student work that reflects teacher expectations and student understanding?*
2. Begin and end on time.
3. Take personal breaks as needed.
4. Practice conversational courtesies:
 - avoid side-bar conversations
 - take turns speaking
 - practice confidentiality
 - limit interruptions (cell phones on vibrate, if on)
 - learn names, wear your nametag
 - use the 3x5 index cards on the tables to hold your thoughts
 - listen and evaluate, try not to be defensive
 - respect and expect a diversity of views
 - expect everyone to participate so no single person dominates
 - critique ideas, not people

The Missing Middle

5. Ask questions. Every question moves someone (or the group) forward.
6. Value the varied backgrounds and experiences that participants bring to the meeting. Both increase the value of our work together.
7. Know we have enough time to do the work we need to do.
8. Realize that the right people are here to accomplish what we need to accomplish.
9. Enjoy your time and today's work

**Prepare them for College; Don't Prepare them to Finish High School:
Graduates from an Urban High School Reflect on their Access to College
and Readiness for Higher Education**

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This paper reviews the high school and college experiences of four college freshman who graduated from an urban high school and are now enrolled at a competitive four-year university. The paper discusses the student's perceptions of their preparedness for success in college, and highlights areas of access to be considered when educating students in high schools for college success. Based on discussions with these students, this paper suggests how high schools in urban areas can improve their college readiness programs for students.

Prepare them for College

Buckland High School is a long-time partner school with a large, comprehensive, university in New England and located in an urban area. The principal of the high school asked a group of Master's students to follow up with recent graduates who were attending the partner university as new freshman. She was hoping to inform future efforts and practices of the high school to ensure students were being well prepared for higher education.

Similar studies have shown that low socioeconomic status and minority students from urban high schools face many challenges when entering higher education. College students from an urban high school felt they had subpar academic proficiencies, study and time management skills, as well as many missed opportunities they experienced being in an urban environment (Reid & Moore, 2008). Students "bluntly described the shock of arriving with far less academic preparation, money, and confidence than their peers" (Cushman, 2007, p.44).

Research has also been done to show the emphasis on affective attributes and dispositions is just as important to college success as cognitive skills (Moses & Nelson, 2011). Student's feelings about culture and self-identity prove that social preparedness is equally as important as academic preparedness in feeling well equipped in a college community (Byrd & Macdonald, 2005). Cushman's study also focused largely on the culture shock and alienation experienced by minority students who attended a four-year college. Cushman discovered that "differences in income, social styles, and even speech patterns cause many students to feel like outsiders" (2007, p.45). Because of these differences, students from underrepresented populations experienced the difficulty of staying true to their culture and personal identities, while also trying to fit in with the campus norm. To adjust, students had to "learn what both the old and new settings call[ed] for, and they continually move in and out of different cultures" (Cushman, 2007, p.47). This research examines how our participants' experiences compare to these findings, and offers suggestions to high school stakeholders about how to better prepare students for college.

Context

The Colton Public School system is grounded in the rich diversity of the city. While the context of this paper is based in one neighborhood high school, it is imperative to consider the community and the district as a whole before examining a single school.

The demographics of the Colton community are reflected in the obstacles that the school district faces. The average household income in Colton is \$28,931 compared to the income of the average family in the state at \$69,519 and a staggering 45% of children live in poverty in Colton (CT Voices for Children, 2014). The state where Colton is located struggles with the most significant gap in achievement and disparity of income between whites and those from underrepresented populations. Ninety percent of the students in Colton are eligible for free or reduced lunch, and all students receive it throughout the district. Forty percent of Colton students come from homes where English is not their first language (Strategic School Profile, 2012). In addition, Colton, like many city schools, face high turnover, implications resulting from standardized testing, and resource issues.

In an effort to address the achievement gap, Colton restructured its system to become an “all choice” option. The choice process provides parents with the opportunity to decide what school in the district their child will attend. The choice program offers smaller learning communities, theme-based programs relating to student interests, and a rigorous college-bound curriculum.

This research is based on the Teacher Preparation Studies (TPS) Program at Buckland High School, a previous NNER Clark Exemplary Partnership Award winner. The school’s population is 92% minority, with 70% being Hispanic, and 22% African-American. A major issue that the school faces is the number of students who are not native English speakers. Approximately 68% of the school’s population does not speak English at home, and 23% of these students are not fluent in English (Colton Public Schools, 2010).

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The TPS program intends to prepare students for a career in education, and hopefully become teachers who will return to their community and have a positive influence on urban education. Someone calls this “homegrowing” your own teachers for particular settings. The program works to achieve this goal through rigorous coursework and student internship experiences in local public schools. The Teacher Preparatory Studies program is partnered with the university. Through this partnership, TPS students have opportunities to visit the university, work with university interns, and meet university faculty.

Research Questions

What are urban high school graduates’ perceptions of their college readiness?

Subquestions

How prepared for college do urban high school graduates feel academically?

How prepared for college do urban high school graduates feel socially?

What suggestions can be given to high schools to better prepare their students for college?

Review of Literature

Academic Preparation

In a qualitative study of first-generation, urban college students, researchers measured students’ college preparedness through their own perceptions and attitudes. Three of the students felt well prepared for college and attributed this to AP class opportunities, encouragement and close connections with adults in the schools, high school readiness programs, and exposure to extracurricular activities (Reid & Moore, 2008). Seven of the students felt extremely unprepared for their post-secondary education experience. When asked to examine areas of

weakness, students discussed subpar academic skills, a lack of study and time management skills, as well as many missed opportunities they experienced being in an urban environment (Reid & Moore, 2008). In order to be successful in college, students need to be equipped with a multitude of skills, including “study skills, time-management skills, persistence, and ownership of learning” (Johnson, 2012, p. 30).

Interviews with first-generation students enrolled in their first year of college revealed that students felt a lack of sufficient academic preparation by their high school, especially when compared to other students on campus. Cushman (2007) writes, “they bluntly described the shock of arriving with far less academic preparation, money, and confidence than their peers with college-educated parents’ (p. 44). Some students said they felt “their parents were unable to reassure them” because they were not college-educated themselves, and students were unsure who to turn to for support (Cushman, 2007, p. 44). The emphasis on attributes and dispositions “such as personal goals, a strong work ethic and perseverance are as likely to propel a student through college completion as cognition” (Moses & Nelson, 2011, p. 1) and noted that these dimensions are underdeveloped in most schools.

In order to ensure that students are academically prepared for rigorous college curricula, teachers need to develop a deep, critical, university-level understanding of their subject-area which they can use to inform instruction and challenge students (Bausmith & Barry, 2011). Designating professional development funding to improving pedagogical content knowledge and professional learning communities (PLCs,) can benefit students. In PLCs teachers form concrete, shared visions about student achievement and college readiness (Bausmith & Barry, 2011).

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Academic Behaviors

Essential skills that students must have the opportunity to build during high school are “academic behaviors,” or “building affective attributes that promote college and life success” (Baber, Castro & Bragg, 2010, p. 2). These academic behaviors include organization, study skills, and the ability to work well within a group. Students must also have good note-taking and test-taking strategies, time-management skills, be able to interact with students of various cultures and backgrounds, “navigate the collegiate landscape,” and understand “how to navigate the bureaucratic process, especially in terms of financial aid” (Baber, Castro and Bragg, 2010, p.1).

Financial Aid

One major obstacle that affects the success rate of minority students from urban high schools is a lack of information on financial aid. Schools do not provide students with enough information about the plethora of scholarships, as well as private and government loans that can help them pay for school (Roderick, Noguera and Coca, 2009). Financial aid proves to still be confusing and a struggle for students even after being awarded it. Many do not know how to redeem the aid, and will drop out for fear they will not be able to pay their tuition (Garcia, 2010).

Culture and Identity

Student feelings about culture and self-identity prove that social preparedness is equally as important as academic preparedness in being well equipped in a college community (Byrd & Macdonald, 2005). Minority students often feel culture shock and alienation when attending a four-year college. Cushman (2007) discovered that “differences in income, social styles, and even speech

patterns cause many first-generation students to feel like outsiders” (p. 45). Because of these differences, minority students experienced the difficulty of staying true to their culture and personal identities, while also trying to fit in with the campus norm. To adjust, students had to “learn what both the old and new settings call[ed] for, and they continually move in and out of different cultures” (Cushman, 2007, p. 47). Conley and McGaughy (2012) also noted the isolation that minority students face on large college campuses and notes that they “have to be shown how to understand what campus life is like, how to fit in, that they are not alone with those feelings,” highlighting the need to be directed to the right resources on campus (2012, p. 47).

Academic Language

Lack of familiarity with academic discourse and linguistics can be a barrier for students in college (White, 2005). The author of one study notes that students in urban settings often bring their own home languages or versions of English to their high schools. Urban high school teachers are often accommodating to these students in order to ensure their academic success and make them comfortable in their classrooms (White, 2005). These students then enter universities, which operate based on white, middle class, western tradition and academic discourse. Once in college all of these students found that they were completely unfamiliar with the way their classes functioned, did not understand how to succeed in their courses, and most importantly were embarrassed to speak in class for fear of sounding unintelligent (White, 2005). It is necessary to expose students to the academic language and functions that are predominant in college while they are in high school classes if they are to be successful in college (White, 2005).

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Access to Information

A challenge faced by some urban high schools is the “information gap,” which is the failure to provide minority families with adequate information about college preparation and expectations (Dolan, 2008). Johnson, in reference to low-income and less well-educated families, claims “multiple public agenda studies suggest that many young people are not getting good advice on choosing and entering postsecondary education programs” (2012, p. 18). His study also found that guidance counselors in urban schools were receiving low survey scores concerning the students’ perceptions of their effectiveness (Johnson, 2012).

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses and College Entrance Exams

Many urban high schools are now offering Advanced Placement courses to increase their academic rigor and prepare students for college. However, research proves that taking AP courses does not necessarily predict success in college, only passing AP exams does (Hallet & Venegas, 2011). Students from an urban district who were interviewed about the quality of their AP coursework experiences felt that “teachers were unprepared or unmotivated [to teach the courses], course material did not match the national exams, and school-based structural issues negatively influenced the AP class experience and later test performance” (Hallet & Venegas, 2011, p. 478).

College entrance exams can be a hurdle for most students when attempting to enter the world of higher education. Deil-Amen & Telvis (2010) found that students typically held an inflated sense of their readiness for college and lacked awareness about the realities of their low test scores. There is a need to create a high school culture that promotes appropriate strategies for preparing for and interpreting their performance on college entrance exams (Deil-Amen & Telvis, 2010). This study also asserts that students’ lack of knowledge, weak

information and poor preparation have a serious impact on their success and ability to be adequately prepared for college.

School - University Partnerships

Partnerships between high schools and colleges may give students a vision of what their future might hold and to equip students with the necessary skills to be successful in college (Contreras, 2011). A major cause for the deficiency of adequate college preparation of minority students is the lack of commonality between high school graduation requirements, college admissions requirements, and the skills necessary to be successful in college (Dolan, 2008; Moses & Nelson, 2011).

The earlier students are exposed to post-secondary education, the more likely they are to attend because “unless parents and kids see the opportunities early, they will see college as something that eludes them, something that is not a reality for them” (Dolan, 2008, p. 30). Students “need to be exploring more college and career opportunities earlier on so they can understand what content knowledge, learning skills, and cognitive strategies are necessary to succeed in a particular career pathway or college major” (Conley & McGaughy 2012, p. 31).

Preparing students for college readiness by “invert[ing] the curriculum planning model from a K-12 to a 16-preK model” is one idea and to “plan education [starting in preschool] with college, career and life success as the overarching goal” (Moses & Nelson, 2011, p.1).

Once in college, students from urban high schools cite the lack of support they receive from the universities they are attending. Garcia (2010) found that an “institutional barrier to student retention was the limited information on the part of staff members at the college about students who come to the institution with a lack of college preparation” (p. 843). These students found little sources

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for help or support at their universities and, since most were the first-generation of children in their families to attend college, could not rely on their families to assist them with these challenges and were not able to complete their degrees.

Methodology

Design

In order to examine the perceptions of college readiness held by urban high school graduates currently attending a four-year university, a qualitative study was conducted. The study intended to convey their personal and shared experiences.

Student's high school and college experiences were examined through using surveys and individual interviews. Those participating in the study agreed to engage in an interview with the researchers. The purpose of the interview was to discuss their perceptions of their own college readiness and transition from an urban high school setting to a four-year university.

Participants

Each of the participants was a second semester students enrolled in the University of Northeast and had previously graduated from the same partnership high school. Of the participants, three are female, and one is male and all four participants are considered minorities. Three of the participants are Pre-Education majors, and one is an Engineering major. All are age 18. One of the participants is not an immigrant or first-generation American. Two participants immigrated to America within the last ten years. One is a first-generation American whose parents came to America in their late teens.

Results

The data was analyzed and several categories emerged. The most commonly mentioned factors that influenced the participant's perceptions and at-

titudes towards their college-readiness were access to universities, access to models and mentors, access to information, access to small learning communities, access to challenging academic experiences and access to extracurricular activities that promote involvement.

Discussion

Access to Universities

Participants noted that the partnership between the Teacher Preparatory Academy at Buckland High School and the University of Northeast gave them the advantage of familiarity with the school, and therefore had a significant impact on their decision to attend college, specifically UNE. Shania discussed the influence of this partnership:

Knowing the people in the School of Education was what was a big pusher for me to come to UNE. I didn't know any staff at other colleges, but at UNE I knew all of these people from the School of Ed would be a support system for me whether I pursued education or not.

Jenna commented on the benefit of being comfortable in a familiar place and “not jumping into a whole other world completely.” The constant interaction with the University, including field trips to the main campus, allowed the students to get to know college faculty members, observe the atmosphere of the campus, and learn to physically navigate through a large campus. This exposure proved to ease some of the concerns that many college-bound students face.

The positive impact the Student Support Services (SSS) had on the student's college preparation was unanimous. SSS provides mentoring, tutoring and academic counseling to students who are first in their fam-

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ily to pursue a four year college education, or who meet socioeconomic guidelines established by the federal government. All participants who went through the summer program expressed the high level of difficulty of the coursework and expectations in comparison to high school.

Despite the challenging academics, the students agreed that the program better prepared them for the workload of college. One even said she felt that the SSS program was harder than her first semester. She also admitted that when she first learned about the program she thought it was “ridiculous,” and expressed her reluctance to give up six weeks of her summer for an intensive college preparation program. However, the continued support from her school encouraged her to continue to challenge herself. She commented, “I absolutely loved it... I didn’t see it as a privilege when I was in it, but now that I’m out of it it’s a huge advantage.” Jenna also noted recognizing the benefits after the fact, explaining, and “once I got through, I felt more prepared for the work we have now.” Korina commented on the particular effectiveness of the writing instruction of SSS and attributed her success in writing to the SSS program.

Shania discussed the transition to college by saying “my first semester I came in here it was a huge cultural shock, I expected so much more diversity, coming from Buckland where to me it was a good mix of races, then coming here where it’s such a huge European American population, it was actually like the minorities stuck out.” Her comments were not isolated from the opinions of the other participants, as Korina stated at college “we are the minority again; in Buckland we [were] the majority.” Although all of the participants noticed the drastic cultural change. Most of the participants were involved in cultural centers offered at the University and were able to successfully find a sense of community within an environment of difference.

Access to Models, Mentors and Motivation

Motivation plays a key role in both the desire to attend college and the success students have when they are there. We found that our participants identified motivation from three different sources: self, family, and teachers. Shania demonstrated her intrinsic motivation by stating “I want[ed] to make sure I reach my maximum potential and that’s why I need[ed] to go to college.” All four participants recognized family members as a major source of motivation. Shania’s mother is currently enrolled in college and sister has obtained a Master’s degree. When speaking about her sister’s acquisition of a Master’s she stated, “just knowing that she could do it made me feel like I could do it too.”

Calvin also saw his mother’s enrollment in college as a source of motivation, because he would attend his mother’s college classes as a child. His particularly early and unique exposure to a college setting was a positive influence on his perceptions of postsecondary education. When speaking specifically of his mother’s influence on his decision to attend college, he said she decided, “yes, you’re going to college.” It was not a question, but rather an expectation. Jenna, a first-generation college student, was also motivated by her mother’s desire for her children to have a better life by furthering their education.

All four participants emphasized the influence that strong relationships with teachers had on their academic success. When discussing the teachers at Buckland, a common trend emerged in the conversations about teachers caring for students on a personal level. Shania explained “you had a relationship with teachers and felt they actually cared about you.” Not only did the participants feel supported and cared for, but all of the participants also related their success in academics directly to the teachers. Calvin stated, “I felt it was the relationship with the teacher that really effected my grade. Jenna similarly said, “I think the teachers [were] probably the most important factor of how I did in class.” These strong, caring relationships proved to prepare the participants academically and keep them engaged in their courses. Jenna noted that she appreciated when you

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could tell teachers were passionate about what they do. The teachers' passion, caring demeanor, and ability to build relationships with the students all positively impacted their academic achievement.

Access to Information

Participants expressed knowledge of the passing requirements for AP exams, but were not aware that the passing scores differ from the many universities' requirements for college credit. One participant admitted her frustration with this lack of information, explaining "I did not [get college credit] and I passed three of my AP tests, but I passed them with a three and UNE takes fours. . . I wasn't aware that UNE took fours. I was just told pass the test. . . man if I had known I would have pushed a little bit harder." Korina noted the AP curriculum helped her to know what amount of work to expect in college. Calvin discussed the lack of high standards and gave advice to teachers by stating "you need to prepare them for college, don't prepare them to finish high school." Raising expectations for all students ultimately affects academic performance and what individual students believe they are capable of.

Many of the participants expressed that they were provided with a substantial amount of information about the college application process and financial aid. Shania, who spent time every day in the college and career center, said she "felt like [she] had all the steps and knew what [she] had to do all the way through." However, she made a notable distinction between being *given* information, and having *access* to it, when she explained "I don't feel like [the teachers] hand you a lot of information, but if you're a go getter and the type of student that goes out to look for the information it's there."

Aside from seeking assistance outside of the classroom in the college and career center, students were allowed class time for the college application process. Shania expressed that a specific teacher was particularly helpful with the process because she utilized class time to interpret the students' SAT scores and what those scores meant for them. This teacher also explained how students could find pertinent information on College Board. Students also have

a thirty-minute homeroom block that is largely dedicated to filling out college applications and receiving one-on-one help from teachers and interns.

Access to Small Learning Communities

All four of the participants in our study believed that being enrolled in the Teacher Preparatory Studies Program was vital to their decision to attend a four-year university. For Jenna, enrollment in the program completely changed her mind about college. She stated, “there was a point that I was not going to go to college at all. Since I’m a first generation student it was never in my path, never my main goal until Teacher Prep.” She concluded “if I didn’t choose Teacher Prep I don’t think I would be here right now, honestly.” To explain the impact of the small learning community, Korina described TPS as a “small bubble where all students were pushed to go to college,” as compared to her peers not enrolled in an academy, whom she believed were “just encouraged to graduate with no guidance towards further education.” Generally, being in a small learning community benefitted these students in that they were given special and individualized attention from their teachers and guidance counselors. The small size of the academy allowed for a culture of college-readiness for all.

Access to Challenging Academic Experiences

While all participants found their Advanced Placement courses to be sufficiently challenging, they believed that other general courses were not as effective. Korina noted, “classes other than AP’s did not challenge her at all.” When broaching the same topic, Calvin stated he was challenged to complete homework, but was not challenged with the content within the classes. In general, although AP classes were somewhat challenging, the courses were more about completion and less about the depth of content. This is extremely inconsistent with expectations in college, where students are expected to engage with rigorous material.

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Calvin made a notable observation when he suggested there was no cohesiveness to his high school courses and a lack of connection between one year and the next. He felt he was never given the opportunity to build on prior knowledge and experienced disconnect between what he learned from one unit to the next. On the contrary, in his college courses he realized the necessity of continuous learning.

A common topic in our academic discussion was a lack of preparedness for college writing. Jenna stated “writing is definitely one thing that if I would have had it in high school it would have been easier in college.” She felt overwhelmed by the intensity and amount of writing required in her classes and felt that had she been given more opportunities to develop her writing skills in high school, she would be more comfortable in her college courses.

In addition, participants recognized that they not only lacked sufficient writing proficiencies, but also lacked the basic skills necessary for their college courses. One participant noted “[my peers] just got it right away, study habits and just basic knowledge, I felt like they knew a lot more than I did, so when I would work at something I felt like I had to work ten times harder than the other person.” Similarly, Korina stated “so many people learned things that we were supposed to learn but didn’t.” While neither pinpointed what this basic knowledge was, both were aware of lacking the general knowledge their peers possess. This contributed to an overall lack of confidence about their college-readiness.

For the participants, the most commonly mentioned area of weakness is adequate study skills. While they were enrolled in AP courses during high school, these courses did not require them to develop effective study habits. Shania explained, in high school “I didn’t really study for much, I just did my work. I can’t really ever remember sitting down like I’m going to study for the next couple of hours.” Likewise, Calvin “did close to no studying at all.” College is a difficult transition for all students, but especially if students do not have

the background or skills to adjust to an exam-based college curriculum.

Access to Extracurricular Activities/ Involvement

Two participants also described the social benefits of attending the SSS program. Korina met most of her friends there, and Shania said, “just from SSS you know so much people and that’s 140 faces before you come.” This comment also reaffirmed the advantage of having a sense of familiarity on a campus. Whether it is with professors or other students, having a support system nearby contributed to their success.

All of the participants in the study were “extremely involved high school student[s]” and participated in athletics, clubs, and community service. Shania observed that because she was involved in so many extracurricular activities at Buckland, she was able to learn how to prioritize and manage her time in college. Calvin also used these activities as a healthy way to disconnect from daily stressors, saying “it was good to get the fresh air and exercise and get my mind off school work.” Participants believed that these activities kept them engaged in school and the community.

Conclusion

Dolan (2008) argues that “low expectations [for minority students] are embedded in the system,” and students and families must be equipped with the proper information as early as possible so that “not just a select few [are] lucky enough to have the right counselor or land in the right program get the information — but all the students” (p. 30).

This study highlights the importance of finding ways to access higher education for historically underserved populations. Moses and Nelson (2011) assert that it is in the best interest of the nation as a whole to make a commitment to students’ college readiness; this commitment is not only an important goal of education, but “a civil rights commitment of the highest magnitude” (p.1). They stress the critical economic and political repercussions that the nation will face if the commitment to preparing *all* students, regardless of race or socioeconomic background, is not met. There must be more direct access to opportunity for all.

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Cultural Diversity and Cultural Difference: Learning from Homi Bhabha's Perspectives

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This paper offers an examination of the conceptualization of difference through the lens of Homi Bhabha's concepts of cultural diversity and cultural difference. The author asserts that, from Bhabha's perspective, what happens when different cultures interact is not predictable, and even in the most oppressive conditions, the possibilities for emergence of suppressed knowledge, new meanings, and practices may arise. The paper concludes that the notion of cultural difference can help to expand our understanding of multicultural relations and overcome our essentialist tendencies in thinking about the meanings of difference, whereby we solely focus on learning about different cultures.

Two decades ago, Sarup (1994) raised a critical question for those of us who are interested in understanding the dynamics of multicultural exchange: "At present the norm stresses similarity, but what would happen if the norm changed and if the norm stressed difference?" (p. 103). Burbules (2000) argued

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that the dominant discourse of education and educational policy in the United States has emphasized the common. According to Burbules, this emphasis has sprung from the assumptions about common educational interests and needs that, upon closer scrutiny, appear not to serve all groups equitably. We now live in a time when our lives are impossibly entangled with the lives of cultural Others in increasingly intense and complex ways (e.g., Ang, 2005; Papastergiadis, 2000). Moreover, our classrooms and spaces of scholarship are situated within increasingly complex and diverse human conditions, as our nation is experiencing more racial segregation than ever (e.g., Kozol, 2005). Thus, pluralism and transnationality can hardly translate to equity and equality (e.g., Appadurai, 1996; Bhabha, 1999). The last issue, in particular, is reflected in the current education system, not only in the United States, but other countries in the world where the dropout rates for racially, ethnically, linguistically diverse student populations are alarmingly higher when compared to those for the mainstream students (Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2011). Such an academic achievement gap between students from diverse backgrounds and their mainstream counterparts at least in part testifies that the same common educational goals and interests applied to all groups do not serve all students equitably. Clearly, there is an urgent need to re-think the way we understand difference.

Not so surprisingly, there is a solidifying consensus in the field of education about the need to develop programs that respond to the complex patterns of human lives, in order to create more inclusive schools and a more just society (Shim, 2009, 2011). Not so fortunately, however, there is a companion tendency in education to seek redemptive solutions and quick fixes to problems related to diversity before attending to the complex reasons behind, and sociological nature of, the problems (Bhabha, 1994, 1999). Chief among the many risks of such liberal multicultural education is the tendency toward romanticism or utopianism, which largely locates the goals of multiculturalism in simply exposing, celebrating, and respecting different cultures without challenging the

ways in which differences are represented and used to support unequal power relations (Gorski, 2008, 2009). For instance, Gorski (2008) argued that popular events, such as *Taco Night*, and other international school events that mostly focus on different cultural customs and food only support existing inequity and injustice and risk the danger of perpetuating the stereotypes. In other words, multicultural education that focuses only on benign differences without considering the greater political forces and unequal power relations that shape micro interactions in schools cannot really bring about social change. Thus, despite the good and noble intentions, the present trends in multicultural education that prematurely celebrate diversity in schools only reinforce existing conditions of oppression and social inequality.

Rethinking Multicultural Exchange and Education via Homi Bhabha

Many researchers have been adamantly arguing that the goal of multicultural education must be working against inequality and inhumanity linked to the systems of domination, while foregrounding social justice (Banks, 2004; Gorski 2006, 2008, 2009; Kumashiro, 2004; Nieto, 2000). These researchers convincingly argue that multicultural education that does not interrogate forms of European and American norms that situate difference in structures of domination and that focuses on neutral heterogeneity masks an invisible Eurocentric values by which other cultures are judged. Gay (2010) also argued that what is at stake now is not merely including minority voices, as we also need to raise more questions with respect to how one's own practices and representations of Others contribute in the construction of the margins. In Gay's view, we must understand that those practices and representations are constitutive of broader historical, social, cultural, and political contexts forged in asymmetrical relations of power. More specifically, how individuals understand and interpret differences is shaped by historical, cultural, and social practices that can hinder social justice efforts. That stated, our racial and cultural backgrounds are likely to affect the way we understand and interpret difference. For instance, how I,

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a Korean-American who spent some time growing up in Korea, understand difference may be very different from how most of my students, predominantly Whites who spent most of their life in a rural state in the US, understand the same concept. Not recognizing the social and cultural influence in how individuals interpret difference goes against the commitment of democratic education, as it sees difference as a mere knowledge to be acquired, while not disrupting power asymmetry inherent in multicultural exchanges.

We live in the *age of difference*, as well as, unfortunately, the age of boundary maintenance, quick fixes, and liberal multiculturalism (Dimitriadis & McCarthy, 2001). Thus, as one way to contribute to multicultural education that promotes social justice and democratic practice in education, this paper offers an examination of the conceptualization of difference through the lens of Homi Bhabha's concepts of *cultural diversity* and *cultural difference*. Bhabha is a post colonial scholar, and along Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak, he is often referred as the "Holy Trinity" of postcolonial theory (Young 1995). Bhabha's concept of (concept of *cultural diversity* and *cultural difference* was initially used to expose the conflicts between the dominant and dominated in colonial discourse then extended to address the various ways of living with difference in modern society (Bhabha, 1990, 1994, 1999).

Bhabha contends that in theory of cultural difference Bhabha contends that in theory of *cultural difference*, for example, the interaction between two different cultures results in transformation of both positions over time because their positions are reconstituted in and through a negotiation. Bhabha's idea suggests that no culture is ever contained or fixed and he problematizes the view *cultural diversity*, which focuses on learning about and celebrating difference without attending to what actually happens to during the process of the exchange. Bhabha's view of cultural difference on the other hand focuses on the moments of articulation and interactions between the colonizers and colonized and equally of different representations among different cultures, aiming to understand how social, cultural, and political forces impact cross-cultural re-

relationships. In this paper, Bhabha's distinction *between cultural difference* and cultural diversity is used as a way of thinking about contemporary multicultural exchange education. A more in depth discussion on the distinction between the two concepts will be presented in the subsequent section.

In their interview with Bhabha, Olson and Worsham (1999) stated that "one of the most important theoretical innovations" Bhabha offers is the distinction he draws between "cultural diversity and cultural difference" (p. 15). The authors argued that multicultural educators can benefit from understanding Bhabha's concepts about *cultural difference* in order to promote transformation toward more democratic education in thinking about difference in present time where schools still commonly uphold cultural difference from the essentialist views. Although this paper is not a report on an empirical study, I will refer to my own teaching practices to support the arguments presented in this paper. What follows is a discussion of Bhabha's distinction between *cultural diversity* and *cultural difference*.

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Cultural Diversity

Each semester in my diversity course, which is mandatory for all students enrolled in a teacher education program in an institution where I teach, I invite students to share their thoughts on what they hope to learn in the course. These students, who are predominantly White, generally state that they hope to learn about different cultures so that they can be prepared to work with their future culturally diverse students. As we spend a semester together, it becomes apparent that most students come into the classroom espousing what they believe to be absolute truths (e.g., what they need to do to be prepared to work with diverse student populations).

When viewed through the lens of Bhabha, how my students understand the problem of multiculturalism (as a lack of their knowledge about different cultures) is directly related to the concept of difference in the model of

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cultural diversity, and I dare to state that this is not an unusual assumption. In fact, such an understanding of difference is not uncommon even among my White colleagues. For example, some of my colleagues spend their sabbatical abroad and their subsequent reports often focus on the opportunities to learn about cultural Other's customs (e.g., dances, food, family relations, and social rules), rarely reflecting on their own cultural lens through which they interpret those practices. Bhabha (1994) stated that "cultural diversity is the recognition of pre-given cultural contents and customs; held in a time-frame of relativism it gives rise to liberal notions of multiculturalism" (p. 50). According to Bhabha, liberal multiculturalism naïvely assumes the displays of different cultures as the solution to a problem with cultural difference, which obscures the existing relationship of domination. For Bhabha (1994, 1999), the proponents of cultural diversity celebrate cultural differences and acknowledge that each culture has unique practices and values. Referring back to my students and colleagues—who believe the more knowledge they have about different culture, the better people across different cultures get along—it is evident that they understand that different cultures have different cultural practices. However, they also seem to believe that their understanding of other cultures is somehow objective. Another example of such an assumption is demonstrated in the study conducted by Shim (2012), in which she explored teachers' responses to short stories that embodied intercultural themes. According to the study findings, the responses participating teachers offered showed their continuous desire to learn about cultural Others. Most importantly, the participating teachers revealed the prevalent assumption that the knowledge about cultural Others is the main problem in multicultural exchanges.

However, Bhabha contends that the *cultural diversity* model does not take into an account the inherent power asymmetry in multicultural exchanges, as it assumes that each culture has the equal right to speak and to be heard. Moreover, it fails to address the problem of who gets to decide when there is a disagreement and clash between the cultures (both individually and collectively). In other words, according to Bhabha, the *cultural diversity* model that calls for the recognition of the legitimacy of different cultures does not consider what

happens in the process of cultural contact. Indeed, if the focus of multicultural education was solely on learning about different cultures, e.g., what my students see as problem in diversity, we would not have to consider unequal power relations while running the risk of essentializing other cultures.

Bhabha (1999), however, argued that diversity is not difficult “because there are many diverse cultures” (p. 16). Rather, cultural difference becomes problems when “something is being challenged about power or authority” at which point, “a particular cultural trait or tradition—the smell of somebody’s food . . . the accent that they speak with. . . —becomes the site of contestation, abuse, insult, and discrimination” (p. 16). Indeed, for instance, students who speak English as a second language and those who have accent are often discriminated against in schools (Doerr, 2009). Drawing upon Bhabha’s notion of *cultural diversity*, it is evident that English language learners’ accents are seen through the lens of the dominant linguistic culture, “a norm given by the host society or dominant culture, which says that these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our grid” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 28). In my recent socio-linguistics class, a graduate student, a White male, asked me if, in my view, Korean culture and language are as complex as American culture and English. It was apparent that the student was very eager to learn and acknowledged the difference, and yet his effort to understand the Korean culture and language was focused on contrasting it with what he sees as the complexity of American culture and English. In my interpretation, his question assumed that there exist other cultures whose culture and language are not as complex as his own. This small but significant example indicates that how an individual understands difference depends on the political and social locations in which that individual stands. Furthermore, such *cultural diversity* model that does not consider the invisible norm only masks the unequal power dynamics. Bhabha (1994) pointed out that “in society where multiculturalism is encouraged racism is still rampant in various forms. This is because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests”

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(p. 208). In other words, acknowledgement of diversity neither addresses the complexities of the multicultural interactions that occur nor provides adequate basis for inequality.

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As an alternative perspective, Bhabha offered the notion of *cultural difference* for multiculturalism whose objective is to resist cultural supremacy and to focus on the equality of different representations among cultures. Reflecting on Western cultural hegemony, Bhabha argued that *cultural diversity* is ineffective in delivering its promise—equality and justice for all—and the *cultural diversity* model at best demands tolerance of diverse cultural values. According to Bhabha, *cultural difference* is not a problem because there are different cultures in the world. It is problem because of the power imbalance and the judgments that get attached to the difference. Thus, Bhabha not only acknowledges the inevitable power imbalances in multicultural exchanges, but also highlights the representation (e.g., judgments) of difference constructed by the systems of domination that constitute the invisible norm. The fact that many mainstream classroom teachers assume that students who speak English as a second language and with an accent are less intelligent than those students whose first language is English (Cummins, 2000), is making an unfair incorrect judgment about the second language speakers through the invisible norm of standard English which in turn have serious educational consequences for those students

What is particularly educative about Bhabha's model of *cultural difference* is his concept of *enunciation*, which has a profound influence on how he defines "the cultural differences that makes a difference" (Ibrahim, 2006). Bhabha's (1994) notion of *cultural difference* locates difference "at the level of enunciation" (p. 25) that is at the level of contact. Thus, it is not a matter of several diverse cultures already being present (i.e., *cultural diversity*), but rather the idea that, whenever different cultures interact,

one stands in an unstable (ambivalent) space where “the very authority of culture as a knowledge of referential truth” is also at the moment of the enunciative process (p. 51). For Bhabha (1994), “difference in culture and power are constituted through the social conditions of enunciation . . .” (p. 347). Thus, while acknowledging that inevitable power imbalances exist, he implies that, in the very process of multicultural exchanges, new power relations may emerge. Applying Bhabha’s idea of cultural *difference* to the aforementioned example in my socio-linguistics class, at the moment my student initiates the exchange, I am presented with a generative pedagogical space (that may be uncomfortable) in which the other class members can reflect on and disrupt the assumption underlying the student’s question. In the very interactions between students and teachers, the teachers’ position and how they identify with the English language learners may be reconstituted over time as the student don’t conform to the teachers’ assumption and as a result teachers reach a better understanding of students.

Power, Resistance, and Cultural Difference

Bhabha also asserted the presence of power/resistance relations in all discourse (cultures). He used the insights shared by Foucault (1980) to further conclude that not only is resistance inherently present in multicultural exchanges, but also that resistance can become a space of *negotiation*. This last aspect is a unique insight made possible by Bhabha’s distinction between *cultural diversity* and *cultural difference*, and it has particular relevance for studies of multicultural education whose goal is social justice and democratic education. Bhabha helps us see that, in situations of multicultural exchanges, which are inevitably mediated by unequal power relations, resistance will always be present and may constitute the beginnings of negotiation. According to Bhabha, this social fact is what allows us to open up spaces of possibility. The notion of *cultural diversity* assumes pre-given cultures. Thus, rather than attending to what happens in the process of cultural contact, it assumes and preserves pre-existing hierarchical relations. For instance, comparing the Korean and American

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culture and language does not problematize how difference is represented within the system of domination. Nonetheless, questioning the assumption underlying the comparison does open up a space of different ways of thinking. Moreover, if I choose to agree with the students in my diversity course and focus on helping them learn about different cultures, they will probably look upon me more favorably. Still, doing so does not dismantle the dominant lens through which they understand multicultural exchanges. On the other hand, having a dialogue about what may be a problem with their focus can potentially prompt a change in how they think about their relationships with people from different cultures.

Bhabha's notion of *cultural difference*, therefore, makes room for (indeed invites) a new possibility for reconfiguring the power relations. Invoking the origin of Bhabha's idea which was to examine conflict in the colonial discourse, in his essay, "Signs Taken for Wonders," Bhabha (1994) showed how and why the Delhi villagers' insistence on a vegetarian Bible and the refusal of a meat-eater Bible is significant not simply because they provide a new position, but because they produce a supplemental position through "challenging the boundaries of discourse and subtly changing its terms" (p. 19). Bhabha noted that because the encounter between colonizer and colonized is not constituted by parties with equal amounts of power (in fact, no discourse is every constituted by equals, according to Bhabha), there is always room for negotiation and thus room for subaltern agency. For Bhabha (1994), while the notion of *cultural diversity* does not allow any room for subaltern agency, "cultural difference, as a form of intervention, participates in logic of supplementary subversion" (p. 232) does leave room for change. What this means for the educators of the 21st century is that we must attend to the sites of resistance in our classrooms and consider that some of our students' alternative perspectives can serve as an opening for different ways of thinking against the dominant ways of knowing and perceiving.

Discussion and Implications

Bhabha (1994) stated that the notion of *cultural difference* is a radical notion of questioning everything, even our core being. Indeed, for those of us who are concerned with the educational practice of social justice, we need to reflexively apprehend and challenge the dominant ways of knowing that we at times unknowingly remain complicit. Indeed, how does learning about different cultures help us work with students of diverse backgrounds more productively when it is our own cultural lens that largely distorts how we understand and represent different cultural practices? That said, for Bhabha, our goal is not only to interrogate forms of European and American culture that locate difference in structures of domination, as we must also raise more questions with respect to how our own subjectivities and practices perpetuate the systems of inequality. Most importantly, we must recognize that power is multifaceted and it works not simply as a force for oppression, but also as a basis for resistance, and thus as a form of personal and social empowerment.

Currently, it is not very difficult to find multicultural curricula in American classrooms and schools that are riddled with rhetoric about seeing students from different cultural backgrounds through their eyes. The emphasis here is on respecting them for who they are and allowing them to bring their cultural practices and funds of home knowledge into the mainstream classroom. While these are obviously not bad practices in and of themselves, they fail to recognize the social fact that we are always implicated in the process of *seeing our students*. Moreover, how students are seen (whether by teachers, by researchers, or in the workplace) is always filtered through the lenses of dominant discourses. These practices, at best, have naïve and simplistic understandings of power, and at worst, they refuse to acknowledge the nature and effects of asymmetrical power dynamics. What this means for classroom teachers (at all levels) is that how we perceive and relate to students from different cultural backgrounds says much more about us than about them. Therefore, the shift in teachers' focus from learning about different cultures to looking inward and understanding the

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effects of hegemonies on ourselves would be a productive way to begin dismantling the current hegemonies.

As such, even though Bhabha (1994) was concerned with the nature and effects of colonial discourse, his model of cultural difference is not limited either to the discourse of colonialism or to the diasporic subject. His ideas can be used to understand multicultural encounters in current multicultural educational contexts. Furthermore, although Bhabha's notion of *cultural difference* does not guarantee complete elimination of unequal power relations in multicultural exchanges and education, his concept can be used as a tool in envisioning a more just and democratic schools and society. Bhabha's distinction between the models of *cultural diversity* and *cultural difference* enables us to understand more fully the ongoing constructions of subjects and cultures in contexts of multicultural relations in American classrooms and schools. Furthermore, from Bhabha's perspective, what may emerge when different cultures interact is not predictable. In this regard, one of the main contributions of Bhabha's work is that it encourages us to, at least in part, expose tensions in multicultural exchanges. Most importantly, it allows us to see that, even in the most oppressive conditions, providing new voices for the marginalized is *possible*. In our classroom, when we have opposing voices and encounter perspectives that are different from the dominant and prevalent ways of understanding others, we as educators should not simply dismiss them as a mere difference in opinions, but see such exchanges as a transformative ground on which we can build a different mode of understanding the world. The notion of *cultural difference*, if understood in the critical way Bhabha intends, can help us expand our understanding of multicultural relations and overcome our essentialist tendencies in thinking about the meanings of difference in which we solely focus on learning about different cultures.

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