

Creating a New Culture in 21st Century Field Experience

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Abstract

The 21st century learner has multiple facets that teachers must be able to glean and respond to; as identified in the increasing number of teaching standards that require teachers to meet the needs of all diverse learners through instruction and assessment that engage and encourage all student learners. The increasing diverse composition of students in classrooms brings new challenges that teacher preparation programs and district partners must address to prepare effective teachers whom are ready to embrace all student backgrounds in a classroom setting; being responsive to the needs of all students. It is imperative that candidate preparation and district involvement is centered around, engaging and building on the assets of students' prior experiences and knowledge, while bridging their gaps through collaborative and student centered instruction and assessment. Cultural proficiency is an essential trait of teachers, it is only then they can see the student from the inside out, allowing for explicit recognition of the type of differentiation in planning, instructing and assessment needed for student success. This study focuses on the intersections of university program development, CAEP standards, edTPA assessment of teacher candidates, cultural proficiency and the involvement of Professional Development Schools. These intersections are present in the development of a "Culture of Care" Teacher Preparation Field Experience Model.

Introduction

Preparing 21st Century teachers is at a crucial time where the accountability of teacher candidate pedagogical knowledge and their performance in the classroom are under scrutiny. To prepare candidates to pass the performance assessment (edTPA) requires a unified front with our partnership development schools (PDS) as well as a strong foundation of cultural proficiency (CP). University faculty, supervisors, mentor teachers and PDS administrators need common understanding of the requirements and elements of what constitutes effective teaching related to the elements of the edTPA and what it means to develop cultural proficient practices. Currently PDS, CP and the edTPA are separate entities that need to be meld together to create a culture of instructional celebration – "this is just what good teachers do"!

Beyond the structures of PDS and the expectations of the edTPA is the underlying responsibility to nurture teacher candidates in cultural proficiency. If teacher candidates are unable to understand the background and lived experiences of themselves or their students they will struggle to pass the edTPA or have an impact on K-12 student achievement through their planning, instruction and assessment.

Research Question:

In what ways can PDS partners create a road map that intersects the goals/vision of the PDS and the edTPA while cultivating cultural proficiency to impact both P-12 student achievement and teacher candidate's development of effective instruction?

Methods and Materials

Glaser (1978) identifies the following steps to the constant comparative method of data analysis: 1) Begin collecting data. 2) Look for key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data that become categories for focus. 3) Collect data that provide many incidents of the categories of focus with an eye to seeing the diversity of the dimensions under the categories. 4) Write about the categories you are exploring, attempting to describe and account for all the incidents you have in your data while continually searching for new incidents. 5) Work with the data and emerging model to discover basic social processes and relationships. 6) Engage in sampling, coding, and writing as the analytic focuses on the core categories. In accordance with Glaser's model, analyzing the data results in material and creating a report, which explains the findings and also analyzes the themes of the study.

Results

Five Emerging Themes:

The themes that emerged from this study indicated intersections of the edTPA, PDS and CP were five themes that emerged under the common theme of Creating a Culture of: 1) Care 2) Responsibility 3) Collaboration 4) Respect: equity and diversity 5) Intersections

Theme 1 Creating a Culture of Care

"Incorporating a "theory to practice" model will necessitate discussion and shared decision-making among the participants. The intent of this statement is to honor: (a) the skill and expertise of P-12 faculty and the context in which they work on a daily basis and (b) the knowledge and expertise of college/university faculty" (Professional Development Schools, n.d.).

Theme 2 Creating a Culture of Responsibility

"The PDS partnership holds a shared belief that it is the responsibility of the education community (the public school and teacher preparation program) to prepare future educators" (Professional Development Schools, n.d.).

Theme 3 Creating a Culture of Collaboration

The university faculty, field experience supervisors, TOSA's, principals and mentor teachers "Team up" to provide a framework of ultimate support to guide and reflect with the teacher candidate.

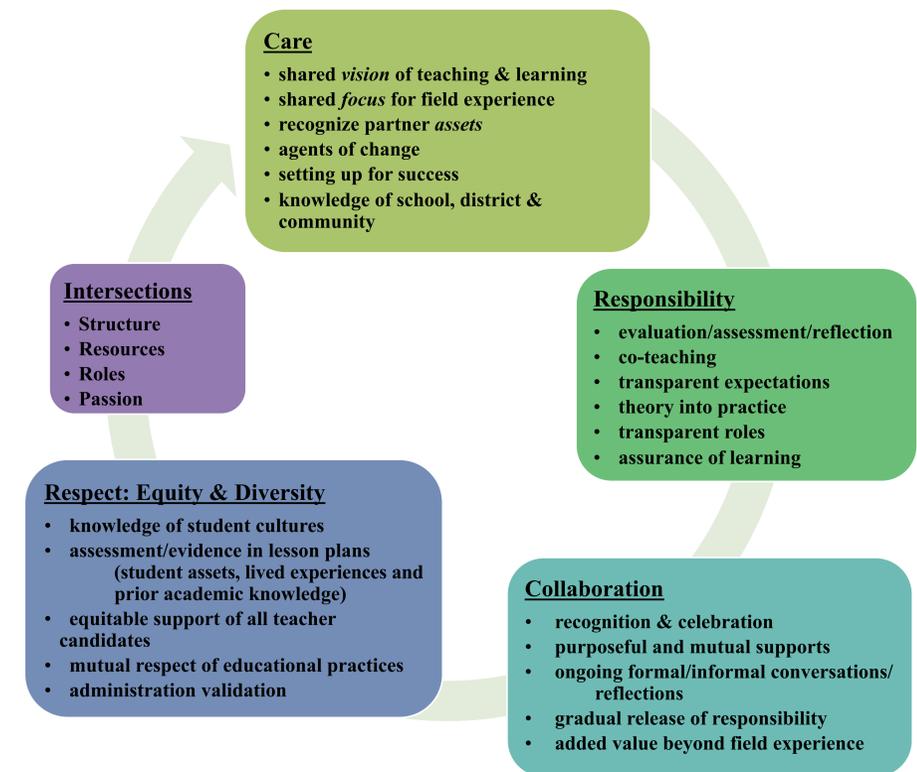
Theme 4 Creating a Culture of Respect: Equity and Diversity

Nieto has explained that the achievement gap can be divided into a resource or care gap. With this mindset, teachers can begin to peel back the layers that impact and empower student learning, where student differences go from a deficit to an asset (Piowski, 2013).

Theme 5. Create a Culture of Intersections

Sharon Robinson, president and CEO of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), declares that PDSs "are emerging as particularly effective, evidence based school-university partnership models in many sites across the nation, providing academic content and pedagogical instruction that is well integrated with extensive, closely supervised, hands-on in-school clinical experience" (Robinson, 2007).

"COC" Culture of Care Field Experience Model Intersections of: PDS, edTPA, CAEP, InTASC and Cultural Proficiency



Conclusion

The constant comparative analysis suggests that there is an intertwined relationship that exists between PDS, CAEP, InTASC, Common Core, CP and the edTPA. All have a strong foundation on care, responsibility, collaboration, respect (equity and diversity), and intersections. The current emphasis on cultural proficiency, teacher performance standards/assessment and professional development school partnerships exist primarily as separate entities. This must be overcome! The presented field experience model: Creating a New Culture in 21st Century Field Experiences is a roadmap for PDS partnerships that embraces the elements, standards and high expectations of all!

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