

Why We Need a Complete Redesign of Teacher Education



JOHN I. GOODLAD

During the 1980s, policymakers trotted out virtually every panacea for school reform ever recommended. Large numbers of educators criticized most of these recommendations as superficial and inadequate. But, by the end of the decade, policymakers and educators were close to agreement on an important concept: The individual school is a natural and most promising focus for effecting significant improvement.¹

The idea that school-based educational reform requires the empowerment of principals and teachers opens the way for serious consideration of the charge that the educational bureaucracy is the villain and that decentralized "schools of choice" are the hope of the future.² But regardless of how far one takes the concept of decentralizing educational authority, the idea of "the school as a center of change" conjures up a vision of principals and teachers as change-oriented stewards of schools.

An accompanying question, however, one that up to now has been on the periphery of discourse, is: Are a large percentage of these educators thoroughly grounded in the knowledge and skills required to bring about meaningful change? Judging from research my colleagues and I conducted several years ago on the nature of inservice education in school districts, the answer is no.³ My recent informal forays into staff development lead to the same negative conclusion: The primary focus of district-driven staff development remains teachers' individual teaching competencies, not the capability of an entire staff to renew the school. The conventional paradigm of staff development lags far behind the contemporary

How will we accomplish school reform if beginning teachers are not well prepared to participate in bringing about meaningful change? John Goodlad explains why schools and teacher training institutions need to join together in a common mission.

perception of school renewal.

What about new teachers? Are they coming out of enlightened teacher education program with the skills to manage classrooms as well as the ability to address the total array of problems and issues they will likely face in school renewal? Again, the answer from our recent research is a resounding no.⁴

As a matter of strange and puzzling fact, educators throughout this century have failed to join the reform of schools and that of teacher education conceptually, never mind in policy and practice.⁵ Only in recent years have educational reform reports addressed the connection between the way we prepare teachers and the needs of the schools.⁶ And even with that, teacher education programs still need a mission tied to a reasonably explicit concept of what teachers do and should ideally do.

Genesis of an Inquiry

In 1985, aware of this lack of connectiveness between the schooling enterprise and the preparation of those who staff it, I decided to launch an inquiry into the education of educators in the United States. Two colleagues joined me in creating the Center for Educational Renewal at the University of Washington. At the Center we embraced three sets of activities: (1) a comprehensive study of the conditions and circumstances involved in educating educators in the United States, (2) a parallel inquiry into a dozen other professions in search of lessons likely to be useful for teacher education,⁷ and (3) the cultivation of school-university partnerships for the renewal of schools and the preparation of those who work in them.⁸

In seeking to conceptualize our study, we focused on the general failure to connect schooling and teacher education that deprives teacher education of a mission. Not surprisingly, proposals for reforming teacher education lack educational aims and tend, rather, to recommend competencies and knowledge for future teachers that are disconnected

from the role of education and schooling in the larger society. Consequently, teacher education programs as well as most proposals for improving them emphasize the technocratic aspects of teaching and eschew, for example, the moral and ethical dimensions.⁹

My colleagues and I took a different

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tack. We looked to the nature of education and the role of schools in seeking to define a mission for teacher education. We favored a minimalist position—that is, what schools and teachers should do above all else. This included four requirements. Schools in our society are called upon to perform two distinctive functions: (1) enculturate the young into a social and political democracy, and (2) introduce the young to those canons of reasoning central to intelligent, satisfying participation in the human conversation.¹⁰ If schools are to perform these two functions well, teachers must be thoroughly grounded in the understandings and beliefs necessary for carrying them out. They must (3) learn the pedagogy essential to the enculturation and trait development of the young, and (4) possess the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in the continuous renewal of the schools for which they are the stewards. We viewed these four

sets of requirements as the underpinnings of the teaching profession.

All four sets of requirements contain moral imperatives: Schools and classrooms must be free of all impediments to the pursuit of equity and excellence for all. These include the many fallacious assumptions about learning and individual differences that interfere with access to knowledge and the full development of human potential.¹¹

As we worked on these requirements, we departed from the conventional educational thinking of the past two decades or so by not breaking them down into specific objectives for teacher education programs. Rather, we followed Abraham Flexner's methodology as outlined in his groundbreaking 1910 report on medical education.¹² We outlined a set of conditions we believed to be necessary for renewing teacher education programs and embedded these in postulates that we then sought in a representative sample of settings. Our data collecting included 1,800 hours of interviewing college and university presidents, provosts, deans, faculty members, and students.

What We Found

Our findings included the following: (1) a debilitating lack of prestige in the teacher education enterprise, (2) lack of program coherence, (3) separation of theory and practice, and (4) a stifling regulated conformity.

Chronic Prestige Deprivation

College and university presidents and provosts rarely mentioned teacher education when I asked them about present and future campus priorities. Indeed, teacher education probably would not have come up at all in most of these interviews if I had not raised the subject. Teacher education faculty I spoke to were well aware that neither they nor their work occupied a high place in the priorities of their institutions. Students, too, were aware of this low status and many—quite idealistic

about the importance of teachers to our society—are deeply resentful.

The low status of teaching relates back to the early days of teacher education in the United States—it got off to a bad start. The four normal schools established by the state legislators of Massachusetts during the 1840s attracted mostly women. Because of the meager educational backgrounds of most candidates, normal schools turned to the teaching of basic literacy. Many of those who enrolled later did so to gain a general education and either did not enter teaching at all or used it as a temporary entry into the job market. Teaching became widely recognized as either a temporary or a female occupation at a time in history when intellectuality in women was not highly valued.

As the normal schools evolved into teachers colleges and then state colleges and finally regional state universities, the schools, colleges, and departments of education steadily lost ground in the pecking order of the academic units of colleges and universities. Finally, these institutions either obfuscated or entirely

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obliterated their teacher education pasts as a kind of rite of passage in the quest for increased status within the hierarchy of higher education institutions.

To be aware that the teaching occupation has been and is of low status in this country is one thing. To understand the pervasive consequences of this is quite another. What Bernard Gifford refers to as chronic prestige deprivation oozes like molasses through and around every component of the teacher education enterprise.¹³

Ill-defined Boundaries

Unlike the professional education units in medicine, law, and dentistry, for example, the boundaries of teacher education are ill-defined. Commonly, there is no clear entry point for students. They wander in and out of the preparation courses, often taking three or more before declaring themselves candidates to get their student teaching placements. The socialization process is weak; there is not a class of '94 or '95. The faculty of the total curriculum is scattered about in the liberal arts departments, in the schools and colleges of education, in various adjunct relationships, and in the nearby schools where student teachers are received. Just assembling this diverse group isn't easy. Bringing all together for purposes of defining a mission and program requires a Herculean effort. Not surprisingly, the curriculum is incoherent, lacking in mission and organizing elements to tie the whole together. Only in a few settings, most notably the liberal arts colleges, did we find considerable coherence in the portion of the curriculum involving campus-based courses taught by regular faculty members.

For decades, teacher education has been exhorted as a campus-wide responsibility. Indeed, visiting teams from the National Council of Teacher Education have sought indicators of this expectation in their reviews of colleges and universities. It appears, however, that the dispersion of the teacher-preparing effort has resulted in teacher education being nobody's clearly defined responsibility.

Segmentation of Theory and Practice

A major corollary of this programmatic incoherence is the general separation of theory and practice. With the exception of four or five programs in our sample, even the so-called professional sequence in education lacks major organizing elements to tie together units of



Candidates for teaching need to be included in cohort groups that stay together during their entire preparation.

We Need More Than a Redesign

ARTHUR E. WISE

I applaud John Goodlad's efforts to create a coalition to reform teacher education. The school-university partnerships established by his Center for Educational Renewal are an exciting venture. His argument that we must require teachers to receive their clinical preparation in professional development schools that include teachers and university faculty is a major step forward for teacher education. The Center, by providing technical assistance and developing state support of the system, developing school-university partnerships, and creating and refining centers of pedagogy, is moving education toward three goals: improving practice, informing the knowledge base, and helping to professionalize teaching.

Yet we must go further. We must initiate policies that support the professionalization of teaching. If we want to increase the accountability of teachers, we must demand more of them than we have in the past. Professional schools of education will not have the necessary impact if teachers who have not had the kind of training and education Goodlad advocates are teaching in classrooms next to those who have received full preparation. Sixty percent of our current secondary school mathematics teachers did not major in and are not certified to teach math. Statistics are similar in other critical subjects, including science and English (*Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987-88*. National Center for Education Statistics, U. S. Department of Education).

In other professions, unqualified individuals are not allowed to practice. These professions have set standards for preparation that individuals must meet, or the state will not issue them a license. Standards, once set, are enforced. But in teaching, that is not always the case. Indeed, the emergency, temporary, and "alternate" licensing and certification programs

hinder the development of strong teacher education programs and hamper the development of teaching as a profession.

Creating Quality Control

When international comparative data are published, we complain that our students are not measuring up to international standards, yet we have not demanded competence from our nation's teaching force. In fact, much of the American public is still trapped in the belief that "anyone can be a teacher." This perception has contributed to our lackadaisical attitude toward the preparation of teachers, which, in turn, has fostered the common hiring practice of assigning teachers to content areas out of their primary field of study. The states say they do this because there is a "teacher shortage." But what have other professions done when faced with shortages? They have increased the incentives to enter the profession and eased the path to entry by providing financial aid. Sometimes, as in the medical field, para-professional personnel are created. But standards for entry to the medical profession have not been degraded.

To achieve the goals of professionalization and accountability, we must develop a national system of accreditation and a strong state licensing system. Right now, only 503 schools of education are independently accredited through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. Yet there are 1,200 schools which purport to prepare teachers. States do not require their teachers to graduate from independently accredited schools. In fact, some states are implementing alternate certification programs designed to waive even the minimal requirements they now have in place.

State licensing agencies in the established professions play powerful roles in shaping education in their fields. Standards boards, made up primarily of members of the profession, establish

and enforce educational, testing, and internship requirements. Always, they require that candidates be graduates of accredited professional schools. Thus the state licensing authorities legally reinforce the voluntary system of professional accreditation.

Professionalizing Teaching

Goodlad found "chronic prestige deprivation" among teachers. Our profession will continue to be held in low esteem until we demand more of our teachers, from grade point averages to elimination of those candidates who show no indication that they should be admitted to the practice of teaching. Until we have quality control mechanisms that work, we will continue down the same path toward low test scores and performance, both on the part of teachers and students.

Creative teachers are frustrated by the bureaucratic regulations that govern schools. But until the profession regulates itself more thoroughly, politicians and legislators will step in to try to do the job. Without profession-based quality control, well-meaning legislators in certain instances are actually reducing the quality of our nation's teachers by implementing "alternate certification" laws. In some cases, these laws allow individuals with no preparation except a college degree to become teachers.

There can never be a profession of teaching until the public has a reason to trust teachers. And that trust will not develop until all teachers are well educated and carefully licensed. Until that occurs, the current wave of education reform will not succeed. As Goodlad has urged, teacher education and school reform must be linked through working partnerships. □

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work or whole courses in a sequential fashion. If major theoretical themes are introduced at all—as sometimes was the case in settings still requiring foundation courses in education¹⁵—these themes were not picked up again in later courses. Indeed, students in or nearing the student teaching portion of their program were hard-pressed to remember any such themes.

The most glaring disjuncture between theory and practice occurred at the point where students left the campus to engage in their student teaching experiences. For prospective elementary teachers student teaching segments were usually full-time, lasting for 10-12 weeks. However, secondary-level student teachers' segments were fragmented by the necessity of juggling

high school class schedules with university courses.

Also, campus-based and school-based faculty in our sample rarely came together to discuss a mutually shared mission for student teachers. Indeed, in one setting with the most cohesive campus-based program, the faculty limited student teaching to the minimal state requirements: They felt that their teachings were undone by student teachers' experiences in the schools!

We found ample reason for such apprehension—student teachers often found that they had no opportunity to try what they had been learning because the school district (but not necessarily the cooperating teachers) endorsed different ways. Students often found themselves in a clash between campus learnings and school-based requirements. When asked about the management of this dissonance, a student teacher at one university replied that a professor told the class "not to move the chairs in the minister's house."

Regulated Conformity

There is no question that the creativity of faculty members in designing teacher education programs has been stifled by requirements set by states. On some campuses, directors of teacher education simply checked off the required courses and then made sure that a course meeting the specification was in place. It was not so much the specific requirements that discouraged faculty members from planning but the fact that existing requirements would be changed in such a way as to nullify any innovative creative efforts. It is not at all surprising, then, that fundamental teaching theory is squeezed out almost at the outset in favor of mechanical paper requirements. Thus, future teachers are preoccupied with the results of such requirements in much the same way that these mechanistic approaches to teaching come to dominate their preparation programs.

Also, state requirements change arbitrarily in response to supply and

demand. When teachers are in short supply—times that occur at quite regular intervals—states loosen their requirements so that almost anyone can get into teaching—if not through the front door, then there is always one standing open at the back.

In our study of teacher education programs in colleges and universities in eight states, we found all were driven more by bureaucratically determined regulations and the ongoing regularities of practice rather than by the knowledge base of teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

Toward Renewal

The interventions and manipulations in the name of reform that have occurred over the past 100 years have resulted in neither effective school reform nor a steady supply of high quality teachers for our schools. The question is, where do we go from here?

The first step to improvement is to join schools and the education of the teachers who will serve as the moral stewards of schools. This rather modest and seemingly sensible proposal is, in fact, quite radical. Teachers have never been charged with the stewardship of our schools; they have only been blamed after the regulations they have been compelled to carry out have failed. Even though the catch phrases of reform today are "the school as the center of change" and "empowerment of teachers," I do not expect a rush to entrust teachers with the stewardship of our schools. The future will be marked by a continued struggle among various sectors of the public interest, policymakers representing a variety of these interests, and the organized teaching profession. And, even if we were to have schools of choice, some of them run exclusively by groups of teachers, teachers would still need teacher education programs to ensure their competence and their moral qualifications.

We now need two things: (1) a complete redesign of teacher education programs, and (2) a share in this



Cooperating teachers must join with campus-based faculty to provide a cohesive program for student teachers.

JOHN McHEWITT

Conditions for the Renewal of Teacher Education

In *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools*, I designated the conditions that must prevail in teacher education:

- Boards of trustees and presidents of colleges and universities must place teacher education at the top of their institutional commitments or take their institutions out of the business;
- A clearly identifiable and responsible faculty in the arts and sciences, in the field of education, and in the schools should take charge of fulfilling the institutional commitment;
- Cohort groups of students who stay together with teams of faculty members throughout their entire preparation programs should be carefully selected and educated;
- All component parts of this program must be integrated into a coherent whole under the supervision of the responsible faculty group;
- Protected resources should be specifically allocated to the needs of a first-rate teacher education program;

- A unit in pedagogy should be located inside or outside of the existing school or college of education, depending on institutional circumstances and choice, that is committed solely and exclusively to the education of educators for the schools and to the study of teaching;
- The unit should formally include clinical or "teaching" schools operated jointly by school districts and the teacher preparing institutional for the renewal of schools and the education of those who work in them;
- All backdoor entry into teacher education should be eliminated;
- State-mandated teacher education curriculums should be completely removed in favor of entry examinations designed to fulfill each state's responsibility for protecting the public against incompetent teachers and assessments to ensure that all the conditions necessary for high-quality teacher education are in place. □

—John I. Goodlad

redesign (although teacher educators will be most heavily involved) by a wide range of actors: policymakers (governors and legislators in particular), appointed and elected state education officials, university presidents and provosts, faculties in pedagogy representing the arts and sciences and the schools of education as well as the departments of education, administrators and teachers in the schools, parents, and a considerable portion of the general citizenry.

An Agenda for Teacher Education

At present, three organizations are collaborating to create the Agenda for

Teacher Education in a Democracy: the Education Commission of the States (an organization created to compensate for the absence of ministries of education in the states and in the nation), the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the Center for Educational Renewal. The Agenda is proceeding in two phases. First, in the summer of 1990, the Education Commission of the States invited the state governors to submit proposals of how each state could stimulate a dialogue about the redesign of teacher education. By September 30, 1990, 44 states had submitted proposals—an astonishing figure, given the short time period and the financial inducement of

only \$5,000. Each state selected is using this money during 1991 and 1992 to augment its efforts to promote dialogue regarding the reform of teacher education.

In November 1990, a committee representing the three organizations announced the second phase of the Agenda. The committee stated its intent to select in the spring of 1991 six teacher education settings (colleges and universities collaborating with surrounding schools) that were interested in becoming pilot settings committed to putting in place the conditions outlined in *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools* as essential for teacher education (see box).

As the days and weeks unfolded, however, telephone calls and letters seeking information taxed the ability of the staff of the Center for Educational Renewal to respond. Early in 1991, letters describing the Center's expectations for the experimental sites yet to be selected had gone out to more than one-fifth of the teacher-preparing institutions in the United States.

Accompanying the letter of explanation was a set of questions designed to appraise the seriousness of intent and the ability of settings to meet the demanding criteria laid down in *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools*. The reply date of April 15 was somewhat intimidating, given the need for respondents to secure top-level administrative support within their institutions, establish the necessary communications with collaborating school districts, and secure faculty agreements regarding some sharp departures from conventional practices.

Despite these rigorous expectations, a substantial percentage of inquirers asked to be included among the initial group of experimental settings. A small committee of consultants to the Center screened the applications and conducted site visits during May and June. Early in July letters of invitation went to seven settings, all embracing a single college or university and various connections with schools: California Polytechnic

State University, Miami University, Montclair State College, Wheelock College, Texas A&M University (College Station), and the universities of Washington and Wyoming. An invitation went also to a consortium in South Carolina: Benedict College, Columbia College, Furman University, the University of South Carolina,

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Winthrop College, and a network of schools. Representatives of all eight sites selected then came together in mid-August 1991 for intensive discussion of commitments, expectations, plans for implementation, and likely obstacles to be confronted.

A cadre of Center consultants is now fulfilling the Center's promise of providing technical help in such areas as developing a supportive state infrastructure (in collaboration with the Education Commission of the States), establishing school-university partnerships, developing partner schools under the umbrella of these partnerships, and, above all, creating and refining the semiautonomous centers for teacher education and pedagogy.

More To Come

An unanticipated third phase has been

added to phases one and two described above. Selecting a small group of pilot settings to be joined in collaboration through the Center's National Network for Educational Renewal was not easy. Since the process was guided by criteria in addition to the excellence of the proposals received (such as geographic distribution and variety of institutional types), some exceedingly promising settings were not included in the first round. Additional sites will be added, one at a time, for at least the next four years and perhaps throughout the entire decade. A critical mass of from 30 to 40 settings will constitute the National Network for Educational Renewal by 1995.

Meanwhile, the Center and its partners, the Education Commission of the States and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, will provide a variety of opportunities for settings not included in the core group to participate in the Agenda. Clearly, this swelling interest in simultaneously renewing schools and the education of educators can be pushed to become a high tide of excellence. Our hope and expectation is that the renewal of schooling and the renewal of teacher education will always be joined in concept, policy, and practice. The prospects for the future are both demanding and exhilarating. □

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