Teacher Education: Expanding the Intersection of Evidence and Policy

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For the SREB Commission on Teacher Preparation
Our Goals

Build on the two great presentations and the discussions that occurred yesterday

- Reforming teacher education is important, but very hard work

- This Commission has the opportunity to make that work easier

- Lack of good evidence of what great teacher education looks like, but there are promising practices, such as the work Scott Ridley is doing

- How might we connect policy to promising practices?
Scared Straight

- Juvenile delinquents, 2 hour visit
- New Jersey’s Rahway prison
- Implemented in hundreds of sites
Scared Straight—a good program?

Scared Straight caused 13 percent more crimes
6500 more crimes
How is this relevant to teacher preparation?

Let’s explore an example from teacher preparation:

**Eight states require a masters degree**

- How might such a requirement make a difference?

- Dozens of studies have found that it makes no difference in student outcomes

- In NY alone, it is estimated to cost > $300million/year and has reduced the pool of would-be teachers
How is this relevant to teacher preparation?

Let’s explore an example from teacher preparation:

Eight states require a masters degree

Because ill-informed policies pose risks, we encourage you to demand good evidence

– Dozens of studies have found that it makes no difference in student outcomes
– In NY alone, it is estimated to cost > $300million/year and has reduced the pool of would-be teachers
Different Uses, Different Evidence?

Imagine you are developing a new flu vaccine. What type of evidence would you want before using it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Is it successful?</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing interventions</td>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>Anecdotes, case studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pilots, individual programs</td>
<td>Suggestive</td>
<td>Correlations, associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy, scaling-up</td>
<td>Causal</td>
<td>Experiments, quasi-experiments</td>
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</tbody>
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Landscape of Teacher Preparation

• More than 2,000 teacher prep providers

• > 80% graduate from university-based preparation programs

• Nationwide, only 10 to 15 percent prepared in alternative routes
  o In **Louisiana**, it is greater than 50 percent
  o In **Texas**, it is close to half of new teachers
The Role of States

• Set teacher certification and licensure requirements
  – Common set of training experiences: coursework, fieldwork, and licensure exams
  – Requirements vary widely across states

• Hold programs accountable for teacher knowledge, student outcomes?
Tensions to Consider

- In certain fields (STEM, special education), we are facing dire teacher shortages.
- Higher standards for teacher preparation versus pressing need to recruit more teachers.

“Finish up here. We need you to teach third period math.”
What Makes a Program “Good”?  

Effective teaching requires substantial and complex knowledge and skills

• Multiple goals for teacher preparation:  
  – Diverse teacher workforces  
  – Retention  
  – Impact on student achievement  
  – Impact on non-cognitive outcomes
A simple model of teacher education

States typically legislate or regulate each stage of this process. The effect of those requirements depends on their link to student outcomes.

Teacher education is important in developing effective teaching skills.
• Consistency in assessments across medical schools

• Analog in teacher education?

• How do we know prospective teachers have the knowledge, skills, abilities needed for effective teaching?
## What Do We Know?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Causal Evidence</th>
<th>Descriptive Evidence With Large-Scale Data</th>
<th>Anecdotal Evidence with Small Samples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection into preparation programs</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coursework in teacher preparation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student teaching and other clinical experiences</td>
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We lack strong evidence on effective practices for teacher education.
Learning From SREB States

Entry to Teacher Education → Preparation Program → Knowledge, Abilities, Skills → Classroom Teaching → Student Outcomes

Content Knowledge → Teaching Skills → Clinical Experience → Lots of Other Influences
Promising Practices........
A Few Illustrative Examples
Promising Practice #1: Data Systems to Inform Improvement

- Required admission credentials
- Licensure exam results
- Enrollment
- Clinical experience requirements
- Where graduates teach
- Teacher effectiveness on multiple measures:
  - Classroom observations
  - Student outcomes
  - Teacher retention.

We need to build data to inform what works.
UNC Educator Quality Dashboard
UNC Educator Quality Dashboard

http://eqdashboard.northcarolina.edu
Promising Practice #2: High Quality Clinical Experiences

• More ≠ better
  – Quality trumps quantity

• Does the match matter?
  – Teachers working with similar student populations

• School quality and teacher turnover?
  – Place student teachers in schools with low turnover
Room For Strategic Experimentation

Entry to Teacher Education → Preparation Program → Knowledge, Abilities, Skills → Classroom Teaching → Student Outcomes

- Content Knowledge
- Pedagogical Skills
- Clinical Experience
Room For Strategic Experimentation

Don’t wait, start with promising practices.
Promising Practice #3: Licensure Requirements

- New exams
  - edTPA-performance assessment
  - Mixed evidence
  - SREB states are trying many new things
Turn and Talk

• *PICK ONE PROMISING PRACTICE*
  – *What information would you need to understand if this is a promising practice for your state?*
Building Teacher Preparation Policy

1. More qualifications v. Barriers to entry

2. Some principles we might agree on:
   - Effective teaching requires substantial skill
   - Ill-informed policies pose risks
   - Teacher education is important
   - We lack strong evidence (don’t be Scared Crooked)
   - Build data
   - Don’t wait, promising practices

How can we:

- Help build more promising practices?
- Develop evidence they work?
- Connect policy to effective practices?

3. Commission members engaged in every phase of TP