

Teacher Quality in the US: Stories of Policy, Reform and Responses

Introduction

I am happy to return to Japan--a place where my husband and I spent much time when he worked with American university branch campuses located in Koriyama and Akita Prefecture. During my time in Japan, I learned about the Japanese philosophy of *Mingei* (民), which is the hand-crafted art of ordinary people. The philosophy encourages us to discover beauty and craft in everyday ordinary and utilitarian objects. The philosophy of *Mingei* is a wonderful way to think about how to live ones life and a gift I gained by living in Japan.

Toys are considered ordinary and utilitarian objects in *Mingei* philosophy and while in Japan I became fascinated with the folk lore associated with Japanese dolls [ningyō (人形)]. There are *Kokeshi* (こけし) dolls, *Gosho* dolls, *Hina* and *Kimekomi* dolls (木目込人形) and many of the dolls represent Japanese folk culture and certain locations in Japan. One doll, *Hoko-San*, is a character in a folk tale that originated on the island of *Shikoku*. Her story goes like this:

A long time ago, in *Takamatsu*, there lived a little girl named *Omaki*. Her family was very poor, so she was sent out to become a servant in the mansion of a local samurai. At the mansion she served the daughter of the house, but her little mistress was afflicted with an incurable disease. *Omaki*, cared for her little mistress day and night and the disease was transferred to her own body instead. *Omaki*, being kind and loyal did not want anyone else to catch the disease so she sailed to some far-off island in order to prevent the disease's contagion to others. She was never seen again.

Ever since then, whenever a village child in *Shikoku* comes down with an illness, a doll called *Hoko-San* (servant) is put into bed with the sick child for one night and then floated away on the ocean the following morning, as a rite to bring about the child's recovery from the illness. Now the doll that is named after her is one of the things to bring as a charm against sickness at the time of a marriage.

I insert this personal account so you will know how much I learned from the culture of Japan, how honored I am to speak to you today, and how much I look forward to learning from all of you in attendance at this conference.

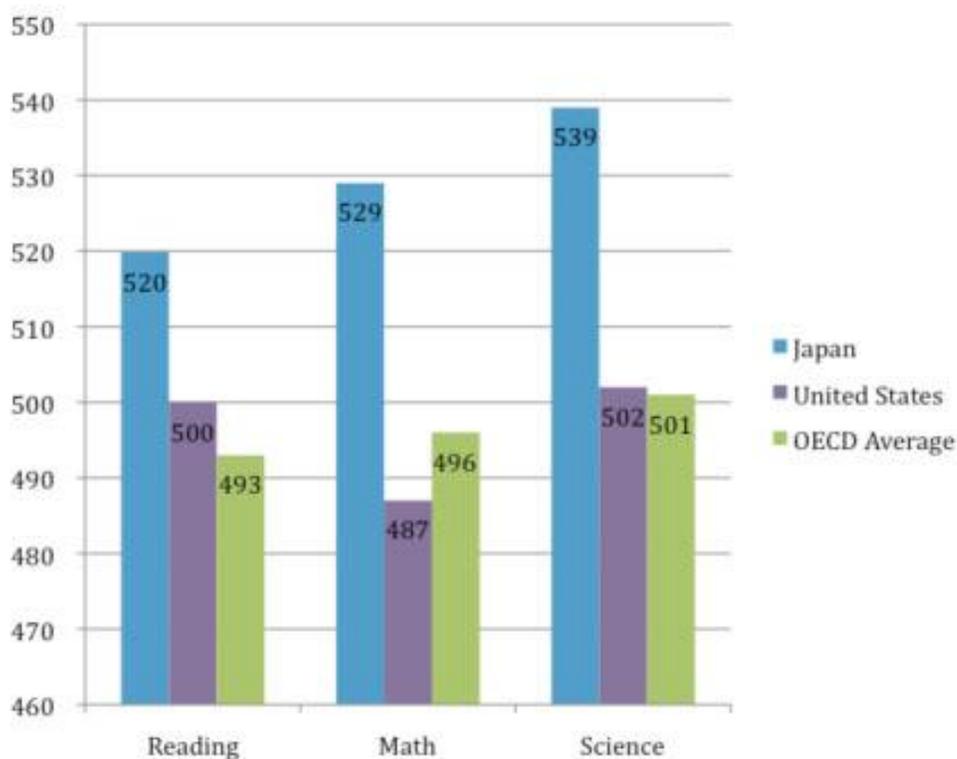
We have gathered in beautiful *Naruto* to talk about the challenges of preparing quality teachers who will thrive in today's classrooms and help develop the next generation of responsible citizens who understand how to play a prime role locally and globally. Whether it is in Japan, the United States, or West Africa, there is an insistence that the performance and effectiveness of teachers must improve (OECD, 2009). Widespread evidence showing that teachers are critical to raising education standards and the impact of teacher quality on the student learning overshadows all other educational investments. The emphasis on teacher quality highlights the importance that those who prepare teachers and provide professional development do so in ways to ensure that all teachers are highly skilled and motivated to perform at their very best. For those of us who prepare teachers, there have never been such high expectations (Goldhaber, 2009; Gordon, Kane &

Staiger, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2010). How we respond to these expectations is important in my country and in yours. Today, in the hopes that you will learn from our experiences, I will share with you the story of the challenges that face teacher education in the U.S. and how we are responding to those challenges.

Demands on Teacher Preparation

In the United States, we are facing an impending crisis in education and the academic performance of our elementary and secondary students. There is evidence that U.S. students are not prepared well for future challenges. Data from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) that surveys 15 year olds in principal industrialized countries indicates that high school students in the US are not competing at expected levels especially in mathematics and science. In a comparison of US and Japanese student data, the US lags far behind in reading, science and mathematics (Figure 1). In addition, within our own country, there are wide achievement gaps between diverse student groups, such as those between children from low income versus high income communities. For example, only 8% of students growing up in poverty will graduate from college by age 24 versus 80% of students in more affluent areas. Increasingly, students are unable to enter the workforce with the appropriate skills and abilities needed for today's jobs, let alone the jobs of the future. These issues and others have resulted in an urgent examination of our current system of education and how we, as a country, prepare future teachers.

Figure 1: PISA 2009 Mean Scores by Country for Reading, Mathematics, and Science (Source: OECD)



The trust of the public in our education system is also being diminished. Nowhere else was this so well documented as when the public embraced the film *Waiting for Superman: How We*

Can Save America's Public Schools”(2010). The movie was characterized by poignant examples of worthy students struggling to find good schools and experience excellent teaching, captured the country’s attention. Its less than positive characterization of public school classrooms and teachers and its promotion of innovative charter schools and teachers prepared in non-traditional, non-university programs served as a dramatic wake-up call for American schools and focused public discourse on the quality and training of teachers. The movie captured the negative tenor of public conversations and debates around education and the quality and preparation of teachers.

The focus of public policy makers and politicians, philanthropists, the media and “think tanks” across the political spectrum has continued to assert that the quality of teachers must improve. Their insistence is reinforced by research evidence that high quality teachers are critical to raising educational standards and improving the learning of all students. Indeed, many contend that the efficiency and equity of schooling now depends on having highly effective teachers in the classrooms making teacher preparation a target of attention in the discussions. Many feel that our country’s problems related to education are directly connected to teacher preparation and the professional development of experienced teachers. Unfortunately, one of the greatest challenge we as teacher educators face is that we lack a compelling road-map to follow in response to criticism.

Almost everyone agrees that high quality teachers will improve the educational experiences of learners in elementary and high school classrooms. There is less agreement about the nature of the programs that prepare them and how to measure the results of a well-trained, highly qualified teacher. Questions about high quality teacher education programs abound. Are longer programs better than shorter programs? Are programs based in schools, relying on classroom teachers, better than campus centered preparation programs, relying on university faculty? Are programs focused on subject matter knowledge better than those built on a foundation of socio-cultural theory and appropriate pedagogy? Which modes of instruction should be taught? What models of classroom management should be evident? Do we train or do we educate future teachers? Can we shape the personal dispositions that candidates carry-away from programs?

There are many questions that we cannot answer with the assurance of research support. As a recent study, completed by the prestigious National Research Council concluded, there is little evidence that supports any one way of preparing teachers (National Research Council, 2010). And it is not just colleges and universities who are striving to solve the problems in our current models of teacher preparation and reform our profession. In fact, philanthropists, entrepreneurs and business leaders, conservative politicians, liberal media interests, the Obama administration, and reform groups like Teach for America, the New Teachers Project, Chiefs for Change and Education Trust, are each trying to drive the agenda for teacher education reform in the US.

For these reasons, the nature of teacher preparation and the quality of teachers is the basis for an intense debate in the US. As with every debate, there are two contending forces. On the one side are those labeled “traditionalists”, those who support conventional rigorous university-based teacher preparation and robust clinical experiences for future educators. On the other side are so-called “reformers,” those who emphasize performance over credentials and show skepticism about conventional licensure and preparation.

Each side is determined to recast teacher education in their own image using “their” tools to measure the efficacy of programs and to highlight the success of graduates. And even though the

two camps differ significantly on methods, their emergence in the public discourse on education has certainly prompted a renewed commitment to elevating the quality of teacher education programs in an effort to increase the academic performance of our students. The debate is far-reaching, affecting everything from education policy at the national and state levels, standards development within accreditation bodies, the rise of non-academic non-profit organizations, and program design and delivery at universities. Before I describe some of these developments, it is important to provide a brief comparison of the traditionalist and reformist views within the context of the US education system.

Traditionalists v. Reformers

For the moment, the reformers have coalesced around an agenda that places much more authority in the hands of the state, ensures greater conformity across teacher preparation, and insists on assessing the effectiveness of program graduates in their practice and attributing those successes to their preparation program. Their agenda for action includes standards setting, alignment and accountability, data-driven decision making, performance assessment of teachers, value added or “achievement gain” assessments of students, clinically based preparation, the use of modern technologies, and competition between and among “providers of beginning teachers.” Reformers insist on defining effectiveness in terms having to do with raising student achievement scores as measured by various standardized assessments of student performance. Student retention and student engagement and school and college readiness are important, they argue, but student performance on school system administered tests is primary.

Traditionalists, on the other hand, believe that all learners must acquire the skills and knowledge to succeed in a competitive and fast-changing global society and that teacher education must be “extended” to accommodate such demands. Traditionalists insist on models that require additional resources to prepare teachers to be more effective in teaching diverse learners in a highly technical and media rich society with new, highly sophisticated strategies (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1999). They point to new forms of preparation and greater mastery of content and more lengthy and labor intensive models that rely on clinical preparation, internships, induction programs, and teacher residency models. They envision five and six and even seven year preparation and induction programs that would reshape the relationships between university preparation programs and school-based professional development and create “seamless transitions” between preparation and practice. Unlike reformers who are supportive of non-conventional teacher preparation programs, the traditionalists insist that short term or abbreviated teacher preparation programs fail to produce quality teachers and that only through extended and clinically based preparation programs can they be prepared.

A continued theme in the debates is how to identify and measure high quality teachers and how to hold teacher education programs accountable for their preparation. Race to the Top, as well as other state and federal policies insist that the profession find ways to measure teacher education programs by linking a teacher’s performance with elementary and secondary student learning. One measure, the value-added method of measuring teacher effectiveness has become another area of disagreement between traditionalists and reformers.

Value-added models use complex mathematics to predict how well a student can be expected to perform on an end-of year- test based on several characteristics, such as student’s attendance and past performance on tests. Teacher with students who take standardized math and

English tests are held accountable for students' performance on the tests. If a teacher's students, on average, fall short of their predicted test-scores, the teacher is generally labeled ineffective, whereas if they do as well or better than anticipated, the teacher is deemed effective or highly effective.

A number of states and districts across the country already tie student performance on standardized tests to teacher evaluations; others have plans to do so. Many reformers, including those in the Obama administration, commend the practice. But, skeptics, including teachers unions, researchers and other traditionalists, say that value-added models have reliability problems and don't take into account multiple factors that affect classroom performance. The methods of linking teacher performance and student achievement continues to be a major part of the US debate regarding teacher quality and one that will require a great deal of effort and resources of teacher educators and scholars.

Impact on Education Policy

So how has this rhetoric between the traditionalists and the reformers actually impacted current education policy? The questioning of the value of university-based teacher education programs can be seen in US federal policy. The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) of 2001 and its efforts to define a highly qualified teacher elevated the discourse on teacher education accountability (Crowe, 2010). NCLB attempted to define highly qualified teachers by focusing on the subject matter preparation of current and future teachers. In making the point of the importance of subject matter preparation and building a case against teacher preparation, a leading philanthropic figure (Bill Gates) asserted that teacher certification did not ensure teacher quality.

More recently, the Obama administration brought forward the Race to the Top Initiative (RTTT) as its answer to educational change and reform. Although focused primarily on elementary and secondary education, RTTT identified the improvement of teacher quality as one of the most pressing issues of educational reform. RTTT continued NCLB's emphasis on subject matter but the teacher education components of RTTT required that students' achievement be linked to their teacher's preparation programs and suggested that performance in the classroom after their formal teacher education program was the only thing that mattered.

Each of these federal initiatives supported policies related to stronger content and quicker methods of preparation and gave rise to alternative routes to certification and fast track teacher preparation in higher education as well as those located in private and non-profit settings. A popular example of such a program is Teach for America (TFA), which enlists high-achieving recent college graduates to teach two or more years in low-income communities. Praised by Reformers as innovative and effective, Teach for America recruits are prepared in a two month, summer intensive program and placed primarily in urban and rural schools throughout the United States. Teach for America teachers are often in competition for job placements with traditionally trained teachers even though TFA teachers often leave the profession at the end of their two year commitment. Federal and state policies and funding processes often favor Teach for America and many private foundations and corporations have contributed money to the program to make it hugely successful. The Teach for America program has an effective marketing program and successfully recruits students on university campuses and even recruits students away from traditional teacher education programs.

Teach for America is a concrete example of how the Reformer agenda has potential spill-over for nations outside of the US. In April of 2012, Teach for America welcomed its newest partner, Teach for Japan, to its growing global network of independent organizations. Teach for Japan will follow a similar model, recruiting and training high-achievers without traditional preparation as an educator. How will this new “breed” of teacher affect the education system in Japan? What will the response be? Is this model sustainable - or even superior to traditional educator preparation programs? Our Japanese colleagues in this room may very well be faced with wrestling with the same questions that we are.

The ideological differences between Reformers and Traditionalists are perhaps best illustrated by the recent effort of the Obama administration to establish new federal rules for the conduct of teacher education programs. The US Department of Education assembled a panel of 17 representatives drawn from both the Traditionalists and the Reformers in Spring 2012 and asked them to identify high quality teacher preparation and to propose new criteria for identifying high quality and low performing teacher preparation.

Six months of efforts by the panel produced more frustration than results. The traditionalists and the reformers divided as expected on issues having to do with the validity and reliability of measures used to assess beginning teacher performance in classrooms. After much contentious debates, the panel ended without making any decisions and left the end results in the hands of the federal government raising concerns in a our political system known for “local control” and decentralized decision- making for teacher education. Shaping a federal agenda for teacher education in the US has become a priority for the Obama administration.

Proposed Solutions: Responses from Teacher Preparation

In the midst of the political rhetoric, public demands, and continuous debates the teacher education profession has made a series of moves intended to strengthen university-based teacher education programs and respond to the demand for higher quality preparation programs. I’d like to highlight three such initiatives. The initiatives have to do with outlining conditions for robust clinical practice, standards setting for the teaching profession, and establishing an assessment system that documents the growth of future teachers during their preparation programs.

First, there has been a renewed focus on clinical practice. Nearly two and a half years ago, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) commissioned a Blue Ribbon Panel (BRP) on Clinical Preparation and Partnerships for Improved Student Learning. The purpose of the commission, on which I served, was to provide NCATE and the field with guidance on what changes to make in educator preparation. Ultimately, the goal of the BRP was to establish a framework that would be a key factor in redesigning educator preparation. The NCATE leadership was guided by the belief that there was a gap between how teachers are prepared and what schools need and that the way to reform teacher education was to establish strong clinically based programs.

The resulting report (NCATE, 2010) presented examples of excellent clinically-based programs but posited that individual attempts were not enough and that the profession needed an entirely new system of teacher preparation to improve teacher quality. The basic assumption of the

BRP was that teacher education programs must work in close partnership with schools and place practice at the center of preparation experiences. The report issued a call to action (Figure 2) and provided several design principles that if implemented would turn “...the education of teachers ‘upside-down’” (p.2).

Figure 2: Recommendations from NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel

<p style="text-align: center;">FOCUS ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENT LEARNING IN TEACHER PREPARATION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Student learning is the focal point for design and implementation of clinically based teacher preparation.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">INTEGRATE CLINICAL PREPARATION THROUGHOUT EVERY FACET OF TEACHER EDUCATION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Content and pedagogy are integrated with clinical experiences throughout preparation, through coursework, laboratory-based experiences and school-embedded practice.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">REVAMP CURRICULUM INCENTIVES AND CLINICAL STAFFING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Higher education should develop roles for clinical faculty who have dual assignments as teachers and mentors in schools. Schools should develop new staffing models that would allow veteran teachers to work with prospective teaches.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EXPAND THE KNOWLEDGE BASE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Currently there is not a large research base on what makes clinical preparation. New resources must be invested that support new models and determine which are most effective.</p>

In my home state of Maryland, all future teachers are prepared in Professional Development Schools which are clinical sites that have formal agreements to prepare teachers, design professional development for experienced teachers, improve curriculum in teacher education programs, and develop collaborative research projects that improve teacher preparation and classroom instruction. The graphic in Figure 3 illustrates the complexity of one of our most effective school-university partnerships. The goal of the partnerships is to form a learning community that focuses on communication, collaboration, and professional growth. As you can see, various oversight committees comprised of school and university faculty oversee the activities. University supervisors from all content areas and teachers in the schools are involved guiding

university students at all levels of preparation as they observe, participate in day-to-day school activities, plan and deliver lessons, and assess student learning. During their training our students are a part of the school, attend staff and department meetings, and participate in the same professional development offered to teachers at their host school.

Prince George's County Public School System (PGCPS)/Univ. of Maryland College of Education (UMCOE)



**Professional Development School Partnership at
Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School (MLK)**



PDS Organization & Governance

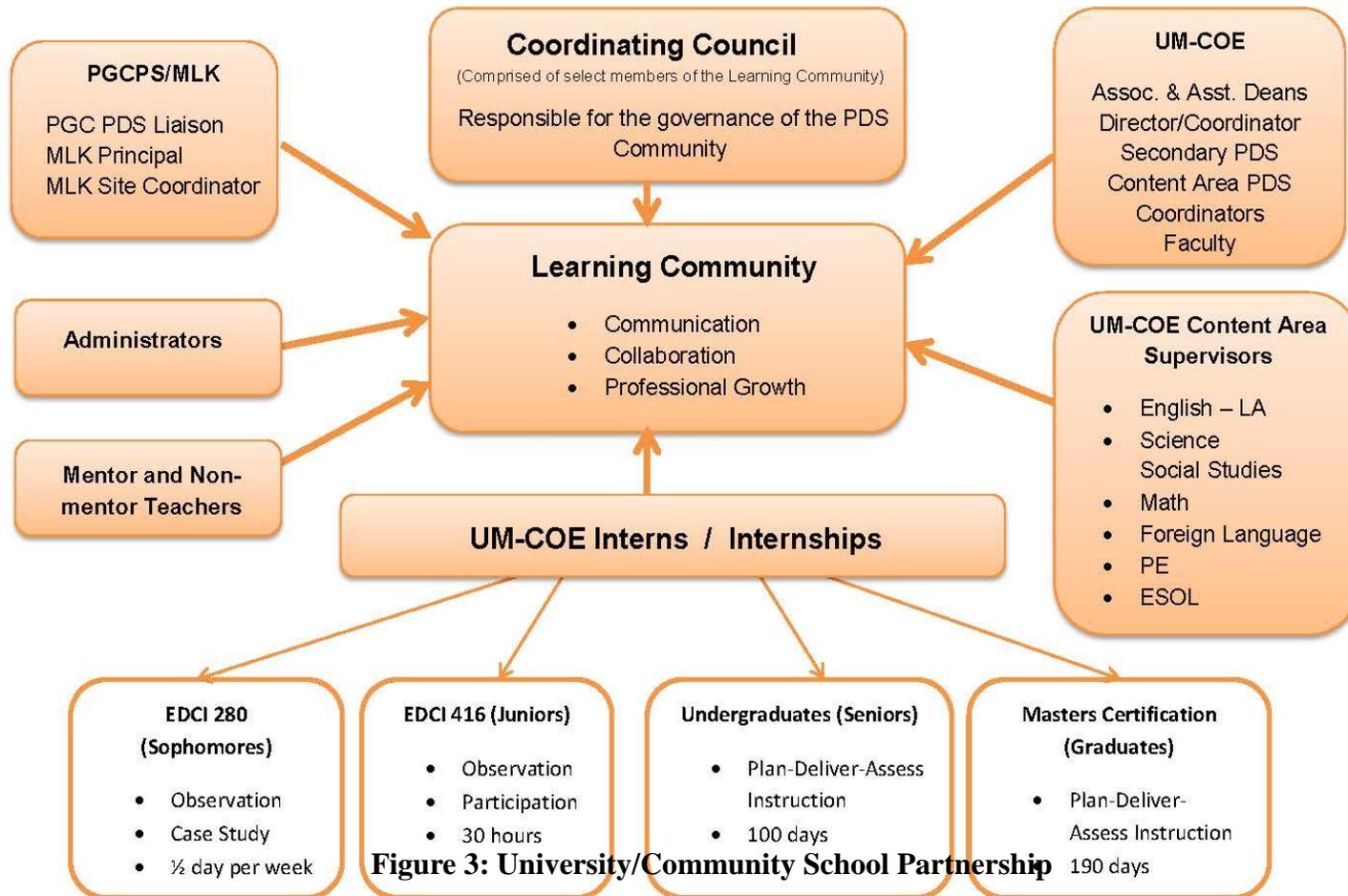
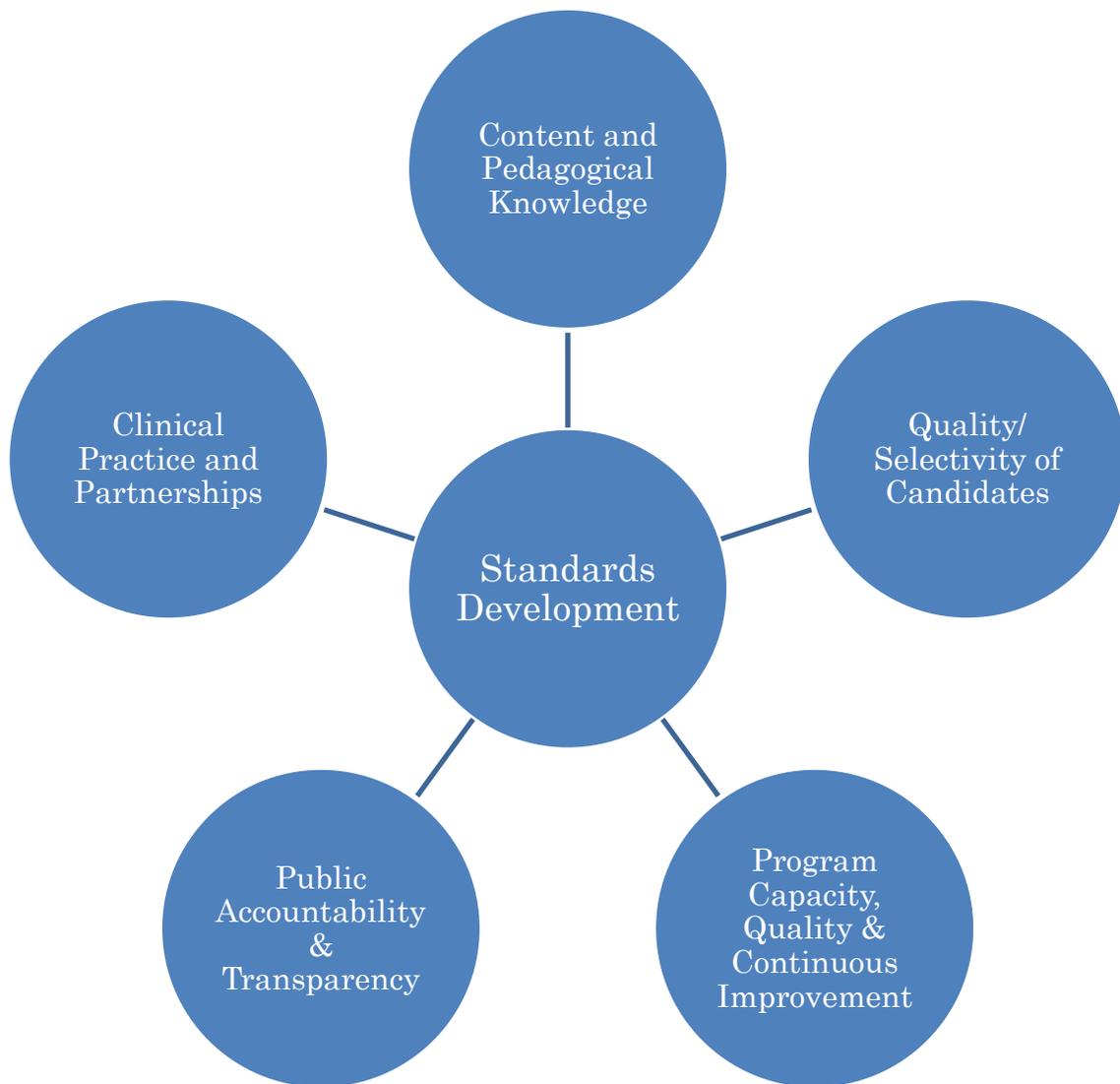


Figure 3: University/Community School Partnership

A second initiative taken on by the profession has to do with accreditation and establishing rigorous standards for teacher preparation programs. In 2011, the joining of the two specialized professional accreditation agencies for educator preparation was finalized in 2011, bringing together the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council to form the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The merger provides an extraordinary opportunity for the profession to define a common set of specific characteristics of high performing and high quality educator preparation programs. The intent of the new body is to create standards to be used in a unified manner with evidence-based examples of how programs are performing. A Commission of leading educators in the US is currently at work to develop a set of prescriptive standards grounded in research that will guide both traditional and alternative route programs. The Commission is focused on standards development in five areas (Figure 4).

Figure 4: CAEP Standards Development



As a member of this commission, I have been assigned to small group to consider standards related to quality/selectivity of candidates. My small group recently spent two days discussing how we would develop standards that result in recruiting, preparing, and retaining more qualified students into our preparation programs. Our discussions centered around qualifications that novice teachers should possess before being admitted to preparation programs and skills and abilities that should be developed while in the program. We also discussed the importance of collecting data so the profession would be capable of describing the impact of high quality teacher preparation. There were three areas that my subcommittee spent considerable time discussing: 1) how can standards be written for the variety and diversity of schools in our country, 2) how do standards acknowledge that we may be preparing teachers for technology enriched and media supported environments that may require very different skills than current teachers need, and 3) what basic experiences and dispositions are required of all future teachers.

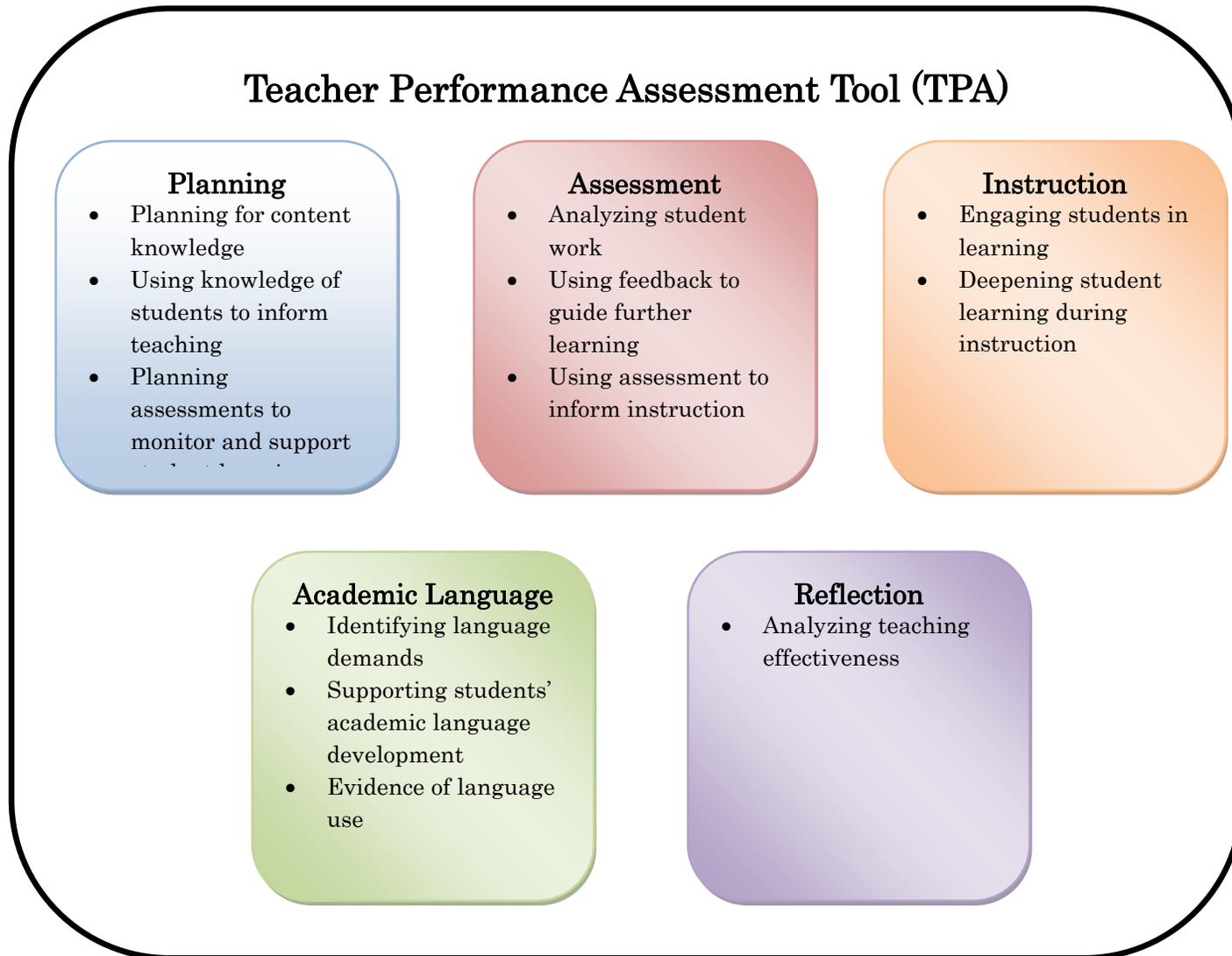
It is anticipated that these new standards and the processes used to examine preparation programs will provide a basis for raising the caliber of programs and securing greater recognition and support for all educator preparation. More prescriptive standards, emphasizing specific features of knowledge acquisition, and learning to teach and practice in clinical settings will “raise the bar” and challenge providers of teacher education.

And finally, in response to our critics, the profession is working to develop and implement a way of assessing future teachers that provides evidence of preparation effectiveness, supports program improvement, and informs policy makers about qualities of teaching associated with student learning. U.S. teacher education has relied on various forms of candidate assessment - from standardized admission tests and course-embedded assessments to observations of candidates in classroom settings “doing” student teaching and “technical assessments” of candidates regarding their dispositions and readiness to teach. Student portfolios have emerged in recent years to enable teacher candidates to document their accomplishments and to provide instructors with ways to assess their progress. Exit examinations are used in most states in the US to determine suitability for state licensure. The inadequacy of these measures and their inability to predict later effectiveness in classrooms has led the profession to seek new strategies for evaluating teacher competence.

The American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) and Stanford University formed a partnership to develop the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA), a 25-state initiative involving more than 140 teacher preparation programs (Figure 5). TPA is an assessment tool that gathers and uses evidence of teaching performance to improve teaching and teacher preparation. These performance assessments require future teachers to document their plans and teaching for a unit of instruction, videotape and analyze their teaching and collect and evaluate evidence of student learning. All these pieces are assembled and evaluated by highly trained raters who score the materials in a consistent manner against specific criteria that reflect standards of effective practice. These assessments have been found to measure novice teachers’ performance and can be used to help them improve their practice.

We are implementing TPA in our own university and have found that it dramatically changes the way our students respond to assignments. It guides their reflection and learning in ways that connect directly to the classroom. The TPA targets the following competences of future teachers in our program.

Figure 5: AACTE and Stanford University Teacher Performance Assessment



Case studies of students, analysis of student learning, and curriculum/teaching analysis are signature TPA assessments. An example of a curriculum/teaching analysis illustrates the difference the assessment process makes in future teachers reflections in classrooms. As you can see from the very short example in Figure 6, future teachers think through their actions and anticipate their students' reactions much more when involved in a curriculum teaching analysis activity guided by the TPA. [You will be learning more about the TPA in a later presentation.]

Figure 6: Lesson Comparison

Before TPA Adoption: One Section Describing

Directed Reading Activity: Grade 1

Teacher will gather students onto the circle time rug, and present students with the book "Muncha, Muncha, Muncha" by Candance Fleming. The teacher will explain to students that first students are going to brainstorm what the story will be about. The teacher will show students the cover of the book, and select pages at random to show the students. The teacher will encourage students to study each page, and start thinking about what's happening on each page.

Example of Assignment After adoption of TPA

Directed Reading Activity: Grade 1

Hello boys and girls! Today we will read "We're Going on a Lion Hunt" by David Axtell. We are going to practice letter combinations of sw-, sq-, sp-, and -sh. We are going to learn a way to decode words that contain these sound combinations. When we have a better understanding of what sounds each letter combination produces, we will be able to identify words on our own. Before we begin reading the story, we will do a very quick speed writing activity in our reading journals. I will list on the board the 4 letter combinations I want you to focus on. With these letter combinations, I want you to write down any word that contains one of the letter combinations that comes to mind. You can write as many words as you want for each sound combination for 2 minutes. Afterwards we will go around and share the words that we came up with on the board. Note: I will be reading this book for them because it will be their first time reading it and will be helpful for Gisoo, who has a bit of difficulty reading at times alone. The group reciting of words will engage students, especially Kobi

Evidence of:
Planning
Instruction
Assessment
Academic Language
Reflection

In spite of the fact that these assessment systems are extremely complex, will require faculty development, student training, and the allocation of greater resources to teacher education, the Teacher Performance Assessments have the potential to document the value of teacher preparation programs, predict future success of our students, and help us understand more about “what works” in teacher preparation programs. While these efforts will not solve the perception problems that the teaching profession faces in the United States, each are critically important to improving academic outcomes of our nation’s children. As a Dean of a college of education, I am optimistic that even these three initiatives will foster an improvement in the way we prepare future educators.

At the same time, we cannot overestimate the challenges that teaching and the teacher education profession are facing in the United States. Currently, the profession is divided by two very different views of teaching. The traditionalists are trying to build a profession while the reformers want highly competent and accountable public sector workers. The efforts of the reformers are succeeding at all levels of policy and government--the traditionalists seem to be reacting more than leading the conversation. Even during our current presidential campaign both candidates take more of a reformist perspective when talking about teaching and teacher education. Whether one adopts a Traditionalist or Reformer paradigm of how the education system should work, there is wholesale agreement that change is necessary. In order to develop agreement on what changes should happen, the two groups must come together in some way and build trust that is built on the common goal of educating our children. Unfortunately, the two groups are a long way from working together so for the foreseeable future, the divisive context surrounding teaching and teacher education will remain at the forefront of education policy and reform. The impact of this potential split cannot be underestimated.

Conclusion

The story of our quest to define quality teaching and teacher preparation in the US is complex, sometimes confusing and often contentious, but our greatest hope comes from our day-to-day efforts and the students in our programs. While the conversations outside colleges and schools of education may have a negative bent, it is different within the hallways and classrooms of higher education. There the caliber, commitment, and energy of students enrolling in undergraduate and graduate classes is remarkable. Cohort after cohort is alive with expectations and a readiness to commit to the challenges of educating our nation’s youth. Are they idealists? Yes, of course and we need them to bring their

positive energy to the teaching profession. They are eager to learn the means to best teach all students and the most effective ways to collaborate and partner with colleagues in schools to ensure that all students benefit from their schooling. While education deans (and leaders of the enterprise) worry if there is a future for university based teacher education, the next generation of teachers eagerly participates in the university program of studies, volunteering to tutor high risk students, observing skilled teachers practice, and undertaking student teaching.

There is no doubt that the challenges related to preparing teachers for the future are great. No matter the location, it is an era of increased accountability for the teaching profession, the ascendancy of a new reform community influencing policy debate and discussion, a growing centrality of standards setting for elementary, secondary, and higher education (and particularly teacher education), competition from alternative providers, and confidence in data gathering and the ability to attribute student learning to teacher performance. Colleges and universities are definitely challenged to respond to the criticism. Here I have told the story of how the American teacher education community is responding with a series of bold interventions. However, we still have a great deal of work ahead of us with continued challenges for teaching and teacher education.

Why is it important for the US to share our challenges and accomplishments at an international conference and why should you be concerned about efforts in the US? Of course, the simplest answer is that we learn from one another and we gain understanding about important issues when we share experiences and solutions. In today's world, brought closer together by the ease of travel and communication, what happens in one of our countries will most likely come about in another country making it even more important for us to work together to answer some of our common questions and consider our connected themes. How much more powerful we could be if we answered important questions related to teaching, learning and teacher preparation together? The very nature of the JUSTEC experience provides opportunities for colleges and schools of education to examine their study and practice and encourages the establishment of networks and joint study projects between Japanese and US scholars, educators, and practitioners.

Preparing teachers who are capable of responding effectively in today's complex educational climate is an international imperative. The demands on teaching are constantly changing and teacher education throughout the world will be continually

called upon to rethink curriculum and programs that stay relevant and meet current demands. Those of us in the profession can expect that there will be significant debates about what experiences produce quality teachers. There will be constant policy-driven decisions made from within and outside the profession. The public and political rhetoric will continue and it is safe to say that during the coming years teacher educators throughout the world must be prepared to participate in the debates in an informed and reasoned manner. It will be up to us to contribute scholarly solutions to the policy questions and issues. We can find those scholarly solutions so much better by working together.