Educator Preparation Innovation

CREATING PATHWAYS TO STRENGTHEN RECRUITMENT
Meet the Moderator

Jacqueline Rodriguez, PhD
Vice President, Research, Policy, and Advocacy
AACTE
Workshop Objectives

**Understand**
- Creative solutions and pathways to recruiting teacher candidates.

**Identify**
- How to use candidates as assets to fulfill the demand in schools.

**Learn**
- How programs established meaningful partnerships with local school districts.

**Advocate**
- That shortages of special education teachers in schools is an equity issue.
Workshop Agenda

- Landscape analysis
- AACTE’s investment in addressing special education shortages
- Para to professional pipeline
- Substitute teaching lines as paid clinical experiences
- Recruitment of underrepresented communities
- Programs that have pivoted
- Reflection
Today’s Panelists

Dr. Sylvia Linan-Thompson
University of Oregon

Dr. David Winters
Eastern Michigan University

Dr. Becky Hines
University of Central Florida

Dr. Cathy Newman Thomas
Texas State University

Dr. Kimber Wilkerson
University of Wisconsin at Madison

Dr. Eleanora Villegas-Reimers
Boston University

Dr. Corey Pierce
University of Northern Colorado
Landscape of the Field
The Supply Side of the Teacher Shortage
Long-term Trends in the Production of Teachers

Bachelor’s Degrees Awarded in Education
Degree Trends in High-Need Specialties

Change in Number of Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees and Post-baccalaureate Certificates Conferred Between 2009-10 and 2018-19

- Special Education: -4%
- Science & Mathematics Education: -27%
- Foreign Language Education: -44%
- English as a Second Language: 17%
### Teacher Candidate Diversity

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<th>Traditional</th>
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AACTE’s Investment in the Special Education Teacher Shortages:

Networked Improvement Community
Addressing Teacher Shortages Through Effective Partnerships

Our Journey

Corey D. Pierce, PhD
Director, School of Special Education
University of Northern Colorado

Combatting Shortages of Educators Serving Students With Disabilities: A CEC and CEEDAR Center Webinar
The “Why”

UNC Educator Preparation Perspective

• Decreasing enrollments in undergraduate initial teacher licensure programs
• Teacher candidates in our programs lacked diversity

District Perspective

• Many unfilled positions remained during the school year
• Seeking diverse teachers who more accurately represent student populations
The “How” and “Why”

How was it developed?
• Failed at first
• Established new partnerships
• Clarified motivations and goals up front
• Targeted district needs as priority
• Communicated early and often
• Built on existing structures
• Leveraged learning opportunities (e.g., AACTE special education networked improvement community, Prepared to Teach)

What was created?
• Targeted concurrent enrollment program
• Designed paid teacher residencies
• Supported teacher pathway through CTE program
• Effective district/university interactions to engage all students
• Additional pathways (paraprofessional to teacher using concurrent enrollment)
• Parameters to guide future partnerships
Journey to Sustainable

Challenges Faced
1. Time/funding
2. Tuition costs
3. Lack of existing structure

Overcoming Challenges
1. Committed partners/creative thinking
2. Supportive administration
3. Leveraging Connections (AACTE & Prepared to Teach)

Sustainable Through
1. El Oso Innovative Center for Educator Preparation at UNC (management and generation of funding)—in proposal phase
2. Expanding partnerships to additional districts
3. State/federal initiatives and grants
   - Colorado TREP
   - Colorado concurrent enrollment expansion and innovation grants
   - ARP funding and positive ripple effects (creative thinking)
THANK YOU!

Corey.pierce@unco.edu
The Paraprofessional and Professional Preparation Connection

ELEONORA VILLEGAS-REIMERS
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
WHEELOCK COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
Boston University (BU)–Boston Public Schools Partnership

• Two-way partnership: Boston Public Schools is the site for our students’ pre-practicum, practicum, and internships:
  – “Traditional” sites
  – Partnership sites

• In strengthening our commitment to two-way partnership, both institutions are exploring what each needs and what each can offer.
  – We have learned from our students’ perceptions of special educators’ roles.
  – We have learned from our partner teachers about their goals and needs.
Supporting Teachers and Paraprofessionals

• **The district** is interested in professionally prepared and effective teachers who want to stay in their jobs.

• **Teachers** are interested in professional development opportunities: courses, workshops, opportunities to become mentors, opportunities to be mentored, and opportunities to do research.

• **Paraprofessionals** are interested in becoming licensed teachers, professional development opportunities, having mentors, and being mentors.

• **Boston University** is interested in recruiting students, having excellent sites that are committed to our Guidestar, helping with the retention of teachers, and helping with the professional development of teachers and educators.
Paraprofessionals at BU Wheelock

• From paraprofessional to graduate student
  – Incentives to apply
  – Course schedule
  – Financial aid opportunities

• From graduate student to paraprofessional
  – Gaining experience in the classroom beyond what a “regular” practicum offers while in the program
  – Having “a foot in the door” in a district of interest for after graduation
  – Getting a salary while in graduate school
Eastern Michigan University

PARAPROFESSIONAL-TO-SPECIAL EDUCATOR PARTNERSHIP WITH WASHTENAW COUNTY DISTRICTS

DAVID C. WINTERS, PhD
EMU and Washtenaw County Districts

• Eastern Michigan University (EMU)
  – Regional (Research II) university in southeast Michigan
  – Department of Special Education & Communication Sciences and Disorders
    ◦ Undergraduate and graduate programs in ASD, CI, CSD, EI, LD, and POHI
    ◦ 520 students with 15 faculty (9 special education) and 27 part-time lecturers (17 special education)

• Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD)
  – Southeast Michigan
  – WISD plus 10 local districts: urban to rural, low socioeconomic status to affluent
  – 44,300 students
  – More than 1,200 paraprofessionals
The Partnership

• Paraprofessionals recommended by their district
  – Complete undergraduate degree or postbaccalaureate
  – Allocated by proportion of paraprofessionals in each district

• Results in
  – Secondary general education licensure
  – Special education endorsement
  – Undergraduate or postbaccalaureate degree

• Launched in fall 2020 with 25 students (EI endorsement)
  – Second 25-student cohort in summer 2021 (LD endorsement)
  – Third 25-student cohort in fall 2021 (EI endorsement)
Lessons Learned So Far

• Be attractive to districts as well as students.

• Unique needs and characteristics of nontraditional student cohorts require instructional adjustments.
  – All students work full time; most have family responsibilities.
  – Instructors must be ready to adapt to the cohort’s learning needs.

• Mentors (one from EMU and one from WISD) provide an important bridge between the students, the university, and districts.

• Clear communication of student expectations is critical: college courses, not professional development.

• Communication and coordination among EMU and district(s) needs to be ongoing.

• “Mistakes are opportunities to learn.”
Looking Ahead . . .

• Scalability and sustainability
• Course delivery
• Curriculum
University of Central Florida

DR. BECKY HINES
College of Community Innovation and Education

University Of Central Florida
New Layer:
Substitute Practicum

Student-Directed Sign-Up

One of Many Practicum Options

Online Coaching Sessions as Part of Practicum Course

How to join the UCP Team as a Classroom Substitute

1. Apply online using this link: https://bit.ly/UCPSub2022
2. Participate in an interview with an UCP Education Leadership Team Member
3. Receive job offer/Offer Letter from UCP HR Department
4. Complete Staff Record Form via DocuSign
5. Complete Fingerprints (will receive information on options of places/times to go)
6. Complete Drug Test (will receive information on options of places/times to go)
7. If you complete the above steps quickly – the results will be ready in 7-10 days.
8. Complete New Hire Paperwork electronically
9. Participate in New Staff Orientation (held on Monday mornings)
A Mentoring Conversation: A Protocol

Assess the Beginning Teacher’s Needs by:
- Making connections and building trust by listening
- Identifying successes and challenges

Establish a Focus for Work by:
- Paraphrasing
- Clarifying

Support the Teacher’s Movement Forward by:
- Direct teaching
- Collaborative problem-solving/planning
- Reflective questioning

Promote Accountability by:
- Identifying specific next steps
- Agreeing to follow-up

Teachers in Residence & Substitute Teaching Practicum Students Engage in Regular Reflection, Problem-Solving, & Goal Setting Sessions
UW-Madison School of Education
Wisconsin Teacher Pledge Program

KIMBER WILKERSON
DIRECTOR OF THE UW-MADISON SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
TEACHER EDUCATION CENTER
KLWILKERSON@WISC.EDU
Teacher Pledge Program Goals

1. Recruit a diverse group of outstanding students to our teacher education programs.
2. Improve teacher retention.
3. Provide incentives to stay in Wisconsin.
What the School of Education Pledges

• Pay up to the cost of in-state tuition plus testing and licensure fees for teacher education students while enrolled in one of our programs.

• Funding philosophy

What the Student Pledges

• Teach at least 75% full time at a PK–12 Wisconsin school for 3–4 years within 5 years after graduation.
Moving Forward

- Research and evaluation
- Experimentation in real time
Texas State University

CATHY NEWMAN THOMAS, TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
GLENNA BILLINGSLEY, TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
NIHAT POLAT, TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT CHAIR
MELISSA CORONA, LOCKHART INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, HAYS CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEL MCINTOSH, LOCKHART INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Program/Context

• TXST is one of the largest producers of Teacher Educators in Texas.
  – More than 800 per year
  – More than 25 special education, including undergraduate and master’s degrees

• Local districts still face teacher shortages.

• Demographics
  – TXST is a Hispanic Serving Institution: 42% White, 39.7% Latinx, and 11.1% Black
  – State of Texas: 41% White, 39.7% Latinx, and 12.9% Black
  – Lockhart ISD: 17% White, 69% Latinx, and 3% Black
Original Change Idea

• Recruit a minimum of five veterans per year as future special educators.

• Why?
  – Texas has a large population of veterans.
  – TXST has an active Office of Veterans Affairs.
  – Veterans have qualities that make them outstanding special educators, including, for example, leadership, crisis management, work in hierarchies, and service oriented.

• Target not achieved.
  – Self-selected for our program
  – Already have set goals when arriving at TXST
  – Relationships with the Office of Veterans Affairs disrupted by COVID-19
  – Troops to Teachers program aligned with alternative certification pipeline but sunsetted
Pivot to New Change Ideas

• Paraprofessional pipeline
  – Not fruitful prior to COVID-19.
  – Given Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief funds, memoranda of understanding in process with multiple districts.
  – Districts are identifying interested paraprofessionals with associate of arts and bachelor of arts degrees.
  – Programs are being streamlined to facilitate.

• Middle/high school recruitment
  – Evidence that career education needs to occur earlier.
  – Collaboration with middle school and high school Texas Association Future Educators/CTE teachers.
  – Existing paraprofessional certificate pathway in LISD high school.
  – Explore dual credit opportunities with local community college.
Future

- Institutionalize paraprofessional pipelines.
- Expand middle school and high school pathways to additional districts.
- Pilot residency program in fall 2022 and fall 2023.
Background

• Until recently, initial teaching licenses required completion of a bachelor’s degree and completion of an approved graduate teacher licensure program approved by the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission.

• An advanced degree was required to maintain licensure and progress through license types.

• Since 2015, educators are no longer required to move through the license types or complete an advanced degree.
Initial Plan

• Develop an undergraduate program to
  – reduce cost to students,
  – increase enrollment, and
  – ensure they had a license when they graduated.

• However, a university feasibility report (January 2021) showed that the market in our area is saturated.
Pivot—Two Ideas

OPTIONS

Distance program: A second feasibility report (August 2021) supported this option.

Accelerated master’s program.

CURRENT WORK

Redesigned K–12 program

• Reduced program from six terms to four terms.
• Initial term in the summer consists of all online classes.
Future

- Review redesigned program and complete university and Teacher Standards and Practices Commission forms.
- Move forward with distance program based on redesigned program.