

## **CCTE Fall 2021 Research Monograph**

## Published by the California Council on Teacher Education

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## Introductions

## From CCTE President Eric Engdahl

This is the third monograph that the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) has published following a COVID-affected conference. While the Fall 2021 conference was our first return to an in-person format, this publication has become an important component of all CCTE Conferences. It allows the excellent research presented to be disseminated for a wider audience. Given the dynamic and challenging period that education and teacher education is in, research arising out of and addressing the issues of the time has a certain urgency to it.

Several of the articles in this monograph deal directly with these issues. Two of the papers address the pandemic, "Learning and Adaptation During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Schools of Education as Hubs for Leadership and Innovation," and "Pandemic Pain, Holistic Help: How One School's Trauma-Informed Approach Provided Support and Expanded Opportunity." Another pair address racism and trauma, "Building Equity Through Positivity and Mindfulness in a Traumatized World"and "Anti-Racism, Inclusivity, and Asset-Based Perspectives as Foundational for Transforming Core Pedagogical Practices."

The other research presented here is no less timely, investigating approaches to literacy, critical pedagogy, meaningful fieldwork, dual language, and Universal Design. We believe that this research is important and hope that you will find it so, as well. Remember that some of the research can also be found on the CCTE YouTube channel. I want to thank all of the researchers who contributed as well as the CCTE Conference Planning Committee and the CCTE Research Committee for their work on all aspects of the Fall Conference and development of this monograph.

-Eric Engdahl, CCTE President California State University, East Bay eric.engdahl@csueastbay.edu Introductions

## From CCTE Fall 2021 Conference Co-Chairs Victoria Graf & Virginia Kennedy

The Fall 2021 California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) Conference exceeded all expectations with the highest registration of any previous CCTE conference. The hybrid conference allowed for both in-person and virtual audiences to view and participate with keynote speakers Pedro Noguera and Alfredo Artiles as well as in the Policy Sessions and other Conference events. The theme of "Intersectionality—New Knowledge, New Actions in Teacher Education" encouraged deep reflection and conversations by participants on the identities of our students and how educator preparation programs should prepare future teachers to respect and address the intersectional identities of students regarding race, language, and disability/ability. The research presentations have also been uploaded to the CCTE YouTube channel so participants have the opportunity to view the presentations for further thought and dissemination.

The CCTE Fall 2022 Conference will continue the conversation with the theme of "Rehumanizing Education through Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist Practices." CCTE is committed to addressing discrimination and bias in all its forms so that our California students are provided with the most respectful and equitable education possible.

 —Virginia Kennedy, Co-Chair, CCTE Fall 2021 Conference California State University, Northridge virginia.kennedy@csun.edu
—Victoria Graf, Co-Chair, CCTE Fall 2021 Conference Loyola Marymount University victoria.graf@lmu.edu

#### From the CCTE Research Committee Chair Karen Escalante

Having been forced to take a hiatus from our California Council on Teacher Education members presenting in person during recent conferences, it was incredible to receive over 50 proposal submissions for the CCTE Fall 2021 hybrid Conference. All presenters were encouraged to record their sessions and post to the CCTE GoReact platform prior to the conference to allow our Conference attendees (in all formats) the ability to see and hear from their colleagues. If you were able to attend any of the in-person sessions at the Conference, you were treated to dedicated colleagues and buzzing energy; an abundance of collaborative discussion was at the heart of each presentation. To allow for continued discussion and involvement with the research, we present to you the *CCTE Fall 2021 Research Monograph*. Curl up with your favorite beverage and read about the work your peers, friends, and colleagues are engaged with.

> —Karen Escalante, Chair, CCTE Research Committee California State University, San Bernardino karen.escalamte@csusb.edu



# Using Integrated STEM as a Context to Teach Mathematics and Expand Prospective Elementary Teachers' Dispositions

By Babette M. Benken & Cathrine Maiorca

#### Abstract

Integrated STEM education is critical to preparing both teachers and students. However, students' interest in STEM disciplines has been shown to decrease in upper elementary grades. Therefore, it is important to study how teachers implement integrated STEM activities in elementary school, as students need opportunities to engage in authentic hands-on STEM activities. The dispositions preservice teachers hold about STEM education will affect the choices they make with their teaching. We describe an integrated STEM module that we implement in an elementary mathematics methods course and provide a brief overview of effectiveness, including how we modified the module during the pandemic. Following the module PSTs expressed expanded confidence in their ability to teach and create integrated STEM lessons and greater enjoyment toward teaching lessons that include multiple STEM disciplines.

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## Overview

Integrated STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) education has become critical to preparing both teachers and students (National Academy of Sciences, 2007; Wolfram Institute, 2012). Furthermore, recent reforms such as the Next Generation Science Standards, NGSS (NGSS Lead States; 2013), and Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, CCSSM (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers; 2010), advocate for purposefully integrating STEM by providing deeper connections among the STEM domains; these standards are mandated in California. Everyone needs to develop STEM literacy and be prepared for STEM-related jobs (Bybee, 2018). Therefore, preservice teachers need to be able to provide students with access to quality STEM education, even if these students choose not to pursue a STEM career. Elementary school teachers are one of the most important factors in the implementation and development of integrated STEM lessons (Yoder, Bodary & Johnson, 2016). We define integrated STEM in education as the combination of two or more STEM disciplines to help students apply the content knowledge from each and make connections between them to solve or understand real-world problems (Bybee, 2018).

The number of students who pursue STEM majors is decreasing (National Science Board, 2016). Students' interest in STEM begins in early elementary school (Corp, Fields, & Naizer, 2020). However, students' interest in STEM disciplines has been shown to decrease in upper elementary grades. This poses a concern because students begin to make decisions about their future educational pursuits as early as middle school (Trusty, Niles, & Carney, 2005). Therefore, it is important to study how teachers implement integrated STEM activities in elementary school, as students need opportunities to engage in authentic hands-on STEM activities. Researchers have shown that these kinds of experiences increase students' interest in STEM (Maiorca & Roberts, 2020; Mohr-Schroeder, Bush & Jackson, 2018; Roberts et al., 2018). Researchers have suggested that integrated STEM pedagogies should be introduced in elementary methods classes (Shernoff et al., 2017) because "the current path for elementary teachers does not ensure appropriate knowledge of or dispositions towards science and mathematics" (Corp, Fields, & Naizer, p. 337). Furthermore, practicing teachers have little support in curriculum design that will help them use integrated STEM pedagogies (Bybee, 2018; Stohlmann, Moore, & Roehrig, 2012). However, there is limited research on integrated STEM experiences in preservice teacher education (Corp, Fields, & Naizer, 2020).

In this article we describe an integrated STEM module that we implement in an elementary mathematics methods course at California State University, Long Beach and how we modified the module during the pandemic, including a brief overview of its effectiveness. In this module, preservice teachers (PSTs) experience integrated STEM–first as student, then as teacher, providing a meaningful context to foster positive dispositions towards teaching math while learning mathematics content through STEM.

## Perspective

The Council for the Accreditation of the Educator Preparation (2015) defines dispositions as, "The habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie an educator's performance" (Dispositions section, para. 6). Dispositions are influenced by beliefs because beliefs can "be thought of as lenses that affect one's view of some aspect of the world" and are "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are thought to be true" (Philipp, 2007, p. 259). Philipp (2007) found preservice teachers' dispositions about teaching mathematics change when they see children's mathematical thinking; this is also true for their dispositions towards STEM.

Research has shown a connection between dispositions and the mathematical teaching practices implemented in the classroom (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Gomez-Zwiep & Benken, 2013; Philipp, 2007). Researchers have found that the dispositions held by inservice teachers are similar. The dispositions preservice teachers hold about STEM education will affect the choices they make with their teaching, including interactions with students (Mohr-Schroeder, Cavalcanti, & Blyman, 2015). Philipp (2007) noted the importance of changing dispositions to support a change in instructional behaviors. Often preservice and beginning teachers' personal experiences in mathematics remain the default mode of instruction (Foss & Kleinsasser, 1996; Thomas & Pederson, 2003). Having positive dispositions derived from authentic experiences is critical, as when preservice teachers only rely upon models based on how they were taught, they usually do not try to use more effective teaching methods, such as the effective STEM teaching practices (Foss & Kleinsasser, 1996; Steele, 2019).

In this article we illustrate the importance of including integrated STEM modules in elementary methods classes. Although teachers' dispositions can be difficult to expand, this module can be used to positively shape preservice dispositions towards mathematics through integrated STEM. The experiences provide them a new model for how to teach mathematics through lessons that include other disciplines and real-life contexts.

## **Description of STEM Module**

In the first component of the STEM module (or unit), prospective teachers engage in the activities as a learner of both STEM content and current standards (CCSS-M, NGSS). Prior to the first class, prospective teachers are introduced to integrated STEM through the use of Model-Eliciting Activities, which are open-end-ed problems that use the engineering design process to naturally connect STEM disciplines (Maiorca & Stohlmann, 2016). They complete the *Survivor Activity*, in which they are asked to design a shelter that is sturdy, water resistant, and spacious enough for people to survive while stranded on an island. The primary mathematical topics include estimation and mathematical reasoning, proportional reasoning, and problem solving. After the prospective teachers complete this activity as learners,

they engage in a whole group discussion regarding the embedded 6<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics content standards (see Figure 1 for problem statement).

In the second component, the prospective teachers engage as a teacher of STEM content. They are given a Kindergarten lesson plan without the mathematics content standards listed to read prior to class; they must also indicate which Kindergarten standards are addressed in the lesson, as well as how the activity addresses those standards. During the next class meeting, they engage in a whole group discussion about the identified standards; the prospective teachers then work in groups to describe how (with justification) their own standards, as well as others suggested, are addressed in the lesson plan.

In the final component, the prospective teachers are given the task of bridging the Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grade lessons. They develop an activity for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade that integrates mathematics and science, as well as bridges the mathematics content in the Kindergarten and 6th grade lessons. They also identify 2-4 mathematics content standards from 3rd grade relevant to their described lesson and provide justification as to how those standards are addressed in their activity. The culminating activity of this component is for the prospective teachers to design an integrated STEM task that can be implemented in an elementary classroom.

#### Figure One Problem Statement

Survivor returns to Costa Rica and Mark Burnett, the producer of Survivor, has decided to give survivors the materials to build a shelter as a reward for a challenge. He wants to provide materials for the shelter out of items that might wash up on shore. He will be providing a strip of metal supposedly from a plane, tarp from a raft, rope and of course mud from the island. To determine who will be the contestants on the show he wants to see who can design the best scale model of a shelter. The shelter must fit three people and withstand both wind and rain. Design a quality shelter and your team could be on the next show of survivor.

Your shelter must:

- Not move, tip or be damaged when given three gusts of wind
- · Remain dry when given three squirts of water to simulate rain
- Not tip or move when shaken to simulate an earthquake

Before building your scale model decide on a scale that you will use to determine how much of each material that you will use. For example, if your scale was 1 meter: 2cm, then you would have 20 craft sticks that are 6 cm long (\*\*\*\* don't use this scale ..... is it realistic?).

Actual materials that will be provided on the island Materials that you will be given	
Logs (20 logs, 3 meters long each)	sticks: 20 sticks x cm:
Plane siding (2.5 meters x 4 meters)	Aluminum foil: cm x cm
Tarp (1 piece 3 meters x 5 meters)	Wax paper: cm x cm
Rope (6 meters)	String: cm
Mud (1 bucket with 1 cubic meter (m3)(1m x 1m x 1m)	Unlimited

After designing and testing the shelter write Mark Burnett a letter describing why your shelter is the best. Include in the letter the design for the shelter, the materials that you used, and general guidelines for how to make scale models for any purpose. A few example shelters are provided below for your team to begin to develop ideas. Prior to the pandemic this module was implemented completely in person. In the first component students worked collaboratively to determine the scale and build a shelter to meet the constraints using materials provided in class. Examples of the shelter built by students during class are provided in Figure 2.

In the second component students first worked individually (outside of class as homework) to determine the content standards they thought were addressed in the kindergarten lesson. When we returned to class, they worked in groups to come to a shared set of content standards and justification for how these standards are addressed in the lesson. In the last component students worked collaboratively to create an activity that bridges the main content concepts embedded in the Survivor activity and the kindergarten lesson and similarly engages students using the Standards for Mathematical Practices (CCSS-M).

Beginning summer 2020, this methods course moved to a 100% virtual format. To support the change in mode of instruction, participants engaged via Zoom and used Flipgrid to virtually present their individual models for Survivor activities. Breakout rooms were used to foster collaborative synchronous discussion and students were encouraged to meet with their groups outside of class via Zoom. We found two aspects of this virtual mode of instruction to be helpful to the PSTs' engagement in and understanding of the engineering design process: (1) they needed to find materials from their own homes to build their 3-D model of a shelter (previously they had been given a selection of materials during class), and (2) they needed to carefully show and explain how they built their shelters and then creatively demonstrate that they could withstand the "elements" using video. Some examples of shelters built by students using alternative materials are provided in Figure 3.

Capturing their explanations and presentation on video provide PSTs the opportunity for careful communication, reflection, and revision. We intend to continue this implementation even when the course reverts to an in-person mode of instruction.

Figure Two Examples of Shelter Built by Students



## **Overview of the Impact of the STEM Module**

From Spring 2018 to Spring 2021, we studied the impact of the STEM module on the 351 PSTs dispositions toward towards math and integrated STEM (*How do the K-6 STEM modules impact PSTs dispositions towards math, as well as dispositions towards STEM teaching and creating integrated STEM lessons*) using surveys with both open-ended and Likert-type questions and both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

Following the STEM modules PSTs expressed expanded confidence in their ability to teach integrated STEM and create integrated STEM lessons and greater enjoyment toward teaching lessons that include multiple STEM disciplines. For example, 67% of participants reported not feeling confident about teaching an integrated STEM lesson (pre-survey). On the post-survey, 100% of these participants expressed being more confident in their ability to teach integrated STEM. Fifty-eight percent of participants reported they were confident in their ability to create an integrated STEM lesson on the pre-survey. This seems to be because they view math and science as connected and they had prior experience writing integrated math and literature lessons. As one participant noted, "The STEM fields naturally integrate with each other so forming connections doesn't feel like a daunting/difficult task." On the post-survey this same participate reported, "I am confident in my ability to generate integrated STEM lessons. Although I don't consider the STEM fields to be my forte, I do enjoy them and tried to learn as much as possible this semester in my math and science methods."

Furthermore, initially 29% of the PSTs reported that they would not enjoy teaching STEM, yet on the post-survey 100% of these participants indicated that they would enjoy teaching STEM disciplines. For example, one participant explained that he did not enjoy teaching STEM disciplines because "[Science] is either not

#### Figure Three Shelters Built by Students Using Aternative Materials



interesting or I don't know how to make it fun for the kids to learn. However, I love to incorporate lessons with math. I enjoy math and solving equations." On the post-survey the same participant reported he would enjoy teaching STEM disciplines because he "liked to work with multiple subjects and work hands-on with my hands. I especially like engineering lessons. I find it fun and great way for kids to learn and build."

Many PSTs expressed that integrated STEM could be a way to engage students in problem solving and meaningful discussion. Even when participants were not feeling completely prepared, they saw the impact integrated STEM lessons can have on students' math learning. They especially found participating in the Survivor Activity as a learner to be a valuable experience. As one participant noted, "[It was valuable] even myself as a grown up to participate in because I loved working with groups and learning hands-on by building and using math." Another participant said, "I am a person who learns by doing so participating in the actual lesson gave me a better understanding of what was being taught." For this participant actually doing the STEM lesson helped raise understanding. Another participant also felt that the activities in the course enabled her to feel more confident, as the Survivor and Kindergarten lessons allowed her to see a written lesson plan that integrated both mathematics and science. This participant also said, "I feel these two activities contributed to me now feeling well prepared and confident to teach and create lessons that integrate STEM disciplines."

## **Significance**

STEM education has become critical to preparing both teachers and citizens (National Academy of Sciences, 2007). Given this focus, it is increasingly more important to include integrated STEM units within mathematics content and pedagogy courses to make mathematics relevant and connected for both teachers and students (Bybee, 2018; Maiorca & Roberts, 2020). Teachers' dispositions impact choices in practice. Yet despite this importance, there is little research that examines elementary preservice teachers' dispositions towards science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (Corp, Fields, & Naizer, 2020) and few examples of specific activities that support their development of positive dispositions. It is encouraging that all of the PSTs who experienced this integrated STEM module felt more prepared and confident to integrate STEM disciplines after they completed the activities. Not all preservice teachers have positive experiences with STEM prior to entering their methods courses. Experiences like the one presented in this study may not only provide pre-servi<sup>TM</sup>ce teachers their first experience with STEM, but their first *positive* one.

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# Educators' Perceptions of Middle Level Education in a State Without a Middle Level Teacher Credential

## By Rong-Ji Chen, Erika Daniels, Roxanne Greitz Miller, Moses Ochanji, Ben Seipel, & Acacia M. Warren

## Abstract

Over forty U.S. states offer teacher licensing specifically in preparation for teaching middle grades students. California is not included in this number, nor do California teacher licenses (i.e., multiple subjects, single subject, and special education) require teacher preparation coursework specific to meeting the needs of early adolescents. This descriptive study presents results of an exploratory survey of California educators with middle grades experience (n=48) regarding their ability to identify essential attributes and characteristics of successful middle schools in

Rong-Ji Chen. Erika Daniels, and Moses Ochanji are professors in the College of Education, Health, and Human Services at Calfornia State University, San Marcos. Roxanne Greitz Miller is a professor and interim dean of the Attallah College of Educational Studies at Chapman University, Orange, California. Ben Seipel is an associate professor in the School of Education at California State University, Chico. Acacia M. Warren is the single subject program coordinator in the School of Education at the University of California, Irvine. Email addresses: rchen@csusm.edu, edaniels@csusm.edu, rgmiller@chapman.edu, mochanji@ csusm.edu, bseipel@mail.csuchico.edu, & acaciamw@uci.edu California, their perceptions of young adolescents' needs and responsive teaching practices, and their current opinions of middle level education in California. Findings indicate that survey respondents (1) moderately agree that middle schools in California represent the essential attributes and key characteristics of successful middle schools, (2) agree that middle level teachers' practice is responsive to early adolescents' developmental needs but does not emphasize student choice and community interaction, and (3) overwhelmingly agree that the overall state of middle level education in California is inadequate. These findings have implications for policymakers and teacher educators to think flexibly about middle level education and whether the needs of early adolescents are best served by the current conditions of teacher preparation in California.

Keywords: middle grades, middle schools, teacher preparation

#### Introduction

California is a national leader in educator preparation, producing many highly qualified teachers who demonstrate both subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skill on the pathway to earning a California teaching license ("credential"). However, the status of California's middle grades teacher preparation is lacking in comparison to other U.S. states. California is one of only eight states without specific licensing or required coursework for middle grades teacher preparation (Howell et al., 2018) despite national efforts to promote specialized preparation for teachers who work with early adolescents (Association for Middle Level Education, 2021; McEwin & Smith, 2013). Teacher preparation programs in California offer three preliminary credentials: Multiple Subjects, held by most elementary school educators; Single Subject, held by most secondary school educators; and Education Specialist, which provides two levels of credentialing for those serving students with special education needs. Teacher candidates wanting to teach middle grades students choose among the three types of credential programs, which generally means their training focuses on teaching in self-contained elementary school classrooms, departmentalized high school classrooms, or in a range of special education environments. Without specific preparation for the middle grades, teachers and administrators who find themselves in middle level educational settings in California may not be prepared to serve young adolescents' unique developmental, socio-emotional, and academic needs.

#### Literature Review

The basis for implementing specific experiences into middle level education to support the development of early adolescents has been documented in the literature for more than 80 years (see McEwin & Smith, 2013, for a comprehensive reference list). The Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) presents a framework of middle level education and defines five essential attributes and 18 characteristics of successful middle schools (Bishop & Harrison, 2021). The essential attributes

specify that education for young adolescents must be responsive, challenging, empowering, equitable, and engaging. The 18 characteristics are categorized in three areas: (a) culture and community, (b) curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and (c) leadership and organization. Young adolescents' unique cognitive, physical, moral, socio-emotional, and identity development is at the center of this middle level framework, and the interdependent essential attributes and characteristics form a coherent system to facilitate young adolescents' development.

Middle school teachers are expected to understand this framework and adopt best practices to meet young adolescents' various developmental needs. To this end, middle level educators urge teacher education programs across the country to provide specialized preparation for middle level teachers (Howell et al., 2016). Although much research is needed to answer the question of whether specialized middle level teacher preparation truly matters, several empirical studies have yielded a promising finding that middle school teachers with specialized preparation performed better in many key areas than their counterparts who have only elementary or secondary licensure (e.g., Mertens, Flowers, & Mulhall, 2005; Ochanji et al., 2016).

Teacher education programs operate under the state policy on teacher credentialing and coursework and fieldwork requirements. Howell and colleagues (2016) reviewed the licensure documents and middle level teaching degree requirements of the 50 U.S. states and Washington, D.C. They found that, while 45 U.S. states offer licenses specific to middle grades, one-third of universities with teacher preparation programs have no required coursework focused on preparation for teaching in middle level settings, and they urged teacher educators to think flexibly to prepare effective middle level teachers even when state credentialing structures are not supportive.

#### Aims

The purpose of this descriptive study was to explore the current state of middle level education in California. We analyzed survey data from California education stakeholders regarding their credentialing paths and teacher preparation program content, perceptions about middle grades characteristics, teaching practices, and beliefs about young adolescents. The findings shed light on educator perceptions of the condition of middle level education and teacher preparation in a state without specific professional licensing or requirements for middle grades teachers, with implications for policymakers and teacher educators.

#### Methods

Situated in the California context and based on the above review of the AMLE framework and related research, we posed the following research questions:

To what degree do survey respondents recognize AMLE's five essential attributes and 18 characteristics for successful middle schools in their district?

What are survey respondents' perceptions about young adolescents and the differences between middle school and junior high school? To what degree do their teaching practices address young adolescents' needs?

What do survey respondents think of the current state of middle level education, in general?

We designed an online survey to address these questions. All levels of California educators were invited (via email listservs, contact lists, and social media postings) during spring and summer 2021 to participate in the survey. We had usable data from 48 respondents, with an average of 11.1 years of service in education (range 1-29 years; SD= 9.63 years). Survey respondents worked in middle grades settings for an average of 7.4 years (range 0-29 years; SD=7.80 years).

The survey had five broad sections: personal experiences and training regarding middle level education, reflections on the AMLE's essential attributes and characteristics of a successful middle school as defined by Bishop & Harrison (2021), administrative positions and training, personal teaching practices as related to middle level education, and personal beliefs regarding the current state of middle level education in California. Items in the personal experience and training section were a mix of open response, checkboxes, and yes/no questions. All 23 items in the AMLE attributes section (e.g., curriculum, community, engagement), 24 items in the personal teaching practice section (e.g., content, pedagogy, assessment), and 13 items in the current state of middle level education (e.g., purpose, structure, student needs) were Likert-based (3 points: agree, neither agree nor disagree, and disagree). The 14 administrative/school structure prompts were yes/no items. Responses were tallied by percentage and means calculated for all questions regarding respondent agreement (agree = 1, neither agree nor disagree = 0, disagree = -1). Respondents could offer additional comments at the end of each section. The survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

## Findings

For this monograph, we center our discussion on quantitative findings from the survey. Due to space limitations, we encourage readers to view all tables and figures referenced below online at <u>https://bit.ly/mid-gr-graphics</u>.

## Specialized Preparation in Middle Level Education

We asked three questions about respondents' initial preparation as a teacher. Figure 1 online summarizes the responses. There was no distinction between the operational concepts of "middle schools" and "junior high schools" in 67% of respondents' preparation. Only 31% of respondents took specialized middle level teacher preparation coursework. This finding complements the study by Howell et al. (2016) who found that one-third of the 1,324 teacher preparation programs in the study did not offer coursework on young adolescents or middle level schools,

despite these programs being located in states that provided middle level licensure. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents reported middle grades experiences in fieldwork settings (e.g., observations and/or student teaching placement), which indicates by placing teacher candidates in middle schools to learn from the field, many teacher preparation programs may be attempting to address the candidates' preparation for the unique settings of middle grades and young adolescents' developmental needs in the absence of specific required coursework.

#### AMLE's Essential Attributes and Characteristics of a Successful Middle School

We asked the respondents whether they believed the middle grade schools in their districts or communities are responsive/challenging/empowering/equitable/engaging (i.e., whether their schools demonstrate the AMLE essential attributes). Overall, respondents indicated they generally agree that the middle grade schools in their district/community exhibited each of the five essential attributes. The "responsive" and "engaging" attributes were identified (agreed with by 79% and 75% of respondents, respectively) more than others, with "equitable" receiving the least recognition (55%). Table 1 and Figure 2 online summarize the results.

Similarly, we asked the respondents to identify AMLE's 18 characteristics of successful middle schools present within the middle grade schools in their district (see Table 2 and Figure 3 online). The top three identified characteristics were educators' respect and value of young adolescents (88%); a school environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for all (77%); and school safety addressed proactively, justly, and thoughtfully (72%). The least recognized characteristics regarded educators being specifically prepared to teach young adolescents (44%), students' academic and personal development being guided by an adult advocate (44%), and school collaboration with community and business partners (47%). The authors' observation is that the most frequently cited characteristics are common to schools at *all* levels. Yet, the least recognized characteristics tend to be specific to middle grades settings.

## **Teaching Practice**

We asked the respondents whether they agreed with 24 statements about teaching and students. Figures 4 through 8 online summarize the percentages of the responses in five areas. General observations of trends and responses include:

Respondents reported adopting many teaching practices aligned with AMLE's recommendations, such as interdisciplinary lessons, student-centered teaching, planning with colleagues, and meeting students' social-emotional needs.

The state-adopted standards and school-based guidelines largely determined curriculum content; only 46% of the respondents said they decided "what to teach."

Respondents perceived a very high degree of autonomy concerning instruction

(95% of respondents independently determined how to teach) and assessment (85% of respondents independently determined how to assess) of their students.

The lowest percentages reported by respondents related to implementing community-based projects (35%), allowing students' choice in assessment (27%), and students' involvement in the larger community (16%).

These findings correspond to White et al. (2013), who found various gaps between middle level educators' practices and the AMLE Standards.

#### The State of Middle Level Education

We asked the respondents to assess middle level education in general. Table 4 and Figure 9 show the results. For the statement, "the current state of middle-grade education is adequate," only 27% of the respondents agreed, 31% disagreed, and 42% neither agreed nor disagreed. The mean agreement was -0.04, much lower than other statements. Additionally, 40% thought that the terms "middle school" and "junior high school" are synonymous, despite the extensive literature base establishing middle schools as distinctly different in theory and practice.

Moreover, for the statement, "teachers, in general, are well-prepared to meet the needs of middle grade students,"33% of the respondents agreed, 16% disagreed, and 51% neither agreed nor disagreed. Overall, we conclude the survey respondents disapproved of the current state of middle grades teacher preparation in California. However, in contrast, over 90% of the respondents recognized young adolescents" needs are unique from those of elementary and high school students. 78% of respondents did not think middle school students are just "little high school students," and 53% believed middle grade students need a homeroom teacher or advisor.

#### **Discussion and Implications**

This study has acknowledged limitations. The sample of 48 respondents is not representative of educators across the state. Also, as an exploratory study, the questionnaire was not designed to be comprehensive, nor was it intended to reach the statistical power necessary to authoritatively comment on the opinions of educators across the state of California. Future studies will address these limitations as we expand our efforts and process further revisions.

Despite the limitations, the findings are essential to middle level education for two main reasons. First, the results show that although the state policy shapes the operations of teacher preparation programs and school districts, these preservice and in-service entities can - and we propose should - provide opportunities for preservice and in-service teachers to learn how to address young adolescents' developmental needs. We agree with Howell and colleagues that teacher educators must develop the appropriate curriculum for individuals seeking a credential that includes the middle grades, regardless of whether the candidate is prepared through an elementary, middle, or secondary preparation program (Howell et al., 2018). School districts can share this responsibility by providing placements in quality middle schools to their credentialing providers.

This study is also significant for considering how individual practitioners navigate the political and educational system. By and large, the respondents did not think that the current state of middle grades education or teacher workforce preparation is adequate. Indeed, education leaders and policymakers in California do not appear to value young adolescents' unique developmental and educational needs, evidenced by the absence of a specific middle grades credential. Yet, most of the respondents recognized the need to specifically educate young adolescents, who are different from other age groups. As we move forward from this monograph in our future work, we will gauge how educators operationalize their commitment to young adolescents and middle grades education in spaces where structural support is lacking, as well as in what ways and to what extent middle school principals demonstrate their commitment to and enact the key characteristics of quality middle grades education in their schools.

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## Perspectives on Teaching and Learning Universal Design

By Mina Chun, Kimiya Sohrab Maghzi, Marni E. Fisher, Meredith A. Dorner, James St. Amant, & Jessica Puryear

#### Abstract

This prismatic inquiry study examined three types of experiences with learning about Universal Design. Each experience was examined in terms of effort, discovery, frustration, and learning levels. The first experience examined the one-to-one professor and undergraduate exploration of Universal Design through a co-authored literature review. This experience had the highest levels of class commitment and effort, low frustration levels for the professor, but a higher frustration level for the student, and high levels of learning for both professor and student. The second experience explored a class engagement with Virtual Reality (VR) goggles in order to determine the accessibility of a campus. This experience had the lowest levels of out-of-class commitment and effort, high initial frustration levels for the professor

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Key words: Universal Design, teaching, teacher education

### Perspectives on Teaching and Learning: Universal Design

This prismatic inquiry study examined three types of experiences with learning about Universal Design. The first experience examines the one-to-one professor and undergraduate exploration of Universal Design through a co-authored literature review (Chun & Puryear, 2019). The second explores a class engagement with Virtual Reality (VR) goggles in order to determine the accessibility of a campus (Maghzi et al., 2019). The third looks at how professors learn about Universal Design through professional development or independently as the need for student accommodations emerges in their classrooms.

#### Literature

Universal Design was a framework that originally emerged out of architecture. The architect Ronald Mace coined this term when thinking about the design of buildings (Jiménez et al., 2007; McGuire et al., 2006). Mace brought our attention to the idea of thinking about all people regardless of their physical ability or dis/ability. Instead of spending thousands of dollars to retrofit buildings, Mace proposed we think about the needs of all individuals when designing a building from the get-go in order to be accessible to all people. The goal of Universal Design seems to be inclusive of all individuals and needs and thus very applicable to learning and the classroom (Jiménez et al., 2007).

As educators we must think of the needs of all our students and potential students when designing our lessons. Meyer and Rose (2000) applied this concept of Universal Design to education, coming up with the concept of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). When we think about the needs of all our learners and design and implement lesson plans in the initial planning process, these lessons become more accessible to all our students and their various learning styles (Meyer & Rose, 2000). Thus, Universal Design for Learning needs to be implemented into instruction, curriculum, and assessments. According to the Delaware Department of Education (2004):

UDL is good for teachers because planning ahead saves time and money in the long-run... The UDL approach promotes a more inclusive environment for all students... "Universal design for learning does not remove academic challenges for students; it removes barriers to access. Simply stated, universal design is just good teaching." (Ohio State University Partnership Grant, 2003). (pp. 7-10)

Furthermore, the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA, 2008) reinforced that Universal Design for Learning, as a research based framework, proactivity plans lessons and learning materials with a focus on maintaining constant student engagement through a variety of teaching methods (CAST, 2018; Davies et al., 2013; Meyers, Rose, & Gordon, 2014).

## Methodology

Prismatic inquiry emerged out of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) rhizomatic theory engages in a multifaceted lens, which sets out to deterritorialize bilinear arborescent thinking to break up established paradigms while mapping out information (Fisher, 2016). Focusing on action, mapping, expression, *praxis*, and testing, collaborative prismatic inquiry may revisit patterns across research studies or engage in multiple perspectives to identify areas of convergence and divergence (Fisher, 2016).

Collaborative prismatic inquiry invites a series of participant-researchers to engage in storytelling and analysis (Achieng-Evensen et al., 2017). This study, through collaborative prismatic inquiry, employed a storytelling pattern borrowed from the first half of "holistic visioning" (Sanders-Lawson et al., 2006), where each thread of experiences is shared individually, identifying subjectivity and then experiences.

#### **Data:**Three Experiences

This study considered three types of experiences when learning about Universal Design. These included: (1) learning through a literature review, (2) integrating VR technology, and (3) learning through experience and professional development.

#### Experience One: Professor Reviewing the Literature with a Student

The first experience examines the perspectives of professor and undergraduate student while developing a collaborative literature review about Universal Design.

These took place in a series of one-to-one meetings where each had a list of tasks to complete between meetings.

#### **Perspective One: Professor**

One of the seniors, Ms. Puryear, and I met in May 2019 to develop an independent study for Fall 2019 to research inclusive higher education. As we further discussed our interests, we discovered we both wanted to gain a better understanding of the use of Universal Design-based strategies in higher education, especially types of inclusive strategies implemented by faculty and their perspectives on incorporating those into their courses. We reviewed only empirical studies conducted in the U/S. and published in peer-reviewed journals between 2010-2019. Full- and/or part-time faculty were the participants of the studies we reviewed. Also, the studies were focused on Universal Design-based frameworks, such as Universal Design for Learning, Universal Instructional Design, Universal Design for Instruction, and Universal Design for Assessment. As this was Ms. Puryear's first time doing a literature review, I was involved in every step guiding her. Also, I shared a list of resources for conducting a literature review and Ms. Puryear reviewed the resources during summer to get familiar with doing a literature review. At the beginning of the project, Ms. Puryear and I met once a week, then later we met once every twothree weeks. Throughout the project, we collaborated on Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. We asked each other questions by posting questions and comments in the files and researching via email. We first began with carefully reading the articles that met our inclusion criteria. With collaborative efforts, we completed a synthesis matrix for each article. This process took a couple of months to complete, then we collaboratively analyzed our matrix and converse about our analysis to identify themes. Throughout the project, I made sure to be available to Ms. Puryear as much as she needed me to process her questions and thoughts.

**Discoveries**. Through the literature review, I gained a deeper understanding of various factors that influenced the faculty's ability to apply Universal Design-based strategies. When faculty had students with disabilities in their courses previously and had positive experiences with those students, those faculty would more likely incorporate Universal Design-based inclusive strategies in the courses. However, if they had negative experiences with the students with disabilities, the faculty were less likely to implement inclusive strategies. In addition, the faculty, who had disability-related training, were more aware of the needs and perspectives of the students and the importance of incorporating the Universal Design-based strategies to be proactive. Through training and personal experiences with the students with disabilities, faculty gained confidence in utilizing the Universal Design-based strategies.

**Frustrations**. Ms. Puryear and I frequently communicated with each other via email and posting in the shared files. We met most of the tentative deadlines,

and if we needed to extend our due dates, we communicated to each other and rescheduled our deadlines. I deeply enjoyed collaborating with Ms. Puryear. There were no difficulties while completing the project.

#### **Perspective Two: Student**

At the end of Spring 2019, I spoke with Dr. Chun about my experiences in college courses, which included discussing Universal Design for Learning. Though I learned about Universal Design and Universal Design for Learning in the Special Education courses I took, I did not consistently experience Universal Design-based strategies across all my college courses. Some professors used more Universal Design-based strategies in their courses than others. My professors who taught education courses used some Universal Design-based strategies such as digital copies of course materials, PowerPoint slides, video clips, hands-on learning activities, active classroom discussions, small group-based discussion, group-based projects, group-based field experiences, or revisions for papers/exams. However, one of my Education courses significantly incorporated the Universal Design for Learning principles, such as multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression/ action, so the course materials were designed in flexible and accessible formats. This allowed all students, not just me with approved accommodations, to access the course materials equitably. For example, all students used their laptops or tablets to access the PowerPoint slides, eTextbooks, and video clips to participate in the course. Due to this design, I was able to enlarge the materials to follow along and actively participate in the discussions. These experiences made me wonder why all courses were not designed with Universal Design-based principles and why Universal Design-based strategies were not consistently applied at the same rate throughout all college courses. Based on these questions, Dr. Chun and I started the literature review, which focused on Universal Design-based strategies in higher education, specifically from a faculty perspective.

The process of constructing the literature review relied heavily on collaboration. Dr. Chun and I exchanged ideas about the literature review and collaborated while writing the paper. I wrote many drafts and Dr. Chun made revisions. We communicated through email, Google Docs, and in-person meetings. We met in person regularly to go over the drafts, find themes in the data, and prepare for the conference. The collaboration was a key role in my ability to learn to write a literature review. By communicating with Dr. Chun on a regular basis, I was able to ask questions and learn from my mistakes, which enabled me to continue to work on a similar project with less guidance a year later. Before completing the literature review, I had no previous experience writing such a paper but Dr. Chun showed me the resources and guidance to learn how to properly write a literature review.

**Discoveries**. Before starting the literature review, I had some previous experience with Universal Design-based frameworks through my classes. I knew about

the Universal Design and Universal Design for Learning, as I learned about them in classes and used some strategies when creating lesson plans, such as tolerance for error, perceptible information, and multiple means of representation. However, while reading articles for the literature review, I discovered that Universal Design/ Universal Design for Learning is more than just making sure the environment or materials are accessible for every student. It involves using guidelines when creating a curriculum so that all students of various abilities and backgrounds can learn in a way that works for that student. Using Universal Design for Learning, many barriers in the classroom could be shattered. For instance, having worksheets available in print and electronically eliminates barriers for students who have trouble reading, who have visual impairments, or students who have trouble with handwriting but it still gives students options. I also discovered various reasons why faculty in higher education may be less willing to incorporate inclusive strategies into their classroom, including a lack of time, lack of knowledge, and personal perceptions and bias. One aspect of the literature review that surprised me was that some faculty lacked experience or knowledge regarding working with students with disabilities. This surprised me because more and more students with disabilities are enrolling in higher education.

**Frustrations**. The difficulties I encountered during this literature review were due to the fact that it was my first time working on a literature review, I had to first learn basic skills related to writing a literature review, such as the style of writing, types of literature reviews, and data collection. Dr. Chun and I collaborated on the project, which was a great experience. We consistently met to discuss our progress, made changes to our schedule when needed, shared ideas, and responsibilities. I believe that our successful collaboration was a major factor in having very few frustrations during this literature review.

One frustration I encountered during the literature review process was the length of time it took me to complete certain steps. As this was my first time working on a literature review, I could not predict the toll it would take on my body. I have a visual impairment, which for me personally means that I needed to enlarge text and use a bigger computer monitor to read articles and write. After reading several articles, it was clear that I could not solely rely on enlarging the documents since it was not sustainable to my eyesight or the time frame. Thus, I started using text to speech software, which decreased my eye fatigue.

Another challenge I encountered at the very beginning of the literature review was trying to figure out what to write about because it seemed to me that Universal Design was already heavily researched and studied, so what else could we contribute? However, after reading more articles, I realized that there are gaps and areas that still need more research.

## Experience Two: Professor and Students Exploring Through VR Technology

The second experience includes the perspective of one of two professors and one of a class of 31 students who piloted the use of VR goggles in order to explore and learn about Universal Design. This took place during an on-campus face-to-face class. Students were assigned additional content to learn about Universal Design before using the VR goggles to explore space and determine accessibility.

## **Perspective One: Professor**

I had the opportunity to write a grant to integrate VR into the classroom to examine spaces that students inhabit. What better way to examine spaces than to utilize technology to teach about accessibility and Universal Design for Learning? Students were asked to critically examine the education spaces that they inhabit at the University. This project was an attempt to have our future teacher educators think about spaces, accessibility, learning and barriers. This project was to push our students to critically evaluate and examine how educational spaces in higher education have been traditionally designed and to think about how these spaces meet or deny the needs of all students, especially students with dis/abilities.

Students used Google Earth Street View and 360 imagery and examined spaces on campus and applied their understanding of Universal Design to these spaces by determining the limitations and challenges of these spaces to support student learning and accessibility. Students created end products that displayed their examination of these campus spaces using Thinglink (2020) and Google Earth Street View (See Table 1).

**Discoveries**. This activity brought physical awareness to future educators of the possible physical impact on learning and the importance that access plays in the education and development of students. Overall, pre-service teachers' greatly benefited from rethinking and re-envisioning educational spaces. Preservice teachers were able to examine spaces in their learning environment at the University and examine the accessibility of buildings and spaces. While this task was beneficial to pre-service educators to explore their learning environment, it may be even more beneficial to explore the spaces in K-12 schools that they will be teaching in. Also, it became apparent through this process that participating pre-service teachers could have greatly benefited from more demonstration and time with the

Table I     Examples of Student Videos on Google Earth (St. Amant, 2019)			
Location	Link		
Height Issue Montage	https://tinyurl.com/HeightMontage		

technology. Perhaps in the future a video demonstration could help facilitate student understanding of the tasks at hand.

Frustrations. Students who feared technology and making mistakes seemed to be hesitant to delve into using the technology required for this project. Having students work in small groups seemed to help ease the nerves of students, however, there were groups that really struggled with getting started with using the technology. I think frustrations were two-fold, both for the students and the educators. As I was co-teaching this course my colleague who was also unfamiliar with the technology also had hesitations and apprehension about using the technology. As a result, we decided to invite a tech expert to join our class and help our students get started with using the technology. I think this hands-on approach to learning was so different from traditional ways of teaching that students became frustrated and anxious as a result of the unknowns of what the end outcome would look like. As this was the first time we were implementing and using this technology we did not have a sample to show students. In fact, I'm not sure if I would show them a sample or idea of what an end product could potentially look like. I think the mere process was impactful for students. Having to problem solve together, work together in teams, and use consultation and collaboration to implement their practice and achieve the goal of this project.

#### **Perspective Two: Graduate Student**

In the Spring of 2019, I was completing the first semester of the education specialist program at the University of Redlands. During the semester, I participated in the Foundations of (Dis)ability and Special Education.

Part of the class's coursework was a Universal Design project that students would complete in small groups. For the project, students were tasked to explore the physical spaces of the University utilizing 360-degree cameras to gain an understanding of the level of accessibility of each space. Once the students explored the spaces, they were to give an analysis on the level of accessibility and whether Universal design structures would increase the level of accessibility.

Our group was made up of 4 students that included myself. We chose the University's library as the space to explore for the project. Each group was given time during class to get comfortable using the 360-degree camera, as well as explore their chosen location on campus. Our group felt confident in being able to operate the 360-degree camera, so we opted to spend most of our time exploring the library. From the outside of the library, the building is a big sprawling structure that appears to have all the most modern building amenities. As we explored further, we discovered that the library is a smaller portion of the bigger surrounding structure of the library. To explore and analyze the library, our group first did a brief walk through of the library and the bigger surrounding structure noting areas that may be challenging for individuals to navigate. On our second visit, we utilized the

360-degree camera to more deeply explore all the pathways that patrons of the library would utilize to navigate the various areas of the library. One of the biggest challenges that a patron of the library could potentially face is navigating to the wheelchair accessible bathroom that was located on one of the highest floors. To get to the bathroom, a patron would have to take two elevators depending on their location in the library. Another issue that the library faced was how to get patrons who utilize wheelchairs from the upper floors down to the bottom floors to safety in the event of an emergency when the elevators would become unavailable.

Completing the Universal Design project was a great learning opportunity that was filled with many challenges and discoveries. It was incredibly eye opening to explore the library (that many of our group members had visited many times before) through the lens of Universal Design and how the barriers of our physical world can be applied and modified in the classroom environment.

**Discoveries**. By researching and learning about the limitations of physical spaces through the lens of Universal Design, I was able to see the benefits of well-planned and thoughtful design that works for everyone, rather than most.

As we struggled through the technological barriers, it allowed us as future teachers to realize that the frustrations that we were running into would be similar to the frustrations that our students would face in the classrooms every day. It was interesting to observe myself and my peer's discomfort in not being able to complete a task the way that we were intended to. This frustration is literally the exact thing that our students would experience. We are so reluctant to extend ourselves the grace to learn through the process of doing, yet we are so quick to demand it from the students whom we teach in our classrooms.

**Frustrations**. Navigating the technology to work the way that we wanted it to. Specifically, connecting the pathways through the library in an easy way that would make sense to an observer.

#### **Experience Three:**

## **Professors Learning about Universal Design**

The third experience asked professors familiar with both face-to-face and online instruction as well as professional development that covered Universal Design. The instructor in the first perspective was introduced to Universal Design academically, and built an educational career implementing differentiated design into instruction, but had found few spaces where Universal Design worked for everyone. The instructor in the second perspective learned about accessibility based on students' needs for access in courses, revolutionizing instruction before professional development started covering Universal Design.

## Perspective One: Professor as Student Taking Professional Development Courses

I learned about universal design peripherally through working with a student who was researching Universal Design, then as it came up in professional development as a professor. As a k-12 educator, differentiation was modeled for me and integrated into my teaching long before differentiated learning (Tomlinson et al., 2003) or differentiated design (Fisher & Magzhi, 2021) had been coined. I carried this belief in giving each student what they needed into my teaching as a professor.

In terms of integrating Universal Design into my teaching, as a face-to-face professor, I tell students to just let me know what they need. The disability services office has noted that most students don't need to request accommodations because supports are already part of my regular teaching. Online, I proudly started out following the rules for Universal Design... until the rules changed. Faced with little prep time and 100s of pages, gSlides, and assignments to restructure across multiple classes, I added a line to my syllabus saying to let me know if they needed further accommodations, and left it there. My videos are all captioned, I'm thoughtful about the colors I use, but a screen reader would have difficulty with my course.

**Discoveries**. Entrenched in differentiated design (Maghzi & Fisher, 2021), I am more likely to differentiate than worry about Universal Design. It is an ideal that helps many people, but misses the mark for others. Having worked with students in the past who used screen readers, I understand their frustration, and would adjust my courses, if need be. Having experienced multiple situations where accommodating someone else stomps on my dis/ability has made me aware of the need to really consider what each student needs to be successful.

**Frustrations**. When Universal Design began showing up in my professional development for teaching online classes, I was puzzled, since we were being urged to use accommodations for certain learners that did not help others. Since I am hearing impaired, I was especially frustrated when I found myself in a class on diversity that promoted pretty much only developed videos to build community, but didn't use programs that integrated captions until the third week, making the videos inaccessible to me. I questioned this the first day of class on the Q & A board, but never received an answer. I've also found it frustrating that even courses that model and teach Universal Design did not integrate scholarly readings, and typically covered it briefly.

## Perspective Two: Professor Meeting Students' Needs in the Classroom

Each semester, I examine my courses and try to determine how I can make them more accessible to all of my students. Aside from captioning my videos, I had previously given little thought to accessibility for students who are Deaf and/ or Hard of Hearing (DHH). During one semester, I had a student enrolled in a face to face course who attended class with American Sign Languages interpreters. During that experience, I was able to teach my class as I always had with little alteration other than to keep an eye on the pace of my lecture to ensure that the interpreters could follow along effectively. This semester, in addition to converting an in-person lab to an online format, I had the experience of having a student who identified as DHH in a synchronous online lab course. Given that I have taken a professional development course in Universal Design for Learning, I was confident in my ability to meet this student's need without significant adjustments. Indeed, when the disabled student services representative contacted me to let me know about this student's enrollment in my course, I was told to teach as I always do, just make sure I have captions and that there would be a live captioner in each synchronous Zoom meeting. As it turns out, I have had to adjust my teaching significantly, in ways I didn't expect. Thus, my experience reveals a need for more professional development.

**Discoveries**. Through this experience, I have discovered two important things. First, I speak too quickly for live captioning. This has led me to slow down my speaking across all of my sections, which I think is beneficial for my students.

Second, I believe there is a need for more guidance for faculty who have identified DHH students in their courses. Specifically, faculty would benefit from professional development providing guidelines and insights into how live captioning works including the pace of speaking, their ability to follow students into breakout rooms, how to make corrections if the captions show errors without drawing unnecessary attention to it, etc. Additionally, significant forewarning of delays for closed captioning and notification of DHH students in courses with more notice, whenever possible, would help professors plan for their courses accordingly.

Frustrations. The most frustrating piece of this experience has been feeling unprepared for the changes I would need to make in my course. Specifically, I didn't receive any information regarding the accuracy (or lack) and pace of live captioning. While reading the captions, it was clear to me that the captioner was consistently missing chunks of course material and that some of the captions were giving false information. I think it may have been due to my speaking speed. I also noticed that the captioner didn't always follow the DHH student into breakout rooms, which may have had a negative impact on their learning experience. Additionally, we did not receive notification that the captioning grant we use to help closed caption pre-recorded videos was running three weeks behind. Because of this, I ended up having to record my videos over one month in advance, and was not even able to use my pre-recorded videos for the first month of class. Finally, I realized very quickly that my teaching style, which is full of humor, often didn't "translate" well to captions that couldn't convey tone of voice, were filled with mistakes, and running behind my facial expressions, so I felt the need to leave a lot of humor and spontaneity out of the sessions.

## Analysis

Analysis initially considered the effort, discovery, frustration, and levels of learning unique to each type of learning experience. These experiences could be clustered as: (1) high effort, high discovery, low frustration, high learning; (2) high effort, high discovery, high initial frustration, high learning; and (3) mixed effort, mixed discovery, high frustration, and mixed learning.

#### High Effort, High Discovery, Low Frustration, High Learning

The collaborative literature review held a number of revelations for professor and student, while being a low frustration activity. The one-to-one connection and interaction, while high effort, resulted in the student far exceeding undergraduate levels of writing, creating a very high learning impact. As a new area of research from both professor and student, it also provided a high level of discovery for both professor and student.

#### High Effort, High Discovery, High Initial Frustration, High Learning

The VR goggles were a high-effort activity, with high levels of initial frustration while technology support, professors, and students mastered the goggles. Exploration was high, as was the discovery of exploring the campus. However, students declined to walk their own campuses, which was the original intention, which would have resulted in aligning the activity with the educational leadership standards. As a takeaway, this activity had a high impact on learning.

#### Mixed Effort, Mixed Discovery, High Frustration, Mixed Learning

Learning about Universal Design through professional development or independently results in mixed effort. With students needing immediate access, there is a high effort, high frustration, and staggered discovery rate. Without students needing immediate access, the professional development was low effort, but also relatively low discovery and low frustration until two types of situations. First, standards changed, resulting in high frustration that thwarted discovery. Second, students needed immediate access in a way that either did not align with the previous teaching or did not fill in the gaps, resulting in high frustration.

#### Findings

Ultimately, there were clear connections between productive struggle and authentic effort with overall learning, with one-to-one connection with large jumps in mastery, and a definite deficit where low effort resulted in low levels of learning. While the curriculum is important, the integration of authentic application, oneon-one time, productive struggle, and active learning add weight to producing high learning outcomes and knowledge retention. Combining these elements results in reduced frustration. Conversely, even when there is a solid curriculum, if *all* elements are missing, knowledge retention and mastery are equally likely to be missing. (See Figure 1)

## Conclusions

While curriculum is important, the integration of authentic application, oneon-one time, productive struggle, and active learning add weight to producing high learning outcomes and knowledge retention. Combining these elements results in reduced frustration. Conversely, even when there is a solid curriculum, if all elements are missing, the knowledge retention and mastery are equally likely to be missing.

#### **Figure I**

#### **Elements that Add Weight to Learning Outcomes**



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# Imagining the Future of Literacy Instruction in Teacher Preparation

By AmyK Conley

#### Abstract

Critics argue there is a disconnect between research, what is taught in teacher preparation, and K-12 classroom practice (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1985), so this mixed-methods study collected ideas from all three about literacy coursework in teacher preparation programs. An online survey asked the 233 respondents to rank the importance of concepts from the literacy Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) and consider time allotment in literacy courses. Themes from the open-ended survey questions were member-checked and elaborated on during the video-conferenced focus groups. Participants expressed that teacher preparation programs should place more emphasis on foundational literacy, writing instruction, and culturally sustaining pedagogy.

#### Introduction

This study was originally conceived to consider what should be in literacy coursework to replace the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA), but asking hundreds of K-12 administrators, literacy researchers, and literacy instructors

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about what should be included in literacy instruction in teacher preparation programs produced startling insights into P-12 instruction. Although we know now that the RICA may be replaced with a performance assessment by 2025, we are entering a new era of literacy instruction in California, guided by the ELA/ELD Framework, the Literacy Teacher Performance Expectations, increased student diversity, and a growing understanding that literacy instruction must be inclusive and multilingual.

#### Literature Review

While literacy seems like a simple term, the definition changes with time, context, and field of study. For instance, some may define literacy as merely the ability to read by decoding letters, but many adults enter basic literacy programs in order to learn to write (Street & Lefstein, 2007). Few people can agree on a simplistic definition: is literacy the ability to function as an adult with reading and writing? Is it the ability to read aloud a government text, like a voter pamphlet? How much comprehension is required of a text to demonstrate literacy? What kinds of literacies are required to read Ikea directions, program your DVD player, read board books to your baby, find song lyrics to that song you heard on the radio, fill out a W-2 for a new job, or critique Walmart commercials? Increasingly, researchers acknowledge that literacy is autonomous AND socially constructed. While it includes decoding the alphabet, it is also multi-modal, translingual, potentially empowering, controversial, and fundamental (Alim & Paris, 2017; Fitzgerald, 2018; Gee; 1989, Goldenberg, 2020; Janks, 2014; Katz, et al., 2020; Street & Lefstein, 2007; Washburn et al., 2011).

Nationally, a recent panel on literacy teacher education developed by the International Literacy Association and the National Council of Teachers of English created a policy brief outlining what the two organizations believe matters in literacy teacher education: knowledge development of literacy content and pedagogy, preparation to teach diverse students, authentic practice in classrooms with children, engagement in self-critique and learning communities, and ongoing, reflective assessment (Risko & Reid, 2019). The instruction of literacy content and pedagogy is joined with social justice ideas about diversity and reflection, ideas reflected in California's current TPEs (CCTC, 2016). The testing about literacy instruction in California was the unifying force for California universities to teach the content of the RICA for a while, but as the research moved beyond the balanced instruction touted by the RICA, universities and researchers worked with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) to establish TPEs focused on literacy instruction (CCTC, 2016). The 2016 version of the literacy TPEs call for foundational phonics skills in early grades, but also materials that appeal to the diverse "interests and abilities of students" (CCTC, 2016, p. 17). New literacy TPEs adopted by the CCTC in November of 2019 put even more emphasis into social meaning-making and student empowerment;

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teachers effectively apply their knowledge of factors that affect meaning making, such as, for example, students' background knowledge and experiences (including cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge), language (including students' academic language), and motivation (including connections to their daily lives and interests). (CCTC, 2019a, p. 2)

The 2019 update extended the mandate that teachers be able to teach diverse learners at all levels, K-12 (CCTC, 2019a), an approach most supported by a science of reading approach (Goldenberg, 2020). The focus on student diversity rejects one-size-fits-all instruction and highlights the need for pedagogy to meet the needs of students who have dyslexia, are multilingual, are neuroatypical, and have varied cultural experiences, suggesting a more social justice for literacy approach (CCTC, 2019a). The future of literacy teacher preparation must be aligned with current research and must be allowed to flex and grow with current research.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

Critical literacy theorists argue that the purpose of literacy is to question, make meaning, connect with others, and make new futures (Freire, 1972), as literacy means writing and reading towards truths of what it means to be human and understanding our history and our world. As Gloria Ladson-Billings suggests, structures still impede equal opportunity for children of color and instruction aimed at critical thinking, and critical literacy is still often denied Black children (1998). A solution to address inequities and to better align policy and practice is to include stakeholders in the creation of policy (Elmore, 2004; Moats, 2009;). Inquiry as stance, a social justice theory, is a component of practitioner research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009), that argues researchers, practitioners at every level, and policy makers should make teaching and literacy policies together. Although literacy decisions have a history of being made by small, exclusive panels (Allington, 2002), like the NICHD or the panel that developed the RICA, a more democratic process is suggested by post-structural feminist theory, which argues that knowledge is constructed together by dissent and transition.

#### Methodology

After being approved by IRB, the quantitative and open-ended survey with the focus groups aimed at answering the research questions about what should be included in a literacy course for California pre-service elementary teachers to replace the RICA. This broad inquiry had two sub-questions:

1. What should the course objectives be for the proposed course to replace the Reading Instructional Competency Assessment, according to literacy instructors, literacy researchers, and districts?

2. What should be the common assessments for these courses?

An online survey was distributed to K-12 administrators and literacy researchers and instructors that collected information about the 233 respondents (See Appendix 1), and also asked respondents to rank the importance of concepts from the literacy Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs), consider time allotment of various instruction and assessments in literacy courses in the credential program, and rate TPEs in importance on a Likert scale. The survey also asked respondents if they would like to participate in follow-up focus groups to develop the ideas. Themes from the open-ended survey questions were member-checked and elaborated on during the three same-role, video-conferenced focus groups.

#### **Overview of Results**

From analysis of both the survey data and the focus groups, it was clear that participants had moved past paradigms of the literacy theories that shaped the creation of the RICA exam (O'Sullivan & Jiang, 2002). Whereas the RICA was created to balance the sides of the Reading Wars (Street & Lefstein, 2005), participants of this study encouraged less standardized testing, replacing previous approaches with an ecosystem of literacy (Pearson, 2007) that supports a detailed foundational literacy K-12 focused on phonemic awareness and phonics *and* increased emphasis on writing instruction *and* Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP), particularly tranlanguaging (Hammond, 2017). Additionally, participants suggested that the structure of literacy education in teacher preparation programs better align with research and practice.

Although California learned hard lessons about high-stakes testing for K-12 students in the last 15 years, California is still learning and feeling the effects of high-stakes testing for its teacher candidates (Lambert, 2021). The survey respondents and focus group participants expressed that the teacher candidates should be tested less. More specifically, the RICA-focused curriculum on out-dated ideas of literacy (Kohn, 2000b), taking away from instructional time in literacy courses for other needed instruction.

Participants in this study criticized overtesting of teacher candidates in general, decrying CBEST, CSET, and RICA as keeping too many candidates out of the classroom and costing too much money without actually targeting future instruction (Lambert, 2020). Participants may have been responding to current trends of the state legislature and CCTC also reconsidering the level of standardized testing for teacher candidates (Lambert, 2021), partially due to COVID-19.

Participants argued that much literacy instruction in universities was actually RICA test preparation and did not necessarily prepare teacher candidates for teaching literacy in K-12 classrooms. The narrowing of curriculum for standardized testing (Kohn, 2000b) is a known effect, where the more important and the more unique the testing scope, the more instruction is restricted to teaching to the test. As the RICA is aligned with older standards (O'Sullivan & Jiang, 2002), the time spent

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on the RICA is time not spent on the newest research on the Foundational Skills, Writing, or CSP that participants expressed should have more emphasis. Although research around Foundational Skills has listed the RICA as requiring the right kinds of procedural knowledge (Goldenberg, 2020), participants in this survey expressed that more performative assessment like the EdTPA (Darling-Hammond, 2015) better prepare teacher candidates for the classroom and the newer standards, fitting with the subsequent announcement that the RICA will be replaced with a performance assessment by 2025.

Foundational Skills are the phonological awareness, phonics, and orthographic mapping necessary to decode (English Language Arts Standards, 2016). Research in the last ten years has focused on the science of reading (Washburn, 2010) and the ecosystem of literacy (Pearson, 2007), an approach supported by participants. Participants requested more focus on Foundational Skills in teacher preparation programs, with a focus on UDL and dyslexia and continued throughout 12th grade (Washburn et al., 2011). Currently, Foundational Skills are a standard through 5th grade and are only taught to elementary and special education credential candidates (English Language Arts Standards, 2016), but the new literacy TPEs (CCTC, 2019a) require dyslexia screening and language supports through 12th grade. Additionally, participants argued for curriculum for K-12 with a Foundational Skills focus and professional development to support existing teachers' knowledge of Foundational Skills K-12 (Folsom et al., 2017).

In both surveys and focus groups, participants requested more emphasis on phonemic awareness, phonics, and decoding in both instruction and assessments during teacher preparation programs, following the trend from the new Literacy TPEs (CCTC, 2019a), the draft of the new Reading Framework, and research in the last ten years stressing the importance of the science of reading (Moats, 2009; Washburn, 2010) and the literacy ecosystem (Jaeger & Pearson, 2017). While the RICA was created in a time of balanced literacy (O'Sullivan & Jiang, 2002) where the model was some sight words and some cueing and some phonics and some writing and some choice books, the ecosystem of literacy suggested by current research only includes practices linked to long-term reading success, like phonological awareness, phonics, choice books, writing, and spelling, and requires all of those components together to both create decoders and give them reasons to become fluent (Jaeger & Pearson, 2017). Additionally, the science of reading has a strong research-based connection to UDL and dyslexia (Washburn, 2010). In focus groups, participants explained that dyslexia awareness and UDL are very important for every teacher to know, but instruction for teachers on those topics can be short and still be effective (Washburn, 2010) and should still be culturally sustaining.

The push for Foundational Skills through junior high and high school classrooms is directly related to the increasing number of students in California who are emergent bilinguals (DataQuest, 2021), the newer research suggesting that Foundational Skills are more important than previously realized for students with intellectual

disabilities (Lemons et al., 2016), and burgeoning research about Foundational Skills and UDL for students with dyslexia (Moats & Foorman, 2003; Washburn et al., 2011). Our older students need teachers with knowledge of language foundations. The new Literacy TPEs (CCTC, 2019) parallels this need for Foundational knowledge of literacy and dyslexia screening in all of the grades.

CSP is an extension of culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy (Alim & Paris, 2017; Gay, 2010; Hammond, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Lee & McCarty, 2017) that includes practices that honor and sustain students' and families' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), languages, and diverse cultures. Participants were adamant that CSP should drive both literacy curriculum and instruction. Literacy is most powerful when it connects to who we are and what we believe and allows us to see and be seen by our community (Alim & Paris, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Street & Lefstein, 2007). But too often students' experience in school and especially literacy instruction is othering. It's not just the monoculture portrayed in books; it's the lack of value placed in their home languages and cultures; it's the focus on individuality and competition in a subject that could have an unique ability to connect and collaborate. As students of color are the majority in our schools, they deserve literacy curriculum that reflects them like Bishop's (1990) windows and mirrors, but also empowers them to question the dominant culture (Janks, 2014b) with teachers who model their values (Hammond, 2014). Translanguaging, honoring and bringing in home languages, can be added to phonemic awareness by teaching sound-letter correspondences in multiple languages. CSP should influence literacy curriculum, instruction, and teacher beliefs and should guide literacy instruction in teacher preparation (Woodard & Schutz, 2020).

Participants agreed with the research that K-12 schools need more focus on writing (Graham & Harris, 2017) and that teachers need more preparation to better support writing (Brenner et al., 2012). Teacher preparation to teach writing is not adequate to the task, according to participants and research (Brenner et al., 2012; Totten, 2005). Common Core Literacy Standards (English Language Arts Standards, 2016) have placed more emphasis on writing without the teacher preparation to support that change (Brenner et al., 2012). While participants lauded the National Writing Project and its local organizations for professional development that built capacity in existing teachers, participants agreed that teacher preparation programs are not producing teachers who feel comfortable supporting writing. Some participants supported research that also claims even English-Language Arts secondary teachers are not adequately prepared to teach writing (Totten, 2005), and other participants urged writing instruction be included more in content literacy courses.

#### Conclusion

California's changing teacher assessments, TPEs, research, and student populations have created an opportunity to rethink the purpose and shape of literacy assessments. K-12 administrators, literacy instructors in teacher preparation programs, and literacy researchers imagine a future literacy environment that centers on culturally sustaining pedagogy while teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, spelling organized by graphemes, choice reading, and writing.

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#### Appendix Tables and Figures

#### Figure I

Summary of Rank the concepts from the Literacy Teacher Performance Expectations above in order from Most Important to Least Important to be taught to teacher candidates in literacy coursework to replace the RICA.

Filter: (Start Date is greater than or equal to 10/26/2020 12:00 AM)

Bucketing

Variable $\diamond$	Count 🗘	Average *	Median 🗘			
Foundational skills of literacy (	181	2.10	1			
Students' meaning making	181	3.19	3			
The ELA/ELD Framework.	181	3.53	4			
Inquiry-based learning, collab	181	3.97	4			
Students' ability to express th	181	4.08	4			
Support students with reading	181	4.12	4			
Total (6)	1,086	3.50	4	2	4	6

### AmyK Conley

### Figure 2

By role, average hours should be allotted in literacy coursework to each topic of instruction?

Role	Write a case study of a child based upon assessme nts	Learning best practices for decoding, phonics, and whole language instructio n	Building classroom libraries and reading choice programs	Lesson planning for culturally responsive literacy pedagogy	Learning development al stages of language acquisition	Learn to screen for dyslexia	Learn and practice literacy assessments	Prepare for literacy planning task of the EdTPA	Learning best practices for writing instruction	Learning best practices for speaking and listening instruction
K-12 Admin	0.778	4.69	0.919	3.20	3.25	1.82	6.77	1.123	4.24	2.90
Literacy Instructor	2.957	3.78	1.391	4.30	2.52	1.30	6.04	0.913	3.87	2.61
Literacy Researcher	2.579	4.11	1.842	4.05	2.21	1.26	5.32	1.158	4.26	2.68



### The Intersection of Dual Language Learners and Special Education

A Culturally and Linguistically Inclusionary Approach

By Kai Greene & Kate Esposito

#### Introduction

Bilingual education emerged as a progressive movement during the 1960s that sought to disrupt existing educational inequalities for language minority students. Although widely viewed as educationally beneficial, opponents in the late 1990's argued that such programs threatened national identity because instruction was delivered in languages other than English. At that time, teachers along with administrators frequently told parents to speak English only to their children even when English was not the family's first language (LI). In 1998, these views were further legitimized with the passage of Proposition 227 which fundamentally banned bilingual education in California's public schools.

As a result, *English Only* instruction was implemented whereby students identified as *English Learners* (ELs) were provided sheltered instruction designed to transition them into English monolingual classrooms (see Echeverria & Graves,

Kai Greene is an assistant professor and Kate Esposito is a professor and chair, both in the Special Education Department of the College of Education at California State University, Dominguez Hills. Email addresses: kgreene@csudh.edu & kesposito@csudh.edu 2015 for complete review). Dual language students were immersed in monolingual English instruction with minimal-to-no access to L1 support. Bilingual language advocates asserted that this "sink or swim" approach was not only racist, but academically detrimental as ELL students' *funds of knowledge*; the rich cultural and linguistic experiences brought from their home and communities to the school classroom setting, were undervalued and mostly ignored (Gonzalez et al., 2021).

Over the last decade, literature specific to bilingualism shows evidence that biliterate students experience not only academic benefits, but cognitive gains evidenced throughout one's lifespan (Bialystok, 2015). Additional research supports how dual language programs actually increase English proficiency in EL students (see Goldenberg & Wagner, 2015 for complete review). Policy makers have cited additional economic, cultural and sociopolitical benefits of biliterate populations. It is within these contexts that California voters in 2016 overwhelmingly passed Proposition 58, which placed an educational priority on multilingual learning in K-12 schools and calling for an increase in the number of dual language programs offered. From this victory came Global California 2030, an initiative that contained multiple large-scale ambitious goals. One in particular was to quadruple the number of dual language immersion programs from 400 in 2017 to 1,600 by 2030. This policy shift has large implications for the 22.3% of California's school population classified as dual language learners (DLLs) and this percentage increases to 60% of children in the zero-to-five age category (Jacobs, 2019). Among this sizeable dual-language population are children who qualify for special education or children who may present with language-learning difficulties but eligibility for special education has yet to be determined (IDEA, 2004). In accordance with this recently renewed priority to create dual language classrooms, so then is the need to streamline current and future educators' essential professional competencies to promote inclusionary practices to DLL children in special education (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Kaney, 2019).

Educational practitioners yield much authority and play an influential role when it comes to informing parents and families on decisions about their bilingual school-age children's classroom setting and placement for both general and special education. Yet, as California schools suffered two decades of harmful English-only instructional policies, considerable misconceptions about bilingualism linger (Cioè-Peña,2020).

Most policy experts welcome the opportunity to offer multilingual or dual language immersion programs to prepare students with global skills for the 21st century. However, California's chronic teacher shortages in Special Education and Bilingual Education are likely to be exacerbated as new programs are created (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Additionally, the growing demand for the creation of new dual language programs, which must, by law, include students with disabilities (IDEA, 2004), highlights the need for university teacher preparation programs to ensure a high quality teaching force (Becker & Deris, 2019). This is especially true within the context of preparing teachers, both general education and special education, to meet California's growing population of EL students with disabilities. The empirical link between teacher quality and educational outcomes is well established. As DeMonte and Coggshall (2015) noted, "the most powerful in-school influence on learning is the quality of instruction that teachers bring to their students" (p. 1).

#### Background

Myths regarding the advantages and disadvantages of bilingual education still linger along with confusion related to dual language classroom settings and options specific to students with disabilities (see Table 1). Unlike monolingual populations, young bilinguals represent a heterogeneous population due to the range of individual variability in both receptive and expressive experience and exposure in two languages (Gonzalez-Barrero, 2021). The misidentification of DLLs as related to determining appropriate eligibility for general and/or special educational services is a matter of equity and social justice (Ortiz et al., 2018; Potapova et al., 2020). Over-identification occurs when a DLL is inappropriately diagnosed with a language, reading, or learning disorder and receives unnecessary services or is erroneously placed in special education classes (Peña et al, 2020). Under-identification takes place when a DLL actually presents with a language, reading, or learning disorder but goes undetected or undiagnosed because assumptions are made that poor or low performance in key content areas is the result of learning two languages. The overriding reason for this practice is the lack of both appropriate diagnostic materials for DLLs and qualified educational practitioners to conduct valid bilingual assessments (Bedore & Peña, 2008; Lazewnik et al., 2019). In order to address the

#### Table I

#### Five bilingual myth busters: Statements that capture inaccurate views on bilingualism.

1. Speaking two or more languages to a child can confuse them, so it is better to only speak one language.

2. It is better for families to only speak the language taught in school to their children, even if they do not speak the language well.

3. Young bilingual children are delayed in learning language compared to peers who only speak one language.

4. Bilingual children who code-mix or code-switch show language confusion.

5. Bilingual children who stop speaking their first language have a language disorder or language-based learning disability.

Note: The answers to all of these statements are resoundingly "false." Sources: Becker & Deris (2019) and Guiberson (2013).

intersection of DLLs and special education, the aim of this monograph is twofold. The first intention is to untangle some misconceptions concerning inclusionary practices for DLLs. The second goal focuses on the creation of an interdisciplinary course, "*Teaching Spanish-English Bilinguals in Inclusive Dual Language Settings*." This course was the result of an effective collaboration between teacher and special education faculty members from the College of Education at California State University, Dominguez Hills in order to prepare a more informed generation of new educational practitioners about inclusionary best practices to address the unique educational and instructional needs for DLL populations.

#### Intersection of Dual Language Learners and Developmental Language Disorders

Specific language impairment (SLI) which is now more commonly referred to as developmental language disorder (DLD) is a common communication disorder that effects approximately 7 to 10 % of school age children (Lund et al., 2017). DLD impacts the development of language skills in children who have no hearing loss or intellectual disabilities; can hinder a child's speaking and listening skills; and eventually may impact reading and writing literacies (Leonard, 2014). Clinical markers of DLD are similar for monolingual and bilingual speakers; most noted are challenges in learning and retaining vocabulary, use of non-specific words, challenges in grammatical markers, and production of short phrases or utterances. Specific to the deficit areas, these production errors will surface in both languages for DLLs (Lazewnik et al., 2019).

Fortunately research on the topic of bilingual children and special education has expanded significantly over the last two decades. Findings from an extensive narrative review (Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2016) on a diverse range of bilingual children with developmental disorders across two continents, four countries, and six cities included students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Developmental Language Disorders (DLD) and Intellectual Disabilities (ID) provide encouraging evidence on this matter. Overall results from these studies support how bilingual students with disabilities are able to participate in dual language learning classrooms and are able to learn two languages in ways comparable to their monolingual peers.

Unlike monolingual speakers, dual language children receive input and output in two languages resulting in varying degrees of achievement related to developmental language milestones. Simultaneous bilinguals receive exposure to two languages from birth whereas sequential bilinguals generally have exposure to their first language and gain second language access upon entering a school setting (Kaney, 2019). Challenges for bilingual educators are generally due to the great degree of variability witnessed in a young DLL's mixed profiles between languages across language content areas of form (phonology, morphology, syntax), content (semantics), and use (pragmatics). Of importance is that dual language educators should consider language histories of emerging DLLs to differentiate simultaneous from sequential bilinguals so as to develop awareness of linguistic profiles and dual language abilities for each student

Armas et al., 2021).

School-age children experience gains in vocabulary knowledge and begin to apply that linguistic knowledge into the construction of phrases and sentences. As word knowledge and utterance productivity expands, so does the understanding of applied use of grammatical markers within each language. Errors in morphology or grammar often represent "red flags" as clinical markers for SLI. Through an extensive series of studies with 7-year-old French-English simultaneous bilinguals from majority language backgrounds residing in Montreal, researchers revealed the following: bilinguals with SLI had the same level of language abilities as monolinguals in each language; both mono- and bilingual children with SLI showed similar profiles which resulted in lower accuracy with grammatical markers than the control structures; and bilingual children with SLI showed language-specific difficulties with clinical markers, which did not transfer from one language to the other (for further studies, see Paradis et al., 2021).

As limited valid and reliable bilingual assessment measures exist, diagnostic tools should consider a battery of options to include standardized measures, observations in multiple contexts, parent and teacher surveys, and language sample analysis to be conducted in both languages (see Bedore & Peña, 2008). Available evidence soundly suggests how a dual language environment does not put children with developmental disorders at a disadvantage. Now extensive research on executive functioning shows where DLLs evidence enhanced performance on cognitive processing primarily linked to attention, memory, and inhibitive control (Bialystok, 2015). While certain levels of skepticism remain specific to research methods from these studies, what is established is that there is not a diminished ability or negative component to bilingualism.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological disorder that impacts functional communication skills and social interactions often accompanied by restricted repetitive behaviors that impacts nearly 1 in 68 children with incidence among Latinx children at 11 per 1,000 in the United States (CDC, 2014). In one study, Ijalba (2016) surveyed over twenty Spanish-speaking immigrant mothers of preschool children with ASD where three over-riding themes surfaced: social isolation, misconceptions about developmental milestones and delays, and reluctance to speak Spanish (L1) to their child. Other qualitative research-based surveys indicated that many Spanish-speaking parents often felt pressured to speak English, their non-native language, to their child with ASD (Angulo-Jiménez, 2018). In these cases, parents chose to speak English only to their children with ASD due to fear that exposure to two languages may limit the achievement of certain communication skills and other developmental milestones, or that use of Spanish over English might result in limited access to special education services. Other studies examined language development, diagnostic information, and intervention strategies with dual language learners with ASD in other spoken languages spoken across the world such as Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Hebrew (Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2016). Collectively and regardless of the language pair, language skills between monolingual and bilingual children with ASD showed no significant differences across the following assessment measures: receptive-expressive vocabulary, sentence production, auditory comprehension, sentence construction, and pragmatic language skills (Smith et al., 2018). In sum, evidence from these studies demonstrates that a dual language educational approach does not have a detrimental effect on the bilingual language abilities of children with DLD or ASD; if a child can learn one language, a child is capable of learning another language.

#### **Inclusionary Practices in Dual Language Settings**

The growing demand for the creation of new dual language programs, which must, by law, include students with disabilities (IDEA, 2004) highlights the need for university teacher preparation programs to ensure a high quality teaching force. California's chronic teacher shortages in special wducation and bilingual education are likely to be exacerbated to meet the demands as new DLL programs are created (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). This is especially true within the context of preparing teachers, in both general education and special education, to meet California's growing population of DLL students (Gonzalez et al., 2021).

# Table 2 SPE 522: Course assignments and applied learning activities focused on DLLs and inclusion.

1. Understand the federal, state, local district policy issues for special education.

2. Conduct cross-linguistic transfer analysis to understand language differences versus language disorders.

3. Address dual language assessment and clinical intervention issues for DLLs with disabilities.

4. Learn to speak the language of special education and develop Individual Education Programs ( IEPs) for students.

5. Learn how to advocate for DLL students with disabilities and their families.

6. Complete an extensive bilingual language sample analysis case study to address language domains of form (phonology, morphology, syntax), content (semantics), and use (pragmatics).

7. Develop bilingual language instructional activities and strategies based on the principles of Universal Design for Living.

8. Present an applied learning activity that targets one of thirteen special education eligibilities (IDEA, 2004) and bilingualism.

#### The Intersection of Dual Language Learners and Special Education

The need to effectively prepare high quality teachers who can provide inclusive instruction within dual language contexts provided the impetus for an interdisciplinary approach between Teacher Education and Special Education to revise an existing Bilingual Authorization certification program, which lead to a new course: *"Teaching Spanish-English Bilingual Learners in Inclusive Dual Language Settings."* at California State University, Dominguez Hills (see Table 2).

This course conducted in Spanish was specifically designed to provide an instructional opportunity of more comprehensive and complex instructional practices for educating students in Spanish-English dual language programs with special educational needs. Students who complete this course gain exposure to the use of special education terminology in Spanish, learn how to develop an effective IEP, and explore existing research to present on topics related to DLLs and the 13 different special education eligibilities (IDEA, 2004). Of significance is the need for pre-service teachers to gain skills in the ability to discuss clinical markers that differentiate typical from atypical dual language development. Via parent-teacher interviews, students learn how to analyze a DLL's linguistic profiles and learn about proficiency, abilities and parental concerns related to language experience, exposure, and use. As a signature assignment, students learn how to conduct a comprehensive Spanish-English oral narrative language sample analysis; an assignment that requires the ability to elicit, transcribe, analyze, and discuss a DLL's oral narrative comprehension and production abilities. It is hoped that other university education preparation programs will consider the importance and need to not only prepare dual language teachers but also support teachers to address the learning needs of dual language learners with disabities.

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# Aligning High Leverage Practice (HLP) and the California TPEs for Clinical Practice

### A Web-Based Resource for Program Redesign

By Virginia Kennedy & Anne Spillane

#### Introduction

California's educator credentialing state agency, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), has developed new program standards and Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) for special education teachers, necessitating redesigns of our credential programs. A Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) project has developed a web-based resource that aligns High Leverage Practices with these new program standards and TPEs and identifies key instructional resources that support program redesigns.

#### Overview

As research in effective teacher preparation expands, certification, induction, and graduate programs must be both responsive to, and leaders of, new ideas and

Virginia Kennedy is a professor in the Department of Special Education in the Michael D. Eisner College of Education at California State University Northridge. Anne Spillane is an associate professor and associate dean for special education with the University of Masachusets Global, Irvine, California. Email addresses: virginia.kennedy@csun.edu & spillane@umassglobal.edu priorities. State agencies that are responsible for setting standards for teaching certifications must continue to update these standards so that the newest teachers have the newest knowledge. A vision that is clearly expressed in the competencies and ideals of credential candidates will move the state's teaching profession forward as a whole.

Accordingly, California's most recent updates of its state standards and TPEs for teaching credentials became operational in 2017 for general education Multiple Subject (elementary) and Single Subject (secondary) credentials. Education Specialist (special education) standards and TPEs were finalized in 2018 and their implementation is to be launched in the summer/fall of 2022. Both sets of standards and TPEs emphasize competencies needed in inclusive education and integrate a focus on diversity and equity into the preparation of teachers. These TPEs require teacher education programs to build credential candidates' competencies in effective instruction and academic and behavioral support of students with disabilities. Most importantly, the overarching principle is that for every teacher, "all students are our students." The new model relies on identifying critical components within the general education teaching standards that can be embedded into the special education program through coursework and clinical practice.

Increasing and improving the quality of inclusive education has, as a movement, been active for many years. Key components are preparing teachers to use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and administrators to build Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in their schools. Preservice and early service teachers in special education and general education must also have opportunities to learn about and practice high leverage practices, identified as core practices when teaching students with disabilities. High Leverage Practices (HLPs) address the essentials of inclusive education—effective teaching of all students.

As preparation programs engage in redesigning their own coursework and clinical practice experiences, it has become evident that they need a way to organize these changes, connect their changes to the new standards and TPEs, and identify and incorporate high-quality resources into their courses and clinical practices. The well-known, widely-available set of teaching practices, High Leverage Practices in Special Education (McLeskey et al., 2017), when aligned to a state's teacher preparation standards and Teaching Performance Expectations, is ideally suited for inclusion in methods and other coursework as well as in early fieldwork, student teaching, and intern/residency clinical experiences.

The objective of this project was to show how teacher preparation state standards and TPEs can be actualized and "taught" by aligning them with core practices and providing instructional resources to demonstrate and explain them.

#### **Purpose of the Project**

A sub-group of the CEEDAR State Leadership Team (SLT) in California developed a matrix that aligns the CA TPEs and HLPs with high-quality resources, plus an observation form that is intended as a tool for Educator Preparation Programs to use in their redesigned programs. The information from this matrix was then published on a website developed by the California State University and funded through the S. D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation, which provides ready access to this information for teacher preparation programs and other stakeholders throughout the state. The availability and utility of this tool to meet the needs of teacher preparation programs and to ensure the use of high-quality resources and teaching practices has significance for the promotion of inclusive practices in the preparation of both general education and special education teachers in California and potentially elsewhere.

#### Need for This Project: New Standards and Teacher Performance Expectations

The impetus for creating this alignment and resource tool arose from the development of not only new special education educator preparation standards and TPE's, but also two new, broader credential authorizations. Seven (7) Education Specialist credentials areas were condensed into five: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Early Childhood Special Education, Extensive Support Needs, Mild/Moderate Support Needs, and Visual Impairments.

During a series of meetings over several months, state workgroups, task forces, and open conversations with stakeholders from throughout the state were convened for their input. At issue was the question of the best way to define the "common trunk" of preparation for all teachers in order to create one coherent education system of effective instruction for all students. Coursework and especially clinical practice components such as fieldwork and student teaching in traditional, intern and residency pathways needed to broaden in scope.

The new model relies on identifying critical components within the general education teaching standards that can be embedded into special education preparation programs through coursework and clinical practice.

These cross-over standards, now called Universal (General Education) Teaching Performance Expectations, include, for example:

Universal TPE 1.4 Use a variety of developmentally- and ability-appropriate instructional strategies, resources, and assistive technology, including principles of Universal Design of Learning (UDL) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to support access to the curriculum for a wide range of learners within the general education classroom and environment.

Universal TPE 3.2 Use knowledge about students and learning goals to organize the curriculum to facilitate student understanding of subject matter, and make accommodations and/or modifications as needed to promote student access to the curriculum.

Universal TPE 6. Access resources for planning and instruction, including the

expertise of community and school colleagues through in-person or virtual collaboration, co-teaching, coaching, and/or networking.

#### Need for This Project: Incorporating High Leverage Practices

In an effort to specify core elements of instruction, Ball and Forzani (2011) had identified a set of high leverage practices that were found to underlie effective teaching. Brownell and others (2015) through the CEEDAR Center and the Council for Exceptional Children then aligned a set of High Leverage Practices for Special Education teachers.

HLP's provide a bridge between general and special education teaching practices. They also promote the use of other inclusive practices, such as co-teaching. University and on-site supervisors can effectively assess candidates' progress in implementing them because they are observable and included in their lesson plans.

With new competencies for California's special education to work towards, including an increased emphasis on pedagogical knowledge across curriculum content areas, having a grounding in high leverage practices that could be employed not only in literacy and math instruction, but also in social studies, science and other subjects became vital.

#### Project Product

#### California CEEDAR High Leverage Practices HLP/TPE Alignment Resource

#### https://inclusive.calstate.edu/hpl-tpe-alignment-resource.html

This resource is located in the last row of tiles within the CSU Website for Inclusive Education for Educator Preparation (https://inclusive.calstate.edu/index. html), an extensive and in-depth collection of Resources, Class Activities, Assignments in Literacy and Language Arts, Math, Other Content Areas, Social-Emotional Learning, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. There is also more information here about HLPs and alignment with California's TPE's, at High Leverage Practices in Special Education, Teaching Works HLPs, and California TPE Crosswalk.

Structure: The HLPs are matched to the California Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) to help Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) identify which HLPs can be used to demonstrate competence in specific TPEs. A glossary of terms is included:

COLLABORATION	HLP 1 TO 3
ASSESSMENT	HLP 4 TO 6
SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL PRACTICES	HLP 7 TO 10
INSTRUCTION	HLP11TO22
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	

Aligning High Leverage Practice



To use: Clicking on an HLP domain, e.g., Collaboration, opens up the aligned HLP's. The example below shows a pathway for Collaboration that could be chosen:

Collaboration

→ HLP 1: Collaborate with Professionals to Increase Student Success

✓ Aligned CA TPE's: U TPE 3.4 'Individually and through consultation and collaboration with other educators and members of the larger school community, plan for effective subject matter instruction and use multiple means of representing, expressing, and engaging students to demonstrate their knowledge.'

✓ Resources that support the HLP and TPE's (to embed in clinical practice coursework and fieldwork)

 $\checkmark$  Using trauma-sensitive strategies to support family engagement and effective collaboration

✓ Collaboration and consultation IRIS module

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# Building Equity Through Positivity and Mindfulness in a Traumatized World

By Kimiya Sohrab Maghzi, Mina Chun, Marni E. Fisher, & Meredith A. Dorner

#### Abstract

This practice-based workshop offers the integration of positivity and mindfulness practices within an equity framework. Recognizing the importance of equity and positionality, positivity shifts habitual thought patterns while mindfulness offers the development of a beginner's mind and openness, empathy, acceptance, focus, awareness, and presence.

#### Introduction

After over a year of pandemic life, our traumatized world has a heightened awareness of the pandemic's impact on mental health and systemic inequities.

Kimiya Sohrab Maghzi is an assistant professor in the School of Education at the University of Redlands, Redlands, California. Mina Chun is an assistant professor in the College of Education at Governors State University, University Park, Illinois. Marni E. Fisher is associate faculty at Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, California. Meredith A. Dorner is a biology instructor at Irvine Valley College, Irvine, California. Email addresses: kimiya\_maghzi@redlands.edu, mchun@govst.edu, mfisher@saddleback.edu, & mdorner@ivc.edu A part of establishing equity is recognizing the uniqueness of cultural ways of knowing. Furthermore, mindfulness practices, when integrated into education, can support improved acceptance, communication, and positive relationships (Maghzi & Fisher, 2019). This practice-based workshop offers the integration of positivity and mindfulness practices within an equity framework.

#### Purpose

Mindfulness practices, particularly when paired with positivity, can support awareness of personal positionality (Maghzi et al., 2017) and vision clarity (Davis, 2014) while also improving the open mindedness (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006), awareness (Baer, 2003), empathy (Gold et al., 2010), and acceptance (Meiklejohn et al., 2012) needed to both accept differences and take action in the face of inequity. The examination of positivity and mindfulness practices within an equity framework suggest that the integration of both can improve educational experiences on all levels.

#### Significance to the Field of Teacher Education

The 2020 lockdowns and distance learning throughout the spring 2020 and 2020-2021 school year significantly impacted education (Fisher, Dorner, et al., 2021; Fisher, Maghzi, et al., 2021). Furthermore, digital inequities impacted learning (Ayre, 2020) while the pandemic increased stress levels for students, parents, and educators (Nelson et al., 2020). In addition, educators, parents, and students found themselves carrying multiple roles, blurring the lines between home and work, while increasing stress levels (Fisher, Maghzi, et al., 2021). As of fall 2021, students were exhausted from over a year of pandemic and online distance learning. Furthermore, they were impacted by the stresses of the pandemic, resulting in an inability to focus, a lack of concentration (Kecojevic et al., 2020), isolation (Fisher, Achieng-Evensen, et al., 2021), and lost opportunities, including high school milestones, sports, etc. (Fisher, Achieng-Evensen, et al., 2021). Their initial learning in 2020 was impacted by professors and their own online digital skills and technology access (Fisher, Chun, et al., 2021). Framed by social justice and critical pedagogy (Darder et al., 2009), positivity and mindfulness offer an opportunity for both reducing stress and opening the mind to recognize, accept, then change the hegemonies that undermine equity.

#### **Theoretical Perspective**

Working out of a critical pedagogy theoretical perspective (Darder et al., 2009), this practice piece recognized that the forms of knowledge inherent to the educational system often fall within the banking model, so that "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Freire, 2003, p. 58). This fails to acknowledge the cultural strengths each individual student brings to the learning (Davis, 2005).

Furthermore, the banking model hides the social constructions of knowledge, failing to recognize how "common sense," social constructions, and "subjectivities" are produced and lived while the relationship between social class and the knowledge are taught in schools (McLaren, 2003). While Dewey (1916) noted that systematic education and routine were training rather than learning, Freire (2003) identified that systematic education is politically based. The unintended outcomes of education and the schooling process result in a hidden curriculum (McLaren, 2003), which perpetuates inequality.

#### Positivity and Mindfulness During and After a Pandemic

There is a relationship between positivity and mindfulness (Swickert et al., 2019). The deliberate development of positivity practices paired with mindfulness practices can support the reduction of personal stress and improvement in self-care and self-compassion while also improving the understanding and acceptance of others. Furthermore, self-compassion can improve empathy for others. Keeping in mind the systemic inequities of education (Darder et al., 2009), teaching a positive outlook for creating change (Anchor, 2011), developing the ability to handle the stresses of change (Crum et al., 2013), and embracing an open mind (Nyanaponika, 1971) can improve how we relate to others. This change, in turn, offers grassroots grounds for changing society. There are a number of ways to integrate this relationship between positivity and mindfulness practices (Swickert et al., 2019).

#### Positivity

Anchor (2011) suggests five daily activities to improve positivity. These include short activities with the goal of shifting the mind toward a more positive focus while reducing negative thinking. These practices help develop a positive outlook (Anchor, 2011), change how we handle stress (Crum et al., 2013), and improve self-care, self compassion, understanding, and acceptance of others.

#### Mindfulness

Mindfulness practices can aid education in three areas. These include: support health and wellbeing (Gold et al., 2010; van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2014), improve focus (Meiklejohn et al., 2012), and developing an open mind.

#### Health and Wellbeing

For the pandemic driven exhaustion and stress impacting educational stakeholders, which include parents, students, educators, leaders, etc., mindfulness practices offer spaces to reduce the anxiety and stress that lead to burnout (Gold et al., 2010; van de Weijer-Bergsma et al., 2014). At the same time, mindfulness improves self-compassion (Neff, 2003) while promoting improved emotional regulation (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Furthermore, since a stress mindset has a significant impact on how an individual responds to stress (Crum et al., 2013), positivity becomes more important during a pandemic. Anchor (2011) suggests a list of activities designed to improve general positivity and positive thinking. Deliberately pairing positive practices to mindfulness can improve both the benefits of mindfulness and the benefits of positivity on health and wellbeing.

#### Focus

Mindfulness practices also improve focus along with improving the sustaining and shifting of attention, promoting the ability to be present-centered and responsive to learning (Meiklejohn et al., 2012). As Meiklejohn et al. (2012) note, mindfulness can "broaden skill sets of attention, balance and compassion and reduce the universal human tendency under stress to become reactive and impulsive" (p. 2). This includes presence, which

is defined as a state of alert awareness, receptivity, and connectedness to the mental, emotional, and physical workings of both the individual and the group in the context of their learning environments, and the ability to respond with a considered and compassionate best next step. (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 266)

Being *present*, therefore, improves focus. Additionally, the inclusion of receptivity both opens the mind to improving focus while also including an understanding of others that is uncluttered by muddy thinking and ideas.

#### An Open Mind

There are many types of knowledge and multiple ways to engage with it (Eisner, 1991). Furthermore, "Human knowledge is a constructed form of experience and therefore a reflection of mind as well as nature" (Eisner, 1991, p. 7). Rather than using education to maintain patterns of dominance and subordination (Freire & Macedo, 2009), mindfulness offers a more open model for authentic engagement with the world, opens the mind to accepting differences, and creates space for non-dominant narratives (Fisher et al., 2020).

An open mind is needed to recognize both the systemic inequities of a standardized education (Valenzuela, 2006) and the cultural wealth that each student brings to the table (Davis, 2005). Mindfulness, which builds a beginner's mind (Nyanaponika, 1971) while urging the need for "paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145) improves empathy and acceptance. This beginner's mind includes an attitude of openness, eagerness to learn, and a lack of preconceptions (Nyanaponika, 1971). The non-judgement aspect includes improved attitudes of kindness while, at the same time, "mindfulness practice can help us let go of our static worldview and understand the diverse ways of being in the world" (Rechtschaffen, 2014, p. 110)

Recognizing the uniqueness of individual learners requires also recognizing

that "Children grow up with very different types of discipline and relationships to authority. To teach we need to understand how each student learns" (Rechtschaffen, 2014, p. 110) rather than absorbing the banking model and hegemonies of education (Darder et al., 2009; Freire, 2003).

#### **Moving Theory into Practice**

Anchor's (2011) positivity starts with five daily activities: three "gratitudes" a day, journaling for two minutes about something positive that has happened in the past 24 hours, 15 minutes of exercise, two minutes of mindful breathing, and a conscious act of kindness. A bullet journal style positivity checklist or tracking program, such as the iWatch's *Streaks*, can help track the implementation of these five activities (see Table 1). Starting with a positivity journal may integrate simple tracking or include an added gratitude journal for more inspiration.

While integrating positivity helps with mental scripts on a personal level, and two minutes of mindful breathing can help with the reduction of stress and improvement of focus (Meiklejohn et al., 2012), the integration of mindful breathing should consider the integration of actual mindfulness practices or activities, which bring the additional benefits of mindfulness. There are a number of easy resources that support mindfulness. These might include a scripted focus on mindfulness of breath (Mindful Awareness Research Center, 2020) or mindfulness of eating (Kuikka, 2016). The recordings can be played while engaging in the activity, or even played for a class to practice focus and reduce stress levels. Similar activities can be used to support learning experiences, or follow guided imagery that may support learning or athletic performance (McCarthy, 2018).

Other practices involve how we engage with others. Mindful listening considers how you are listening to others, practicing the integration of Liu's (Liu, 2013, 14 Aug) parts of listening while thoughtfully engaging the ears, eyes, mind, and heart through undivided attention.

Table I Resource List	
Resource	URL
Positivity checklist	https://tinyurl.com/PositiveBullets
Gratitude journal	https://tinyurl.com/GratitJournal
Mindfulness of breath script	https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/workfiles/Breathing%20 Meditation_Transcript.pdf
Experiencing chocolate video	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7RBKj6UZDY
Listening kanji	https://raykliu.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/active-listening.jpg

#### Conclusion

A positive mindset improves our ability to handle stress (Crum et al., 2013) while the integration of mindfulness improves openness and understanding (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). When paired together, positivity and mindfulness have the potential to change how we handle the societal stressors as well as teach our students tools to reduce their stress while improving their open mindedness (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), capacity for empathy (Block-Lerner et al., 2007), ability to communicate effectively (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), and develop positive interpersonal relationships (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

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### Creating Meaningful Fieldwork Experiences for Teacher Candidates

### **Lessons Learned from the Pandemic**

By Shana Matamala, Nancy T. Walker, & Joy Ardis Springer

#### Introduction

Like the rest of the country, we were shocked at the quickly spreading pandemic and sudden closure of schools a year ago March. As a College of Education, we shifted into survival mode as countless teachers and districts informed our teacher education department that they could no longer support our credential candidates working with them for the spring 2020 term. After the initial shock wore off, we began to meet in work groups to develop alternative fieldwork. The new virtual fieldwork experience entailed re-thinking and re-framing the idea that fieldwork was placed out in the schools. The team began by identifying critical components of our in-person fieldwork experience.

Intersectionality came to the forefront as we discussed our traditional clinical fieldwork experience, both in our placements and activities. We agreed with the Annamma and Winn (2019) definition of intersectionality as "disrupting layered, interlocking inequities in the lives and communities of multiply-marginalized students" (p. 319). Prior to the pandemic, we thoughtfully placed our students in classrooms

Shana Matamala is director of teaching fieldwork, Nancy T. Walker is a professor, and JoyArdus Springer is director of teacher education, all with the LaFetra College of Education at the University of La Verne, La Verne, California. Email addresses: smatamala@laverne.edu, nwalker@laverne.edu, & jspringer@laverne.edu with diversity in culture, abilities, languages, gender, etc. Early in our program, candidates read and reflected on Funds of Knowledge research (Moll et al., 1992) during which we focus our conversations on our candidates and their backgrounds. This dialogue leads to the importance of candidates encouraging conversations with families and communities as they contribute to a child's education. Candidates complete a multi-term community project in which they learn about the assets of the community, the school, the classroom, and individual students. The faculty team brainstormed ways for candidates to continue to interact with this content in a virtual setting.

This article focuses on the process of utilizing reflective video observation activities to enable candidates to think critically about intersectionality and education. While the project initially began as a reaction to the need for alternative fieldwork in the face of a pandemic, it has now shifted to evaluating the value of the activities post-pandemic, including thoughtfully integrating select components into our teacher education program on a permanent basis.

#### Process

This reflection-in action approach began by looking at how the presentation of content was scaffolded in relation to identified video activities. The Director of Teacher Fieldwork scheduled meetings with the course leads to begin the planning process. The groups met throughout the summer editing and finalizing the alternative fieldwork plan for each course. The alternative fieldwork all aligned with our theoretical frame but reflected the individual course goals and competencies. These small group meetings were punctuated by whole group faculty meetings analyzing the entire sequence to ensure scaffolding and eliminate redundancy.

Faculty agreed on prioritizing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and intersectionality as the conceptual framework for the alternative fieldwork. Content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge traditionally covered in in-person fieldwork were identified by lead faculty, tools were selected as vehicles for candidates to be scaffolded in learning this knowledge (observation tools, videos of teaching, peer teaching, and lesson design), and collaborative conversation were developed to support reflective conversations (professor-candidates, candidate-candidate, and university supervisor-candidate).

The faculty and university supervisors collaboratively designed questions for individual reflection and small group discussions with a focus on language, including:

# Did the teacher assess each student in the small group and adjust their instruction?

*Were the SDAIE strategies the teacher chose appropriate for both content and student needs?* 

*Did the teacher use a deficit or asset-based approach during the reading activity?* 

#### How were the collaborative groups effective, and what could be improved?

In one of the first term courses, the initial videos and content were presented during class. The teacher candidates used a sequential viewing guide that prompted them to look for a specific skill/strategy/approach within the video. The viewing guide highlighted the content language being used in the video. This offered yet another cue for teacher candidates to observe the desired strategies. Teacher candidates participated in dyads to discuss what they watched, completing an in-class guided activity using a collaborative conversations model approach. During this time, there were opportunities for collaboration between studen-to-student and instructor-to-student. The instructor was able to model strategies highlighted in the videos and remediate on the spot.

This approach was particularly effective in scaffolding strategies for working with English language leaners (ELLs). The viewing guide walked candidates through Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), including comprehensible input, graphic organizers, academic vocabulary development, body language, realia, etc. Previously, when candidates were viewing different teachers and strategies in different settings and situations, holding a discussion in class on a shared observation of ELL strategies was not possible. With all the candidates viewing the same videos, collaborative discussions were fruitful, and the instructors were able to make adjustments that benefited the instructional needs of all candidates.

Several classes implemented additional strategies to support the viewing of the instructional videos. Handouts and graphic organizers were created to scaffold the video watching, which then lead to the identification of strategies related to the content of the class and eventual reflection. Videos and observation forms were also linked to the course content. These activities were framed within a Vygostkyian lens, where the cognitive and communicative skill appears twice in two planes. First it appears in the "social plane" and then on the psychological plane. As teacher candidates participate in activities that require cognitive and communicative functions, they are drawn into the use of these functions in ways that nurture and scaffold them (Vygotsky, 1978, p.163). This is the basis of Tharp and Gallimore's (1988) instructional conversations, an approach to dialogic interaction, usually between the teacher and the student.

#### Findings

Both students and supervisors identified the reflective conversations that happened after viewing videos as powerful components of alternative fieldwork. During a training last December, supervisors shared that the zoom conversations they experienced during the fall semester with their candidates were often at a deeper level than they had experienced after fieldwork lessons in the classroom. They attributed this to the extra time they had to slow down their conversations online, instead of trying to force them in between events happening in an in-person classroom. Additionally, supervisors noted the lower stress levels they saw in candidates, and their ability to critically cite evidence in the video lessons. Previously, supervisors' first interaction with candidates was during their first lesson observation. Candidates were often stressed and felt deflated by suggestions to improve practice. This stress and build-up hindered them from having collaborative conversations around improving practice.

We held small group interviews for candidates after they had finished the alternative fieldwork to discover their experiences with the process. On student stated,

I was lucky enough to have a really supported fieldwork supervisor. We would talk about how we can turn this into like a positive experience. We're observing virtually, but at the same time we're getting an opportunity to watch a video and pause and go back because sometimes in a natural environment, you don't usually get the opportunity to.

Another student explained how she felt like she learned more through the alternative fieldwork, because without it I would "not been prepared to do online teaching, I would have struggled. La Verne quickly adapted to online distance learning." The reflective conversations connected with the videos enabled the instructors to emphasize and model "how we speak to students, families and colleagues, as well as how we talk about these individuals and groups when they are not present—is an essential consideration for teacher education" (Annamma & Winn, 2019, p. 320).

As we move into a new normal, our team does not want to squander the lessons we have learned. As "language builds and communicates value systems and helps people make meaning" (Annamma & Winn, 2019, p. 323), our faculty sees value in retaining the collaborative conversations that grew from our alternate fieldwork activities. Even though on campus fieldwork options are available once again, our team has decided to retain video-based activities in our initial program coursework, allowing candidates to build a stronger theoretical foundation before moving into in-person fieldwork options. We are currently working to refine both the videos we use and the questions we ask to maximize meaningful discussion. It is our intention to further capitalize on these conversations by providing our candidates with opportunities to use language that reflects the values of intersectional justice.

#### Significance to the Field of Teacher Education

In many ways, the pandemic provided us freedom to consider completely new structures while analyzing our old structures with new lenses. Our team is as anxious as everyone to return to 'normal,' however we are also cognizant that education has been changed dramatically by the events of the past year. Our post-pandemic normal will look quite different. This project uses a reflection-in action (Williams, 2020) approach to examine best practices in clinical fieldwork and the structures that support it as we frame next steps for our fieldwork processes. As we reflect in action, we continue to utilize the lens of intersectionality to transform the way beginning teachers think about disrupting educational and social inequities (Annamma & Winn, 2019). Our project draws conclusions on our experiences of utilizing reflective video activities as vehicles for transformational learning in teacher candidates.

Reflection works best when it is purposeful and intentional. Our team utilized collaborative practices as we reflected on each step of the 2020-21 structure. Feedback from candidates and fieldwork supervisors was solicited and brought into collaborative discussions along the way. We concur with recommendations from Slay et al. (2020) with respect to support for teacher training. Considering "alternative means without compromising the quality of clinical teaching" (p. 19) became a faculty theme for our teacher education faculty over the last 17 months. Our post-pandemic normal is still emerging, but by all accounts, we will not return to a pre-pandemic state. We remain committed to continuous reflection and refinement of our approaches to ensure our relevance and increase our impact. Our experiences in the last year demonstrated that fieldwork objectives can be met in non-traditional ways. We look forward to remaining open to possibility as we embrace a responsive and reflective structure that is adaptable enough to empower pre-service educators through whatever comes

#### next.

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# Anti-Racism, Inclusivity, and Asset-Based Perspectives as Foundational for Transforming Core Pedagogical Practices

By Shannon Panfilio-Padden & Adam Devitt

# Abstract

This article explores important viewpoints of anti-racism, inclusivity, and asset-based perspectives that are current topics within educational research. While these significant issues deserve consideration and exploration, designing actionable steps for implementation of these topics into current pedagogical practice can be difficult for educators to initiate. This article will explore ways in which to deconstruct current pedagogical practices and disrupt current belief systems regarding inclusivity and equity practices using diffractive pedagogy techniques. Diffraction provides guidance and a critical lens to discover pathways for anti-racism, inclusivity, and asset-based implementation. Reconstruction of pedagogical practices into an actionable process is aided by the creation of a "vision board" to move ideas forward into their professional work.

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# Purpose

Research continues to demonstrate how students are systematically harmed by racism, sexism, able-ism, homophobia; or in other words, exclusion of cultural backgrounds other than those dominated by white Eurocentric masculinity (Love, 2019; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). It is far overdue that university teacher educators, k-12 administrators, and professional developers at all levels embrace the reality that we need to develop new pedagogical practices that deconstruct historical hegemonies from white, Eurocentric, male privileging (Kirkland, 2020).

While many in academic and k-12 institutions might agree that we need to incorporate anti-racist pedagogy, the problem is that adopted visions and subsequenat practices for teaching and learning remain merely symbolic (Al-saji, 2014), or "non-performatives" (Ahmed, 2017), which rarely result in bringing the named or desired changes meaningfully to the intended institutions. We strive to achieve more than symbolic naming, but rather bring about institutional change by acknowledging that our vision of social life and the educational system are constructed through our personal and collective histories, and thus in order to make meaningful understandings, we need to intentionally bring social-justice oriented frameworks. This article summarizes an experiential presentation presented at the California Council on Teacher Education Fall 2021 Conference.

# First Step: Finding Common Definitions for Inclusion and Equity Work

A critical first step in transforming meaningful equity work is redefining inclusivity and avoiding deficit viewpoints. Subsequently, our task necessitates our work to reframe thinking to an asset-based approach to teaching and learning (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). Collaborative conversations should move the focus from "diversity initiatives" to understanding inclusivity (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). Diversity initiatives, though well intentioned, do not create the changes necessary to move inclusion work forward. This is key to staging asset-based perspectives and to expand the definition of inclusion to include 'belonging' and 'dignity' (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). These shared definitions create a foundation for which intentional, focused, and deliberate work can occur.

1. Diversity: "Human differences or variation."

2. Inclusion: "Engagement within a community where the equal worth and inherent dignity of each person is honored. The community promotes and sustains a sense of belonging."

3. Belonging: "The extent to which people feel appreciated, validated, accepted, and treated fairly within an environment (i.e., school, classroom, or work)."

4. Dignity: "Equal worth of each human being simply because that person is human."

For promoting full inclusivity, we argue that educational spaces need to embody appreciation, validation, worthiness where the only requisite is being human.

# Second Step: Illuminating the Dark Spaces With New Social-Justice Oriented Pedagogy

In education, we have a tendency to search for answers to social-justice oriented initiatives in spaces where it is easy to see (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). These initiatives are often referred to as *The Streetlight Effect*, to look for solutions to inclusion where it is 'well lit,' using the metaphor of a street light illuminating darkness (Freedman, 2010; Jervis, 1993). Common initiatives in education could include discussion around forming equity committees, revolutionizing discipline practices, or elimination of standardized tests (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). Cobb and Krownapple call the search for 'well lit' results as the 'dysfunctional cycle of equity work' (2019). According to Cobb and Krownapple, educational practice and research rarely lead to institutional change because mainstream researchers and practitioners tend to seek convenient and comfortable answers, repurposing only what has already been done, to complex and dynamic problems. This leads to failure of ideas, initiatives, and good intentions because the 'well lit' conversations do not get to the depth needed to uncover issues attached to inclusivity which often are uncomfortable and personal.

The educational system needs to take a critical look in areas which are not 'well lit,' in the dark spaces where sustainable change can occur. We started a discussion through an illustration on how aspirations of inclusivity are often followed by deficit-oriented perspectives. For example, common deficit-oriented beliefs about students with disabilities have limitations to "learn" or "do" high-level educative tasks and maintain the belief of *disability as tragedy*—focusing on the physical or intellectual abnormality. We reframe the discussion to shift from deficit-oriented perspectives to asset-oriented approaches by discussing how these perspectives ameliorate macro-level problems through micro-level illustrations.

1. Asset-based perspectives that are presented (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019; Tan et al., 2019; Love, 2019).

2. Students as thinkers and doers (Tan et al., 2019).

a. Reframe teaching as positioning the teacher to impose knowledge, but to facilitate growth of students thinking and doing capacities.

3. Funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992).

a. Consider how funds of community and family-based knowledges, experiences, and identities, propel active learning and higher forms of critical thinking.

4.Correct historically unhealthy and unwelcoming climates in schools.

5. Dismantle personal bias and interrogate common assumptions and norms.

6. Avoid one-size/one strategy approaches (i.e., standardized testing).

7. Create environments for belonging: Presume competence/positive intent, build partnerships/community, repair harmed relationships, and affirm differences/ uniqueness.

# Third Step: Placing Belonging Before Achievement

A. H. Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, is a motivational theory in psychology placing focus on hierarchical levels of human needs (1987). Maslow's theory moves from lower levels of human need, starting with physiological and safety. Once these levels are fulfilled, other areas such as belonging, achievement, and finally self-actualization can be satisfied (Maslow, 1987).

Current educational systems, especially in the United States, place focus on student achievement, with little priority on the area preceding this stage, belonging (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). This practice goes unchecked as heteronormativity, whiteness, and able-bodiedness presupposes the learning environment and belonging is already granted while non-dominant groups need to gain access to the culture prior to becoming successful within the learning environment. The damage to students' well-being, relationships, connection to community, physical and mental health is often not taken into consideration and achievement becomes the most important goal (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019; Love, 2019).

It is imperative that educators understand the importance belonging has to the success of students within our educational spaces (Love, 2019). Students 'fitting in' to the educational system focused on achievement does not work because this requires a person to assess the environment and change who they are to fit within it (Brown, 2010). Researcher Brene' Brown (2010) states belonging "doesn't require us to change who we are; it requires us to be who we are" (p. 25).

Siry (2020) informs our research and practice that by reframing teacher|student interactions in positive ways (e.g., through anti-racists, inclusivity, asset-based orientations) learning spaces become embodied with senses of belonging and increased learning outcomes. Author and activist Austin Channing Brown (2015) calls us to action by stating "*I believe firmly that to practice love is to disrupt the status quo which is masquerading as peace*."

# Fourth Step: Diffraction for Intentional Interrogation of Personal Pedagogies

At this step we begin to grapple with developing practices to help educators, including ourselves, learn how to move beyond symbolic representation into transforming dispositions. We need educators who learn to shift from developing knowledge only of key terms and ideas to developing transformative practices where

ideas rooted in social justice become embodied in personal dispositions. Our paper juxtaposes the common practice of reflection with diffractions. The problem with reflection is that what is visible is only displaced elsewhere, like a mirror image, nothing changes. In educational practice, when educators 'reflect' they tend to reproduce the same ideas, practices, or knowledges—leaving no possibility for meaningful changes. Whereas with diffraction, there is intentional interference causing an output that is drastically different from the input—like white light transforming into a rainbow as it passes through a prism. Hence, a diffractive pedagogy rooted in our key terms of belonging helps disrupt and uncover systemic elements that prevent attainment of inclusivity while also providing projections of nuanced ideas and practices for transforming educational ideas and practices (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 1997).

One of the problems that persists in reinforcing the educational system structured by white supremacy is that few have considered challenging the practice of "reflection" which was intended to improve inclusivity and equity. To exemplify this idea, one of the requirements of the California Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs), TPE 6: Developing As a Professional Educator, the standard states that beginning teachers: "*Reflect on their own teaching practice and level* of subject matter and pedagogical knowledge to plan and implement instruction that can improve student learning." According to George Lakoff (1980), concepts and metaphors used characterize and frame the way we engage in the world. From this perspective, it is possible that we set our inservice and pre-service teachers up for failure by setting the standard practice of 'reflection' as the agent of change, yet metaphorically, and in practice (e.g., Haraway, 1997) reflection is inherently incapable of producing change.

Kara Naidoo and Susan Kirch (2016) provide an inspirational model for educating pre-service teachers to intentionally interrogate practices and beliefs about teaching as a way to improve the reflection process. In their research in a science pedagogy course, they engage pre-service teachers in a transformative reflection process. Transformative reflection aligns in spirit and in practice with what we call 'diffraction'. In the transformative reflection process, pre-service teachers identify problems in their teaching, analyze with ideas from multiple science pedagogical perspectives, and re-envision alternative beliefs and practices for improving their future teaching (Naidoo & Kirch, 2016). For example, they report that one pre-service teacher learned that by integrating pedagogical practices for speaking and listening informed by Karen Gallas (1995) her teaching provides greater authority and agency to students as they engage in their science activities (Naidoo & Kirch, 2016). While the transformative reflection process helped inform our work, we promote using the concept of diffraction as it provides the metaphorical image to help frame how we hope educators interrupt and transform themselves and the world.

In our research and practice, we argue for nuancing reflective practice to a diffractive pedagogy. Diffractive pedagogy, as we have developed in this article,

uses anti-racism, inclusivity, and asset-based perspectives to cause international interference of normed attitudes, beliefs, and practices embedded in examples of prior instructional, assessment, or curricular practices in order to enable more informed decision-making.

# Fifth Step: Setting the "Out of Reach" Goal

This step includes creating a "Vision Board" to give an experiential opportunity for practicing diffractive pedagogies, goal setting, and actionable steps to move forward (Schwarz, 2009). Vision boards help to define personal or group goals related to anti-racist and anti-bias teaching practices educators incorporate into their classrooms or courses taught. These canvases can include words, phrases, and pictures of goals that currently seem "out of reach" or momentarily unattainable. The goals should focus on what is hoped for. Jim Wallis (2015) presented an engaging and thoughtful definition of this term, focused on racial justice; "*Hope means believing in spite of the evidence and then watching the evidence change. Hope is not just feeling, but a decision.*" Vision boards offer a space to hope for unseen change and provide a canvas for transformative ideas learned and identified to come to fruition. Vision boards also offer a place for core teaching practices and pedagogy currently needing interrogation to become a life-changing space for future growth to occur.

We recommend that goals and ideas be shared with a trusted person who acts as a 'thinking partner.' Also referred to as a "Thought Partner," this is someone who challenges your assumptions and frameworks, encourages modification, and provokes innovation (Stanny, 2012). This valued person acts as a key component for facilitating the collaborative diffractive process—moving through the space where status quo mentality is challenged through discourse. The thinking partner relationship includes key elements in any effective relationship. Some of these characteristics include: (1) equality, where we see a person being an equal contributor to the conversation; (2) voice, where multiple perspectives are valued; (3) dialogue, where we acknowledge we cannot understand an issue alone; and (4) praxis, where change can occur if inquiry and experimentation are engaged intentionally (Knight, 2018). When the thinking partnership is nurtured, it leads to reciprocity, where ideas are mutually humanizing and learning opportunities benefit each person within the partnership (Knight, 2018).

#### Conclusion

Kurt Lewin's (1945) belief that "There is nothing more practical than a good theory" is needed to help educators look into the dark spaces so we can progress and advance our agenda towards genuine inclusivity. Continuing to persist in the 'lighted spaces,' where educators are knowledgeable and comfortable (i.e., using

practices such as reflection without diffraction) will only continue the cycle of systemic racism and marginalization of our vulnerable populations.

We conclude by framing our work using Vygotsky's triangle for mediated action. Vygotsky (1978) believed that learning (i.e., subject achieves object) by being mediated by transformative tools and is situated within a cultural and historical practice. In our context, educators have an opportunity to create goals using a vision boarding strategy, developing thinking partnerships, learn new pedagogical theories such as theories of anti-racism, inclusivity, and assert-based orientations, and which can be used as transformative tools, and utilize diffractive pedagogy as an educational space for implementing the process for practice.

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# Learning and Adaptation During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Schools of Education as Hubs for Leadership and Innovation

By Reyes Quezada, Paul Rogers, Kelly León, & Sobeida Velázquez

# Introduction

The transmission of the Coronavirus pandemic moved across international borders with incendiary speed, economies were transformed, health service capacities were tested, as well as education systems. Asia and Europe closed schools early on and were followed by western hemisphere countries. What we know as the traditional delivery of teaching on campus or in school site classrooms changed overnight. Teaching remotely in the United States and throughout the globe was the new norm. Brom et al. (2020) reports, "An unprecedented "exercise" in distance education that burdened families, schools, and students at all levels"

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occurred. Remote teaching and school closures have occurred in pre-kinder and in higher education. However, it had never been instituted on such a large scale and in such a short notice worldwide (Quezada, Talbot, & Parker-Quezada, 2020). These immediate effects on primary, secondary, and higher education left higher education institutions to fend for themselves, particularly Schools of Education (SOE) preparing educators to teach, to counsel, or to lead in all levels of education (Quezada, Buczynski, Medina, Stolz, Fabionar, & Jez, 2020). Therefore we set out to research and investigate the response of SOEs to the triple crisis of COVID-19, the economic fallout from the pandemic, and heightened attention to the systemic and institutional racism that engulfed our country and indeed the world.

We undertook this research with the support of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) with the hypothesis that SOEs were providing leadership across the many critical relationships they hold among a wide range of stakeholder groups; from state and federal policymakers, county offices of education, school administrators, higher education personnel, teacher educators, researchers, grant funders, teachers, students, as well as families. These crises greatly stressed each of these vital relationships, and they provided a significant/ critical opportunity for SOEs across the nation and around the globe to innovate and re-imagine education for students in teacher preparation programs, and for faculty and support staff to find innovative ways to have a greater impact on our students in K-12 schools.

This monograph presents some of the innovative ways in which deans from SOEs in their leadership roles rose to not only manage the crisis but to lead others and to innovate in these difficult times. It aims to highlight the change leadership across SOEs across the country; public, private, large, small, urban, rural, and to surface both the pain points and the innovative adaptations that were initiated by SOE. Our ultimate research purpose was that through our interviews with SOE deans we could discover and share evidence-based innovative educational practices that emerged while SOEs navigated the pandemic, the economic fall out, and the inequities that resulted from both. A focus on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism is also a key component. Our hope is that the results of this study might help inform a design process that would provide meaningful support and capacity development for the educational leaders who themselves are supporting so many others in this historic moment.

The results are drawn from a larger study of interviews with deans of SOEs from across the country. This article will focus on seven interviews with deans of SOEs from California. They were conducted throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and into the Delta variant. Drawing on these interviews we provide a deep dive reflection on the knowledge and insights gained during this tumultuous time, and we share some of the innovations that emerged, the processes by which they were developed, and the role of leadership and collaboration in supporting teacher education and bringing these innovations to life. We seek to present results from

our study to provide meaningful support to educational leaders in SOEs (deans, department chairs, and program directors) with the aim of adding to the existing knowledge related to leadership in SOEs.

#### Methodology and Data Collection

Using a case study approach, we present the reasoning, and implementation methods behind strategic decisions made by deans of SOEs from across a range of institutions: public, private, suburban, urban, and rural. The case study methodology was chosen strategically to investigate the COVID-19 phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2015). including the closing of universities and the transition to remote/online distance instruction across virtually all SOEs. Data were collected and analyzed from interviews, resource documents, and memos, and triangulation was achieved by analyzing recorded and transcribed interviews with the SOE deans (Saldaña, 2020). Interviews consisting of 10 questions were asked via a one-hour Zoom meeting. Some national and state licensure reports were provided by the deans, as well as anecdotal notes and memos which were then analyzed. Data were analyzed by all four researchers independently and in teams using both NVivo and thematic coding strategies (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Codes from each data point were documented and we created a codebook for analysis. Coding was an interactive process that led to categorizing, which subsequently led to the refining and negotiation of categories and ultimately, theme development. Once data saturation occurred, analysis shifted from inductive to deductive, and the focus became checking for the existence of themed patterns (Corbin & Strauss, 2014).

# **Theoretical Framework**

We sought a framework that would help illuminate leadership in and beyond Covid-19 and in particular, one that would provide an analytic structure for our conversations with deans about their work related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This became particularly salient as our interviews and debriefs kept returning to the deans' expressed aspirations and in some cases examples of work in which they were engaged, which focused on striving for a more socially just education. Given this focus, we turned to Cochran-Smith's 2010 research that offered ideas toward a theory of teacher education for social justice in which she put forth the need to consider a (1) theory of justice, (2) theory of practice, and (3) theory of preparation (for teachers).

Inherent in our framing is the recognition that there is no one way to approach education for social justice and in fact, Cochran-Smith illustrated this by suggesting that some teacher education programs might focus on teachers' beliefs or identities, others on democratic or civic education, and still others on multicultural issues (Cochran-Smith, 2010). Since Cochran-Smith's publication, efforts have been made to address systemic racism, improve inclusivity, and challenge traditional epistemologies. Regardless of focus, we know that there are tensions and challenges in thinking about education for social justice, and those are reflected in different conceptualizations of justice (Fraser, 2008; Rawls, 1971; Sen, 1990), in the intersectionality of different types of injustices that are faced, and in the ways that marginalized groups, who individually and collectively have different interests, values, and preferences, think about and take up social justice.

#### Framing Questions

Cochran-Smith (2010) encourages an approach that integrates these three theories and she presents questions that have the potential to drive the work of SOE. According to the framework, in order to make explicit the goals of a teacher education program, SOEs need to be able to describe what they mean by justice, be able to talk about the teaching and learning that happens or should happen inside their programs and lastly, focus on how educators are able to learn about and demonstrate their ability to teach for justice, both inside and beyond the teacher preparation program.

# Theory of Justice

For a theory of justice, Cochran-Smith establishes two pairs of justice goals: distribution and recognition, and autonomy and identity, which she sees as *in-tension* with one another. The distribution side of the paradigm focuses on equality of individuals, their civic engagement, and a commitment to individuals that they can pursue their own definition of a good life (Rawls,1971 as cited in Cochran-Smith, 2010). The recognition side of the paradigm is about realizing that respect for different social groups is also part of addressing injustice. In essence, there needs to be a focus on equity of learning opportunity (challenging policies and practices that reify inequity), a focus on respecting and recognizing distinct social groups, and an acknowledgment that there are tensions between these and they need to be managed. She also suggests that a theory of justice for teacher education should incorporate multiple perspectives, be critical, and democratic, and also work toward anti-oppressive practices.

# Theory of Practice

A theory of practice is what connects teacher preparation to justice. This goes beyond knowledge and teaching skills and involves the theoretical, practical, critical, and relational aspects of preparing educators for education for social justice. It includes an acknowledgment of the competing agendas or questions related to a theory of practice, the ways in which we prepare educators to make decisions as professionals, and the relationships that are built and established between teachers and families/communities.

# Theory of Teacher Preparation

Finally, for the theory of teacher preparation, there is a need to know what teacher preparation practices foster justice. Cochran-Smith includes questions of selection and recruitment such as who should teach, both at the university and in our diverse schools? This involves questions about the diversity of future educators, but also recruitment of teachers of all backgrounds who have social justice goals. It also involves questions of what teacher candidates (and ultimately) students should learn. This includes an assessment of curriculum and pedagogy in schools of teacher education, but also conversations about what is left out or implied through the curriculum decisions that are made, including the messages that are sent about race, class, language, and ability. Cochran-Smith also looks at questions about how and from whom faculty and teachers should learn as well as how to assess the preparation of teachers. She argues that the work of schools of education needs to be transformative and collaborative and that we need to be working both within, and against accountability structures. The bottom line is that the work should challenge and disrupt the status quo.

# **Preliminary Results**

While the results from our study speak to several questions, our work best speaks to confronting the challenges at the programmatic and institutional levels. In this IRB-approved research study, we sought to understand the challenges facing SOEs with the goal of surfacing inspiring and potentially scalable practices from the point of view of deans of SOEs (i.e., which includes a strong focus on institution-wide programs).

Our interviews covered three major topic areas with various subtopics turned into questions: (1) *Leading through Crisis*—questions focused on the most serious challenges of the pandemic such as: the critical learnings from the pivot to remote instruction; views on lasting changes and opportunities post-pandemic; and providing resources for faculty to meet the needs of their students in a virtual learning environment; (2) *Innovation and Leadership*—questions focused on: well-being practices and programs for faculty, staff, and students; decision-making frameworks; responding to fiscal challenges; and operationalizing diversity, equity, and inclusion, especially for our neediest students; (3) *Revolutionizing Public Education*—questions focused on: men of color and the teacher pipeline; improving educational outcomes; and support of young people as advocates for social justice and social change.

Five preliminary themes emerged from the data analysis: (1) *Challenges* encountered due to the pandemic, some that were pre-existing, others that were compounded due to the pandemic, (2) *Supporting Others and answering the Why, How and What*? with regards to motives, actions, and resources, (3) *Leadership* 

distribution and capacity development, (4) Diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism (DEI +A), intentionality, and making k- 12 connections in both curriculum and programs; and (5) Promising practices-in decision-making, well-being, and DEI +A.

In this article, we present a deep-dive analysis for theme four—DEI + A with the sub-themes of *curriculum*, *program support*, and *strategic intentionality*.

# Theme Four: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, + Anti-Racism

In this theme, some SOE deans engaged in a self-analysis of how white privilege has shaped their professional trajectory. This was coupled with a recognition of the urgency to break down the barriers of current systemic racism in our education system. The primary driver of these changes for the deans was to make conditions more equitable and to provide greater access for all students. Some examples of systemic barriers include hiring practices, scholarship funding, program funding, and types of initiatives that SOE initiated in order to gain access to technology for underserved counties or with different communities, or the use of the CARES act funds. SOE deans' acknowledged and reflected on the need for providing talented and caring role models to attract men of color into the teaching profession. Some acknowledged the importance of having difficult, critical, and courageous conversations, particularly on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion + Anti-racism as a result of the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) experience and injustices to be remedied in the work we do.

#### Curriculum

In talking with the deans it was evident that DEI +A was playing a more important role in the curriculun across programs and courses. Our interviews revealed a great deal of intentionality on the part of SOEs in their approach to curriculum development. One dean described the importance of doing this work with an "inside-out approach," not only in conversations, but in action. This strategic intention was evident in the speakers who were brought in to speak (mostly on Zoom), the readings in courses, units in course syllabi, as well as in the mission and vision statements that were developed at both the unit and departmental levels. Conversations concerning anti-racism were common, and discussions were held in department meetings and in open forums on how to respond to the escalation of tensions on these issues across the country.

#### **Program Support in Schools of Education**

Within the topic of DEI+A *Program Support in Schools of Education* some reported bringing in speakers to support anti-racism within the department and unit as a whole. SOEs also began to analyze the current testing required of teacher candidates or testing in general. Tests are seen as privileging some teacher can-

didates over others. One dean said it's easier to "teach content than it is to teach care." Some SOEs began re-branding and reprioritizing funds to support BIPOC students through scholarships, some allotted monies not on race-based systems but on need and on educational gaps that exist, or lack of educational experiences in one's education or families' education. Some SOEs created initiatives to develop new centers and institutes (Neurodiverse Learning and Wellness Centers) and invited their K-12 partners to support their needs as well, especially on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism. SOEs further elicited more targeted feedback with their K-12 programs by making stronger connections due to the pandemic. K-12 partners informed education preparation programs by pushing teacher preparation to be inclusive and antiracist—ready by working with them to develop curriculum and asking for feedback to improve teaching practice.

# Strategic Intentionality

Some SOEs focused on DEI+A in program development as evidenced by expenditures of resources used to create new centers and institutes, maintaining consistent communication on issues related to DEI+A both at the unit and the departmental levels, and for the institution as a whole, as well as following through on their commitment to teaching in under-resourced and under-served schools and communities.

Strategic Intentionality was also apparent in aspects of the curriculum such as revisiting English and history courses and repurposing them as new Ethnic studies courses. SOEs also took advantage of remote learning as an opportunity to provide more equitable access that considered students' various needs which includes managing work and class schedules, considering individuals personal values, as well as, recognizing and accommodating the needs of culturally diverse family needs.

Faculty members were key figures in this work as they reconfigured their teaching modalities to be more inclusive by having more hybrid courses to support students resulting in an increase of availability of class space. In some cases, these steps led to increases in student enrollments which deans attributed to the greater flexibility in which courses were offered. Innovation by faculty also included upgrading their own instructional strategies as a result of anti-racist training, and of synchronous teaching which engaged all teacher candidates in their courses. What we observed could indeed be called a change in the growth mindset in regards to DEI+A across the SOE community.

# Scholarly Significance of the Work

Given the complexity of the issues addressed, the number of important stakeholders, and the distribution of our interviewees across the country, we hope our research will provide SOE faculty and administrators with a greater sense of what's possible and some practical details of how a diverse group of schools of education

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deans' responded to a set of challenges that were shared in many ways across and within institutions, but which were also context and college-specific, along with the leadership attributes and activities that helped programs to navigate these challenging times. Our goal as researchers is to provide data-informed perspectives (based on the aggregation of our responses from across institutions) that can provide concrete examples of exemplary best practices, and specific steps that can help contribute to the leadership capacity, resilience, and effectiveness of faculty and administrators as they address ongoing and future challenges.

#### Implications for Action

In order to address the most pressing challenges we face as SOEs and teacher educators, we need to work together. Our goal in conducting these interviews was to create a data-informed baseline for considering SOEs as a network of leadership and innovation.

While some have viewed SOEs as bound by tradition and bogged down in compliance issues due to multiple accreditation agencies, our research demonstrates that leaders in SOEs are on the leading and cutting edge of problem-solving and designing solutions that impact many lives. Undergirding our research is a vision of capacity development for leaders. In particular, our desire was to identify the most urgent needs of leaders in order to provide additional input and guidance to others in the profession who are committed to developing leadership capacity and to better support leaders in ways that they need the most, as they provide support for so many others. We cannot provide the complete results of our work, in this article we offer an overview of the most relevant results of our study for leaders and recommendations for concrete programmatic improvement and leadership development across theme four: *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion+Antiracism*, and three subthemes—*Curriculum, Program Support in Schools of Education*, and *Strategic Intentionality*.

# Discussion

We do not take for granted that each of the deans maintained a commitment to their stakeholders, as they worked through what one of our participants described as "the storms." We return to Cochran-Smith's (2010) framework to re-examine the degree to which deans expressed work related to education for social justice, all the while recognizing the contextual circumstances in which they operated.

What is clear is that we heard a variety of approaches to issues pertaining to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism. There are instances in which deans addressed issues of equity through distributive justice, by ensuring students had access to technology during virtual learning and by increasing funding for DEI+A initiatives or redistributing scholarship monies. We also heard deans speak to issues of identity and recognition, in terms of curricular changes they made, incorporating

Ethnic Studies into their programs, recreating systems to center Black and ethnic minority students, or focusing on hiring/retaining teachers of color. In terms of a theory of practice, we heard deans discuss the knowledge that teacher candidates need to educate for equity and worked to bring in that knowledge through an "inside-out approach" of reconceptualizing their course curriculum. Deans were able to conceptualize aspects of a theory of teacher preparation in rethinking what assessment of teacher candidates should look like, being strategic and intentional about K12 and community partnerships, and focusing on the goal of a more diverse teaching force.

From our study, deans expressed what sounds like momentum toward a desire to address systemic racism and social injustice. Using De Wit's (2002) framework to guide us, we ask to what degree is education for social justice centralized and systemic within SOEs? What we concluded is that across the schools, there is a high degree of variability, which means there is a real opportunity to sharpen the consistency across SOEs, learn from each other, and identify gaps in the work. We know COVID put pressure on leaders, but the SOEs that weathered the "storms" better than others were able to do that because they were prepared. In the case of social justice, the leaders who had been intentionally working on these efforts over time, were ready to advance this work, despite dealing with the triple crisis. Ultimately, these are the schools that are closest to ensuring this work is central and systemic to teacher preparation.

Using Cochran-Smith's perspective and in reflecting on what we heard and didn't hear, we offer up 5 questions that we hope will inspire more conversation in and between colleges of education:

(1). In what ways do we discuss/act on issues of educational equity *and* of recognition and respect?

(2). How are tensions/contradictions about the nature of justice acknowledged and managed?

(3). How do we build effective relationships with colleagues, students, and communities?

(4). What is the knowledge that future educators need and how can we prepare them to decide *what* to teach their students?

(5). How and with/from whom should teacher candidates learn? How can we learn from each other?

These questions can perhaps serve SOEs or departments of teacher education. They have served us as we sharpen our process and questions related to our own research and they can perhaps be a first step toward more dialogue amongst teacher educators at different institutions so that we might continue to advance this critical work.

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# The UC/CSU California Collaborative for Neurodiversity and Learning

# The Intersectionality of Literacy and Equity

By Sue Sears, Anna Osipova, Kai Greene, Renee Ziolkowska, Vanessa Goodwin, Susan Porter, & How Alpert

# Introduction

The UC/CSU California Collaborative for Neurodiversity and Learning brings together resources from the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems with an aim to strengthen educational support for

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#### Significance to Teacher Education

Launched in January 2020, with funding from the California legislature, the Collaborative is focused on issues critically important to the field of teacher education: access to quality literacy instruction for all students; preparation of teacher candidates in evidence-based and culturally responsive literacy pedagogies; and incorporation of recent reading research findings into teacher training. Specific significance for California's teacher educators is rendered by legislated implementation of the *California Dyslexia Guidelines* (CDE, 2017) as well as the new Literacy Teaching Performance Expectations (CTC, 2019).

#### Need to Address Literacy Outcomes

According to reports from the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) two thirds of all 4th graders read at or below proficient levels, with over one third of those reading below a basic level (NCES, 2019). The intersectionality of literacy and equity emerges when we look at the disparities in scores by student groups. Specifically, students of color and students with disabilities consistently score among the lowest of student groups. As shown in Table 1, 81% of California's White 4th graders scored at or above basic level; however, comparable numbers for Black and Hispanic students were 42% and 53% respectively (NCES, 2019). Nationally and in California, among all student groups, and as appears in Table 2, the lowest reading scores were those reported for students with disabilities.

Table I
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Reading Assessment Scores by Selected Race/Ethnicity Groups in California

Race/Ethnicity	Average Score	Percentage at Basic Level	t or above NAEP Proficient Level	Percentage at NAEP Advanced Level
White	234	81	45	15
Black	197	42	18	2
Hispanic	207	53	22	4
Asian	238	81	57	23
Two or more races	233	80	46	14
100 01 10010 10000		00	10	

Note: Black includes African American and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin. Scores for American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander did not meet reporting standards.

# **Relevant Research**

An interdisciplinary body of reading research, which includes education, psychology, and neuroscience informs and is reflected in the work of the Collaborative. This body of research, sometimes referred to as the "science of reading", supports the critical role of foundational skills, the ability to read words accurately and efficiently, as related to, yet distinct from comprehension (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) and suggests that learning to read depends upon a beginning reader's grasp of the alphabetic principle, an insight that letters represent sounds (Castles, Rastle, & Nation, 2018). In this literature, recommended instructional practices for students who are struggling to learn to read are explicit, sequential, and systematic (Birsh & Carreker, 2018).

The work of the Collaborative is also informed by research on culturally sustaining pedagogies—responsive literacy frameworks (Muhammad, 2020), the selection of diverse books for children to read (Kelly-Howard, 2021), and the leveraging of students' bilingualism for literacy learning purposes (Sánchez, García, & Solorza, 2017). As suggested by Gabriel (2020), "We cannot have scientific enterprise that improves outcomes for diverse student populations if it does not consider the user's experience and perspective" (p. 17). Neither can we improve outcomes for diverse student populations, if our research does not include all readers—students of color, students living in poverty, bilingual students and students with disabilities.

While advancements in reading research have made significant contributions to an understanding of reading and how students learn to read, there is some evidence to suggest that these have not made their way into educational practice (Elliott, 2020). A recent national survey provides support for this assertion (EdWeek, 2020). Within the broader context of literacy as a social justice issue, this paper describes efforts of the Collaborative to embed the comprehensive and systematic teaching

#### Table 2

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Assessment Scores for Students in Special Education and General Education Nationwide and in California

Group	4th Grade	8th Grade	Achievement Level
Special Education			
California	174	221	Below Basic
Nationwide	184	228	Below Basic
General Education			
California	222	264	Basic
Nationwide	225	267	Basic

Note. Achievement levels Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced are ranges defined by grade (U.S. Department of Education, 2019a).

Scores are reading average scale scores for fourth-grade (U.S. Department of Education, 2019a) and eighth-grade (U.S. Department of Education, 2019c) students in public schools.

of reading in teacher education. We begin with a study of CSU reading methods courses (Alpert, 2020).

#### Study of CSU Reading Instruction

Focused on describing what programs taught credential candidates in reading instruction courses and the means they used to teach it, this qualitative study analyzed course documents and interviewed instructors from 16 CSU special education and general education credential programs. The following two relevant findings emerged: (1) a key distinction among learning *about* reading, learning *about teaching* reading, and learning *to teach* reading; and (2) reading is taught as component parts and as part of something larger.

All courses taught about reading. Further, they all taught reading as part of something larger, but not all courses taught reading as component parts. That is, all courses connected reading to writing, to English Language Arts, to other subject matters such as science, or to broader literacy, including issues of culture and social justice. General education courses tended toward visions of reading with more connections to personal, literary, or social aspects of literacy, but less emphasis on direct instruction of foundational skills. Few special education courses painted an expansive vision of literacy. Rather, they tended toward component models of reading, with the most prominent the Big Five—phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—as outlined by National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Put another way, all courses documented teaching about reading theory, though courses differed on which portions of which theories were documented.

In addition to teaching about reading, all the courses taught something about teaching reading. They all had readings and lectures about instructional strategies, methods, or materials. Many had exercises or projects to teach candidates to teach reading, and some courses were directly linked to a formal student teaching placement. Perhaps it is telling that only one course documented using direct instruction to teach candidates to teach reading. It used modeling and guided practice, with feedback from peers and the instructor, before assigning independent practice. From these findings, we can see that credential candidates at CSU are taught wide-ranging theories about reading, but few are taught directly how to teach reading.

# Efforts To Improve the Preparation of Credential Candidates to Teach Reading

Informed by study findings, the need to meet legislative mandates (Literacy TPEs and dyslexia guidelines), and the mission of the UC/CSU California Collaborative for Neurodiversity and Learning, our group collectively reviewed and revised reading and reading relative courses and course syllabi. We now report on these efforts from three CSU campuses.

# Program and Course Design

At California State University, Dominguez Hills the work of the Collaborative has focused on program and course redesign to meet the new Education Specialist Teaching Performance Standards and Expectations, and the new Literacy Teaching Performance Expectations. Efforts have included collaborating with the Teacher Education Department to align all literacy courses for consistency and equivalency, with an emphasis on content area literacy and the comprehension of texts. Faculty have also worked to integrate foundational skills across methods courses and to incorporate the California Dyslexia Guidelines within programs. Focusing on language and literacy we describe more specific examples of this work.

Approximately one-quarter of students in California schools are English learners. A recent survey (Gonzalez et al., 2021) reports that a majority of special

#### Table 3

# Selected Assignments in Three Courses: SPE 462, SPE 522, and SPED 403

SPE 462: Language, Literacy and Cognition	SPE 522: Teaching Bilingual Learners in Inclusive Dual Settings	SPE 403: Language and Literacy
1. Write IEP performan- and accommodations sp language, pre-reading li and writing.	ce levels, goals, objectives, secific to receptive-expressive teracy skills, and/or reading	1. Case study: provide student background information: student's funds of knowledge (including home literacies, cultural, ethnic and dual language status)
2. Complete a comprehe language sample analys	ensive oral narrative is	2. Specific lectures and activities addressing the assessment of emergent bilinguals and ways to best determine whether reading challenges are due to second language learning or a learning disability
3. Develop innovative U learning activities with a content, and use	IDL-based language a specific focus on form,	3. Specific assignments and discussion posts requiring students to address culturally responsive pedagogy for emergent bilinguals who are also struggling readers
4. Research approaches	to assessment and	

intervention in one of 13 special education eligibilities (IDEA, 2004)

Note: Certain assignments overlap yet SPE 522 is taught in Spanish to address students seeking the dual language immersion credential or bilingual authorization certificate.

education teachers felt underprepared to address the heterogeneity of dual language learners' cultural and linguistic experiences and differentiating between language learning disabilities and second language acquisition. As well, ELs' low achievement in reading skills might be mistaken as the typical process of second language learning as opposed to actual reading disorders or dyslexia (Swanson et al., 2020). As a priority and in order to address the language and literacy instructional needs of university students in the education preparation programs at CSU Dominguez Hills, three specific courses have been updated to address current accreditation and literacy standards (See Table 3).

Students enrolled in these courses learn how to address, understand, and untangle language domains of form (phonology, morphology, syntax), content (semantics), and use (pragmatics) but also appreciate how these five language areas interact in dynamic ways. Recent focus on prioritizing dyslexia (California Dyslexia Guidelines, 2017) as one type of a language learning disability highlights the need to place an increased emphasis on preparing new teachers to confidently address the instructional needs of all students' multiple literacies. As noted by DeMonte and Coggshall (2018), "the most powerful in-school influence on learning is the quality of instruction that teachers bring to their students" (p. 1).

#### **Collaboration Across Elementary and Special Education**

At California State University, Northridge (CSUN), collaborative work through the UC/CSU Project revealed that both departments, Elementary Education (EED) and Special Education (SPED), had gaps in best and evidence-based practice for teaching reading. Specifically, Elementary Education included modeling and guidance in choosing children's literature, with an emphasis on books focused on social justice issues, but only briefly mentioned dyslexia. Special Education included direct instruction on attributes and supports for children with dyslexia, evidence-based practices to support children with dyslexia, and collaboration with families, but devoted limited attention to children's literature.

While both departments regularly collaborate, co-development of content was not a part of this collaboration. Instructors for two classes, both of which are foundational reading courses, agreed first to an objectives review, and then agreed upon new readings and content. Finally, each instructor guest lectured in the other's class on topics including selection of children's literature, social justice and advocacy, dyslexia overview and methods, and effective collaboration with families. These sessions were recorded for future use. As a result elementary education infused more information on dyslexia into their reading methods courses. And special education, recognizing the value of children seeing themselves in books, shared selections like those from the recommended readings in Table 4, with their teacher candidates. Students reported that meeting with colleagues in another department was enlightening, allowed them access to new learning, and should become a permanent fixture of both classes.

# Sears, Osipova, Greene, Ziolkowska, Goodwin, Porter, & Alpert

At CSUN both elementary education and special education programs support on-campus reading clinics (the *LA Times Literacy Clinic*, and the *Special Education Literacy Clinic*). Serving K-12 low-income students, the clinics have mostly run as separate programs with special education providing the "how" of teaching reading through a structured literacy lens (Spear-Swerling, 2018). However, building on the strengths of each department, the Collaborative affords opportunities to infuse

# Table 4 List of Books that Address Social Justice Issues

Book title	Author	Description of the Book
Say Something	Peter H. Reynolds	If you see an injustice say something! A single voice can make a difference. Each of us, each and every day, have the chance to say something: with our actions, our words, and our voices.
The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family	Ibtihaj Muhammad	Faizah admires older sister Asiya's new, strikingly blue and beautiful first-day-hijab. Asiya finds inner strength and pride when facing bullies at school who make fun of it.
Emmanuel's Dream The True Story of Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah	Laurie Ann Thompson	Emmanuel was born with one deformed leg. He hopped to school, learned to play soccer, and became a cyclist. He rode 4,000 miles across Ghana spreading his powerful message: disability is not inability.
My Diary From Here to There/ Mi diario de aqui hasta alla	Amada Irma Perez	Amada and her parents are moving from Mexico to Los Angeles, where greater opportunity awaits. On their journey, Amada records her fears, hopes, and dreams for their new life in her diary.
Sulwe	Lupita Nyong'o	Sulwe has skin the color of midnight. She is darker than everyone in her family and in her school. This book addresses colorism, self-esteem, and learning that true beauty comes from within.
Same, Same But Different	Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw	Elliot lives in America and Kailash lives in India. They are pen pals. By exchanging letters and pictures, they learn that even though their worlds might look different, they are actually similar.
My Name is Yoon	Helen Recorvits	A young Korean girl moves to the US and struggles with cultural differences. Her father shows her how to write her name in English, but Yoon does not like how her name looks in English.

new content on the science of reading, culturally sustaining pedagogies and neurodiversity into clinical practice.

# Interdepartmental Collaboration and Collaboration Within Special Education

The work carried out at California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA), can be described as a three-pronged effort, which encompasses interdepartmental collaboration, intra-departmental collaboration across education specialist credential pathways, and efforts in program and course evaluation.

Interdepartmental collaboration occurred in summer 2020 and involved program coordinators of Multiple Subject and Education Specialist (mild to moderate, MM) credential pathways developing a joint perspective on enhancing programs' content. As a result of joint reflection, the coordinators agreed on the importance of including the ongoing hot topics in education, including diversity, neurodiversity, and dyslexia. The faculty reflected on controversial issues surrounding these topics and agreed that it is critical to prepare credential candidates for the ongoing debates about social justice, the needs of diverse learners, science behind teaching and learning, and equity in education. The courses where such content fit within the programs (e.g., courses focused on assessment of literacy skills of diverse learners) were identified to address the issues.

Intra-departmental collaboration is ongoing and involves the program coordinators of the early childhood special education (ECSE) and mild to moderate (MM) credential pathways. Working to ensure that candidates across pathways are well familiar with dyslexia-related legislation and meet the Literacy TPEs, the content in both programs has been enhanced with a renewed focus on language and literacy development. The coursework now includes developmental trajectories of language and literacy skills development, as well as oral academic language, reading and writing learning profiles of diverse and neurodiverse populations.

The foci of the credential programs have been found mutually enriching. For example, the ECSE program's emphasis on family supports and family-based interventions served as a model for extending discussion of school-home partnerships within the MM credential program. Similarly, the emphasis on literacy within the MM pathway aided conceptualization of an updated ECSE literacy focus, which starts with early oracy and child-adult interaction and continues onto oracy and literacy in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten and throughout lifespan. Collaboration across credential pathways also spearheaded the efforts to provide credential candidates with knowledge and skills in early identification and early intervention to support learners at risk for dyslexia and other language/literacy related difficulties. The third aspect of the work stimulated by the Collaborative at Cal State LA is focused on an evaluation of candidates' skills and knowledge to guide the incorporation of dyslexia- and neurodiversity-related content into coursework. To this end, a survey was developed and piloted in spring 2021. Four courses across credential pathways were identified as assessment points for pre- and post-assessment and two mid-points of evaluation. Four-point evaluation allows for formative assessment of candidates' knowledge and skills and informs the instructors' in subsequent courses of the areas of relative strength and weaknesses that can be addressed through instruction. The results of the survey are forthcoming and will be discussed in upcoming CCTE sessions.

# Implications and Conclusions

While teacher candidates in the CSU learn about reading and learn about teaching reading, there is evidence to suggest they may not be learning "how" to teach reading (Alpert, 2020). To date the Collaborative has been focused on course-work, and yet it is well documented that clinical experience is critically important if teacher candidates are to transfer the evidence-based practices they are learning about, to the field (Scheeler et al., 2016; Heckaman et al., 2018). Therefore, it is important that the Collaborative consider leveraging clinical practice opportunities that already exist as well as supporting the development of new ones.

A recent report from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (2021) calls for the articulation of "a coherent vision for improving literacy that is grounded in evidence-based practices and a commitment to equity and student outcomes" (p. 3). Described in this paper are the combined efforts of general, special, and bilingual researchers and teacher educators, who represent multiple and differing perspectives and areas of expertise. Reaching across departments, campuses, and fields of study the Collaborative aims to understand differences and identify commonalities, in pursuit of the coherence needed, to improve reading outcomes in California.

Finally, as others have suggested, we know more about the "science of reading" than we do about the "science of teaching reading" (Seidenberg et al., 2020; Shanahan, 2020). One might argue that the science of teaching reading resides at the intersection of basic and applied research. Importantly the Collaborative provides a space for embedding reading research in teacher preparation and opportunities for those who prepare teachers to participate in and inform that work.

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# Pandemic Pain, Holistic Help

# How One School's Trauma-Informed Approach Provided Support and Expanded Opportunity

By Carrie R. Giboney Wall

# Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed students and families to the breaking point as they experienced financial stress, social isolation, fear of illness, death of loved ones, disrupted learning, and loss of normalcy. Moreover, those who struggled under normal circumstances found it even more difficult to learn and thrive. The swift shift to distance learning exacerbated the digital divide and opportunity gaps that already existed within the United States only widened (Garcia & Weiss, 2020). As a result, students in schools serving majority Latinx and Black students or located in lower-income zip codes experienced greater unfinished learning (Curriculum Associates, 2021). Additionally, the emotional well-being of children who were already trauma-impacted further deteriorated. Trauma is defined as the inability to respond in a healthy manner to acute stress (Wolpow et al., 2016). Prolonged activation of stress response systems to fight, freeze, or take flight can result in changes to an individual's brain structure and functioning (Alexander, 2019; McInerney & McKlindon, 2014; Wolpow et al., 2016), impacting their ability to engage, learn, and succeed in school (McInerney & McKlindon, 2014).

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# Carrie R. Giboney Wall

# **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical frame from which this research operates is that educators "cannot teach the mind until [they] reach the heart" (Wolpow et al., 2016, p. 18). Gaining momentum over the last decade, the Trauma-Informed Approach (TIA) is "a safe, supportive community that enables both students and teachers to feel safe, build caring relationships, regulate their feelings and behavior, as well as learn" (Alexander, 2019, p. 86). It shifts the focus from "what's wrong with you," to "what happened to you" (McInerney & McKlindon, 2014), seeking to minimize harm and maximize learning and healing. The TIA emphasizes five core components: school-wide relationships, structure, shared agency, self-regulation, and social-emotional learning.

The purpose of this qualitative study conducted at a Southern California Title 1 elementary school was to investigate two research questions: (a) What physical, academic, and social-emotional challenges did students and families face during the pandemic? and (b) How did the focal school incorporate trauma-informed practices to support students during the pandemic? This research is unique in its examination of effectiveness of a TIA during the pandemic from the perspective of educators who "have a front row seat to the behavioral, academic, and socioemotional issues that trauma-impacted students encounter" (Crosby, 2015, p. 228). It is hoped that research findings can assist educators as they help students grapple with trauma not only in the wake of the pandemic, but also moving forward.

# Figure I

Carrie R. Giboney Wall During Poster Presentation at CCTE Fall 2021 Conference



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# **Research Methodology**

The focal school is a Title 1 elementary school in which approximately 75% of the students are considered economically-challenged and many are trauma-impacted. The school enrolls approximately 270 students—85% of whom classify themselves as Latinx. Questionnaire and interview data centering on pandemic challenges and the TIA were collected from 14 educators in fall 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 1 provides information on the participants.

In an attempt to distill, organize, and make meaning of the transcribed interview and questionnaire data, content analysis was used in which the data were sorted within Google sheets by each of the two research questions and by participant. Codes used to sort and synthesize the data were tested against the data and then dropped, refined, or retained. During this process of "identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns in the data" (Patton, 1990, p. 381) through content analysis, themes emerged within each inquiry area.

### Findings

The findings of this study are reported in response to two research questions.

# Question 1: What challenges did students face during the pandemic?

# **Physical Challenges**

Because 75% of the school population is economically-challenged, many students experience food insecurity, unmet medical needs, insufficient sleep, and inadequate housing. These conditions were exacerbated by the pandemic.

#### Table I Participant Information

Participant	Gender	Position	Ethnicity
Nina	female	Teacher on Special Assignment	white
Anna	female	K/1st grade teacher	white
Genny	female	office assistant	Latinx
Carol	female	TK/K teacher	white
Kristen	female	2nd/3rd grade teacher	white
Maude	female	paraprofessional	white
Valerie	female	1st grade teacher	white
Maria	female	community liaison	Latinx
Bruce	male	5th grade teacher	white
Eric	male	4th grade teacher	white
Gabby	female	social worker	Latinx
Kate	female	counselor	white
Jane	female	special education teacher	white
Jose	male	paraprofessional	Latinx

**Difficulty Accessing Learning**. The most frequently cited physical challenge in abruptly shifting from in-person instruction to distance learning was accessing education online. Though the district provided each student a device, participants reported that many families had little technological knowledge and did not have WiFi.

Housing, Supervision, and Transportation Challenges. Housing challenges worsened during the pandemic making optimal learning spaces difficult to secure. Students Zoomed into class from parent work trucks, garages, beds, campers, hotels, and/or dark corners at their parents' workplaces. Others refused to turn on their cameras. One participant theorized, "Some students don't want people to see what's happening in their home. There is shame built into poverty and they feel the stigma." Caregivers often were overtaxed by large numbers of children, unfamiliar with technology, or preoccupied by the need to Zoom into their own classes (if older siblings). When back in person, some parents struggled to leave work midday to pick up their children, forcing some families to return to distance learning.

# Academic Challenges

**Unfinished Learning**. Participants articulated concerns about fewer instructional hours and incomplete reinforcement work which contributed to unfinished learning (Curriculum Associates, 2021) and a diminished readiness for grade-level work. Additionally, because teachers could not proctor online assessments, educators discovered once back in person that students were not performing at the levels indicated, making it difficult to tailor instruction to meet individual needs.

**Developmentally-Unfriendly Pedagogy**. Teachers also found remote instruction insufficient in meeting students' developmental needs. Not only was support of fine-motor skill development difficult, but use of shared manipulatives, sensory input, and project-based learning was also inhibited. Additionally, mask-wearing made reading tasks like sounding out words or rhyming challenging and COVID-mandates like social distancing and plastic partitions diminished academic and emotional connectivity within the classroom.

#### Social-Emotional Challenges

Lack of Socialization. COVID mandates such as wearing masks, limiting in-person interactions, and staying socially distant were detrimental to students' relationship-building. Participants grieved the loss of formal school programs as well as informal interactions that provided opportunities for student problem-solving and strengthening social competency. When in-person, participants found that mask-wearing constrained students' ability to socialize, emote, and/or understand humor.

**Emotional Distress.** Behavioral manifestations of emotional distress were students crying on Zoom, struggling to meet long-term goals, or becoming ag-

gressive when previously easygoing. Students who lost family members to COVID struggled to re-bond with family members after they had the virus, wondering aloud whether they were safe to be near. Behavioral manifestations of fear included students drawing hoodies tightly around their faces or wearing winter gloves on hot days "to keep the germs away."

# Question 2:

# How did the focal school incorporate trauma-informed practices?

Having adopted a TIA several years ago, the focal school provided trauma-informed support throughout the pandemic in meaningful ways.

# School-wide Relationships

Aware that equipping families with devices and technological knowledge was essential in facilitating home-school collaboration and learning, educators, administrators, counselors, social workers, paraprofessionals, and office administrators worked hard to ensure families were digitally connected. School personnel used the WhatsApp video feature to conduct individual training sessions on operating devices, accessing WiFi, utilizing email, and navigating Zoom. Because teachers Zoomed into students' homes, they reported increased understanding of parent-child relational dynamics, greater connectivity about pets and toys, and improved communication with caregivers. They also creatively fostered relational connectedness. One teacher delivered popcorn to homes before a movie night. Another mailed donated fast food certificates with the class calendar. When back in person, another teacher created activity tubs to engage her kindergarteners independently so she could check in with students individually as they arrived. Still another transformed her classroom into a pizza parlor, posting pictures of students in their toques and aprons for the parents to see.

The Community Liaison (Maria) and the Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) hosted online family game nights, painting sessions, literacy events, parenting workshops, and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses for parents. Monthly Parent Outreach Nights featured immigrants who openly shared about their childhood and the importance of education. Avoiding a webinar format, the sessions built community by urging all attendees to keep their cameras on and by merging the speaker with the families on the screen.

### Structure, Shared Control, and Self-Regulation

Because the pandemic disrupted normalcy, educators established predictable routines, communicated expectations, and provided warnings when modifying schedules. To empower students to transition successfully back to campus, the focal school created videos providing explicit instruction on "how to physically be at school" including where to walk, how to use communal restrooms, and how to go through temperature checks. Teachers shared agency with students by allowing them to co-construct mission statements, select lesson topics, and determine the order of the schedule. Educators empowered trauma-impacted students to self-advocate by signaling when they needed to turn their camera off or take a break from Zoom, reporting students were more productive when rejoining later. Additionally, educators modeled healthy problem solving themselves such as, "Hmm, my document camera is not working today. That's out of my control. I'm going to go get a whiteboard and be right back." By making emotional modulation visible, educators modeled healthy de-escalation strategies.

## Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

The focal school adopted Covey's (2008) *The 7 Habits of Happy Kids* which are: (1) be proactive, (2) begin with the end in mind, (3) work first, then play, (4) think win-win, (5) listen before you talk, (6) creatively cooperate to problem solve, and (7) "sharpen the saw" by cultivating life balance. Woven into the curriculum and problem-solving, the 7 Habits provide a schoolwide common language. Weekly SEL videos offered instruction on coping skills and Troubleshooting Thursdays allowed students to talk through problems. These trauma-informed practices provided relational support, structure, shared control, and social-emotional skill building to equip students to resiliently move forward.

# Implications

Following a tumultuous year of collective trauma, the goal of schools should not be to return to education as usual, but rather to re-imagine how schools can be more inclusive, responsive, and purposeful in meeting student needs, facilitating learning, and supporting well-being. Though the worst of the pandemic may be over, the work of educators is only beginning as they seek to address unfinished learning, reactivate student engagement, cultivate community, and promote recovery. The present study serves as a powerful exemplar of how trauma-informed practices can effectively support students and families not only during times of collective trauma, but also moving forward when COVID restrictions are lifted.

One implication of this study is the need for school-wide professional learning and skill building in the TIA. A second implication is that technology can be harnessed not only to facilitate learning, but also to strengthen home-school collaboration and improve access to support services long after the pandemic is over. The focal school's enhanced community outreach through family game nights, literacy events, ESL courses, and Parent Outreach Nights is a noteworthy endeavor that promotes family cohesiveness, parental support, and community engagement. As the number of students in the United States who have experienced trauma continues to grow, so should educators' understanding of their needs and the best practices that not only interrupt the effects of trauma, but maximize students' ability and potential to rebound, succeed in school, and resiliently move forward.

#### Note

For the full article on this research, please see the article below:

Wall, C. (2021). What hurt and what helped: How one school's trauma-informed approach provided support during the pandemic. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*. http://dx.doi.org/ 10.1080/15325024.2021.1943127

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# Cultivating Critical Pedagogy Through Inquiry, Reflection, and Action

**By Rosemary Wrenn** 

# Abstract

While current and preservice teachers express a desire to incorporate anti-racist ideals into their curriculum and pedagogy, the vast majority of them do not feel adequately prepared to do so. The overwhelming majority of teachers in California are white, while the majority of their students are not, making it imperative that teacher preparation programs and faculty development proactively incorporate strategies for building awareness of and tools to mitigate systemic racism throughout curriculum and pedagogical decisions. In this article I share practical strategies leaders in teacher preparation and faculty development can use to integrate critical questions and reflection into and throughout their programs.

# **Overview and Purpose**

Teachers today do not feel adequately prepared to navigate issues of race and racism in the classroom and community (Jones et al., 2021; Wrenn, 2021). This is

Rosemary Wrenn is the lead faculty for elementary education in the Education Department at Cuesta College and a university supervisor and lecturer in Liberal Studies at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Email address: rosemary\_wrenn@cuesta.edu complicated by the fact that the majority of our teachers are white and may not have had the opportunity to address the way race has influenced their own position and experience. In this article, I share how I have integrated critical inquiry, reflection, discussion, and action throughout an introduction to teaching course with two main practices: (1) weekly reflections on 21-day racial equity and social justice challenges (Cuesta College, 2020) and (2) inquiry, reflection, and discussion on how various pedagogical choices might impact learners from diverse identities and lived experiences following each classroom observation.

In addition, I share how I introduce and facilitate critical conversations on how race and racism show up in U.S. educational history, policies, and classrooms by combining direct instruction with learning opportunities woven throughout the course. I introduce them to what Freire (1970) termed praxis, the ongoing cycle of inquiry, reflection, and action necessary to liberate education from the power dynamics of the status quo. Modeling and facilitating praxis, along with integrating activities that weave content centering the voices and lived experiences of people from minoritized populations throughout an introduction to teaching course and with teacher candidates is a doable practice that can significantly enrich our preparation of future teachers and support current teachers in order to better prepare them to serve their students and meet the demands of the current educational climate.

## Context

While the events of 2020 brought systemic racism to the level of common conversation, it has been creating barriers to student academic and emotional success from the inception of schooling in the U.S. Our educational system was established as an exclusive resource to perpetuate the power-holding class—intentionally barring access for Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other people of color (Isenberg, 2016). Through racial segregation, redlining, biased testing, hyper-surveillance of students of color and more, what began as common practice has been institutionalized over the decades and is woven so deeply into our system that it is perpetuated in our teacher preparation and professional development.

We know that students perform better in classrooms with same-race teachers (Gershenson, 2016), for a variety of reasons, including higher expectations, shared lived experience and language, and validation of students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) Due to the perpetuation of racist policies and practices (Kohli, 2006) California's teaching force remains primarily white, at 64% (California Department of Education, 2020) while our students are majority Latina/o/x, Black, Asian, Indigenous and other people of color.

While the demographics of the student population have become more and more diverse over the years, white women remain the dominant group in teacher preparation programs. This is in great part due to the ways in which Black, Latina/o/x, Indigenous, Asian, and other people of color are discouraged and made to feel as

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if they do not belong in school throughout the PK-12 educational system (Gershenson, 2016). Starting in preschool, these children receive implicit and explicit messaging that they and their ways of knowing and being are not welcome. They do not see themselves or their experiences in the curriculum, their languages and ways of communicating are not accepted or valued, and they do not see their people contributing to the development of knowledge (DeHoyos & Ramirez, 2006; Flores et al., 2007; Gershenson et al., 2016). White teachers who have experienced the privileges of U.S. education designed to affirm their lived experiences (Isenberg, 2016) are often not aware of this or choose to ignore it, and thus perpetuate the problem via their language, curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices.

Many of our current preservice teachers have had little experience questioning the status quo presented in pedagogical practices and curriculum. They are, themselves, products of an educational system that prioritizes the narrative and norm of meritocracy, centered on the voices of white men and the primacy of the individual. Their own K-12 experience has omitted, downplayed, or demonized the contributions of non-white, non-western, non-capitalist cultures (personal communication, September, 2021). The very books we use in our preservice teaching classes perpetuate racist, classist ideas and practices (Wrenn, 2021) that are often so subtle and part of our educational culture, that we are not even aware of them unless we intentionally approach them with a critical lens.

## Positionality

I am a white woman and have been in the field of education since the late 1980s. After earning my multiple-subject credential and Masters of Education at UCLA, I taught elementary grades in schools with an emphasis on student-centered differentiated, integrated, and project-based learning. I currently serve as lead faculty for Elementary Education at Cuesta College, and University Supervisor and lecturer in Liberal Studies at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. I teach courses in Introduction to the Teaching Profession and Children's Literature in a Diverse Society in addition to working with teacher candidates in their clinical placements. My doctoral research was centered on how to better prepare and support teachers to navigate issues of race and identity in the classroom.

During my introduction to teaching course, I incorporate critical pedagogy from the very beginning with readings on culturally sustaining pedagogies and a reading/discussion of history of education in the U.S. that includes much more of the story that is often projected (Indian Boarding Schools, Redlining, etc.). One hundred percent of my students have been surprised to learn about many of the racist practices and policies throughout the history of education. From the first day of the course, I use terminology surrounding race and racism, identity, class, etc. and that we will be exploring education from a critical standpoint.

Combining direct instructional opportunities like readings and class discussions

with the ongoing 21 Day Challenge activities (Cuesta College, 2020) reinforces the cycle of inquiry, reflection, discussion, and action (see Figure 1). Critical conversations become part of the fabric of the course and normalize talking about race, identity, culture, and other key concepts. Thus normalized, students consider these issues as crucial to curricular and pedagogical decisions as they do any other element of classroom decision-making such as content standards or instructional sequencing.

# The Practice

We developed the 21-Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge (Cuesta College, 2020) as one element of improving the campus culture for our traditionally underrepresented students. It was proposed to us by Ali Michael, a visiting scholar, and is based on the work of the New England Food Cooperative and the Greater Cleveland YWCA. The premise is similar to fitness programs that encourage people to adopt a practice daily for 21 days with the idea that the practice becomes an adopted habit. A small team developed our challenge to reflect contemporary and local issues.

It consists of providing participants with daily reflective activities along with context. Once launched, the challenge is available to the entire community with the idea that all who participate will feel supported as they explore concepts that might previously have been omitted from their learning or considered confrontational. As one of the co-creators of our challenge, I was quite familiar with the content and realized its value for my preservice teachers. I wove participation in the challenge into weekly assignments over 7 weeks (we published 3 topics per week). Students were asked to choose at least one activity each day and to write a brief reflection (see Appendix A) about their experience. A sample of student responses are included

# Figure I

Cycle of Inquiry, Investigation, Reflection, and Action



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in Appendix B. While these reflections were just between me and the student, the topics then came up in our discussions and class meetings. This practice provides a great deal of information for preservice teachers to process and leads to further (unprompted) inquiry. Regardless of racial background, most students are alarmed to find out just how much information has been kept out of their K-12 experience.

The other explicit practice I've adopted is incorporating a reflection question for students to consider as they record their observations of classroom teachers. I use it with my teacher candidates in the credential program as well. I ask students to consider how children from different lived experiences and abilities might respond to the type of lesson they've observed (see Appendix C). This brings up the opportunity to address culturally sustaining pedagogical practices as we discuss the ways in which individuals from different cultures interact with one another in relation to language, cultural traditions, gender and more.

Integrating these activities throughout the term, preservice teachers come to consider issues of race and justice to be foundational to their pedagogy and decisions about curriculum and assessment. Using the content from the Challenge and other readings and media throughout the course, my students engage in ongoing critical conversations about race, privilege, access, policy, and other issues related to public education. They are activated to speak up and to view the classroom from a critical instead of a hierarchical perspective. They interrogate the traditional power dynamics in the classroom (and broader school system) and explore the ways in which our systems and school culture have built obstacles to student learning. They have a greater sense of culturally sustaining and anti-racist strategies as is evidenced by their final reflections and actions. They are engaging in what Freire defined as "praxis" the unification of theory through inquiry, reflection, and action.

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## Appendix A

### 21 Day Challenge Reflection Assignment

As teachers, we need to understand how our students' lived experiences influence their perceptions, values, and interactions with us and their peers. The 21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge is a great way to get an introduction to some of the issues our students face. Regardless of the identities we hold ourselves, understanding how our students navigate the world helps us to better serve them.

This week, we'll explore Week 1 of the 21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge. There are 3 topics each week. Choose at least one activity from each day. Then, summarize your thoughts about what you have learned and share your reflection here. As with other assignments, your work is confidential.

Your weekly reflection should be a minimum of 150 words and include the topic(s) you are reflecting on.

Feel free to use the following sentence frames to get started or write about the week in any way that works for you.

The most thought-provoking topic for me was \_\_\_\_\_

The action I will take related to this week's activities is \_\_\_\_\_

I felt \_\_\_\_\_\_ when I learned about \_\_\_\_\_\_.

I am frustrated by \_\_\_\_\_.

This week made me think more deeply about \_\_\_\_\_\_ and my relationship with my community.

Expand on one or two activities that really resonated or challenged you. Explain why you think you had that reaction to the issue.

How can this week's activities inform your preparation to become a teacher?

# Appendix B Sample Student Responses to 21 Day Challenge

Spelling and grammar remain as submitted by students.

#### White female, early twenties

It's no surprise to me, or most people now anyways, that BIPOC are systemically discriminated against in ways that white people like myself will never know. I've known about the racist medical procedures against Black and Indigenous peoples, but learning about the history makes me feel even more distrubed. I've used the word horrified before, but it is true that it's all completely horrific. It baffles me that there's medical textbooks stating that Black people tend to have a higher pain tolerance, and it has had long lasting racist effects. I remember a separate story about Serena Williams and how she was refused pain medication from a nurse.

Indigneous people are also being treated the same way. Natives in Oglala County, South Dakota have a lower life expectancy than people in Sudan, India and Iraq. But there's no wars going on in their tribe. It is due to the lack of quality healthcare, and there are few hospitals around the area. Even then, there's no point in going. Rape kits are hardly sent to the police, and the hospitals recieve little funding from the Indian Health Service.

While I feel like I can't do anything to overtake systemic racism, what I can do as a teacher is create a warm, welcoming environment. Especially for BIPOC, I want their voices to be heard and feel like they matter. Maybe this behavior will also be a good example for my white students and what they can do as well.

#### Latina, early twenties

The most thought-provoking topic for me was that seven states do not teach about slavery and eight states did not teach about the civil rights movement. It is really interesting to see how different education systems are implemented in the states. There is already a debate as to what we are censoring in history but to completely cut it out of the curriculum is unfair. The action I will take related to this week's activity is really to reflect on what I can bring to the table as a future Latina educator. There is a lack of Latino educator representation in many school districts which helps students better connect to a teacher with similar backgrounds. I felt very happy when I was watching Laurence Tan and how he connected with his students. He was able to build a community within his classroom because he is helping students connect with each other as well. I am frustrated by the fact that anti-racist teaching is just now becoming part of the education system. This is something that should have been implemented a long time ago. This week made me think more deeply about the need for color teachers in the classroom, especially those teaching a foreign language. I grew up in a dual immersion school and did not see many latino/a teachers teaching the Spanish language. It was very annoying sometimes because the teacher would not understand some of the cultural differences. Some of the teachers would get frustrated at the slang students would use when talking to each other and try to correct them from the country they learned Spanish in. There are many variations of the language so it makes it difficult when a Spanish teacher argues with a Spanish speaker. This will help me better prepare so I know that it is important to make all students feel welcomed and comfortable with their own cultural differences.

Cultivating Critical Pedagogy Through Inquiry, Reflection, and Action

# Appendix C Observation Assignments

#### **Observation Journal: Social Studies**

Students have many different opinions about Social Studies and Science. Those who experience learning via text books and lists of dates or vocabulary to memorize feel quite differently about this subject than those who engage in inquiry, simulation, and project-based learning opportunities.

Reflect on the strategies you see the teacher using and the way students respond to these. Then write about what you observed by addressing the following:

- How did the teacher introduce the concept to students? (Was it an Inquiry Design?)
- In what ways did students engage with the content? (Did they read aloud? Did they discuss?)

• In what ways did the teacher make space for students' different ways of knowing and being?

- What is your most vivid memory related to learning about Social Studies?
- In what ways does the teacher encourage students to co-construct learning?
- What do you think might happen/how would you respond if students start down a path of questioning that was not part of the original lesson?

• In what ways could you extend the learning from this activity into the next step of this topic? How could you extend it into other content areas?

Remember to include:

- a question or analysis of how you might teach this topic
- Minimum 150 words

#### **Observation Journal: Math**

Keeping in mind the class meeting and readings, describe what you see in the math lesson you observed. Consider the following in your reflection:

- How does the teacher help students make connections during math instruction/activities?
- What are some methods/strategies you see being used to instruct math in the classroom?

• In what ways does the teacher make space for students' varied ways of knowing and being?

- Where do you see math thinking being used in other subject areas?
- In what ways do students struggle with mathematical ideas?

Connect your observation to our class readings, discussions, and activities. Be sure to include:

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- your written summary of the lesson (150 word minimum)
- a question or suggestion you have regarding this topic



# Additional Research Presentations from the CCTE Fall 2021 Conference

"Cultivating Equitable and Sustaining Systems for Women Faculty of Color in Teacher Education." Betina Hsieh & Huong Tran Nguyen (California State University, Long Beach).

"Advancing Racially-Just Practices: A Tool for Reflection and Transforming of Educator Preparation Programs." Mimi Miller (California State University, Chico) & Bre Evans-Santiago (California State University, Bakersfield).

"Mentor Development and Partnerships for Equity." Imelda Nava, Tonikiaa Orange, & Jaleel Howard (University of California, Los Angeles).

"A Multidimensional Partnership to Develop an Expanded Learning, Rural Teacher Pipeline." Heather Horsley & Christina Macias (California State University, Fresno) & Brooke Berrios & Hank Gutierrez (Fresno County Superintendent of Education).

"Using Just, Equitable, and Inclusive Educational Practices to Assess Candidate Learning in a Science Methods Course." Antoinette Linton & Gavin Tierney (California State University, Fullerton).

"A Collaborative Effort to Improve Literacy Foundational Skills in Teacher Preparation in the California State University." Tanya Flushman (California State University Center for the Advancement of Reading and Writing), How Alpert (UC/CSU California Collaborative for Neurodiversity and Learning), & Sue Sears & Renee Ziolkowska (California State University, Northridge).

"Bringing Culturally Responsive Practices into View Across the Preservice/Practicum/Inservice Continuum." Betina Hsieh & Nina Wooldridge (California State University, Long Beach).

# **Other Presentations**

"Supporting Culturally Responsive Teaching Through Mindfulness Practices." Janeen Goree (Fresno Pacific University) & Nancy Akhavan (California State University, Fresno).

"Through Shining Eyes: New Knowledge for a Pedagogy of Reflexive Coaching." Carrie Birmingham, Somer Levine, & Terrelle Sales (Pepperdine University), Deborah Hamm (California State University. Long Beach), Lisa Keith, Claudia Norris, Michelle Pengilly, & Jan Zoller (Fresno Pacific University), & Frederick Peinado Nelson (California State University, Fresno).

"Sharing a Legacy of Courage and Activism with a New Generation of Teachers to Champion Access and Equity for California's English Learners."Lyn Scott (California State University, East Bay) & Elsie Solis-Chang (Point Loma Nazarene University).

"Latinx Families Navigating Special Education and the Role of Cultural Brokers." Kathleen Mortier & Edith Arias (San Francisco State University).

"Re-Imagining Teachers' Expectations Through Borderland Pedagogy." Leticia Rojas (Pasadena City College) & Daniel Liou (Arizona State University).

"Teacher Education Supervisor Priorities and Concerns: What Data Tell Us About Ongoing Professional Learning Needs Related to Social Justice and Equity Practices." Lisa Sullivan & Rebecca Ambrose (University of California, Davis), Evelyn Young (University of California, Irvine), Jane Kim (University of California, Los Angeles), & Johnnie Wilson (University of California, Santa Cruz).

"Environmental Justice in Teacher Preparation: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Place-Based Learning." Amy Frame (Loyola Marymount University).

"Advancing Equity and Social Justice: The Case for an Ecological Approach." Pia Wong, Susan Baker, & Deidre Sessoms (California State University, Sacramento).

"The Pedagogy of Jesus: The Intersection of Spirituality, Faith, and Identity Formation for Black Students." Terrelle Sales (Pepperdine University).

"Providing Opportunities for Practicing 'Do No Harm' in Preservice Education: Rehearsing Collaboration Between Parents, Teachers, and Interpreters to Benefit Students with Challenges in a Bilingual Education Program." Talya Drescher & Danna Lomax (California State University, Channel Islands).

"Incorporating Literacy TPEs and Dyslexia Content Within and Across Credential Pathways: Early Childhood Special Education and Mild to Moderate Support Needs."Anna Osipova & Ya-Chih Chang (California State University, Los Angeles) & How Alpert) UC/CSU California Collaboratve for Neurodiversity and Learning).

"Growing Your Own: Special Education Teacher Agency in a Residency Model." Ilene Ivins & Troya Ellis (Alder Graduate School of Education) & Courteny Gumora (California State University, East Bay). "Hope for the Future: An Exploratory Study on Latinx Community College Students Aspiring to Become K-12 Teachers." Steve Bautista (Santa Ana College).

"Partnerships Building Commitments in Equity and Social Justice Through the Nine Essentials." Cynthia Coler & Elizabeth Brown (California Lutheran University) & Jan Zoller (Fresno Pacific University).

"Mentoring Special Education Clear Credential Candidates: Impact on Perceived Workload Manageability." Jessica Cruz (California State University, Los Angeles).

"Mindfulness and Intrusive Advising in Higher Education." Lizbeth Viridiana Marquez (California State University, Fresno) & Janeen Goree (Fresno Pacific University).

"How Can We Enact What We Believe? Creating Inclusive Spaces in Teacher Education." David Huerta (University of La Verne) & Betina Hsieh (California State University, Long Beach).

"Action Research: A Tool for Novice and Veteran Teachers Committed to Equitable and Justice-Oriented Classrooms." Sarah Ives, Jenna Porter, & Pia Wong (California State University, Sacramento).

"Stressing Out: Teacher Candidates' Financial Worries While Being a Student Teacher." Jarod Kawasaki (California State University, Dominguez Hills).

"CSU Center to Close the Opportunity Gap Survey: COVID-19 Challenges and Pressing Needs Facing Teachers."Corinne Martinez, Diana Porras, & Analía Cabral (California State University, Long Beach).

"AAQEP's Model of Quality Assurance: Can Accreditation Standards and Processes Support Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity in Educator Preparation and in the P12 Education System?" Linda McKee (Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation).

"Continuing to Improve: Engaging in Improvement Science Towards Equity in Teacher Education." Libbi Miller, James Woglom, Heather Ballinger, & Sarah Green (Humboldt State University).

"Bridging Critical Thinking to Computational Thinking Through Equity Focused CT-STEM-PBL" Imelda Nava, Jaime Park, & Jane Kim (University of California, Los Angeles).

"Students as Protagonists: Transformative Literacy in Teacher Education." Carolyn O'Gorman-Fazzolari (Florida International University).

"To Help Students Like Me': Bilingual Teaching Candidates, Motivations, and California's Bilingual Education Renaissance." Adam Sawyer (California State University, Bakersfield).

**Other Presentations** 

"From Over-Under-Regulation (OUR) to a New Educator Preparation Framework." Alexander M. Sidorkin (California State University, Sacramento),

"Recruiting and Supporting Latinx Teacher Candidates." Pat Stall, Kimberly Knowles-Ynez, & David Espinoza (California State University, San Marcos).

"Why Is This So Difficult? A Descriptive Study of Two Cohorts of Youth Transitioning Back to Community from Juvenile Justice Detention." Catherine Galaviz-Sturm (University of California, Los Angeles).

"Pathways to Diversify the Educator Workforce." Adina Sullivan-Marlow & Sheivah Jones (San Diego County Office of Education).

# Information on the California Council on Teacher Education

Founded in 1945, the California Council on the Education of Teachers (now the California Council on Teacher Education since July 2001) is a non-profit organization devoted to stimulating the improvement of the preservice and inservice education of teachers and related school personnel. The Council attends to this general goal with the support of a community of teacher educators, drawn from diverse constituencies, who seek to be informed, reflective, and active regarding significant research, sound practice, and current public educational issues.

Membership in the California Council on Teacher Education can be either institutional or individual. Colleges and universities with credential programs, professional organizations with interests in the preparation of teachers, school districts and public agencies in the field of education, and individuals involved in or concerned about the field are encouraged to join. Membership includes announements of semi-annual spring and fall conferences, receipt via email in PDF format of the journals *Teacher Education Quarterly* and *Issues in Teacher Education*, emailed newsletters on timely issues, an informal network for sharing sound practices in teacher education, and involvement in annual awards and recognitions in the field.

The semi-annual conferences of the California Council on Teacher Education, rotate each year between sites in northern and southern California, feature significant themes in the field of education, highlight prominent speakers, afford opportunities for presentation of research and discussion of promising practices, and consider current and future policy issues in the field.

For information about membership in the California Council on Teacher Education, please contact: Alan H. Jones, Executive Secretary, California Council on Teacher Education, 3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, California 94118; telephone 415/666-3012; email alan.jones@ccte.org; website www.ccte.org

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