

Chapter 1

Preparing Educators for Sustainability: One Center's Journey

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the authors discuss clinical practice as a key component to field-based teacher education. Clinical practice constructed within a professional development school (PDS) model is based upon the work of Dewey, Vygotsky, and Goodlad, and provide the basis for this work. Dewey's center of pedagogy and learning through direct experiences, connected with Vygotsky's socially constructed relational imitation experiences linked with common language, juxtaposed to Goodlad's simultaneous renewal of university and PK-12 partnerships all intersect in the work of clinical practice. The authors then present a logic model framework in which to design field-based educator preparation considering the theory and research discussed. The chapter concludes with highlighting practice-based solutions and recommendations through three case studies showcasing implementation of the logic model framework in action.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2010), “the number of successful clinical practice programs and partnerships has increased, and clinical practice has advanced to a point of being nearly non-negotiable” (AACTE, 2018, p. 9). Dating back to when Dewey advocated for “centers of pedagogy” (Dewey, 1916), educators and education researchers have consistently recognized the need for clinical practice to be central to educator preparation programs in order for teacher candidates (TC) to move from theory to practice with authentic, hands-on experiences in exemplary schools (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Goodlad, 1990, 1994; Zeichner, 2010; Zimpher & Howey, 2013). The *Clinical Practice Commission* (CPC), sanctioned by AACTE (2018) was a national charge for operationalizing clinical practice stating,

...to prepare effective teachers for 21st century classrooms, teacher education . . . must move to programs that are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses (p. 5).

In order to add context to the clinical practice requisite in educator preparation, this chapter explores the development of clinical practice as the key element in educator preparation. Additionally, the need for establishing, maintaining, and growing intentional university and K-12 partnerships as one way to address the educator shortage through solid preparation will be addressed. Next, is a discussion of one exemplar of clinical practice at one institute of higher education where the development of a logic model framework is presented. The chapter concludes with highlighting solutions and recommendations within three case studies showcasing implementation of the logic model framework in action.

BACKGROUND

The key for improving teacher preparation lies on the importance of providing teacher candidates with field experience in a real world context. To achieve this goal, key stakeholders from PK-12 schools and key stakeholders from educator preparation programs (EPPs) must work together regardless of where they are along the developmental continuum toward a true clinical practice and partnership. Partnerships today between university faculty and K-12 teachers imply more than an instructional relationship based on a one-way flow of information from expert to his or her novice students (Tomanek, 2005). The construct of the term partnership implies direct benefits for all parties involved. Partnerships involve individuals with expertise or skills to contribute toward a common goal. The idea is that there is something to be gained by everyone (AACTE, 2018; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990).

Although both PK-12 schools and teacher preparation focus on the development and education of students, often times the cultures of both entities are different and blending the two can prove to be challenging. Along with the challenges and barriers also comes a great opportunity for simultaneous renewal where every stakeholder can benefit mutually from the result of collectively working together. Whether stakeholders within a clinical partnership are collaborating on establishing, maintaining, or growing a program, there are certainly considerations at each stage to discuss and enact together as a unit.

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