Chapter 6
Overcoming Barriers to Clinical Partnerships:
A National Taskforce Response

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ABSTRACT

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) set forth a set of new standards that demand excellence to produce educators who raise P-12 student achievement. This pilot multi-case study describes perspectives and across-case themes of the lived experiences of national key stakeholders in educator preparation programs and their professional development school (PDS) partnership system. CAEP's five guiding principles of Standard 2: Clinical Partnerships and Practice as a priori codes describe experiences and perspectives of three key stakeholders of the university's clinical partnership. The three key stakeholders include (1) university-based teacher educators, (2) school-based teacher educators, and (3) teacher candidates. The researchers discuss results and implications for practice and offer avenues for future research.

INTRODUCTION

Nine years ago, *The Blue Ribbon Panel Report* (National Council for Accreditation for Teacher Education, 2010) set forth a comprehensive series of recommendations that would lead to necessary changes in policy, practice, and culture and norms of preparation programs and school districts. One of the recommendations of the report suggested the moral imperative to "remove barriers to preparation program/district collaboration and provide incentives for meeting district needs" (National Council for Accredita-

tion for Teacher Education, 2010, p. 22). The report was a call to action to all education stakeholders, yet the collaborations between P-12 schools, the universities that prepare teacher candidates, and the state/federal policy makers continue to be stifled with barriers that prevent the renewal of the education profession. Although many positive moves toward the renewal of teacher preparation have taken place in specific locations, the sheer number of barriers often limit the development of collaborative systems between the entities that play large roles in the development of future teachers. The result is a critical problem of practice.

SIGNIFICANCE

Increasingly, universities and school districts share responsibility for teacher and student learning. Sharing responsibility demands that both institutions work to develop closer relationships, yet many barriers arise from the complex work done in university-school partnerships. When two educational institutions work together to meet both state and federal demands, there are simultaneous efforts to maintain, reproduce, negotiate, and transcend institutional boundaries and barriers (Daniels, Edwards, Engeström, Gallagher, & Ludvigsen, 2010). Schools and universities challenge each other's expertise, practices, policies, and social arrangements that can create conflicts and tensions. Solutions and support for resolution of any barrier will have a far-reaching impact on partnership sites.

The purpose of this study is to describe barriers in teacher preparation programs that may slow, or halt, the renewal of teacher preparation. The researchers of this study, a unique team of school and university based educators who simultaneously work in both environments, assert that the renewal of teacher preparation begins by removing certain boundaries of governance between the higher-education system that prepares teachers and the P-12 system where teachers work so that teacher educators can respond to the needs in P-12 schools. All stakeholder groups represented in a typical teacher preparation clinical partnership as well as national groups associated with educator preparation participated in the focus groups for this study.

The following research questions guided the data analysis identified in the methods, findings, and discussion sections of this article:

Research Question One: How does current literature identify ways to help educator preparation programs turn barriers into opportunities for renewal?
Research Question Two: How do practitioners in educator preparation programs (EPPs) describe barriers in clinical partnerships and practice?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Professional Capital: An Answer to a Divided Profession

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) described professional capital as made up of three other categories of capital: (a) human capital; (b) social capital, and; (c) decisional capital (p. 3). Human capital in teaching acquires and develops the required knowledge and skills. Hargreaves and Fullan explained:

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