Teaching and Learning: The Journal of Natural Inquiry & Reflective Practice

Volume 21 | Issue 2 Article 7

1-2007

How Can Creating Standards Ensure Teacher Quality?

Polly Ulichny

Teaching & Learning, Spring/Summer 2007, Volume 21, Numbers 2 & 3, pp. 213-253

How Can Creating Standards Ensure Teacher Quality?

Polly Ulichny
Brown University

Teacher quality is at the heart of student achievement. Accounting for variables traditionally associated with poor achievement—student poverty, poor school climate, lack of resources, class and school size—if teacher quality is high, so are student outcomes. If the quality is poor, the same goes for student achievement. But what is quality when it comes to teaching? Studies have identified an array of teacher attributes and their impact on student achievement levels, from teacher verbal ability measured by standardized tests, flexibility and breadth in implementing instructional strategies, subject area expertise, previous teaching experience, subject area knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge. But few individual, isolated traits have been identified that correlate with levels of student achievement. In a recent large-scale national study measured by NAEP, however, which correlated a state's student achievement gains with a number of teacher characteristics, Darling-Hammond (1999) found the greatest predictors of student achievement to be teachers' subject area expertise (as measured by college major or equivalent) and appropriate pedagogical knowledge (as measured by certification in the area of one's teaching). The study also found that states that have consistently high criteria for teacher credentialing have the highest scores on state aggregated NAEP data. It is not surprising, then, that the current climate for federal and state education policies supports the establishment of setting standards in the preparation and credentialing of new teachers.

As a result of the twin pressures to apply high standards for entering the teaching profession (and staying there) as well as to seek alternative routes to acquiring those standards in order to allow unprecedented numbers of well prepared teachers to enter a field that is facing staggering shortages, we are at a threshold of enacting policies that will transform the way teachers learn their craft and receive certification to teach. Setting standards for teachers is more complicated than setting student achievement standards, we will argue, because the

teaching standards refer to performance, which relies on more than mastering a specified body of knowledge. There is no battery of tests that can capture the complexity of the teaching craft. It needs to be evaluated in its enactment.

The main argument we present in this article is that a responsible approach to establishing standards for teacher licensure will need to allow for variation. We describe the implementation of a standards-based approach to preparing novice teachers through an examination of a case study of the Teacher Education (TE) program at Brown University, and we argue that an attempt to set standards in a one-size-fits-all federal or state-level legislation will not improve the preparation of teachers. We need to avoid standardization, the "evil-twin" of standards arising from the need for national-level, reliable accountability. Teaching contexts in schools, as well as schools of education in universities and colleges across the country, vary and so should their unique abilities to educate teachers well.

This is not a defense for an "anything goes" approach to the preparation of teachers. Rather, it is a call for better understanding the conditions of teacher preparation that best result in high quality teachers getting and staying in teaching positions in the many diverse settings of our nation's public schools. As we describe in our case study, we find that conditions which support excellence in teacher education are not unlike those recognized as improving failing secondary schools—collaborative efforts in small learning communities so that students and teachers know each other well in the multiple contexts that constitute their preservice preparation. Teaching, and learning about teaching, should maintain continuity across practicum and high education classroom experiences. This is best accomplished through personalization, which relies on teacher educators knowing their students and "best" classroom practices well, enabling them to coach teacher candidates in the acts of teaching and reflection on teaching.

The State of Standards

Standards for teacher quality and procedures for ensuring them are less uniform across the nation than the standards set for student learning (curriculum) and outcomes (achievement measures), but the current impetus to solve the problems in our nation's education system

by legislating accountability systems shows the direction in which we are heading. At present, the political will, as well as the need for significantly more teachers in the profession in the near future, seems to favor setting national standards for all teacher preparation programs and at the same time promoting alternatives to traditional teacher credentialing which, traditionally, has followed the completion of an accredited college teacher preparation program. We know from numerous studies of teacher quality, however, that it takes more than a college degree in a subject area or a high IQ to manage the complexities of educating children well. But establishing standards that define a high quality teaching craft is no simple matter. It may even be counterproductive to creating experiences that promote optimal teacher learning. On the one hand, there is a danger in specifying very broad and generic, measurable standards for accountability purposes. As mentioned earlier, having quantifiable, measurable benchmark criteria is attractive, but the likelihood of test scores in subject matter and pedagogical knowledge actually demonstrating the quality of one's teaching is minimal. Even the requirement to have earned a major and to be certified in the subject area and grade level of teaching, which follows from the findings of research on teacher quality and student achievement, is problematic. Do social studies teachers need to have multiple majors or their equivalents in order to teach geography, history, and economics? Or does a math/science teacher need multiple majors in math and various science disciplines? Teaching algebra, chemistry, and physics is a common load assignment in traditionally hard-to-staff or small schools. The National Council of State Legislatures' (2005) recent report recommending changes to NCLB describes this "flaw" in the legislation as follows:

> The law sets fairly broad parameters for what constitutes a highly qualified teacher and provides states some latitude for setting their own definitions and qualifications. Even so, the federal parameters have posed problems for certain schools and school districts in all states. The portion of the law's definition that requires teachers to prove content knowledge for each subject they teach is particularly problematic for hard-to-staff schools—for example, those in urban and rural districts. In addition, areas that were affected by teacher shortages even

> prior to NCLB have more challenges to adequately staff classrooms. (Executive Summary)

And how does having completed a list of required courses actually impact one's craft of teaching? Isn't it more likely the case that meaningful standards would need to address what teachers know, value, and actually *do* in the classroom?

While this might seem like a more responsible way to define quality in teaching than relying on a test score and a checklist of courses completed, it is a difficult enterprise and one that requires a great deal of flexibility, because it is virtually impossible to specify the myriad facets that contribute to quality teaching applicable to all teachers in all classrooms. Teaching is a contextually-bound, interpersonal activity that requires the simultaneous interplay and adjustment of subject matter, learner, and teaching strategy. As Labaree (1997) states in his analysis of why prescriptivism can be dangerous,

> [t]here is no simple checklist of teacher knowledge. ... Instead, the practice of teaching reveals interconnected sets of rule-governed behaviour which vary from context to context from social context to context. It is possible to identify some of these rules, but it would be a basic mistake to attempt to generalize from them so as to produce a definitive list of teacher knowledge. (p. 39)

Similarly, while educators regularly refer to "best practices," which might be articulated in standards, the reading and math wars show us that general agreement about the "one best way" to teach conceptual knowledge and skills is far from agreed upon.[1] Nevertheless, many state departments of education and professional educational organizations have attempted to do just that—define the basic dispositions, knowledge bases, and instructional practices that a teacher needs to master to be considered "highly qualified." Given NCLB specifications that require accountability for teacher quality and encourage new pathways to acquire and demonstrate it, we will surely see more attempts to work through these conundrums as the need for new teachers continues to rise, in some areas, dramatically.

A Case Study of Standards-Based Teacher Education

In this article, I will present the Brown University Teacher Education (TE) program as a case study of how standards for beginning teachers have been determined, addressed programmatically, and accounted for in the accreditation review process. It includes insights and convictions that my colleagues share and, hopefully, reveals the benefits and potentials of applying rigorous standards to teacher education programs. At the same time, it raises serious concerns about the regulation of standards in preparing (or standards regulating) highly qualified teachers.

It begins, however, with a caveat. What I will present is not based on rigorously determined "scientific" evidence. It is, rather, an accumulation of experiences of both teacher educators and graduates of the TE program at Brown over the past five to ten years. We are in the process of collecting information on all of our graduates from the past five years that will indicate who has pursued a teaching career after graduation, for how long and where, with attention to the whys of their decisions. But even that information won't tell us much about the teaching quality of our graduates. For that we rely on where we expect graduates of our program to be on the learning continuum of teaching at the end of our program, their hiring rates and in which schools, as well as continued contact with a large number of our graduates that informs us of their career paths post graduation. We keep track of their teacher certification test scores, but that seems the least revealing indicator regarding the quality of their preparation to teach upon leaving our program. The accumulation of this information about our graduates is not sufficient to *scientifically* demonstrate that what we are doing at Brown is the "best" practice, if there even is *one* for educating all teachers, but we continue to modify our attempts to educate new teachers in line with what we believe is most important. It is that belief and its actualization that I present here.

While my colleagues and I take pride in the program we have constructed, sometimes considering it the "best" way to educate beginning teachers, we nevertheless continually grapple with complexities in creating a standards-based system that can account for producing quality and highly qualified beginning teachers. I present this case as a thoughtful model of standards-driven teacher education

and as an illustration of how context conditions the implementation and interpretation of standards in teacher education.

Brown University Practice-Based Standards

The Brown TE program is standards driven. Practice-based standards stating the desired qualities and capacities of our graduates were developed by the clinical faculty in the early 1980s to guide TE candidates' learning of the teaching craft. We consider it good teaching practice to have clear expectations for learning and to share those expectations, in the form of a rubric, with students. The Brown Practice-Based Standards (BPBS) address seven areas of the teaching craft:

1. *Roles and Relationships* established with students, parents, colleagues, and the wider community.
2. Understanding the individual *Student as Learner*.
3. Ability in *Planning* individual lessons and curriculum units.
4. Implementing *Classroom Practices* that are appropriate for the task, delivered as whole group instruction or for collaborative group work, and that support cognitive development across a range of student abilities.
5. Using a variety of *Assessment* tools to monitor student learning and to inform instruction.
6. Demonstrating *Professional Knowledge and Growth* as a reflective, developing teacher.
7. Demonstrating depth and continued growth in the *Content Knowledge* of the teacher's disciplinary concentration.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, broad standards such as these represent uncontestable qualities of a highly qualified teacher. They are so broad that all desired attributes of a good teacher can fit under one or more of these categories. For example, facility with technology and issues of diversity are two areas that state departments of education are increasingly requiring as components of an accredited teacher education program. Rhode Island is one of those states. At Brown, we find multiple standards where they can and should be included—Roles and Relationships, Student as Learner, Classroom Practice, and Professional Knowledge and Growth.

Further, the breadth of these statements as standards provides little more to guide the teacher candidate in what it takes to attain them than an introductory chapter in a generic textbook on teaching methods. They serve as commendable ideals, but what do they mean, exactly? How does a teacher candidate know what it means to demonstrate these qualities? And, even more difficult to determine, how do we know what is good enough for a beginning teacher in each of these standards? These are the complex questions that must be answered for a standards-based accountability system to be effective, and we will argue, certainly no one score on an exam nor a single, broadly applicable assessment template can be used to monitor accountability in achieving these standards.

Articulating the Brown Practice-Based Standards

To address the issue of breadth of quality teaching standards and the vagueness inherent in declaring largely indisputable traits of qualified teachers, standards need to be carefully articulated and clarified. To inform teacher candidates of what we think it means to embody the qualities we have identified in our practice-based standards, we have included indicators to each of the seven general statements to describe them in detail. For teacher candidates and for mentors and supervisors we pose these indicators as questions. For example, Standard One is articulated by these indicators:

Standard One: Roles and Relationships

A. Relationship with Students

In what ways does the student teacher:

- create a safe and secure learning environment for students?
- encourage learners to become independent, responsible citizens in the classroom who demonstrate self discipline while carrying out assigned tasks?
- organize resources, materials, and the physical space allocated and organized to support active engagement of students?
- discern and address stereotypical references to gender, race, class, age, culture, disability, or sexual orientation?

- exhibit a consciousness of classroom community dynamics and climate?

B. Expectations of Students

In what ways does the student teacher:

- establish and maintain an orderly and cooperative classroom?
- enforce, fairly and consistently, classroom rules and deadlines?
- demand high expectations for all students? Are students expected to take responsibility for their own learning?
- create an active learning environment characterized by mutual respect and intellectual risk-taking?

C. Relationships with Colleagues and the School Community

In what ways does the student teacher:

- fulfill classroom and school responsibilities?
- work with fellow teachers?
- interact professionally, fairly, and equitably with students, colleagues, parents, and others?
- work collaboratively with agencies in the larger community (when necessary and appropriate)?
- follow school policy and procedures, respecting the boundaries of his/her professional responsibilities when working with students, colleagues, and families?
- make use of codes of professional conduct adopted by his/her professional organizations?
- understand local, state, and federal laws and regulations related to students' rights and teacher responsibilities?[2]

In this detailed articulation of what we mean by establishing an appropriate professional role and developing relationships in the classroom, with students and their families, colleagues, and the wider community, we define what we believe are "best practices" for high quality teachers. I doubt that all teachers, or even all teacher educators, would agree that these are universally held values in what it means to establish one's role as a teacher. The principles embodied in these questions guide our design and implementation of teacher education at

Brown. In deciding on standards for preparing new teachers, the angles are in the details. This *should* be the place where a teacher education program expresses its philosophy and intentions. Articulating standards makes those principles explicit or sheds light on where faculty cannot come to agreement on "best practices."

Assessing the Standards

Along with the challenges of defining standards, the second problem of a standards-based approach to teacher preparation is that of assessing how a candidate meets standards: Where is the bar to be set for a beginning teacher in a preservice teacher preparation program? How should meeting standards be demonstrated (how many indicators need to be met; how consistently; how many times; by artifacts, reflections, student work outcomes, external judgments)? And, finally, who is responsible for making the global assessment as to whether or not a candidate has met the standard for licensure?

It is no wonder that many policy analysts, policymakers, and educators seek refuge behind a single, telling test score, because to answer these questions in terms of one's teaching performance is extremely difficult. It reminds us of the 1964 statement of Justice Potter Stewart regarding the definition of hard-core pornography, "I shall not today attempt to further define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within the shorthand description; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. *But I know it when I see it*, and the motion picture involved in this case [The Lovers] is not that" (italics added). Quite the same problem, when it comes to determining "quality teaching."

In order to describe how we have dealt with the problem of assessing practice-based standards at Brown, we need to put the assessment process within the context of the TE program as a whole. We present the context of the program here in two layers:

- what we hold as fundamental tenets of good teacher education, and
- how the program has been designed to maximize these principles.

Teacher Education at Brown

The central tenets we consider critical to quality teacher education and that distinguish our program are:

1. Small size

We offer certification in only four discipline areas and the desired number of students in each of those divisions is from twelve to fifteen.

2. Cohort based

All students follow an intensive eleven-month program together. There are no part-time students, though additional time student teaching is sometimes required before candidates qualify for certification.

3. Faculty teach and supervise

Each of the four disciplinary strands is directed by one clinical faculty member who recruits, admits, advises, teaches, and supervises each of the students in their discipline area. Clinical faculty have significant school and teaching experience.

4. Centered on practice

The core of the teacher education program is practice-based, including an introduction to teaching in a specially designed summer lab school that is organized by the clinical faculty but entirely taught by teacher candidates.

5. Mentors (cooperating teachers) as partners

The recruitment of mentors is deliberate so that there is generally a long-term commitment on the part of cooperating teachers to the program, and cooperating teachers are selected because they use methods in their classroom similar to the methods in which we instruct our student teachers. University classes and school experiences are connected.[3]

6. Seeking diversity

We specifically recruit and support candidates of color into our program who want to enter a teaching career, and we all struggle with issues of race, class, culture, and home language as they affect student achievement.

7. Content knowledge emphasis

In the secondary disciplines, candidates spend an academic semester taking courses in their content area. In the elementary program, methods courses in elementary content areas are year-long and prepare teachers by engaging them in content area instruction that they are encouraged to use and modify for their elementary age students.

Personalization in Teaching Students to Meet BPBS

Small is the key word in this case study. Both the teacher education program and Brown University itself are small, as is the State of Rhode Island, where Brown resides. The hallmark of our program is its personalization. As Ted Sizer, the major architect of the current TE program configuration at Brown, says, "You can't teach someone you don't know." We also believe that teacher candidates should be taught at the university the way they are being asked to teach in their classrooms. This means small class sizes, hands-on/minds-on learning tasks that foster habits of mind needed in teaching, teaching the whole student, an emphasis on collaboration and community in learning and teaching, and teachers *coaching* while students *do* authentic work (in this case teaching). The resonance with Coalition of Essential Schools principles is not a coincidence since Ted Sizer, the founder of CES, reorganized the 100-year tradition of secondary teacher certification available to Brown undergraduates interested in becoming teachers at the same time he founded the Coalition at Brown. Themes that underlie CES principles have greatly impacted and, we would argue, facilitated the standards-based approach to teacher education we have developed.

Brown University is a private Ivy League university with a liberal arts emphasis. Although a recently launched academic enrichment campaign intends to transform Brown from a small, primarily undergraduate, student centered, liberal arts university into a moderately larger university,[4] teacher education historically fits within the student-centered, liberal arts tradition at Brown. The current teacher education program was designed with the intent of developing a teacher's craft along with content area knowledge. Today there are approximately fifty-five students enrolled in the eleven-month Teacher

Education program, divided among three secondary disciplines—biology, history/social studies, and English—and an elementary MAT program. The secondary teacher education program enrolls some undergraduates, but serves mostly MAT students.[5]

Faculty. The unique clinical role of the teacher education faculty has a great deal to do with rigorous attention to standards in the program as well as maintaining the personalization of the program. The teacher education faculty are non-tenure track, clinical faculty because their expertise in teaching is considered more relevant than their highest degree. Moreover, their responsibilities to both teach and supervise students in the field as they learn by teaching are considered primary, with service to the local community of great importance as well. Conducting and publishing research, though considered a desirable addition to clinical faculty work, and grant writing, while valued at the university as a whole, are not mandatory criteria for keeping one's faculty position in Teacher Education. This explicit sanctioning of dedicating one's professional energies to the training and coaching of preservice teachers in their practice-teaching placements allows the TE program to help a small, carefully selected group of students master the fundamentals of teaching at a beginning level, but often at a more accomplished level than the average first-year teacher.[6]

Each of the four divisions of the TE program has one clinical faculty person to oversee their portion of the program and, along with an assistant director of teacher education, administer all aspects of the program. Clinical faculty teach a seminar accompanying each of the clinical teaching experiences covering instructional methods and analyses of teaching practice. They also supervise all student teachers frequently. The secondary program relies on other Brown faculty to teach discipline area courses during the academic semester of the program. The elementary program, a relatively recent addition to TE at Brown (begun in 1997), has one clinical professor and five adjunct faculty members whose primary responsibilities are in local area schools as teachers, coaches, and administrators. One of the adjuncts serves as an additional clinical professor in the elementary program and is the Director of the MAT Program at The Wheeler School, our partner institution in the elementary program. The adjuncts provide content area instruction and methods as well as a touchstone in the day-to-day reality of schools.

Program of Study and Teaching Experiences. At the center of the TE program are coached teaching experiences and reflection. The program begins with an intensive seven-week summer semester during which all MAT and UTEP (Undergraduate Teacher Education Program) candidates team-teach in a three or four week special summer lab school designed by the TE faculty—Brown Summer High School for secondary candidates and SummerPrep for elementary. A mentor teacher is assigned to each team, with his or her role based on a peer-coaching model in which the mentor consults with the team about curriculum planning, observes each lesson, and debriefs with the team daily. Clinical faculty supervise MAT and UTEP students daily and closely follow their growth as teachers in this intensive summer enrichment program. The lab-school morning teaching experience is accompanied by daily afternoon classes specifically related to learning the fundamentals of the craft of teaching. At the end of the summer semester, students produce an electronic portfolio that describes and documents their growth in each of the seven practice-based standards and posts it on the education department website.

The fall and spring semesters differ for the elementary and the secondary candidates. Since secondary candidates have an academic semester in which they take university courses primarily in their content area, they may choose to student teach in either the fall or the spring, leaving the non-student teaching semester for academic concentration. Student teaching for fourteen weeks is accompanied by a weekly methods course taught by the clinical professor of that discipline.

The elementary program, on the other hand, has one path for all students in the cohort. The fall semester contains a practicum experience of 2.5 days a week in a single placement and the majority of education courses constituting the program. Spring semester is dedicated to student teaching—full-time classroom teaching in yet a different school and at a different grade level. Methods classes in math, science, and literacy continue to meet occasionally, while the analysis seminar continues to meet weekly.

Teacher candidates are placed in multiple school settings, and cooperating teachers are selected on the basis of how their practice aligns with the instruction candidates receive in their methods classes, their willingness to co-teach with and coach a novice in all teaching responsibilities, and their specific knowledge of the Brown program

and its standards. We tend to work with cooperating teachers we have recruited for a sustained period of time, but we are always looking for and adding new mentors and schools to our team. We ask them to communicate regularly with clinical supervisors regarding the progress or glitches teacher candidates experience in the practice-based standards.

Practicum and student teaching experiences are supervised by the clinical professors of the various disciplines, who also teach weekly seminars, that help students collectively reflect and connect their daily experiences to pedagogical learning. Clinical faculty rely on each other and on cooperating teachers to corroborate their assessments of the candidates' teaching, as well as students' self-assessments on their progress in the BPBS. A three-way conference between teacher candidate, supervisor, and mentor towards the end of the teaching experience confirms areas of growth and sets goals for further attention.

At the end of each teaching semester, students produce a digital portfolio demonstrating their continued growth and understanding of each of the seven standards. The digital portfolios contain a self-selection of curriculum units, lesson plans, student work, academic coursework, and reflective exercises that students have completed, described in the narrative of their cumulative teaching and learning experiences. By the end of the TE program, successful teacher candidates see themselves as "works in progress" and have acquired the meta-awareness of what constitutes quality teaching to continue to guide their learning as teachers.

Assessing Students Using Practice-Based Standards. Given this description of the Brown TE program, it should be clear how the central tenets of the program support an assessment-driven, "personal" coaching approach to the preparation of new teachers within the context of a cohort support network. The proverbial village is co-constructed to teach the teacher.[7] It is, I believe, the unusual juxtaposition of a standards-based, assessment-driven, personal coaching approach that underlies the accomplished, reflective, meta-cognitive, knowledgeable practitioner we manage to congratulate repeatedly on the graduation stage each May.

Challenges. Would that it were this easy all the time! Most of the time—with a great deal of work, interpersonal coaching and advising, and successful communication—the vast majority of our

candidates fall somewhere between the qualitatively assessed and agreed upon "closely approaching" to "exceeding standards" continuum of Meeting Practice-Based Standards. It is in the case of the few "beginning to approach standards" towards the end of their student teaching experiences, that the dilemma of defining "how good is good enough?" surfaces.

As a nation and a profession, we are entering new territory as credentialing programs are being held to particular, strict outcomes within university or college contexts that have traditionally offered multiple avenues to an earned degree. Earning a teaching degree is being regarded as scrupulously as other degrees conferring a professional status and eligibility for a license to practice, as in the fields of medicine, law, psychology, and pharmacology. Since the ability to teach well is more than mastering a body of knowledge, it is extremely difficult to define and quantify. Add to that hurdle the widely-held opinion of nonteaching professionals that the ability to teach is an automatic byproduct of a good general education and we are faced with the dilemma of how to specify what an input-outcome system for teacher education would look like in a context of national regulation with strong support for alternative, deregulated routes into the profession. As regulations seek to define what the higher education system of preservice teacher education should look like with greater specificity, other entities are being encouraged to offer alternatives for educated, talented people just out of college or changing career directions in midlife to enter the teaching corps with less red tape. National and state-level policy and legislation are in the dual horns of the dilemma that surrounds knowledge and beliefs about what it takes to prepare highly qualified teachers.

State Standards for Program Approval

In order to understand the Brown TE program within the state context regarding standards-driven teacher education and credentialing, I will explain Rhode Island's newly implemented standards-based approach to approving credentialing programs for teachers. Many of the same issues I have described in how Brown's TE program grapples with standards for assessing teacher quality reverberate at the state level since the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) shifted to a standards-based system to accredit teacher credentialing programs.

To accomplish this, RIDE developed eleven standards for beginning teachers (RIBTS) that are detailed in fifty-six indicators attached to the eleven beginning-teacher standards and, in addition, it created four standards for credentialing teacher preparation programs.[8] The context of state mandated standards governing the preparation of teachers is presented below.

Accrediting Teacher Preparation In Rhode Island

In the late 1990s, the Rhode Island Department of Education embarked on designing a new, standards-based accreditation process for teacher education programs. Over the past several years, the Rhode Island Standards for Teacher Preparation Program Approval have been introduced, refined, and as of 2005, applied to all teacher education certification programs in the state. This was not an easy or painless process. Most of the state's certification programs received conditional approval, which required Accreditation Committee recommendations to be implemented within a prescribed time frame, usually within one year. These ranged from minor modifications—such as refining a particular reporting system—to more substantive changes within not only the teacher education programs but also within the wider university community. Several individual certification programs in the state were denied accreditation and required to disband or wholly reconstitute themselves according to the Accreditation Committee's recommendations.[9]

Rhode Island accredits all teacher preparation programs according to four broad standards:

Standard One:

> Prospective educators recommended for licensure by Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs are proficient in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards (RIBTS).[10]

Standard Two:

> Prospective educators in Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, develop the dispositions, and practice the skills that are encompassed in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards and the opportunity to develop their learning in a

variety of high quality field sites with professionals who model effective educational practice, assume responsibility for educating prospective colleagues, and are committed to ongoing professional development.

Standard Three:

Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs and their institutions demonstrate a commitment to affirming the diversity of our state, our communities, and our public schools by preparing educators who can work effectively with students, families, community members, and colleagues from diverse backgrounds to create learning communities in which all students succeed.

Standard Four:

Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs:

- have adequate resources to ensure a faculty that is engaged in scholarship,
- demonstrate exceptional expertise in its teaching fields,
- are actively involved in PK-12 schools,
- contain structures that ensure coherence within and across programs, and
- specify systematic processes of evaluation to ensure program improvement.

These standards are further articulated through *process* and *performance* indicators that need to be supported by evidence to show that a TE program is meeting the standard. For example,

Standard One specifies the assessment and accountability system that TE programs need to adopt;

Standard Two specifies, in great detail, the kinds of knowledge and experiences required to prepare highly qualified teachers;

Standard Three specifies that diversity is a subject to be encountered throughout the coursework and classroom experiences leading teacher candidates to not only appreciate, but accommodate to the diversity of the students and communities in the state; and

> **Standard Four** defines the inter-relationship of teacher education programs/universities and schools/districts in taking responsibility for children's learning.

In other words, the State Department of Education requires teacher preparation programs to ensure that their graduates meet practice-based teaching standards, that they are provided with coursework and practical experiences that embody these standards, that they embrace diversity as an institution and provide graduates with diversity training, and finally, that they collaborate with local schools and districts to improve K-12 student achievement.

We find little to disagree with here in terms of the desired components of a teacher education program. But the newly defined accreditation system, like the accountability requirements of NCLB, which the state also enforces, is tantamount to a mandate for school reform that the state defines for all participants in the PK-12 education process. In defining the responsibility of TE programs to find and/or create ideal training-ground classrooms for their teacher candidates while pressing for a contextual diversity of learning and teaching experiences that include high standards in the use of technology for each candidate, the state is effectively requiring universities to contribute, in quite specific ways, to solving the educational disparities that exist in public schooling all across the country—as an unfunded mandate. This is an ambitious agenda which sits uneasily in university administrations and teacher education programs that have generally enjoyed academic freedom to educate their students as they see best, without much interference from the state.

In Rhode Island, the problems with this state-imposed responsibility to improve PK-12 education systemically, although fundamentally different, are felt by large public universities and small private ones alike. The ripples of the effects of the long arm of this tiny state into a university's policies and practices regarding even more than teacher education courses and practice-teaching experiences are disquieting when not outright alarming. If implemented as designed, the state can require universities to offer arts and science courses that demonstrate compatibility with K-12 curriculum standards in specific subject areas; redefine the responsibilities of faculty in the university to include direct support in PK-12 schools; allocate resources to support

the state's emphasis on diversity in admissions, hiring practices, and discourse within the university; and promote an aggressive technology agenda.

If we look at the Brown context, in particular, we see the state PK-12 educational bureaucracy requiring a private, Ivy League, liberal arts institution to comply with its requirements well beyond the confines of the small scale Teacher Education program. In a university that is not invested in professional degrees, as a matter of principle, the Teacher Education Program is anomalous. If we create more problems than we're "worth," in terms of collateral changes required of the wider university community, we have little hope of garnering the financial support we need to provide excellent teacher preparation experiences for a diverse group of candidates. What we need to survive and excel as a preservice teacher education program is a flexibility that we have so far negotiated with both the state and university administration because of our small size and unique position within the college. As federal guidelines for teacher preparation emerge within the current climate of strict accountability, which is to be outcome-determined and quantitatively measured, the room for flexibility to adapt to the unique contexts of the universities that prepare teachers is threatened. The more specifically the preparation of future teachers gets encoded in national legislation that, then, falls to the states to enforce, the less likely unusual programs like Brown's or those in institutions similar to ours will survive, given they cannot easily leverage universitywide policies and resources in support of teacher education.[11]

The irony of this situation—that small, personalized programs may find it difficult to meet state-level program accreditation standards—surfaces when we consider that alternative routes to teacher certification are being developed in every state with federal encouragement. Alternative routes will allow individuals to petition that their unique paths of experience and education can earn them a teaching credential. They will also allow various private interest groups to establish pathways leading to a teaching credential, skirting the requirements imposed upon universities, their credentialing programs, and a matriculated student in a state-accredited teacher education program. Many of the private interest groups, whether entrepreneurial such as *Teach for America* or supported by business interests as are the growing number of large city Teaching Fellows programs, are designed

to attract college graduates with liberal arts degrees with an "easy" entree to a teaching credential by combining minimal coursework with immersion into a challenging teaching situation in a hard-to-staff school. An analysis of these alternatives and their ability to train and maintain a talented teaching pool is the topic of another article, but my overall assessment is that they do not serve either aspiring teachers or needy school districts and their students well. The irony resides in the fact that these fast-track programs are allowed to skirt the scrutiny that an accredited teacher education program must undergo; and the programs that are most likely to deviate from the regulations—thus risking losing either their credentialing status or their university support—are those that offer small, ancillary programs within a college or university that is focused on providing a quality liberal arts education to its academically talented students. As a case in point, if the success of a teacher education program is to be measured in terms of how graduates affect the learning of their charges in PK-12 classrooms, teacher education programs will need to engage in extensive data collection and analysis.[12] The increased burden on small, relatively unsupported, nonresearch-oriented teacher education faculty and programs that reside in small liberal arts institutions might very well crush them.

Conclusion

Through this presentation of Brown's implementation of a practice-based/standards-based TE program within the context of a state mandated standards-based program accreditation process, we have presented the benefits and dilemmas that a rigorous implementation of standards-based teacher education can produce. Important learnings have emerged for us, confirming our belief that a small, personalized, clinically-based program prepares excellent novice teachers. At Brown we have benefited from state-sanctioned flexibility in demonstrating how our candidates meet standards required for licensure—including the flexibility to define our own practice-based standards for beginning teachers, which reflects our philosophy of a good PK-12 education.

No one template of requirements will suit the variety of institutions that exist to train new teachers. Teacher education programs need to be able to identify their philosophies of what constitutes quality teaching and create experiences that engender them. Flexibility also

ensures continual assessment and revision of program elements to meet the new challenges that surely will be many in the years to come. Federal and state policies governing the preparation of teachers need to account for the varieties of university contexts that support teacher preparation programs and remain flexible in their accountability demands. How far they can "force" a university's compliance has not been tested yet, but uniform mandates from the government upon institutions of higher learning would undoubtedly create a hornet's nest of problems.

Additionally, the demands for documentation that may be required to support the accountability mandates are costly in terms of time, personnel, and funds. They are particularly onerous to small faculties that already manage multiple roles in the preparation of teachers—as is the case at Brown. We don't wish to see the systems-management aspect of standards-based teacher preparation overwhelm and undermine the personalized work of the faculty with their students, which we are convinced is needed to prepare highly qualified teachers.

Finally, the deregulation of avenues leading to licensure needs the same scrutiny that a careful articulation and assessment of standards for accredited teacher preparation require. It is illogical to require state approved university-based TE programs to fit a standards mold, with all the indicators specified and the documentation necessary to demonstrate meeting them, and at the same time allow alternate routes to certification the extreme flexibility to create their own rationale and process for credentialing educators. What is to prevent a candidate who does not meet standards in a state-accredited program from entering an alternative route program to avoid intense scrutiny? We need ways for career changers to enter the teaching profession without repeating years in college to accumulate required courses, but a six-week introduction to the "essentials" of teaching before being placed in a challenging classroom that even the most seasoned teacher would struggle in is not likely to produce a new generation of highly qualified teachers who will stem the tide of teacher shortages. Without serious mentoring programs, that so far few states or school districts have created because of the funding required to support them, fast-track, entrepreneurial teacher preparation programs have little hope of meeting high standards for preparing beginning teachers. The large scale exodus from teaching within the first three years that is associated with programs like Teach for America, while explained away in the intentions

of its mission,[13] is also a result of burn-out experienced by poorly prepared idealists who experience failure day after day in their classrooms.[14]

Fundamentally, teaching quality is a result of what prepared professionals know, value, and do in the classroom to support students' learning. Relying on performance-based standards to determine a teacher's quality is complicated. We need to find reliable ways to document evidence of meeting standards in a teacher's practice, and we need to determine how good is good enough to enter the profession as a first year teacher. These qualitative assessments are more difficult to render in a strict system of accountability, but that should not prevent us from searching for answers that reflect the complex activity that is teaching itself. Relying on teacher or student test scores or the number of courses taken in a discipline to determine quality teaching avoids asking and answering the questions that will permit us to prepare well-qualified teachers. In an accountability climate, turning to a standardized, measurable criteria to demonstrate that the mark has been met is desirable for ease of implementation, but in the case of determining what quality teaching looks like in practice, single scores fail to tell us much of anything about a teacher's craft.

Determining quality in a teaching practice comes from being close to the source—the act of teaching, not from mandates. We need to understand more about the preservice preparation experiences that produce quality teachers. Critical policies that will shape the future of teacher preparation should rely on research that investigates quality outcomes in terms of teaching practice and the conditions that promote them. They need to encompass preservice experiences as well as induction into the profession in the first three to five years of a teacher's career. This means investigating ways in which the state, school districts, higher education programs, and non-profit teacher preparation enterprises can jointly assume responsibility for seeing teachers through their preparation experiences. Backwards engineering to establish the core of standards, along with flexibility in demonstrating how they are being met within the various contexts of higher education institutions and professional pathways, should guide the legislation of excellence in teacher preparation.

References

Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). *Teacher quality and student achievement: A review of state policy evidence.* Seattle, WA: University of Washington, Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.

Labaree, D. (1997). Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Education Research Journal, 34*(1), 39-81.

Protheroe, N., Lewis, A., & Paik, S. (2002). Promoting quality teaching. The U.S. Department of Education annual plan for 2002-03 prepared by the Rand Corporation. *ERIC Digest, 20*(1), 3-9.

Rhode Island Program Approval Standards. (2002, November 4). Providence: Rhode Island Department of Education.

Shavelson, R. J., & Towne, L. (Eds.), & Committee on Scientific Principles for Education Research. (2004). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Research Council.

Thompson, S. (2001). The authentic standards movement and its evil twin. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82*(5), 358-362.

Endnotes

1 See the following commentaries and reports to get a general idea of the issues surrounding these curriculum wars and the passionate ideologies that fuel them: K. Anderson, "The Reading Wars: Understanding The Debate Over How Best To Teach Children To Read," *LA Times*, June 18, 2000, and the National Right To Read Foundation; D. Klein et al., *The State of State Math Standards 2005,* Thomas Fordham Institute, 2005.

2 A full articulation of all seven BPBS is in the Appendix.

3 In reality, this criteria is difficult to guarantee in all cases given the particular contexts of schools, particularly the urban schools we work with. We teach teacher candidates constructivist methods of teaching, and not all school contexts support this kind of instruction, particularly many urban secondary schools. Additionally, it is fair to say that we, as faculty, see a more seamless integration of university coursework and classroom practice than our students do while in the program. A recent graduate characterized his MAT experience for new applicants to the program like this, "If any teacher education program can prepare you

for your first year of teaching—which they can't—this [Brown] program comes as close as you can get."

4 The plan for Brown's future development continues its undergraduate tradition while expanding graduate studies and promoting interdisciplinary centers of research excellence.

5 There are many similarities between the elementary and secondary programs, but an important distinction is that the secondary candidates have an academic semester, in which they take content courses in their subject area of certification and do not teach in a school, while the elementary program has a teaching component embedded in all three semesters. Content area subject matter is a prerequisite to entering the MAT program in elementary education.

6 I am basing this value judgment on the number of graduates who are hired and have choices among desirable job offerings, the career trajectories of many graduates (many have won national awards, have created their own schools, and are actively involved in faculty-driven charter schools across the county), and the first year references and comments from principals who have hired Brown TE graduates.

7 All of the villagers become both teachers and learners in our best experiences, but that is another article.

8 RIBTS (standards and indicators for beginning teachers) as well as Standards for Program Approval are posted on the RIDE website at http://www.ridoe.net

9 All of the denied programs have petitioned the state and have been allowed to continue credentialing new teachers pending major modifications in program design that will be applied to all newly matriculated students.

10 Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards (RIBTS), have been aligned with the Brown Practice-Based Standards (BPBS), which predated RIBTS and are regularly updated to incorporate new additions to teacher quality indices. The state of Rhode Island has approved the Brown Practice-Based Standards, in their articulation, as equivalent to RIBTS.

11 Brown is an original member of CETE (Consortium of Excellence in Teacher Education) which was created in the 1980s to bring together teacher education programs available in small, elite liberal arts colleges that did not, as a rule, have a large scale commitment to the field of education. (Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania are exceptions among the members since they both have a well established graduate school of education, but all other members of CETE rely on a relatively small education faculty to educate liberal arts undergraduates or a small number of masters candidates who seek a credential to teach.)

12 A case in point: The state of Washington mandates that candidates for teacher certification demonstrate "positive impact on student learning." The term "positive impact" begs for definition and too easily leads towards a simplistic pre-test/post-test criteria. But in the short time that a student teacher is in full charge of a classroom of learners, how can *any* impact be reliably attributed to an individual teacher candidate? A more sensitive alternative to demonstrating positive impact on student learning would be to keep copious samples of classroom work and documents of student participation, with and without the student teacher's involvement, and assess the differences between the conditions, if any, in a systematic way. This assessment, while more authentic than a comparison of test scores, would overwhelm both large and small TE programs by the sheer volume of data that would need to be collected and assessed to determine a candidate's eligibility for licensure.

13 Part of the appeal that Teach for America engenders among new college graduates is the steep learning curve it offers to talented, idealistic young people so that they can teach for a few years and "save needy children" in classrooms before moving on to their more permanent professions.

14 Lack of adequate support and preparation for challenging situations is most often cited as the reason teachers leave the profession within the first few years of practice. But there are other factors leading to early exits from the teaching profession. The more we view the preparation of teachers in terms of rigorous professional standards, the more likely preservice teacher preparation programs are going to ready their graduates to get the many jobs that will need filling. But, will they stay in teaching if the conditions in schools are so regulated by current accountability mandates that they feel little professional autonomy to create a learning environment that can meet their students' needs? In an accountability climate that is driving teaching and learning to be measured by multiple and frequent tests that meet scientifically defined reliability and validity criteria, teachers are finding less room to make professional judgments about curriculum content and instructional strategies with the result that they end up feeling that they are incapable of making a difference in their students' achievement. Will highly qualified teachers feel as effective as they could be in classrooms that are becoming increasingly controlled by district, state, and federal mandates?

Appendix

Brown Practice-Based Standards*

Standard One: Roles and Relationships

A. Relationship with Students

In what ways does the student teacher:

- create a safe and secure learning environment for students?
- encourage learners to become independent, responsible citizens in the classroom who demonstrate self discipline while carrying out assigned tasks?
- organize resources, materials, and the physical space allocated and organized to support active engagement of students?
- discern and address stereotypical references to gender, race, class, age, culture, disability, or sexual orientation?
- exhibit a consciousness of classroom community dynamics and climate?

B. Expectations of Students

In what ways does the student teacher:

- establish and maintain an orderly and cooperative classroom?
- enforce, fairly and consistently, classroom rules and deadlines?
- demand high expectations for all students? Are students expected to take responsibility for their own learning?
- create an active learning environment characterized by mutual respect and intellectual risk-taking?

C. Relationships with Colleagues and the School Community

In what ways does the student teacher:

- fulfill classroom and school responsibilities?
- work with fellow teachers?
- interact professionally, fairly, and equitably with students, colleagues, parents, and others?
- work collaboratively with agencies in the larger community (when necessary and appropriate)?
- follow school policy and procedures, respecting the boundaries of his/her professional responsibilities when working with students, colleagues, and families?

* Indicators are phrased to reflect the elementary classroom. Minor modifications appear in the secondary BPBSs.

- follow school policy and procedures, respecting the boundaries of his/her professional responsibilities when working with students, colleagues, and families?
- make use of codes of professional conduct adopted by his/her professional organizations?
- understand local, state, and federal laws and regulations related to students' rights and teacher responsibilities?

Teachers maintain professional standards guided by social, legal, and ethical principles. (RIBTS #11)

Teachers create a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation. (RIBTS #6)

Teachers foster collaborative relationships with colleagues, families, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning. (RIBTS #7)

Meeting Standard One at the End of SummerPrep:

The teacher candidate manages to establish a routine which students understand and respect. Activities reflect careful thought, and take into account differences in students' cultural background, home language, developmental levels, and learning styles. The teacher candidate is learning to create situations in which students construct knowledge. The teacher candidate exhibits respect and consideration toward colleagues, particularly in team situations; supports colleagues' work; and contributes an equal share to team efforts. The teacher candidate encourages and elicits interaction with parents and community and makes him/herself available to those constituencies when and where appropriate. (S)he clearly demonstrates leadership in the classroom, guiding and directing activities and interaction in ways that contribute to a positive and safe learning environment. The standard is met if the student teacher consistently models appropriate decorum and exercises control without intimidation or domination, promoting a genuine democratically-based classroom towards the end of the clinical experience.

Meeting Standard One at the End of Fall Practicum and Seminar:

The teacher candidate manages to maintain the routine of the host classroom, which students understand and respect. Carrying out of activities reflects careful thought, and takes into account differences in students' cultural background, home language, developmental levels, and learning styles. The teacher candidate is continuing to learn to create situations in which students construct knowledge. The teacher candidate exhibits respect and consideration toward colleagues, particularly in team situations; supports colleagues' work; and contributes an equal share to team efforts. The teacher candidate encourages and elicits interaction with parents and community and makes him/herself available to those constituencies when and where appropriate. (S)he clearly demonstrates leadership in the classroom, guiding and directing activities and interaction in ways that contribute to a positive and safe learning environment. The standard is met if the student teacher consistently models appropriate decorum and exercises control without intimidation or domination, promoting a genuine democratically-based classroom throughout the clinical experience.

Meeting Standard One:

The teacher candidate can establish and maintain a classroom atmosphere that students understand and respect and organizes them for instruction. Carrying out of classroom activities reflects careful thought, and takes into account differences in students' cultural background, home language, developmental levels, and learning styles. The teacher candidate is adept at creating situations in which students construct knowledge. The teacher candidate exhibits respect and consideration toward colleagues, particularly in team situations; supports colleagues' work; and contributes an equal share to team efforts. The teacher candidate encourages and elicits interaction with parents and community and makes him/herself available to those constituencies when and where appropriate. (S)he clearly demonstrates leadership in the classroom, guiding and directing activities and interaction in ways that contribute to a positive and safe learning environment. The standard is met if the student teacher consistently models appropriate decorum and exercises control without intimidation or domination, promoting a genuine democratically-based classroom in which high expectations for student engagement and learning are consistently demonstrated.

Standard Two: Student as Learner

In what ways does the student teacher:

- seek information about the learner's background and culture?
- seek information about the learner's life experiences, achievements, and interests?
- seek information about and observe the learner's strengths and weaknesses, developmental levels, and learning styles?
- seek information about and observe the learner's patterns of language use?
- seek information about and observe the learner's interests and talents?
- seek information about and observe the learner's organizational skills?
- use efficient and effective ways to document student characteristics and progress?
- listen carefully and respectfully to students?
- check in with students about inferences and assumptions s/he makes about them?
- develop an understanding and awareness of students as individuals without overgeneralizing or stereotyping?
- help learners develop conceptual understanding?
- challenge learners to develop higher level cognitive skills?

(RIBTS Standards: 2.4, 2.6, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 8.4, 9.3, & 10.1)

Meeting Standard Two at the End of SummerPrep:

The teacher candidate demonstrates an awareness of, and concern for, the individual learners in his/her classroom. S/he begins to understand the variables of diverse backgrounds, strengths, and developmental stages and how they create a diverse group of learners. S/he works hard to "understand their understandings" and uses this knowledge to further individual student learning. S/he holds high expectations for all learners and helps them accomplish the SummerPrep curriculum by focusing on students' developing thinking skills and conceptual understanding in a variety of areas.

Meeting Standard Two at the End of Fall Practicum and Seminar:

The teacher candidate demonstrates an awareness of, and concern for, the diverse backgrounds, strengths, and needs of learners in his/her

classroom. Focusing on individual learners, the teacher candidate does his/her best to observe, document, and learn about his/her students. S/he works hard to "understand their understandings" and uses this knowledge to further individual student learning. S/he holds high expectations for all learners and helps them accomplish the curriculum standards of the host classroom by focusing on students' developing thinking skills and conceptual understanding in a variety of areas.

Meeting Standard Two:

The teacher candidate demonstrates an awareness of, and concern for, the diverse backgrounds, strengths, and needs of learners in his/her classroom. Focusing on individual learners, the teacher candidate observes, documents, and learns about his/her students. S/he works hard to "understand their understandings" and uses this knowledge to further individual student learning. S/he holds high expectations for all learners and helps them accomplish the curriculum standards of the host classroom by focusing on students' developing thinking skills and conceptual understanding in all areas of the curriculum. The teacher candidate demonstrates a heightened competency in all of these areas, particularly in those targeted during the self-assessment conference at the end of the fall semester.

STANDARD THREE: PLANNING

In what ways does the student teacher:

- convert ideas and materials into teachable lessons? Into larger units—or an entire course? Are there clearly linked patterns and themes?
- prepare focused, thorough, sequenced lesson plans? Does the lesson help students to see connections with previous material and their prior knowledge?
- prepare a variety of learning activities chosen in order to accommodate different backgrounds, levels of prior knowledge, and learning styles?
- make her plans clear to the students? Does the teacher use metalanguage to aid students in understanding the purpose of activities? Does the teacher relate individual lessons to the larger curriculum?
- use written plans? Are these usually an accurate guide to what actually happens in class?

- encourage learners to see, question, analyze, and interpret concepts from multiple perspectives?
- prepare for active engagement of students throughout the lesson?
- consciously determine how s/he will know if students are on task/on target with the lesson?
- prepare a variety of communication strategies (questioning, counter-examples, etc.) in his/her planning?
- incorporate technology, where appropriate, in his/her planning?
- design lessons to accommodate individual differences (developmental, language, cultural background, learning style, or disability)? Does the student teacher use resource personnel to help with this planning?
- design lesson plans that reflect an understanding of how students learn—how students construct knowledge, acquire skills, develop habits of mind, etc.?

Teachers use effective communication as the vehicle through which students explore, conjecture, discuss, and investigate new ideas. (RIBTS #8)

Teachers create instructional opportunities that reflect a respect for the diversity of learners and an understanding of how students differ in their approaches to learning. (RIBTS #4)

Teachers create instructional opportunities that reflect an understanding of how children learn and develop. (RIBTS #3)

Meeting Standard Three at the End of SummerPrep:

The teacher candidate's lesson plans are carefully written and detailed, noting content and skills objectives linked to appropriate Standards for the content area, and describing materials, advance preparation, and step-by-step classroom procedures for activities in detail. The teacher candidate begins noting modifications for diverse or special learning needs where appropriate. Lessons exhibit clearly focused, sensible connections from one to the next and are designed to promote students' active construction of knowledge—student as worker, not teacher as teller. The teacher candidate takes time to explain lesson objectives to students and, using a variety of strategies including demonstration and modeling, checks that students are clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it.

Meeting Standard Three at the End of Fall Practicum and Semester Coursework:

The teacher candidate's lesson plans are carefully written and detailed, noting content and skills objectives linked to appropriate Standards for the content area, and describing materials, advance preparation, and step-by-step classroom procedures for all activities. The teacher candidate begins making modifications for diverse or special learning needs where appropriate. Lessons exhibit clearly focused, sensible connections from one to the next and are designed to promote students' active construction of knowledge—student as worker, not teacher as teller. This is well established in the candidate's practice by the end of the Fall Practicum. The teacher candidate takes time to explain lesson objectives to students and, using a variety of strategies including demonstration and modeling, checks that students are clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it.

Meeting Standard Three:

The teacher candidate's lesson plans are carefully written and detailed, noting content and skills objectives linked to appropriate Standards for the content area, and describing materials, advance preparation, and step-by-step classroom procedures for all activities. The teacher candidate begins with an assessment or activation of students' prior knowledge and makes modifications for diverse or special learning needs where appropriate. Lessons exhibit a clear focus, with sensible connections from one to the next, and are designed to promote students' active construction of knowledge—student as worker, not teacher as teller. The teacher candidate takes time to explain lesson objectives to students and, using a variety of strategies including demonstration and modeling, checks that students are clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it.

STANDARD FOUR: CLASSROOM PRACTICE

A. Teacher Presentations

In what ways does the student teacher:

- inform students of the purpose of the lesson?
- plan presentations that are structured with the diverse learning needs of the students in mind?
- demonstrate a good sense of which objectives are best accomplished using direct teacher presentations?

- use different modes of presentation (for example: oral, written, visual, tactile) and a variety of materials as integral parts of direct teacher presentations?
- build "comprehension checks" and evaluation criteria into lessons?
- demonstrate sensitivity to the pacing of the lesson, making sure all students are engaged and following?

B. Collaborative Activities

In what ways does the student teacher:

- create learning groups in which the students learn to work collaboratively and independently?
- emphasize oral and written communication through instructional use of discussion, listening, and responding to the ideas of others and group interaction?
- firmly structure a variety of group activities (e.g., role plays; simulations; debates; and collaborative, small group work) with adequate directions, clear goals, time limits, and criteria for evaluation clearly stated?
- provide all students with the materials and information they need to succeed at their tasks?
- preteach the group process skills necessary for students to complete the assignment successfully?
- hold each student responsible both as an individual and as a group member? How is that accomplished?
- have a good sense of which objectives are best accomplished using collaborative activities?

C. Questioning/Discussion

In what ways does the student teacher:

- use questions to determine if students understand and can perform the purpose of the lesson?
- use different types and levels of questions, depending on the lesson's objectives?
- use questioning and nominating techniques, such as wait-time, probing, rephrasing, connecting responses to previous contributions, etc., effectively?
- use strategies that demonstrate awareness of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, gender preferences in student participation? How does the student teacher gauge the effectiveness of these strategies?

- include key questions and "script" an arc of questions in the lesson plan teacher?
- employ a variety of strategies (restating ideas, offering counter-examples, etc.) to engage students in discussion and learning?
- ask questions eliciting a variety of discourse modalities (e.g., summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, comparing, etc.)?

D. Development of Student Skills

In what ways does the student teacher:

- design thoughtful, sequenced assignments that break complex undertakings into manageable steps?
- engage learners in generating knowledge, testing hypotheses, and exploring methods of inquiry and standards of evidence?
- use tasks that engage learners in exploration, discovery, and hands-on activities?
- instruct students how to read for understanding and enjoyment, how to use a variety of reading strategies to retrieve relevant information from texts, how to write more clearly and coherently?
- provide models or exemplars to guide student work?
- instruct students in developmentally appropriate concepts of numeracy? Are students instructed in mathematical problem-solving using a variety of techniques including manipulatives, mental math, estimation, and written communication of problem solving strategies and understandings? Are students instructed in basic computation as well as underlying mathematical concepts?
- instruct students in oral presentation and listening skills? Does the student teacher make criteria for excellence in these skills available to students?
- instruct in multiple forms (artistic, literary, historical, scientific, mathematical) of expression (orally, in writing, through reading, via visual modalities, manipulatives, and technology)?
- closely monitor skill attainment and provide students with timely feedback?
- encourage students to extend themselves beyond their range of comfort in carrying out a variety of classroom tasks and activities?
- use technology as a learning tool?
- design lessons which extend beyond factual recall and challenge students to develop higher level cognitive skills?

Teachers create instructional opportunities to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and performance skills. (RIBTS #5)

Meeting Standard Four at the End of SummerPrep:

The teacher candidate exhibits an emerging control over a variety of approaches to classroom pedagogy. In direct presentations, s/he demonstrates sensitivity to pacing, timing, amount and sequencing of material, and form of presentations, as well as inviting student contributions and interactions. The teacher candidate learns to apportion instructional time, reducing teacher talk and increasing student doing and discussion. Questioning strategies are thoughtful, aware of the need for a range and arc of questions which develop logically from simple to complex and help scaffold knowledge construction. Group work is used regularly and appropriately and students are coached on the purpose and strategies for collaboration. Work required of students reinforces basic skills (reading, writing, math, oral presentation, listening) and builds toward higher level cognitive demands in a variety of subject areas.

Meeting Standard Four at the End of Fall Practicum and Seminar:

The teacher candidate exhibits an increasing control over a variety of approaches to classroom pedagogy. In direct presentations, s/he demonstrates sensitivity to pacing, timing, amount and sequencing of material, and form of presentations, as well as inviting student contributions and interactions. The teacher candidate demonstrates the ability to apportion instructional time, reducing teacher-talk and increasing student doing and discussion. Questioning strategies are thoughtful, demonstrate an awareness of the need for a range and arc of questions from simple to complex and help scaffold knowledge construction. Group work is used regularly and appropriately and students are coached on the purpose and strategies for collaboration. Work required of students reinforces basic skills (reading, writing, math, oral presentation, listening) and builds toward higher level cognitive demands in a variety of subject areas.

Meeting Standard Four:

The teacher candidate exhibits control over a variety of approaches to classroom pedagogy. In direct presentations, s/he demonstrates sensitivity to pacing, timing, amount and sequencing of material, and

form of presentations, as well as frequently, appropriately, and democratically inviting student contributions and interactions. The teacher candidate demonstrates the ability to apportion instructional time appropriately, reducing teacher talk and increasing student doing and discussion. Questioning strategies are thoughtful, aware of the need for a range and arc of questions, and help scaffold knowledge construction. Group work is used regularly and appropriately and students are coached on the purpose and strategies for collaboration. The teacher candidate monitors group work and sets outcomes for accountability purposes. Work required of students reinforces basic skills (reading, writing, math, oral presentation, listening) and builds toward higher level cognitive demands in subject areas.

Standard Five: Assessment

In what ways does the student teacher:

- exhibit a varied repertoire of evaluation methods? How does the student teacher decide which particular method of evaluation to choose? Are students included in the process?
- base his/her instruction on standards that are measurable via the assessment instruments employed?
- provide students with rubrics or task descriptions which clearly indicate successful and exemplary performance standards?
- use a variety of assessment measures as data that uncovers individual needs of students as well as drives subsequent instruction?
- employ evaluations which are not graded but are used for comprehension check and student feedback?
- use performance-based activities which teach as much as they assess? To what extent are such projects a part of the class's ongoing work?
- use grades in the classroom? To what extent are they used as a motivator? To what extent are students involved in the process of developing criteria for excellence?
- encourage learners to evaluate their own work and use the results of self-assessment to establish individual goals for learning and improved performance?
- use information from assessments to reflect on the effectiveness of their own teaching—and modify instruction accordingly?
- demonstrate awareness of and redress the potential cultural and linguistic biases embedded in assessment tools and practices?

Teachers use a variety of formal and informal assessment strategies to support the continuous development of the learner. (RIBTS #9)

Meeting Standard Five at the End of SummerPrep:

Proficiency in this standard at this phase of the program is minimal. Teacher candidates are expected to have acquired a vocabulary concerning assessment and to have tried a variety of strategies over the course of SummerPrep. They should set increased experience and proficiency in this standard as a major goal for future clinical experiences. To meet the standard at the end of SummerPrep, the student teacher has rudimentary knowledge of a variety of approaches to assessment and evaluation. Assessment is understood as integral to the instructional process and is conducted via a variety of informal methods—anecdotal records, reviewing of classwork, and observations of discussion. Teacher candidates begin to understand the importance of keeping records of these assessments but are not yet proficient at it. Assessments for lessons taught are designed as performances and exhibitions which allow students to demonstrate what they know in a variety of media. Students are given various opportunities to self-monitor progress, and their classroom work is often guided by displayed rubrics—known criteria developed by the teacher candidate with the class (or with the class's knowledge). Teacher candidates begin to explore what they can notice about student achievement and growth over time by examining student work. They begin to get a feel for the range of capabilities and what one can expect of the grade being taught.

Meeting Standard Five at the End of Fall Practicum and Seminar:

Teacher candidates are expected to have acquired a vocabulary concerning assessment and to have tried a variety of strategies over the course of the fall semester and practicum. They should noticeably demonstrate increased experience and proficiency in this standard. At the end of the fall practicum, the student teacher has rudimentary knowledge and experience of a variety of approaches to assessment and evaluation—pre-assessments, during instruction, and post-instruction. Assessment is understood as integral to the instructional process and is conducted via a variety of informal methods (anecdotal records, reviewing of classwork, and observations of discussion) as well as more traditional pencil and paper methods. Teacher candidates begin to understand the importance of keeping records of these

assessments but are not yet proficient at it. Students are given various opportunities to self-monitor progress, and their classroom work is guided by displayed rubrics—known criteria developed by the teacher candidate with the class (or with the class's knowledge). Teacher candidates determine what they can notice about student achievement and growth over time by examining student work. They understand the range of capabilities and what one can expect of the grade being taught.

Meeting Standard Five:

Teacher candidates are expected to have acquired a vocabulary concerning assessment and to have tried a variety of assessment strategies and kept records for each child. At the end of student teaching, the teacher candidate has general knowledge and experience of a variety of approaches to assessment and evaluation—pre-assessments, during instruction, and post-instruction—as well as protocols for examining student work with peers. Assessment is understood as integral to the instructional process and is conducted via a variety of informal methods (anecdotal records, reviewing of classwork, and observations of discussion) as well as more traditional pencil and paper or product methods. Teacher candidates understand the importance of keeping records of these assessments and have kept and analyzed assessment records for all students. Students are given various opportunities to self-monitor progress and their classroom work is guided by displayed rubrics—known criteria developed by the teacher candidate with the class (or with the class's knowledge). Teacher candidates determine what they can notice about student achievement and growth over time by examining examples of student work. They understand the range of capabilities and what one can expect of the grade being taught.

STANDARD SIX: PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & GROWTH

In what ways does the student teacher:

- reflect thoughtfully on his/her teaching experience? How, and from whom (colleagues, administrators, students, families), does s/he solicit feedback and accept criticism? How effectively is the reflection and/or criticism used in improving performance?
- use learning theory to inform his/her practice? Does s/he regularly apply new ideas presented in coursework, professional publications, and journals which discuss current trends and effective practices in education?

- make an effort to learn about and value the backgrounds and cultures of the students that may be different from his/her own?
- explore new instructional strategies? Is s/he willing to take risks in trying new teaching approaches? Is s/he open to critically appraising the results of teaching methods employed?
- develop basic technological literacy (use of computers, video and audio equipment, knowledge of the Web, the Internet, use of search engines) for professional purposes as well as classroom applications?
- take responsibility for his/her own professional growth by participating in workshops, courses, and other educational activities that support plans for continued development as a teacher?

Teachers reflect on their practice and assume responsibility for their own professional development by actively seeking opportunities to learn and grow as professionals. (RIBTS #10)

Meeting Standard Six at the End of SummerPrep:

In face-to-face debriefings, journal writing, peer reflective practices, and formal self-analyses, the student teacher demonstrates positive acceptance of feedback and makes a thoughtful response to it. Growth in planning and implementation of curriculum and instruction demonstrates that the teacher candidate has internalized and is making use of instruction in MAT coursework and mentor and supervisor feedback. Beyond the classroom, the teacher candidate avails him/herself of professional publications, including web resources to improve his/her practice and to develop the habits necessary for continued professional growth.

Meeting Standard Six at the End of the Fall Practicum and Seminar:

In face-to-face debriefings, e-mail communication, journal writing, peer reflective practices, and formal self-analyses, the student teacher demonstrates positive acceptance of feedback and makes a thoughtful response to it. Growth in planning and implementation of curriculum and instruction demonstrates that the teacher candidate has internalized and is making use of feedback. Beyond the classroom, the teacher candidate avails him/herself of professional publications, including web resources to improve his/her practice, and develops the habits necessary for continued professional growth. The teacher candidate takes responsibility for sharing new learning with peers and with school-site colleagues.

Meeting Standard Six:

In face-to-face debriefings, e-mail communication, journal writing, peer reflective practices, and formal self-analyses, the student teacher demonstrates positive acceptance of feedback and makes a thoughtful response to it. Growth in planning and implementation of curriculum and instruction demonstrates that the teacher candidate has internalized and is making use of feedback. Beyond the classroom, the teacher candidate avails him/herself of professional publications, including web resources to improve his/her practice, and develops the habits necessary for continued professional growth. The teacher candidate takes responsibility for sharing new learning with peers and with school-site colleagues.

STANDARD SEVEN: ENGAGEMENT WITH ELEMENTARY SUBJECT MATTER

In what ways does the student teacher:

- demonstrate understanding and enthusiasm for the elementary disciplines—literature, reading, writing, math, problem-solving, science, social studies, art, technology, health, physical education?
- understand how knowledge in each discipline is created, organized, and linked to others?
- use subject-knowledge to carefully select instructional materials and resources based on their comprehensiveness, accuracy, and usefulness?
- use precise and appropriate language to convey content accurately and understandably?
- demonstrate an awareness of the various disciplines as means of explanation and multiple representations of concepts (including analogies, metaphors, experiments, demonstrations, illustrations) that help students develop conceptual understanding?
- demonstrate an awareness of differing viewpoints, theories, and methods of inquiry in the disciplines and show evidence of that understanding when teaching concepts?
- design lesson plans which reflect a variety of academic, social, and cultural experiences?
- demonstrate a broad knowledge base which could be used to create interdisciplinary learning experiences?
- mediate the tension between content and skills demands in the subject areas?
- demonstrate an ability to present subject matter in culturally responsive ways, which assumes a knowledge of cultures and backgrounds present in the classroom?

Teachers create learning experiences using a broad base of general knowledge that reflects an understanding of the nature of the world in which we live. (RIBTS #1)

Teachers create learning experiences that reflect an understanding of central concepts, structures, and tools of inquiry of the disciplines they teach. (RIBTS #2)

Meeting Standard Seven at the End of SummerPrep:

The teacher candidate demonstrates a broad knowledge and initial mastery of the skills and knowledge bases central to the elementary disciplines. Interest in and energy for these disciplines are demonstrated through the finding of information and materials and creation of lessons which present students with challenging activities and projects; engage them in culturally responsive ways; and encourage them to solve problems, raise questions, and interact in ways that contribute to a positive learning environment.

Meeting Standard Seven:

The teacher candidate demonstrates a broad knowledge and initial mastery of the skills and knowledge bases central to the elementary disciplines. Interest in and energy for these disciplines are demonstrated through the finding of information and materials and creation of lessons which present students with challenging activities and projects; engage them in culturally responsive ways; and encourage them to solve problems, raise questions, and interact in ways that contribute to a positive learning environment.

Polly Ulichny is a Senior Lecturer of Elementary Education in the Department of Education at Brown University.