

Jennifer Wallace

From: Jennifer Wallace
Sent: Friday, November 07, 2008 6:10 PM
To: 'Dan Grimm'
Subject: Grimm Proposal
Attachments: AndersonNCTQ.jw.doc

Dan -

I thought when I received the email Roxanne sent at 8a.m. Wednesday to George Scarola from LEV, Dan Goldhaber from UW and myself that you were seeking some preliminary input on the "teacher certification" portion. She'd emailed me a couple weeks back indicating that you were intending to do so. By the time I got the 10a.m. email sending your proposal to the leg listserv – I had already written much of what is below - so I went ahead and added to it and am sending now. Text below in italics is from your proposal, followed by my comments.

Jennifer Wallace

GRIMM PROPOSAL

There are two elements of effective teaching:

- 1 – sufficient knowledge of subject matter and intellectual skills*
- 2 – an ability to IMPART knowledge and intellectual skills*

Comments from PESB

Although you later criticize pedagogy, #2 IS pedagogy and we couldn't agree more. The NCTQ report you quote in fact goes on to recommend that states have a uniform assessment of pedagogy.

Area 2 / Goal A: Defining Professional Knowledge - Through teaching standards, the state should articulate and assess the professional knowledge of teaching and learning that new teachers need, but steer clear of "soft" areas that are hard to measure

- Standards should describe knowledge that is grounded in science and consensus thinking about effective teaching, while avoiding overt ideological statements and descriptions of teachers' "soft" attributes that cannot be tested.
- Standards should address the needs of the novice teacher, describing the state's expectations of what a new teacher needs to know before starting to teach.
- Standards should be specific enough to drive the instruction of teacher preparation programs and inform teacher candidates of what they need to know in order to become licensed teachers.
- The state should verify that new teachers meet its professional standards by means of a licensing test.
- All standards should be found in one document.

Note that it neither suggests states throwing out licensure standards addressing teaching skill, nor negates the need for standards and state accountability applied to our preparation programs.

I'm glad you quoted that report, and would encourage you to read it further. I think I provided this when we met, but I've attached here again the PESB's response to the entire report. We found many areas with which we agreed, as well as some inaccuracies.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

[knowledge of subject matter and intellectual skills] *should be assessed by general and specialized national tests (e.g. Praxis)*

And

. . . . with test performance requirements based on the state's Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

Comments from PESB

These statements are in direct conflict. The reason we moved from the Praxis II to the WEST-E is that the Praxis II is incapable of alignment with the EALRs because it is an off-the-shelf test. We heard many complaints from the field that the Praxis II simply didn't assess the right knowledge base and wasn't rigorous enough. Other states, including California and Oregon, have concluded this as well.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

" . . . scoring well in language should not be allowed to compensate for a deficiency in math or science"

Comments from PESB

The WEST-E IS non-compensatory. For example, elementary educators they take two sections, scored separately to ensure this. The basic skills test is also 3-part non-compensatory.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

"All certification standards based on the completion of college courses, programs and degree requirements should be eliminated"

Comments from PESB

All specific requirements for courses and degrees HAVE been eliminated – as we have discussed with you, when the PESB moved to competency-based, it opened up far greater flexibility for HOW individuals reach certification standards. Prospective teachers, regardless of courses, credits, or degrees, demonstrate subject knowledge required for certification through the WEST-E test.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

"colleges with best record of preparing teachers for certification tests will thrive; others will be forced to improve or cease operations"

Comments from PESB

To which "tests" are you referring? Since you imply only the need for a subject knowledge test, it's important to know that prospective teachers don't get their subject knowledge from colleges of education – it's part of their degree program via colleges of liberal arts. So to link a subject knowledge test (which you suggest would be the only measure) as an indicator of whether a teacher preparation program was doing a good job, would be completely invalid.

If you mean “an ability to impart knowledge and intellectual skills” – we agree completely. By all means let’s hold any and all forms of teacher preparation accountable for ensuring that teachers are able to impart knowledge and intellectual skills. And if they don’t, let’s force them to improve. Right on! But that’s sounds like state oversight /accreditation to me. We think we do that pretty well. Since the legislature transferred oversight to the PESB three years ago, we’ve disapproved or placed on probation numerous programs lacking adequate, as you put it, “record of preparing teachers” and further, and importantly, insisted on their improvement or they lose their approval to operate.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

“Teachers lacking appropriate certification should be prohibited from teaching classes requiring those certifications”.

Comments from PESB

Here’s where I get confused. Earlier you said certification should only be based on subject knowledge – but you also rightly point out that “ability to impart knowledge” is important. So then their certification should reflect both of these abilities, yes? We would like stricter alignment between certification and assignment as well. NCLB’s Highly-Qualified Requirements has pushed this forward quite a bit, but districts will tell you that they need flexibility in hiring when they are unable to find an appropriately certified teacher. While this may be an unavoidable reality, policy can ensure that they immediately work toward the appropriate certification.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

“subsequent to certification and based on student academic performance and classroom evaluations conducted by supervisors . . . “

Comments from PESB

We agree - evaluation needs to be reexamined fundamentally. Certification is about preparing the basic model – the basic skills that one should possess before being charged with a classroom full of our children. We know that teachers gain competency – or not – in their first three years like no other time in their career. Evaluation is critical.

I think it’s a leap to go from “it seems hard to know who is going to be effective in the classroom until they are actually in the classroom” to the assumption that preservice preparation based on an agreed-upon set of knowledge and skills should not be required. I would say if it’s hard to know - then all the more reason to get them in the classroom during preparation and assess whether they are being effective with students. This is the entire reason the PESB has moved to evidence-based standards and assessment for preparation and programs are just beginning to implement. No longer will it be enough for prep programs to show teachers can perform as we expect – it will need to be reflected in evidence of student learning. Isn’t it better that they should have to demonstrate this before we certify them?

There actually is a significant body of research to suggest that instructional methodology – which is pedagogy – DOES impact student achievement. There’s also no shortage of studies suggesting that certified versus non-certified makes a difference – and by “certified” they do not mean only having passed a subject knowledge test. Here’s a few just off my shelf –

Boyd, Hamilton, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff and Wyckoff (2007) “The Narrowing Gap in New York City Teacher Qualifications and Its Implications for Student Achievement in High-Poverty Schools” Urban Institute.

Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007) Urban Institute –

Note - Concludes that teacher’s experience, test scores AND regular licensure (which in the case of North Carolina – where the study was conducted – would include demonstrated

competence in instructional methodology – taken together exhibit “quite large effects” on math achievement.

Monk, D (1994). Subject area preparation of secondary mathematics and science teachers and student achievement. *Economics of Education Review*, 13(2).

Monk concluded that knowledge of subject area is necessary, but not sufficient condition for effective teaching.

Darling-Hammond, L. Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence (2000). *Education Policy Analysis Archives*. 8(1)

How and Why Do Teacher Credentials Matter for Student Achievement? Clotfelter, Ladd and Vigdor (2007) Urban Institute

This study found clear negative effects on achievement for those with provisional or emergency licenses (which did require a subject knowledge test, but no formal training) This and other studies have found that teachers with reduced preparation prior to entry into the classroom exhibit smaller initial gains than other teachers. Eventually the differences disappear as the cohort becomes experienced, but what of the impact on students in those first few years?

We also know that the American Educational Research Association assembled a panel of nationally-recognized scholars to analyze the empirical evidence relevant to practices and policies in preservice teacher education. (See Cochran-Smith, M. and Zeichner, K.M. *Studying Teacher Education: the Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*. (2005). American Educational Research Association. www.erlbaum.com)

National Research Council Report – How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School. Committee on Developments in the Science of Learning (2000)

A series of several studies that showed the importance of effective teaching incorporating not just subject knowledge, but an understanding of how people learn, ability to use the principles of learning, and teaching to stimulate student learning and achievement.

But put aside for a minute the notion of cert/no cert – prep program/ no prep program and focus on what knowledge and skills individuals should possess when they first step foot into a classroom – we KNOW that given today’s classrooms they must be able to:

- Organize and manage classrooms
- Be effective with children with special needs and ELL students
- Use student data to improve instruction
- Be able to teach their content in different ways for different learning styles
- Know how to find and use adaptive materials, curricular and instructional resources

We also know that parents care deeply that teaching reflects understanding of the community and culture of the school.

GRIMM PROPOSAL

You quote Levin’s famous - “Colleges treat teacher preparation programs as cash cows” . . .

Comments from PESB

This is why the PESB has been working with the Governor and legislators on a proposal that would hold institutions accountable for the productivity of their colleges of education. Right now, they produce a surplus of elementary teachers and there’s no financial incentive or restriction for them to do otherwise. We need better control over the SGF enrollment dollars that wind up in colleges of ed – we need to ensure they are

going to preparing the math, science, special ed and ELL teachers we need, not a surplus of elementary. his in no way precludes other entities from getting in the game – this is why the PESB has been talking to out-of-state online institutions and organizations like Teach for America and The New Teacher Project.

We also contacted Art Levine to see if his quote or his work for that manner would in any way support your conclusions. See his attached email reply below stating that he does not. He's an outstanding scholar and perhaps you might converse with him further.

-----Original Message-----

From: Levine, Arthur [mailto:levine@woodrow.org]

Sent: Wed 11/5/2008 2:13 PM

To: Joseph Koski

Cc: abby@woodrow.org

Subject: RE: Clarification on a position

That's not my position. Let's talk. I will ask my assistant, Abby Levin, to find a time that is convenient for you.

From: Joseph Koski [mailto:Joseph.Koski@k12.wa.us]

Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2008 4:22 PM

To: Levine, Arthur

Subject: Clarification on a position

Dear Dr. Levine,

I am a TC alum who is working in education for the State of Washington.

We recently had a proposal from the chair of a state policy committee that used your paper (Educating School Teachers) to buttress his conclusion that all teacher education and certification should be eliminated and replaced with a national Praxis type test.

I was hoping that you might have a minute to clarify your position on this issue.

Best,

Joe Koski

In 2007, the Business-Higher Education Forum published their influential report, *An American Imperative: Transforming the Recruitment, Retention and Renewal of Our Nation's Mathematics and Science Teacher Workforce*. On this issue, the top Fortune 500 CEOs, together with college and university leaders declared that states need to,

“Invest in programs to strengthen the pedagogical skills of STEM professionals seeking to enter the teaching profession” and that “Structures to ensure the regular and ongoing review of teacher preparation programs should be broadened to ensure that they include every institution that is involved in preparing mathematics and science teachers” “In the case of alternative teacher preparation programs, we should ensure that such efforts provide age-appropriate pedagogical skills and knowledge of teaching materials for effective classroom instruction to supplement the content knowledge and real-world experiences that professionals possess.”

We are all impatient in our progress toward the same goal – ensuring an adequate supply of well-qualified teachers and what that implies for a system of preparation and certification. But hasty actions can have lasting consequences. Many of the highly-qualified provisions of No Child Left Behind are a result of states that, in a panic over supply, enacted knee-jerk policies that created a pool of poor teachers who didn't stay. Let's work together on lasting change.

Jennifer Wallace

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