

**DISSERTATION**

**LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE CASE STUDY OF A UNIVERSITY-  
BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SECOND CAREER  
ADULTS: STAKEHOLDER VIEWS OVER 18 YEARS.**

**Submitted by**

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirements**

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**Fort Collins, Colorado**

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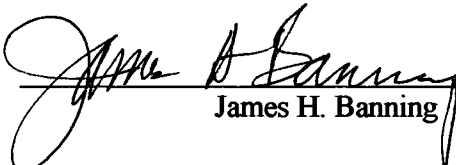
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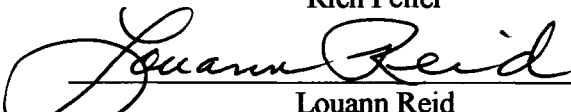
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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE DISSERTATION PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY ALEXANDRA S. BUTLER ENTITLED LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE CASE STUDY OF A UNIVERSITY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SECOND CAREER ADULTS: STAKEHOLDER VIEWS OVER EIGHTEEN YEARS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

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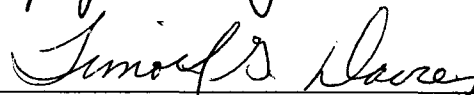
  
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## **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

### **LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE CASE STUDY OF A UNIVERSITY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SECOND CAREER ADULTS: STAKEHOLDER VIEWS OVER EIGHTEEN YEARS**

In recent years the need for teachers has brought discussions about alternative teacher training models to the forefront (Huling, 2001; Levine, 2006). This study was conducted to understand best practices related to one type of alternative teacher education program; a fast track university graduate education program for second-career adults. The researcher used an embedded case study methodology with four stakeholder groups; program graduates (n=101 or 50% of the available sample), program directors (n=6), university administrators (n=6), and selected employers of graduates (n=6). The graduates completed an online survey addressing their satisfaction in the program. The researcher conducted hour-long interviews with the other three participant groups to further explore factors that either positively or negatively affected the program's implementation. Additionally the researcher reviewed program archival materials.

Findings were that the majority of the program graduates responding were satisfied with the program (mean = 4.53) and would recommend it to others (mean = 4.55). The respondents reported that the use of a cohort model that interspersed learning with classroom experience, extensive and varied classroom pedagogies, and the use of research –based curriculum as having provided them with a sound foundation for entering the teaching profession. Frequent feedback and mentoring in the field were also perceived as being important factors for the program's success.

Graduate survey responses were confirmed by the interviews with the three other stakeholder groups. University administrators identified barriers to program implementation and sustainability to include its high delivery cost, the lack of communication with the traditional licensure program, limited documentation of program strengths, and the disconnection with university and departmental practices. Further the intensive nature of the program's delivery was perceived as a hardship for involved faculty.

Recommendations were to make completing the masters mandatory, not optional; to seek to meet content area needs identified by school district partners; to have strong administrative support; to create communication mechanisms for maintaining a strong presence in the university and to conduct evaluation and research studies providing data for ongoing reflection and renewal.

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"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times;  
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness;  
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity;  
it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness;  
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair;  
we had everything before us, we had nothing before us;  
we were all going direct to Heaven,  
we were all going direct the other way.  
--in short, the period was so like the present period,  
that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received,  
for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only."

– **Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, Chapter One**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A leading question often asked by motivational speakers is, “What are the best 10 years of this organization?” The audience might reflect on its historical beginnings and then think about recent successes. However, the only answer that will move an organization forward is, “The next ten years.” So with that in mind, this study seeks to inform the next 10 years of teacher education and the changes they will eventually engender.

The spirit of innovation and change underscore this study which is hereby dedicated to visionary educators who determined a new way to lead, to those career changers (past, present, and future) who were willing to give up a perfectly good job because they discovered a mission within themselves to teach, and to their students who will learn from and with them.

This case study relied on the willing participation of the stakeholders involved—program graduates, directors, School of Education directors, and employers. My thanks go out to all the people who responded so willingly and openly providing a narrative that spanned eighteen years of a teacher training program from multiple viewpoints. Literally, none of this could have been done without your participation, for which I am deeply grateful. My exceptional colleagues, Ali Shore and Lee Evans, inspired me daily with their level of expertise and caring. I so value their deep friendship and perspective.

Many strong women contributed to the completion of this project through inspiration and loving support. My grandmother Elizabeth Magnuson, a teacher who graduated in 1905 from the Normal School in Duluth, Minnesota, believed in me to the extent that she converted her life insurance policy to support my college preparation at St. Mary’s Hall. Her sister, my Aunt Ebba Berg, never went past the eighth grade but she inspired me with a life of service and reading. Although my mother, Libby Smith, is absent for this achievement, she showed by example what a strong, independent woman can accomplish. My daughter, Kathryn Elizabeth Davis, became my best friend and strongest advocate. Her master’s degree paralleled my doctorate studies and her final project was to create and support data collection on a survey website for my case study. Her love and support became essential. She makes my eyes light up with pride and gratitude. My granddaughter, Laura Elizabeth Davis, delights me with her curiosity and compels me to contribute to continuing excellence in education as she gets ready to begin school. I wish to thank my mother-in-law, Jeanne Butler, for her continuing support during my studies and my friend, Sharon Olson, who kept me sane and helped maintain my focus. A sibling thank you goes out to my brothers Scott Smith and Chris Smith and my sisters Marjie Smith-Doba and Becky Hackman who couldn’t believe I was still going to school after having become a grandmother, but supported me just the same.

Sincere thanks to my father, Cyrus Smith, who initiated this journey by supporting my undergraduate studies and to my husband of thirty-five years, David Butler, who had to put up with the time this project took away from the family. I thank you both with all my heart for getting me started and helping me travel this road I chose to follow. Many thanks to my committee members who helped deepen this study.

## DEDICATION

My professional growth lineage can be traced through the work of Marian Diamond, Robert Richburg, Deborah Meier, and Vito Perrone. While each touched me in a different way, their ideologies have melded into my educational leadership philosophy. I knew the first three personally, but I only knew Dr. Perrone through his writings. I found them at a time when I felt isolated in the research process, but his words resonated with me and renewed my energy.

Dr. Perrone, veteran teacher and former director of teacher education at Harvard's Graduate School of Education, believes that children need to see a connection between learning and the real world. That means that teachers must know not only the subjects they teach, but also the students they are teaching. Reflecting back on his 40 year teaching career, Perrone summed up what he had learned in this way, "Most of all, **teaching is not telling**, that readiness for learning matters, that exemplars—actual visible performances and products—are critical." He likens this to sports, where he says the **best way to learn to play baseball is by actually playing baseball**. Learning by doing then is an important concept to consider in the training of pre-service teachers. He continues:

*When teachers are asked to reflect on what makes their work captivating, what from their collegiate background and ongoing reflection contributes most to their successful practices, what do they say? The technical pieces—lesson plans, record books, academic majors and minors, the policy debates, what is often the core of teacher education programs—fade quickly. Little seems easily reduced to a course on this or that. Everything takes on a more complex, even messier direction. The design for better teacher preparation, they suggest, has more to do with dispositions toward inquiry and reflection, curiosity, a particular intellectual passion, a social commitment to a sense of beliefs, a love for the unexpected, a general interest in human growth and development (Perrone, 651).*

Dr. Robert Richburg was there at the beginning of my journey and he was there all along the path to this point. I am profoundly grateful for his friendship and support. His questions provoked some surprising answers. Both model and mentor to me, we shared many teachable moments. My learning community also included my teaching partner, Dave Ludwig, who provided an essential sounding board throughout my career and made sure that laughter was part of my life. These people and many others helped shape me and led me to believe that Great Teachers become Great Leaders who:

*Create a safe, caring, respectful and inclusive literate learning community that nurtures curiosity, preserves discovery, inspires creativity and the full range of what it means to achieve, prompts potential, celebrates diversity, values laughter, increases achievement, honors all voices, fosters fun, models reflection, and promotes independent lifelong learning.*

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

**“Being an excellent teacher is one of the highest callings a person can have in life. Before there can be great doctors, Nobel Prize winners or scientists, there must be great teachers.”** Case Study Handbook

A review of teacher education trends over the past 50 years from 1955 to 2005 *Studying Teacher Education* (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005. p.656) cites two major pathways lead to teacher licensure. The first is a traditional four or five year undergraduate program that traces its origins to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Historically, educational training for new teachers consisted of a four or five year undergraduate program in pedagogy and child development capped with student teaching which led to licensure or certification. The second includes non-traditional programs divided into alternative licensure and post-graduate programs, both of which could be completed in a year or two, provided the teacher candidate has already completed a bachelor’s degree. This second path will be the focus of this study.

Early challengers to the concept of alternative licensure paths feared that a lack of rigor might accompany the shorter programs. Others could not envision any other way of training teachers. In response to a huge demand for teachers that could not be met through traditional programs alone, acceptance was reluctantly granted to alternative programs. The National Center for Educational Information reports in *Special Analysis*, “the current projections call for 2.2 million new teachers in the next decade or 210,000 new teachers per year for the next 10 years” (*Special Analysis*, 2005, p.1). That breaks down to a demand for 45,000 new hires each year. In a market driven economy, teacher licensure is responding to not only a staggering need

for more and better teachers, but also to a growing market of non-traditional teacher candidates, who are older, have career experience, and a strong desire to become teachers. As professionals, these adults need significantly different teacher training curriculum and expectations. So in the last 20 years, non-traditional programs have emerged to address the specific needs of change-of-career adults who might already have a degree and a strong desire to teach.

Controversy persists about which program better prepares new teachers. Many argue to continue with the four or five year program because it has existed for so long. Alternative certification programs are relative newcomers which began with state sponsored programs in the 1980s in response to a shortage of qualified teachers in urban and rural schools. The 1990s showed an increase of change-of-career individuals who already had at least an undergraduate degree. This movement gained further support as a pathway providing entry for minorities. Research supports both paths as a means to meet the diverse needs of potential teachers.

The traditional secondary teacher education approach focuses on undergraduate students with emphasis on fundamentals of education, classroom management, teaching methods, child development, legal issues, and philosophy. Once this coursework is completed, the capstone is the student teaching experience at one school for one term. Successful completion of these requirements, coupled with passing scores on state required courses or tests, lead to licensure. Non-traditional programs are designed for working adults who already have a degree in their field and wish to change careers. Linda Darling-Hammond, a highly regarded researcher in the

field of teacher education, talks about the road to respectability for this alternate path by saying,

The non-traditional approach to secondary teacher education can take several forms. The options include graduate programs, on-the-job training with a mentor who has a degree in their field and work experience, Troops to Teachers for former military personnel, Teach for America, or emergency licensure. The variety of these programs makes it difficult to apply a standard definition. These approaches, such as Emergency Licensure, to teacher training have increased dramatically from 1983 when only eight states had an alternative licensure program to 47 states and the District of Columbia in 2005 as reported by the National Center for Educational Information. This path to teacher certification has certainly generated much controversy over the past 25 years, but within the last ten years it has gained respectability by developing or providing evidence of a solid research base that has brought positive changes to licensure programs (Darling-Hammond, 1990, p.124).

### **My Stance and the Use of an Embedded Case Study for Illustration**

One such non-traditional graduate teacher training program for second-career adults has been in place at a land-grant university in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States for the past eighteen years. My researcher stance with regard to this program is unique. I am both a graduate (year 5) and a former interim director (year 15). Only one other person shares this distinction. This study is being conducted three years after the end of my association with the program. While I have deliberately worked at being objective in this inquiry, I also must acknowledge the presence of this innate bias. As a former director, I believe in the power of this program. As a graduate, I know that all of the various elements of the program provided a strong foundation for me as a classroom teacher. While I did respond to the survey, I did not include myself in the interviews as my goal focused on letting the data speak for itself. Instead, my response to the findings will be included in an afterward.

This program was designated a Program of Excellence by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) in 1991 and has produced many exceptional teachers. With the program ending in May 2007, a rare opportunity existed to contact the stakeholders involved over the years to capture their impressions of this model. Graduates, employers, program directors, and School of Education directors constitute the stakeholder pool. Research questions focus on: *What worked? What did not work? What changes do stakeholders suggest?* In this way, the inquiry seeks to gather lessons to be learned from a program that produced hundreds of sought-after graduates. Using the framework of an embedded case study, my concept involves first identifying the original vision and goals of the program and telling the story of the creation of this program.

Stakeholder data will come from graduates who will be asked to complete a survey covering demographic information and short answer questions regarding their reflections on training received in the program. With over 300 program graduates, this information would be useful in informing future programs. Then school administrators who have employed these graduates will be interviewed concerning perceived attributes of program graduates as professional teachers in the field. Additional interviews will be conducted with the past and present directors of the School of Education.

#### **Is This a Well-Studied Phenomena?**

No, this program has not been well-studied over the past eighteen years. While this program has been the subject of several articles and doctoral dissertations over the years, a case study of this type has not been undertaken. The articles include: In

*Cost-Benefit analysis of two teacher training programs* (Richburg, Penna, McWhorter, Paccione, Knox, 1996), *Adding power to our ability to develop outstanding new teachers* (Richburg, Knox, McWhorter, 1996). A related study was conducted on the interview process for this program in 1990 by Sharon Carson entitled *Predictors of future teacher effectiveness for nontraditional teacher certification candidates*. In 1997 Natalie Ann Keilar used the program as the topic for her dissertation, *Comparison of performance between alternatively licensed teachers and graduates of Project Promise*. In 2000 Dawn Lauterback examined the cost effectiveness of the program *Principals recognize outstanding new teacher performance in graduates from Project Promise teacher licensure at Colorado State University* (unpublished master's thesis, Colorado State University, Fort Collins).

This program has been challenged over the course of its existence on the basis of cost. There exists an impression that the program is expensive because it is small and non-traditional. In *Cost-Benefit Analysis of Two Teacher Training Programs* (Richburg, Penna, McWhorter, Paccione, Knox, 1996), the non-traditional program and the traditional program were compared on the basis of three program benefits: candidate employability, candidate satisfaction, and retention in teaching. This analysis reached the following conclusion:

“Best practice” teacher education programs which are innovative and proficiency based like (this program), are inherently faculty intensive and, therefore, seem expensive. In examining only comparative initial training costs, in this study, for example, the per-candidate costs are over four times that of a more traditional program. In times when university budgets are stressed to the maximum, implementing this kind of program may appear extravagant. Clearly, however, when program benefits such as 1) candidate employability, 2) candidate satisfaction, and 3) retention in teaching are examined, the issue is not as one-sided. Candidate employability, candidate satisfaction, and retention in teaching are evidences of

higher quality teacher candidates, Such benefits also transfer to school districts via lower induction costs, lower yearly professional development costs, and staff stability. This study suggests that producing higher quality teacher graduates may require initially greater per candidate university training expenses. These costs, however, may indeed be more than recovered by the public school systems who employ these graduates.

When considering program costs it should be noted that graduate student tuition is higher than undergraduate tuition and many candidates come from out-of-state which further increases revenue to the university. In recent years, the director position has been less than a full-time position and the director was not tenured faculty for the last five years of the program, further reducing the overall operating cost. Additionally, the FTE has been reduced to approximately 1.5 FTE who are responsible for delivery over 40 credit hours of instruction to the cohort during more than 1,050 hours spent together over the course of three semesters. This direct and consistent contact is not matched by the traditional program. More added value relates to this program in extensive supervision and observation which covers the entire year, spanning middle school/junior high, rural, high school, and urban student teaching experiences, providing at least three times the observations provided by the traditional program.

### **Context for Innovation**

In 1989 Dr. Robert Richburg and this land-grant university undertook an experimental and innovative teacher education model. The underlying concept of this program hinged on meeting the needs of non-traditional adults who already held a four-year college degree with several years of work experience, but now wanted to teach. Admission was selective and limited to no more than 20 outstanding individuals who had been working in their field for a number of years but have

identified a passion to become secondary teachers. The title acronym for this program reflected its focus—professionals with a mission in education.

The framework for this teacher preparation model reflected the needs of change-of-career adults in three significant ways. First, the model is a one-year, fast-track cohort program that leads to secondary teacher licensure. Second, the core curriculum delivery was integrated to meet adult learning needs. Third, a hands-on approach put motivated adults into public school classrooms within two weeks of the start of the program and deliberately featured experience in four distinct teaching environments: rural, urban, junior high/middle school, and high school. This structure allowed participants to apply lessons immediately and then build confidence and skills as teachers as the cohort progressed through the year. This philosophy of interspersing theory with teaching placements gave each teacher candidate a chance to practice, then reflect and improve each component before moving on to another instructional piece.

So, do we need more teachers or better teachers? “Education is inherently problematic,” states Linda Darling-Hammond in *Redesigning Schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (McDonald, 2002). She continues,

basically, the first part of the challenge is that we’re asked to do work in education that we’ve never been asked to do before. The mission of schools has changed over the last 100 years and, certainly, dramatically in the last 20 or 30 years. We have more need for education, standards for learning are going up. there is a feeling that the kinds of education we need today are different than what we’ve had before. That we need to articulate new, more ambitious goals for learning and we need for those goals to apply to all kids rather than just a small number of kids (p.16).

Consistency is a partner issue with quality. Current research shows 60% of teachers entering the classroom in 2004 will still be teaching in five years. Findings from the Tennessee Tomorrow, Inc. (2002) report:

Next to the family, a teacher is the single most influential factor in a child's learning. A competent, caring, qualified teacher will make a difference in a child's life. Why then are the new teachers leaving the teaching profession early in their careers? 42% of new teachers will leave the teaching profession in Tennessee in the first five years of their career. (p.6)

Why do 40% of new teachers leave the field so soon? Some former teachers surveyed said they left because of low pay, disruptive students, heavy workload, unrealistic expectations, and family reasons, and many reported a lack of support and a feeling of isolation (p.15).

Two facts collide and create a sense of urgency in training great teachers and then supporting them during those tough first five years. First, the number of school-age students is increasing every year and second, an aging population of baby-boomer teachers is ready to retire. Statistics for 2004 show the median age of teachers as 44 years old. Broken down by age group, the same study shows 10% of teachers in the 20-29 age group and 22% in the 30-39 age group with the majority of teachers, 63%, falling into the 40-59 age group (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). With such a large percentage of teachers nearing retirement, solving the attrition problem becomes even more important. The solution to providing enough teachers is two-fold. If we can sustain the younger teachers to remain in the field and recruit older change-of-career teachers, we may be able to meet future demands. The next challenge is to train excellent teachers.

## **Nurture and Development of High Quality Teachers**

The following priorities are identified in the foreward to *Studying Teacher Education* (2005) published by the American Educational Research Association:

Issues related to teacher quality and quality teacher education are always a priority in a democratic society committed to excellence in teaching and learning for all of its participants. These issues, however, are seldom as central to public policy concerns and decisions as they are today. (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, p.vii)

The nurturing and development of high quality teachers then plays an important role in the readiness of our future citizens to meet the demands of a challenging world. Not only do we need more teachers in the classrooms, what we really need are highly qualified and effective teachers. Studies show that students with highly qualified teachers show increased achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2002). She reiterates this in March, 2006 following the annual conference of the Association for Teacher Educators by pointing out that since “student achievement gains are more influenced by classroom teachers than by any other factor, the focus should be on providing new teachers with enough tools to be successful” (p.8). In an age of increasing reliance on standardized tests to validate teacher effectiveness, teachers in the schools and teacher preparation programs feel pressure to prove their worth.

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the non-profit and non-governmental accrediting body formed in 1954, serves to monitor teacher training programs and reports to the U.S. Department of Education. With over 30 national associations within its coalition, NCATE applies its standards to teacher training programs following the NCATE mission to provide leadership in

accountability and improvement of teacher education. NCATE “believes that caring, competent and qualified teachers should teach every child. Student learning must not only mean basic skills but also the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed as a responsible citizen and contributor to the new economy.” NCATE further lists the following ways for a teacher to meet that goal with:

1. a broad liberal arts education;
2. in-depth study of the teaching field;
3. a foundation of professional knowledge upon which to base instructional decisions;
4. a diverse, well-planned, and sequenced experiences in p-12 schools;
5. ongoing assessments of competence to practice, through an array of performance measures. ( NCATE Standards Homepage)

Just as the 18<sup>th</sup> century Agrarian Model gave way to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Factory Model, the 20th century demands of technology, and the 21<sup>st</sup> century Information Age require more change. To meet these challenges, NCATE provides six standards that outline its conceptual framework. The NCATE Standards for Candidate Performance

are:

- Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Disposition
- Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation
- Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practices
- Standard 4: Diversity
- Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development
- Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

By defining quality in teacher preparation within these parameters, NCATE establishes a shared vision and specific expectations for teacher education programs and teacher candidates. High standards for admission, completion of required work, field experience, knowledge, and pedagogy all reflect the demand for professional performance and accountability.

Over time, many experts have reflected on education. Table 1 shows a shift in the realm of influence in public education from philosophers to public intellectuals to research scientists who have the most influence on charting the future of public education policy. We have moved from a time when most students did not finish high school or even consider college. Many jobs were available in the past that did not require a formal education. Both society and the role of public schools have changed significantly and will continue to change as our local and global economies integrate (Orfield, 2005).

**Table 1. Selected Quotes on Education from 350 BC to 2002**

350 BC	Aristotle	<i>In modern times people's views about education differ. There is no general agreement about what the young should learn either in relation to moral virtue or to success in life. Nor is it clear whether education should be more concerned with training the intellect or the character. Contemporary events have made the problem more difficult, and there is no certainty whether education should be primarily vocational, moral, or cultural. People have recommended all three.</i> Politics VIII.2
1800	Thomas Jefferson	<i>Information is the currency of democracy. Let us in education dream of an aristocracy rising out of a democracy of opportunity.</i>
1848	Horace Mann	<i>Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the greatest equalizer of the conditions of men.</i> 12 <sup>th</sup> Report to MA Bd of Ed
1916	John Dewey	<i>Our job as educators is to prepare young people for life... we must equip them with the tools they need to function effectively in the world they will live.</i> Democracy in Education
1974	Deborah Meier	<i>Schools are the conscious embodiment of the way we want our next generation to understand their world and their place in it. It calls upon our most critical faculties to sort out what that message ought to be and how the teachers who represent the public in this enterprise can represent such ideals.</i> The Power Of Their Ideas
1984	John Goodlad	<i>Which comes first: good schools or good teachers? The two come together. Principals and educators must cultivate a culture of continuous renewal, and teacher preparation programs must produce teachers who can participate in a school renewal process that transcends the walls of their own classrooms.</i> A Place Called School
1989	Robert Richburg	<i>We hope to change public education by changing teacher education. We want to bring new competencies to the field.</i> Program Founder
2002	Linda Darling-Hammond	<i>The most important variable in pupil learning is the quality of the education and training of the teacher.</i> Highly Qualified Teachers

## **Form Follows Function—Program Origins**

This study has the two-fold intent of capturing the origins of an innovative program in teacher education and also of gathering data from the stakeholder groups of graduates, directors, and employers who will have the opportunity to share their reflections on their experiences with this program. The architectural precept that *form follows function* applies to the architecture of educational policies and programs just as it does to the framework for buildings. In the mid 1980s, the host university redefined its Strategic Plan and called for “creating the best teacher certification program in the state.” At the same time, Dr. Robert Richburg was asked to begin teaching some of these education classes. To reconnect with the classroom, Dr. Richburg left for three years from 1985 to 1988 to work with a school district in Minnesota. He came back renewed, reconnected, and with an idea. He talked with the director of the School of Education and said, “I want to develop a really good teacher education program.”

By design, the traditional undergraduate teacher training program hinged on the following principles delivered through undergraduate courses:

1. foundations of education
2. diversity and human relations
3. literacy/reading
4. general instructional methods
5. methods in content area with 1 student teaching experience after coursework

So what areas of a traditional program could be improved by change?

1. no authentic selection process
2. mass theory was coupled with mass practice
3. no opportunity to see contextual teaching (textbook learning isolated from application)
4. not enough emphasis on how to teach
5. no faculty accountability for final endorsement of teacher candidates

These opportunities for change pointed to establishing a separate program focused on serving non-traditional aged students in a full-time graduate program to run side-by-side with the traditional undergraduate program. The needs assessment revealed that 40% of the teacher training candidates were currently non-traditional. This is a large segment of students whose needs were not being individually addressed. Even more students could be added by actively recruiting them into a specialized full time program. Further recruiting refinement came in the form of the Teacher Perceiver Interview protocol (SRI). Dr. Richburg took the training in this protocol from SRI and became certified in it. This tool isolated elements that identify effective teachers during the selection process.

Development of this teacher training program began in earnest in 1988 by a team of faculty and graduate students. The program acronym reflects the vision: *professionals with a mission in education*. This program set to align its goals with those of the Holmes Group, an organization that enrolled charter institutions with an emphasis on research and development in teaching and learning, as well as a commitment to what to teach and how to teach. These goals included a solid knowledge of subject matter content, graduate level education study content, more rigorous screening and assessment, research-based curriculum. Additionally, more varied and productive field experiences formed the foundation for the new program. The team then set out to recruit, interview and select a pilot group. Next, the actual curriculum was designed to match the vision for teaching/coaching and to include varied field placements, intensive supervision model and eventually job search (The Holmes Group Forum, 1991).

The student manual introduced the program in this way: "Being an excellent teacher is one of the highest callings a person can have in life. Before there can be great doctors, Nobel Prize winners or scientists, there must be great teachers." It goes on:

*Learning to teach is one of the most difficult sets of skills that any person will ever attempt to learn. To the uninitiated, teaching looks easy - simply conveying information with clarity. It turns out to involve developing a very sophisticated relationship with many individuals (the learners) simultaneously and having a keen awareness and sensitivity to a wide range of dynamics, including the environment, learning styles, motivation, available methodologies, and the prior experience of the learner. Teaching requires an almost mysterious mixture of science and art that comes to focus in the thousands of pressure filled decisions that every teacher makes each day.*

*This program respects the complexity of the task involved in learning to teach. The staff believes that one learns to teach by being exposed to the best-tested, most practical theory; seeing that theory modeled by instructors every day; spending time "processing" the modeling that they, as learners, are involved in; practicing the skills they are being exposed to in small enough doses that the skills are 'isolate-able' and manageable; receiving immediate, specific feedback by their instructor as they practice; journaling about their own learning experiences in order to heighten their sensitivities to the learning process generally; and finally, practicing in a wide range of classroom contexts, because the processes and dynamics of teaching differ significantly from situation to situation.*

*In addition, the project is based on the belief that all students can learn and be successful. That success won't happen at the same point in time for each student. Some will learn quickly, some more slowly, but if opportunities continue to be presented - all will learn.*

*The crucial element in this success model is the individual teacher. The teacher's job is to know and communicate to young people specifically what the desired learning or outcomes are to be, then to create an environment which maximizes the likelihood that students can be successful, and employ a range of research-based instructional tools to give each child the highest possible probability to reach their own potential.* Case Study Program Handbook

Following a successful pilot year in 1988-1989 with 12 students (which involved two classes and student teaching), the program officially began in the school

year 1989-1990. An infusion of funding and prestige came in the winter of 1992-1993 when the program was named a Program of Excellence by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) after graduating four cohorts. This award had never before been given to a teacher training program (Hayes, 1994). The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) recognized this program as an outstanding program in 1995 (Ludwig, 1995). This higher profile led to increased national awareness of this program and applications rose to several hundred vying for the 20 slots annually.

In its 18 years, this program has attracted professionals from a variety of fields, including veterinary medicine, nursing, emergency medical technician, engineering, soils science, wild life biology, retired military, law, geology, corporate business, and social services (Richburg, 1996). The research based selection process has two major components. First, candidates complete a written application, which includes essay components. This is followed by a face-to-face interview based on revised questions from the Teacher Perceiver Instrument developed by Selection Research Incorporated (SRI). The interview takes place with at least two faculty members present using identical rating sheets. This model has been in use for over 20 years and centers around themes that reflect those embodied by teachers who effectively stimulate student learning. The themes include *mission, empathy, rapport, drive, individualized perception, listening, investment, input drive, activation, innovation, gestalt, objectivity, and focus*. The role-play segment of the interview offers a realistic view of the teacher potential. (Since 2004, Graduate School programs and Licensure Office personnel have also been on hand for interviews to

streamline the process that includes admittance to both the Graduate and Licensure programs.) Scores are compiled separately and then the teacher potential as well as the candidate fit with the cohort are considered before final decision for admittance is made (Richburg, 1996).

Once admitted, students encounter a program that differs in many respects from the traditional program.

“One student teaching experience at the end of the program made no sense. You can’t practice that many ideas—you should intersperse theory and opportunity to practice. Teaching is contextual,” said Dr. Richburg (Richburg, 2006). He also wanted more continuity of experience so that there would be more accountability in training teacher candidates. This was accomplished by having cohort teaching staff follow the teacher candidates through the year with direct instruction and repeated observations in a field placements. Staff also led the seminars in the fall and spring semester where the cohort processed their student teaching experiences. This resulted in a rich mentoring environment and fully informed evaluations of student teacher competencies at the end of the program year.

**Table 2. Case Study Program Timeline**

School Year	Cohort Number	Students Enrolled	Director	Significant Internal Events	Significant External Events
1989-90	PP1	18	Dr. Robert Richburg Sharon Carson	Dr. Dwayne Jansen, Director, SOE 1 year	Carson Dissertation: <i>Predictors of Future Teacher Effectiveness for Nontraditional Teacher Certification Candidates</i>
1990-91	PP2	14	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Sharon Carson	Dr. Cathy Love, Director, SOE 1 year	Young Women's Conference funded by Project FOCUS
1991-92	PP3	20	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Sharon Carson	Dr. Nancy Hartley, Director, SOE 4 years	Young Women's Conf. Funded for 3 years
1992-93	PP4	17	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Sharon Carson	Program Highly Visible Enormously popular Many articles done	Earned CCHE Program of Excellence Award Young Women's Conf.
1993-94	PP5	15	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Sharon Carson	Reading Across the Content Areas	McWhorter dissertation: <i>Chaos and Positive Disintegration: Transformation as a Non-Linear Process in Counseling</i>
1994-95	PP6	18	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Sharon Carson	Standards Based Portfolios	Change to License State Content Standards
1995-96	PP7	21	Dr. Robert Richburg Barb McWhorter - GT Angie Paccione - TS Jacques Fournet (2 years)	Dr. Rick Ginsberg, Director, SOE 9 years Vocational Ed combined into SOE	
1996-97	PP8	14	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Barbara McWhorter	Diversity Institute Technology training	Kielar-Dissertation
1997-98	PP9	19	Dr. Robert Richburg Dr. Barbara McWhorter	Class resumed 5 days later using lawn chairs	Flood July 27, 1997
1998-99	PP10	17	Dr. Barbara McWhorter Dr. Angie Paccione, AD	Emphasis on Diversity and Human Relations	CSAP testing initiated Lauderbach dissertation (M.Ed.)
1999-00	PP11	17	Dr. Barbara McWhorter Angie Paccione, AD.	Added Case Studies and Masters Portfolio	State Licensure Changes Paccione Dissertation
2000-01	PP12	16	Dr. Barbara McWhorter Dr. Angie Paccione, CoD	Adolescent Development Emphasis	
2001-02	PP13	14	Dr. Angie Paccione 1 year	Technology infusion	No Child Left Behind federal law enacted
2002-03	PP14	12	Dr. Paccione until Nov Dr. Richburg 10 <sup>th</sup> year		
2003-04	PP15	23	Sandy Butler	Step Up to Writing 6 Traits	Literacy & Numeracy
2004-05	PP16	20	Dr. Terry Deniston	Dr. Jean Lehmann, Interim Director, SOE	Program based at Fossil Ridge High School Co-Teach in Mind Center
2005-06	PP17	20	Dr. Terry Deniston	Dr. Jean Lehmann Interim Director, SOE	Credit & Load Refinements with Dean Dorhout
2006-07	PP18	13	Dr. Terry Deniston	Dr. Jean Lehmann, Interim Director, SOE Dr. Tim Davies, Interim Director	Program  Redesign group appointed

308 students /18 years = 17.1 average each year

With minor changes driven by the significant events in the right-hand column on

Table 2, the program has maintained its core components.

## Foundational Program Goals

Even though 18 years have passed under the leadership of 6 different directors, the core principles of this program have proven their effectiveness in teacher training. Six goals were established in 1989 as a framework for this program. They follow and include anecdotal comments from a variety of stakeholders. Both the program founder and successive School of Education Directors found these goals to “ring true” over the entire eighteen year life of this program.

**Goal 1 Recruitment and Retention of Exceptional Candidates from Professional Backgrounds:** We plan to recruit 15-20 highly motivated and capable individuals from professional and technical backgrounds each year with at least a bachelor’s degree and significant life and work experience related to the academic area in which they would teach.

*Not just any new teacher would have been equipped to handle the discipline situation on our school bus today. Without the valuable, previous work experience of being an environmentalist and working in the National Parks, the situation would probably have needed my assistance—but she handles it with ease. It is a breath of fresh air to have this type of new teacher starting out with these kinds of skills.*

*Middle School Assistant Principal*

**Goal 2 Multiple Teaching Experiences:** We will provide participants with successful teaching experiences in rural, urban, middle school/junior high, and high school environments so they will understand how each situation is similar and each unique. They will develop a confidence that teaching in only one circumstance would never give them. They will learn how to adapt and flex with any new teaching situation.

*The opportunity provided me in the rural student teaching experience gave me the confidence and job experience that I believe provided the edge in my being hired! The committee told me that they had never seen a student teacher with such a wide variety of field experiences.*

*Graduate*

**Goal 3 Research-Based Program:** We intend to continue to build the program around the best that is known from current research. Project Promise strives to train their new teacher clientele through an innovative research-based teacher preparation program. This will include the best-known research from learning styles, multiple intelligences, multicultural education, neuro-science, methodological innovations, and the use of technology.

*I would have been excited to have someone in August tell me to go out and teach. However, in the time that I have spent in schools, I find the techniques that I am learning invaluable in assisting me to communicate well with my students. I am learning how to talk with my students and get across a different perspective.*

*Participant*

*Having a methods class structured in conjunction with a teaching assignment allows me the opportunity to experiment and grow in my use of the information and develop my own understanding of how students learn.*

*Participant*

**Goal 4**      **Feedback and Coaching:** The project was conceived to provide multiple feedback opportunities and coaching situations. It provides regular and systematic coaching and feedback sessions that encourage the implementation of smaller bits of theory with immediate feedback in a teaching/work situation. Project Promise candidates often receive oral and written feedback thirty or more times during their four student teaching experiences. One of the program mottos is “Feedback is the breakfast of champions.”

*Never before have I had such extensive coaching and supervision of my student teachers. Your university supervisors have been here more in one quarter than almost all of my other student teachers combined! The support is beneficial both to me and my student teacher.*

*High School Science Department Chair*

**Goal 5**      **Job Placement of Candidates:** We will facilitate an extensive job search process that will invite school districts from all areas of Colorado and other states, as candidate interests dictate, to interview Project Promise participants. The goal is to retain the candidates for the teacher pool in Colorado in order to keep these teachers in Colorado classrooms following their specialized and intensive training.

*I am impressed with the design of this program and would like an opportunity to interview all of the candidates.*

*Personnel Director of a Colorado School*

*District*

**Goal 6**      **Mentoring and Follow-Up:** The goal of this project is to provide mentoring and follow-up to the candidates within the state (and out-of-state when possible), through regular conferencing and coaching sessions for the first two years of their contract teaching.

*I am looking forward to the needed support during my first year as a teacher. I know one thing for sure, my work as an engineer was never as meaningful and rewarding as I have experienced as a teacher thus far... and I am just beginning my new career.*

*Graduate*

## **Program Delivery Design**

With a strong philosophy and sense of purpose, this non-traditional graduate program became an annual cohort model where one group of 20 teacher candidates in an intensive program together with a faculty cohort who saw them through instruction and into a variety of field placements—rural, urban, junior high/middle school, and

high school providing abundant feedback all through the year. Cohort members are in schools from August until April. Classroom support continued with weekly seminars that provide a forum for sharing weekly happenings in their various placements and discussing relevant educational issues.

A major change in this program compared to the traditional program involves moving the philosophy of education component from the beginning to the end. This shift allows students to marinate in the realm of education for a year and then to purposefully reflect not only on what others have thought and said but to have the chance to formulate their own philosophy of education based on a variety of experiences. This personal document reflects what they have come to believe in their hearts about their career. Graduates then carry this piece into the interview phase and employment where it serves as a strong professional core. A typical program calendar follows in Table 3.

**Table 3. A Typical Calendar of the Case Study Program Year**

<p><b>Summer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cohort building: quilt squares, people bags, ropes course</li> <li>• Understanding instructional process</li> <li>• See how the year begins in junior high/middle school</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEPS – 6 weeks of methodologies</li> <li>• Video taped mini-lessons with peer and instructor feedback</li> <li>• Rural experience – live and teach in small, rural community teaching K-12</li> <li>• Return and process week of intense supervision in rural setting</li> <li>• 9 week student teaching back in junior high/middle school setting</li> <li>• Seminar-An opportunity to share joys and discuss frustrations of teaching</li> <li>• Work on Case Study and Lesson Plan segments of Portfolio</li> </ul>
<p><b>January</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity Institute with Baseline Training</li> <li>• Urban Experience with Multicultural emphasis</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 week student teaching in high school</li> <li>• Work on Case Study and Lesson Plan segments of Portfolio</li> <li>• Seminar-An opportunity to share joys and discuss frustrations of teaching</li> </ul>

- Philosophy Exploration and Development (Portfolio)
- Job Search Preparation – resume writing and interview skills
- Project Promise Career Fair
- Colorado State University Career Fair
- Course Completion Ceremony (May)

### **What Are the Power Considerations in Developing a New Alternative?**

Dr. Richburg outlined the following points for consideration to an ED 713

(Teaching, Learning, and Professional Growth) class in 2006:

1. Innovators Personal Position? – as a tenured professor his ideas had weight
2. Support from Above? – the director of teacher certification was a friend, the Department Chair had no strong preference, and a new program director was in place
3. Support of Peers? the Strategic Plan seemed to support the change until questions were asked about what other courses would be dropped if something new were added. When the survival of individual courses became an issue, peer support diminished. (Richburg, 2006)

Resources, competition, rivalry, and ego have to be considered when attempting change. Change is messy, nonlinear, and unpredictable or “unknowable” as Stacey (1992) notes:

The long-term future of such organizations is completely unknowable because the links between specific actions and specific outcomes become lost in the detail of what happens. We can claim to achieve something intentionally only when we can show that there was a connection between the specific action we took and the specific state we achieved; in other words, that what we achieved was not materially affected by chance. Since it is impossible to satisfy this condition when we operate in a chaotic system, it follows that successful human organizations cannot be the realization of some shared intention formed well ahead of action. Instead, success has to be the discovery of patterns that emerge through actions we take in response to changing agendas of issues we identify. (p.124)

Power can blindside an initiative, people in positions of power can change, peers can change. People resist the actual threat or the perceived threat of change. In fact, between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the program, the School of Education took a vote on the future of the program—just days before it was scheduled to begin. Students had

already enrolled and many had moved from distant parts of the country. The continuance of this program hinged on a single vote. One faculty member who had concerns, cast the swing vote in favor of continuing the program to avoid letting down all the students who had already committed to this program. What resulted was the continuance of a two-year old non-traditional program existing side-by-side with the larger traditional program.

At that time, a new course request went to either the undergraduate or graduate curriculum committee. Teacher certification is considered an undergraduate program by both the university and the School of Education, so proposed course changes for this new graduate teacher certification program needed approval by both the undergraduate and the graduate curriculum committees. This double endorsement was not anticipated and disapproval by either committee could have halted any hope of change one course at a time due to the use of the add-one, drop-one policy. If approval for new courses was granted within the school, then the proposal is presented at the college level. If approval is granted at the college level, then the new course proposal makes its way to Faculty Council (for all university curricula).

Next came the hard question: which 10 courses will be dropped to provide resources for the 10 new course offerings? Now the change agent is pitted against fellow educators and a competition for resources ensues. Dr. Richburg admits that there is an element of serendipity involved in successful change. Luck did certainly play a part as this fledgling program negotiated the hurdles of program approval (Richburg, 2006). As a full professor with support from School of Education administrators, two of the three power considerations were in place. Dr. Richburg

deliberately sought out peer support by including them as guest speakers for the program and through a series of lunches to maintain communication.

### **Potential Limitations and Assumptions**

I take a unique stance in regard to this program as a former graduate of year five and as a past director in year fifteen (2003-2004). Although I am no longer associated with the program in any regard, I have experienced its power in two unique ways and I believe in the strength of this model for teacher training. I add to this my curiosity about what can be learned by tapping into the collective experiences of program stakeholders.

One assumption is that I will be able to reach a significant number, possibly over 60% of the stakeholders. I also hope that they will be interested enough to participate. It is further assumed that all participants will answer all questions in an honest, professional and open manner. In a broader sense, I assume that teacher education programs will be interested in reviewing data on successful program elements when there is currently a 40% attrition rate among teachers in their first five years in the field (Teacher Attrition). Qualified teachers equipped to not just survive, but also thrive are critical to solving the problem of attrition. Research indicates that real support after graduation leads to increased longevity in the field. Additionally, studies show that well-educated and highly qualified teachers increase student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Solid teacher education then is at the heart of educational reform.

## **Definitions**

Accreditation means to certify as competent or valid. One accrediting agency is the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). This non-profit and non-government body formed in 1954 and serves to monitor teacher training programs and reports to the U.S. Department of Education.

Alternative Teacher Education Program is a program by which the state licenses a person who has not completed a typical state-approved or equivalent program of studies designed to prepare individuals to teach (in this study, at the secondary level). It is often referred to as “non-traditional.” In this case study, the alternative program is a one-year graduate level teacher training program of second-career adults.

Case, as described by Miles and Huberman (1994), is a “phenomena of some sort occurring in a bounded context.” A case is considered to be embedded when a single case contains several discrete yet interconnected elements. In this study the stakeholders involved in a single teacher training program include eighteen years worth of graduates, program directors, employers, and School of Education directors and are considered as embedded elements of this single case.

Certification was the term used before 1994 by which states authorize teachers to be employed by school districts. Licensure is the term being used since 1994. Both terms reflect the satisfactory completion of required courses, student teaching, and tests.

Competencies refer to skill mastery.

Essential elements refer to the content organization of this specific delivery model.

Evaluation, as defined by Fitzpatrick, Sanders, and Worthen (2004), is “identification, clarification, and application of defensible criteria to determine an evaluation object’s value, worth, or merit in relation to those criteria.” It is used here in two ways. The first context involves review of an entire program. The second context is limited to the review of teachers in the classroom.

Experimental describes the leap of faith that the Director of the School of Education took when backing the new teacher education delivery model aimed at adults who already had a four-year college degree and wished to become educators.

Goals are defined as explicit statements of intent (mission and vision) that are clearly reflected in action within the program.

Hiring professionals or employers could be principals, superintendents, or human resource people who are responsible for hiring and evaluating teachers.

Innovation, refers to a process, product, program, or idea that is the focus of a change effort, as seen by the users (Hall, 1998).

Innovative in this context indicates a change from the norm based on client needs and framed by research.

Lessons learned will become patterns that emerge from this case study data which might also apply to other teacher training programs.

Licensure is the existing means by which states currently permit teachers to be employed in school districts. Generally, states license teachers when they have completed a program of studies approved by the state or when the candidate has

completed a set of experiences, which the state deemed equivalent to that program of studies.

Longevity means how long a teacher has stayed in the field of education.

Professional Learning Community describes a collegial group of educators who are united in their commitment to student learning. They share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and review other classrooms, and participate in decision making.

Second-Career Adults is a term used to designate adults who have previously completed a four-year degree and have worked for a number of years, but now wish to change careers and become teachers.

Traditional Teacher Training for new teachers is a four or five year undergraduate program in pedagogy and child development capped with student teaching that leads to certification or licensure.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Review of Literature

**“Despite the growing consensus that teachers matter, however, there are many debates about why and how they matter or how they should be recruited, prepared, and retained in teaching.”**

Cochran-Smith & Zeichner (p.1)

This chapter will contain a selected review of current academic literature on teacher training programs designed for second-career adults. This non-traditional student has forced academic change in teacher licensure programs. Adults who already have four-year degrees and carry with them years of job experience have new demands for continuing their education. Many have families to support while taking their teacher training. This economic reality requires a fast-track program to put these professionals back to work. As adult learners with a strong sense of mission to accomplish new goals, accelerated training is needed to meet their learning styles. These older learners bring with them a wealth of prior knowledge that can be readily applied to new domains. Ready to add relevance to theory, these adult learners respond to authentic learning situations and are quickly able to integrate theory and practice (Carson, 1990).

Historically, traditional university or college based teacher training programs have accounted for about 75% of the demand for high-quality teachers in American classrooms. (It should be noted that some school settings, such as private, parochial and some charter schools or high-need public schools do use uncertified staff.)

Alternative teacher certification exists now in over 40 states and the District of Columbia to provide another pathway to teaching (Feistritzer & Chester, 2003).

Alternatively certified teachers account for varying percentages in different states, In

California, for example, 5% are alternatively certified. In Texas the number rises to 15%. New Jersey reports that 27% of its teachers, 600-700, are alternatively certified (Huling 2001, p.326). Not all alternative teacher certification programs are the same. Differences fall into several categories: target population, length of induction and training, type and length of field experience, and support in the field. Some draw from the military, others target adults with work experience in the private sector. Most require an existing four-year college degree. These programs could be operated by states or school districts, an educational service industry, colleges or universities or a combination of providers. With a wide disparity in the focus and framework, alternative certification programs are difficult to compare. The purpose of this paper is to review the literature centered on several such programs with the intent of isolating delivery aspects that lead to the comprehensive preparation of high quality teachers.

So what do the journals say about alternative certification programs? To limit our scope, we will look at programs for career changers who have a four-year college degree. It should be noted here that this teacher preparation segment is not only helping to meet the overall demand of the job market, it also adds value by providing access for non-traditional students (i.e., working adults) to become teachers. To access current data, journal articles written after the year 2000 are used.

### **A Third Alternative**

*The case for a third alternative* (Huling, Resta, & Rainwater, 2001) presents a case study of the Teacher Recruitment and Induction Program (TRIP) at Southwest Texas State University. The reference here to “third alternative” acknowledges the

decade long tension between university/college centered traditional teacher training programs that provide all training before certification and the alternative programs that provide training to candidates while they are employed as teachers. The overall design of TRIP is presented along with data from the first two years of operation which shows positive feedback from a program evaluation survey completed by participants about the worth of the program to them. The evaluation results to the question of which factors were most influential in your choice of this program (on a five-point scale with 5 = a lot of influence and 1 = to a little influence) follow:

- Accelerated program (4.87)
- Convenient location (4.78)
- Cohort design (4.44)
- Tuition assistance (4.15)
- Time & convenience (4.15)

Responses to whether TRIP met the expectations of students (on a seven-point scale with 7 = very much so and 1 = to very little so) follow:

- Career-change (5.88)
- Promotes personal growth (6.04)
- Would recommend (6.56)
- Willing to continue to teach in high-needs school (6.44)
- Confident they will still be teaching in five years (5.85)

How did the design of TRIP lead to such positive responses? First we will look at the stated stance of this teacher education program, their target market, and what unique elements have become critical factors in producing and supporting new teachers.

Stated program stance of TRIP:

Midcareer individuals comprise an important talent pool needed to help address the teacher shortage, yet this population, because of financial and family obligations, has often found it difficult to enroll in traditional SCDE

teacher preparation programs... Commitment, maturity, and life experience have always been strengths that mid-career candidates have brought to teaching, but in the past, many of those who have entered teaching through alternative pathways have done so with the handicap of minimal pre-employment preparation. A comprehensive preparation program, coupled with an intensive induction support system, will substantially reduce the stress of their entry into the profession and will allow them to more quickly become effective teachers, which in turn will likely increase their retention in the profession (Huling, pp.336-7).

Next, we will look at the rationale for creating this third alternative. Huling (2001) cites predictions from the U.S. Department of Education in 2000 that America will need 2.2 million new teachers with student enrollment peaking in 2007 as the rationale for a need for this new teacher preparation program. The combination of an aging teacher population reaching retirement age, a high attrition rate for new teachers, and increasing student enrollment are driving this need for new teachers who will be able to remain in the classroom for more than five years. With 2007 just around the corner, how can this goal be met?

The program evaluated by Huling (2001) is the midcareer option at Southwest Texas State University (SWT), formerly a state normal school. The Teacher Recruitment and Induction Project (TRIP) originated in 1999 with funding from the U.S. Department of Education in partnership with Southwest Texas State University (Colleges of Education, Science, and Liberal Arts) and seven surrounding school districts. The stated purpose of this program is to “recruit talented midcareer degreed individuals into teaching, provide them with high-quality preparation, facilitate their employment in high-needs schools, and provide them with intensive induction support for their first two years of teaching” (Huling, p.330). A small percent of the

people recruited are actually certified teachers wishing to re-enter the field and SWT has created a niche program as a refresher with a one-semester spring course. While this program is considered under the umbrella of “alternative certification” programs, the end-result for program completers is regular certification.

The customer-oriented approach of TRIP provides instruction off-campus at times convenient for participants (a cohort of 12-30). All requirements for certification are completed in two semesters prior to employment. Additionally, \$1,200 in tuition assistance is provided for each participant each semester with the understanding it will not have to be repaid if they teach for a year in a school defined as “high-need” as defined by the U.S. Department of Education as “one that has 50% or more of the student population qualifying for free or reduced lunch, has 34% or more faculty teaching in areas for which they are not certified, or has a 15% or greater teacher turnover rate for the past 3 years” (Huling, p.332). In a continuing effort to meet customer needs, TRIP staff takes an active part in facilitating paperwork for students, but in doing so has encountered some unintended consequences.

This, of course, requires additional staff resources and is less efficient than the traditional program. In addition, any change in typical procedures involving other university offices creates ripples throughout the organization, so program staff need to be prepared to deal with the annoyance of various offices as new procedures are forged. In addition, some faculty and many students in the traditional program have difficulty understanding why the midcareer candidate is entitled to special treatment when it comes to dealing with bureaucracy. In reality, these critical friends have a valid point, and universities in general need to be more consumer-oriented institutions to meet the needs of their changing student populations. Programs such as this may in fact be a catalyst for such improvements (p.336).

What impact does this have on staffing? Currently, TRIP has a team of six field-based College of Education faculty members as well as a content support team from math, science, language arts, and geography. Courses are often co-taught by a college faculty member and a content support teacher. The on-going support following job placement is conducted by the same mentor who served as the university supervisor during student teaching. Mentors regularly meet with the TRIP staff and receive on-going training. This element of the program is cited as being critical to its success. The typical TRIP participant is reflected in the following profile:

- 20% minority
- 33% in high-needs field
- 33% have GPA of 3.5-4.0
- 70% are age 40 or older
- Highly-engaged learner
- Less compliant than typical undergraduate student
- Have high expectations of self and teachers
- Likely to challenge and engage in debate
- Will readily seek help during student teaching placement

The TRIP philosophy that extends beyond just producing teachers reflects current findings by Linda Darling-Hammond (2005) in *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*,

Given these challenges of contemporary schooling, it would be naïve to suggest that merely producing more highly skilled teachers can, by itself, dramatically change the outcomes of education. We must attend simultaneously to both sides of the reform coin: better teachers and better systems. Schools will need to continue to change to create the conditions within which powerful teaching and learning can occur, and teachers will need to be prepared to be part of this change process (p.5).

Seven critical factors emerge as elements that drive success for TRIP.

1. Selective recruitment

2. Consumer-oriented approach adapted to midcareer candidates
3. Accelerated Program, comprehensive design-builds toward independent M.Ed.
4. Cohort Design
5. Financial Incentives
6. Mentoring support during and after program
7. Job placement support

By regarding the teacher candidate as a consumer, Southwest Texas State University has adopted a business model that is attuned to the needs of the teacher candidates as well as the needs of surrounding schools. By establishing a broad community partnership, TRIP has strengthened its foundation through inclusion of university and school district involvement. From demanding recruitment to responsive mentoring not only during the program, but for two years afterward with consistent personnel, pre-service teachers emerge as in-service teachers who feel valued and supported. The accelerated cohort program with a comprehensive design is one of the elements that has strong appeal to midcareer individuals. The placement of financial incentives is appropriate for career changers who have family obligations. It also provides a built-in incentive to remain in the field. Close collaboration with surrounding districts facilitates job placement. Most significantly, university resources are dedicated to supporting the aggressive elements of this program.

TRIP closely aligns with the original goals of the embedded case study and indeed does share many of the tensions as well. It is notable that TRIP was able to garner the necessary resources of both faculty and financial incentives and maintains (at least at this time) the necessary support of the university to allow it to succeed. Powerful continuity is provided with the university supervisor during the student teaching process continuing as mentor during the first two years of a graduate's

employment. This is rare and reflects the depth of the commitment to success in TRIP.

### **Levine and the 2006 Education Schools Project**

This recent study funded by the Education Schools Project reflects the findings of a four-year study of 1,206 U.S. university-based teacher education programs. Headed by Arthur Levine, past president of Columbia University (which was excluded from this study) and current president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, this research study found funding through private foundations. In reference to the lingering debate over whether teaching is a profession or a craft, Levine states,

Teacher education is the Dodge City of the education world. like the fabled Wild West town, it is unruly and chaotic. Anything goes and the chaos is increasing as traditional programs vie with non-traditional programs, compete with graduate programs. Increased regulation is juxtaposed against deregulation, universities Struggle with new teacher education providers, and teachers are alternatively educated for a profession and a craft.

In this rapidly changing environment... America's teacher education programs must demonstrate their relevance and their graduate's impact on student achievement—or face the very real danger that they will disappear (p.5).

While studying over 1,200 programs, Levine highlights four outstanding ones in this paper as exemplars. Characteristics shared by these programs include:

- Are a central part of their education school
- Offer a coherent, integrated, comprehensive, up-to-date curriculum that includes a field experience component that is sustained, begins early, and provides immediate application
- Connect theory to real classroom situations
- Teacher education faculty are committed both to their program and to their students
- Other faculty and administration support the program

- Quality of the program and its graduates are recognized by important external publics, such as the schools that hire them and the experts who assess them (p.6).

The four programs are Alverno College (Wisconsin), Emporia State University (Kansas), the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia, and Stanford University's Teacher Education Program (STEP) in California. All four schools are nationally recognized for producing excellent teachers. I will take a brief look at the Curry School, which is a five-year program, and then a more in-depth look at the STEP model as it has some unique innovations.

### **Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia**

The Curry School of Education comprises five years of study that result in a bachelor's degree in a content area and a master's degree in education that qualifies graduates for state teaching certification. It is included here as an example of a traditional program and as such provides some reference data on its student demographics. A series of grade point average, Praxis I and II and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) milestones must be met to continue from the undergraduate to the graduate level in this selective program. Currently, more than 80% (82% in 2005) of the students are white and female and most go on to teach in suburban schools. The Curry School reports 9 out of 10 of its graduates become classroom teachers.

Strong field experiences which account for up to 90 hours in as many as six different field placements at the undergraduate level are coupled with frequent formal observations by both clinical and university supervisors during the graduate student teaching (p.92).

## **Stanford Teacher Education Program (STEP) Model Overview**

Stanford's STEP model enrolls less than 70 students in this one-year (full year plus a summer) master's program. The full year in the field is paired with 45 graduate units of course work. In addition to the M.A. in education, graduates earn a preliminary California teaching credential. Like the Curry School, STEP students are predominantly (76%) female. However, the STEP cohort enrollment is 50% students of color. All have high grade point averages (B+/A-), GRE scores of over 1200, and have passed the California Subject Exam for Teachers (CSET). Financial incentives can offset costs.

The STEP model uses partner schools to assure that theory integrates with practice. Students spend at least 20 hours a week in the partner schools (mornings) and then attend afternoon classes at Stanford. While the partner schools may number up to 20, the program prefers to limit the number to 8 or 10 for better control of quality and resources.

Five areas are addressed in the instruction with an emphasis on equity.

1. Social and psychological foundations of education
2. Curriculum instruction in content areas
3. Language, literacy, and culture
4. General pedagogical structures
5. A practicum and student teaching

Students also attend a yearlong seminar that introduces topics such as technology, special needs, building community, and assessment.

As a selective program, STEP chooses its partner schools carefully for excellence in teaching. When frequent turnover in personnel at partner schools made this selection process difficult, Stanford took extreme steps. With privately raised

funds Stanford opened its own charter high school in a high-needs area. Later, three other small schools were added, thereby creating their own laboratory school network. With the sponsorship of Linda Darling-Hammond, a nationally recognized leader in university-based teacher education, these schools now provide not only learning opportunities for STEP students but also job placement opportunities for STEP graduates.

The STEP mission rests on recruiting diverse students and providing them with opportunities to work with diverse learners. The commitment here is to produce excellent teachers who have the skills and the dedication to work at high-needs schools. Clearly this effort is directed at narrowing the student achievement gap.

So many components in the STEP program are already in place in Project Promise. Both are accelerated master's programs. Both emphasize the integration of theory into practice with a variety of well-supervised observations. While the embedded case study under consideration here maintains an equity base with a genuine sensitivity for fairness and special needs, it has not actively recruited a majority of minority students. This might be something to consider.

#### Recommendations Resulting from *Educating School Teachers*

1. Transform education schools from ivory towers into professional schools focused on school practice.
2. Focus on student achievement as the primary measure of the success of teacher education programs.
3. Make five-year teacher education programs the norm.
4. Establish effective mechanisms for teacher education quality control.
5. Close failing teacher education programs, strengthen promising programs and expand excellent programs by creating incentives for outstanding students and career changers to enter education at doctoral universities.

I remained on board through most of the 142 pages of this study until it reached the measurement of the recommendation stage. I found most of the recommendations void of the reality of commitment to meaningful change. It reminds me of the current state of the standards movement. Just because we establish standards, post them in classrooms, create elaborate curriculum organizers graphically showing relation to standards, it does not necessarily translate into student achievement. A commitment to a comprehensive curriculum that is responsive to current needs and based on sound research coupled with the dedication of resources to mentoring and induction of new teachers offers promise. The partnership of stakeholders, in this case, the schools of education and the school districts, offers the firm foundation of a community of learners.

***Locking and Unlocking Possibilities for Teacher Leadership.***

Silva (2000) in *Teachers College Record*, focuses on an often neglected aspect of teacher preparation—the nurture and development of teachers as leaders. Silva’s case study looks at three teacher leaders. Through their experiences, characteristics for successful leadership become evident. First, teacher leaders understand and work within the organization and structure of the school. Second, they form relationships. Third, they model professional growth. Fourth, they help others with change. Fifth, they challenge the status quo by raising children’s voices. Case study data were gathered by interviews and analyzed both within case and across cases (p.779).

The choice of this article evolved from considering the interaction of the new teacher within the school environment. The model suggested by Southwest Texas State University establishes the collaboration, co-teaching and release time of in-

service teachers for mentoring. The Stanford STEP model emphasizes equity. Levine also suggests distributive leadership. A model that promotes the growth of leadership in new teachers while it welcomes in-service teachers to leadership positions, could serve to instigate systemic change and reform necessary to strengthen the learning equation. Recently, many have written about the transforming power of teacher leadership (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1998; Fullan, 1994; Lieberman, 1992; Wasley, 1991).

### **The Three Waves**

Separate and distinct manifestations of teacher leadership are described as occurring in three waves. The first wave of using teachers as managers had little meaning. The second wave used teachers as instructional leaders that also carried some negative meaning as specialists were relied on to pre-package material for the classroom and led to “remote-controlling of teachers” (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Shulman, 1987). Third wave teacher leadership, which values “collegiality and professionalism,” works by changing the school culture (Silva, 2000). Sergiovanni and Starratt state,

Teacher leadership involves the experimentation and examination of more powerful learning activities with and for students, in the service of enhanced student productions and performances of knowledge and understanding. Based on this leadership with and of students, teacher leaders invite other leaders to similar engagements with students in the learning process (p.149).

This is where the title image of “sliding open the doors” becomes apparent as the opportunity and invitation to collaboration are presented. Since little research has been conducted on the professional and personal impact of third wave teacher leadership, Silva seeks to begin the work. Using a descriptive case study

methodology (Merriam, 1988), Silva interviewed teacher leaders at what was described as “a progressive school district in the northeastern United States.” All three teacher leaders shared these three experiences: the principal as barrier, structure valued over people, and trouble finding space to share knowledge.

While unsuccessful in many of their efforts, these three teacher leaders learned lessons from their mistakes. The relationship building any honoring of other teacher’s efforts had to take place before any conversations about change could. Subtle, behind-the-scenes efforts were more successful than trying to steamroll an idea through—no matter how good the idea might be. Ownership leads to successful shared leadership.

It became apparent through the lived experiences of these three teacher leaders that three actions led to success. First, teachers need to learn to “walk in both the world of the children and the world of the school as an organization.” Second, collective authority needs to be shared by both the principal and the teachers, wherein the “school becomes a community of leaders.” Finally, the culture needs to “value developing teachers over developing efficient and effective structure (p.790). Then more democratic communities emerge within the organization (Apple & Beane, 1995; Meier, 1995; Wood, 1992).

### **Comparison of Eight Different Approaches**

Eight different exemplary alternatives listed by Innovations in Education on the U.S. Department of Education website include: Transitions to Teaching, New York City Teaching Fellows, Wichita State University, Chicago Academy for Urban School Leadership, Boston Teacher Residency Program, and Massachusetts Institute

of New Teachers, SW Texas's TRIP, and our case study. These provide a sampling of current programs available to second-career adults who want to become teachers. They vary in sponsorship, approach, support, and duration. A brief description will be followed by a comparison chart of features of each program. Common factors become apparent and are outlined at the end of the table.

**A. Transitions to Teaching**

(<http://www.ed.gov/print/programs/transitionteach/index.html>) is a federal grant program that “supports the recruitment of highly qualified mid-career professionals, ” Through five-year grants this program allows local entities to develop and implement a program leading to state certification with the stipulation that the resulting teacher placements last at least three years. To date, 31 grants have been awarded, amounting to \$11.8 million.

**B. New York City Teaching Fellows**

(<http://www.nyctf.org/about/fellowship.html>) started recruiting talented professionals in 2000 to teach in struggling schools. With a retention rate of about 90%, this program now attracts 17,000 applicants a year and accounts for 30% of new hires in math. The program is so attractive because it provides a regular teacher's salary plus benefits worth more than \$41,000. This two-year program also can lead to a Master's degree.

**C. Wichita State**

**University**(<http://www.webs.wichita.edu/?u=altcert&p=index>) partnered with the Peace Corps to meet declining entrance into secondary education to meet a need in urban districts. Since 1992 more than 250 candidates have completed the program and 85% of those remain in education.

**D. Chicago's Academy for Urban School Leadership** (<http://www.ausl-chicago.org/index.html>)

offers a year-long residency program for mid-career professionals in association with National-Louis University's “redesigned traditional Master of Arts in Teaching degree from 15 distinct courses to an innovative spiral curriculum for the 10-month Teaching Residency and the 12 months of graduate level coursework. The spiral curriculum consists of six strands: Foundations of Education, Knowledge of Students, Integrated Methods of Teaching, Teacher Leadership, and Power of Data and Technology. Placement after graduation is in under-performing schools.

**E. Boston Teacher Residency Program** (<http://www.bpe.org/btr/>) is a one-year

urban teacher preparation program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education. As part of the Boston Teacher Residency program, 52 candidates will be recruited in 2006 in Mathematics, Science, and English. This accelerated 13-month program matches the teacher-in-resident with a co-teacher who serves as mentor. “Developed as part of Boston's aggressive commitment to improving instruction in every classroom.” Residents receive \$10,000 during their year of service to a school. They earn a Massachusetts Initial Teacher License and a master's degree in education from the University of Massachusetts/Boston, and work toward dual licensure in Special Education.”

- F. Massachusetts Institute of New Teachers (MINT)** (<http://www.doemass.org/mint/other.html>) seeks to enlist motivated college seniors as well as talented recent college graduates and mid-career professionals to become teachers. Candidates must be accepted as potential teachers by one of five Boston school districts before enrolling in the summer foundational ‘bootcamp.’ These “teachers of record” are supported and mentored through their first year of teaching. Benefits include a guaranteed teaching position, a full-tuition scholarship and a \$2,000 stipend. Other initiatives that might apply include paying back college loans, a signing bonus for teaching in Massachusetts public schools, and tuition vouchers. In five years, this program has launched 600 teaching careers in high-demand areas.
- G. Teacher Recruitment and Induction Program –TRIP** (<http://www.lab.rrhcc.txstate.edu/trp/>) was created by Southwest Texas State University to recruit mid-career individuals to become teachers in high-needs schools. Incentives include forgiving tuition in exchange for teaching for a year in Texas at high-needs schools (Huling et al, 2001).
- H. Subject Case Study** (<http://www.promise.colostate.edu>) founded in 1989 to meet the needs of non-traditional students, this one-year master’s level program provides urban, rural, middle school and high school teaching experiences for its cohort. With over 300 graduates, this program maintains a placement rate of over 90%.

**Table 4. Comparison of 8 Non-Traditional Teacher Certification Programs**

Program	Affiliation	Certification	Length	Focus Area	Mentor	Incentives
Transitions to Teaching	US Dept of Ed grant program to schools	N/A	N/A	Program Development for High Needs Schools	N/A	N/A
New York City Teaching Fellows	New York University	YES	2 Years	High Needs-math science, Spanish, Special Ed, bilingual ed	YES	Regular teacher's salary; subsidized master's degree
Wichita State University for Peace Corps volunteers	Wichita State University	YES	2 Years	High needs, urban	YES	Regular teacher's salary
Chicago's Academy for Urban School Leadership	National-Louis University	YES	1 Year	High needs, urban schools	YES	\$30,000 stipend; Master's and certification with 5 year employment
Boston Teacher Residency Program	University of Massachusetts, Boston	YES	13 months	Dual certification in Special Ed; Urban schools	YES	\$10,000 stipend
Massachusetts Institute of New Teachers (MINT)	Simmons College and Worcester State College	YES	1 Year	High needs, Low performing schools	YES	Job guarantee; full-tuition scholarship; \$2,000 stipend
Teacher Recruitment and Induction Project -TRIP	Southwest Texas State University	YES	1 Year	High-needs, low performing schools	YES	\$1200 tuition per semester; forgiven after 3 years work in high needs school in Texas
Embedded Case Study	A land-grant university in the West	YES	1 Year	Full range of diversity; urban and rural	YES	NONE

Some common factors in these programs seen as building for success:

- Recruit widely, but select candidates carefully
- Streamline enrollment and registration process
- Offer classes at time and place that is convenient for students
- Establish active partnerships with public schools
- Pace and shape curriculum to meet needs of motivated adult learners
- Set and maintain high standards for excellence and professionalism
- Instructors model best practices through interactive cooperative learning

- Blend learning with opportunity to practice in the field
- Provide a variety of field placements
- Frequent opportunities for observation, feedback, reflection, and support
- Offer incentives that value effort and commitment

What drives states to create programs like the ones listed in Table 4? Most states are encountering similar challenges to the ones identified in Massachusetts:

1. 50 % of the current teaching force will need to be replaced in 10 years
2. 33% of school-age children in the U.S. are members of minority groups, yet only 12% of the teaching force reflect a minority group
3. Young men in urban schools have a dropout rate 31 times higher than their male peers in more affluent suburban schools
4. 30% of newly hired math teachers are not licensed in mathematics
5. 29% of newly hired science teachers are not licensed in science  
(Massachusetts Department of Education Homepage)

With statistics like these driving even wider discrepancies in existing achievement gaps, it really does make sense to recruit talented and motivated individuals who want to make a difference through teaching and to provide them with powerful tools as well as incentives to help them be successful in the most challenging subject areas and schools.

### **Moving Beyond One Pathway**

If educators can move beyond the concept of one true pathway to teacher certification by accepting alternative routes as equals, then perhaps we can add highly qualified professionals to teaching who might not otherwise have had access to the field of education. In classroom terms, this is differentiation at its best because it meets the needs of a different pool of teacher candidates, not just bachelor level education majors. With more routes, more communities can be reached. A complex highway network of teacher training options based on standards of quality could provide those hard-to-reach areas with an influx of caring, motivated, and “high-

qualified” teachers. Underlying all the alternate routes, however, is the sincere notion that to learn best students need the best possible teachers. Successful non-traditional teacher training programs share a primary purpose: to provide exceptional leadership and learning opportunities for non-traditional teacher candidates (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005, p. 704).

### **Conclusions and Recommendations That Inform This Study**

Several significant benefits emerge from the notions suggested by the articles for both teacher preparation programs and for employers. First, by instilling leadership skills in teachers, a carryover effect would result in skills that can be directly modeled for students and that allow for a more positive teacher affect through active participation in the business of school in the larger sense as well as from working in an environment that values individual abilities. Second, from an employer’s perspective, individuals with leadership skills add value to an organization.

Ten essential factors associated with university-based alternative programs for second-career students emerge from this review that inform program reform efforts.

1. Prickly innovation models may irritate the status quo of a university, but are still worthwhile as an exemplary program. (HULING)
2. Deliberate recruitment standards are essential to success. (ALL)
3. A customer-oriented approach to students and increases student satisfaction. (ALL)
4. Mentoring into the first 2 years of employment increases longevity of employment. (ALL)
5. Financial incentives and cohort design are desired by career changers. (ALL)
6. Multiple field placements that emphasize the integration of theory into practice is effective in producing excellent teachers. (ALL)

7. Program survival at a university depends on it being accepted and supported as a central part of the education school. (ALL)
8. Sufficient resources must be committed to the program to enable it to complete its mission. (ALL)
9. A community partnership that values the program and its graduates is necessary for success. (ALL)
10. Teachers trained as leaders can be instrumental in reform efforts and serve their students better as they develop a larger lens that focuses on the classroom and beyond. (SILVA)

## CHAPTER THREE

### Method

#### **Overview**

This case study sought to capture and frame the responses and stories of stakeholders concerning their involvement with a graduate level secondary teacher training program at a land grant university in the Rocky Mountain Region. No other stakeholder study had been done during the existence of this program, therefore a case study to explore this phenomena in its real-life context is appropriate (Gall, 2006, p.447). Isolated or “bounded” in time and place (Creswell, 1998, p.37), this study went forward in the spirit of inquiry to survey the program graduates and to interview program directors and employers of the graduates. A resulting combination of mostly qualitative and some quantitative data lead to the combination or mix of methods.

This chapter presents the tradition and methods used to explore these topics:

- What worked?
- What did not work?
- What suggestions for change do stakeholders suggest?

Details follow in four sections on rationale and evidence for the selected methodological approach, an evaluation of the use of triangulation to check quality and veracity, and the efficacy of the proposed methodology to address the research questions listed above. The first section will examine the procedures used for this study. The second section describes the setting and context of the case study. The third section provides details on the study participants. The fourth section contains

the data analysis, an explanation of the inductive coding process, and a discussion of trustworthiness issues.

### **Procedures**

In reviewing the research on design issues, Miles and Huberman (1994) cite the work of Rossman and Wilson (1984) who propose three overarching reasons for combining qualitative and quantitative data, “(a) to enable confirmation or corroboration of each via triangulation, (b) to elaborate or develop analysis, providing richer detail, and (c) to initiate new lines of thinking through attention to surprises or paradoxes, ‘turning ideas around,’ providing fresh insight” (p.41). Continuing this line of thought, Firestone (1987) states, “qualitative research persuades through rich description and strategic comparison... thereby overcoming the ‘abstraction inherent’ in quantitative studies” (p.41).

When I considered the choice of collecting either quantitative or qualitative data for this research project, the language arts teacher in me knew from experience that the power of story outweighs the impact of numbers when describing the people-oriented process of a teacher education program. My pragmatic side, however, acknowledged that some of my audience of educators might only value numbers. So, I embraced a combination of mostly qualitative data and some quantitative data to tell the story of the stakeholders in this case study. I wanted their voices to be heard without being reduced to tables and charts or graphs. By coding the narrative responses inductively, I intended to move from the literal to the abstract as I focus and simplify the data. The narrative was examined to locate emerging themes or

patterns. In this way, authentic data emerged and became available for the audience of other educators to evaluate independently.

Merriam (2002) defines a basic interpretive qualitative study in this way:

A basic interpretive qualitative study exemplifies all the characteristics of qualitative research discussed above; that is the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of the situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as the instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive. In conducting a basic qualitative study, you seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives, and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these. Data are collected through interviews, observations, or document analysis. These data are inductively analyzed to identify the recurring patterns or common themes that cut across the data. A rich descriptive account of the findings is presented and discussed, using references to the literature that framed the study in the first place. (pp. 6-7)

With a qualitative study in mind, I next considered the five traditions of qualitative inquiry: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. Biography did not fit because I was not studying a single person. My subject seemed too broad to be classified as a phenomenology as my research questions focus on the performance of the program as a whole over time, rather than on individual lived experience within the program and would not be limited to just interviews. Grounded theory did not match because the intent of my study was to work forward toward meaning rather than work backward to prove a hypothesis. The basis of ethnography in culture as a social group or system in the broad social sense does not describe the culture of a learning community this program engenders. Case study as an in-depth analysis with multiple sources, however, did indeed seem to match the intent of my study as “the exploration of a bounded system, bounded by

time and place... with the case being studied—a program, an event, an activity, or individuals” (Creswell, 1998, p.61).

Approval to conduct this study was obtained from the Human Subjects office of the university and a letter of cooperation (see Appendix) came from the director of the School of Education allowing access to the names and addresses of graduates of the program for the purposes of this case study. Following Human Subjects approval for this study, data collection in the form of a survey and interviews began in January, 2007 and ended in May, 2007. After current addresses had been verified for the graduate group (with help from the Alumni Office), a cover letter (see Appendix) was sent explaining the intent of this study. It asked for agreement to participate in this confidential case study. The ability to locate graduates and their willingness to participate in this study determined the final sample sizes.

#### *Field Testing*

Survey and interview questions were field tested prior to their use. The survey was given to two student groups, one in the School of Business and one in the School of Education. The interview questions were tested with two university instructors involved with the program and two veteran educators with over 60 total years of experience in hiring and supervising new teachers. Their feedback led to refinement in both data collection tools.

#### *Survey Website*

A survey website was created to receive the survey information at <http://www.business.colostate.edu/kathryn.e.davis05/survey.html>. It was designed specifically for this study by Kathryn Davis in the School of Business. The data from

mail-in surveys was entered automatically into the database. No names were attached in an effort to preserve anonymity, but the cohort year was recorded. The database design allowed for sorting by various categories and used a Likert scale which presented numerical data in report form.

In keeping with business standards, a reminder postcard was sent out to graduates two weeks before the online website closed. This resulted in responses from about two dozen graduates. Control groups from *cohorts* 16 and 18 were contacted by email to assess any difference in response rate between a letter and an email contact. These two *cohorts* contacted by email responded in higher number than cohorts contacted by mail. Year 18 posted the highest response rate of 54% and year 16 had the third highest rate of 45%. This suggests that staying in contact with graduates through current email addresses is effective.

Here are the survey database specifics:

- Database design will hold and sort survey information (without names)
- a ColdFusion based website will house the survey
- <http://www.business.colostate.edu/kathryn.e.davis05/survey1.cfm>
- responses submitted from the survey will populate the database
- an Access database will consist of tables that hold the data generated from survey and reports of the data

The graduate survey had three parts:

1. Likert scale responses to questions about participant's experiences
2. demographic data such as cohort, current teaching position, etc.
3. short answer questions

Names were replaced by numbers on the survey data submitted online. (If any individuals requested a paper survey rather than an online one, the hard copy of their responses would have been destroyed as soon as it is entered by hand into the database, but this step was not necessary as there were no such requests.) While the

limited number of cohorts and graduates might allow for some guessing about attribution of responses, the survey is designed to allow participants to not answer any question they choose thereby offering further confidentiality. While this resulted in fairness for participants, it also resulted in responses that did not match the sample size. Further, data was sorted and reported in aggregate rather than being isolated to a small group.

### *Interviews*

The interview questions were open-ended and follow-up questions were asked as needed. Participants (*program directors, School of Education directors, and employers*) were asked:

- What about the program worked?
- What about the program did not work?
- What suggestions do you offer for change to the program?

There are six former *program directors*, so that is the sample size (n=6) for this group. Each *director* was interviewed. Face-to-face interviews (that lasted for one hour) were used with the second stakeholder groups of six *employers* which numbered (n=6). This group consisted of principals who hired and/or supervised program graduates. The third stakeholder group consisted of six *School of Education directors* (n=6).

For the interviews, *employers* (secondary principals) were purposefully selected from names suggested by the program directors as individuals who have employed many graduates over the past 18 years in a variety of school districts. The range used for the employers continued up to 12 (n= up to 12) until no new

information or explanations were received. A cover letter was sent. Interviews were tape recorded after consent forms were signed. No names were not used.

For all interviews, the interview location and time was at the convenience of the interviewee. One hour was allowed for each interview. All interviews were captured on audio tape for later analysis and coding. The resulting transcripts added up to over 200 pages of narrative data.

### **Case Study Setting**

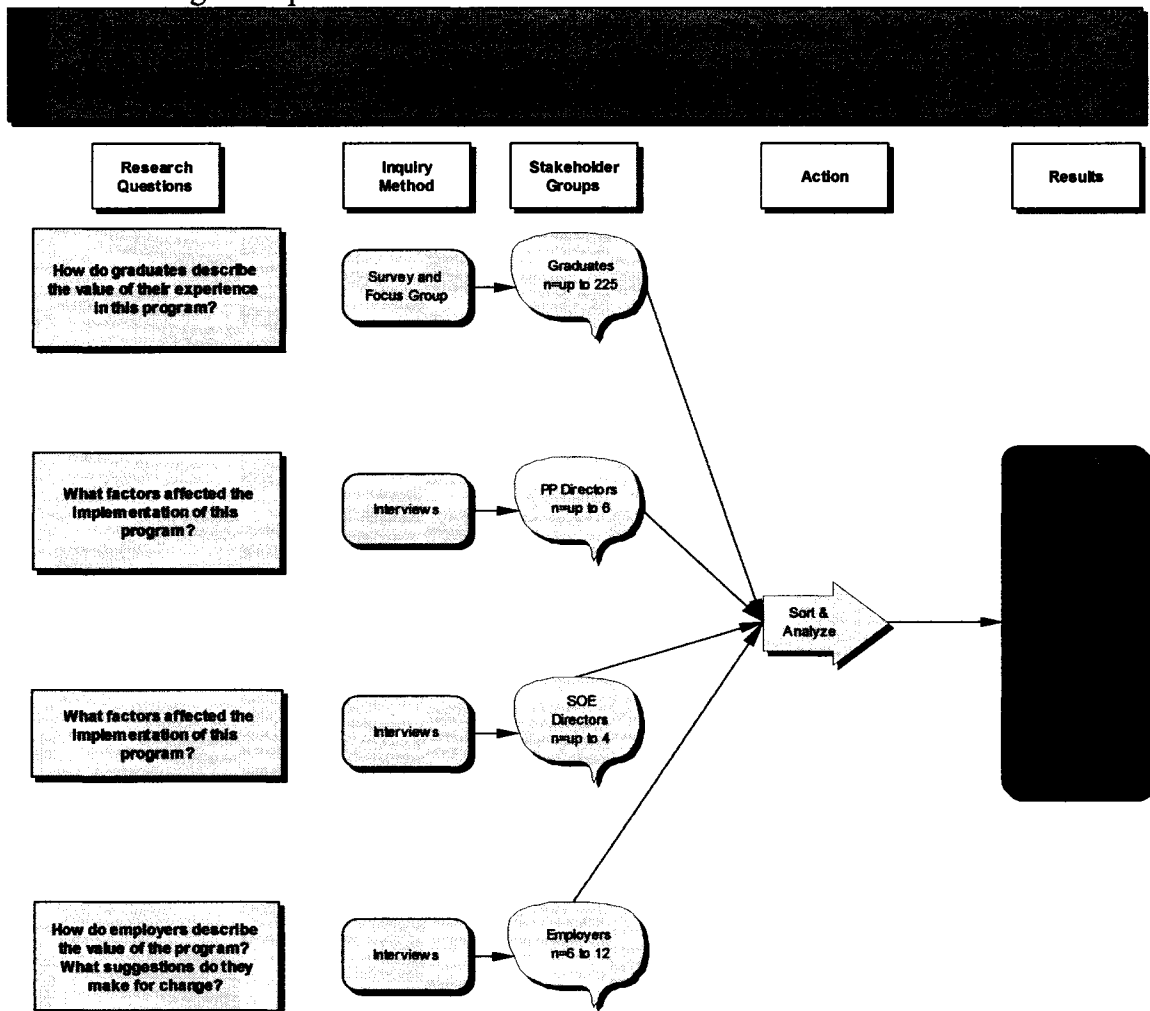
The case here involved four stakeholder groups: *program graduates, program directors, School of Education directors, and employers* (hiring and supervising principals). This one year fast track university graduate level teacher training program for second-career adults began in 1989 and ended in 2007. Over those eighteen years of operation *cohorts* ranging in size from 12-23 (averaging 17) resulted in 308 graduates. Given that the program ended after eighteen years, this may be the last chance to obtain input from all the embedded stakeholders.

Just one stakeholder view might not provide a full telling of the story of this alternative model for graduate teacher education. Multiple stakeholders represent multiple realities. Giving all these participants a voice seemed essential. As such, this follows in the participant oriented, constructivist tradition (Guba and Lincoln, 1989) which includes all viewpoints in order to fully reveal the partnerships at work. This is also consistent with the research methods employed here that “depend on inductive reasoning, use a multiplicity of data, and record multiple, rather than single realities” (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004, p.133). The use of open inquiry provided flexibility in the study process. The multiple view points provided various

inside views that resulted in a rich landscape and also allowed for comparison of perceptions. The focus of this inquiry was refined to three overarching research questions used in all the interviews: *What worked? What did not work? What changes would you suggest?*

The initial case study design template follows.

**Table 5.** Design Template for Case



What Table 5 does not reveal is the physical presence of the program under study. Therefore, a brief introduction to the environment created by this program would be appropriate. Born of innovation and high expectations for providing an

enriched environment for training (see Chapter One), this CCHE designated Program of Excellence was housed in two different basement rooms of the School of Education Building. I will describe these rooms from my memory and impressions. For the first eight years, it called Room 7 home. Room 7 was rather plain--a windowless room that had previously been home to a speech therapy laboratory for children. The two way mirror was still in place. Sandwiched between two hallways and between two bathrooms, this otherwise unremarkable space came to life with ideas, passion for teaching and learning, and mission. If you looked around the room you would see several dominant posters: *What's Going On In the Mind of the Learner? Success is a Journey, Not a Destination. GO BIG!* As the year went on, more and more student artifacts adorned the walls. Even at the beginning though, there was enough stimulation in place to challenge a wandering mind. This medium was the message as Marshall McLuhan proclaimed in the 1970's. Room 7 was colorful with table and chairs that could be moved as needed rather than confining desks. This was a learning laboratory in every sense. *Daily Agenda and Objectives* took front stage on the board. The lessons delivered here had authenticity, relevance, and transparency. The creative energy generated in this setting was delightfully chaotic. There were no quiet ah-ha moments, but loud explosive ones. Each lesson modeled the content. Teachable moments filled each day on campus. New students found their name in place three times as they entered. The ceiling displayed banners from each of their alma maters to honor them. Human diversity was honored daily and every voice had a place in the room. This became a safe place for the risk-taking involved in learning to teach. Fluid placement of furniture and people allowed the

focus to constantly change in this room. Here friendships were forged and lessons became indelible. Then one day in July, 1997 it was flooded and almost everything was lost.

After that the building was reconfigured and the program moved from the middle earth (or middle basement) to Room 4 which had windows and occupied the northwest corner of the basement. In this space, a foyer and three small offices provided entry. The *Program of Excellence* banner was hung in the hall and a large welcome sign greeted people. Bulletin boards were added for the current cohort with pictures and names as well as bulletin boards for past cohorts showing where they were teaching. More posters set the tone, including the content of the ones that originally hung in Room 7 and an accumulation of class gifts were grouped near the entrance as a reminder of those who had come before. Another learning laboratory was created here and lasted until 2007. (A sign on the door proclaimed: *You are about to enter a Learning Zone!*) The *Daily Agenda and Objectives* were written on the front board. Again the walls and ceiling held artifacts and learning tools. These two basement rooms should not have attracted much attention, but the invitational nature of them made them a favorite with faculty. As a result, these rooms were often requested for use when the cohort was not in residence. (The program emphasis took students into schools within the first two weeks and kept them in a variety of settings during the year. The on-campus time was limited to two weeks in August for STEPS, two weeks in January for the Diversity Institute, and April into May for Philosophy, Portfolio Development, and Career Fair and Job Search. Seminar sessions were held one night a week throughout the year.)

For the final three years of the program, a local high school provided a home base and the room used for the program in that building took on the same attributes of Room 7 and Room 4. Like the university faculty, high school students and teachers found this room to be welcoming and safe and many people gravitated to this space. Despite changes in place and leadership, the underlying cultural elements of this program remained constant.

### **Study Participants**

Due to the large number of stakeholders involved in this one program, I considered this to be an embedded case. As such, this case meets the criteria of being bounded in time and place as this one-year teacher training program has been offered for the past eighteen years. I isolated four distinct stakeholder groups for this program:

- *graduates* (n=up to 225),
- *program directors* (n=up to 6),
- *School of Education directors* (n=up to 6)
- *employers* (n=6 up to 12) of the graduates.

#### *Program Graduates*

While 308 teachers graduated from this program, contact information for only 250 could be found. Using data from archived files and with the help of the alumni office, 225 current addresses were verified. More than 25 letters were returned as *addressee unknown*. We were unable to locate individuals who had moved to France and Africa. One graduate was deceased. Of the 200 who were located, 101 (50% of the available sample) responded to the survey. The survey included the provision that participants could decline to answer any of the questions, so the range of the responses was from 80-101.

Multiple sources required multiple methods of inquiry and data collection. In considering target stakeholder sample size, it was determined that every effort would be made to reach as many of the stakeholders as possible. Choosing a random sample of participants from each cohort was considered and rejected. It made more sense to deepen the data by reaching as many graduates as possible. The *graduate* cohort size for this program has ranged from 12 to 23 over the years. A survey seemed like a natural tool to use to collect data from the largest stakeholder group, the program graduates.

An option for graduates to take part in a focus group was also included if six or more people were interested. It was thought that the graduates might possess richer information than just a survey would collect, so several constructed response opportunities were added to the survey to allow the voices of these graduates to be heard. There was inadequate response to hold a focus group.

#### *Program Directors and School of Education Directors*

There were six *program directors* over its eighteen year lifespan. All six agreed to the hour-long interview. At the university level, six past and present *School of Education directors* also participated, representing the onset of the program to its closure. In the university the overall program falls within a college. The education program administrator is considered a director who interacts with other unit heads in the college. *It is important to note here that the program in this case study is only one program nested within a larger licensure program and as such is in competition for limited resources.*

## *Employers*

Six employers (secondary principals) also agreed to participate. *Employers* were secondary principals who shared two criteria. First they have interviewed and hired many program graduates over the past 18 years. Second, they have been responsible for supervising these new hires and evaluating their induction and growth in the profession. Two principals were from a large school district near the university. Two were from neighboring mid-size districts and two were from small outlying districts, one on the western slope and one on the plains of Colorado.

Many names were suggested by past directors. These names were separated into four categories based on the size or location of their districts:

1. large suburban
2. mid-size suburban
3. small western slope
4. small eastern plains

At random, names were chosen from each group. Twelve employers were contacted and six agreed to participate. Two employers were from a large suburban district, two from a mid-size district, one from the western slope, and one from the eastern plains.

In addition to the larger research questions, one question was asked of all participants: *What one word would you use to sum up this program?* This provided a quick look at general impressions across the board. Additionally, the interviews of *directors, employers, and School of Education directors* sought to capture their experience as to desired traits in new teachers and what one experience in their own lives have shaped who they became as educators.

These stakeholder groups provided multiple sources of information.

Whenever possible primary sources, like the six program goals, program handbook

and calendars, were used as documentation. This was verified in the interviews with *program directors*.

Direct observation occurred during my two years of association with the program, first as student and then ten years later as director. I also interacted with cohorts 16, 17, and 18 to some degree. As a student in the program I participated in reciprocal peer evaluations. As director, I actively observed and evaluated all the students in their various field settings. As director I was involved in interviewing and accepting students for cohorts 16 and 17, During my graduate studies I conducted a program evaluation for cohort 17 in their field setting at a local high school.

It should be noted that 95% of the resources and files for this program in years 1-8 were destroyed in the flood of July 1997. Just before the program began its ninth year, a massive rainstorm flooded much of the town, including the basement offices at the university where this program was housed. Almost all of the files and resources were destroyed. After a dismal cleanup process, the program began the following week in another building with students bringing their own lawn chairs for seating. The tradition of beginning each year with lawn chairs to honor the overcoming of obstacles continued through to the end of the program.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The data for this case fell into two broad categories:

1. Graduate Survey data (a mix of numerical and narrative) and
2. Interview Transcriptions (over 200 pages of narrative data).

## *Graduate Survey*

First, the numerical graduate data were presented in tables. A description of the results followed. Second, inductive reasoning was applied to the short answer responses. Then the computer program NVivo was used to sort and code narrative responses as included in the design proposal. All 18 verbatim narrative transcripts were entered into this program and were coded. This program resided on the university server and at one point the program was removed and my data was lost. It later was brought back online, but because of glitches, I decided not to use the program to continue coding. The process of using the program, however, was helpful as I continued coding on paper.

Isolating emerging themes from this data resulted in two dozen categories—far too many to be useful. Further consolidation and pairing of information resulted in the isolation of these four discrete domains:

1. **Instructional**  
i.e., integrated curriculum, delivery, cohort aspects, student teaching, time management and workload
2. **Support**  
i.e., transparency of lessons, level of support, communication, and personality conflicts
3. **Self**  
i.e., expectations and doubt, cohort issues, family issues, writing assignments and reflection
4. **University System**  
i.e., application and registration process, paperwork, placements, prerequisites, and convenience of course offerings

The process of sorting through this wealth of data revealed additional layers embedded in this case. This program existed within a university under the direction of the School of Education. Immediate supervision came from the program director. The program itself had the following elements: application and registration; cohort

involvement; curriculum design and delivery; student teaching placement, preparation and supervision; cooperating teacher interaction; peer observation and feedback mechanisms; time and workload management; adult learner issues such as family and financial obligations which all fall under *Instructional*.

Next, in *Support*, are the modeling elements of transparency in lessons, provision of support for fledgling teachers, stress management, and resolution of personality conflicts (staff and student). *Self* incorporates expectations and doubt issues, cohort and family issues, writing assignments, and the process of building reflection into all aspects of teaching and learning. A separate category was created for interaction with the *University as a System*. Many frustrations and roadblocks emerged with regard to the application and registration process, paperwork, student teaching placements, program prerequisites, and convenience of course offerings which resulted in a less than streamlined process that caused stress to many participants.

#### *Interview*

As for the narrative generated by the *employers, directors, and School of Education directors*, the interview transcriptions were organized by research question, coding category and illustrated by numbered sample responses. The same coding categories were found to apply to both the graduates and the stakeholder interview groups and were then used to provide a parallel structure to the data.

#### *Trustworthiness*

Purposeful triangulation of survey responses, constructed responses, and stakeholder narrative responses to interview questions yield a variety of data that

served as its own check and balance (Creswell, 1998, p.202). Information from three separate sources was compared internally to each other for consistency or variance. The fact that narrative constitutes the majority of data collected allowed for direct quotes to be accessed and thereby limited misinterpretation of data. It was possible to do the member checking recommended by Stake (1995) to assess adherence to the inclusion of 5 of the following case study criteria:

1. Is the report easy to read?
2. Does it fit together, each sentence contributing to the whole?
3. Does the report have a conceptual structure (i.e. themes or issues)?
4. Are its issues developed in a serious and scholarly way?
5. Is the case adequately defined? ( p.131)

Using these criteria as guides throughout the process should result in a total document that maintains its integrity and thereby achieves the goal of trustworthiness.

Was the embedded case study design outlined above the best choice to provide rich and deep data on this program? Yes, I believe so. Teaching and learning are interactive endeavors. We needed input from all stakeholders to get the full picture of the dynamics of the educational process. While a random sample of graduates might have been easier to manage, it was determined that the data resulting from a random sample might not reflect the totality of the experience. By conducting a case study as suggested above, all stakeholders had the opportunity to address the same questions. The use of both interview and survey formats yielded a combination of narrative and numerical data. Since all stakeholders are professional educators, the assumption was that they would provide thoughtful, reflective, and honest responses. Data collection of this magnitude has not been done for this program in the past. Given that the program ended after eighteen years, this was an optimum time to

access the stakeholders—graduates, directors, and employers. The intent was that the findings generated from such an embedded case study might inform the best practices of other teacher education programs.

Green (2006) states in *The Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research* that inquiry poses certain dilemmas since we need to start with a plan for analysis and organization, but we also need to remain flexible in the ability to change that plan as new information or trends emerge (p 118). Since this was an embedded case study, attention was paid to the chronology of events with consideration for policy changes as they came into play. The intent here was to capture descriptive information, to sort and evaluate it by theme or code, and then to summarize the results with regard to addressing the research questions (What worked? What did not work? What suggestions do stakeholders have for change?) for the intended audience of education professionals. Overall, I believe that the use of a mixed design provided a check and balance to maintain the veracity of the results.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Findings

#### Introduction

Data presentation is the purpose of this chapter. As previously stated, the purpose of this case study is to explore lessons that can be learned from a close look at a graduate level teacher training program for second-career adults. Embedded within this case study are the perspectives of four groups of stakeholders: *program graduates, program directors, School of Education directors, and employers* of the graduates.

Each group spoke from their specific view of what worked, what did not work, and what suggestions they might make for change to this graduate level teacher training program for second-career professionals (hereafter referred to as *the program*). The *graduate* data were collected through the use of an online survey (see Appendix), while the *program directors, School of Education directors, and employers* were interviewed.

The program has resided for the past 18 years at a public land grant university in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States. It is a graduate level, one-year fast-track program designed for change-of-career professionals who wish to become licensed in secondary education. Exclusive features include four distinctly different student teaching placements (rural, middle school, urban, and high school), a student-centered constructivist curriculum that carefully and developmentally intersperses theory with practice, and is structured as a cohort design of about 20 students who go through the 3+ semesters as a group. Emphasis is placed on research-based pedagogy

(S.T.E.P.S. which stands for Students, Tools, Environment, Planning, and Success), team and relationship building, developing an awareness of what is going in the mind of the learner and addressing the needs of the various learning styles. Feedback and mentoring from consistent supervision play a pivotal role in nurturing the emergent teacher while reflection is practiced to engender continuous improvement (Richburg, 2006).

All stakeholders responded to three overarching questions about the program:

- What worked?
- What did not work?
- What suggestions would you make for change?

Frequently mentioned topics included: program candidate selection criteria, cohort design, the four field experiences, the integrated curriculum, program pace, program rigor, a portfolio for the master's degree, the job search, mentoring, and support.

Two unique aspects need to be acknowledged here. First, while the graduates are treated as a whole, it must be noted that each individual is unique as is each cohort. There were six program leadership changes over the lifespan of this case and each cohort year responded to changes in the overall educational climate. During the scope of this program the School of Education was reorganized, university leadership from the presidency to the dean to the School of Education directorship changed many times, teacher *certification* became teacher *licensure*, the standards-based movement took place, the ascendance of educational theory included cooperative learning, constructivism, brain-based learning, and the student-centered classroom, the funding for higher education from the state fell to significantly low levels prompting serious cutbacks, and testing dominated from graduate program entrance

to K-12 student proficiency exams. The years are united, though, by the steady application of the program goals and mission and philosophy. Second, it was clear from the data that one cohort experienced disruption due to leadership change. Therefore, consistent leadership is critical to overall program success. By consistent leadership, I mean having a director in place for a number of years. This program had very consistent leadership during the first nine years of its existence. In the final few years there were several different directors. Those frequent changes resulted in fewer applications and a sense of uncertainty about consistent quality in the program itself.

With that as part of the framework, it should also be noted that the graduate cohort (N = up to 101) is far larger in size than the other three stakeholder groups (n=6 each). The directors of the program and of the School of Education are a finite number and all the people involved over time agreed to participate and their opinions are reflected here. The principal group was designed to include as many as twelve individuals. Six principals with the most experience in hiring and supervising program graduates agreed to participate. Several other early administrators have retired and were contacted. However, they felt they had little to offer. The study design allowed for interviews to cease when no new information was gathered. This is the case here. Also, the study design allowed for a focus group to be formed if more than six participants expressed an interest. This did not happen. Many were just too busy with the demands of their teaching careers to step back at this time.

While the numbers for the graduates are high, it does give this group their first opportunity to express their opinions about the program. These articulate graduate reflections are significant and worthy of some space. While the four short

answer responses were limited to 250 characters which amount to just a few sentences, they generated 32 pages of data. The narrative data collected from the other three stakeholder groups during an hour long interview averaged twelve pages each amounting to over 210 pages. So the interview depth could be seen to balance the graduate survey breadth.

Further, the graduate voice has not often been considered by the university perspective.

This chapter will begin with the responses from program graduates (n = 83 to 101) who participated in an online survey or in an online focus group providing voluntary information including graduate demographics, reflection, and short answer responses to four questions. The remaining stakeholders are comprised of employers (n=6), past and present program directors (n=6), and past and present directors of the School of Education (n=6). Each of these groups responded to the three overarching questions listed above: What worked? What did not work? What suggestions would you make for change? Representative responses from the non-graduate stakeholders will be assembled according to each question. A table will highlight the dominant stakeholder responses.

In addition to the initial cover letter, a follow-up post card was sent as a reminder. This courtesy consistent with business practices did yield about 20 additional participants. One control group of a recent cohort with email addresses was contacted via email to see if this method prompted more responses than a mailed letter. The more personal and immediate email contacts did provide for a greater percentage of responses which could possibly be contributed to the ability to click on

a hot link to the survey and the ease of contacting the researcher if any problems arose.

### Survey Data

Over its 18 years of existence, this program has graduated 308 teachers in cohorts that ranged in size from 12-23 and averaged 17 people each year. A concerted effort to reach all the graduates resulted in 85 to 101 graduates who agreed to complete the survey.

**Table 6. Demographics**

Demographic Information Report from Graduate Survey	
2. Gender	Female 50 Male 39
3. Median Age (Range 25-67)	40
4. Subject Area	30 Science 25 Social Studies 18 English 6 Math 5 Business 2 Foreign Lang. 1 Other
5a. Are you currently teaching? Yes No	59 20
5b. If you are not currently teaching, what is the primary reason? Retired Changed Careers Family Other	1 6 1 12
6a. Were you hired within one year of graduation?	72
6b. Within 4 months? Within 6 months? Within 9 months?	56 7 1
7. How many years have you been teaching? (66 responses) Range Median Total	1 – 18 7.7 539 years
8. What type of tuition did you pay when in Project Promise? In-State Out-of-State	81 6
9. How did you hear about Project Promise? Word of Mouth Internet Newspaper Other	47 13 11 11
10. What graduate degrees have you completed? Completed Master's Working on/Completed Ph.D.	66 6
11. Do you hold any additional licenses? Principal Superintendent Additional Endorsements	4 0 10

12a. How would you describe the location of your current school?	
Urban	14
Rural	14
Suburban	38
12b. How would you describe the type of school you are now in?	
Public	56
Private	4
Charter	6
13. Have you team taught?	
Yes	39
No	41
14. Are you or have you been a department chair/team leader?	
Yes	49
No	28
15. What one word would you use to describe your experience in PP?	<b>One Word Table</b>

*Please note that the sample size on individual questions varies as participants were not required to answer all of the questions and some did exercise that option. It should also be noted that while the closing of this program had been published in the local newspaper and on the university website, no mention of the program closing was included in the cover letter or survey introduction. While there is no way to determine the extent to which survey answers might have been influenced by the context of closing of this program, I deliberately did not mention it. A check of survey data resulted in the discovery and exclusion of only one double entry.*

The demographic part of this survey looks at the professional aspects of the graduate participants (n=90). Table 7 shows that educational leadership was important, as sixty-six graduates completed their master's degree compared to only six who did not. These graduates were almost equally likely to have team-taught (39) as not (41). This represents about 50% of graduates who chose a more collegial format of teaming with another teacher. This is far above the profession average of 5% of teachers who chose non-traditional approaches. Worthy of note here is the positive response of 49 graduates that they have been or are team leaders or department chairs compared to 28 who responded in the negative.

Facts derived from demographic portion of the survey data show that by gender respondents were 56% female (50) and 44% male (39). Science is the dominant subject area for licensure with 30 graduates, followed closely by social studies with 23 and then English Language Arts with 18, next come 6 math majors, and 5 business majors. Two foreign language graduates and 1 marked other completed the field. Of this group, more graduates are still teaching than are not (50 to 39). Six have changed careers, 1 has retired, 1 cites family reasons, and 12 list a variety of responses as other reasons for leaving the field. Sixty-four were hired within one year following graduation, with the majority (56) being hired within 4 months. Out of 70 responses, those teachers represent 539 years in the classroom with careers ranging from 1 to 18 years, the average being 7.7 years. Of the 308 graduates of this program over 18 years, addresses were found for 250 and 100 (response rate of 40%) chose to participate in whole or part. The overall impact of this program could be demonstrated by subtracting the 118 graduates of the last seven years (who have been teaching for seven years or less) from the overall graduate total of 308 resulting in 190 graduates. Then multiply 190 by the 7.7 year average to equal an approximate value of 1,463 years in the classroom from graduates of this program.

The typical respondent:

- Female (50) / Male (39)
- Science teacher
- 40 years old
- Been teaching for 7.7 years
- Hired within 4 months of graduation
- In-state resident
- Heard about program by word-of-mouth
- Completed master's (M.Ed.)
- Teaches in a public school in a suburban setting
- Has 50% likelihood of team teaching
- Twice as likely to be department chair/team leader
- Considers self a lifelong learner

Is satisfied with the program  
Would recommend it to others  
Feels that the program promoted personal career goals

Part I of the graduate survey contains twenty-one questions to be ranked on a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 = not at all, 2 = perhaps/seldom, 3 = somewhat, 4 = most often, and 5 = definitely). Table 8 shows the results with the mean calculated in the right hand column (n = 93 to 100).

It is interesting to note that while the cohort design was not primarily a dominant influence for choosing the program (with the lowest mean of 3.52), it was rated second highest (mean of 4.61) as an effective element of the program. A large number (mean of 4.80) agree that the accelerated program design influenced their choice of the program. With a mean of 4.90, respondents show a strong correlation of sharing the perception of themselves as lifelong learners.

The next highest range of means of 4.60 to 4.53 is shared by a cluster of positive responses regarding: interspersing theory with placements, would recommend the program to others, felt the program promoted their personal growth, and overall, are satisfied with the program. With a mean of 4.49, many respondents gave positive responses to the usefulness of the four student teaching placements.

**Table 7. Graduate Survey Part I Results with Mean**

<b>Program Survey Results Part I Reflection Responses</b>	<b>1 Not at All</b>	<b>2 Perhaps/Seldom</b>	<b>3 Somewhat</b>	<b>4 Most Often</b>	<b>5 Definitely</b>	<b>Mean</b>
1. I found the cohort design effective.	0	2	6	21	70	4.61
2. I found interspersing theory with teaching placements useful.	0	2	8	19	64	4.60
3. I found having four different teaching placements useful.	0	2	9	24	59	4.49
4. I feel that the integrated curriculum met my needs as an adult learner.	0	3	9	30	56	4.42
5. I would describe the program as rigorous.	4	6	14	27	48	4.10
6. I felt supported by the staff throughout my year in the program.	4	6	5	22	61	4.33
7. I would recommend this program to others.	1	5	5	16	72	4.55
8. I felt the pace of the program was appropriate.	1	1	9	33	54	4.41
9. I feel satisfaction with my choice of teaching as a career.	6	5	12	19	57	4.24
10. I would describe myself as a lifelong learner.	0	0	1	8	91	4.90
11. I would describe myself as a school leader.	4	4	17	18	50	4.14
12. I felt challenged by the program.	0	7	7	30	55	4.34
13. I found the workload in the program to be manageable.	1	3	11	35	49	4.29
14. I feel that the instructors in the program modeled effective teaching.	3	1	7	32	55	4.38
15. The accelerated program influenced my choice.	1	2	1	7	86	4.80
16. The cohort design influenced my choice.	7	17	20	22	29	3.52
17. This program met my expectations for a career-change program.	3	4	4	22	64	4.44
18. I feel that this program promoted my personal growth.	2	1	6	23	67	4.54
19. Upon exiting the program, I felt confident that I would be teaching 5 or more years.	5	2	9	19	62	4.35
20. Overall, I am satisfied with this teacher preparation program.	2	4	5	16	72	4.53
21. I believe that this program promoted my career goals.	4	3	7	17	68	4.43

Responses in the mean range from 4.44 to 4.31 show that the program met graduate's expectations for a career-change program (mean of 4.44), promoted career

goals (mean of 4.43), the integrated curriculum met adult learning needs (mean of 4.42), the pace was appropriate (mean of 4.41), following closely with a mean of 4.35, many graduates felt confident that they would be teaching five or more years, felt challenged by the program (mean of 4.34), and felt that instructors modeled effective teaching (mean of 4.34).

Ninety-nine responded that they found the workload to be somewhat/most often/definitely manageable (mean of 4.29). With a mean of 4.24, there were 88 somewhat/most often/definitely responses compared to 9 not at all/seldom responses describing their level of satisfaction with choice of teaching as a career. In response to whether or not graduates considered themselves school leaders, 85 responded somewhat/most often/definitely, while 8 replied perhaps/seldom or not at all (mean of 4.14). Eighty-nine graduates rated the program as rigorous somewhat/most often/definitely (mean of 4.10). Below is a rank ordered list of the responses to those 21 questions going from highest to lowest.

The majority of the graduate responses occur in the Most Often/Definitely column. The mean of 4.53 in response to Item 20, *Overall, I feel satisfied with this teacher preparation program* coupled with a mean of 4.55 in response to Item 7, *I would recommend this program to others*, can be considered strong positive statements from the graduates as they reflect on this teacher preparation program.

**Table 8. Rank Ordered Results with Mean**

	Statement	Mean	
10	I would describe myself as a lifelong learner.	4.90	Most Often
15	The accelerated program influenced my choice.	4.80	
1	I found the cohort design effective.	4.61	
2	I found interspersing theory with teaching placements useful.	4.60	
7	I would recommend this program to others.	4.55	
18	I feel that this program promoted my personal growth.	4.54	
20	Overall, I am satisfied with this teacher preparation program.	4.53	
3	I found having four different teaching placements useful.	4.49	
17	This program met my expectations for a career-change program.	4.44	
21	I believe that this program promoted my career goals.	4.43	
4	I feel that the integrated curriculum met my needs as an adult learner.	4.42	
8	I felt the pace of the program was appropriate.	4.41	
19	Upon exiting the program, I felt confident that I would be teaching 5 or more years.	4.35	
14	I feel that the instructors in the program modeled effective teaching.	4.34	
12	I felt challenged by the program.	4.34	
6	I felt supported by the staff throughout my year in the program.	4.33	
13	I found the workload in the program to be manageable.	4.29	
9	I feel satisfaction with my choice of teaching as a career.	4.24	
11	I would describe myself as a school leader.	4.14	
5	I would describe the program as rigorous.	4.10	
16	The cohort design influenced my choice.	3.52	Somewhat

### *Short Answer Questions*

In this survey section, 83 graduates (n = 83) responded to these four questions:

1. *Is there a single element of the program that made the greatest impact on you?*
2. *What caused the most stress for you in the program?*
3. *If you were to design changes to the program, what elements would you include to strengthen the program?*
4. *Think back about your year in the program. What stories or impressions have stayed with you that you would share?*

Inductive coding showed these responses falling into four categories:

*Instructional* (code 1), *Support* (code 2), *Self* (code 3), and the *University* (code 4).

Table 10 provides the scope for each code. These four basic areas were condensed

from over two dozen initial topic areas generated by the interview data.

**Table 9. Coding Breakdown**

Code 1	<i>Instruction</i> i.e., integrated curriculum, delivery, cohort aspects, student teaching, time management and workload
Code 2	<i>Support</i> i.e., modeling and transparency of lessons, level of support, communication, and personality conflicts
Code 3	<i>Self</i> i.e., expectations and doubt, cohort issues, family issues, writing and reflection
Code 4	<i>University System</i> i.e., application process, paperwork, placements, convenience of course offerings

Within each code several defined nodes appeared. Sample responses that reflect each node are included here.

**Question 1: Is there a single element of the program that made the greatest impact on you?**

The following samples are representative of graduate responses to the short answer part of the survey, beginning with the first question: *Is there a single element of the program that made the greatest impact on you?* Comments are provided for each of the four coding domains.

**Code 1: *Instruction***

A group of responses centered on curriculum and program design which included the accelerated program, cohort collegiality and peer support, integrated instruction model, overall program design, relationships, cooperative learning, four field experiences, and student centered learning focus. Illustrations of each are provided.

Because of the fast-track nature of this program, many comments referred to the *accelerated program*.

*It was attractive to me that the program was for people like me: who already held a bachelor's degree in their subject area and had work experience. We were coming from similar backgrounds and maturity levels. If there was no accelerated program available, I would not have chosen teaching as my next career.*

Graduate 1

*Cohort collegiality and peer observation* were often mentioned as strong positive components.

*The element that impacted me the most was the level of collegiality. The collaboration and support we create among ourselves enables us to support student teaching and celebrate successes. Peer coaching was vital to me.*

Graduate 2

*The small groups allowed us to develop relationships with our instructors and professors. We became a family and that helped me survive the difficult process of becoming a teacher. Keep the cohort.*

Graduate 3

The *integrated instruction model* had a strong impact as witnessed here.

*The integrated student teaching model wherein the student teacher is able to return to the classroom and ask questions of the staff and the cohort was invaluable.*

Graduate 4

Closely related to this were other comments about the *overall program design* that addressed adult learning needs.

*The overarching framework of active learning and authentic assessment honored me as an adult learner.*

Graduate 5

*The hands-on learning, being able to practice what we were learning immediately and with different audiences made a big difference for me.*

Graduate 6

A recurring theme focused on *relationships* in the learning environment and using tools such as *cooperative learning* to achieve results.

*I think it was that we were focused on education practices which really make a difference (relationships, healthy discipline systems, alternative assessments, dynamic content delivery) instead of "old school" ineffective practices.*

Graduate 7

*The strong belief in cooperative learning was especially powerful to me.*

*Most people see teachers lecture and that's what they feel they should do. Then cooperative learning takes that notion and turns it upside down.*

Graduate 8

The impact of the *four distinct field experiences* is reflected below.

*Having two long-term experiences in a junior high and a high school made me change my focus and change my views on what and where I would like to teach.*

Graduate 9

*The range of four different student teaching placements was priceless. Without this program or something similar graduates are entering the field with a monofocus created by only one experience.*

Graduate 10

A question has been posed to each cohort throughout the 18 years of this program which prompts pre-service teachers with this question: *What is going on in the mind of the learner?* This single question frames the value of student centered learning and can be seen in many comments, such as this one.

*I found my pathway to teaching to be a most positive experience that helped me to better understand and live by my core values. We enjoyed great leadership, camaraderie, and a meaningful vision for learning that continues to light my path.*

Graduate 11

#### Code 2: *Support*

The next cluster of responses refers to staff modeling and support. Included here are comments on effective modeling, frequent feedback, embedded professional development, and inspiring instructors.

Many comments made reference to the *effective modeling* within the program by the instructors.

*The best teaching was modeled as well as taught. Being able to try out teaching and then go back and improve built confidence as well as skill.*

Graduate 12

Frequent feedback by program instructors rather than unknown supervisors added to the value of *feedback* when coupled with regular observations.

*Working closely with master teachers and receiving frequent feedback from those same teachers. I needed the confidence building, and it helped me to understand my strengths.* Graduate 13

*Embedded professional development* rated many comments, as shown here.

*The program was a model for job-embedded professional development.* Graduate 14

*The staff showed me the impact that a teacher can have on students if they are effective and can connect with those students.* Graduate 15

Evidence came from many graduates attesting to *inspiring leadership*.

*The idealism and vision of the staff inspired me.* Graduate 16

*The leadership always returned to the purpose of our education to serve young people. Yet, they remained realists, giving real information and not merely citing slogans and buzzwords.* Graduate 17

*Through humor and humanity I was guided and mentored in a positive direction.*

Graduate 18

### Code 3: *Self*

This domain reveals the personal responses of graduates which fell into two categories: sense of *intensity defining purpose* and *developing awareness*.

The comments about *purpose* also reflect the career-change nature of the program and provided focus on specific changes felt by people in the program.

*I think the intensity was the greatest impact. It was a one year program that challenged me to see if this was really the career change I wanted to do and the theory and student teaching simultaneously made the program what it was for me.* Graduate 19

*It gave me direction. There was always something inside of me but I didn't know what it was. It helped me find my inner self and purpose.* Graduate 20

*The program was a package deal. It all made a profound impact on me.* Graduate 21

*Yes! I LOVED the four placements and the fast track of one year. It was the only way as an existing professional that I could have made the career change.* Graduate 22

Next are sample responses that reflect on increased *awareness*.

*I think what impacted me was how one's perceptions often become one's reality and how a teacher has the power to lift you up or tear you down.* Graduate 23

*I saw that students from a 600 year-old culture in Leadville and students in modern Denver are so much the same, but world's apart.* Graduate 24

Code 4 *University*

No comments.

## **Question 2 What caused the most stress for you in the program?**

Code 1 *Instruction*

Stress manifested itself in graduates in several different ways. Some were concerned about *placements*, a few questioned their *choice* after student teaching, others commented on *lesson design and delivery*. Most of the comments, however, concerned *time management and workload*. It is interesting to note that many comments revealed that stress could also be a *positive and appropriate element* in teacher training. The notion that stress can be good and is an essential element in the change process is often overlooked. One graduate expressed it this way, "There wasn't one particular thing. We were all stressed the whole year. But it was a good stress and it prepared me for my first year of teaching." Graduate 25

Placement comments regarded timing and an apparent struggle between the program and the licensure office at the university as well as scheduling in prerequisite methods classes.

*General placement for student teaching. Student teaching was also stressful because our methods class conflicted with teaching, making us feel like rag dolls between the school district and the university.* Graduate 26

One graduate's comment reflects the reality of teaching as a career choice following first hand experience in the classroom. For many this *choice* question centered on whether junior high/middle school or high school would be the best choice for them.

*Trying to determine if I really wanted to become a teacher after experiencing it first hand posed the biggest stress.* Graduate 27

*My junior high and high school placements were very different. It took me a while to decide which one suited me best, but I was very glad to have the opportunity to try each one on for size.* Graduate 28

For many, *lesson planning and delivery* caused stress.

*The most stressful moment was the thought of watching a video of myself in an impromptu teaching session at the outset of the program. However, I gained insight into how an "outsider" perceived me. Thank you!* Graduate 29

*The greatest stress for me was the normal, mind-controlling battle to come up with lesson plans while student teaching. It began to take over every waking and dreaming thought of my life.* Graduate 30

Most comments dealt with *time management* and the overall *workload* of the program.

*Sometimes I felt as if I was out of the college element without textbooks and a traditional schedule. Student teaching and trying to complete lesson plans plus the work sample and case studies was difficult. I needed help with time management.* Graduate 31

*Spring student teaching followed immediately by Philosophy of Education and the job search all at the same time was VERY stressful for me. Two summer classes and defending my portfolio at the same time was also difficult.* Graduate 32

Of interest are also a group of comments that show the positive nature of stress in teacher training.

*So much to do (as with all teaching) in such a small amount of time, but I wouldn't change it. I liked the pace. Plus it's the unknown that causes stress. TEACHING IS HARD!* Graduate 33

### Code 2 Support

Some comments here reflect the combined effect of implementing *new elements* the same year as the *director resigned* in November.

*Some confusion over implementing a new master's portfolio added stress.* Graduate 34

*Our director quit mid-year and it split our cohort amid high emotions, uncertainties and added stress.* Graduate 35

*Unclear communication* also resulted in stress.

*The lack of support, compassion, and empathy from faculty, combined with the inadequate explanation of assignment criteria and clearly delineated deadlines.* Graduate 36

Some comments reflected *personality struggles*.

*There were personality struggles between the instructors.* Graduate 37

While many comments referred to situations that arose from *understaffing*: "It was a bit disorganized at times. I think it was largely due to the fact that it was understaffed."

Graduate 39

### Code 3 Self

Here comments centered on *self imposed doubt or expectations, family issues, cohort issues* and the ability to *write and reflect* on demand. Some graduates experienced *self doubt* or struggled to meet self-imposed *expectations* as they measured themselves against cohort members or staff. One graduate had this to say, "An inner self doubt. I feared I wasn't as talented as the amazing people with whom I

went to class everyday.” While another graduate felt impacted by the “pressure I put on myself.” Graduate 40

*Family issues* played a large role in creating stress as evidenced by these remarks.

*Trying to juggle family life with the demands of the program.* Graduate 41

*Outside family crisis and the amount of intensive energy the program required. Managing a year of no income (and paying tuition) after having successful career and income prior to the change to teaching.*

*The bills didn't go away, but the income did.* Graduate 42

Other comments related to the nature of the *cohort* and issues created there.

*One of my cooperating teachers was not the best teacher of teachers. We also had a controversy that led to one of my classmates being removed from the program. Emotionally, the situation was difficult to deal with.*

Graduate 43

Finally, a number of comments centered on *writing and reflecting* in a fast-paced program.

*My stress centered around writing and reflection. I was a very reflective practitioner and could discuss the metacognitive pieces; however, I experienced a lot of writer's block. Sometimes I did not feel supported (real or perceived).*

Graduate 44

#### Code 4 University

This group of responses reflects frustrations with meeting all the *paperwork demands* of the university, *pre-requisite course management*, and *placement issues*.

First, a majority of comments regarded *paperwork* inefficiencies.

*Getting all the paperwork in order and explaining to others (Grad School, Admissions, Licensure, etc) how the program was different. There should be procedures in place that make it easier after all these years*  
(16).

Graduate 45

*Managing the administrative requirements, paperwork, registration, etc.*

Graduate 46

*Registering for classes was stressful because the program doesn't seem to fit into the university's strict registration process.* Graduate 47

Next, many comments reflect a struggle to manage program and personal demands which were magnified by difficulty in *meeting content course requirements*.

*Trying to take courses to meet my content requirements while teaching and trying to have a life with my partner who lived over an hour away.* Graduate 48

Additionally, many graduates expressed discontent with *placement*.

*I wasn't placed in a student teaching assignment until the week before it began.* Graduate 49

*Uncertainty in student teaching placements.* Graduate 50

*My junior high student teaching placement was far away from my home.* Graduate 51

**Question 3: If you were to design changes to the program, what elements would you include to strengthen the program?**

*Code 1 Instruction*

Graduates offered many suggestions to strengthen. It must be noted that many graduates were *satisfied with the existing structure*, as is reflected in the following comments.

*I loved the way the program was designed.* Graduate 52

*Nothing. It was a great program.* Graduate 53

*I found it to be a well-crafted program and can't come up with any major changes.* Graduate 54

*Continue the emphasis on real world teaching experience.* Graduate 55

*I honestly thought it was great as it was.* Graduate 55

*I found much value in the sequence and the manner in which the program was delivered. I definitely would not make it less intense. If someone signs*

*up for a fast-track 10 month master's level program, be ready to hang on!!*  
Graduate 56

Many others offered a variety of suggestions for change that ranged from *candidate selection*, “*When I first learned of the program I thought it was a select group of individuals. I don't feel it's as selective as it once was*” (Graduate 57) and “*The key to success is the incoming interviews. If quality people are chosen, it will be a quality program*” (Graduate 58) to ideas that would expand the depth, connection, and scope of the program.

Forward thinking ideas included creating a *larger community network*.

*I would encourage more ties with previous and subsequent cohorts to build a larger community network. Also, create more relationships between the program and student teacher placement partners.*

Graduate 59

*I would encourage the program to incorporate leadership skills, strategies on how to function in a Professional Learning Community, and how positive behavior support aligns with a response-to-intervention model.*

Graduate 60

*Follow-up mentoring with staff and maintain a connection to graduates.*

Graduate 61

*Develop and add to a reading list reflecting current research. An on-line newsletter or blog to stay connected. Support for academic research, growth and publication.*

Graduate 62

*Build greater contact with alumni. Develop summer rejuvenation camps for teachers.*

Graduate 63

Many felt that the *M.Ed. should be required* for all.

*Include the additional courses required for the M.Ed. as part of the program, even if this expands it by a quarter.*

Graduate 64

*Incorporate the M.Ed. within the program and make it a requirement.*

Graduate 65

The *small cohort size and design* were viewed as important, as well.

*The strength of the cohort is very important. It's small size really made a difference for me.* Graduate 66

A cluster of comments related to maintaining existing program elements, such as: the adolescent panel, lesson plan development, practicing a variety of classroom management techniques, the multiple field experiences, and cooperative learning. In addition, several specific suggestions for improvement included:

*I would look closely at all the components and cut maybe 20% in order to spend more quality time in depth on the other 80%.* Graduate 67

*Diversity training should focus more on ELL and sheltered instruction.* Graduate 68

*I would add more of the mechanics of long term planning—unit plans, then weekly, then daily, also go in-depth on IEP's, and how to be successful (survive) within the school (teacher breakroom logistics) and school district politics.* Graduate 69

*The only area for improvement would be to provide more perspectives on classroom management. I entered the classroom thinking if my lessons were engaging and student-centered that I would have few discipline problems.* Graduate 70

*To strengthen the program, I'd have a clearer chain of command among faculty and administrators.* Graduate 71

*If the university is going to sponsor a program, it should then honor and support it.* Graduate 72

#### Code 2 Support

With regard to staff modeling and support, many graduates view these elements as necessary to an exemplary program:

*Continue to have instructors model their instruction.* Graduate 73

*Continue to use panels of educators to share their trade and to model quality teaching to the class.* Graduate 74

*Include male and female perspectives within the faculty.* Graduate 75

*Keep the extremely strong professors who model effective teaching and do not simply give it lip service. Professors also need to have recent public school classroom experience.* Graduate 76

*Maintain solid and consistent leadership.* Graduate 77

Offered for improvement are the following thoughts:

*Include more content area professors in the program.* Graduate 78

*Absolutely essential to the program is the frequent observation and feedback from the program leaders.* Graduate 79

*Work toward seamless student teaching placement. This should be a given, not a constant struggle.* Graduate 80

### Code 3 Self

Here suggestions go beyond the extent of the program.

*Honestly, the only thing I would add is a refresher element. I miss my cohort. I could use their wisdom, experience, and never-failing support. Teaching can get lonely, but we were never lonely in that program.* Graduate 81

*I would add something that goes beyond graduation—a means or place for sharing ideas and asking questions. A forum via the internet or preferably in person where we can gather, share, relate, reflect, and help each other.* Graduate 82

### Code 4 University

Graduates agreed that university *bureaucracy* was not user-friendly for them.

*Find a balance between completing pre-requisite courses and the load allowed by the university.* Graduate 83

*I think it's important to keep teachers in charge of the program, not college administrators. The university bureaucracy was counter-productive for me.* Graduate 84

*The hanging summer semester coursework was a pain. The semester workload was pretty tough with student teaching and coursework. I had over 20 credits. Maybe the program could be one and one-half years.*

Graduate 85

*Make the paperwork process more user friendly for career-changing adult graduate students.*

Graduate 86

Concern was also expressed about *transferability between university programs*.

*Allow students the ability to deal with crises by either returning to the program or transferring easily to a traditional program.*

Graduate 87

The final cluster of remarks in this area addressed *program structure and funding*.

*A better local school partnership, more resources, pay the instructors more, and add definition to the field experiences, especially urban.*

Graduate 88

*A full-time administrative staff person is essential. Also the school of education needs to fully support any future program because it was obvious when I was in the program that it did not.*

Graduate 89

*Funding for this essential program has to increase.*

Graduate 90

**Question 4: Think back about your year in the program. What stories or impressions have stayed with you that you would share?**

#### *Code 1 Instruction*

Memories recalled here by 83 graduates begin with outstanding moments from their training to a reflection of what they will take away from their experiences that transfer directly to their teaching careers. A long list of stories, no matter how poignant, will do little to convey the impact felt, so just a few have been selected to represent what was said. Comments were just about equally divided between the primacy of the cohort and the added value of the legacy they carry from the program into their careers as educators.

The cohort experience, sharpened on the ropes course, and broadened through each aspect of training is even more remarkable in that each year a divergent group of people with a shared passion to teach come together to support each other.

*The rural/urban experiences and the ropes course helped to facilitate the camaraderie/cohort. It was the whole process (primacy of self-discovery) of building passionate educators and sharing that experience which created memories that will last a lifetime.*  
Graduate 1

*I made many new friends that I am proud to call colleagues and I look back on my time in the program with great fondness. We shared hopes, dreams, laughter, and a common purpose and dedication.*  
Graduate 2

*This program is about modeling, support, and tenacity. It's about discovering your strengths and realizing that personal needs are potential avenues for growth and success. It's all about relationships.*  
Graduate 3

*Working as a cohort and "learning by doing" was the best. Sharing ideas, successes, struggles, etc. with each other in the team was a highlight. The non-traditional classroom setting was a plus for my stage of learning.*  
Graduate 4

*I remember most the bond between cohort and faculty. I'll never forget the crew of us that slept on the floor of an abandoned farm house at our rural school site for 3 or 4 nights.*  
Graduate 5

With regard to the impact of this program, graduates have this to say.

*This group truly cared about kids and at the end of the day that made me a better teacher.*  
Graduate 6

*As a former engineer, I was surprised at how much practical psychology I would need to be effective in this position. Sharing with cohort members and instructors began my long road to effectiveness in the helping arena.*  
Graduate 7

*I really enjoyed my cohort group and that we met often to share our stories and case studies of our student teaching experiences. I learn best through action and reflection and I feel this program offered that opportunity often.*  
Graduate 8

*It didn't all go well, but it was a growing experience like none other. I am proud to be part of a team of school leaders.*  
Graduate 9

*I personally had a great year and learned a lot that has helped me grow not*

*only as an individual, but also as a teacher. The program worked for me as a wife and mother and as a second-career choice.* Graduate 10

*Intense and valuable. I feel that the program did an excellent job of preparing me for teaching adolescents in a public school. I have no regrets.* Graduate 11

*The diversity of the student teaching experiences had a huge impact on how prepared I was for entering the classroom. The classes were well-prepared and appropriate for our teaching experiences. It's a shame it won't be there.* Graduate 12

*I still carry a pewter heart that a student gave me that year. Everyday in my classroom I find myself reaching into my pocket and touching that heart.* Graduate 13

### Code 2 Support

The theme of *instructor as mentor* comes across clearly in a majority of the comments given.

*The directors were extraordinary mentors who used their diversity to model and foster collaboration and collegiality for the cohort.* Graduate 14

*Phenomenal year. Made me a "teacher for life" which I am not finding from many new teachers in my school where there has been an 80% turnover rate in the four years I've been here.* Graduate 15

*I entered as a former Marine officer ready to impose the Marine Corps on those darned undisciplined kids. I left as a thinking, reflective professional who was ready to build on the mentorship I received from the program director.* Graduate 16

*The program director pushed us and opened our eyes to becoming strong new teachers.* Graduate 17

*I was heavily influenced by the director's introduction of the idea of brain-based learning. I was inspired me to want to not just be good, but a great teacher.* Graduate 18

*I felt supported as we all shared our journey and the staff was able to guide our excitement and frustration into yet another "teachable moment."* Graduate 19

Other comments centered on how *staff gave extra time and effort* to provide support and encouragement.

*The professors were willing to do anything to get us where we needed to be—extra hours, extra observations, even finding housing and loaning cars to students. They were incredibly supportive.* Graduate 20

*It was evident that all the instructors were caring and dedicated to our success; the support and encouragement from the staff during student teaching stays with me as being invaluable during a stressful time.* Graduate 21

*It was the most exciting year of study I have ever experienced. My instructors are caring and behind me 100%. The instruction and hands-on learning make this program what it is—awesome!* Graduate 22

*The concept and construct of the program gave us the opportunity to see that for the faculty teaching was not just a job or a profession, it was their passion. Being a teacher showed me, passion is the key.* Graduate 23

### Code 3 Self

Included here are glimpses into personal moments that have stayed with graduates.

*I remember my back going out. I kept attending because for the first time in my life I didn't want to miss school. Other students took turns lying on the floor with me or flat on a table beside me. Most of the cohort was at my wedding a year later.* Graduate 24

*This program made me realize that I was meant to be an educator. It changed my life and opened up a whole new career for me. Although I am not a person who maintains many long distance relationships, I still keep in touch with people from my cohort.* Graduate 25

*During the rural experience, my host family, who were farmers, took me up in their airplane and I got to take the controls. I connect this directly to the moment I was certain I had made the right choice to become a teacher.* Graduate 26

*I am proud to be part of this program. There are so many great teachers in the district that have come out of this program. Some of the most creative and inspiring teachers who taught my own children are graduates of this program.* Graduate 27

## Code 4 University

As if with a single voice, the comments below summarize the responses made.

*Overall, the program is a great program, but it exists as a square peg in the round hole of the School of Education. My experience was invaluable.*

Graduate 28

*I could tell tales about my year that would make anyone ask why an institution would allow a program with so much depth and value to end. My experiences in the program will forever be the roots in my career as a teacher making a difference.*

Graduate 29

## One Word Responses

When asked to use one word to describe the program, graduate respondents used words that fit into one of three categories: *affect* or how I feel about it, *program aspects*, and *growth* which describe either personal or professional impact. *Please note that the sample size will vary as participants were not required to answer any of the questions and some did exercise that option.*

**Table 10. Graduate One Word Responses**

<b>Graduate One Word Responses</b>	<b>Affect</b> How I feel about it	<b>Program Aspects</b>	<b>Growth - Personal or Professional Impact</b>
Positive  93%	Amazing (5) Excellent (3) Terrific (2) Awesome! Effective Exhilarating! Fantastic Frenetic Good Great! Important Positive Perfect Memorable Surprising Terrific Well-suited	Supportive (5) Accelerated (2) Intense (2) Comprehensive Constructivist Dr. Richburg-Priceless Energetic Enough Essential Exciting Experiential Powerful Progressive Quick Rigorous	Life-Changing (6) Rewarding (5) Enlightening (4) Challenging (3) Fulfilling (2) Empowering (2) Inspiring (2) Insightful Envisioning Epiphany Eye-Opening Maturing Provocative Springboard Stimulating Transforming Vision Test 79
Negative  7%	Disappointing Frustrating Hypocritical Traumatic	Chaotic Unprofessional	6
Sample Size			85

This query sought to capture an overall impression of the program. A large majority, 93%, responded with positive descriptors. Seven percent responded with negative word choices. Four of those fit into the *affect* category and two were used to describe *program aspects*. No negative responses applied to growth. By gender, all the negative comments came from females. This is not surprising since there were more female than male graduates, but it might suggest an awareness area for future programs. The top four adjectives, *amazing, supportive, life-changing, and rewarding*, provide a positive snapshot of the experience.

The three other stakeholder groups (*program directors, School of Education directors, and employers*) also responded to the one word query. Those results are displayed in Table 11.

**Table 11. Stakeholder One Word Responses**

Stakeholders	One Word or Phrase Summary
Employers N=6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Positive, Productive Partnership</li> <li>*Highly Professional</li> <li>*Mature and Focused</li> <li>*Relationships are a high priority. Went beyond the classroom to become part of the Culture.</li> <li>*Creative Option for a teacher training program. It Worked.</li> <li>*Teamwork + Collaboration + Multiple Field Experiences + Professional Learning Community + Support = A Powerful Program</li> </ul>
School of Education Directors N=6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Journey of Discovery: It's like peeling an onion, there is always another layer to explore.</li> <li>*Heartfelt, Heartbreaking, Bittersweet, Immersion</li> <li>*Immersion and Self-Affirming</li> <li>*Premier Program – an Exceptional way to prepare teachers and an exceptional experience. It took a village to develop this program.</li> <li>*Educators on a mission to change schools; Individuals with a passion to change lives; Innovation</li> <li>*Produces teachers who know that teaching is their passion. These individuals have made a conscious decision to become teachers. They are Stars.</li> </ul>
Program Directors N=6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Complex – with the positive connotation of challenging</li> <li>*Multifaceted and Innovative</li> <li>*Innovative; Bob Richburg; Career Transition Program—there was nothing like it at the time it was created</li> <li>*Innovative and Cutting Edge</li> <li>*Stellar</li> <li>*Commitment, Persistence and Perseverance (of staff and students)</li> </ul>

Positive comments came from all three stakeholder groups. Word choices from *employers*, *School of Education directors* and *program directors* all point to a *premier professional* program focused on its mission to prepare *exceptional* teachers. *Innovative* repeatedly describes a program that was *cutting edge* as there was *nothing like it at the time*. As *complex*, *challenging*, and *multi-faceted* as it was, *it worked* in creating *stellar* graduates. Two references to *immersion* denote the intensity of the program. The description of some of the component parts reveals program values and overall effect: *Teamwork+Collaboration+Multiple Field Experiences+Professional Learning Community +Support = A Powerful Program*. The *journey* metaphor and the simile comparing the program to *like peeling an onion because there is always*

*another level to explore* impart the non-linear, flexible, and adaptive nature of the program as it evolved over its 18 years.

### **Powerful Parallels**

What emerges from the responses is an interesting parallel: The labor-intensive design and demands of this program marked both the zenith of its impact as well as the major components leading to its closure. As we look back, we can evaluate which elements might form the building blocks of future graduate level teacher education programs for second-career students.

Surely the education landscape has changed in the past two decades. Finances within the university system have tightened, demanding that programs become more cost effective or aggressive in grant writing. School districts are under enormous pressure from the federal guidelines of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to hire *highly qualified teachers* for students who must pass demanding tests. Community building within the teacher education programs as well as between the school districts and the university must mesh in their mission and goals. What remains the same is the imperative to inspire and support future teachers with the mission and tools necessary to succeed and persevere in this most human of professions.

According to the participants, the perceived strengths of the program are:

- screening for those with a strong sense of mission
- relationship building core
- use of a collaborative model which values support and feedback
- framed in a variety of field experiences that build on knowledge base
- integrated curriculum for flexibility and differentiation in contextual settings
- lifelong learning core value
- provided an understanding of the neurology and diversity of learning.

In contrast, approximately 10% of graduates identified these deficit areas:

- lack of institutional support
- the cohort model did not work for all students
- journaling disliked by some
- the intensity was overwhelming at times
- lack of support from program
- the pace caused stress
- uncertainty resulting from poor communication
- uncertainty resulting from late placements
- difficulty in registering
- personality conflicts between students/staff

(Compare to TRIP program satisfaction ratings in Chapter Two (p.27).

Two intangible items, *time and resources*, emerge as factors in success or failure of this teacher training program. First, is the intense labor necessary to implement a program driven by high expectations and a strong sense of mission. While the sense of mission conveys students and instructors through the necessary extra hours, burn out and stress are inevitable. Additionally, though the extra input of personal time might lead to satisfaction, it is not recognized or rewarded by the university as a system. The second intangible is resources. When considered as budget items, the idealistic framework of a labor-intensive program immediately comes into conflict with the practical demands and limits of the business aspect of the university. This becomes heightened in times of economic downturn. In this case, an early infusion of money from a Program of Excellence award sustained the program for a period of several years. However, the grant created funding expectations that could not be met again. When that money was gone and the state economy tightened requiring 6% budget cuts, the program had to re-enter the bidding for university funding. Then the competition became contentious and underlying program demands

emerged as problems. At some point, when the demand for limited resources is too high, eliminations have to take place.

In addition to the human capital of invested time and the monetary budget resource conflict, there is also a student-centered resource issue that relates directly to professional development. Working as a partner with schools, the mission of the program under study here included preparing individuals, who have already described themselves as lifelong learners, to enter the teaching profession with the tools necessary to sustain them. School districts understand that much time and many resources are needed to support novice teachers who come to the classroom only partially prepared. Professional development at this in-service level is able to add tools, but not to retool, making adequate teacher training essential. Teacher preparation programs which view the long term as well as the short term goals tend to produce teachers who are more likely to be hired quickly and who are more likely to remain in the field after five years because of adequate preparation and in-service support.

### **Stakeholder Interviews**

While the stakeholder group, which consists of current and past directors of the program, current and past directors of the School of Education (SOE), and employers (principals) of program graduates, each maintains a separate point of view, some commonalities in responses have emerged. In regard to what worked, the following, identified by stakeholder group (first *program directors*, and *School of Education directors*, then *employers*), reveal their opinions.

*What worked: Program Directors*

Looking through the lens of the *program directors*, the interview and selection processes were essential. Research informed instruction and multiple field experiences added impact. Abundant feedback from course instructors/supervisors built confidence as the scaffolded curriculum interspersed small amounts of theory with immediate practice and reflection. Through it all, high expectations were set for high performance.

*The cohort selection process based on the Teacher Perceiver model.*

Program Director 1

*Staying current with research and education trends is essential.*

Program Director 2

*The multiple field experiences add power as they change background knowledge.*

Program Director 3

*“Feedback is the Breakfast of Champions” accomplished by multiple observations from consistent faculty.*

Program Director 4

*Interspersing small amounts of theory with practice and reflection. Keep high expectations, high standards, high performance outcomes.*

Program Director 5

*What worked: School of Education Directors*

From the administrative point of view, the *School of Education (SOE)* directors saw many strengths. Dedicated master teachers used research to inform instruction in a program that produced many excellent teachers over the years. This comment was repeated often, “*Principals loved the graduates.*”

SOE Director 1

*Graduates became excellent teachers who did an outstanding job over the years.*

SOE Director 2

*It was ideal in many ways—it produced reflective practitioners.*

SOE Director 3

*It always had good people running it—superior teachers, master teachers.*

*The program made good use of research to inform teaching.* SOE Director 4

*The master teachers were dedicated leaders over the years.* SOE Director 5

*Under the grant, the students were very strong and there was strong interest in the program. SOE felt pride in the program and the unit profited.*

SOE Director 6

### *What Worked: Employers*

The *employers* recognized five areas of excellence from program graduates ranging from relationship building to relevance, the cohort as a support group, the effect of the many field placements, and the depth of reflection. Here are sample comments.

- *Cohort support and skill at establishing relationships.*  
Principal 1
- *Candidates were well-taught. By coming to high school last, they built toward the most challenging placement and by that time they knew they had made the right choice and were eager.* Principal 2
- *The diversity of placements and settings in their training allowed them to be more flexible and to see more possibilities.* Principal 3
- *The program created a Professional Learning Community that led to deep and critical consideration of their new endeavor.* Principal 4
- *Program graduates bring relevancy from their own lives and previous careers to the classroom.* Principal 5

### *What Did Not Work: Program Directors*

The program directors all echoed the stress of finding placements even after the search process was included under the umbrella of the licensure office, which created a more competitive climate rather than streamlining the process. Even after 18 years, many faculty members within the unit did not have a clear understanding of the

program and how it worked. Thus, the program never became fully embraced by the unit as a whole. Also constant over time were budget issues and threat of closure.

*There were constant budget and support issues.* Program Director 1

*The program's isolation from SOE resulted in contempt or jealousy expressed by other members of the unit due to lack of understanding of the program.*

Program Director 2

*It was a constant struggle to secure appropriate placements.*

*The logistics of the university system made it feel like we were always swimming upstream.*

Program Director 3

#### *What Did Not Work: School of Education Directors*

School of Education directors all shared common struggles to balance cost with benefits. In later years, a breakdown in marketing lower applicant pool numbers and became a concern. Here are some of their perceptions.

*When the award money went away, the problems became evident. Grant writing did not continue to bring in large dollar amounts.* SOE Director 1

*The program as designed was expensive to run. It was unclear how the human resource costs related to the benefits.* SOE Director 2

*There was a perception that faculty could not do the program and research at the same time.* SOE Director 3

*There was a breakdown in marketing and recruiting to maintain a pool of outstanding candidates.* SOE Director 4

#### *What Did Not Work: Employers*

In regard to *what did not work*, the following, identified by stakeholder group (first, employers, then program directors, and School of Education directors), reveal their opinions. When pressed, employers agreed that individuals did vary some in their classroom readiness levels. Additionally, the scheduling necessary to complete four

classroom readiness levels. Additionally, the scheduling necessary to complete four field

placements did not match the school terms causing some adjustments.

*Individually, some graduates differ from others in stages of readiness. Some came in with too much idealism about the profession.*

Principal 1

*As student teachers, the 8 weeks came mid-term for high school and we lost professional development time and closure.*

Principal 2

*If anything did not work, it was that periodically some lacked a strong understanding of the pedagogy or teaching practices. It doesn't mean they didn't get it, it just meant that some had the potential to not be as strong. I needed to keep this in mind when choosing a mentor.*

Principal 3

#### *Suggestions for Change: Program Directors*

*Program directors* comments centered on vision, support, outside review and extending outstanding program attributes to other programs.

*Full support from the School of Education is vital to the success of any program.*

Program Director 1

*Strong visionary leadership is necessary.*

Program Director 2

*Resolve budget issues and use an open budget.*

Program Director 3

*Let the good qualities of this program spill over into the regular program. Maintain high standards throughout the unit.*

Program Director 4

*Initiate an annual program review by an outside party.*

Program Director 5

*Extend mentoring and professional development opportunities to all graduates.*

Program Director 6

#### *Suggestions for Change: School of Education Directors*

*School of Education directors* offered several concrete suggestions to remedy budget and climate issues as well as ways to work better within the university community and with the local school districts. All agreed that the post-baccalaureate

program with non-traditional older students is still a valid target audience and that much can be salvaged from this program, especially by broadening the cohort.

Several additional suggestions were offered.

- *Create credit/course alignment. Consider tuition differentiation.*
- *Seek feedback from former program directors and work with school districts to meet their needs.*
- *Develop visible opening and closing rituals for programs within the unit.*
- *Improve communication within the unit.*
- *Recruit tenured faculty to head the program.*
- *Encourage active participation of outside faculty.*
- *Improve paperwork flow and overall user-friendly nature of paperwork.*
- *Create a seamless placement procedure.*
- *Establish strong community partnerships that reflect a common mission and can grow into Professional Learning Communities.*

#### *Suggestions for Change: Employers*

It is not enough to say what went well and what did not. The full value from lessons learned is in the suggestions that stakeholders offer for change. The following suggestions for program change came from stakeholders. Foremost in the minds of the employers is establishing a “commitment level and active public relations to create a high level of trust” through program consistency. Many employers felt a sense of loss:

*It is very sad that this option is being taken away from people. I think of the staff that I know have who would not be here without this program.*

Principal 1

*Bring it back because it captures those born to teach. Speaking for a school that has hired more than a dozen graduates of this program, I am surprised that it was put on hiatus. The worth of this program should be measured in more than dollars.*

Principal 2

*They have become excellent teachers and exceptional leaders. Not having any more teachers like that is a big concern for me. What are we going to do?*

Principal 3

Other employers had concrete suggestions to maintain the second-career niche but to refocus recruitment to fill high-needs areas.

*I would like to see an evenness of recruiting across the content areas with an emphasis on hard to fill areas like math, foreign language, and gifted and talented instruction. It would be a tragedy if this program disappeared. It has produced, by far, the best quality teachers I have hired.* Principal 4

*This is a good program. Keep some avenue available for career-changers to become teachers—they have the skills and knowledge that our kids need.*  
Principal 5

Another comment centered on student teacher placement.

*By centering the program in just one school over the last few years, I have lost the opportunity to watch student teachers in my building teach. I have hired many program graduates after watching them in my building. I would like to have that opportunity again.*  
Principal 6

Table 12 shows four areas of agreement by all stakeholders (\*). First, all agree that the M.Ed. should be required. Second, there is complete agreement that marketing and recruiting should focus on top quality candidates. Third, all are in accord on resolving budget issues. Fourth, it was agreed that overall communication needed improvement.

To put all this into perspective, Table 12 summarizes the range of suggestions.

**Table 12. Summary of Stakeholder Suggestions for Change**

<b>Stakeholders Suggestions for Change</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Employers</b>	<b>Program Directors</b>	<b>School of Education Directors</b>
* Require M.Ed.	X	X	X	X
* Market to and Recruit Top Candidates	X	X	X	X
* Resolve Budget Issues	X	X	X	X
* Improve Overall Communication	X	X	X	X
+ Create Professional Learning Communities	X	X	X	
+ Keep 4 Field Experiences	X	X	X	
+ Active Public Relations and Trust Building with School Districts	X	X	X	
+ Full Administrative Support for Program	X	X	X	
§Keep Cohort Small	X		X	
§Keep Fast-Track	X		X	
§Annual Outside Program Evaluation	X		X	
§Resolve Paperwork Flow Issues	X		X	X
Align course and content			X	X
Improve Image within Unit	X		X	X
Recruit for High-Needs Areas		X		
Develop Visible Open and Close Rituals				X
Recruit Tenured Faculty to Lead				X
Seek Outside Funding				X
Encourage Active Participation of All Faculty				X

The table also shows four areas where *graduates, employers, and program directors* found common ground (+): creating Professional Learning Communities, keeping four diverse field experiences, being proactive in improving public relations and trust

building with the school districts, and establishing full administrative support for the program.

*Graduates and program directors* came together to support these agenda items (§): maintaining small cohort, keeping fast-track, using outside evaluators annually, and finding a resolution to paperwork flow issues.

*Program directors and School of Education directors* highlighted the importance of aligning courses and content. This is consistent with their focus as administrators. Likewise, improving the image of the program within the School of Education unit was important to *graduates, program directors* and *SOE directors*, but not to *employers*. *Employers*, on the other hand, valued recruiting to fill high-needs areas.

In addition there were four areas valued only by the *School of Education directors*: developing visible opening and closing rituals for the program, recruiting tenured faculty to lead the program, seeking outside funding, and encouraging active participation of all SOE faculty in the program. Implementation of these aspects could lead to program integration through improved visibility and decreased sense of distrust.

It is interesting to note that in contrast to the *SOE directors* desire to have all faculty participate in the program, program directors stated that not all faculty were prepared to participate in this active learning laboratory. It is not enough to lecture about exemplary teaching, it must be modeled. This suggests the larger question of how do you keep an innovation without homogenizing it? If the heart of your content

is enriching the educational environment, how do you accomplish that without resources and support?

### **The Enigma**

The stakeholders in this case present an enigma for it appears that that which is valued most by all is also what provided the most challenges. Stakeholders valued the diversity of the four distinct field experiences that scaffolded in scope to meld theory and practice. The labor intensive nature of frequent observations by consistent staff provide a rare mentoring environment that allowed students to learn immediately from their mistakes in a safe and supportive environment. The accelerated cohort design was most effective for second-career adults even though it caused friction within the university system. The integrated curriculum also challenged the university course system, but it was essential in creating a firm foundation for future teachers. Across the interviews, the stakeholders all agreed that the program was based on solid research and it continued to respond and change professionally as new research emerged.

Also puzzling is that the problems that appeared at the inception of the program continued through to its end without resolution. *Directors of the School of Education* and *program directors* identified the following areas of conflict:

- lack of program transparency and visibility
- lack of full incorporation into the unit or university system
- constant placement struggles
- poor communication
- unresolved budget issues
- perception of privilege
- breakdown in marketing and recruiting of strong candidates.

If problems are opportunities, or our friends as Fullan (1993) suggests, then many opportunities exist here to inform best practices in creating a graduate teaching training program for career-change adults. But first these areas must be addressed and resolved.

Overall, stakeholder groups viewed this program as successful in recruiting second-career adults who identify themselves as lifelong learners who came to define within themselves a mission to teach. Once recruited, these individuals with very few exceptions became teachers who were hired quickly (most within 4 months), who stayed in the profession 3 years longer than the average of four years, and who valued establishing a caring relationship with all their students. A long-time administrator in a local school district found the following to be true of program graduates as a whole:

*Program graduates have a strong sense of mission, an urgency to become a teacher. They were well-taught by master teachers who modeled hands-on student-centered learning. By coming to high school last they were building toward the most challenging placement. They were hard workers who knew what it took to succeed with students. They had good roots and they knew they had made the right choice. As a whole, they stepped up to our high expectations with reliable and mature performance. In fact, they went beyond the classroom to become part of the school culture.*

Principal 2

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Discussion

**“The most important variable in pupil learning is the quality of the education and the training of the teacher.”** Linda Darling-Hammond, 2002

The overview of this study included a look at national trends in graduate level teacher preparation programs for second-career adults. Then one case was accessed in depth to allow stakeholders to express their opinions as to what worked, what did not work, and what changes they might offer to future programs. In this way, lessons might surface that can add to best practices in this field. These building blocks become important in order to avoid starting from scratch each time a new program is considered. Change suggestions might also lead teacher preparation in new directions and allow it to respond to the changing landscape. At the very least, this inquiry might prompt conversations on how to provide the optimum learning environment for second-career adults that prepares them to become highly effective teachers. While my single program focus did not produce data to support a broad claim that lessons learned about a graduate level program for second career adults can be generalized into best practices for all teacher training programs, I believe the elements possess enough strength and power that they should be considered.

The current trend for graduate level teacher training programs for second career adults is a one-year intensive program that puts adults into the classroom right away. Classwork and mentoring support the pre-service teacher throughout the year. Most programs are associated in some way with sponsoring universities although some are administered through a school district or a state board of education. All

work closely to meet the needs of the cooperating school districts. A new development is paying a stipend of from \$10,000 (Boston Teacher Residency Program) to \$30,000 (Chicago Academy for Urban School Leadership) per person per year while in training. Some programs use a co-teaching model that puts the teacher candidate in the classroom full-time all year with a veteran teacher. These programs focus on high needs areas.

As I contemplated this embedded case study and reviewed the comments of the multiple stakeholders (program graduates, program directors, school of education directors, and employers) I readily acknowledge that change in life—and in programs—is inevitable and remains a constant in life. Therefore, it is not unexpected that the program under study here should cease to exist. Indeed, many administrators with decades of experience nod and say that this program may have indeed lasted longer than most or even longer than it should. With that being said, what remains is to look at any legacy this program might have left. What can be learned from its 18 years of its existence? How can we gather building blocks that will form new programs? I see this change process as an upward spiral that stops on a higher plane than where it started. We should not have to start from scratch to continue the process of building great teacher training programs.

For a class gift, one recent career-change cohort, the 15<sup>th</sup>, planted a tree next to the education building. This young tree symbolized the growth experienced by these students. Like the program itself, this young tree has struggled to survive harsh winters and dry summers. But it persists. As 18 cohorts have come and gone on this

university campus, what remains are the roots that have inspired and supported those teachers. What will sprout from them next is yet to be determined. An educator with 35 years of experience, an instructor in the case study program for four years, and serious fly-fisherman put it this way, “There’s a lot of water yet to be fished.”

### **So, What Have We Learned?**

Much has changed on the teacher education landscape since the beginning of the program in this case study. Teachers are now licensed, not certified. The standards movement has marched across the country. Federal legislation in the form of *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 has fueled a frenzy of test taking. Outcomes based education has come and gone. Madeline Hunter’s ideas are still relevant, but no longer new. Brain-based education and multiple intelligences have prompted much discussion. Constructivism and cooperative learning have moved from the outside in. Active learning and experiential learning continue to alter formerly passive lesson plans. Relationships and relevance are the new reality. Recitation is out, replaced by reading for understanding. Creativity and the arts still struggle for legitimacy. Collaborative models lead to professional learning communities. All of Bloom’s taxonomy is used in lessons, not just the basic knowledge level.

Differentiation is the new buzz word.

The purpose here is to listen to and learn from some of those people most closely involved in one slice-of-life graduate level teacher preparation program over the last 18 years. Collectively, the graduates of this program describe themselves as lifelong learners, which indicates an underlying spirit of inquiry that propels them

through life. Several commonalities have emerged from this data. Surprisingly, what worked also caused friction.

### **Ten Key Tenets for Teacher Training**

On the positive side, the survey and interview results in this case study point to ten basic tenets that stakeholders identify as important in a graduate level teacher training program for career-changing adults:

#### **Stakeholders 10 Key Tenets for Teacher Training**

1. Careful Selection of Candidates
2. High Expectations in an Enriched Environment
3. Modeling of Instruction
4. Master Teachers
5. Small Cohort Group
6. Integrating Curriculum with Practice
7. Multiple Field Experiences
8. Frequent Evaluation by Instructors and Peers
9. Relationship Building
10. Reflection

First, careful selection is a key component. Not everyone has the skills, passion or disposition to embrace teaching as a profession. The use of a modified Teacher Perceiver interview model combined with written responses and personal interviews in a panel format has been effective in identifying individuals with a sincere passion to teach as well as those who put students first and are more inclined to find solutions to problems than to assess blame. Second come high expectations set in an enriched environment. There is no point in providing minimal training for a profession that demands exceptional training. The third criterion is the modeling of instruction—for example, using cooperative learning methods to explore cooperative learning. This inside out or three dimensional modeling provides for rich learning by

making teaching and thinking visible. Fourth is the employment of master teachers to teach novice teachers. Master teachers are able to walk their talk and offer inspiration as well as information. Fifth is the increased learning afforded by a small cohort group. Small collaborative groups prevent students from becoming invisible. Cohorts have the unique aspect of connectivity that provides a sense that no one is going through the program alone. This network can act as support system and sounding board.

Sixth is integrating the curriculum with actual practice, so that small chunks of learning are mastered before going on. This scaffolded approach to mastery builds confidence as it builds skills and allows for individual differences in growth. The seventh element of multiple field experiences provides immersion in a variety of contexts to provide a richness of learning situations. Starting with a small rural setting, the field locations build to middle school/junior high and then to high school. As the pre-service teachers gain skills, they work in progressively more challenging settings. In between is a service learning experience and a urban experience that includes at-risk programs and a prison school. This broad range of settings develops a flexibility to deal with many situations and provides first-hand knowledge for choosing the best personal fit in the job search. The eighth tenet addresses the frequent evaluation of pre-service teachers *by their instructors*. In this way, supervision and evaluation is provided by a consistent person. This helps to establish the ninth principle of relationship building and providing strong support through the critical phase of student teaching. Learning to teach involves significant risk-taking. A stable and supportive environment allows the novice a chance to learn and grow in

a safe environment. The tenth piece involves imbuing a thoughtful training in reflection. Reflection in this case is structured into every laboratory session, every lesson plan, every observation, and most significantly in the expression of personal philosophy that is formulated at the end, rather than at the beginning of the teacher preparation program. These elements could be applied in any program and are not limited to just the case study. Individually they seem simple enough. Collectively these ten tenets provide an enriched approach to teacher training that requires a wide angle lens to view the larger landscape.

**Interpretation of Data: How does the literature agree or disagree?**

In the *Rise and Stall of Teacher Education Reform* (1988), Fullan, Galluzzo, Morris & Watson list what they see as the critical components of such reform:

1. a stronger knowledge base for teaching and teacher education
2. attracting able, diverse, and committed students to the career of teaching
3. redesigning teacher preparation programs so that the linkages to the arts and sciences, and to the field of practice, are both strengthened
4. reform in the working conditions of schools
5. the development and monitoring of external standards for programs as well as for teacher candidates and teachers on the job
6. a rigorous and dynamic research enterprise focusing on teaching, teacher education, and on the assessment and monitoring of strategies (p.58)

In this definitive look at the future of teacher education (from 1996-2006)

Fullan et al (1998) note that school reform must be matched by addressing inequities, and “under conditions of poverty, including huge inequities across class and races, the development and mobilization of large numbers of caring adults is absolutely critical to the chances of success, and in this sense parent and community development must be closely linked to teacher development” (p.57).

This is consistent with the themes that emerged from this case study on what comprises a successful program and are similar to the themes identified in chapter two which came from a review of eight different graduate level programs for second-career adults. These American programs span the nation in from New York, and Boston to Chicago, and Menlo Park, CA. Some common factors in these programs seen as building for success are:

- Recruit widely, but select candidates carefully
- Streamline enrollment and registration process
- Offer classes at time and place that is convenient for students
- Establish active partnerships with public schools
- Pace and shape curriculum to meet needs of motivated adult learners
- Set and maintain high standards for excellence and professionalism
- Instructors model best practices through interactive cooperative learning
- Blend learning with opportunity to practice in the field
- Provide a variety of field placements
- Frequent opportunities for observation, feedback, reflection, and support
- Offer incentives that value effort and commitment

Two facts collide and create a sense of urgency in training great teachers and then supporting them through the critical first five years. First, the number of school-age students is increasing every year as the population of baby-boomer teachers is rapidly approaching retirement. Statistics for 2004 show the median age of teachers is 44 years old. Broken down by age group, the same study shows 10% of teachers in the 20-29 age group and 22% in the 30-39 age group with the majority of teachers, 63% falling into the 40-59 age group (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). The second fact comes from studies that show students with highly qualified teachers show increased achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2002). With a 40% attrition rate for new teachers entering the field within those critical first five years (Tennessee

Tomorrow, 2002), teacher preparation needs to focus on not only providing enough new teachers every year:

Increasing birthrates, immigration, teacher retirements, and attrition are fueling the projected need for 200,000 new teachers annually over the next decade...Hence, issues of quantity, quality, and equity dominate current discussions of the teaching pool (Zumwalt, 111).

Teachers must also have skills and mentoring to sustain them. Otherwise students will see the revolving door effect of a constant stream of new teachers who never achieve enough maturity in their field to become highly qualified.

### **What Are the Surprises?**

What surprises me are the paradoxes. Very little real systemic change has occurred in teacher education in the last 100 years--since my grandmother graduated from the Normal School at the University of Minnesota at Duluth in 1905. The teaching ranks continue to be filled mainly by women who are held in low regard by male administrators and by society in general. Reflecting this, teaching continues to be a low-paying career that nevertheless demands high levels of performance but garners little respect from the public. With regard to the case study, I wonder why a successful program valued by all stakeholders no longer exists.

Additionally, the extent to which program strengths also existed as program weaknesses present a true enigma. All the features that were valued by stakeholders had the unintended consequence of creating its downfall—from the small cohort size that developed into a supportive team, to the emphasis on relationships and honoring diversity, to multiple field placements, to integrated curriculum, to master teachers making their instruction visible, to frequent observations and feedback by familiar instructors, to authentic constructivism, to practiced reflection. All of this requires a

compelling sense of mission and a high level of caring. The *ethic of care* in education that Nell Noddings (1995, p.196) writes of requires enormous amounts of time and energy which are resources not factored into FTE or workloads. Further irony exists as this teacher education training program built on honoring diversity was ultimately not valued for its innate diversity.

Table 13 contrasts *what worked* with *what did not work* to show the plurality of impact—how positives could become negatives. This plurality marks the enigmatic nature of this case.

**Table 13. Plurality of Impact—What Worked Also Did Not Work**

<b>What Worked</b>	<b>What Did Not Work</b>
1 year fast-track program	Too intense for some
Short Time line	Volume of Learning Created Time Management Issues for Some
High Ideals and Expectations	Budget Issues, Lack of Resources
Staff Commitment, Perseverance, Persistence, and Many Observations	Staff Burnout, Little time for Research, Limited Time for Recruitment
Multiple Field Placements	Difficulty in Making Placements
Cohort Design	Personality Conflicts
Collaborative Model	Messy or Perceived as Chaotic
Unique Structure	Mismatched with University System
Immersion Model for Rich Learning	Isolation and Loss of Transparency

The extension of each strength over time became some of the program weaknesses. The fast track became too intense for some when coupled with the risk taking involved in career change. As adults with real world dependencies, time management issues arose. The strong sense of mission and the demands of high expectations created staff burnout. Multiple field experiences required multiple field placements which required enormous time and energy. Even the cohort design which many graduates depended on for support could result in occasional personality

conflicts during times of stress. The unique structure of the program was constantly at odds with the structure of the university system. The dynamics of this program in motion also unintentionally created a sense of isolation from the rest of the School of Education which resulted in isolation and contributed to a general lack of understanding of program particulars. While leadership on several levels was aware of these ongoing problems, the pace of the program combined with growing budget issues did not result in change. This led to frustration that was apparent even at the student level that a program with such a strong history could so easily disappear.

### **Stakeholders Speak of Influential Enriched Environments in Their Lives**

In the fall of 1990 I attended a conference at George Mason University on the neurology of learning. At that time I was an instructional assistant in a K-2 self-contained special education classroom in a Fairfax County, Virginia public school and had just started a master's program at George Mason University in special education. The keynote speaker was Marian Diamond. In addition to interpretative signing of the presentation, Nancy Magulies stood on the side of the stage and mind mapped the content. Quite a treat. It rained that day and I shared my umbrella with Dr. Diamond as we went to lunch. We also shared a table and I was able to talk with her at some length about her work. The importance of that discussion stayed with me. Marian Diamond's attention to "enriched environments" often comes to mind when I think of inquiry and discovery within the classroom. When my granddaughter, Laura, was born I was conscious of the enriched environment I deliberately put into place for her. Early home movies show that we instinctively did the same for her mother. When I entered the classroom as a teacher, I carried that

value with me. During the course of interviews for this case study, I asked administrative stakeholders about pivotal moments in their own lives or training that helped shape who they are today. Five themes emerged.

1. Challenge
2. the Coaching Relationship
3. Look Behind to Understand
4. Safe Climate
5. Inclusion

First, many stakeholders mentioned *challenge*—either positive or negative. Some stakeholders felt challenged by negative feedback to succeed to prove someone wrong. Some stakeholders were encouraged by mentors to “step up and step in.”

*\*My mother and grandmother instilled a passion for education and taught me to “Step Up and Step In” and gave me self-confidence and self-esteem to stand on the rock of knowing who I am and that the actions and words of others can’t hurt me.* Program Director 1

*\*I learned a global view of education from two very different mentors, one strict, one loose and then I had the benefit of more academic training that brought confidence.* Principal 3

*\*I probably always wanted to be a teacher, but I ignored it until I was in college and happened to fill in over break in a model demonstration school. One little girl challenged me, but I kept trying. I felt successful and appreciated and that I made a difference. That was it for me, I enrolled in education courses right after that.* SOE Director 2

*\*I got into a Ford Foundation graduate program in California. They met with us and we were a cohort, an interesting idea, of about 28 people. they met with us and said they had placements for each of you in junior high or high schools. You are going to go out there and student teach and you will come back here for classes in your major. Also you are going to work on a teaching license, too. So I marched out to the school like everyone else did. And I got there and I was a horrible disaster. I could just watch these poor students in an urban high school in Los Angeles just sinking lower and lower into their chairs. At our first meeting back at our cohort, we were to design our own program, which was marvelous because we were so motivated because everyone was having the same experience I was. So we basically designed our own program: we needed*

*to learn how to put some excitement into our teaching, learn how to discipline.*  
SOE Director 1

Second, others *learned through coaching the power and rewards of relationships.*

*\*Once I started coaching, I experienced a satisfaction level that can only come from working with students and that started me on the path that led to certification and eventually to principalship.* Program Director 1

*\*Coaching led to an extended way of knowing students that brought a new dimension of trust to the classroom relationship. I think we both saw each other as more real, more caring, and more approachable.*  
Principal 3

Third, stakeholders also acknowledged the importance of the *ability to look behind things in order to understand them.*

*\*Not getting something I wanted had an impact on me. I still remember a great teacher in grade school, and a terrible teacher in high school, and disappointment at not getting an assistantship with my mentor in grad school. What it taught me was to look behind things to truly understand them. I think that made me a better person and a better leader and certainly a better researcher because I didn't ever—I stopped taking things at face value.*  
SOE Director 4

*\*When I taught art, I used to put on big shows. Not everyone liked having their work shown. Still, I was surprised when a student objected to the background color for his picture. My response was, "What difference did it make if the background was black or blue?" He responded, "My father is black and he beats me." It was at this point that I knew I had to move beyond the subject area to focus on the very human nature of my students. At that point I pursued higher degrees in counseling so I could better know my students and their thinking.*  
Program Director 4

Fourth, several stakeholders experienced either positive or negative situations where they *learned that teacher training is not done in a vacuum, but requires a safe and supportive atmosphere.*

*\*I had three remarkable mentors who gave me a safe environment in which I learned to love teaching. They gave me foundational values of never settling and always being of service have stayed with me.*  
Principal 2

*\*I believe in the simultaneous renewal concept as discussed by Goodlad. I believe that when you really understand that concept and work with people, that higher education is not training people in a vacuum. I think pivotal points would be just a place of that simultaneous renewal where you get people talking and create an environment that allows people to talk and feel OK about talking when they are being critical.* Program Director 5

Fifth, many stakeholders expressed a universal theme that *being excluded developed a passion to create inclusion.*

*\*When I went to my high school counselor for help with college applications she told me I was wasting my time and her time and the college's time because I was just not college material. But my football coach who believed in me, academically and athletically, encouraged me and helped fill out the applications. We were able to get 5 football scholarships. From that spun off all my feelings about leadership and openness and transparency and inclusivity because of the way I was shut out. I know that if I really got into kind of a counseling piece on that they could show me subconsciously how rejections and being boxed off opened up my own philosophy.* SOE Director 4

*\*On my very first day on the job as an elementary intern they were looking for ways to prevent a new book box with a heavy lid from becoming dangerous to students. I raised my hand and offered two suggestions. My cooperating teacher then sent me to the principal's office saying that if I had a suggestion, work them through me. So I was ready to quit teaching because what I realized was I had no value. That's why it is important to me that everybody has a voice.* Program Director 6

*\*In my student teaching, I became aware of inequities of resources between inner city and wealthier suburban schools and I have worked to change that.* Program Director 1

### **What Does This Mean for Teacher Training: Suggestions for Change**

The various stakeholders involved in this case study offered a number of suggestions for future graduate teacher education programs for second-career adults. They address a range of topics from School of Education mission, budget issues, and smoother integration into the university system to candidate recruitment and program particulars, to partnership considerations and evaluation recommendations.

- Program must be valued and supported by the School of Education

- Increase budget and staffing
- Provide a budget to broaden cohort and recruit more minority teacher candidates
- Establish an evenness in recruiting across content areas with an emphasis on hard to fill areas like math, foreign language, ELL, special education, and gifted and talented instruction
- Establish commitment level and active public relations to create a high level of trust between all partners
- Work with school districts to meet their needs
- Yearly external evaluations and reflection
- Measure worth of this program in more than dollars
- Include more methods classes in the summer session
- Improve interface with licensure office
- Require all to complete M.Ed.
- Expand scope by bringing graduates back to campus to interact with new cohort and for professional renewal
- Appoint tenured faculty as director
- Create co-teaching opportunities for university faculty and cooperating teachers

When considering the reality of change, one administrator, a former dean, made this statement during an interview:

*You have to allow those involved to say what they think about change, but then I think another thing is, I mean another huge piece if we use it, is we should be a lot better at having research-informed practice and I think this is still a struggle in many districts and in many areas of higher ed. You know it is easy to say that, but it is another thing to do it. To really use that information and data to inform or change what you are doing if it is not working... You know it is messier. It's not easy to do, but I think in the long run you also build relationships that can sustain working through problems versus in the old model where you didn't have relationships.*

Fullan (2001) identified 10 “do and don’t assumptions” about educational change in *The NEW Meaning of Educational Change*. Item ten in this list speaks to the heart of the matter by explaining that “changing the culture of institutions is the real agenda, not implementing single innovations and when implementing particular innovations, we should always pay attention to whether each institution and the

relationships among institutions and individuals is developing or not” (p.109).

Sarason (1990) also acknowledges the cultural imperative of system culture:

Ideas whose time has come are no guarantee that we know how to capitalize on the opportunities, because the process of implementation requires that you understand well the settings in which these ideas have to take root. And that understanding is frequently faulty and incomplete. Good intentions married to good ideas are necessary, but not sufficient for action consistent with them (p.61).

Goodlad and McMannon (2004) speak of what Paul Watzlawick and his associates term *first and second order change*. First order change accepts existing culture, while second order change “challenges existing culture by countervailing ideas.” This change in a system’s culture, they maintain, is necessary to lead to authentic renewal (p.77).

Addressing their thoughts *Toward Renewal in School-University*

*Partnerships*, Paul Heckman and Cory Mantle-Bromley (2004), breakdown deep second order change into three deceptively simple principles:

1. Participants agree that a primary purpose of the partnership is to challenge long-held beliefs and assumptions about their own and each other’s teaching and learning.
2. There must be agreement that everyone’s responsibility within the partnership work is to raise the most basic questions about theory and practice. (What and Why questions)
3. Participants must agree to go about their work together and, where necessary, differently (Goodlad, 2004, pp.82-3).

By seeking to break the pattern of what has always been done through deliberate collaboration, the path to substantive cultural change begins. From the beginning, participants know that what they create will be different. This frame of inquiry and challenge facilitates action, not just mere repetition. Active learning and reflections work toward simultaneous renewal that can benefit all partners. This approach could

have a profound effect on classrooms that have been driven into passivity by a glut of assessments. Students could ask more questions than they answer, inquiry could lead to discovery, and teaching and learning might become relevant and engaging rather than dull. This renewal aspect carries added value in that the continuous questioning and reflection act to provide sustainability.

Just how hard is it to institute change at the university level? Can it be accomplished at all? Richard Wisniewski (Goodlad, 2004) reflects on his own experience in this way:

As a dean of education, I challenged notions of how a faculty is organized, and how instruction is delivered. I did my best to support and reward groups of faculty willing to change their work with students despite the resistance of their colleagues. I learned, like many others, that changing anything in higher education is difficult—but not impossible. In short, I did what I could to encourage alternatives in a setting where standardization is even more powerful than in K-12 schools. Universities are, by and large, resistant to even minor internal changes, while they preach the desirability of change in other institutions (p.200).

He goes on to share his belief that alternative teacher preparation programs require a special kind of leadership that differs from other faculty in that “only handfuls of professors are willing or able to devote the intensive time required by clinical, school-based preparation programs” (p.200).

In addition to the external building of relationships, it seems to me that internal attention must be paid to teacher education programs, no matter the model, through the use of yearly evaluations. Further, consistent student and graduate input would yield much data relevant to the overall success of the program by providing real-time data on the program as it is running (Lincoln and Guba, 1981).

Keeping in touch with graduates yearly would prevent the disconnect I experienced in trying to locate people from cohorts as many as 18 years ago. There is also an opportunity here to extend the learning community to include graduates seeking renewal through a familiar network. A blog (like the one Gary Natriello created as editor of *Teachers College Record* at Columbia) could field questions and prompt conversations. A website with reading and resource lists could keep graduates in touch with current research and trends. Workshops could bring students back on campus to refresh their minds and spirits and feed their need for lifelong learning. Including staff from local school districts would help create a stronger sense of community. Co-teaching and guest speaker inclusion opportunities for partners would also create more community connections and provide for more transparency.

Another recommendation would be to deliberately match content area demand with high needs. It does not make sense to send out a large number of teachers in any content area to a job pool that does not require it. Currently, much is being written about the need for math and science teachers, as well as the need for qualified teachers for English Language Learners and Special Education. Since fewer teachers are male or from a minority, that might be another need to consider. A training model should be flexible enough to meet the market demand. This adaptability to the market could increase program sustainability and would reflect an active partnership between schools that train teachers and schools that employ them.

### **Future Research Questions**

Many questions for future research on teacher education bubble up for me, after all the time and pages spent on this case study. I have grouped similar

questions.

What assumptions have we made about teacher training?  
Are our assumptions correct?

Are we currently training teachers to serve democratic purposes?  
What are our realms of importance? Social? Economic? Moral?

Does the current university culture value and support teacher education?  
Does teacher education belong in the mission of the modern American university?  
On what hill will the battle for quality teacher education be fought?

What are the policy implications of change in teacher education?  
Is teacher education adequately funded?  
How can we add value without adding cost?  
What can we afford to provide in the way of teacher training?  
What can we not afford to lose in the way of teacher training?

What are the gender or race implications in teacher training?  
Should there be more than one way to become a teacher?  
Is the current testing frenzy counter-productive to teacher education?

What are the unintended consequences of current programs?  
What will the future demand from its educators?  
Is our program design fragmented or connected?  
Does it spiral? (Bruner, 1960/1977)

Is it time to change?  
Should we change—and why?  
How do we initiate change?  
What will that change look like?  
What does it take to sustain great programs? What makes a program great?

In brief, I think we need to examine our assumptions. Are they valid? Do they lead to quality and equity? Are sustainability issues negatively impacting the mission of teacher education? Is current policy (federal, state, and university) supporting programs that are capable of producing highly effective teachers? Are research-based best practices being applied? Significantly, competition for limited funds and misalignment with the mission of a large research university may be the

biggest obstacle and should be examined. Is a large research university a good fit for a program like this?

### **Problem Areas in Teacher Training—1989 and 2007**

As I considered current trends in teacher training, I went back to 1989 to read what the education leaders were saying then to ground my inquiry. It is remarkable that four areas identified as problem areas in teacher education between 1950 and 1990 (Goodlad, 1990; Holmes Group, 1996; Howey and Zimpher, 1989) still exist

1. Fragmentation of key elements – lacks connections
2. Uninspired teaching methods – lecture and recitation
3. Superficial curriculum – no depth of learning
4. Traditional views of schooling- preparing not for the future but for schools as they are now

*Learning begins then with unlearning.* Systemic change needs strong leadership which demands energy, enthusiasm, and administrative skill. It also takes courage to free faculty from isolating “balkanization” (Fullan, 1993, p.82) through opportunities for collaboration. These are the first steps to including all voices in a community of change agents. In *The Power of Their Ideas* (1995), Deborah Meier identifies five habits of the mind that create a framework for learning

1. Evidence - How do we know what we know?
2. Viewpoint- Who is speaking?
3. Cause - What causes that? (search for connections/patterns)
4. Supposition - How might things have been different? and
5. Relevance - Who cares? Why does it matter? How does it fit in?

(Meier, p.50):

These habits, once internalized, lead to inclusion and inquiry.

*The habits conducive to free inquiry don't just happen with age and maturity. They take root slowly. The uncertainties, multiple viewpoints, the use of independent judgment, and pleasure in imaginative play aren't luxuries to be grafted on to the mind-set of a mature scholar, suited only to a gifted few, or offered after school on a voluntary basis to the children of parents inclined this way. It is my contention that these are the habits*

*of a sound citizenry, habits that take time and practice* (Meier, p.81).

Within this democratic frame suggested by Deborah Meier, it becomes evident that the purpose of training future teachers well is to have a genuine impact on their future students. The scope of this study does not in any way attempt to capture data from that point of view. That collection would be problematic in any case. But what of the impact of teachers on students? I do have some anecdotal evidence to offer.

I attended the graduation of the 18<sup>th</sup> cohort in May of 2007. As I looked around the room, I saw one high school administrator, but no university administrators. In addition to the expected family and friends, there were a large number of high school students whose lives had been touched by their student teachers. These 20 high school students outnumbered the graduating cohort of 13 soon to be licensed teachers. A group of three high school students came to the front of the room and addressed the gathering. They wanted to share something of their experiences. This group had been considered at-risk by school administrators. A boy came in spite of a broken foot. One of the girls spoke for all of them in symbolic terms. She said she had learned in speech class that symbols conveyed power, so she had thought about an appropriate symbol for her feelings. She chose a river to describe the relationship she felt. She said,

*You never know if the river is going to be gentle or swift or what lies around the bend. When you come to waterfall and find yourself going over the edge, you don't know how or where you are going to land. These student teachers and the ones we knew a year or two ago became our floatation devices and provided support for us as we traveled along that river. Today we have the chance to thank you for going out of your way to make sure that we did not sink.*

*Thank you. We can take it from here.*

High School Student

This story clearly illustrates the results of student-centered teacher training at its best. The single paradigm shift evidenced here from teacher-centered to student-centered classrooms could produce the most profound change in teacher education programs in the last 50 years.

### **How Does This Case Study Inform the Future of Teacher Education?**

The founder of the program in this case study speaks of the Latin verb *educare* which is the root for our word *education*. The definition, “to draw out from” which places the means for understanding within the learner. Curiosity and inquiry and the innate human capacity to figure things out are the tools to draw out learning. This drive is evident from infancy in children as they try to make sense of their new world. Lecture and recitation have no part in this equation. Now the teacher becomes facilitator and guide with the learner actively questioning in the forefront (Gunn, Richburg, Smilstein, 203). In *Igniting Student Potential*, Richburg shares his vision for the future:

*As teachers experience the power of educare approaches in their own training, we will see a greater commitment to constructivist approaches to learning in their classrooms. When their learners, in turn, become more active and confident in building more of their own knowledge, they will experience greater degrees of academic success. The process spirals upward. Each incidence where the learners have learned something important by their own energies enforces their skills and desires to learn. They are realizing more of their potential. The success of students energizes teachers to use more of these strategies. Success not only breeds success but also facilitates change as new patterns evolve in the classroom. (p. 204)*

### **A Community of Learners Speaks**

So, eighteen years of stakeholders—graduates, employers, program directors, and School of Education directors have been given the opportunity to speak. Survey

data from 100 graduates were examined. Over two hundred pages of narrative transcripts have been analyzed for emerging themes. These stakeholders have addressed what worked and what did not work for the case study program and they also recommended future changes. For the first time in eighteen years, this community of learners has been given a voice.

Even though this community is large, some might wonder if it is all-inclusive. The answer is no. I chose to include only four stakeholder groups closest to my study and who were most accessible. The fact that the program was studied at the end of its lifespan also influenced my choices. Future studies may wish to expand the context to include cooperating teachers in the field, students of graduates, the other licensure programs, other faculty within the school of education, or other academic leaders.

The “big ideas” that emerge are drawn from those words of the stakeholders. The role of *relationships* becomes pivotal and foundational. With this guiding philosophy of relationships as necessary in the learning environment, the following equation sums up the findings of this case study: *Teamwork + Collaboration + Multiple Field Experiences + Professional Learning Community + Support = A Powerful Program*. The team building done in the first few weeks of the cohort provide a network that shares common goals and a common language. The collaborative element leads to network building and sets the stage for formal engagement with other teachers, rather than isolation in the classroom. The notion of a Professional Learning Community ensures that current research and best practices will continually be sought out and discussed. It also allows for partnerships to grow that connect schools and people with the result of synergy. This synergistic effect

where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts provides a powerful support system to sustain professionals throughout their careers. This is not easily done. The process is developmental and relies on commitment, persistence, and perseverance in the pursuit of excellence in teacher training. In spite of any number of obstacles, all stakeholders valued the results of the program in this embedded case study.

This journey of discovery for second-career adults is non-linear and is nourished by the passion to become a teacher. This sense of mission is sustained by an innate value for life-long learning. The fast-track immersion approach filled with a variety of field experiences meets adult learning needs. These adults bring a wealth of experience with them that can translate to relevant instruction in the classroom. These non-traditional students carry real world work experience with them that resonates with students. To support their transition to teachers, the intangible elements of time and money must be invested lavishly in the process of building skills and confidence. Flexibility and vision also factor into this equation by allowing for ongoing change while keeping the long-term goal in sight. Finally learning to reflect on practice provides for inquiry, growth, and renewal.

Throughout my analysis of the data collected, I have looked for a single symbol to emerge. I scanned hundreds of pages looking for emerging themes that would provide a compelling central image. I found an onion, immersion, a river, a tree, waters yet to be fished, support from cohort and mentoring, learning by doing, constructivist design, hands on, passion, vision, service, challenge, coaching, reflection, safety, inclusion, enriched environment, creativity, problem solving, democratic principles, active learning, inquiry, and many others. These elements

appeared to be related but nothing emerged as a single profound image until I re-read my chapters prior to submission.

One Friday in July the image emerged—*root*. To me, the tree planted by case study cohort 15 stands for the slow growth of free inquiry that Meier describes. The extension for programs to come is that roots are in place to grow new programs. Indeed programs based on this model are currently in place at Wayne State University, Black Hills State University, Metropolitan State College of Denver, and Fort Lewis College. Enrich the soil, use the latest research and technologies, go slowly to ensure a firm foundation. It all comes back to Richburg's reference to *educare* meaning "to draw out from." What future programs draw out from this case study remains to be seen, but the roots have been planted.

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## **Survey**

Hello graduates!

Your experience and opinions regarding our graduate teacher training program for second-career students are important to this university and we ask for your assistance.

Dr. Jean Lehmann is the Principal Investigator in this research. Sandy Butler, a former graduate (year 5) and former Interim Director of the program (2003-2004), is the Co-Principal Investigator. This dissertation project is a case study.

Our purpose is to explore what can be learned about educating teachers from the graduates and stakeholders of this program. How do graduates of this eighteen-year-old program describe the value of their experiences? What suggestions do they make for change? We want to learn where the graduates are now and what you are doing. We are also gathering information on what aspects of the program served to sustain you in the field.

This survey is divided into three sections that should take you about 20 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary. Answer only the questions you feel comfortable answering. Once the survey is completed and you have activated the “submit” button, your data will be assigned a number in order to protect your confidentiality.

Thank you for taking the time to provide vital information!

Participate in [Survey](#)



# Survey

- Part 1. Reflection
- Part 2. Demographic
- Part 3. Short Answer

Instructions: Complete Parts 1, 2 & 3

All parts of the survey should take no more than 20 minutes.

---

## Part 1: Reflection

Please answer the following questions relative to your experience in the program by responding according to the scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5  
Not at All      Somewhat      Definitely

1. I found the cohort design effective.

1  2  3  4  5

2. I found interspersing theory with teaching placements useful.

1  2  3  4  5

3. I found having four different teaching placements useful.

1  2  3  4  5

4. I feel that the integrated curriculum met my needs as an adult learner.

1  2  3  4  5

5. I would describe the program as rigorous.

1  2  3  4  5

6. I felt supported by the staff throughout my year in the program.

1  2  3  4  5

7. I would recommend this program to others.

1  2  3  4  5

8. I felt the pace of the program was appropriate.

1  2  3  4  5

9. I feel satisfaction with my choice of teaching as a career.

1  2  3  4  5

**10. I would describe myself as a lifelong learner.**

1  2  3  4  5

**11. I would describe myself as a school leader.**

1  2  3  4  5

**12. I felt challenged by this program.**

1  2  3  4  5

**13. I found the workload in this program manageable.**

1  2  3  4  5

**14. I feel that the instructors modeled effective teaching.**

1  2  3  4  5

**15. The accelerated program influenced my choice of this program.**

1  2  3  4  5

**16. The cohort design influenced my choice of this program.**

1  2  3  4  5

**17. This program met my expectations as a career change program.**

1  2  3  4  5

**18. I feel that this program promoted my personal growth.**

1  2  3  4  5

**19. Upon exiting the program, I felt confident I would be teaching 5 or more years.**

1  2  3  4  5

**20. Overall, I am satisfied with this teacher preparation program.**

1  2  3  4  5

**21. I believe this program promoted my career goals.**

1  2  3  4  5

---

Next	Reset
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## Part 2: Demographic

<b>1. Cohort year :</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>2. Gender:</b> <input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female
<b>3. Age:</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>4. What is your Subject Area?</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>5a. Are you currently teaching?</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>5b. If you are no longer teaching, what is the primary reason?</b> <input type="radio"/> Retired <input type="radio"/> Changed Careers <input type="radio"/> Family <input type="radio"/> Other Please specify: <input type="text"/>
<b>6a. Were you hired in a teaching position within 1 year after completing this program?</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>6b. If yes on question 6a, within how many months were you hired?</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>7. How many years have you been teaching?</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>8. What type of tuition did you pay when you were in this program?</b>

<input type="radio"/> Paid in-state tuition <input type="radio"/> Paid out-of-state tuition
<b>9. How did you hear about this program?</b> <input type="radio"/> Word of Mouth <input type="radio"/> Internet <input type="radio"/> Newspaper <input type="radio"/> Other _____ If other, where: _____
<b>10. What graduate degrees have you completed? (Check all that apply)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Master's <input type="checkbox"/> Working on/Completed Ph.D.
<b>11. Do you hold any additional licenses?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Principal <input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Endorsements
<b>12a. How would you describe the location of your current school?</b> <input type="radio"/> Urban <input type="radio"/> Rural <input type="radio"/> Suburban <b>12b. How would you describe the type of school you are in now?</b> <input type="radio"/> Public <input type="radio"/> Private <input type="radio"/> Charter
<b>13. Have you team taught?</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>14. Are you or have you been a department chair/team leader?</b> <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
<b>15. What one word would you use to describe your experience in this program?</b>

[Next](#)   [Reset](#)

**Part 3**  
**Short Answer Questions for Survey**

We value this information that can only  
come from program graduates.  
Please answer as many of the following  
four questions as honestly and  
completely as you can.

\*Please limit responses to 250 characters  
(including spaces)

**1. Is there a single element of this program that made the greatest impact on you?  
If yes, please explain.**

**2. What caused the most stress for you in the program?**

**3. If you were to design changes to this program, what elements would you include to strengthen the program?**

**4. Think back and share any stories or impressions about your year in Project Promise that have stayed with you.**



---

Submit

Reset

## GOALS FOR CASE STUDY PROGRAM

- Goal 1**      **Recruitment and Retention of Exceptional Candidates from Professional Backgrounds:** We plan to recruit 15-20 highly motivated and capable individuals from professional and technical backgrounds each year with at least a bachelor's degree and significant life and work experience related to the academic area in which they would teach.

*Not just any new teacher would have been equipped to handle the discipline situation on our school bus today. Without the valuable, previous work experience of being an environmentalist and working in the National Parks, the situation would probably have needed my assistance—but she handles it with ease. It is a breath of fresh air to have this type of new teacher starting out with these kinds of skills.*

*Middle School Assistant Principal*

- Goal 2**      **Multiple Teaching Experiences:** We will provide participants with successful teaching experiences in rural, urban, middle school/junior high, and high school environments so they will understand how each situation is similar and each unique. They will develop a confidence that teaching in only one circumstance would never give them. They will learn how to adapt and flex with any new teaching situation.

*The opportunity provided me in the rural student teaching experience gave me the confidence and job experience that I believe provided the edge in my being hired! The committee told me that they had never seen a student teacher with such a wide variety of field experiences.*

*Graduate*

- Goal 3**      **Research-Based Program:** We intend to continue to build the program around the best that is known from current research. Project Promise strives to train their new teacher clientele through an innovative research-based teacher preparation program. This will include the best-known research from learning styles, multiple intelligences, multicultural education, neuro-science, methodological innovations, and the use of technology.

*I would have been excited to have someone in August tell me to go out and teach. However, in the time that I have spent in schools, I find the techniques that I am learning invaluable in assisting me to communicate well with my students. I am learning how to talk with my students and get across a different perspective.*

*Participant*

*Having a methods class structured in conjunction with a teaching assignment allows me the opportunity to experiment and grow in my use of the information and develop my own understanding of how students learn.*

*Participant*

- Goal 4**      **Feedback and Coaching:** The project was conceived to provide multiple feedback opportunities and coaching situations. It provides regular and systematic coaching and feedback sessions that encourage the implementation of smaller bits of theory with immediate feedback in a teaching/work situation. Project Promise candidates often receive oral and written feedback thirty or more times during their four student teaching experiences. One of the program mottos is "Feedback is the breakfast of champions."

*Never before have I had such extensive coaching and supervision of my student teachers. Your university supervisors have been here more in one quarter than*

*almost all of my other student teachers combined! The support is beneficial both to me and my student teacher.*

*High School Science Department Chair*

**Goal 5**

**Job Placement of Candidates:** We will facilitate an extensive job search process that will invite school districts from all areas of Colorado and other states, as candidate interests dictate, to interview Project Promise participants. The goal is to retain the candidates for the teacher pool in Colorado in order to keep these teachers in Colorado classrooms following their specialized and intensive training.

*I am impressed with the design of this program and would like an opportunity to interview all of the candidates.*

*Personnel Director of a Colorado School*

*District*

**Goal 6**

**Mentoring and Follow-Up:** The goal of this project is to provide mentoring and follow-up to the candidates within the state (and out-of-state when possible), through regular conferencing and coaching sessions for the first two years of their contract teaching.

*I am looking forward to the needed support during my first year as a teacher. I know one thing for sure, my work as an engineer was never as meaningful and rewarding as I have experienced as a teacher thus far... and I am just beginning my new career.*

*Graduate*



**Consent to Participate in a Research Study  
Colorado State University**

**TITLE OF STUDY:** Lessons learned from the case study of a university-based teacher education program for second-career students: Stakeholder views over 18 years.

**Principal Investigator:** Jean Lehmann

**CO-Principal Investigator:** Alexandra S. Butler

**WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?** You are invited to participate in an interview because of your role as a stakeholder (program director, School of Education director, or employer/supervising principal of a graduate) of Project Promise, a graduate level teacher training program for second-career adults at Colorado State University.

**WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?** This is a research study for the fulfillment of a Ph.D. program for Alexandra S. Butler, a student at the School of Education at the Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY** The purpose of this case study is to explore what can be learned about educating teachers from the graduates and stakeholders of Project Promise at Colorado State University. How do graduates of this eighteen year old program describe the value of their experience in Project Promise? What factors affected the implementation of the program? How do employers describe the value of the program? What suggestions do they make for change?

**WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?** The interview will be held either at your office or at a location of your choice. The interview will last from 60 to 75 minutes.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?** You will be asked to participate in a personal interview to share your understanding, views and perspectives on this teacher training program by addressing the following three general questions:

1. From your point of view, what worked?
2. From your point of view, what did not work?
3. What suggestions would you offer for Project Promise?

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation entails an individual personal interview session that will last for up to 75 minutes. The researcher will answer any questions about the research before proceeding with the interview. The interview session will be tape-recorded and the interviewer will take notes. Tape recordings and notes will be transcribed verbatim, and your identity will be protected in the transcription document and will not be recorded elsewhere. After the study, the audiotapes will be erased. Participation is voluntary, and you may choose not to answer any question, for any reason.

**ARE THERE REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?** Participation in the study is voluntary.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?** Though there are no known risks involved with this study, it is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures. The researchers have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks. If at any time you are uncomfortable with a question, you may refuse to answer.

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?** There is no known immediate benefit to you as an individual participant in this study. We hope this research will indirectly benefit second-career graduate teacher training programs. The lessons learned from this research may be used to improve our understanding of teacher education.

**DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?** Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**WHAT WILL IT COST ME TO PARTICIPATE?** The personal interview session is estimated to last up to 75 minutes.

**CAN I BE IDENTIFIED FROM THIS RESEARCH?** Your responses will be kept in strict confidence and will not be traceable to you because your confidentiality is important and is assured. Your name and interview responses along with all others will remain anonymous in any report generated from this research and the report will not identify CSU as the site for this research. Any information that you would like not to be shared will not be. Audio tapes from the interview will be destroyed after the study is completed but the transcripts will be kept in a secure location in Dr. Lehmann's office at the Colorado State University's College of Education for 3 years.

**WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?** We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be identified in these written

materials though some of your statements may be quoted in support of any statement. We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information confidential.

**CAN MY TAKING PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?** Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?** You will not be compensated for your time and information.

**WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM INJURED BECAUSE OF THE RESEARCH?** The Colorado Governmental Immunity Act determines and may limit Colorado State University's legal responsibility if an injury happens because of this study. Claims against the University must be filed within 180 days of the injury.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Dr. Jean Lehmann, at 970-491-0799. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Meldrem, Human Research Administrator at 970-491-1655. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

**WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?**

Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 3 pages.

---

_____ Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study	_____ Date
<hr/>	
Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study	
<hr/>	
_____ Name of person providing information to participant	_____ Date
<hr/>	
Signature of Research Staff	

## MEMO

**To:** Alexandra S. Butler and Dr. Jean Lehmann  
**From:** Dr. Tim Davies, Interim Director, Colorado State University School of Education  
**CC:** Human Subjects Research Review, Colorado State University  
**Date:** November 1, 2007  
**Re:** Letter of Cooperation for proposed case study of Project Promise

---

Signature below signifies awareness of and cooperation with this proposed case study. Title of Proposed Study: Lessons learned from the case study of a university-based teacher training program for second-career students: Stakeholder views over 18 years.

Scope of Proposed Study: The framework of case study is proposed to seek information from embedded stakeholders of Project Promise (graduates, program directors, CSU School of Education directors past and present, and employers/principals of graduates) over the past eighteen years with the purpose of exploring what can be learned about educating teachers from them. The graduates will be asked to complete a survey covering demographic information and short answer questions regarding their reflections on the value of training received in the program. A call for volunteer participation in a small focus group of graduates will be included in a cover letter to further amplify graduate voices. Interviews will be conducted with program founders and directors as well as School of Education directors focused on what factors affected implementation of the program from their respective views. Then school administrators who have employed these graduates will be interviewed concerning perceived attributes of Project Promise graduates as professional teachers in the field. All data will be analyzed through the following questions: 1. How do graduates describe the value of their experience in Project Promise? 2. What factors affected the implementation of Project Promise? and 3. How do employers/principals describe the value of the program? What suggestions do they make for change?

Protection for Participants: Identity of all research participants will remain confidential and will not be used in any research reports. Audio tapes of interviews will be kept in a locked file in Dr. Lehmann's office in the CSU School of Education building to prevent their being listened to by anyone other than the researchers and transcribers. Tapes will be destroyed at the completion of the project. Online survey data will be electronically entered into the ColdFusion database (<http://www.business.colostate.edu/kathryn.e.davis05/survey1.cfm>) upon submission WITHOUT names. All information gathered from this study will remain confidential. Data gathered will contain no direct identifiable information from participants. Participant information will be combined with information from

other people taking part in the study in the form of a single data set. These data will not have any names or other identifiable information. If there are questions about data, it will be altered or fictionalized to remove risk.

Participation in this case study is completely voluntary.

Involvement of School of Education: Cooperation from the CSU School of Education will be limited to agreeing to support this research by allowing access to the roster of graduates from Project Promise so they may be contacted by mail with a cover letter asking if they would like to participate in this study.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Interim Director, CSU School of Education

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

Dear Project Promise Graduate,

We are contacting you on behalf of the School of Education at Colorado State University. We are in the process of updating our address rosters in order to send out an important survey to graduates of Project Promise. In the 18 years since its creation, Project Promise has never before collected data from its participants. As this program comes of age, we would like to know what your thoughts and reflections on the program are. We hope that you are willing to invest 20 minutes in providing useful information about your experience in Project Promise.

Sandy Butler is a former graduate of Project Promise (PP5) and former Interim Director of Project Promise (2003-2004). She is now a full-time graduate student. Her dissertation project is a case study of Project Promise. My purpose is to gather as much information as possible about the last 18 years of this program. We want to learn where the graduates are now and what you are doing. We are also gathering information on what aspects of Project Promise served to sustain graduates in the field. Further, we would like to hear your suggestions on changes you might have for teacher preparation.

Graduates who are willing to participate will be asked to complete a survey—either online or on paper to be returned by mail. Other *stakeholders* to be contacted include program directors, employers/principals, and current or former directors of the School of Education at Colorado State University. Interviews will be conducted with the program directors, selected employers, and current/former directors of the CSU School of Education.

Your participation is vital in providing accurate data about your experience with Project Promise. We hope that you will agree to take part in this research project. No names will be attached to any form of data collected. Findings will be confidentially reported in my dissertation. The research design for this case study will gather mostly narrative and some numerical data concerning factors affecting the implementation of Project Promise and how its stakeholders value the program. This is information that only you possess.

The survey for graduates is available online at:

<http://www.business.colostate.edu/kathryn.e.davis05/survey1.cfm>

for twenty-one days after receipt of this letter. If you prefer to fill out a paper copy of the survey, please call Sandy at 970-226-2892 or email her at [dsbutler@peakpeak.com](mailto:dsbutler@peakpeak.com). Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important topic. Also, participants are needed for a small graduate focus group which would meet once to amplify to your reflections on Project Promise. Contact Sandy if this interests you.

Your feedback is truly valued.

Sincerely,

Sandy Butler, M.Ed.  
[butlers@cahs.colostate.edu](mailto:butlers@cahs.colostate.edu)  
[dsbutler@peakpeak.com](mailto:dsbutler@peakpeak.com)  
4825 Hinsdale Drive  
Fort Collins, CO. 80526  
970-226-2892

Jean P. Lehmann, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator  
Colorado State University

Date

Dear Project Promise Stakeholder,

We are contacting you on behalf of the School of Education at Colorado State University. In the 18 years since its creation, Project Promise has never before collected data from its stakeholders. As this program comes of age, we would like to know what your thoughts and reflections on the program are. We hope that you will be willing to agree to a brief interview at your convenience.

Sandy Butler, the co- investigator is a former graduate of Project Promise (PP5) and former Interim Director of Project Promise (2003-2004). She is now a full-time graduate student. Her dissertation project is a case study of Project Promise. An online survey will be used to gather as much information as possible from the graduates of this program. Further, we would like to hear your suggestions for change to this teacher preparation program.

*Stakeholders* to be contacted include program directors, hiring professionals, and current or former directors of the School of Education at Colorado State University. Interviews will be conducted with the six program directors, selected employers, and current/former directors of the CSU School of Education. The time and place of these short interviews will be at the convenience of the stakeholder and all information will be confidential.

Your participation is vital in providing accurate data about your experience with Project Promise. We hope that you will agree to take part in this research project. No names will be attached to any form of data collected.

The research design for this case study will gather numerical and narrative data from the graduates. Interviews with other stakeholders will yield narrative data. Framing questions about Project Promise from your point of view will include: What worked? What did not work? What suggestions would you offer?

The overarching research frame is threefold: (1) How do graduates describe the value of their experience in Project Promise? (2) What factors affected the implementation of Project Promise? And (3) How do employers describe the value of the program? What suggestions do they make for change?

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important topic. Your feedback is truly valued. Please contact Sandy by phone or email if you are interested to schedule an interview at your convenience (about an hour).

Sincerely,

Jean P. Lehmann, PhD  
Principal Investigator  
Colorado State University

Sandy Butler, M.Ed.  
[butlers@cahs.colostate.edu](mailto:butlers@cahs.colostate.edu)  
[dsbutler@peakpeak.com](mailto:dsbutler@peakpeak.com)  
4825 Hinsdale Drive  
Fort Collins, CO. 80526  
970-226-2892

## Interview Summary of Main Points

STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS	Employers	PP Directors	SOE Directors
<p>1. What markers or evidence do you look for in new teacher candidates that indicate they might fit with your goals and mission?</p>	<p>A. Relationships are a high priority. Value a collaborative approach to education. Go beyond the classroom to become part of the culture.</p> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Candidates must be conversant in the language of school—standards, curriculum, NCLB, AYP, lessons plans etc so we talk the same language.</li> <li>2. Are “with it” in terms of the youth culture, know the jargon, the music, what’s going on.</li> <li>3. Know the curriculum.</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. maturity with focused career goals</li> <li>2. a diversity of placements and settings in their training</li> <li>3. up-to-date knowledge of current research backed trends in education</li> </ol> <p>D.</p> <p>I look for a strong sense of mission or purpose coupled with the teamwork skills necessary to function at a high level in a middle school.</p> <p>E.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Passion for kids, commitment to education</li> <li>2. content knowledge</li> <li>3. fits with philosophy of school-small learning communities, advisor/advisee</li> <li>4. bi-lingual</li> <li>5. interested in aspects outside the classroom</li> <li>6. has the ability to connect their learning through relevance</li> </ol>	<p>A. Begin with a careful selection process. Cull those who are content oriented. Keep the idealistic one with imagination who are team players.</p> <p>B. Admit those who feel compelled to teach all children—the whole range and variety—and who understand the interdependence of learning and are committed to supporting each other.</p> <p>C. Need a strong sense of mission or desire to make a difference, to reach all students. Should have experience with kids. Know the ups and down of teaching—work toward long term rather than short term goals. Be ready to offer help in the role play rather than assess blame. Lack of Institutional Support Budget Issues Placement Issues Invisibility</p> <p>D.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did they have solid reasons to be a teacher?</li> <li>2. Did they have the commitment of time, resources, and support?</li> <li>3. Did they have preconceived idea of how school was or were they open to new ideas of what school could be?</li> </ol> <p>E.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. mission</li> <li>2. empathy</li> <li>3. rapport building</li> <li>4. intuitive in role play</li> <li>5. pre-screened for academic history and recommendations</li> <li>6. what motivates them</li> <li>7. shows initiative-get up and go spirit to improve on life</li> </ol> <p>F.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. people who wanted to make</li> </ol>	<p>X</p>

		<p>a difference</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. committed to service</li> <li>3. putting kids first and not content</li> <li>4. would remain in the profession</li> <li>5. could grow and build their capacity—didn't come in thinking they knew everything</li> <li>6. be a team player and learn from others while sharing their own gifts</li> <li>7. adaptability and flexibility how people dealt with authority confidence</li> <li>8. I looked as best I could at what people put their value on, what they do value</li> <li>9. People who questioned and had lots of inquiry</li> </ol>	
<p>2. What factors affected the administration of Project Promise while you were director?</p>	X	X	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Checked on recruitment to be sure PP criteria was met</li> <li>2. Enrollment numbers</li> <li>3. the off-campus nature of the program made it difficult to keep track of</li> <li>4. We had been working for 3 years before my term to combine at least PP and TEAM</li> <li>5. We worked on improving the ease of delivery of classes and worked toward consolidating parallel classes</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enrollment #s</li> <li>2. tension between regular program &amp; PP</li> <li>3. SOE faculty feeling on the outside—many questions</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High energy, high visibility; active recruiting</li> <li>2. I met once of month with PSD head to talk</li> </ol>

			<p>3. I wrote a newsletter that featured successes</p> <p>4. I made sure the Dean and President Yates knew about PP</p> <p>D.</p> <p>1. It became human resource intensive after the grant \$ were gone</p> <p>2. 6% cuts targeted PP and TEAM to go</p> <p>3. Lost its champion as Bob retired</p>
3. What worked?	<p>A.</p> <p>1. Cohort support and skill at establishing relationships.</p> <p>2. Positive attitude and willingness to become part of the learning process.</p> <p>3. Mind Center interaction</p> <p>4. Contributed beyond the classroom duties</p> <p>5. Created a pleasant, positive, productive, partnership</p> <p>6. Built on innate people skills.</p> <p>7. Reflective</p> <p>B</p> <p>1. Had an urgency to become a teacher—strong sense of mission</p> <p>2. Well taught; coming to high school last; building toward most challenging placement</p> <p>3. Hard workers-know what it takes</p> <p>4. Good roots</p> <p>5. Knew they had made the right choice; were eager</p> <p>6. Stepped up to the expectations</p> <p>7. Reliable performance</p> <p>C.</p> <p>1. maturity with focused career goals</p> <p>2. a diversity of placements and settings in their training allows them to be more flexible and to see more possibilities</p> <p>3. up-to-date knowledge of current research backed trends in education</p> <p>3. cohort nature of their training provides a support</p>	<p>A.</p> <p>1. Creating a block of time for instruction</p> <p>2. multiple field experiences</p> <p>3. Cohort Selection Process</p> <p>4. Interspersing small amount of theory with practice</p> <p>5. Doing rural first and urban 3<sup>rd</sup></p> <p>6. Many observations</p> <p>7. flexibility</p> <p>8. consistent staff</p> <p>9. modeling message</p> <p>10. processing every day</p> <p>B</p> <p>1.tremendous faculty and cohort model</p> <p>2. all field experiences</p> <p>3. staying current with research and ed trends</p> <p>4. questioning “How do we know what we know?”</p> <p>5. Partnership at Fossil Ridge</p> <p>6. Taking pride in success</p> <p>7. Amazing candidates and admin support at FR</p> <p>8. the Mind Center</p> <p>9. Being of service</p> <p>10. Teachers in Residence</p> <p>11. Staff with classroom experience</p> <p>C.</p> <p>1.multiple field experiences—add power as they change background knowledge</p> <p>2. learn a little, do a little</p> <p>3. FRHS partnership</p> <p>4. Weekly observations “Feedback is the Breakfast of Champions”</p> <p>D.</p> <p>1. Brilliant Design</p>	<p>A.</p> <p>1. Excellent teachers did an outstanding job over the years</p> <p>2. After serving on many portfolio committees, I was impressed with the student-centered focus</p> <p>3. The principals are pleased</p> <p>4. The cohort worked well</p> <p>5. The multiple field experiences were rich and got students out into the field so they could make informed choices later on</p> <p>6. The applicant interview process was a plus</p> <p>7. the teachers are notorious for being excellent teachers</p> <p>B.</p> <p>1. It was a great program, a model for teacher training</p> <p>2. Attracted candidates committed to an intense year</p> <p>3. Multiple field exp</p> <p>4. Ideal in many ways—produced reflective practitioners</p> <p>5. Always had good people running it—superior teachers, master teachers</p> <p>6. Produced mature teachers who were exceedingly well-</p>

	<p>system that helps to sustain them in the field</p> <p>4. cohort also carries a strong sense of community and relationship building</p> <p>D.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PP created a Professional Learning Community</li> <li>2. Teamwork aspect of the cohort led to deep, critical discussion with stakeholders</li> <li>3. PP provided personal attention and support; bonding within cohort created a safe environment for learning and growth</li> <li>4. help at end with job placement insured success</li> <li>5. staff modeled high level of planning and collaboration</li> <li>6. High level of enthusiasm</li> </ol> <p>E.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PP grads know that teaching is where they want to be</li> <li>2. They have a great deal to offer beyond the subject matter</li> <li>3. They bring relevancy to kids from their own life experience</li> <li>4. More maturity</li> <li>5. Interested in leadership roles beyond the world of the classroom</li> <li>6. They want to be involved.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Effective selection</li> <li>3. Outstanding Instructors</li> <li>4. Multiple Field Experiences</li> <li>5. Cultural Immersion in Rural and Urban</li> <li>6. Quality and Quantity</li> <li>7. Consistent staff for cohort</li> <li>8. Cohort</li> <li>9. Honored diversity and focused on teaching all</li> <li>10. Outstanding curriculum</li> <li>11. Fluidity in adapting</li> <li>12. Differentiation based on need</li> <li>13. Developed human skills that dealt with each other in truth</li> <li>14. Multiple feedback</li> <li>15. It takes a village concept</li> <li>16. Nonconformity made it beautiful</li> </ol> <p>E.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-contained cohort</li> <li>2. 5 field experiences to understand contextual nature of teaching</li> <li>3. integrated curriculum gave flexibility</li> <li>4. level of commitment from participant-ownership &amp; investment</li> <li>5. PP frequent feedback method</li> </ol> <p>F.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Refined purpose on what makes a great teacher—we looked for it and we found it</li> <li>2. The multiple field experiences</li> <li>3. Close supervision with the incredible feedback</li> <li>4. The articulation of every class-knowing where one left off and the other began</li> <li>5. The cohort</li> <li>6. The collegiality of the staff</li> <li>7. The tireless hours of contribution—I literally had people call me at midnight—that’s also what didn’t work, being on call 24-7</li> <li>8. Program outcomes where teachers loved their accomplishments,</li> <li>9. High expectations, high standards, high performance</li> </ol>	<p>trained</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. provided an alternative model that met the niche need for change of career professionals</li> <li>8. Principals loved PP teachers</li> <li>9. Best indicator—Alums very supportive</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PP was innovative</li> <li>2. It modeled good teaching</li> <li>3. PP made good use of research to inform teaching</li> <li>4. PP worked to develop relationships with students</li> <li>5. Multiple sites</li> <li>6. Involved faculty created close relationships that allowed for growth development to be seen</li> <li>7. Multiple feedback looked at many assessment points to make sure benchmarks are met</li> </ol> <p>D.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Very strong students and very strong interest in program under grant</li> <li>2. Full immersion program</li> <li>3. SOE felt pride in PP and the faculty profited</li> <li>4. Grads in the field praised the program</li> <li>5. Cohort model</li> <li>6. Portfolio</li> <li>7. Grant money</li> <li>8. master teachers and dedicated leaders</li> <li>9. Selection Process</li> </ol>
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		<p>outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. We created an extremely powerful hiring pool</li> <li>11. We created a legacy of strong teachers</li> <li>12. Research-based teaching and learning at all times</li> <li>13. Reflection before reflection was popular</li> <li>14. Commitment, Persistence, Perseverance on the part of staff and students</li> <li>15. Community building within local and state school districts and CSU</li> <li>16. The equity pieces; more opportunity to understand diversity</li> </ol>	
4. What didn't work?	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poor fit for some</li> <li>2. some messiness in creating partnership</li> <li>3. individually, some differing stages of readiness</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. as Student Teachers, the 8 weeks came mid-term for high school and lost professional development and closure</li> </ol> <p>C. Nothing comes to mind</p> <p>D.</p> <p>All I can think of is that some came in with too much idealism about the profession</p> <p>E.</p>	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hard on SOE faculty relations</li> <li>2. Intense—requires commitment and could lead to burnout</li> <li>3. Constant budget issues</li> <li>4. staff exp. Had to match program goals</li> <li>5. Almost impossible to meet professional writing goals</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. urban could be richer</li> <li>2. isolation from SOE</li> <li>3. Contempt or jealousy expressed due to lack of understanding of the program</li> <li>4. Program closing looked like a coup; a top-down decision with no honest explanation</li> <li>5. SOE needs leadership with vision</li> <li>6. Budget to include funds for recruitment and widen the applicant pool</li> <li>7. sufficient staffing to achieve goals</li> <li>8. Refine curriculum so courses line up</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. too intense for all; get too involved in each other's lives</li> <li>2. blurred line between staff and students</li> <li>3. nicknamed Project Privilege by SOE</li> </ol>	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When the award money went away, the problems became evident</li> <li>2. PP was never really embraced by SOE</li> <li>3. The three-way admission system was complicated and never fit into the university system</li> <li>4. "You can't fix an airplane while you are flying it."</li> <li>5. The separateness led to invisibility and suspicion</li> <li>6. It moved from being almost a private school to being a charter school</li> <li>7. Not enough accountability on pre-requisite status</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. costly</li> <li>2. probably not sustainable in today's market because the landscape has changed and there are many other choices out there</li> <li>3. should have done longitudinal study to inform policy makers</li> <li>4. Tension issues never resolved</li> </ol>

	<p>If anything did not work, it was that periodically some lacked a strong understanding of the pedagogy or teaching practices. It doesn't mean they didn't get it, it just meant some had the potential to not be as strong. I needed to keep this in mind when choosing a mentor.</p>	<p>4. excludes others in SOE  5. trouble with placements  6. load issue  7. design and course title mismatch  8. budget issues  9. differentiated tuition?  D.  1. Much of what worked also contributed to what didn't  2. any negative spirit in cohort  3. volume &amp; timeline  4. not integrated into SOE  5. Creativity is messy  6. Resentment or jealousy of perceived favoritism  7. Were not able to mentor grads after money went away  8. logistics of univ system- it was like swimming upstream all the time  9. Funding  E.  1. unique structure didn't fit into Grad School mold  2. Sometimes the commitment was too much for some participants  F.  1. Incongruence from leadership at SOE and PP  2. Not enough funding  3. Always being asked to demonstrate our body of evidence  4. Always on trial-whatever we did was not enough  5. Sometimes we tried to put square pegs in round holes. Sometimes we recruited people because they would make the program look good  6. Multiple placements were difficult—over 70 a year  7. Teacher-to-teacher conference, our own form of evaluation at the end of each semester. That infrastructure piece demonstrated the strong communication because the good news and bad news of this was there was good communication and there was hard communication because there were so many details.  8. When you had a problem</p>	<p>5. Research mission creates some difficulties  6. Didn't change  C.  1. Not getting back to students or school personnel  2. Somewhere along the line recruitment broke down  3. Too many changes in leadership in a short time  4. Perception that you couldn't do the program and research at the same time  5. Loss of tenured faculty as head  6. Transparency became an issue and other faculty didn't know what was going on  7. Leadership failed to make sure everyone knew what was going on at meetings etc.  8. Licensure has issues that weren't discussed  9. Divisions or camps formed within SOE ( omm... breakdown)  D.  1. Secrecy and isolation  2. Breakdown in recruiting, marketing  3. no program eval  4. Human resource cost unclear to benefits  5. Credit load disputes  6. Interface with Licensure Office over placements  7. Invisibility to SOE  8. Non-tenured faculty</p>
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		<p>with a teacher it was difficult because the (cohort) family didn't want to let him go. So we had to decide—are we trying to help the program or help the person?</p> <p>9. There was not support from SOE. I was always the rope in the tug of war. That demonstrates the disfunctionality of the unit.</p> <p>10. One of the things that didn't work is that we graduated some that weren't really the best, which is unfortunate</p>	
<p>5. What suggestions would you offer for change?</p>	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish commitment level and active public relations to create a level of trust following a breach of trust</li> <li>2. the goals are solid</li> <li>3. comprehensive environment and immersion model are realistic and effective</li> <li>4. Devise more measurable outcomes</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring it back!</li> <li>2. Captures those born to teach</li> <li>3. Creates high-caliber candidates</li> <li>4. Don't diminish the level of excellence in training based on current research</li> <li>5. Keep the collegiality and support of the cohort model</li> <li>6. A school that has hired more than a dozen grads is surprised that the program is on hiatus</li> <li>7. The worth of this program should be measured in more than dollars</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep up with research component</li> <li>2. I would like to see an evenness of recruiting across the areas with an emphasis on hard to fill areas like math, foreign language, and gifted and talented instruction</li> </ol>	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No PP without SOE valuing it</li> <li>2. Does not fit into Carnegie I Research mission</li> <li>3. Praxis etc. tests raised tension, created barriers for some, no appeal process</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Need strong visionary leadership</li> <li>2. Integrity, commitment, ethics</li> <li>3. Could be great with SOE support</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. align course names and content</li> <li>2. resolve budget and make it an open budget</li> <li>3. need institutional support</li> <li>4. include staff pay raises</li> <li>5. budget for marketing plan</li> <li>6. make methods courses available in the summer</li> <li>7. keep Seminar with specific topics and guest speakers as well as opportunity to connect with cohort</li> </ol> <p>D.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Must be values as an integral part of SOE</li> <li>2. View it as another avenue for people to enter teaching</li> <li>3. Director must understand</li> </ol>	<p>A.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A lot can be salvaged</li> <li>2. Broaden the cohort</li> <li>3. The post-bacc program with non-trad, older students is a valid target audience</li> <li>4. Keep the portfolio and case study</li> <li>5. On-site support for student teachers and new teachers is important</li> </ol> <p>B.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Target only shortage areas</li> <li>2. revise so all exit with M. Ed.</li> <li>3. Work with school districts – fill a need</li> <li>4. Create credit/course alignment to meet universities needs</li> <li>5. Consider Emergency Licensure with teachers hired as they go thru the program</li> <li>6. There's a lot here that it worthwhile, but without change it could become a dinosaur</li> <li>7. Move beyond the "cult" culture and bring in new blood in leadership</li> </ol> <p>C.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create an efficient and effective model for change-of-career adults to keep it short and</li> </ol>

	<p>3. It would be a tragedy if this program disappeared. PP has produced, by far, the best quality teachers I have hired.</p> <p>D. This a good program—keep some avenue available for career-changers to become teachers—they have skills and knowledge that our kids need.</p> <p>E. 1. It is very sad that this option is being taken away from people. I think of the staff that I have now who would not be here without PP. They have become exceptional teachers and exceptional leaders. Not having any more teachers like that is a very big concern for me. What are we going to do? 2. By centering PP in only one building in the district, over the last several years, I have lost the opportunity to watch student teachers in my building teach. I have hired many PP graduates after watching them in my building. I don't like not having that opportunity any more.</p>	<p>how to teach it</p> <p>4. Keep vision of preparing teachers for the future</p> <p>5. Include a commitment to an infusion of new ideas</p> <p>6. let good qualities of PP spill over into regular program</p> <p>7. Maintain high standards throughout SOE</p> <p>E. 1. Self-contained cohort of students and teachers who continue as supervisors</p> <p>2. 5 field experiences</p> <p>3. integrated curriculum</p> <p>4. expand mentoring after graduation</p> <p>F. 1. annual review by an outside party</p> <p>2. looked at as a program of equity in terms of how it gets funded</p> <p>3. rotation of leadership with stability is important</p> <p>4. mentoring –we've got to bring the graduates back to talk to the new students because we can't tell them all of that; 75% of what we did by knowing this is what we needed—we kind of did it by feel is what really helped sculpture PP</p> <p>5. acknowledge past successes and concerns, factor them into a program that honors what worked; I think it's too easy to just say what didn't work</p> <p>5. regular reunions, mentoring/professional development opportunities needed; we did it a couple of times but I am completely disappointed that PP ended and there wasn't a chance to bring people together again. I'm devastated.</p> <p>6. Regular dialogue between SOE, PP staff and students for open communication</p> <p>7. Look at practitioners who are graduates and former staff as well as cooperating teachers and invite them in</p>	<p>good</p> <p>2. No more than 3 semesters to keep it attractive</p> <p>3. Seek feedback from those involved with the program over the years</p> <p>4. Work with the school districts to meet their needs</p> <p>D. 1. Tenured faculty</p> <p>2. funding</p> <p>3. Marketing &amp; Recruitment Plan</p> <p>4. Visible Opening and Closing Rituals</p> <p>5. New model embraced and supported by SOE</p> <p>6. Active participation of outside faculty</p>
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<p>6. Can you recall a pivotal moment in your own training that shaped who you are today?</p>	<p>A. Learned a global view of education from two very different mentors, one strict, one loose and had the benefit of more academic training that brought confidence</p> <p>B. Knew lecturing was out of the question and learned creative lessons planning and delivery in safe cohort setting.</p> <p>C. Bob Richburg had a huge impact on me when he demonstrated how authentic performance and assessment would bring relevance to learning. Next I had a mentor as my boss who gave me opportunities to make decisions and then provided guided feedback. Third, the principal here before me was on the leading edge and modeled always being learner, always improving.</p> <p>D. Once I started coaching, I experienced a satisfaction level that can only come from working with students and that started me on a path that led to certification and eventually to a principalship.</p> <p>E. The principal before me took me in an a young teacher and told me that I could do this, that I needed to be in administration to be involved with kids on a different level. He continues to be a mentor and calls me every month to be sure that the colors are still blue and silver.</p>	<p>A. In schools from the beginning, then asked what they needed to learn</p> <p>B. Learned to love teaching in a safe environment and values: never settle and be of service.</p> <p>C. Put in leadership role to verbalize what needs to be talked about, teaching is not for \$; You mean I don't ever have to lecture?</p> <p>D. The sensitivity of one small boy taught me that teaching has to go beyond the subject matter to connect with the students and understand what they think and know where they are coming from. (What's going on in the mind of the learner?)</p> <p>E. My mother and grandmother instilled a passion for education and taught me to "Step Up and Step In and gave me self-confidence and self-esteem to stand on the rock of knowing who I am and actions and words of others can't hurt me.</p> <p>In my student teaching, I became aware of inequities of resources between school like Cherry Creek and Manual and I found the feedback process after being hired didn't meet my needs and I had to create my own ways to improve.</p> <p>F. From the age of 4 or 5 I knew my parents expected me to graduate from college even though neither of them did. I determined that I would become a teacher and so I practiced being a teacher throughout my whole childhood thanks to their modeling and mentoring. My parents not only expected that</p>	<p>A. I probably always wanted to be a teacher, but I ignored it until I was in college and happened to fill in over break in a model demonstration school. One little girl challenged me, but I kept trying. I felt successful and appreciated and that I made a difference. That was it for me, I enrolled in education courses right after that.</p> <p>B.</p> <p>1. 4<sup>th</sup> grade, just missed the cut to continue in gifted program: Mrs. Rosenbloom asked him to grow up and change the really stupid things that happen in schools</p> <p>2. 11<sup>th</sup> grade-bad teacher told him interpretation of symbolism was wrong—why should he waster his time?</p> <p>3. In college some favorite profs were denied tenure-thought it was wrong</p> <p>4. In grad school at Harvard-didn't get assistantship with his mentor. Set out to prove that he was worthy.</p> <p><u>5. Learned that you have to look behind things to truly understand them.</u></p> <p>C. <b>Simultaneous Renewal Concept</b> (Goodlad) that teacher training is not done in a vacuum. By</p>

		<p>we would have a college education but they made it happen.</p> <p>My sister and husband have been tremendous role models</p> <p>On my very first day on the job as an elementary intern they were looking for ways to prevent a new book box with a heavy lid from becoming dangerous to students. I raised my hand and offered two suggestions. My cooperating teacher then sent me to the principal's office saying that if I had a suggestion, work them through me. So I was ready to quit teaching because what I realized was I had no value. That's why it was important to me that in PP everybody had a voice.</p>	<p>creating a safe place for people to talk critically, you can build relationships that can sustain working through problems .</p> <p>D. HS counselor told me I wasn't college material, but football coach encouraged and helped. From that spun off all my feelings about leadership and openness and transparency and inclusivity because of the way I was shut out.</p>
7. What one word or phrase comes to mind when you think of Project Promise?	<p><b>A. Positive, Productive Partnership</b></p> <p><b>B. Highly Professional</b></p> <p><b>C. Mature and Focused.</b> Produces teachers who know that <b>Teaching is their Passion</b> These individuals have made a conscious decision to become teachers. <b>They are stars.</b></p> <p><b>D. Teamwork + Collaboration+ Multiple Field Experiences + Professional Learning Community + Support = A Powerful Program</b></p> <p><b>E. Creative Option for the program / about the graduates, It Worked</b></p>	<p><b>A. Journey of Discovery:</b> It's like peeling an onion, there is always another layer to explore.</p> <p><b>B. Heartfelt /Heartbreaking; Immersion; Bittersweet</b></p> <p><b>C. Self-Affirming and Immersion</b></p> <p><b>D. Premier Program, and an Exceptional Way to Prepare Teachers and an Exceptional Experience; it took a Village to develop PP</b></p> <p><b>E. Educators on a Mission to Change Schools, Individuals with a Passion to Change Lives, Innovation</b></p> <p><b>F. Commitment, Persistence, Perseverance</b></p>	<p><b>A. Complex</b> – with the positive connotation of challenging and multi-faceted; <b>Innovative</b></p> <p><b>B. Innovative, Bob Richburg, Career Transition Program</b>— nothing like it at the time it was created</p> <p><b>C. Innovative and Cutting Edge</b></p> <p><b>D. Stellar</b></p>
Imagery	Creativity is Messy	<p>Invisibility/Visibility</p> <p>Like peeling an onion-layers</p> <p>What is past is prologue.</p> <p>Immersion</p>	<p>Swimming upstream</p> <p>Look behind you</p> <p>Like trying to change the tire while the car is still rolling.</p> <p>Changing landscape</p>
Symbolism	It took a village to form PP Cohort/community Stars	<p>Inclusivity/Exclusivity</p> <p>Relationships/Stakeholders</p>	Stellar
Questions to Consider	<p>Does the niche still exist?</p> <p>Who feels the pain?</p> <p>Who Owns the problem?</p> <p>Who has the power to act?</p> <p>What is blocking progress?</p>	<p>What is the mission of SOE?</p> <p>How can excellence and efficiency be balanced?</p> <p>What is the Human Factor?</p> <p>Who are we serving?</p>	<p>Can we afford PP?</p> <p>Can we afford not to?</p> <p>Has the landscape changed?</p> <p>How has it changed?</p>

## **AFTERWARD: What is Past is Prologue**

Teacher training is a challenging endeavor. It is one of the most human of all endeavors and as such it is non-linear by nature. Individuals learn in different ways and on different timelines. It tends to be messy in the sense that one approach does not work with all students. The skill set required to become an educator is complex. The learning never ends and it takes years to refine those skills to a master level. As an educator, I know that the positive rewards of this career far exceed its drawbacks. I also know that a sense of mission compels second-career adults to retool and change professions. They are drawn to it as I was, not by the money or prestige, but by the chance to make a difference or to give back. There is an intrinsic joy that comes from making a connection with students that transcends anything else. While I have lived the program under scrutiny here as both a student and as interim director, I had no data until now about how others felt about the program. By listening to the voices of four distinct stakeholder groups, I now have documentation of the perceptions of those people closely involved with the program over its eighteen year lifespan. In this afterward, I will allow myself some space to react to the findings.

According to program stakeholders, the original six program goals have stood the test of the past 18 years and ring true today as they did at the inception of the program.

- Goal 1 Recruitment and Retention of Exceptional Candidates from Professional Backgrounds
- Goal 2 Multiple Teaching Experiences
- Goal 3 Research-Based Program
- Goal 4 Feedback and Coaching
- Goal 5 Job Placement of Candidates
- Goal 6 Mentoring and Follow-Up

Strong positive feedback from the survey and the interviews indicate that the basic underlying framework was solid as well. One stakeholder summed it up this way: **Teamwork + Collaboration + Multiple Field Experiences + Professional Learning Community + Support = A Powerful Program.** This collaborative model was built on strong supportive relationships that created a professional learning community designed to last beyond the classroom training.

While many stakeholders continued to value the program, emerging data confirmed that this small program was ultimately unsuccessful in competing for limited resources. Ironically, 18 years later, the niche market—second career adults—is still viable, but a survey of other niche programs across the country shows the need to provide financial incentives for these adults which makes for very expensive programs.

When I asked stakeholders about pivotal moments in their own education, five themes surfaced: **Challenge, the Coaching Relationship, Looking Behind to Understand, Safe Climate, and Inclusion.** These could be considered kernel elements of any program.

Challenge speaks to rigor and engagement. The coaching relationship fits into the sixth program goal and mirrors contemporary thought on the necessity (not luxury) of providing long term support for new teachers. To look behind to understand is to reflect on history and tradition and performance. Change really is the only constant in life. How individuals and organizations react to problems is telling. Are problems viewed as threats, obstacles, challenges, friends, or opportunities? Do organizations act out of habit, from fear, by reaction, or through action? The fourth

theme is a safe climate. The sense of safety and belonging is essential if individuals are to thrive. Beyond that, the overall sense of climate sets the mood for the context of change. Finally, inclusion goes beyond just being given access to a space. It speaks to feeling genuinely valued, to knowing that all voices will be heard and listened to in the room. It goes past *us versus them* to embrace the broadest sense of *we*. This deceptively short list can provide a substantial framework for powerful organizations.

A sense of enigma pervaded this study. It turned out that what worked about this program also fit into the category of what did not work. To my surprise, problems that existed at the beginning of the program were still there eighteen years later to an even greater degree. Many people spoke passionately about their experiences with this program—both positively and negatively. I saw an institutional climate shift that brought about the end of this program. The serendipitous timing of the pilot program morphed into budget driven decisions that impacted institutional mission. While I am a bit haunted by voices of future career-changers who no longer have this avenue to teaching as an option, I do accept that if something cannot be done well, then it should not be done at all.

The review of eight different graduate level programs for second career adults that spanned American from New York to Boston to Chicago to Texas to California yielded a useful list of common factors in these programs that can be seen as building for success.

- Recruit widely, but select candidates carefully
- Streamline enrollment and registration process
- Offer classes at time and place that is convenient for students
- Establish active partnerships with public schools

- Pace and shape curriculum to meet needs of motivated adult learners
- Set and maintain high standards for excellence and professionalism
- Instructors model best practices through interactive cooperative learning
- Blend learning with opportunity to practice in the field
- Provide a variety of field placements
- Frequent opportunities for observation, feedback, reflection, and support
- Offer incentives that value effort and commitment

This aligns with the data from this case study in which stakeholders identified 10 elements as important for a powerful graduate level teacher training program for second-career adults.

#### Stakeholders 10 Key Tenets for Teacher Training

1. Careful Selection of Candidates
2. High Expectations in an Enriched Environment
3. Modeling of Instruction
4. Master Teachers
5. Small Cohort Group
6. Integrating Curriculum with Practice
7. Multiple Field Experiences
8. Frequent Evaluation by Instructors and Peers
9. Relationship Building
10. Reflection

On the other hand, there are several barriers to success to avoid. As I considered current trends in teacher training, I went back to 1989 to read what the education leaders were saying then to ground my inquiry. It is remarkable that four areas identified as problem areas in teacher education between 1950 and 1990 (Goodlad, 1990; Holmes Group, 1996; Howey and Zimpher, 1989) still exist

1. Fragmentation of key elements – lacks connections
2. Uninspired teaching methods – lecture and recitation
3. Superficial curriculum – no depth of learning
4. Traditional views of schooling- preparing not for the future but for schools as they are now

While there is no data to support generalization of the findings here for a graduate level second-career program to a traditional teacher training program, my sense is that there are many common factors that would support transfer of lessons learned. In a way, best practices are best practices and should be considered in more than one context. So the challenge remains to find a balanced approach that will train a new generation of teachers to inspire tomorrow's leaders. Can we afford to provide high quality graduate level teacher preparation for second-career adults? Can we afford not to?

What follows is a thumbnail sketch of the graduate respondents to the survey. I have added a narrative that fleshes out these graduates and provides a glimpse into some of the real people who decided mid-career to become teachers.

The names for these vignette characters are drawn from *A Tale of Two Cities*. Charles Dickens wrote this novel (1859) as a cautionary tale. These vignettes provide a glimpse of the diversity and degree of support these second career adults needed to be successful on their career transition journey as reported in 2007.



***What does a second career graduate student in this study look like?***

A typical respondent:	Female (50) / Male (39)	(p.69)
	Science teacher	
	40 years old	
	Been teaching for 7.7 years	
	Hired within 4 months of graduation	
	In-state resident	
	Heard about program by word-of-mouth	
	Completed master's (M.Ed.)	
	Teaches in a public school in a suburban setting	
	Has 50% likelihood of team teaching	
	Twice as likely to be department chair/team leader	
	Considers self a lifelong learner	
	Is satisfied with the program	
	Would recommend it to others	
	Feels that the program promoted personal goals	

**A Few Vignettes**

What do an oil company executive, a computer analyst, a single mother, and a dude ranch wrangler, and an engineer have in common? They differ in age and gender. They all have chosen different careers. Some are single. Some are married. One is divorced. Three have children. They all do have college degrees. They all happen to like the outdoors and they value natural resources. But they come from different parts of the country and do not know each other. However, they all share a lifelong love of learning. It also turns out that they each have developed a passion to become teachers (through many divergent routes) and they are all graduates of the same master's level teacher training program for second-career adults.

While my case study produced quite a bit of data, I still felt that a sense of who was involved in this case was missing. To fill in the details, I would like to share five vignettes that put faces on some of the voices that have been heard. I have

selected five stories (from 308) that give a glimpse of the risks these people were willing to make for this career change. Pseudonyms have been used.

*'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times;  
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness;*

1. **“Sydney”**: Sydney worked for a major oil company in Chicago as an executive. As part of the civic outreach plan for this corporation, gas stations that had been closed in inner city neighborhoods were refitted to serve as community centers. They combined recreation with some job skills and company executives took turns volunteering to help local youth with resume writing and interview skills. After working with at-risk youth for a while, Sydney became convinced that he should become a teacher. He sold his house in Illinois and returned with his wife and 1.5 children to Colorado. Facing a year of tuition and no income to become a teacher, he reluctantly moved into the basement in his in-law’s house. There they welcomed their second child into the world and Sydney spent his days learning and growing as a teacher. His evenings, however, were challenging with an active toddler and a colicky baby that compressed family life into one small space. He and his wife had little quality time for just the two of them. His wife worked in the evening for a while, but they both found that made things even worse as they hardly ever saw each other. Date nights were limited due to financial constraints. Sydney often stayed after hours at school or went to the library just to find a quiet place to prepare his lessons and complete coursework. This caused conflicts at home as his wife thought he was absent too often. After graduation Sydney was hired and the family was able to move into a home of their own. Sydney thanks his family for their remarkable support which allowed him to pursue his dream. There were many times when he

thought he was asking too much of himself and his fragile young family, but with their help they worked together to reach the goal.

*it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity;*

*it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness;*

2 “Jerry”: One young man had a life changing moment when he and his dog were hit by a car. After one full year of recovery they are both ready to build for the future. While recovering, Jerry had time to consider his career and decided he needed a change. The life-threatening nature of his injuries brought him to the realization that life was too short not to give back in a significant way. This led him to teaching. Research on the internet led him to a graduate level teacher training program far from his native Virginia. Applications were filed, telephone interviews took place, and following acceptance into the program, Jerry and his dog, Alex, moved to the Rocky Mountains to begin a new life. Jerry now shares his professional background and his story of overcoming obstacles with his students.

*it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair;*

*we had everything before us, we had nothing before us;*

3. “Therese”: This mother of a young daughter responded to a classroom activity in a way that stunned her cohort. When asked to fill in the blank in this statement, she said, I knew I was grown up when *I signed my divorce papers*. Many others had experienced life-changing moments, but that statement hung a bit in the air. During her year of teacher training, money was always an issue. Babysitters emerged from the teenage children of other cohort members and room was provided for them at evening seminars. When people visited her at home near Hughes Stadium she apologized for their apartment by saying, “I have never lived this poor.” With

assistance from the cohort, food and transportation, school supplies and clothing issues evaporated. She was hired after graduation by a middle school in the high country that suited her well and allowed her daughter to thrive. Life later took them to Australia where Therese continued to teach after she re-married.

*we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way.*

*--in short, the period was so like the present period,*

4. **“Charles”**: Charles came to Colorado to be a wrangler. He loved living and working at a dude ranch in the San Juan Mountains. His experience as a trail guide provided a strong base of experiential learning. Growing up in Louisiana flavored his sense of humor and brand of music. From time to time, he and his brother would travel and sing their cowboy songs. One day they found themselves in a college town that they liked. Since it was the off season for the ranch, they stayed a while and got to talking to people. Charles became interested in sharing his love for the outdoors with students—like he had when the ranch sent him to the Navaho prep school in Four Corners to teach the youngsters about horses and wrangling and rodeo. Because of his outdoor lifestyle, Charles showed up for his interview for a graduate level teacher training program looking mighty rough. The torn jeans and frayed shirt were topped off by mussed hair, but he was clean. What shone that day was his genuine interest in learning and sharing his experiences with others. With few personal resources, helping hands from staff and cohort provided clothing and odd jobs for some spending money. Once in the program, he became a central figure. He was outrageous, energetic, thoughtful, and talented. He possessed a fine mind that could construct visual frameworks for remembering anything. For example, he had a cherished old truck named after a famous amphibian and he would connect people or

places or dates or ideas to parts of his truck as a memory aid. Dates might go on the license plate, the Great Lakes might stick to the dashboard area (Superior=steering wheel; Huron=horn and so on). Items in the classroom could be used to remember the US Presidents. The more outrageous the image, the better—like picturing a 60's brightly painted van pulling up outside the door with Van Buren emerging. Charles connected easily with students who responded to his energy, enthusiasm, and basic wildness. Bull whips could be used to make a point, cowboy stories illustrated universal concepts while taking children out of their everyday environments, guitar music played during sustained silent reading soothed many students. Charles continued to move around a bit. He became Dean of Students at a famous bi-lingual university school in Texas for a while. Then he returned for a Master's degree in counseling and worked with the program that gave him his start. He has moved beyond his field of mathematics and is currently well-situated at a prep school in the Rocky Mountains that serves at-risk inner city students from all over the country. Here his talents come into play as he coordinates the experiential learning program.

*that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received,  
for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only."*

5. **“Lucie”**: Lucie embraced life and play. This former engineer loved playing with her children and playing in an adult soccer league. She brought creative energy with her scrap-booker's sense of order and whimsy and ready smile. Her student teaching struggles began with a sprained ankle injury from soccer that did not keep her from going out on the rural experience for a week. Her determination kept her going through the upward learning curve of engaging middle school students in math. She reached a transition point when she walked into a classroom of at-risk

students. This was her first day with this group and they sized her up. Speaking in Spanish the classmates discussed ways to make this new teacher's life miserable. They took their seats with anticipation as the bell rang. When Lucie addressed them in Spanish she watched the expressions on their faces turn from chagrin to humor. From that day on, Lucie and this class understood each other and they learned and laughed together. On the personal side, at a pre-inspection of a home her family had planned to purchase, her engineering background allowed her to detect a badly flawed foundation. The contract was nullified and the search for a new family home continued. Before that search succeeded, their identity was stolen and the home approval process stopped for many months. With determination, the family reclaimed their identity and eventually found a new home. Lucie went on to become a stellar math teacher at a local junior high school. She continues to play soccer and scrapbook family milestones. Her creative talents have translated into her lesson plans and teaching. As she gained confidence and experience, she now mentors novice teachers with a mix of compassion and toughness.

**Other extraordinary moments** reflect the adult nature of need associated with this group of nontraditional learners and should be mentioned:

- “Roy’s” car died the day before he was to report to student teach so he rode his skateboard across town to class. Since it would take him about an hour and half to get to his assignment the next day on his skateboard, one of the instructors gave him his car.
- “Amy” was threatened and needed sanctuary which was provided by the program director.

- “Justin” jumped out of a second story window to escape an apartment building fire that killed his cat and left 8 families homeless. With nothing to his name, the director brought suitcases full of clothing to the hospital the next morning to start the recovery process. The cohort provided support—one who worked in a shoe store replaced a recently purchased pair of sneakers. Others recorded music to help him heal. A group formed carpools for him and arranged for furniture donations.
- A few of candidates struggled with the Praxis and PLACE tests. Many hours were invested in strategizing and test taking skill refreshers. Visualization was used to calm, focus, and succeed. Once over this hurdle, all became excellent, caring teachers who were sensitive to differing needs and skills in their students.
- Unexpected occurrences, like unplanned pregnancies, stillbirth, a child’s suicide, or a sudden death in the family, all tapped into cohort resources for support.
- Paperwork struggles over the years required much intervention and caused stress for many students. The other significant issue was the lack of scholarships. Each graduate came from a paying career and had to endure financial hardships during the year without a salary. Tuition was always an issue. Even after graduation, the first paycheck would be four months away.

Although these graduates came from diverse backgrounds, they all shared a love of learning and a strong sense of mission to become great teachers. They each found what they needed in one teacher training program that honored their diversity and carefully nurtured their skill sets and built their confidence to become remarkable professional educators. Before graduation they challenged and enriched learning within the cohort. After graduation they continue to engage, challenge, and touch the lives of students everyday in their classrooms.