Aligning Standards with Reality: What Early-Career Teachers Wish They Had Known Before Day One

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Our perspectives on teacher prep and accreditation

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  - NCATE- and CAEP-trained
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- Kim
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  - NCATE- and CAEP-trained
  - 15 visits as a state consultant and national team member
  - Serve on Accreditation Council
  - Currently: High School Reading Specialist
What did we do?

- Developed an informal "What do you wish you'd known?" survey to be completed anonymously
  - Focus groups with first- and second-year teachers
  - Existing new-teacher survey questions
- Used a non-probability convenience sample
  - Fully acknowledge the findings may not be representative
  - Waiting for the perfect study is not practical for P-12 schools
- Emailed survey to first-year teachers we know
  - ≥ 5 EPPs, ≥ 3 states
  - Asked them to forward to other early-career teachers
  - Data analyzed for trends only
Given the limitations, what can we do with the findings?

- Develop a stronger survey.
- Inform district and building personnel who work with new teachers about self-reported areas of concern.
- Inform EPPs so they are aware of what recent completers are saying.
- Apply our combined expertise to suggest how the areas of concern align to CAEP standards.
  - Which standards?
  - What evidence?
What else is missing?

- We do not know for sure how prepared these teachers really were.
- We do not know for sure how effective they were on day one or on any other day.
- But teacher efficacy research tells us....
What did they say about...

- At the beginning of my teaching career, I felt prepared to address college and career readiness standards.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
At the beginning of my teaching career, I felt prepared to address the needs of my students with Individualized Education Plans.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At the beginning of my teaching career, I felt prepared to address the needs of my students with 504 plans.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At the beginning of my teaching career, I felt prepared to address the needs of my students with Gifted/Talented Student Service Plans.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At the beginning of my teaching career, I felt prepared to address the needs of English language learners in my classroom.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
What did they say about...

- At this point in my career, I feel prepared to address college and career readiness standards.
  - Strongly Agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly Disagree
At this point in my career, I feel prepared to address the needs of my students with Individualized Education Plans.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At this point in my career, I feel prepared to address the needs of my students with 504 plans.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At this point in my career, I feel prepared to address the needs of my students with Gifted/Talented Student Service Plans.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At this point in my career, I feel prepared to address the needs of English language learners in my classroom.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
During my preparation program I had experience assessing P-12 student learning.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
During my preparation program program faculty modeled effective uses of technology in our courses.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
At the beginning of my teaching career I felt prepared to model and apply technology to engage students and improve learning.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
Throughout my program, I was aware of how I was being evaluated.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
My performance was evaluated throughout my program.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
Throughout my program, I received formative feedback about my performance.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
My preparation program has sought my feedback on evaluation of the program.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
My preparation program has sought my feedback for program improvement.
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
My preparation program has sought my feedback for identifying models of excellence in the program.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
What did they say about…

What aspects of your preparation program do you believe were effective in preparing you to teach?

- Field experiences
  - “Field work helped me understand schools settings I had not seen before”

- Student teaching
  - “The student teaching portion of the program was extremely beneficial. I would attribute everything I learned from my time in my cohort school with my assigned teacher”
What aspects of your preparation program do you believe were not effective (or less effective?) in preparing you to teach?

- Lack of Special Education preparation
  - “I was not ready to deal with the variety of special needs kids in my classes have. ARCs were pretty scary”

- Technology
  - “Our technology classes were outdated, and the psychology classes really did not teach us much”

- Courses versus Reality
  - “I cannot think of one class that was effective in preparing me to teach. Teaching is so hands on -- all the classroom work was busy work. Feedback was not provided in many of my courses”
What recommendations would you give your preparation program to help them prepare effective teachers?

- Special Education and English Language Learners
  - “I would have preferred to thoroughly go over the IEPs, 504 Plans, Gifted and Talented Program, and ESL learners because I now run into students with these characteristics and I am not sure I am giving them the best instruction possible to help them succeed”

- Real experiences
  - “Bring in teachers to talk about their classes and how they deal with challenges”
  - “Have professors teaching students who have many years of teaching experience”
If EPPs are addressing these instructional areas in which these new teachers felt unprepared, where does the evidence go?

- College and Career Readiness, Special Education, 504 Plans, Gifted/Talented Service Plans, ELLs
- CAEP 1.1, Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions; 1.2, professionalism and students’ progress; 1.3, content and pedagogical knowledge; 1.4, skills and commitments that afford all P-12 students...; 1.5 completers model and apply technology
If EPPs are evaluating candidates and providing feedback, where does the evidence go?

- Candidates know how they are evaluated
- Candidates are evaluated consistently
- Candidates get formative feedback

- CAEP 3.2 Admission; 3.3 Additional Selectivity Factors; 3.4 Selectivity During Preparation; 3.5 & 3.6 Selection at Completion
Where does the evidence fit?

- If EPPs are seeking completer feedback, where does the evidence go?
  - Program evaluation
  - Program improvement
  - Identifying models of excellence
- CAEP 4.2, Indicators of Teaching Effectiveness; 4.4, Satisfaction of Completers
All things field experience, practicum, and clinical....

CAEP 2.1, Partnerships for Clinical Preparation; CAEP 2.2 Clinical Educators; CAEP 2.3 Clinical Experiences
Conclusions

- Some of the responses were painful from an EPP perspective.
- Some of the responses were painful from a state perspective.
- Some of the responses were painful from a collegial perspective.
- Most of the respondents have been teachers of record for at least a year: that year is the students' only opportunity to get it right.
Conclusions

- CAEP is about ensuring that teachers are prepared to teach.
- As we and others learn more about early-career teachers’ feelings of efficacy and their actual instructional effectiveness, preparation programs should feel obligated to respond.
- Based on federal regulatory trends and CAEP’s expectations, preparation programs will be required to respond.