

Clinical Teacher Preparation: Teacher Quality Partnerships

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SESSION NOTES

Opening

The presenters introduced themselves and provided an overview of their session's agenda, which was designed to consist primarily of a conversation among those attending.

Peggi Zelinko began with a discussion of the Teacher Quality Partnership grants, noting that of the 40 total, seven or 17.5% of these are in California with five of the seven awarded to the CSU. TQP grants support 19 Residency programs, 12 Pre-Baccalaureate programs, and nine programs offering both.

The statute guiding the Teacher Quality Partnership program was one of the most specific enacted. Based on a medical model of clinical preparation and similar to the themes of the Summit, the statute included the following:

1. Partnerships with high need schools and with the arts and sciences
2. Enriched clinical experiences that are year long
3. Preparation in sites where placement is likely to occur
4. Follow-up through induction with mentoring, cohort participation, and collaborative experiences

Peggi reported that the first round of awardees are 1½ year into their programs and that more specific information about these will be forthcoming in Annual Performance Reports. Of particular interest to the Office of Innovation and Improvement are issues related to the selection of sites and the measures used to determine site effectiveness, the placement of cohorts in schools, the selection and training of mentors and the impact of programs on other new teachers at selected school sites. The Office is working to determine how to collect data on what is working.¹ Residency programs are participating in a national evaluation conducted by "Mathematica."

Mary Falvey reported on the Residency Program at CSU, Los Angeles and acknowledged the other TQP grantees in the CSU system, CSU, Dominguez Hills, CSU, Northridge, CSU, Chico, and the consortium that includes CSU, Bakersfield, Monterey Bay, and San Luis Obispo.

The CSULA program is a Residency in Science and Math. In order to capture the purpose of the Residency the existing CSULA teacher preparation curriculum was completely reorganized with Residents placed in sites Monday through Thursday from the first, to the last day of school. They attend classes on Wednesday evenings

and Fridays and complete a six-week/eight hour day summer Boot Camp prior to the beginning of the school year. All Residents have strong subject matter competence. The 20 Residents, who are placed in LAUSD and the charter school at CSULA, have completed 2/3 of their first year. They will engage in Action Research and earn their MA degree at the end of next summer. CSULA will recruit 20 new Science and Math Residents for fall 2011, adding special education in fall 2012. It is anticipated that Residents will be hired in LAUSD upon graduation.

Peggi noted that the expectations for the Residencies are clearer than for the Pre-Baccalaureate programs where the requirement is to reform ALL teacher preparation programs. This is a challenging undertaking and the Office is interested in learning more about how this is occurring, and what it “looks like” on campuses.

Mary and Peggi distributed a handout summarizing activities of individual TQP grants and opened the session for discussion--promising practices and questions.

Discussion

Commenting on the Monday-Thursday school assignment, one attendee asked what other differences there were between a traditional student teaching experience and the experience of the Resident in the CSULA model.

Mary responded that the Residency is more of a co-teaching approach with the Resident working with small groups (7-8 students) at first and then assuming more responsibility for co-planning and co-teaching with the mentor teacher. And while it differs across mentors, there is not the “rush” as there is in student teaching for the candidate to acquire and demonstrate skills.

Strengthening the partnership with LAUSD, Residents’ Unit and Lesson Plans are reviewed by the mentor teacher and an IHE representative. Mary then described the rigorous selection process that CSULA Residents participated in, which included delivering a lesson rated by students at the CSULA Charter School; i.e. of the 65 who applied the 20 selected had high potential for success in the classroom. In addition to potential, the importance of the Residents reflecting the diversity of the campus and of the local region in which they will work was noted.

The CSULA cohort is spread out across LAUSD schools with five being the highest number at any one site. In an effort to select the very best mentor teachers this exemplifies the challenge of balancing quality mentors with the desire to cluster candidates in a “professional development” school or site.

A question about CSULA community partners led into a more expanded discussion of TQP partnerships.

CSULA has three community-based partners who offer services to low-income families and provide the perspective of families and the roles parents play in the education of their children. The community-based partners serve as guest lecturers in classes, participate in parent panels, and provide the community and cultural context for the work at CSULA.

The District partner for the TQP grants in the Los Angeles area is LAUSD. The fiscal agent for each of these is the respective IHE (UCLA, CSULA, CSUDH, and CSUN). Representatives from the TQP grants and the campuses housing these, and other regional IHEs meet six times a year with LAUSD. Additional time and portions of these meetings are dedicated to discussion of the TQP grants. And both CSULA and CSUN have hired liaisons from the District to work full-time with them. An expectation of all TQP programs is professional development for mentor teachers.

A concern expressed about sustainability of programs led to a discussion of this issue.

In looking to scale-up TQP efforts, ways to institutionalize expensive preparation programs, continue training mentor teachers and engage in collaborative activities were expressed as a collective challenge. The CSULA President spoke to the importance of involving leadership at every level of the university to ensure success of TQP programs. He emphasized clarity of commitment by administrators, the need for TQP grants to be a high priority at IHEs, and the willingness of IHEs to use their resources flexibly.

Peggi mentioned the need for partners to work together and with the Office on the 100% supplement not supplant match requirement.

She suggested that projects focus on systemic change and not engage in conducting a number of activities that do not necessarily “move the agenda forward” in focusing on outcomes and preparing competent candidates who are comfortable in the classroom.² In looking to new reauthorizations, new types of programs that do move this agenda, need to be identified, supported and encouraged.³

Mary offered that contributing to sustainability is the ability of programs to address teacher turnover. Preparing candidates who are committed over the long term and retained in positions may generate resources.

Information about a CSU Pre-Baccalaureate Program

Activities of the CSU, Bakersfield Consortium were described. Study Teams representing subject areas have been deliberating in ways that are informing curriculum reform at each participating campus. In addition, each IHE has its own initiative; e.g., Monterey Bay, clinical experiences. Partners collaborate using a project website. A similar reform is occurring in an Arizona program where 30 courses have been redesigned.

Opportunity for teacher evaluation

A representative from LAUSD reported suggesting a common measure for evaluating all TQP Residents working within the District. The purpose would be to begin using a common language and performance-based metric.

Presenters thanked those attending for their participation in the session.

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1. The program is developing a survey that it will be inviting grantees to complete to answer questions for it on the elements of reform that are working and perhaps not working.
 2. The point here is that the program is hopeful that the projects will result in systemic change and not the conducting or completion of only activities. This was not to state or imply that projects are engaging in activities that do not move the agenda forward.
 3. This comment referred to the proposed reauthorization of ESEA in which a number of programs are consolidated away from a high number of more narrowly defined programs, thereby providing not only more funds but also more flexibility and innovation linked to state/local needs.