

# Critical Issues in Urban Teacher Education

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## Abstract

*This article identifies several long-standing and pervasive issues and problems attached to the preparation of teachers, and especially teachers for high-poverty urban schools. At the root of the present condition are all-too-common simplistic views of teaching, and hence teacher education. A second constraining factor is the lack of understanding of the fundamental relationship between the scope and nature of teacher preparation and the structure and nature of P-12 schools. The latter condition mediates needed collaboration between universities and P-12 districts. Directions universities and university presidents can pursue to redress the situations are explored.*

## The Context

Urban communities represent a spectrum of contexts, conditions, cultures, and languages. They encompass manifold assets as well as a range of challenging problems. Within most urban communities there are pockets of poverty where much of our nation's growing underclass reside. Schools located in these settings face distinct challenges. Thus, problems common to schools located in high-poverty neighborhoods are reviewed briefly at the outset to provide a context for the type of teacher preparation needed for teachers to be effective in these schools.

Almost 40 percent of urban students attend high-poverty schools (defined as schools with more than 40 percent of the students receiving free or reduced-cost lunch). The percentage of students who belong to Hispanic or several other minority groups (including Asians and Pacific Islanders) has increased in recent years in these schools, while the percentage of those who are white has declined and the percentage of those who are black has remained the same (National Center for Educational Statistics 1996). What else makes these high-poverty schools distinctive? In addition to the increased likelihood that many of their students are poor, these students also often have difficulty speaking English, are commonly exposed to safety and health risks, and have limited access to regular medical care. They are less likely to live in two-parent families and more likely to have changed schools frequently.

Additionally, they are more prone to engage in risk-taking behavior resulting in conditions such as teenage pregnancy. The impact of being poor is manifold, including a propensity for risk-taking. Rentel and Dittmer (1999) summarize some of the implications of being poor:

More than 300,000 school-age children are homeless at any given time in the United States (Linehan 1992). Roughly four million children have been

exposed to dangerous levels of lead, and health statistics indicate that some 300,000 newborns have been exposed prenatally to drugs, including dangerous levels of alcohol (Burgess and Streissguth 1992; Griffith 1992; Needleman 1992). Many, if not most, of these children have joined a growing underclass of poor, often homeless, and increasingly rootless adults. As juveniles, evidence suggests that many will be noncompliant, aggressive, anti-social, and unable to communicate or to understand effectively. Contrary to media stereotypes, they are distributed throughout the population, not just concentrated in minority communities although they are disproportionately represented among the poor.

The urban culture that surrounds students is saturated with a pervasive media presence, which impacts learning. In the United States, the average teenager sees 12,000 violent incidents on television every year and 100,000 beer commercials (Eitzen 1992). Thus Rentel and Dittmer argue that children who view television are learning that disputes are legitimately settled through violence, that people are untrustworthy, that happiness is linked to alcohol consumption, and that drugs and experimenting with sex are ways to be adult.

Challenges such as these are compounded by the conditions in many urban high-poverty schools. These schools tend to have higher enrollments than those in suburban and rural schools, but have fewer resources and teachers who have less control over their curriculum than teachers in less bureaucratic settings. For example, Kozol, in his book *Savage Inequalities* (1991), found that black and Latino students in decaying schools in Camden, New Jersey, had to learn keyboarding without computers, engage in science without labs, and often attend classes without basic textbooks. Less than 10 minutes away in the wealthy Cherry Hill community, the abundance of facilities and resources included a greenhouse for those interested in horticulture. The contrasts between urban high-poverty schools and the more affluent suburbs are often stark.

Should one be surprised then that most prospective teachers neither feel adequately prepared to teach in such schools nor are disposed to do so? The eight-year Research About Teacher Education (RATE) Studies (1995) sponsored by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) consistently revealed that the great majority of prospective teachers (more than 85 percent) preferred to teach in contexts *other than* urban neighborhood schools, where there are often differences between teachers and their students in terms of culture, language, race, and class. Further, approximately half of the novice teachers who do begin teaching in urban high-poverty schools often leave these assignments within three years. Thus, teacher *retention* is a major challenge as well as teacher recruitment and preparation. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) reported the grim situation as follows:

In the nation's poorest schools, where hiring is most lax and teacher turnover is constant, the results are disastrous. Thousands of children are taught throughout their school careers by a parade of teachers without preparation in

the fields they teach, inexperienced beginners with little training and no mentoring, and short-term substitutes trying to cope with constant staff disruptions. It is more surprising that some of these children manage to learn than that so many fail to do so (1996).

## **The Need for a Collective Response to a Complex Problem**

There are no facile or short-term solutions to redressing this situation. The sustained collaboration of several agents and agencies, as is demonstrated in this issue of *Metropolitan Universities*, will be needed so that all children can be educated to their fullest potential. Political coalitions especially are needed, which may take the form of urban P-16 councils. Presidents of universities, especially those in urban settings, need to take a leadership role in building these coalitions and bringing the resources of the university at large to bear on these pervasive problems. As a first order of business, these coalitions, councils, or partnerships need to underscore both the severity of the problems and the inadequate investment and lack of coordinated strategy in responding to them. There are several major obstacles to overcome in these regards. From the perspective of this author, the root of the problem is that many who could contribute to redressing the problems of urban education simply do not see these problems as *their* problems. A challenge of the first order then is that the youngsters in these schools are indeed viewed as our *collective* responsibility; that they do indeed have an educational birthright to competent and caring teachers. Loeb (1999) poignantly captures the current situation in *Soul of a Citizen* as follows:

How could we not be aware that the plight of our poorest neighbors is actually getting worse? We're unaware in part because our society is so profoundly divided, and the lives of the poor are so invisible. Jim Wallis, the editor of the wonderful radical evangelical magazine, *Sojourners*, recalls how a friend, the civil rights historian Vincent Harding, began to weep after yet another young African American man whom they knew was lost to senseless street violence. 'A whole generation of us is being destroyed,' said Harding. 'At that moment,' recalls Wallis, 'I understood more clearly than ever before why our society was allowing the deadly carnage to continue. I realized that for most Americans who are white and middle class, it isn't a whole generation of 'us' that is being lost. Rather, it is "them."'

This writer does not have a single or simple solution for acquiring broader ownership of this problem and achieving greater coordinated investment in youth who are living in conditions of poverty. However, as Lizbeth Shorr advised in *Common Purpose*, you cannot really understand a child except in the context of her family or truly understand a family except in the context of its neighborhood and community.

A systemic approach to reform is needed wherein the renewal of teacher education, the renewal of schools, and the renewal of urban communities are not viewed as discrete

endeavors independently undertaken by different parties. One could argue that at the core of needed renewal is the idea and ideal of *school-in-community*. An emphasis on school-in-community has direct implications for how one thinks about the core technologies of teaching and learning. Said another way, *contextualizing* schooling, teaching, and learning relative to conditions such as those shared at the outset is essential.

Why is this important? Far too many view teaching—even teaching in the conditions described above—as basically the efficient transmission of information. As a result, preparation for such teaching is similarly viewed as a rather straightforward and uncomplicated endeavor with knowledge of the subject matter to be taught as the basic precondition for teaching success. Engagement in professional schools of education really is not seen as necessary. Lageman (2000), in her penetrating analysis of the troubling history of education research, reviews beliefs embedded deep in the culture of this country that undergird such misguided perceptions. She underscores how both anti-intellectualism and the related phenomenon of anti-educationism have been central themes in American life. The long history of education for elementary aged youngsters as *women's work* underscores this. In analyzing this anti-educationism posture, she writes:

It encompasses as well assumptions concerning the simplicity, sterility, and, more often than not, irrelevance or pointlessness of the educational process. Antieducationism thus allows one to believe that excellence can be achieved in and through education even when investments in personnel, research, materials, and equipment are limited. As one can see throughout the history of educational scholarship, antieducationism has helped to undermine the effectiveness of all aspects of education. In light of Americans' reliance on education as a central social policy and their professed belief in the importance of education, the pervasiveness of antieducationist sentiments is dismaying.

These antieducationist sentiments are gaining strength today, especially among conservatives. For example, the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Foundation recently published a manifesto “The Teachers We Need and How to Get More of Them” (1999). The foundation’s proposals in this document would eliminate *all* requirements for the licensure of teachers except for criminal background checks, examinations of content knowledge, and a required major in the subject to be taught. The report promotes access to teaching through means other than professional schools of education. This position, this author believes, would only further contribute to having the least pedagogically competent teachers in schools where considerable competence is most needed.

## **Underscoring the Complexity of Teaching**

Collectively, and in a sustained manner, the challenges and complexity of teaching in general and surely teaching in urban high-poverty schools needs to be more fully and forcefully communicated to policy makers and the general public. The concept of

school-in-community needs to be underscored, especially in light of what this implies for teaching and learning. Highly effective teaching frequently builds on the knowledge of youngsters' lives outside of school (relevance) and often has the power to enable students to apply these learnings outside the school context (utility). Teaching and learning characterized in this manner is commonly referred to as **connected** or **contextual** teaching and learning (CT&L). A recent technical report (Howey 2000) defines contextual teaching and learning as follows:

Contextual teaching is teaching that enables learning in which students employ their academic understandings and abilities in a variety of in- and out-of-school contexts to solve simulated or real-world problems, both alone and with others. Activities in which teachers use contextual teaching strategies help students make connections with their roles and responsibilities as family members, citizens, students, and workers. Learning through and in these kinds of activities is commonly characterized as problem based, self-regulated, occurring in a variety of contexts including the community and work sites, involving teams or learning groups, and responsive to a host of diverse learner needs and interests. Further, contextual teaching and learning emphasizes higher-level thinking, knowledge transfer, and the collection, analysis, and synthesis of information from multiple sources and viewpoints. CT&L includes authentic assessment, which is derived from multiple sources, ongoing, and blended with instruction.

As one of the contributors to the evolving construct of contextual teaching and learning, Howey went on to underscore the social and cultural nature of teaching and learning and argued that diversity in all of its dimensions is value added in teaching contexts:

In our diverse democratic society we have not capitalized nearly as well as we should have and can in schools as the great storehouse for social as well as cognitive learning. If schools are serious about developing lifelong learners, who know *how* to learn, then students need repeated structured opportunities in and *out* of school to learn how to study and to learn *with* as well as from one another. The workplace today is often typified by collaborative problem solving and so also should be our schools and the contexts with which students interact. This point cannot be underscored strongly enough. Students are in powerful social settings in school, and far too many reform initiatives call for improved student achievement without sufficient attention to how youngsters actually learn *together*, as well as alone. When this powerful social and cultural dimension is not viewed as leverage for learning, and it is *not* in too many instances, students often find that their race, culture, or social station works against them. Thus, how teaching and learning take advantage of diversity and accommodate cultural differences is a central aspect of CT&L.

This concept of diversity as value added is particularly important in multicultural contexts found in many urban classrooms. Research into teaching and learning in

diverse classrooms has gone on for many years. A number of these studies has been conducted by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE). Scholars in this center have identified explicit standards for effective teaching practices, especially in the types of classrooms commonly found in high-poverty schools. One of these core standards is that students are continually engaged in dialogue with one another as well as their instructors. This is important because, among other significant factors, teachers talk twice as much as students do. This dialogue has to have clear academic goals to guide the conversation, occur on a regular basis, ensure that students talk at a more frequent rate than teachers, and encourage *diverse* students' views, judgments, and rationales supported by various forms of evidence including text. Research has clearly demonstrated that "students striving to learn both everyday conversation and the particular *academic* language of content areas in English indicate that academic gain (content language, concepts, and vocabulary) requires considerably more time to develop than does everyday language proficiency" (Chamot 1992).

Despite the obvious need for active student engagement in learning, far too many classrooms provide only infrequent occasions for students to participate in meaningful communication and complex problem solving with their peers. Rarely are these students' views stretched or challenged by someone from a different social or cultural context. Padron (1992) reported that for minority students especially, such restricted opportunities for communication may result in limited academic achievement and low self-confidence. To adopt an approach to teaching "low achievers" that is basically teacher centered and largely prescribed is not only wrong minded, it is fundamentally biased. The understandings and abilities needed to meet the pedagogical standards developed at CREDE are neither quickly nor easily acquired. Add to these standards at least a modest understanding of the cultures and communities represented among the students in many high-poverty classrooms, and the depth and breadth of preparation needed exceeds what is typically provided prospective teachers. From this vantage point it is a moral imperative that coalitions and partnerships be formed to clearly portray the extent of the problems in these high-poverty schools and forcefully put an agenda in place to confront them, beginning with more relevant and rigorous teacher preparation. University presidents and chancellors can and should assume a leadership role in forming the partnerships that will be needed to redress the serious problems currently so widespread in our cities.

## **The Powerful Intersection Between Reforms in Teacher Preparation and Reforms in P-12 Schools**

Historically, and even today, universities have largely limited their role in the reform or renewal of P-12 schools to that of providing—it is hoped—competent teachers. However, as the Holmes Partnership, a national network concerned with reforms in teacher quality, surmised several years ago, if *tomorrow's* teachers are going to be prepared in distinctively different and improved ways, then tomorrow's *schools* have to be designed to accommodate these teachers and new forms of teaching and learning.

The dramatic findings of Sanders and Rivers (1998) regarding differences in teacher quality underscore this. Sanders and Rivers studied the impact of teachers differentially on students. They contrasted teachers who had a track record of large gains in their standardized achievement tasks with teachers who demonstrated consistently low gains in standardized achievement. In this manner they were able to rank both the top and bottom 20 percent of the teachers in terms of their ability to achieve score gains in various content areas such as mathematics. Over time students could encounter teachers ranked in varying degrees from high to low.

Fallon (1999) summarized the results of a Tennessee study by contrasting the matriculation patterns of two hypothetical students who complete second grade with similar achievement scores and aptitude: Sally and Johnny. If, beginning in the third grade, Sally has the good fortune to experience three teachers in the top quintile, her math achievement score at the end of the fifth grade will be above the eightieth percentile for all pupils. If, on the other hand, Johnny has the misfortune of experiencing three of the least effective teachers in a row—the lowest quintile—his mathematics achievement score will be below the thirtieth percentile at the end of the fifth grade. Thus, two students matched in achievement at the beginning of the third grade now have a dramatic difference of 50 percentile points between them. In fact, this difference is so large that Fallon suggests that Sally is now in the gifted and talented program and Johnny is in the remedial program.

For policy makers, the Sanders and Rivers data typically have underscored that teachers are the central and primary factor in student learning. Despite the dramatic differences in conditions in which youngsters live outside of schools, good teaching can override this, especially if that instruction is responsive to students' lives outside of school—recall the attributes of connected or contextual teaching. These data illustrate, however, a fundamental structural flaw in how schools are organized as well. Why is it that randomly—or worse, arbitrarily—Johnny could find himself with a less-than-competent teacher three years in a row? The question has to be asked yet again why elementary schools are organized so that all teachers teach all subjects largely in isolation from one another and in a graded, lock-step arrangement. If subject matter or content knowledge is so important, let alone understanding of the pedagogy attached to it (including how to relate it to students' lives outside of school), then how can one reasonably expect an elementary teacher to teach five or six separate subjects at a high level? The answer, widely reflected in test scores in these urban schools, is that they cannot be expected to do this well! What is needed instead are teams of teachers working together with the same group of youngsters over several years, with a division of labor in terms of what they teach. For example, no one teacher on the team would have to teach more than one or two subjects; over time (multiple years) teachers would come to know their students very well. Evidence continues to accumulate that in good schools teachers not only work closely with their colleagues, but also continue to learn from one another. Two decades ago, Judith Warren Little (1982) showed that schools can be differentiated in quality by the degree to which:

1. Teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise talk about teaching practice.
2. Teachers are frequently observed and provided with useful critiques of their teaching by one another.
3. Teachers plan, design, research, evaluate, and prepare teaching materials together.
4. Teachers teach each other the practices of teaching.

Rosenholtz (1989) contrasted such highly collaborative practices in her study of the culture of teachers' workplaces, portraying schools with nominal cooperation and low-consensus among teachers as follows:

Dreams of possibility were not likely the domain of isolated workplaces. Inertia seemed to overcome teachers' adventurous impulses, and listlessness devoted itself to well-trodden paths. In their ordered routines, teachers' self-reliance appeared not to be a civic sin, an act of selfishness against the community; it seemed rather a moral imperative. And because no one wished to challenge school norms of self-reliance, in times of classroom crises most teachers skirted the edges of catastrophe alone and somehow managed to lead themselves to a safe haven.

Once again, university presidents and chancellors can assume a leadership role in bringing the appropriate parties together to address the fundamental issues of alignment between the reform of teacher education and the reform of schools. Better preparation of individual teachers alone will not solve the problems of urban high-poverty schools and school districts. Stronger partnerships than at present will be needed so that new forms of teacher preparation will coincide with new patterns of schooling. This is to say that preparing teachers in greater depth and with a narrower range of responsibilities who are prepared and disposed to work in collaborative arrangements will only occur *if* schools are indeed organized in more collaborative arrangements as illustrated by Little. In this issue of *Metropolitan Universities* an example is provided for how a university chancellor took the leadership in forming a strong community coalition which in turn developed leadership teams at *every* school in an urban district in order to move toward more collaborative school cultures.

Thus far, two overriding functions have been highlighted for an urban partnership or coalition as necessary preconditions for the reform of teacher preparation for high need or high-poverty schools. The first is a cogent and forceful portrayal of the array of challenges in these school communities and the complex type of teaching that is needed to address these challenges. The second related function is coalescing resources so that needed reforms in teacher preparation can proceed in step with needed reform in P-12 schools. The third critical task is putting in place a *continuum* of activities in teacher preparation, proceeding from necessary changes in general study and preprofessional preparation, to strengthened professional preparation, to continued education and support in the critical first years of teaching for the novice teacher. Examples of initiatives in each of these phases are provided elsewhere in this

issue, but a brief overview of some of the issues and challenges related to each phase provides needed backdrop for these reforms.

## **Issues in General Studies**

The “culture shock” felt by so many novice teachers who take a teaching position in high-poverty urban schools is well documented. The chasm, which so often exists between the teacher’s own cultural norms, language patterns, and social status, has many dimensions to it. Teaching is a highly interpersonal and moral enterprise and a rich understanding of youngsters and the context in which they live are an essential aspect of good pedagogy. Teaching can be reasonably viewed as a three legged stool with knowledge of subject matter, ability to engage learners with that subject matter in multiple ways (pedagogy), and knowledge of the youngsters and the contexts in which they live representing the three legs. Thus, understanding urban cultures and communities is not some peripheral, “that would be nice” goal of teacher preparation, but rather is a core aspect of effective teaching. Such understandings are critically important given that the pipeline of prospective teachers is still comprised primarily of individuals who have the following profile, developed by Zimpher (1989):

The typical graduate of the American education school is female, is of Anglo descent, is about 21 years of age, speaks only English, travels less than 100 miles to attend college, was raised in a small town or suburban or rural setting, and expects to teach in a school whose demographics are similar to her own. In fact this typical prospective teacher does not seek to teach students out of the mainstream, or to serve in a school of innovative architecture or one organized around anything other than a traditional curriculum or facility.

In their article in this issue, Greg Jay, Thomas Brown, and Darrell Terrell describe one effort to establish a core sequence of courses or a general education requirement called Cultures and Community at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). Universities in urban settings can better prepare all of their students and especially prospective teachers to understand more fully the nature of urban communities and the multiple cultures typically found within them. A Cultures and Communities office has been put in place at UWM and is developing courses and related activities to achieve these objectives. The intent is that these courses will allow students to acquire an understanding of urban communities and their diverse neighborhoods both through scholarly study and firsthand experience. Community contexts can be explored through such lenses as those provided by the historian, the sociologist, the cultural anthropologist, the political scientist, and the urban geographer. Literature, the fine arts, architecture, business, engineering, and religion all contribute to students in general and especially to prospective teachers acquiring multiple interpretations and richer understandings of urban communities and cultures.

Multiple issues surround the working relationships between those in professional schools of education and those in the arts, sciences, and humanities. These relationships are fraught with challenges, including issues related to mission,

professional identity, time, rewards, and incentives. Nonetheless, it is clear that for many teachers, especially those who will teach in high-poverty schools, the understandings and appreciation which they need cannot be acquired in their abbreviated preparation programs. The potential contributions of general studies need serious examination. While it is unrealistic to expect faculty members in general studies to forsake their disciplinary scholarship or departmental mission, it is not unreasonable, especially in universities in urban settings, for several of these faculty members to have an urban focus in their course offerings, whether their specialty be anthropology or political science. These courses could be requisite study for prospective teachers, and presidential leadership could assist in shaping such curricula.

## **Issues in Professional Preparation**

Professional preparation for teachers in urban schools likewise is addressed elsewhere in this issue, but again a brief overview of issues attached to such preparation is in order. Two overriding issues are (1) whether schools of education should have programs specifically targeted for preparing teachers to teach in urban schools and especially high-poverty schools and (2) deciding what these programs should be like, beyond providing considerable experience in urban schools and urban school communities. A third related issue is whether there is the competence and interest on the part of faculty to respond effectively to the second question.

In brief and in response to the programmatic issue, this author takes the position that universities in urban settings, where large numbers of youngsters are failing and not getting the education they deserve, need to have programs preparing teachers specifically for these schools. In fact, in *partnership* with school districts, they need to not only better prepare teachers for these high-poverty schools, but also to recruit *more* teachers for urban districts, especially in areas where there are acute shortages, such as special education, mathematics, science, or bilingual education. In many instances these universities are failing on both accounts: they are not preparing enough teachers and those they have prepared are not ready to succeed in these schools. Universities do not have the resources by themselves to make these necessary changes. Partnerships that are stronger and more durable than at present will be required. This situation speaks to the third issue. There generally are not enough faculty in professional schools of education who are informed about or interested in the context and conditions of urban schools and urban communities. Thus, these partnerships will require joint appointments and new “boundary spanning” roles between those in higher education, the P-12 schools, and the community at large in order to design and implement programs that better prepare teachers for these challenging schools.

Even if a commitment is made to prepare teachers for these schools, there will understandably be debate about what the attributes of programs designed specifically for teachers in urban high-poverty schools should look like. In this regard, for a decade this author directed a national reform network intended to promote the development of programs preparing teachers specifically for urban schools. Partnerships in over thirty sites across the U.S. continue to participate in the Urban Network to Improve Teacher

Education (UNITE). Over time, common programmatic characteristics of these urban teacher preparation programs have been identified. They build upon the requisite corpus of understanding and abilities *all* teachers need with respect to (1) knowing deeply the subject matter they teach; (2) possessing a related repertoire of pedagogical tools; and (3) understanding the youth they teach, their backgrounds, and their developmental patterns. Beyond this, teachers in *urban* schools need to be engaged with coursework and related activities designed to:

- Provide knowledge of sociocultural and political factors that influence learning and behavior by youngsters both in and out of school in urban contexts.
- Help them understand forms of bias and discontinuity in curriculum materials and classroom interaction (e.g., linguistic bias, invisibility, stereotyping).
- Engage them through both scholarly analyses and in-depth experience with other cultures and languages in order to examine their own cultural norms, references, and behavioral patterns.
- Help them examine, in a continuing manner, the interactions and relationships between language, learning, and culture in and outside of urban schools.
- Enable them to continually inventory resources and assets in urban contexts and learn how these can be brought to bear to enable learning in and out of school.
- Help them understand their own and others' biases and prejudices as these relate to social class, race, gender, religion, sexual preference, and such commonplace manifestations in school as dress, physical appearance, ability, and behavior.
- Enable them to engage pupils in subject matter and social issues from multiple perspectives (Howey 2000).

In many respects the preservice preparation of teachers lays the cornerstone and sets the direction for continued teacher learning over time. Highly effective teachers are distinguishable by their self-renewing nature. Effective preservice programs, it can be argued, (1) **socialize** novice teachers repeatedly in structures where they collaborate with their peers so that their teaching is public (open to examination by and feedback from others), and they are disposed to learn with and from their colleagues; and (2) provide the novice with **core strategies** for learning over time on the job (Howey 1997).

## Issues in Induction

The third major component of this teacher education continuum is an induction program which is consonant with their initial preparation. Again, induction programs are treated as a separate topic within this issue, but issues attendant to induction are briefly addressed here. First, induction *programs* are rare, especially programs that deepen and extend teacher learning that began in preservice. Strong partnerships are

essential if educational linkages are to be built between what happens in preservice and what happens in the formative first years of teaching. At present in the better induction arrangements, the beginner is assigned a mentor who has a modicum of preparation for this role and some modest release time; there is, however, usually only enough time to operate on a catch as catch can basis. Issues attached to induction include the type of school to which the beginner is assigned, the amount of release time for both parties, the matter of compensation for the mentor or consulting teacher, and the scope and nature of preparation for the mentor to engage in *clinical preparation*. High performance clinical preparation, for example, would include the ability to engage in exposition and demonstration, coaching and guided practice, and analysis of teaching performance, especially as it is tied to student performance. Far too often there is nothing resembling an induction program or support for the beginner, and often novices are assigned to the most difficult schools with limited resources to help them teach effectively.

In order to address these issues and eventually overcome the several problems attached to the induction of teachers, new kinds of partnerships are called for, with a major role for teachers unions. New policies at the state level also will need to be effected in order to provide resources for new boundary-spanning roles. The problems attached to induction are directly linked to the core problems articulated at the outset. First, the naïve belief about what constitutes high performance teaching and what is required to achieve it militate against induction programs. (Recall efforts cited earlier to dismantle any form of university-based teacher preparation, let alone closely couple it with a formal extension into the early years of teaching.) Second, there is the parallel problem of viewing teacher education and school renewal as unrelated endeavors and as the divided responsibility of universities and school districts.

Despite these problems, one potentially powerful, *integrative* strategy for joining teacher education with school renewal is to coalesce several faculty in an urban P-12 school to work with the beginning teacher(s) in that school. As an example, one teacher assists the novice with the local curriculum, another with feedback about teaching, a third with avenues for understanding and interacting with the broader school community, a fourth with accessing resources, a fifth with utilizing district and school technology, and a sixth with the unwritten norms and conventions in the school. In this manner an enabling, collaborative school culture, a key aspect of school renewal, is achieved at the same time as the novice teacher(s) are acculturated and educated in more powerful ways than typically provided by the individual mentoring model.

In summary, this article has addressed some of the more critical issues attendant to teacher education, particularly for high poverty urban schools. Several of these issues or problems are long-standing and in many respects deeply rooted in the broader culture. They include naïve and simplistic views of teaching, and hence teacher education. They demonstrate little understanding of the fundamental relationship between the scope and nature of teacher education and the structure and nature of P-12 schools themselves. Given a lack of understanding of this set of relationships, the

rationale for strong partnerships and the altered nature of the responsibilities of the different parties engaged in the partnership remain opaque. Beyond this, the extent of the responsibility of universities to their education counterparts in the P–12 sector for the quality of schooling remains unclear or, even worse, denied. For many universities, responsibility is limited to preparing educational personnel in general and not with an urban focus. Thankfully this is changing, as the work of the institutions profiled in this issue illustrates. New and creative efforts are addressing the inexcusable conditions in many urban high-poverty schools where tens of thousands of youngsters are failing each year. This article and the others herein, it is hoped, will help to sharpen the issues and lead to increased dialogue about how the problems reviewed here might better be collectively addressed.

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Throughout his career, Kenneth R. Howey has been involved in efforts to reform teacher education, directing the national Urban Network to Improve Teacher Education (UNITE) over the past 10 years. He has written extensively about this topic.

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