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Camp Michigania Faculty Forum
Monday, June 27, 2016

STAND UP FOR THE POWER OF SKILLFUL TEACHING
SAVANNAH, GA (WSAV) – Savannah-Chatham schools are holding up the help wanted sign—with 450 openings. To make sure they get those positions filled, the district is using a new program called Alternative Pathways to Teaching.

The program allows anyone with a Bachelor’s degree in any field to become a teacher in Georgia through a work-as-you-go certification program that takes one to three years to complete.
“The most important civil rights battleground today is education, and, likewise, the most crucial struggle against poverty is the one fought in schools.”
HELP NEEDED

How can America come to appreciate, support, and use the power of skillful teaching?
THE URGENCY, BY THE NUMBERS

19 out of 23

15%, 45%

50

1.5 million

40% decline

78,000,000

4x

11%

9% 90%

5

2x

June 27, 2016
Teacher unions are the problem.

Teacher salaries are low.

Families are the problem.

Children watch too much TV/spend too much "screen time."

We don’t recruit the best and the brightest into teaching.

Teachers have an easy work schedule.
NO PROFESSIONAL SYSTEM FOR TEACHING PREPARATION

- Thousands of independent providers of initial teacher training, about 88% through universities
- No common specific curriculum for preparation for initial teaching
- A reliance on conventional idea about what it is to be “smart enough to teach” for entry to teacher education
- No common standard of individual performance for entry to independent practice with (on) young people
WE ALL WENT TO SCHOOL, BUT . . .

40 years ago:

- The demographics were different: 80% of school-age children were white, income inequality was much less, much less linguistic diversity
- U.S. schools afforded more upward social mobility
- Teacher turnover was lower
- Schools were able to teach more, test less
- Racial segregation was great, but less than today
WE ALL KNOW HOW TO MULTIPLY!

49
x 25
BUT WE DON’T KNOW MULTIPLICATION WELL ENOUGH TO TEACH IT

(a)  
\[ 49 \times 25 = 1485 \]

(b)  
\[ 49 \times 25 = 225 \]

(c)  
\[ 49 \times 25 = 1275 \]
WE’RE TALKING ABOUT A LARGE SCALE!

50,000,000 school-age children,
15,000 school districts
ENTRY-LEVEL TEACHING AS A CRITICAL FOCUS

- More U.S. schoolchildren have a teacher with fewer than five years of experience than a teacher with any other number of years of experience.
- Most beginning teachers say they are underprepared for teaching (and evidence shows poorer effects).
- Distribution of beginning teaching is concentrated disproportionately in low-income and high-minority schools (twice as much).
A GLIMPSE OF BEGINNING TEACHING

1. What is skillful about this teaching? What is less so?

2. What does the video reveal about the challenges of beginning teaching, with respect to:
   - knowing the content?
   - knowing students?
   - specific instructional capabilities?
THE CONCEPT OF “AVERAGE”

- What is an “average” of a set of data?
- How would you explain the key idea to a group of 10-year-olds?
Teacher: Okay. So this morning, we took some time to measure our
DISCUSS: A GLIMPSE OF BEGINNING TEACHING

1. What does the video clip show about the challenges of teaching?
2. What is skillful about the teaching on the video? What is less skillful?
FEATURES OF STRONG TRAINING FOR RESPONSIBLE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

1. Clear specification of knowledge, skills, capabilities, and qualities of performance necessary for independent practice

2. Detailed developmental clinical training, progressing from observing to simulations to apprenticeship to supervised independent practice

3. Performance assessment of individual competence before allowing independent practice
EXAMPLES OF HIGH-LEVERAGE PRACTICES

- Explaining content using modeling, representations, examples
- Leading a group discussion
- Eliciting and interpreting students’ thinking
- Checking student understanding during lessons
- Providing oral and written feedback to students
- Selecting and modifying tasks and texts for a specific learning goal
- Building caring and effective relationships with students
- Establishing and maintaining a productive learning environment
- Learning students’ cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources
- Working skillfully with families and communities, across difference
CONTENT KNOWLEDGE *FOR TEACHING*

- Knowing the content that the students are supposed to learn
- Knowing ways to unpack, represent, and make that content learnable
- Knowing how students think about the specific content
- Knowing ways to teach the specific content
KNOWING MATHEMATICS

\[
\frac{\frac{3}{4}}{\frac{1}{2}}
\]
KNOWING MATH FOR TEACHING
WRITE A STORY OR DRAW A REPRESENTATION

\[
\frac{3}{4} \div \frac{1}{2}
\]
I have two pizzas. My friend eats one quarter of one of the pizzas. I have one and three quarters pizzas left. Then I split it evenly between two of my other friends. Each person gets three and a half pieces of pizza.

1. What is wrong with this?

2. Write a story problem that correctly represents the division.
PRACTICING DEFIBRILLATION
PRACTICING A GUIDED READING LESSON
HLP: LEADING A WHOLE-CLASS DISCUSSION

In a whole-class discussion, the teacher and all of the students work on specific content together, using one another’s ideas as resources. The purposes of a discussion are to build collective knowledge and capability in relation to specific instructional goals and to allow students to practice listening, speaking, and interpreting. In instructionally productive discussions, the teacher and a wide range of students contribute orally, listen actively, and respond to and learn from others’ contributions.
LEADING A WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION

Grade level: First grade
Content area: English language arts
Task: The candidate will facilitate a small group discussion aimed at helping students develop their ability to make and support inferences.
- Elicit thinking from all students by asking targeted questions about the main character in the book. What is he like as a person?
- Coordinate students’ ideas and steer the discussion toward the learning goal.
- Represent the content accurately, either verbally or visually, as you would do with typical first graders.
- Conclude the discussion by summarizing the key ideas covered during the discussion.
Materials: Pet Show! by Ezra Jack Keats
Performance time: 15 minutes.
WHY IS THIS WORK SO IMPORTANT?

1. 50,000,000 children and youth in our nation’s schools
2. Schooling as our society’s commitment to individuals’ lives and to the future of our country
3. Evidence of the power of skillful teaching
4. Overwhelming lack of public respect for the work of teaching

→ This is a public policy problem of vital moral, practical, and political urgency.
HELP NEEDED

How can America come to appreciate, support, and use the power of skillful teaching?
THANK YOU!

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