RISING TO THE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES FOR QUALITY TEACHING

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THE POWER OF TEACHING

- For students’ academic learning
- For students’ sense of belonging
- For students’ sense of themselves as smart, capable, and for their perseverance

BUT—

It works both ways.

Listen to the power of teaching through the voices of students.

Is there a teacher who had a significant impact on you?

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VIDEO: IS THERE A TEACHER WHO HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON YOU?
Teaching can do great harm.
Teaching can have powerful positive impact.
We leave the power of teaching to chance.
Teaching can do great harm.
Teaching can have powerful positive impact.
How do other professions and occupations think about initial formation of novices?
WHAT DO THESE PROFESSIONS HAVE IN COMMON?

1. Base novices’ training on the most crucial skills, knowledge, and requirements necessary for the practice
2. Developmental approaches to clinical training
3. Individual practice-based expectations for licensure

This is not true for teaching.
MY ASK OF YOU TODAY

To use your power as states to raise the quality of beginning teaching in this region by 2022
A FOUR-PART STRATEGY TO BUILD HIGH-QUALITY TEACHING PRACTICE

1. Develop strong approaches to clinical training
2. Use relevant data to track the quality and impact of teachers’ preparation
3. Build and use partnerships with schools
4. Make licensure focused on practice
WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE “PRACTICE” OF TEACHING?
A GLIMPSE OF THE "WORK OF TEACHING": CHOOSING A TASK FOR A LEARNING GOAL

What part of the rectangle below is shaded gray?

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A GLIMPSE OF THE “WORK OF TEACHING”: CHOOSING A TASK FOR A LEARNING GOAL

1. Understanding the mathematics
2. Understanding the mathematical point of the task
3. Understanding common patterns of student thinking about these ideas
VIDEO: A CLOSER LOOK AT PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Teacher: Is that what you said? Okay, would someone like to comment on that? Agree or disagree with him?
IN THIS MOMENT, A MOVE CAN REPRODUCE PATTERNS OF MARGINALIZATION OF BLACK BOYS

NORMALIZED NEXT MOVES

- Clarify for Antar that he is right—that the parts are not equal—but that it is a fraction; ask someone else to give “the correct answer”

- Ask the class to indicate agreement/disagreement

- “What do others think?”

RESULTS

- Antar’s answer is signaled to be incorrect and he is positioned as not having contributed to the work

- Antar’s solution is “voted” on by his classmates

- Antar is excluded and his mathematical point is sidelined

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COUNTERING THE PATTERN

Ask students to say what Antar said or to ask a question before agreeing/disagreeing.

RESULT

Maintain Antar’s authority and agency and position him and his thinking to advance the key mathematical idea.
What does the video show about the work of teaching, both visible and invisible?
TEACHING: INVISIBLE AND VISIBLE

INVISIBLE WORK

- Selecting a specific student to present and to position as competent
- Working to disrupt patterns that marginalize groups of students
- Trusting the children to think, be engaged, try to learn
- Caring for students
- Making choices about how to interpret students’ behavior and answers

VISIBLE WORK

- Supporting students to present
- Honoring different students’ ideas
- Focusing on concepts and reasoning
- Expecting students to listen to one another
- Highlighting particular children displaying specific forms of competence
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- Highlighting particular children displaying specific forms of competence
- Eliciting and interpreting individual students’ thinking
- Explaining and modeling content
- Leading a group discussion
- Implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work
- Building respectful relationships with students
TEACHING: INVISIBLE AND VISIBLE

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These are high-leverage practices.
ORIENTING TEACHER EDUCATION TO FOCUS ON TEACHING PRACTICE

- This is not simply about **how much time** teachers spend in fieldwork or in schools.
- It **is** about whether their program focuses on preparing teachers for the work of teaching:
  1. What is taught
  2. How it is taught
  3. How it is assessed
COMPONENTS OF THE PRACTICE-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

- High-leverage practices
- Content knowledge for teaching
- Ethical obligations
- Critical consciousness about patterns that reproduce inequity and practices to disrupt them
EXAMPLES OF HIGH-LEVERAGE PRACTICES

- Leading a group discussion
- Explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies
- Eliciting and interpreting individual students’ thinking
- Diagnosing particular common patterns of student thinking and development
- Implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work
- Learning about students’ cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction
- Setting up and managing small group work
- Building respectful relationships with students
- Checking student understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons
- Providing oral and written feedback to students
- Setting long- and short-term learning goals for students
- Talking about a student with parents or caregivers

¹TeachingWorks and the University of Michigan School of Education
EXAMPLE: ELICITING AND INTERPRETING INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS’ THINKING

- Introduce practice
- Practice in simulated setting
- Practice in field
- Assess beginning teachers’ skill, at baseline and at end of program

@practice (Meghan Shaughnessy and Tim Boerst)
Listening to and interpreting

Formulating questions designed to elicit and probe student thinking

Posing questions

Developing additional questions

Children

Making sense of what students know and can do
• Developing general, open-ended questions
• Choosing a focus
• Developing hypotheses to test

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Listening to and interpreting

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Making sense of what students know and can do

- Delivering questions in ways that are sensitive to how students might hear and respond to the question
• Giving students time to speak
• Paying close attention to what the student says
• Noticing features of the student’s thinking

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Making sense of what students know and can do

- Identifying elements that the student has said little about
- Identifying interesting aspects
- Focusing on a strategic aspect of student thinking
- Using this information to formulate questions
Formulating questions designed to elicit and probe student thinking → Posing questions → Developing additional questions → Listening to and interpreting → Identifying evidence of student understanding → Making sense of what students know and can do

- Children

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TEACHER EDUCATION PEDAGOGIES

Specific methods and approaches for teaching high-leverage practices and content knowledge for teaching:

- Rehearsals
- Simulated student interactions
- Modeling
- Using video to practice (not just analyze)

1 Grossman, McDonald, Kazemi, Franke, Lampert
LEARNING TO ELICIT AND INTERPRET STUDENT THINKING

Two friends equally share $\frac{3}{8}$ of a ball of yarn. How much of the yarn does each friend get?

$$\frac{2}{1} \div \frac{3}{8} = \frac{16 \div 3}{8}$$

$$\frac{16}{8} \div \frac{3}{8} = \frac{16 \times 8}{3} = 5\frac{1}{3}$$

Division is just like flipping the second fraction and then multiplying.
VIDEO: SIMULATED STUDENT Interaction
SIMULATED Student Interaction

To practice and get close coaching and feedback on:

- eliciting student thinking
- probing student understanding

Two friends equally share \( \frac{3}{8} \) of a ball of yarn. How much of the yarn does each friend get?

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{2\frac{3}{8}}{\frac{16}{8}} &= \frac{21}{8} = 2\frac{5}{8} = 2\frac{15}{24} = 2\frac{5}{3}
\end{align*}
\]
THE URGENCY—AND YOUR STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY
INTERRUPTING A LEGACY OF BENIGN NEGLECT

1. Myths about teaching and teacher preparation
2. Faith in learning from experience
3. Failure to disrupt broader societal patterns of injustice and of persistent habits of practice
4. Lack of concern for students and families
THE REALITY ABOUT TEACHING

- Teaching is complex work that requires a special blend of knowledge and skill.
- Teaching involves substantial skill, reasoning, and technique.
- This requires careful training, and a system of continuous improvement using data.
YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE ACTION

- To act together
- to take a concrete policy approach
- to taking teaching seriously—
- and leverage its power for good
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THANK YOU!
dball@umich.edu
Slides will be available on my website
https://deborahloewenbergball.com/
(“Google” Deborah Ball)
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