

Approved: 4/17/00
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Representative Ralph Tanner at 9:00 a.m. on March 21, 2000 in Room 313-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: A quorum was present

Committee staff present: Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Carolyn Rampey, Legislative Research Department
Renaë Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes
Linda Taylor, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: John Koepke, Kansas Association of School Boards

Others attending: See Attached List

Chairman Tanner opened the meeting with an overview of materials he had provided to members of the committee at the March 17, 2000 meeting. (Attachments 1,2,and3) He stated that he has several concerns about teacher preparation. Among those concerns are a lack of general knowledge, attitudes toward learning, inadequacies in a major field, teaching out of field, growth of the curriculum, blurring of disciplines or competencies, poor teacher competence in technology and teaching as a second career.

John Koepke of the KASB appeared before the committee with a presentation of comments on teacher preparation and the recommendations presented by KCTAF. He stated that Kansas institutions of higher education are doing a better job of teacher preparation than ever before. However, he stressed that they must continue to improve further.

Chairman Tanner addressed the committee on work still needed to be done by the committee. He stated that the KAN-ED bill had been sent to the House Utilities Committee where they dealt with the technical aspects of the proposal. He also stated that a joint effort produced a bill that is acceptable both to the users and to the telecommunications industry.

Chairman Tanner called upon Carolyn Rampey of the Legislative Research Department to present a brief rundown on **SB 432 - School districts, employment of personnel**. Ms. Rampey explained that this bill concerns criminal background checks for applicants who have been offered a job, excluding those applicants who have lived in Kansas for ten years or more.

Chairman Tanner then asked the committee to offer their comments on amending **HB 2801 - National board for professional teaching standards certification incentive program** and **HB 2799 - Kansas mentor teacher program** into **SB 432**. He stated that the purpose of this move would be to get the bills into Conference Committee.

Representative Benlon moved to amend SB 432 by adding HB 2801 and HB 2799 into it. Representative Helgerson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Representative Helgerson moved to pass SB 432 out favorably as amended. Representative Benlon seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2000.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50.

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

GUEST LIST

DATE: March 21

NAME	REPRESENTING
Elaine Frisbie	Div. of Budget
Loren Cole	Sen. Special Office
Craig Grant	KWEA
John Kreyche	KA SB
Val DeFever	St. Bd of Ed.
Andy Simpson	KS DE
Mike Matson	K BUR
Bill Brady	Schools for Fair Funding
Don Ryan	Haw Vally USD 321
Sid Rubin	visitor
Shelbie Robertson	visitor
Chris Robertson	visitor
Jim Giacally	LESD #512

STATE OF KANSAS

House of Representatives



THE CAPITOL

RALPH TANNER

Representative, Tenth District

ADVISORY BOARD: NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC AREAS

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

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LEGISLATIVE PROCESS/CD/ROM
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“Diversity” and “Political Correctness”

These terms have come into great usage over the recent past. The difficulty with these terms is that over use has destroyed any ability to understand their meaning. They have taken on the nature of a fad. They are words that contribute nothing to an attempt at precision of language.

“Political Correctness” came into use in an attempt to soften the alleged hurt that some commentary may bring. The use of such devices may be laudable if they are used only in casual relationships, and are not intended as a substitute for truth. A mere “cleaning up” of the language, as was common in mid-Victorian usage – when a spade may have been called “a garden implement” – might be permitted. But when the truth, or fact, as revealed in a long train of scholarly research is turned on its head, then we have gone too far. History, which is one of my disciplines, is being rewritten through applications of politically correct reinterpretations. I refer to something far more serious than the work by scholars in revisions. There are many incidents when the use of political correctness has become anti-intellectual.

The role of education is to make a positive contribution to understanding. Put another way, the task of educators is to engage in the quest for fact and truth. The feelings and sensitivities of students deserve such considerations as civility, courtesy, and decency. But in providing these attributes, it is essential to hold to the conclusions revealed in scholarly research.

The use of the term “diversity” has become quite pernicious. The academy at virtually all levels seems to be quite enamored with the notion of diversity. The word has become useful as a virtual mantra – which has no real meaning. Again, we struggle to understand what is implied in the use of this term. If we mean that it is good to bring together persons with varied ethnic roots in a setting that fosters a greater degree of tolerance and understanding among people, this motivation can be useful in a civic setting. If the implications to be derived from this term are that we must provide some sort of ethnic ratio or mix in the academy, then it may be that we are promoting an unlawful or undesirable quota system. Some jurisdictions have enacted law which specifically prohibits the use of quotas in employment and enrollment. To create a weighted mix of persons based upon artificially devised ethnic or racial considerations is poor public policy.

Ralph M. Tanner, Ph.D.

House Education
3-21-00
Attachment 1

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THE CAPITOL

RALPH TANNER

Representative, Tenth District

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Note: The following are comments on my perceptions of areas of concern in teacher licensure/certification. This is a “work in progress,” and should not be viewed as a complete and definitive statement.

Lack of General Knowledge: In many teachers, there is a deficiency in learning that should have occurred over time through the common schools, and during freshman and sophomore years in college. These deficiencies are found in common language usage (grammar faults) in writing and speaking. Lessening of academic rigor in the common schools, and a similar trend in colleges and universities curricular designs have given us several generations of poorly educated students. These problems or deficiencies may be so difficult to “fix” that no easy remedy can be found. Persons with deep deficiencies should be counseled “out” of teaching. General education curricula (group requirements) such as was found in curricular models prior to 1965 could be reviewed for inclusion into the first two years of the college experience.

Attitudes toward learning: Teacher training models that encourage a relaxing of academic rigor must be discontinued. A recent study conducted in Washington, D.C. concluded that serious damage has been done to the in-school youth of the district by not requiring solid performance in academic subject matter. A relaxing of standards in the name of improving the self-esteem of students has had a reverse effect in the long run. The real world is not a warm, fuzzy, place. Social promotion is now being recognized as a danger to youth, even by the quite liberal establishment. Self-esteem comes through personal achievement.

Inadequacy in a major field: Many teachers are inadequately prepared with an in-depth experience in a “major” field of academic discipline. In some instances, certification or licensure design requires only a few survey courses in a discipline, and teachers have not plumbed to any real depth a body of knowledge which they are asked to teach. Mastery of a field is not possible by exposure to survey courses of one kind or another. Persons who teach in secondary programs should have had a major concentration in their teaching discipline.

Teaching out of field: A serious problem among Kansas teachers is that many are not trained (educated) in the disciplines they are contracted to teach. While this problem may be one of poor decisions on the part of personnel offices, students are poorly served by teachers who are assigned out of their fields of competence. Recently, I was given information that more than two thousand Kansas teachers are teaching outside of their competencies or training. This difficulty is

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likely to get worse before it improves. An impending teacher shortage (not currently a threat in our state) will only exacerbate the problem of teaching outside the area of certification.

Growth of the curriculum: Unrestrained growth of the curriculum in order to meet the demands of students for courses that were “in touch with the real world” has softened the curriculum by including courses in personal psychology, ethnic studies, diversity, etc., and has reduced them to little more than a show-and-tell experience that is quite politically correct but without intellectual merit.

Blurring of disciplines or competencies: Recent tendencies in certification or licensure have blurred the areas of certified competency. In social studies, for example, a person may apparently be “qualified” to teach history with no more than two or three (or less) courses in this discipline. The assumption has apparently been made that geographers can teach history or psychologists can teach government. “Social studies” is not a discipline. The same problem is true with general science or general math. They are not disciplines.

Poor teacher competence in technology: Many newly certified teachers are not competent to use the advanced technical tools for teaching. Computer assisted instruction is “beyond” the ability or training of many teachers. Colleges or departments of education do not seem to be teaching these competencies.

Teaching as a second career: A serious shortage of teachers is being predicted for Kansas as well as in other parts of the nation. At this time, we still train more teachers than we can use each year. But that is about to change. Further, many young teachers leave the profession by the end of their fifth year of appointment. Some possible solutions must be considered including teaching as a second career. In secondary school subject matter fields there are well trained persons who are willing to begin to teach, but they are unwilling to return to college for a long period of courses in pedagogy. At the same time, NCATE (National Association for the Accreditation of Teacher Education) says this won’t do. They are unwilling to have anyone who did not graduate from an NCATE accredited college take up teaching. We must not allow this position by NCATE to deprive us of quite capable persons for the classroom. Also, we should consider allowing certain retirees to return to the classroom, collecting their retirement pay as they go, on a year-to-year basis, with the decision to be made by the local school board.



Will NCATE Accredited Teacher Training Improve Student Achievement?
Not Likely.

ABSTRACT

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is the largest accreditor of teacher training programs in the U.S. Its standards are fast becoming the national norm. Little understood outside the education community, NCATE's review process is as much or more concerned with a program's philosophical perspective than with the qualifications of its faculty and the knowledge of its graduates. Instead of emphasizing teaching's role in producing student achievement, NCATE's Standards are congenial to the learner-centered pedagogy that is popular with education professors and in disagreement with the result-oriented preferences of most parents and policymakers.

Practically everyone is calling for better trained teachers (Sack, 1999). Last year's failure by 59 percent of Massachusetts teacher education graduates on a literacy exam was a key factor in drawing attention to the problem (O'Brien, 1998). Too, the 1998 Higher Education Act sent a particularly clear message to the schools of education and state licensing agencies: Federal funding in coming years will depend on higher standards for teachers (Sandham, 1998b; McQueen, 1998).

Even the teacher training community seems to agree that improvements are needed. An organization comprised of education and public representatives--the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF)-- has been especially energetic in promoting this message. The NCTAF's Executive Director--Professor Linda Darling-Hammond--has been making the rounds of state capitals telling governors and legislators that it's time to "get serious about [teacher training] standards" (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996). By standards, however, the NCTAF means teacher training standards set by NCATE--the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (Ponessa, 1997).

NCATE is the largest accreditor of teacher training programs in the U. S. Its President and other of its leaders are members of the National Commission. NCATE accredits roughly half of America's teacher training programs and, with exceptions--Boston University, for example--all the large ones. Its standards have been adopted in whole or in part by forty-five states. NCATE's standards are fast becoming the de facto national standard. Whether this development favors reform or strengthens the status quo, however, is a question that deserves to be carefully examined.

NCATE's Standards

NCATE was founded in 1954. Its members are the major organizational stakeholders in teacher training. These include the National Education Association, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers and similar groups representing school personnel. It also includes subject-specific organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association.

NCATE's program review process entails institutional self-study followed by campus visitation. An institution's facilities, personnel, and program are reviewed every five years. Critics have termed the process time consuming and expensive. In a number of states, review by NCATE is, in effect, legally mandated. These are states in which the government agency that regulates teacher training and

licensure has adopted NCATE's standards as its own.

NCATE's standards are undergoing revision. In fact, they are under continuous revision, as required by the NCATE constitution. The current standards were originally written in 1987. They have been rewritten and refined several times. They evolved from several older sets of standards that were similarly written and rewritten during the sixties and seventies. Over the past two years still another rewriting has been underway. This latest round of revisions is due to take effect in 2000 (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1999). As explained below, these latest revisions--the so called NCATE 2000 standards--are said to be "groundbreaking" in that they will be "performance based" instead of "curriculum-based."

NCATE's current standards (Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1997), i.e., its 1987 standards as "refined" in 1995, consist of 20 very general requirements having to do with everything from curriculum to students, faculty, and governance (see Table 1).

Table 1 NCATE's Current Standards (1995, Second Printing 1997):

I Design of Professional Education

Standard I.A Conceptual Framework

The unit [i.e., the university department or college that is responsible for teacher training] has high quality professional education programs that are derived from a conceptual framework(s) that is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, consistent with the unit and/or institutional mission, and continuously evaluated.

Standard I.B General Studies for Initial Teacher Preparation

The unit ensures that candidates have completed general studies courses and experiences in the liberal arts and sciences and have developed theoretical and practical knowledge.

Standard I.C Content Studies for Initial Teacher Preparation

The unit ensures that teacher candidates attain academic competence in the content that they plan to teach.

Standard I.D Professional and Pedagogical Studies for Initial Teacher Preparation

The unit ensures that teacher candidates acquire and learn to apply the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills to become competent to work with all students.

Standard I.E Integrative Studies for Initial Teacher Preparation

The unit ensures that teacher candidates can integrate general, content, and professional and pedagogical knowledge to create meaningful learning experiences for all students.

Standard I.F Advanced Professional Studies

The unit ensures that candidates become more competent as teachers or develop competence for other professional roles (e.g., school library media specialist, school psychologist, or principal).

Standard I.G Quality of Instruction

Teaching in the unit is consistent with the conceptual framework(s), reflects knowledge derived from research and sound professional practice, and is of high quality.

Standard I.H Quality of Field Experiences

The unit ensures that field experiences are consistent with the conceptual framework(s), are well-planned and sequenced, and are of high quality.

Standard I.I Professional Community

The unit collaborates with higher education faculty, school personnel and other members of the professional community to design, deliver, and renew effective programs for the preparation of school personnel, and to improve the quality of education in schools.

II Candidates in Professional Education**Standard II.A Qualifications of Candidates**

The unit recruits, admits, and retains candidates who demonstrate potential for professional success in schools.

Standard II.B Composition of Candidates

The unit recruits, admits, and retains a diverse student body.

Standard II.C Monitoring and Advising the Progress of Candidates

The unit systematically monitors and assesses the progress of candidates and ensures that they receive appropriate academic and professional advisement from admission through completion of their professional education programs.

Standard II.D Ensuring the Competence of Candidates

The unit ensures that a candidate's competency to begin his or her professional role in schools is assessed prior to completion of the program and/or recommendation for licensure.

III Professional Education Faculty**Standard III.A Professional Education Faculty Qualifications**

The unit ensures that the professional education faculty are teacher scholars who are qualified for their assignments and are actively engaged in the professional community.

Standard III.B Composition of Faculty

The unit recruits, hires, and retains a diverse higher education faculty.

Standard III.C Professional Assignments of Faculty

The unit ensures that policies and assignments allow faculty to be involved effectively in teaching, scholarship, and service.

Standard III.D Professional Development of Faculty

The unit ensures that there are systematic and comprehensive activities to enhance the competence and intellectual vitality of the professional education faculty.

IV The Unit for Professional Education**Standard IV.A Governance and Accountability of the Unit**

The unit is clearly identified, operates as a professional community, and has the responsibility, authority, and personnel to develop, administer, evaluate, and revise all professional education programs.

Standard IV.B Resources for Teaching and Scholarship

The unit has adequate resources to support teaching and scholarship by faculty and candidates.

Standard IV.C Resources for Operating the Unit

The unit has sufficient facilities, equipment, and budgetary resources to fulfill its mission and offer quality programs.

The 20 "standards" are very general statements and each is accompanied by one or more "indicators" intended to convey the type of evidence that would demonstrate compliance with the standard. Technically, the indicators are not the standards but without the indicators and without extensive additional guidance, written and unwritten, the standards would be virtually indecipherable.

For example, "Standard I.A" requires that programs be "derived from a conceptual framework that is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, and consistent with the unit and/or institutional mission" and indicator "I.A.1" says "The conceptual framework is written, well articulated, and shared among professional education faculty, candidates [i.e., students undergoing teacher training] and other members of the professional community" (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1997, p. 15)--still, a rather vague statement.

It isn't until one reads the bullet points under indicator "I.A.1" that the meaning of shared "conceptual framework(s)" begins to emerge: "The framework(s) reflects multicultural and global perspectives which permeate all programs" (p. 15).

However, even this statement is less than transparent. In order to gain a more complete understanding of "multicultural and global perspectives" the reader must consult the glossary and it is there that the real meaning of "Standard I.A" becomes evident:

Global perspective. The viewpoint that accepts the interdependency of nations and peoples and the interlinkage of political, economic, ecological, and social issues of a transnational and global character (p. 74).

Multicultural perspective. (1) The social, political, economic, academic, and historical realities experienced by individuals and groups in complex human encounters; (2) the representation and incorporation of issues related to culture, demographics, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, and exceptionalities in the education process; and (3) the inclusion of a cohesive, inclusive curriculum representing the contributions of diverse populations (p. 74).

In other words, NCATE's standard for "high quality professional education programs" turns out to mean, in part, that an accredited institution's teacher training curriculum must be infused with a particular socio-political perspective--a matter well removed from the issue of teacher effectiveness and one that policymakers and the public might well question. Yet by virtue of NCATE's remarkably circuitous statement, "Standard I.A" appears bland and unremarkable.

Determining the true meaning of other NCATE Standards requires similar attention to the "fine print" and, in a number of cases, the fine print turns out to be less a matter of pedagogy than one of social and political ideals. For example, "Standard III, A" addresses "Professional Education Faculty Qualifications"--a seemingly straightforward matter "The unit ensures that the professional education faculty are teacher scholars who are qualified for their assignments and are actively engaged in the professional community" (p. 24). An examination of the indicators, however, reveals NCATE's attention to social and political issues that seem more than a little tangential to faculty qualifications. For example, Indicator III, A, 2 says "Higher education faculty exhibit intellectual vitality in their sensitivity to critical issues (e.g., how content studies and pedagogical studies can be more effectively integrated; and the ethics of equity and diversity in the U. S. culture) and in their efforts to address the issues and become proactive in addressing them" (p. 25). In other words, as a condition of accreditation, teacher training faculty are expected to adopt and promote an activist viewpoint with regard to equity and diversity issues. Here again, standards that nominally deal with academic or professional matters turn out to mean something quite different when closely examined.

What is clear from these and similar examples is that NCATE's standards are anything but self-evident and, in truth, could be termed misleading. They address matters well removed from questions of effective pedagogy and, as a practical matter, they require extensive informal guidance. Because much of this guidance comes in the form of communications from NCATE's various boards and offices, any accurate understanding of NCATE's standards must be based on sources of information beyond the standards themselves.

Happily, NCATE's standards make reference to just such a source of guidance (1997, p. 11). Published by the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, *Capturing the Vision: Reflections on NCATE's Redesign Five Years After* (Gideonse, et al., 1991) sets forth the "vision of quality" that guided the development of NCATE's Standards. It was written by the parties who interpret and implement NCATE's standards. They include representatives of NCATE's Board of Examiners, its Unit Accreditation Board, and its Executive Committee. *Capturing the Vision* was written to communicate "the larger purposes of accreditation" to "faculty in the institutions that seek accreditation" (Gideonse, et al., 1993, p. v). It presents what amounts to an ordained interpretation for the NCATE standards that have been in use (in various stages of refinement) from 1987 to the present.

Capturing the Vision's central message is that teacher training programs must "first and foremost" be "dedicated" to "equity," "diversity," and "social justice"--egalitarian ideals widely approved within the teacher education community (Gideonse, et al., 1993, p. 5). It holds that teachers and administrators are morally obliged to promote social justice, in the same sense that physicians are obliged to promote health and lawyers obliged to seek justice.

Equally noteworthy is that which *Capturing the Vision* ignores. It has nothing to say about that which might be considered the core of teaching—namely teaching's role in producing student achievement. For that matter, NCATE's Standards themselves are oddly silent on the issue. What *Capturing the Vision* does make clear is that faculty willingness to accept certain socio-political views is critical to an institution's success in becoming accredited: ". . . we are convinced that units living the three themes will not have difficulty in meeting NCATE's standards." (Gideonse, et al., 1993, p. 24). By implication, programs failing to adopt NCATE's views may have difficulty. **Plainly, *Capturing the Vision* and NCATE's Standards conceive of teaching as an activity concerned as much or more with social reform than with student achievement.**

to educators, parents and policymakers are less concerned about minimizing differences and more concerned about each child becoming all he/she can become.

Social promotion policies and cooperative learning are familiar examples of education practices that make academic concessions to social concerns. Many less well known methodologies called "best practices" are founded on the same priorities (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1993). They include heterogeneous grouping, multi-age classes, and a variety of other teaching, curricular, and organizational stratagems. All compromise educational outcomes in deference to social aims (Stone & Clements, 1998).

Teachers and administrators are not only taught priorities that are at odds with those of the public, they are also given to believe that the public's ideas about education are unenlightened, even harmful. A recent *Education Week* essay by a veteran high school principal (Jones, 1998) reflects the prevailing view. According to Alan Jones, "parents expect that their children will be educated just like they were." In Jones view, the adoption of traditional education practices--academic retention, for example--is a wrongful concession to the public's ideas. Jones laments the failure of the 1960s student movement to lastingly reshape the public's thinking and he suggests that school administrators push the envelope in a more student-centered direction. A similarly critical *Phi Delta Kappan* article by a much published critic of results-oriented schooling (Kohn, 1998) argues that parents who insist on achievement for their children are selfish and an impediment to the success of other students.

What Teacher-Educators Want

A 1997 Public Agenda survey found a "staggering disconnect" between the priorities of teacher education professors and those of parents and others concerned with schooling (Farkas, Johnson, Duffett, 1997). It showed that professors want less structured schooling, i.e., schooling that "facilitates inquiry" and stresses "learning how to learn." It found that professors are chiefly focused on educational process and favor "learner-centered" teaching. By contrast, Public Agenda and other polling organizations have found that parents want orderly schools that emphasize academic fundamentals. Both they and policymakers want improved pupil achievement.

The gulf between the public and the institutions that train and license teachers is little studied and poorly understood but it explains much about why school reform has failed (Stone & Clements, 1998). Repeated efforts to reform the public schools have failed to improve achievement because they are selected, interpreted, and implemented by educators who have been taught that other aims come first. **If, as recommended by the NCTAF, all teacher training is brought under the auspices of NCATE, virtually all teachers will be trained by programs that emphasize the profesoriate's aims, not the public's (Stone, 1998).**

The gap between teacher-educators and the public is neither transient nor recent (Hirsch, 1996; Sowell, 1993; Sykes, 1995). It is a subtle but profound disagreement about the nature and purpose of public education. Although obscured by jargon and mutating methods, the core difference is that the public takes a *learning-centered* or results-oriented view of education (Stone, 1996; Stone, 1998; Stone & Clements, 1998) while teacher-educators take a learner-centered or process-oriented view (Darling-Hammond, Griffin, & Wise, 1992).

Over the years, learner-centered pedagogy has been reformulated and repackaged many times. Current names include "student-centered," "developmentally appropriate," and "constructivist." In the early part of the twentieth century, similar practices were called "progressive" and "child centered." Contrary to the impression created by continual relabeling and reinvention, the priorities of learner-

centered pedagogy have remained constant. The use of pedagogically correct teaching takes precedence over results (Stone, 1996).

Learner-centered instruction is a form of teaching in which classroom activity is built around the learner's aims and inclinations. It idealizes learning as student-directed, discovery-oriented activity in which the teacher acts less as manager or director and more as a facilitator or guide. Student-led activities are thought to be uniquely beneficial because they require the application of higher-order intellectual activities in a life-like context. Students who are eager, mature, and well behaved are likely to benefit from learner-centered instruction. Students who are less well suited to unstructured and self-directed activity often flounder and learn little in learner-centered classrooms.

Figuratively speaking, learner-centered schools bend over backwards to accommodate learner diversity. They adapt instruction to learning styles. They adapt the curriculum to student readiness and to differences in student backgrounds. More than anything, they strive endlessly to make schooling attractive, engaging, and inherently interesting. In learner-centered schools, it is the teachers who do the work, not the students.

Students who fail despite the school's blandishments and enticements are presumed handicapped by deficiencies in their social, economic, and cultural backgrounds (Stone, 1996). Although societal change is considered the ultimate corrective, the learner-centered prescription for such students is a temporary accommodation of the school's expectations to the student's academic performance and deportment. In theory, if the school provides a truly facilitative and supportive environment, a spontaneous desire to learn will eventually emerge. For example, if a student seems apathetic about engaging in classroom activity, the teacher might diagnose the deficiency as one stemming from a dysfunctional family and poor self-esteem. Intervention might involve placement of the student in a cooperative learning group for the purpose of affording encouragement, participation, and the experience of success. The hoped-for educational outcome would be that the student would come to see himself as capable and would eventually engage in classroom activities.

A different type of accommodation might be made in the case of students who are believed to be poorly motivated and badly behaved because they have experienced social injustice. The learner-centered prescription might be that teachers should demonstrate greater tolerance of the students' apathetic and, perhaps, angry behavior as a means of showing them that the school is a fair and understanding environment. For example, the school might provide counseling or it might infuse the school curriculum with materials that would emphasize the role and the historic contributions of persons who have the same background. Teachers might undergo sensitivity training. The purpose of these measures would be to assure the students in question that their negative behavior and attitudes were not necessary because the school was sensitive to the circumstances of their lives and sympathetic to their feelings.

These examples illustrate the key reason why learner-centered schooling is at odds with the public's educational aims. Whatever the specifics of the accommodations made by the school, their purpose is not the straightforward improvement of achievement but the improvement of conditions congenial to learner-centered instruction. Rather than prescribing a more structured and teacher-directed mode of instruction--one that might be far better suited to students who are not well motivated or well behaved--learner-centered orthodoxy encourages ad hoc intervention for the purpose of facilitating the use of what the teacher training community considers the ideal form of teaching. **In other words, the learner-centered perspective encourages teachers and schools to concern themselves not with intervening to produce results but with creating an environment hospitable to the learner-**

centered ideal.

Teachers may recognize that such accommodations are ineffective but they defend their use because doing otherwise would seem an abandonment of educational ideals, i.e., the ideal of the self-directed learner engaged in higher order thinking. They are taught that even ineffectual learner-centered teaching is better than non-learner-centered alternatives. For example, if a student who participates in the cooperative learning project fails to reach expected objectives, the teacher may argue that at least the individual's self-esteem was enhanced. If angry and unmotivated students fail to read and write, the teacher may argue that the school's multicultural curriculum and sensitivity training at least succeeded in preventing these individuals from dropping out.

NCATE and Learner-Centered Teaching

NCATE's standards do not explicitly call for learner-centered teaching but they are clearly consistent with such a view. From a learner-centered perspective, teacher training must be infused with rightminded social and political values because the success of schooling is ultimately linked to social and economic conditions. In other words, NCATE and the teacher-education programs that follow NCATE's standards have historically infused teacher training with social and political idealism because their pedagogical doctrine requires it.

NCATE and the teacher-education community are the primary keepers of the learner-centered faith. NCATE's leaders are published proponents of learner-centered teaching (Darling-Hammond, Griffin, & Wise, 1992). NCATE's standards emphasize matters such as diversity and virtually ignore teacher effectiveness. NCATE cites a learner-centered vision of education as a guide to the correct interpretation of its standards. **In sum, the teacher training accredited by NCATE is training dedicated not to effective pedagogy but to learner-centered schooling.**

Although little understood by the public, learner-centered thinking has a stranglehold on the teacher-education community (Farkas, Johnson, Duffett, 1997). Skeptical academics are suspected of being "in denial" about their own or society's responsibility for reforming adverse social, political, and economic conditions. Proponents of more conventional explanations for academic failure--lack of study, for example--are thought to mistake symptoms for causes and are suspected of blaming the victim. Educational innovations are welcomed but only so long as they fit the learner-centered mold (Stone, 1998). As E. D Hirsch (1996) puts it, alternatives are not "*thinkable*" (italics in the original):

"To question progressive doctrine would be to put in doubt the identity of the education profession itself. Its foundational premise is that progressive principles are right. Being right, *they* cannot possibly be the cause of educational ineffectiveness." (p. 69)

Tradition, doctrinal zeal, and an absence of competition explains much about predominance of learner-centered thinking in schools of education. Another factor, however, may contribute greatly to its popularity among teachers and administrators. A theory that educational effectiveness is limited by factors such as social justice, low self-esteem, and a variety of developmental considerations explains one thing very well: It explains how so many teachers and so many schools could be working so hard and yet producing so little. In other words, it offers a convenient and nearly irrefutable excuse for educational failure.

As most teachers, administrators, and professors see it, the presence of educational failure implies less-than-optimal conditions for students. Moreover, less-than-optimal conditions argue against educational accountability and in favor of ever greater commitments of resources for education. If

doubled educational expenditures do not succeed perhaps they need to be doubled again. Who can say what constitutes optimal conditions for learning? If schools aren't succeeding, learner-centered educators argue that society has "failed the children."

According to the learner-centered view, educational success is restricted not only by social, political, and economic conditions but by maturational and developmental ones as well. The "developmentally appropriate practice" concept featured in NCATE's proposed NCATE 2000 standards (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1999) holds that the student's maturationally determined stage of intellectual development restricts that which he or she can learn. In theory, correctly fitted teaching will result in as much learning as current development permits and academic challenges in excess of that level are apt to cause burnout and damaged self-esteem (Hirsch, 1996; Stone, 1996). From the standpoint of developmental theory, if a student fails to learn that which might reasonably be expected and there are no obvious sociocultural impediments, a state of insufficient development is implicated. As with other versions of the learner-centered view, developmental theory offers little guidance as to how curricular goals might be achieved. However it does suggest a ready but unverifiable explanation of why curricular goals are not being met and it does relieve both students and teachers of responsibility for effort and results.

Pedagogical concepts such as developmentally appropriate practice are also attractive to students and parents because they relieve anxiety about failure to achieve. According to developmental theory, students should be expected to make an effort only with regard to those activities they find appealing and engaging. Whether those preferred activities result in meaningful academic achievement is considered a secondary issue. The "developmentally appropriate" viewpoint promises academic success through natural and spontaneous means (Stone, 1996) and it supposes that students will learn all that they need to learn when the time is right. If curricular expectations say otherwise, it is the expectations that are wrong. In effect, the developmental viewpoint takes the work out of schoolwork.

Developmentally appropriate practice, education for social justice, and the many other variants of learner-centered education undermine educational effectiveness because they encourage teachers to dedicate their time and energies to overcoming social, economic, and developmental impediments and otherwise engaging students in learner-centered instruction. Of necessity, the activities they arrange must be fun and exciting whether or not they are also educationally beneficial (Stone, 1996). In effect, learner-centered instruction treats student satisfaction with the immediate educational experience as far more important than the longer-term satisfactions associated with academic achievement. In theory, learner-centered teachers attempt to produce achievement by accommodating student needs. In practice, they assume that educational experiences not well received by students are not well fitted to their needs and thus not conducive to achievement.

In many respects, the flaws in learner-centered thinking parallel those inherent in the "root cause" view of crime--the view that poverty causes misbehavior and thus must be the primary target of social intervention. Both perspectives are loosely grounded in social science, both divert the energies of professional helpers into matters that have little demonstrated relationship to results, and both provide built-in excuses for failure. Not incidentally, both require extensive academic training and thereby assure full employment for training institutions and licensure bureaucracies.

The NCTAF's Campaign for Teacher Training Reform

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future is leading a massive effort to encourage

the adoption of NCATE's standards. Originally headed by North Carolina's Governor Jim Hunt and funded by two major foundations, the NCTAF (1996) is urging all states to align their teacher licensure regulations with NCATE's training standards and with the standards set by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1990)--advanced teacher certification standards that are themselves aligned with NCATE. In effect, the NCTAF is pressing states to enact policy that collides head-on with the public's desire for stronger pupil achievement.

Expecting NCATE to reform teacher training in a way that fulfills the public's hopes is naive. NCATE is an organization primarily comprised of teacher-education's stakeholders, i.e., the very groups that created the standards now said in need of reform. Given NCATE's history, it may be safely predicted that any NCATE-led reform will be congenial to learner-centered teaching and antagonistic to achievement-oriented alternatives. NCATE's stakeholders--especially the schools of education--will not have it any other way. If policymakers want teacher training that treats pupil achievement as its top priority, they will have to set standards that are independent of NCATE.

Public Regulation of Teacher Training and Licensure

The teaching profession is regulated by state education agencies and these agencies ostensibly exist to defend and promote the public's aims. In fact, they are staffed, led, and decisively influenced by the profession that they purport to regulate--a phenomenon that economists call "regulatory capture" (Lieberman, 1993).

Instead of insuring that teaching serves the public's aims, state education agencies collaborate with organizations like NCATE and thereby serve as a conduit through which the teacher-education community's beliefs are injected into the decisions of legislators and boards of education. For example, a group representing the executive leadership of the state departments of education--the Council of Chief State School Officers--is working diligently with NCATE to assure that state licensure requirements are compatible with NCATE standards (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, 1992). They are also linked by shared leadership. For example, the immediate past chairman of NCATE's Executive Board heads the Kentucky Department of Education and NCATE's current senior vice president is the president-elect of the National Association for Multicultural Education--an advocacy organization bent on infusing multicultural values into teacher training. **The effect of these intermingled loyalties is governmental regulation that is supposed to be dedicated to what the public wants but, in fact, enforces what the education community thinks is important.**

NCATE and its stakeholders argue that educator control of the regulatory process is proper in that it parallels the professional control of training and licensure that occurs within the medical and legal professions. The comparison, however, overlooks a crucial distinction. Consumers can choose among their doctors and lawyers but not among their children's teachers. If parents want to make use of the schools they support with their taxes, they have few options. Public schools are required to have licensed teachers and nearly all licensed teachers have been trained in the learner-centered mold.

Policy Alternatives

If NCTAF and NCATE succeed, expanded school choice and alternative teacher certification may be the only way parents and policymakers will get teachers who are trained to put achievement first. However, if policymakers are willing to act independently, they can make a vital difference in the kind of skills required of licensed teachers and ultimately in the aims of teacher training programs.

State requirements for entering the teaching profession vary from state to state but most include a degree from an "approved" teacher training program and successful performance on an exam of pedagogical knowledge. Requirements for subject matter examinations and demonstrations of teaching proficiency have been added or are under consideration in a number of states. The model licensure standards now being collaboratively developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and NCATE will require teachers to demonstrate knowledge, attitudinal "dispositions," and certain teaching skills--all consistent with a learner-centered vision of teaching. Licensure based on such standards will most likely insure doctrinal conformity, not effectiveness in producing student achievement.

The content knowledge aspect of teaching can be measured by conventional examinations, however until recently, there has been no good alternative to exams of pedagogical knowledge and classroom observations as evidence of a teacher's ability to produce learning. The product of teaching--learning--could not be used as an indicator because learning is influenced by pre-existing differences in student knowledge, skills, backgrounds, motivation, and other characteristics. Within the past few years, however, a statistical methodology that corrects for such differences has been used for teacher accountability in Tennessee and Dallas, TX (Millman, 1997). Called value-added assessment, it measures how much students taught by a given teacher have gained over the over the past school year. It is vast improvement over any of the indirect measures of teacher effectiveness now used by school systems and state education agencies.

Value-added assessment is currently used for annual job performance ratings but it can be used to assess the quality of teacher training programs. The teaching skills possessed by novice teachers primarily reflect the training they have undergone and the value-added achievement gains of such teachers would be a reasonably accurate indicator of that training. In any case, value-added gains would be a vastly more accurate indicator of the teaching skills sought by the public than the tests of pedagogical theory and classroom observations now used.

Over the years, the public has assumed that teachers are trained to produce academic achievement. In fact, most teachers have been trained to use learner-centered instruction regardless of achievement. It is a subtle but critical discrepancy. A change to an achievement-oriented indicator of teacher preparedness would stir significant change in most teacher training programs. They would either have to begin emphasizing skills that enable teachers to be effective or fail to produce licensable graduates. Programs that have traditionally taught result-oriented methods, however, would only have to fine tune their efforts.

Used in conjunction with a well validated achievement test, value-added assessment can provide officials with an indicator of teacher preparedness that is aligned with the public's educational priorities and independent of those of the teacher education community. It can be used as a basis for tenure and merit pay decisions as well. **If policymakers want teacher training dedicated to results rather than idealism, a change to value-added teacher assessment might be the single most effective action they could take.**

References

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