

Kansas State University
College of Education
Teacher Education Advisory Council
Alumni Center, Banquet Room A
October 27, 2006
9:00 AM– 2:00PM

Present:

LeAnn Clark	Alumni Fellow, Hesston Elementary School
Cindi Barta	Middle-level Teacher, Bonner Springs, KS
Dorsey Burgess	Principal, Benton, KS
Jim Medina	Elementary Teacher, Olathe, KS
Joe Martin	Principal, Frontenac, KS
Kellie Puderbaugh	Middle-level Teacher Topeka, KS
Susan Reusser	Special Education, Andover, KS
Linda Runyan	Elementary Teacher, Pittsburg, KS
Bob Shannon	Superintendent, Manhattan, KS
Gary Stenzel	Secondary Teacher, Clay Center, KS
Kathy Wagoner	Secondary Teacher, Hays, KS
Sandy Wanklyn	Elementary Teacher, Lakin, KS
Sherri Yourdon	School Counselor, Hutchinson, KS
Carolyn Scott	Clinical Instructor, USD 383
Brandys Zolnerowich	Clinical Instructor, USD 475
Erin Bodlak	Undergraduate Student, Elementary Education
Christalina Ramirez	Undergraduate Student, English as a Second Language
Janeal Schmidt	Undergraduate Student, Secondary Education
Susan Vice	Undergraduate Student, Secondary Education
Lori Workman	Undergraduate Student, Secondary Education
Laurie Curtis	Graduate Student, Curriculum and Instruction
Steve Benton	Faculty, Counseling and Educational Psychology
Paul Burden	Faculty, Elementary Education
Mary Devin	Faculty, Educational Administration
Kevin Donnelly	Faculty, College of Agriculture
Dottie Evans	Faculty, Career and Employment Services
Tim Frey	Faculty, Special Education
Di Murphy	Faculty, Certification Officer
Della Perez	Faculty, English as a Second Language
Larry Rodgers	Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences
Tweed Ross	Faculty, Technology
Gail Shroyer	Faculty, Elementary Education
Warren White	Faculty, Director of Assessment
Jan Wissman	Associate Dean, College of Education
Sally Yahnke	Faculty, Secondary Education

Jan Wissman, Associate Dean for Teacher Education, welcomed those in attendance and recognized that some of the members attending are new to this council. She reviewed the purpose of TEAC. The revised Conceptual Framework (CF) brochure was distributed. (TEAC members were acknowledged for their role in the development and revisions of the CF.) Warren White, Director of Assessment for the College of Education, and LeAnn Clark, Hesston, KS classroom teacher and 2004 COE Alumni Fellow were introduced as TEAC Co-Chairs.

Interpreting Data:

W. White acknowledged the TEAC representatives from other colleges on campus - Arts and Sciences, Agriculture, and Human Ecology. It was explained that with No Child Left Behind and recent state mandates for assessment, teachers are seeking ways to keep track of different types of data. One of those methods used is the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) Test.

W. White then asked Gary Stenzel (TEAC member) to provide information from his experiences with the MAP assessment at Clay Center.

G. Stenzel explained that the problem with standardized tests and state assessments is that the same children are not compared. The MAP assessment allows teachers and administrators to compare students against themselves (hand-outs were provided). He explained that this is a growth model form of assessment, in which progress can be monitored for each child, over time. School districts can determine when the students are tested (Clay Center tests both in fall and spring). Because assessment is given to both Elementary and Secondary students on the computer, the availability of computers can be a limiting factor for using this assessment. Logistically, they have found out that it works well to split some grade levels into smaller groups (in half) for assessment management. At this time his district only tests 9th and 10th graders at the high school. The test assesses reading, math, and language skills. A branching system is used that allows students who are answering with 75% accuracy to receive a more difficult question; when accuracy drops to 50%, questions becomes easier. If a child enters 8 wrong answers in a row, their test is kicked out of the program for re-testing at another time. The unit of measurement is called RIT (Rasch Unit Scale). All students, regardless of age, use the same scale. G. Stenzel noted that they have found that in reading the students did better during fall testing. (Perhaps due to the fact that students had time to read over the summer.) However, math scores declined over the summer. The biggest concern that they have at this time is the amount of instructional time being devoted to testing. Scheduling of testing when teachers teach multiple grades (i.e., languages, music, etc.) can cause more interruption in the teaching day. Advantages observed with MAP testing include the fact that the student's instructional level can be identified and individual student growth can be tracked. This is a relatively new program (2 years) and as more schools use it the norms will become more meaningful. Parents are provided with this information at Parent/Teacher conferences. There is also a website that helps parents understand the data that is provided. There are many reports teachers can access and time needs to be allowed for teachers to go over the data generated to make instructional decisions. Teachers take the information from the data and meet with smaller groups of students to provide instruction based on their data. They have found the low SES sub-group needs to remain a focus. *Is it expensive?* The program is very expensive; expenses include the purchasing of software, computers, and making sure you have the technology to support the product. *How is it decided if students are above or below grade level?* That information is provided from the norms. This is a data intensive program, but one that helps teachers meet the needs of all students in their classrooms.

G. Stenzel then provided a copy of a letter written by Scott Henson, Principal at Avondale West in Topeka (USD 501). The letter is written for Congressman Ryun. The letter represents the concerns presented in a document written by the National Association of Elementary School Principals regarding the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. G. Stenzel urged those attending to let Congress know about concerns regarding unfunded educational mandates.

W. White thanked G. Stenzel for his presentation and asked for a show of hands as to how many in the room were using MAP assessments. Several districts represented were using this tool.

W. White gave each table the task of discussing the following question. *What do beginning teachers need to know about how to interpret the student related data schools collect?* After discussion each group provided the most important thoughts to share with the whole group.

Group #1

- Teachers need to know how to talk about assessment and identify what they need to do as a result of it. They need to put the information into practice in the classroom.
- Teachers need to be good at communicating with parents about assessment.
- Teachers need to pay attention to the reading level of all readers in their classes.

Group #2

- Teachers need to know how to read reports and recognize the subgroups in order to analyze the data.
- Teachers need to know what to do with that data in order to reflect a change in their instruction. They must have strategies in place to work with different subgroups to increase learning.
- Teachers need to be flexible, willing to change instruction based on assessment.
- New teachers need to be able to collaborate with their peers and talk professionally about assessment, understanding the terminology.

Group #3

- Teachers need a concrete understanding of assessment basics. For example, the important definitions, confidentiality issues, and what types of assessment are available.
- Teachers need to know how to use assessment to drive instruction.
- Teachers need to know how to present data to parents.
- Teachers need to understand that data analysis is an integral part of teaching.

*W. White mentioned the importance of practice, and notes that the KSU Student Intern portfolio is closely aligned with the KPA, causing our students to look at data and analyze it as it relates to their instructional unit.

Group #4

- Teachers should understand what Kansas requires in the way of testing students. They need to know the tests used and be able to interpret the data. They need to know what state cut-offs mean.
- Teachers need to practice with state standardized assessment. They need to know what the data provided looks like. Pre-service teachers should be allowed to attend assessment meetings in the district. They should be familiar with the Kan-Ed site and look at those tests.
- Teachers should know the accommodations allowed for special groups of students. They should be aware of the information on KSDE site and the information regarding accommodations that is available on that site.

*G. Shroyer mentioned that our new teachers are given experiences in pre/post assessment and writing and administration of formative and summative assessments. It was mentioned by others that most of the information regarding state and standardized assessment is received at the school and district level. *Could pre-service teachers be proctors for state assessments?* Our new teachers need to be aware of the practice tests that are available to them. They need to be comfortable with formative assessment. G. Stenzel noted that when new teachers are hired they should be prepared and supported by their district. J. Martin suggested that the more beginning teachers know at the time of interviewing, the more likely they will stand out from others, and the more employable they will be.

Group #5

- The University should embed assessment into all courses.
- Teachers should be able to understand and analyze data.
- Teachers should know how to interpret data.
- Teachers should understand how to make allowable accommodations - not just for special education students, but for all students.

Culture of Poverty

LeAnn Clark discussed her experiences as a classroom teacher participating in home visits. She provided an update on Robert, a student she worked with last year who arrived from New Orleans when displaced during hurricane Katrina. She noted that while the development of relationships with students is important, this would not be enough to help all students learn. She noted Ruby Payne's work on understanding the cultural framework of poverty and identified an NEA Today article, as well as a Newsweek article, on students in great need. Many educators are finding that students from the low SES subgroup within their school population need extra support. What do our future educators need to know to be prepared for their future classrooms? Brandys Zolnerowich gave the members present an abbreviated test from the work of Ruby Payne, providing a framework for what might be prioritized for those in poverty, middle class, or wealth. K. Donnelly noted that the need for information for students in the College of Agriculture is determined by issues of poverty, which became evident when he observed conference sessions attended by students.

The question to be answered during small group discussion is: *What do our students need to know about the Culture of Poverty? What examples can you give concerning how this culture has influenced your class or school?*

Group #1

- There is a widening gap as the middle class is getting smaller. Often parents have not had a good experience with schools. Teacher/parent contact needs to be on a personal level.
- There should be an effort to provide "grow your own teacher" program by encouraging students to look ahead to opportunities they may have.
- Effort must be given to recruit and retain teachers.
- Teachers must recognize the benefit of after-school programs.
- Teachers should be aware of church and community resources that are available.

*W. White noted that there is a reoccurring theme of the importance and value of parent/teacher communication and contact. This was mentioned in the previous discussion on assessment and it now being identified as being a critical need again. M. Devin stated that we must encourage students to see beyond their own experiences. L. Clark commented about the advantage to making home visits, but noted that our students must be safe if they choose to provide this contact. It was also mentioned that teachers must make sure not to communicate to parents in a condescending way.

Group #2

- Teachers must work to build a relationship with parents
- Teachers must be aware of and utilize the support systems that are available, such as after-school programs.

- Teachers must remember that parents **do** care about their children. The situation they find themselves in may not allow them to provide the support teachers are asking for.
- Teachers must recognize that students may have limited access to resources/ books, or the language used during the school day.
- Teachers must recognize the power that language holds, such as noted in Shirley Brice Heath's book *Ways with Words*.
- Teachers need to be aware of the hidden rules of various cultures. How do you praise a student while being sensitive to their culture (touch, eye contact, etc.)?

Group #3

- Teachers need to be aware of their own biases.
- Teachers need to be aware that SES is #1 indicator of school success, regardless of other subgroups, so this will impact student achievement.
- Teachers need to develop relationships with parents.
- Teachers need to be aware of resources in the school/ community to provide things such as medication, food, glasses, etc.
- Teachers should be aware of the hidden rules of many SES families, such as punishment is not about changing behavior, but penance.

*W. White stated that in Robert's case he needed dental care. Teachers need to know how to get help, when perhaps the adult in the family does not have a car, phone, etc. The school becomes the advocate for the child. A member of the group also noted that teachers must be careful to be sensitive to the pride that the family has.

Group #4

- Teachers need to know that they may need to provide resources. If it is a resource intensive assignment, teachers need to make sure that resources are available for those students that cannot provide them on their own (paper, markers, etc.).
- Teachers must recognize that there may be hygiene issues. Teachers must know how to provide these resources as unobtrusively as possible.
- Teachers may need to facilitate a place for students to do their homework or allow for the work to get done in class.
- Teachers may need to provide help before school, or perhaps provide snacks for those that have not eaten.

Group #5

- Teachers must try to not get discouraged. Students might reject our help, but that is not an indication to give up.
- Teachers must learn to recognize the signs of poverty and homelessness.
- Teachers should look for ways to connect with students, even though the students they are teaching may be growing up in a situation very different from the one the teacher grew up in. Teachers can provide a model of how you can take yourself out of poverty.

Discussion of the larger group was given to helping our students recognize the hidden rules of various classes. It was noted that there are concerns as well for some of our new students that are paying off student loans and waiting for weeks to receive their first paycheck. M. Devin recommended viewing *The Ron Clark Story*. D. Perez reminded all present that when we look at our students in poverty, we need to recognize the strengths that they bring to their classrooms.

The spring meeting was scheduled for April 20, 2007.

Discussion was held regarding what should be considered as topics for discussion at the April 20th meeting.

Suggested topics:

- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations
- Community service opportunities
- Feedback on what has happened as a result of the meetings and information we have shared in the past was requested: What changes have been made to the COE program?
- How can the College of Education increase the diversity of our graduates?
- What current events in state and local legislature are impacting our students?
- Ethics in dealing with professional obligations inside and outside the classroom
- AYP: Recognition that all teachers are teachers of math and reading
- Action research and its use in the classroom to improve practice
- Documentation: what do new teachers need to document- contact with parents, types of duty, learning of students? How can teachers document and what steps to take for protection of liability?
- Plagiarism: cheating in schools
- Relationships: How can students build relationships that are professional and appropriate?
- The topic of the KPA was also suggested. G. Shroyer explained the K-State Student Intern Portfolio models the KPA.

L. Clark expressed her gratitude for this organization and its members, and their willingness to share their expertise. Those attending were asked to complete travel vouchers if reimbursement was needed.

Meeting was adjourned.