

University of Dayton

Documentation of the Teachers for a New Era Learning Network

INTRODUCTION

This case study is one of nine prepared by AED to document evidence of institutional change in teacher preparation at nine of the thirty universities that took part in the Teachers for A New Era (TNE) Learning Network.¹ AED selected the nine universities based upon a variety of factors, including their degree of engagement in the Learning Network, and their willingness to specify a program objective and indicator(s) of change that reflected important work underway and could serve as the focus of a case study.

Institutional change, for the purposes of this study, means change that goes beyond adjusting course curricula, or degree requirements, or even holding meetings across university departments. It means change that transforms a teacher education program's organizational structure, culture, external relationships, and ways of assessing the outcomes of its work. Such change is often based on research evidence, involves sustained partnerships with school districts and personnel, establishes cross-college and cross-departmental pathways for work and communication, increases the quality and length of time that candidates spend in school settings, and assesses its teacher candidates on their effectiveness in the classroom. Institutional change is not change for change's sake, but a mission-driven effort to refocus the activities of the teacher education program on the effectiveness of their graduates in helping pupils learn.

The TNE Learning Network was established in 2005 with a grant from the Annenberg Foundation and additional support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY). Its purpose is to broaden and deepen the profession's understanding of how the Teachers for a New Era design principles could contribute to the reform of teacher education, and to encourage the institutions of higher education that belong to the Learning Network to reach out to others with similar interests. Like Teachers for a New Era (TNE)², launched in 2001 by CCNY, with additional support from the Ford and Annenberg foundations,

1) Arizona State University, Indiana State University, Jackson State University, Montclair State University, New York University, University of Dayton, University of North Carolina Greensboro, Western Kentucky University, and Western Oregon University.

2) The goal of TNE was to strengthen K-12 teaching by developing state-of-the-art teacher education programs at selected colleges and universities through a focus on the three design principles. The 11 institutions participating in the TNE initiative are Bank Street College of Education; Boston College; California State University, Northridge; Florida A&M University; Michigan State University; Stanford University; University of Connecticut; University of Texas at El Paso; University of Virginia; University of Washington; and University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. Most are completing the 5-7 year process of institutional change under TNE.

the Learning Network promotes the TNE design principles: (a) grounding teacher education on sound evidence, including measurement of pupil learning; (b) engaging the arts and sciences disciplines; and (c) understanding teaching as an academically taught clinical practice profession.

Based upon the nine case studies, the AED research team has prepared a cross-case study that documents and analyzes evidence with bearing on four broad research questions:

1. Is there evidence of institutional change along the lines of the TNE design principles in the preparation of teachers at these institutions?
2. What are the primary categories of change being undertaken on each campus?
3. What are the indicators of these institutional changes?
4. What aspects of the Learning Network, if any, are reported to have triggered or enhanced the occurrence of change or supported its continuation?

A final report on the TNE Learning Network, which will include the cross-case study and nine case studies as well as recommendations for next steps, will be published in November 2009, with funding from the Annenberg Foundation.

The Academy for Educational Development (AED) sent a research team to the University of Dayton (UD) on November 5-7, 2008, to conduct interviews with individuals who played significant roles in the university's teacher preparation program (see Appendix A). These interviews, along with additional materials provided by UD and identified by the AED research team, provided the basis for the case study that follows.

DETERMINING THE FOCUS FOR THIS CASE STUDY

University-based teacher preparation is a complex enterprise with many elements and many players, and this is especially true for universities attempting fundamental change. To provide a manageable focus for these case studies, AED staff asked the TNE Learning Network universities to prepare a "Measuring Progress" statement (see Appendix B) which would specify one program objective by which they would wish to document their progress. AED asked that this objective (1) reflect an important aspect of teacher preparation at the institution, (2) address one or more of the TNE principles, and (3) logically connect to pupil success. They were also asked to specify indicators that the change sought was occurring.

The authors of the UD Measuring Progress statement selected as their objective:

To further develop our teacher education program assessment system so that decisions about candidates and program improvements are grounded on sound evidence (TNE Design Principle #1). Our goal as a Department of Teacher Education is to enhance our clinical practice assessment instrument to 1) incorporate more explicit assessment of knowledge of content, and 2) to refine the evidence we are currently collecting on pupil learning gains. The specific objective is to redesign our clinical practice instrument that provides sound evidence of 1) candidate content knowledge and 2) measurement of pupil learning gains.

This objective, they noted, would address two of the TNE principles: “decisions driven by evidence” and “teaching as an academically taught clinical practice profession.”

The authors of the statement also selected three indicators of change by which they would assess their progress toward this objective:

1. Regular faculty meetings in which evidence of candidate content knowledge and pupil learning gains are reviewed for program improvement purposes.
2. Meetings with mentor teachers in which evidence of candidate content knowledge and pupil learning gains are considered in candidate evaluation of clinical practice and letters of recommendation.
3. Meetings with faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences in which candidate content knowledge is considered in curriculum revisions.

Lastly, the authors explicitly connected these plans with attention to student success:

Research had indicated that enhanced candidate content knowledge is related to pupil learning. The revised clinical practice observation instrument and review of candidate content knowledge and pupil learning data generated from the instrument are directly related to student success.

HISTORY OF INNOVATION

The University of Dayton (UD) was one of the thirty universities selected to take part in the TNE Learning Network by the Annenberg Foundation and Carnegie Corporation of New York. At that time, in 2005, the university had already progressed significantly along lines envisioned in the TNE principles.

Located in Dayton, Ohio, UD was founded in 1850 as a primary school, St. Mary’s School for Boys. It became a university in 1920, and today is the largest private university in Ohio. UD is a Catholic university, one of three higher education institutions in the United States associated with the Society of Mary, or Marianists, whose values include a commitment to collaboration between religious and lay communities, to living through experiences of community and service, and to the quality of shared common life.

One aspect of service to community that has particularly contributed to UD’s mission is the Marianist commitment to people who live in poverty and on the margins of society, reflected in the UD teacher preparation program’s commitment to social justice and urban education. Particular emphasis is placed on providing teacher candidates with opportunities to work with urban pupils in settings ranging from the early college high school located on the university campus, to carefully selected classrooms in the Dayton Public Schools, and urban parochial schools in Dayton and San Antonio, Texas. UD’s teacher preparation program also offers candidates the option of applying to its Urban Teacher Academy (UTA), which provides candidates with specialized classes to help them understand and succeed in urban schools, and pairs them with a trained mentor for a two-year field placement in an urban classroom.

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

UD's teacher preparation program has long-standing partnerships with public schools, parochial schools, and Head Start programs. These partnerships provide settings for student teaching and teacher candidate field observations, of course, but have also matured into collaborative professional development arrangements that contribute to the learning of school and university faculty and administrators as well as candidates. During the 2008 site visit, the AED team had the opportunity to visit the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA), Centerville High School, and the Bombeck Family Learning Center.

Dayton Early College Academy (DECA)

DECA is a community school sponsored by the Dayton Public Schools with academic oversight provided by UD, housed in a UD campus building that includes both academic and administrative space. Designed to provide a seamless transition from high school to college for pupils traditionally under-represented in higher education, DECA offers personalized learning plans and opportunities to earn up to two years of college credit while still in high school. In its initial years, the engagement of UD faculty with DECA was limited, the result of individual faculty initiative. UD administrators reported that they have since become more intentional, more purposeful and integrated about organizing the work of faculty members with DECA. Since 2006, DECA has provided the first field experience for juniors in UD's adolescence to young adult (AYA) teacher education program, and candidates in the social studies methods course have also worked alongside DECA faculty conducting observations and discussing lesson plans.

Centerville High School (CHS)

The partnership between the University of Dayton and Centerville High School has endured for more than fifteen years. Its many strands include placement of student teachers, professional development for school faculty and staff, and shifts in candidate evaluation that embody the mutual respect that the leadership and staff members of each organization report having for one another. The principal of Centerville recalls that work on clinical placements began about 1995 "with baby steps" that included a renewed focus on teacher evaluation and cultivating student teachers. She purposely selected outstanding teachers to be part of the new clinical model, and explored incentives for them such as tuition reduction and a modest stipend. According to administrative and teaching staff at Centerville, the partnership has enabled the high school to make a variety of changes for the better. As the CHS placement coordinator noted, "There are no disadvantages to working with UD."

Bombeck Family Learning Center

The Bombeck Center on the University of Dayton campus is considered a demonstration school of the School of Education and Allied Professions rather than a lab school because its purpose is to demonstrate best practice in early learning. The Center is, unlike DECA, part of the university itself, funded through the university budget, tuition, and a legacy from the writer Erma Bombeck. It is the site for all second year Early Childhood Education (ECE) teacher candidate placements, three hours per week for the full year, as well as a provider of observation experiences for students in other university programs. The University of Dayton in collaboration with the Bombeck Family Learning Center has developed the ACCESS Curriculum Framework: **A**ssessment-supported; **C**hild-centered; **E**mergent and negotiated curriculum; **S**cience emphasis; and **I**ntegrating Standards.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING A NEW MODEL FOR CLINICAL TEACHING EXPERIENCES

The new clinical practice model at the University of Dayton has evolved since the mid- 1990s, when the block structure of retaining candidates in the same school for the senior year evolved as part of the new licensure process. The AED site visitors focused on the Adolescence to Young Adult Education (AYA) major, which prepares candidates to teach grades 7 through 12, although there is brief discussion below of ECE field experience.

Field Experiences

The majority of UD's AYA teacher candidates complete a four-year undergraduate program that includes multiple field experiences, beginning in the freshman year. During their senior year, students engage in more extensive field experiences, including student teaching. In 2008-2009 UD placed AYA candidates in five schools for senior year field placements (student teaching), including Centerville High School and Chaminade Julianne, an urban Catholic school and the most diverse high school in Dayton. "What we're moving to at the high school level is a modified professional development school model," noted one faculty member.

The AYA candidate's senior year is conceived of as their first professional teaching year. Courses in the fall semester integrate academic and pedagogical aspects of teaching. The senior year placement also begins in the fall semester: candidates spend six weeks in their assigned school: one an introductory week to experience how a new school year begins, and the other five weeks in the classroom with the teacher with whom they will be placed for fifteen weeks of student teaching during the spring semester. The major assignment in the fall methods class is teaching a five-day unit, and most students will also participate in team teaching.

University-based clinical educator role

One aspect of the new clinical model is ongoing professional development for partner school faculty. One result is that full-time UD faculty members—designated *university-based clinical educators*—are more engaged than previously, serving as resources to the schools, including a regular weekly presence in the building. The nature of professional development is driven by the needs of each building. In one instance, a UD faculty member worked with a high school to study middle school models and determine a plan for adding middle grades to that school. At another school UD history and education faculty members focused on professional development in social studies for the high school staff.

School-based clinical educator role

Another feature of the new clinical model is that cooperating classroom teachers are the primary supervisors of UD student teachers, not the university faculty. Engaging high school teachers as supervisors allows UD to meet the requirement of having student teachers supervised by highly qualified teachers. They function like adjunct UD faculty, but because the university procedure for the official designation of adjunct presented logistical issues, the school of education worked out an alternative arrangement that designates cooperating teachers as *school-based clinical educators*, pays them a stipend, and views them as part of the UD community.

The official criteria for selecting school-based clinical educators include three years of teaching, appropriate certification, and training in use of the Praxis Pathwise® observation protocol, with which

teachers evaluate candidates. In addition, the UD placement coordinator and other faculty members collaborate with each school's staff to identify the master teachers in each building who would share the university's vision of teacher preparation.

Centerville High School (CHS)

The AED research team visited Centerville High School, where they met with administrators, teachers, and candidates in order to observe the new clinical program in practice. One department chair echoed the assessment of most staff interviewed: "The block program is beneficial to Centerville faculty, Centerville students, and UD candidates." The high school has hired more than ten UD graduates who taught as candidates at CHS: "We've had a whole year to look at them."

In the fall semester, the six-week block offers cooperating teachers an opportunity to observe a candidate's teaching style, ethics, and other qualities. "We can catch problems early on and sit down with them to suggest how to address deficiencies," noted the placement coordinator. If the cooperating teacher doesn't feel that the placement will succeed, UD makes other arrangements. Other universities, noted one teacher, make the placement then inquire at the end how their candidates performed—"and you don't see their faculty either." The math department chair concurred: "UD partners are there when you need them." CHS teachers suggested that UD students attend the first week of school and complete the remaining five weeks later, so that they could experience what occurs during the first days of a new school year.

During the spring, UD teacher candidates at CHS are assigned to two teachers, spending ½ day and teaching two courses with each. This approach deliberately defines candidate and teacher as co-equals. The teachers who share a candidate also have shared planning periods to work with that candidate. This arrangement gives candidates the opportunity to be exposed to and gain understanding of two different approaches to teaching their subject. "Partnering gives students different perspectives as well as opportunities to teach classes at all levels, from lowest to AP," the placement coordinator observed.

Teachers noted many advantages to the new approach. Because teachers share a student teacher, their commitment is for two periods rather than the entire day. It gives teachers time to give more attention to individual students, and candidates the chance to learn from working with students who have learning disabilities and other challenges. It enables teachers to adjust schedules so that the student teaching placement doesn't impinge on the teacher's need to prepare students for high stakes tests. It ensures that AP instructors can focus on readying their students for the exams: "Our number one principle has to be service to our students," noted one teacher. And of course, a second opinion is valuable if there is a perceived performance problem with a candidate.

Teachers and administrators noted other benefits for the school staff. Participating CHS teachers have an expanded professional network. The principal noted that among her teachers: "I've seen huge strides in their skills." Praxis training and involvement of UD faculty members has led teachers to reflect upon their practice, read more professional materials, and engage in more conversations with each other and with student teachers. UD underwrites after-school seminars at CHS, which draw teachers and candidates from across the high schools with UD placements. Seminars cover

specific topics, such as simulations, but allow time for wide-ranging conversations about teaching. Instructional lunches at CHS, led by the UD faculty liaison, allow school staff to raise issues. Another innovation is an action research opportunity for student teachers, designed to enrich their connections within the school.

Dayton Early College Academy (DECA)

Since 2006, DECA has served as an initial placement site for students in UD's junior year gateway course for the AYA teacher education program. All AYA candidates are required to take the course, "Child and Adolescent Development," which focuses on three strands: development of critical observation skills; conducting analysis based on observations; and exploration of students in poverty. Part of the course's purpose is to teach candidates to use ongoing formative assessment to design and differentiate instruction for individual pupils. AYA students spend twenty hours of observation at DECA, fifteen in class and five at the after-school study tables. The five hours during which they work with pupils at the study tables enables UD candidates to begin learning how to talk with and get to know individual students.

UD teacher candidates are primarily white, middle class females from suburbia with limited exposure to poverty and urban settings. In interviews conducted by faculty at the start of the semester, most contrast their backgrounds with their perceptions of urban life. Only three of 56 candidates had anything positive to say about urban schools. By the end of the semester, the faculty instructor documented a substantial shift in attitudes; only two teacher candidates still focused on differences. In short, UD data suggest that the early placements at DECA shift teacher candidates' negative perceptions of urban schools and excite them about the contributions they could make to pupil learning.

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The social studies methods class has also engaged with DECA around assessment practices, as discussed below. As the faculty instructor of the methods course said: "It struck me as insane that there was a high school on campus that I wasn't working with."

Bombeck Family Learning Center: Early childhood education

All second year ECE (Early Childhood Education) students have placements at Bombeck Family Learning Center, three hours per week for a full year. In their third year they are placed with Dayton Public School Title I programs and Head Start.

In their placements at the Bombeck Center teacher candidates receive instruction in project-based learning and assessment, technology, and behavioral management. Candidates are mentored by Bombeck Center teachers, whose credentials range from one-year certificates to associate degrees to masters degrees. It is a condition of employment at Bombeck to mentor and assess students, and one administrator notes having seen notable improvements in the staff's capacity to teach and mentor as the result of these experiences. Before candidates take the preschool methods coursework, they teach two lessons, the first based on a book and related activity, the second, a table-top activity that emphasizes the design, delivery, and assessment of hands-on activity. Students also create and conduct science-based projects, with a focus on big ideas, connecting discrete science content, and assessment.

Following their clinical experiences at the Bombeck Center, candidates enter placements with Dayton Public School Title I programs and Head Start. The people they observe in these sites differ from those at the Bombeck Center: children from inner-city Dayton, and teachers and paraprofessionals of African American and Appalachian heritage. Bombeck also conducts professional development with both the Head Start and Title 1 programs. Part of the candidate's role at these sites is to be a "reciprocal mentor"; as a Bombeck administrator noted, "My students know a lot about project-based learning and assessments; those teachers know a lot about classroom management and cultural concerns." Bombeck Center and School of Education faculty members also have conducted joint professional development for teachers at these sites.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING A CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT

The teacher preparation program has expanded and refined its assessment system, first established in 2002, through course-embedded assignments and observations of field experience across UD's four-year teacher education programs. The conceptual framework for UD's comprehensive assessment system is focused on four guiding outcomes expected of all graduates of the School of Education and Allied Professions:

1. Embracing diversity for the promotion of social justice
2. Facilitating the development of scholarly practitioners
3. Building community
4. Engaging in critical reflection

Specific assignments, rubrics, and data collection are aligned with these outcomes to provide faculty and administrators in the School of Education with sound evidence on which to base decisions about individual candidates and program improvements. At the time of the 2008 AED site visit there were five benchmark assignments common across all of UD's teacher preparation programs: (1) a portfolio, with one entry per outcome domain; 2) a case study; 3) lesson plan one; 4) lesson plan two; and 5) the final portfolio, for which candidates collect evidence throughout their four years of undergraduate study.

Observation of Field Experience

Beginning in 2007, UD began to shift to a system in which school-based clinical educators assumed primary responsibility for candidate assessment. Under the previous clinical practice model, UD student teachers were assessed by both university faculty and clinical educators. Part of the rationale for this shift was the School of Education's confidence in the quality of their school-based clinical educators.

Clinical educators conduct five Pathwise® assessments of all pre-service education candidates during their fifteen-week student teaching placements. Pathwise® is a formative assessment that consists of four domains that parallel the Praxis III: organizing content knowledge for student learning; creating an environment for student learning; teaching for student learning; and teacher professionalism.

During discussions about the data, clinical educators who had been conducting the assessments over a period of time shared that they are more likely to be more rigorous on the assessments since they

have assumed a different level of responsibility in the assessment process. As a follow-up to these conversations, university faculty may conduct comparative Pathwise evaluations to use as a basis for conversations with clinical educators who have flagged specific concerns about candidate performance.

Summative Content Assessment

UD has also initiated changes in summative assessment in content areas. Changes in the content of UD methods courses are intended to ensure that candidates understand content standards before going out to teach. The changes typically reflect the pertinent National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) SPA (Specialized Professional Association) standards as well as Ohio state content standards. These changes in course content have provided an impetus for adjustment in summative assessment.

Because Pathwise® incorporates no content assessment, UD faculty sought other ways to assess candidates' capacity in their content areas. For example, in 2007, with a mini-grant from the Learning Network and joint leadership from education and history faculty, Dayton developed a new observation instrument connected to National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) secondary level standards. Student teachers piloted the instrument at two local high schools during the 2007-08 school year. Candidates kept logs of all instances when they integrated any of the NCSS standards into planning and instruction, and noted the impact on pupil learning. The process also included a rubric for two observational assessments each semester by the cooperating teacher.

The faculty members received what they called “very constructive negative feedback” from the high schools that first semester. But the resulting data had an immediate impact on teacher preparation: the logs indicated that candidates were weak in economics and in historical geography, and that they typically approached content area standards as “add-ons rather than essential elements of lesson planning and instruction.” As a result, immediate changes were made in the social studies methods course. Integrating content standards into every aspect of the methods course became the overarching goal. Candidates conducted a standards exercise every week, in which they were to think and write deeply about the NCSS content standards. The revised “NCSS Standards Assessment Integration Journal” (the log) was implemented in spring 2008.

As student teachers, social studies candidates are also required to design all their “learning goals and objectives” in order to meet one or more NCSS standards, and they are assessed on how well they address those standards. Twice each semester, cooperating teachers assess candidates' ability to plan, teach, and influence student learning according to the NCSS standards, based on their observations and on the journal of standards integration that student teachers keep.

Social studies candidates also work with DECA faculty, who provide lesson plans and samples of student work for candidates to assess in terms of whether each meets content standards. Social studies candidates are trained in various observation techniques, and they meet with the teacher in advance to review the lesson plan. Candidates observe two classes, then meet for an hour to debrief with DECA teachers, an exercise that becomes a learning community intended to improve everyone's practice.

ECE uses weekly evaluations in addition to Pathwise® and is also putting into place a summative

evaluation that incorporates National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards. ECE faculty members have also observed the pattern of clinical educators scoring candidates more rigorously than university faculty do.

INTRA-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration between UD's College of Arts and Sciences and its School of Education and Allied Professions has a long and substantial history, extending back at least to the early efforts to create an integrated science sequence in the 1990s. As the Dean of Arts and Sciences observed, "The School of Education has always been our partner in integration, and it is the success between units that has convinced our provost to go there." Among the factors that he attributes as very important to the history of close collaboration are the education dean's "temperament and commitment to collaborate."

The arts and sciences dean also observed that the School of Education and Allied Professions is more highly respected than is typical on many university campuses. What "accelerated that respect was the courage and vision the dean of education had to launch DECA." He noted that after its challenging beginnings, DECA has become a high profile program supported by many faculty members across the university.

UD has not adopted a policy of joint appointments in order to encourage collaboration across colleges. As an example of "intensive integration" without joint appointments, one faculty member noted that the mathematics department had hired three "outreach" mathematicians whose contracts and criteria for tenure specifically refer to math education. This approach is assessed as very successful in a "traditionally research-oriented math department," and led to the redesign of six courses. In addition, music education, foreign language education, and art education are all collaborative efforts between A&S and education.

The dean noted that one challenge is the differing pace of change in arts and sciences and in education, citing the five years necessary to make the integrated science sequence (discussed in the next section) a reality. He described UD as "entrepreneurial," and noted that professional schools such as education rethink curriculum quickly, but that a longer process is required to make such changes in the arts and sciences. "It's a huge culture clash: Our protection of the curriculum looks like a fetish to them." In this context, it is especially important to cultivate the face-to-face relationships that create trust, he adds.

Integrated natural science sequence (INSS)

"There's an arc of things that arts and sciences and education have done collaboratively for years," noted an associate dean from the sciences. In the mid-1990s, with science literacy as the goal, UD's science chairs came up with the idea of creating an integrated sequence. Part of the milieu at the time was the issuance of Ohio's science standards, which led to meetings between public school science teachers and the faculty of UD. The emphasis on inquiry-based science led to changes in college courses as well.

The integrated sequence was piloted in 1996-97 and implemented the following year. Designed for

students not majoring in science or engineering, the INSS is taken by virtually all BA students in the College of Arts and Sciences. The School of Education was an early client, and most education majors were soon required to take the complete INSS sequence. At the time of the site visit, middle childhood candidates with a science concentration took four courses and four labs in the integrated science sequence; ECE students took three courses and three labs. Students who plan to teach science in grades 7-12, however, are required to take courses for science majors.

All INSS students begin with physics, and then continue on either the human environment track, or the global environment track. Courses in physics, chemistry, geology, and biology make up the tracks. Each course builds upon the previous course, creating an “integrated sequence.” Every course deals with the nature of science and basic mathematical principles, and the themes of evolution, energy, and environment.

The education faculty member who teaches science methods commented that she has “seen changes” among the science faculty as a result. “The integrated science sequence has laid the foundation for greater emphasis on pedagogical content knowledge; faculty members sit together to talk about what the data show. You see the collaborative nature of working together and listening to each other’s ideas.”

At the time of the AED site visit, there were two sections of physics, one lecture and lab, the second inquiry-based. The idea behind the two sections of physics was to track differences in performance as students from the two sections advance, according to the science methods professor. Because she teaches the final methods course, her students include those from the inquiry-based course and other sections, enabling her to track the differences, which she would like to continue to do as these students move into teaching.

Learning-Living Community (LLC)

Another vehicle for cross-college collaboration at UD is the learning-living community (LLC). All first-year students at UD are expected to participate in an LLC. LLCs focus on themes ranging from “Writing and the Arts” to “Sustainability, Energy, and the Environment,” and are designed to provide opportunities for students to learn with the people with whom they live. (Each LLC is based in a residence hall.) The “Curiosity in the Classroom” LLC, designed specifically for prospective teachers, connects science instruction at the university level with the science that students will ultimately be teaching. In 2008-2009, 96 education majors were enrolled in this LLC. Its members were taking special sections of introductory teacher education courses as well as “Geology for Teachers” and a second science lab course focused on the physical universe. Faculty in these science courses are expected to model best practices in teaching, including inquiry-based learning. Through an explicit emphasis on ways to foster curiosity in K-8 pupils, this LLC provides opportunities for UD students to experience science lessons taught by current grade school teachers, field trips to science museums and centers, and discussions of strategies for teaching science to children. The education faculty plan to track these students over the course of their work at UD, looking for differences, hoping the LLC experience will pay off by the time they reach their methods coursework.

EVIDENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Earlier this case study noted UD’s proposed program improvement objective, as well as the indicators

of change and evidence of pupil success that they hoped would result from the expansion of the teacher education program assessment system. The AED site visit and other background information indicate progress toward the initial goals, although the assessment of impact on pupil learning remained a challenge.

Impact on Student Teacher Assessment

UD's teacher preparation program made major changes in its assessment system for several years prior to the AED site visit. The program adopted the Pathwise® formative assessment system, and made the decision to allocate primary responsibility to school-based clinical educators (master teachers) to evaluate student teachers in the classroom using that system. Both these steps were intended to ensure "sound evidence" for evaluation of candidates, and the differences between teacher and faculty evaluation of candidates raised intriguing questions in that regard.

Because Pathwise® does not assess content knowledge, however, a different strategy would be required to achieve the stated goal of incorporating more explicit assessment of candidate content knowledge. For example, education and history faculty collaborated to incorporate NCSS standards into the social studies methods course, and into candidates' practice as student teachers, and created an assessment of candidates that considered how well they addressed the NCSS standards. Twice a semester school-based clinical educators assessed candidates' ability to influence pupil learning according to the NCSS standards, based on the educators' observations and journals kept by students. All AYA candidates now have content and standards specific evaluation: Language Arts, Science, and Math.

Indicators of Change

All of the indicators of change have come to pass that UD hoped to see as evidence that their proposed program improvement objective was being addressed. For example, history faculty members and the social studies methods instructor became engaged in revising the methods course to address the weaknesses of candidates in economics and historical geography exposed by the pilot of the social studies observation instrument. The August faculty meeting of the teacher education program is dedicated to the examination of data in order to improve the program overall. Lastly, school-based and university-based clinical educators consider both Pathwise® and content-related assessments in evaluating candidates' performance in the classroom.

Impact on Student Success

The new assessments enable the teacher education program to monitor improvements in pupil learning occurring in individual classrooms. This is a significant step towards the more comprehensive evaluation of pupil learning gains that the program aims to achieve.

ELEMENTS OF LEARNING NETWORK INFLUENCE

A core purpose of the site visits was to document any evidence that participation in the Learning Network contributed to institutional change in teacher preparation at the university. University of Dayton was an active member of the Learning Network, sending teams to all three annual meetings and securing a mini-grant.

Membership

According to the Dean of the School of Education and Allied Professions, the University of Dayton's selection as a member of the Learning Network reinforced the institution's reputation as a national leader in teacher preparation.

Annual Meetings

The University of Dayton sent teams of high-level administrators to the annual Learning Network meetings and led workshops on reform-related initiatives at each of the three meetings. Both the dean of the School of Education and the director of teacher education attended all of the Learning Network events, along with representatives of the arts and sciences. As one participant noted, the meetings facilitated collaboration and peer-to-peer learning with like-minded institutions, and provided opportunities to showcase Dayton's innovative work in urban education and social justice. The dean of arts and sciences recalled: "It opened my eyes to many things, models that you just don't come across elsewhere. It was a combination of excellent high quality presentations, plus a lot of time to talk with others about projects and initiatives—and infectious energy."

Mini-grant

The University of Dayton's mini-grant provided support for efforts to improve candidate and program assessments and to refine field observation instruments. According to the director of teacher education, the work supported by the mini-grant built on Dayton's longstanding efforts to "help our candidates use ongoing formative assessment to design and differentiate instruction." A major thrust of this work was to develop an assessment that provides evidence of the extent to which Dayton students promote diversity and social justice through their work in classrooms. With joint leadership from education and history faculty, Dayton also developed a new observation instrument connected to ten NCSS standards at the secondary level.

Culture of Evidence

Among the factors fueling the School of Education's increasing attention to evidence-based practice was the university's engagement in the Learning Network, which ensured ongoing contact with others engaged in similar work. The mini-grant, as noted above, provided crucial support to build on UD's history of formative classroom assessment.

OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

The site visit documented other factors that contribute in important ways to UD's successful history of innovation in teacher preparation.

University Commitment to Teacher Preparation.

The Marianist mission of UD, with its emphasis on service to people living in poverty and those consigned to the edges of society, means that the teacher preparation program's commitment to social justice and urban education provides a vehicle for carrying out the university's vision in profound ways. The leadership of the university supported the dean of education's vision of engagement with the Dayton Early College Academy even in times of controversy.

Collaboration among Colleges and Departments.

As one faculty member noted, the collaboration among deans at UD goes “beyond cost sharing. It’s not just the absence of conflict. It’s real collaboration.” Changes such as the development of the integrated natural science sequence, and the integration of NCSS standards into social studies teacher preparation, illustrate this in action. The lengthy history of these patterns of collaboration suggests that it is a practice engrained in the culture of at least some elements of the university. Deans and department chairs receive allocations of discretionary money which some have used for collaborative enterprises. The university also has a history of investing in professional development for faculty members, including conferences focused on pedagogy.

Partnerships with Schools

The pattern of collaboration within the university is matched by its lengthy history of collaboration with school partners. The changes underway in clinical experience, particularly at a couple of the university’s partner high schools, reflect well-established relationships of mutual trust and professional respect, and similar visions of continual improvement in practice.

State-level policy changes

State policies—or their absence—can have a significant impact on practice at university-based teacher preparation programs. UD has been invited to take part in state deliberations around important education issues. At the time of AED’s site visit, UD faculty and administrators were engaged in discussions at the state level about revisiting induction practice, participating in the pre-service and second year of induction committees. Ohio’s emphasis on linking pupil performance to teachers has been an important factor for UD as the teacher preparation program has sought to enhance its assessment approach.

Capacity for Sustainability

The history of collaboration among university schools and colleges, the well-established partnerships with schools, the willingness to take risks embodied in the creation of DECA, and the university’s mission of service, all suggest that the approach to teacher preparation reform embodied in the practices of the School of Education have the capacity for long-term sustainability.

APPENDIX A

Shauna Adams, Associate Professor, School of Education and Allied Professions and Bombeck Family Learning Center

Paul Benson, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Eileen Booher, Principal, Centerville High School

Connie Bowman, Associate Professor and Director of Partnerships and Clinical Experiences, School of Education and Allied Professions

Rachel Collopy, Assistant Professor, School of Education and Allied Professions

Susan Ferguson, Director, Center for Catholic Education, Lalanne Program

Judy Hennessey, Principal, Dayton Early College Academy

Janet Herrelko, Associate Professor and Adolescent to Young Adult Education Program, School of Education and Allied Professions

Ellen Isbell, English faculty, Centerville High School

Mary Kay Kelly, Assistant Professor, School of Education and Allied Professions

Kathryn Kinnucan-Welsch, Chair and Professor, School of Education and Allied Professions

Thomas J. Lasley II, Dean and Professor, School of Education and Allied Profession

Lori Lonsert, Math faculty, Centerville High School

Rochonda Nenonene, Program Director, Urban Teacher Academy; Administrative Faculty and First Year Coordinator

Don Pair, Professor and Associate Dean for Integrated Learning and Curriculum, Geology Department, College of Arts and Sciences

Todd B. Smith, Assistant Professor of Physics

Joseph A. Untener, Associate Provost for Faculty and Administrative Affairs

John J. White, Assistant Professor, School of Education and Allied Professions

Jeff Wolff West Unit Principal, Centerville High School

APPENDIX B

LEARNING NETWORK – MEASURING PROGRESS

NAME OF INSTITUTION: University of Dayton

TNE PRINCIPLE BEING ADDRESSED:

#1 Grounding all elements of teacher education program on sound evidence

OBJECTIVE RELATED TO PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT:

To further develop our teacher education program assessment system so that decisions about candidates and program improvements are grounded on sound evidence (TNE Design Principle #1) Our goal as a Department of Teacher Education is to enhance our clinical practice assessment instrument to 1) incorporate more explicit assessment of knowledge of content, and 2) to refine the evidence we are currently collecting on pupil learning gains.

The specific objective is to redesign our clinical practice instrument that provides sound evidence of 1) candidate content knowledge and 2) measurement of pupil learning gains.

INDICATOR OF CHANGE IN INSTITUTION, PROGRAM, OR FACULTY

Indicators of change include:

- 1) regular faculty meetings in which evidence of candidate content knowledge and pupil learning gains are reviewed for program improvement purposes
 - 2) meetings with mentor teachers in which evidence of candidate content knowledge and pupil learning gains are considered in candidate evaluation of clinical practice and letters of recommendation
 - 3) meetings with faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences in which candidate content knowledge is considered in curriculum revisions
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RELATIONSHIP OF OBJECTIVE AND INDICATOR TO STUDENT SUCCESS

[DESCRIBE LOGICAL CONNECTION OF OBJECTIVE TO STUDENT SUCCESS]

Research had indicated that enhanced candidate content knowledge is related to pupil learning. The revised clinical practice observation instrument and review of candidate content knowledge and pupil learning data generated from the instrument are directly related to student success.