# Developing Novice Teachers as Change Agents:
## Student Teacher Placements "Against the Grain"

**By Sheila Lane, Nancy Lacefield-Parachini, & JoAnn Isken**

*Sheila Lane is director of special projects with the Center X Teacher Education Program at the University of California, Los Angeles; Nancy Lacefield-Parachini is administrator for Professor Development with District F of the Los Angeles Unified School District; and JoAnn Isken is principal of Moffett Elementary School, Lennox Elementary School District, Lennox, California.*

### Introduction

Efforts at reforming urban schools have often revolved around choosing the "right" formulaic programs or providing sufficient funds to repair schools. However, too little attention has been paid to staffing schools with competent teachers who desire to stay and effect reform. Finding ways to educate student teachers and novice teachers at these schools so they see themselves as capable of generating substantive change has been difficult. How does a university assist student teachers at urban sites to become both competent and empowered while simultaneously learning to teach?

Feiman-Nemser (1990) has described conceptual orientations in teacher education as "cluster[s] of ideas about the goals of teacher preparation and the means for achieving them" (p.1). She describes a

"critical orientation" as one that "combines a progressive social vision with a radical critique of schooling. On the one hand, there is optimistic faith in the power of education to help shape a new social order; on the other, there is a sobering realization that schools have been instrumental in preserving social inequities" (p.6). Yet, a teacher education program committed to reforming urban schools with student teachers becoming "critical educators" faces several dilemmas when placing student teachers. One dilemma is the shortage of "model" guiding[1] teachers in urban schools. According to Haberman (1993), only 5-8 percent of the current teachers in urban schools are considered outstanding teachers. A second dilemma is that there are many potential guiding teachers in urban schools whose conceptual orientation about students and learning differs from that of the university. These guiding teachers create a classroom model that often contradicts the beliefs of the student teachers. A third dilemma is that most teachers in urban schools do not conceive of their role as being a change agent: ". . . in Goodlad's (1990) recent survey of preservice programs nationwide, only 5 percent of student and faculty respondents, when questioned about the role of teachers in schools, alluded to the idea that the teacher could be an agent for change" (Goodlad as cited in Cochran-Smith, 1991, p.281). A fourth dilemma is that most models of the guiding teacher-student teacher relationship are unidirectional, based on the transmission concept of a mentor-mentee relationship where there is just one learner and one teacher. Within this traditional apprenticeship model, the novice is rarely encouraged to think critically or question the practices of the expert. A thoughtful university's goal, on the other hand, must be to develop teachers who " . . . view knowledge and situations as problematic and socially constructed rather than as certain" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987, p. 288).

As teacher educators who place student teachers solely in urban settings, we contend that novice teachers need to develop feelings of "ownership" so they feel empowered to transform the urban educational setting rather than feel defeated by it. The question, then, is this: How does a teacher education program based on the premise of developing novice teachers as "transformative" urban educators (Giroux, 1986) place student teachers in urban classrooms?

We sought to investigate this question by examining the placement of our student teachers in two urban schools. Cochran-Smith (1991), reports findings from having placed student teachers with cooperative teachers who were " . . . themselves struggling to teach against the grain" (p.285), and who believed strongly in the teacher's role as reform agent. She found that: "Despite their inexperience, student teachers do learn about teaching against the grain when they talk with experienced teachers within a collaborative context where questions are urged, answers are not expected, and the tentative forays of beginners are supported" (p.285). Because of the dilemmas described earlier, as well as the "critical orientation" of our teacher education program, we however found ourselves in a situation different from the one Cochran-Smith discussed. We placed a group of student teachers at two urban

elementary schools with guiding teachers who were not strong proponents of reform and possessed beliefs different from the critical orientation of the teacher education program. Instead, the student teachers were reform-minded and encouraged to work collaboratively with their guiding teachers. Thus, they were differently placed "against the grain" (Cochran-Smith, 1991). Data were collected on these student teachers over the academic year, and it emerged that they had a substantial impact on the practice of their guiding teachers. This led to further inquiry on two main questions: Do certain student teacher placements engender critical reflection on the part of both student teachers and guiding teachers? What everyday practices are challenged by these kinds of placements?

This research was conducted by the three of us: two principals at urban schools (both schools with over 95 percent of students eligible for a free or reduced lunch) in which the focal student teachers were placed and a university faculty member serving as university liaison from UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Studies Center X Teacher Education Program. The principals also headed a team of student teachers who student taught at their school sites. The principals conducted a weekly seminar for the student teachers; the university liaison participated in the seminar as well, and also observed the student teachers regularly. While student teaching, both students and guiding teachers wrote in interactive journals regularly, thus encouraging reflection and questioning by both. In addition, after their first year, beginning teachers continued meeting with the university liaison, participating in seminar and wrote their Master's Portfolio. These journals and portfolios as well as interviews were selected as data over the last five years.

Believing that not all of the guiding teachers would have the same critical orientation as that of Center X and the student teachers, the principals exhorted the student teachers to question the practices of their guiding teachers. Student teachers were expected to develop their strong theoretical principles into a practice consistent with their conceptions of how their students learn. The principals, university liaison and student teachers all read literature about the common pressure in urban schools, an institutional pressure, to conform to the "norms" of the school or get pushed out (Weiner, 1993). In order to counter this pressure, student teachers were pushed to examine and confront their beliefs continually, and were charged to help their guiding teachers to do the same. Thus, their reflections during student teaching were not only about their practice, *but were about how they believed their practice was affecting their guiding teachers.* They were expected to develop strong enough principles so they could continue this conceptual orientation during their first year of teaching, and thus were expected to challenge the practices and beliefs of their schools.

At both schools, at the end of the first year, it was found that the preservice teachers had become change agents for their guiding teachers in terms of implementing changes and thinking about practice. This finding fueled additional study and analysis to flesh out the conditions under which our students effect change in their placements.

## The Program

UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Studies' Center X Teacher Education Program's aim is to nurture "critical (transformative) pedagogues": urban teachers who challenge the conditions they find and feel empowered to change them. The program works solely with urban schools, and supports their students in the field for two years: the first year while earning their teaching credential, and the second as a full time teacher in an urban school. Student teachers are encouraged to employ sociocultural teaching methods and to become social change agents in their schools and communities, and to view cultural and linguistic diversity as an asset to teaching and learning. During the second year, while teaching, students return for university seminars and classes and write a Master's Portfolio. One of our teachers, "Maria," reflected on the uniqueness of this teacher education model during her first year teaching in an urban school:

> *When I see or hear about new teachers implementing classroom strategies that they adopt from their teacher education programs, I find myself thinking that they have been brainwashed. They have not had to question or struggle with their identities as teachers; they just do what their program tells them to do. These teachers do not have ownership over the strategies they implement.*

During both years, students are continually encouraged to question and reflect on their practice and link their practice to theory. They examine how their everyday actions reflect a socially just philosophy. They also examine the underlying political and economic forces which work to maintain the status quo at their school sites. The program stresses the five components Bennett (1995) describes as ". . . a model of preparing teachers for diversity: . . . selection, understanding multiple historical perspectives, developing intercultural competence, combating racism, and teacher decision making" (Bennett as cited in Ladson-Billings, 1999, p.223).

## Existing Research

Limited research exists around guiding teachers (Ariav & Clinard, 1996; Ganser, 1997; Hamlin, 1997). Cochran-Smith's (1991) study emphasized the effects of cooperating teachers on student teachers, although she did find that, as a result of the frequent discussions and reflections, the role of the cooperating teachers was "much more extensive than the demonstration and evaluation of teaching strategies" (p.305). Hamlin (1997), in an extensive study, found changes in supervising teachers as falling in four categories: learning ". . . new ideas and activities . . . ; review/reinforcement of techniques . . . ; reflection and analysis of current teaching practices; and renewed excitement about teaching" (p.81). Ariav and Clinard (1996) found some additional benefits: supervision gave the teacher an opportunity to observe her children, which gave her a " . . . different perspective on

their personalities" (p.10). These studies also found that teachers enjoyed the opportunities for discussions not common at their schools, and learning how to be more reflective. Ganser (1997) surveyed both cooperating and mentor teachers and also found them describing the benefits of working with a student teacher. Those benefits included increased thinking about long-range planning, and a kind of professional rejuvenation. One mentioned that he/she became more tolerant of mistakes as a result. While these studies reveal a willingness on the part of guiding teachers to be reflective, there's no evidence that reflection led to actual changes in their practice.

Vann (1988-89) has a broader point of view and suggests that the entire urban school often benefits from hosting student teachers: "To neglect an opportunity to place a student teacher in a situation that could improve student performance and indirectly contribute to a strengthening of the entire staff and school in the process [through involving guiding teachers in a reflective process] would be irresponsible" (p.60). D. Kagan (1992) discusses student teacher placements in which the guiding teacher and student teacher do not have the same conceptual orientation and argues that ". . . growth on the part of the guiding teacher may also occur in these settings because cooperating teachers need to be prepared to discuss opposing beliefs rather than demand blind conformity" (p.163).

In addition, Kagan states that student teachers would benefit from such placements because they ". . . were more likely to examine and reconstruct their own beliefs if they were confronted with cooperating teachers whose beliefs were different from their own" (p.157). She emphasizes: "cognitive dissonance may be necessary for novices to confront their own beliefs and images and acknowledge that they need adjustment . . . Student teachers need to understand that benefits may accrue from immediate discomfort" (p.163). The idea that placements of this nature stimulate critical, reflective practice by both the guiding teacher and the student teacher is also supported by Tom (1985): ". . . to make teaching problematic is to raise doubts about what, under ordinary circumstances appear to be effective or wise practice...the objects of our doubts might be typical ways teachers respond to classroom management issues, customary beliefs about the relationship of schooling to society, or ordinary definitions of teacher authority—both in the classroom and in the broader school context" (p.37).

The extent to which these studies focused on urban sites is not clear. As well, the conceptual orientation of the guiding teachers vis a vis the supporting academic institutions is not clear. This suggested to us a need to conduct research solely in urban sites. Further, student teachers ought to learn to teach in urban sites, despite the shortage of "model" guiding teachers. More research is needed; this study is an attempt to fill this gap.

## Part Two:

### *How Do Guiding and Student Teachers Work Together?*

Most conceptions of the relationship between guiding teachers and student teachers envision a forward moving linear relationship, that of the mentor training the mentee, the expert training the novice. In many traditional models, student teachers are placed with mentor classroom teachers and are expected to imitate and replicate their practices. These kinds of linear learning relationships in a traditional apprenticeship model have been questioned and reconsidered by Lave and Wenger (1991). Wenger (1998) conceptualized a relationship as a more dynamic one, one of "changing participation and identity transformation in a community of practice" (p.11). In line with this, we are researching the premise of a possible conceptual change in the relationship between the guiding teacher and the student teacher to a kind of cognitive apprenticeship, where both would be involved in "sense-making" as a part of a dialogical relationship, one in which both parties could have an equal effect on the other (Shor, 1992). Murrell (2002) describes a "community teacher" as one prepared through "the immersion of candidates in a rich context of collaborative activity and inquiry" (p.16). He emphasizes that student teachers need to develop "a situated understanding of people, principles, and context" (p.17). Gaining what Murrell calls a "cultural learning perspective" (p.16) will help them in their development as change agents during their cognitive apprenticeship in a community of practice.

This "against the grain" student teaching model focused on preparing teachers "…not just for the mechanics of their occupation…but to develop in them intellectual habits of reflection on their calling . . . that are the mark of a professional continually engaged in self-improvement" (Goodlad, p.38 as cited in Yost, 1997). As a part of the "against the grain model," the student teacher and guiding teacher wrote to each other in an interactive journal which contained questions and answers from both the guiding teacher and the student teacher, as well as reflections from both. During these interactions, which are a part of the data, they were making their thinking visible. This kind of dialogue, envisioned by Zeichner (1993), where student teachers and their guiding teachers are looking at how their ". . . everyday actions challenge or support various oppressions and injustices relate[d] to social class, race, gender, sexual preference, [and] religion . . . [ can become] a central part of teachers' reflections"(p.14). In a traditional transmission model, this rich interaction would not take place; instead, student teaching would be looked at mainly as a kind of training model in techniques and methods.

Ladson-Billings (1999) also described a model teacher education program with a critical orientation, one in which "the emphasis on understanding race and racism is not a goal in itself but, rather, a means for helping students develop pedagogical options that disrupt racist classroom practices and structural inequities" (p.237). Building on this literature, we developed our research agenda, which

examined how our students "disrupted practices" at their school sites while they student taught or were in their first year of teaching as well as how their guiding teachers were changed as a result of their interaction.

## Methods and Data Sources

We selected and analyzed data on all of the student teachers and their guiding teachers. Each year, because of a shortage of "model" guiding teachers, a subset of three to five student teachers in the cohort was placed "against the grain." After identifying themes in the data, we selected some robust examples for further analysis of that theme.

Data came from interactive dialogue journals student teachers and guiding teachers kept during the student teaching experience. In addition, student teachers wrote weekly reflections and lesson analyses. Guiding teachers, principals and student teachers were interviewed. Videotaped lessons were analyzed as well. During their second year in the program, students wrote master's degrees portfolios which included analyses of their practice and reflections on theory and practice, which were analyzed. In addition, field observations by the university liaison and the principals were analyzed. Three to five interactions between students and guiding teachers and from first year teachers were selected for further study because they revealed a reflective interactive dialogue between guiding teacher and student teacher or revealed an action plan for change by teacher participants. From that population, one teacher and her student teachers were studied for five years. A case study is being written about this teacher; excerpts are included here.

A systematic analysis of the data was conducted and we coded the data. Initial analysis of data was based on Hamlin's (1997) four categories of change in supervising teachers: learning new ideas and activities; review/reinforcement of techniques; reflection and analysis of current teaching practices; and renewed excitement about teaching (p.81). However, we found these categories inadequate in describing the development of the teaching ideas of the guiding teachers as well as those of the student teachers. We identified patterns of practice in which commitment to effecting change emerged: grouping students; community building; and social justice projects that demonstrated the development of teacher agency. These themes were transformed during different stages of teacher development. *For student teachers*, we coded the work for new ideas posed during their student teaching experience. *For the guiding teachers*, we studied ideas tried from novice teachers that challenged their own practice. *For the full time first year urban teacher*, we focused on ideas tried that challenged practices of the school in which they were teaching. As a part of examining teacher agency, specific statements were examined for personal pronoun referents, e.g. "I'm planning on trying that."

To derive final conclusions, data were examined to define major categories and

patterns and to answer research questions (Yin, 1989). Facts and information from the different methods of data collection were triangulated to seek convergence from two or three independent sources. Efforts to arrive at the same meaning by at least three independent approaches was used (Stake, 1985). The effect of the change factor was examined from entries in the student teacher-guiding teacher's interactive journals, from teacher and principal interviews, and from other writings.

## Results/Educational Importance

The main finding that emerged from the study was that the student teachers became change agents and had an impact on the practice of guiding teachers at the schools. The student teachers had such strong beliefs that they did not waver even when confronted by guiding teachers with differing conceptual orientations. Rather than being co-opted by the "grain," they changed the "grain." Vignettes from the writings of the participants, both guiding and student teachers, indicate the efficacy of the student teachers. These student teachers continued to be studied the following year, during their first year of teaching. Their commitment to remain agents of change are clearly described in reflective writings in which they describe ways in which they challenged the practices of their schools.

One key result was that the relationship between the student teachers and guiding teachers was, in fact, bi-directional and recursive. Clark and Peterson (1986) described the relationship between teacher behavior, student behavior, and student achievement as circular and not linear. The data in this study reveal the same circular relationship between preservice teacher behavior, student behavior and achievement, and guiding teacher behavior and achievement. Each one's behavior affected the behavior and interactions of the other. However, in the case of these preservice teachers, the classroom experiences and dialogue constructed by the preservice teachers and the guiding teachers resulted in strong changes in the guiding teachers, both in teaching practice and in thinking in a social justice framework.

Discussing effective staff development, Wilson and Berne (1999) described several characteristics of successful programs: "is collaborative, providing opportunities for teachers to interact with peers . . . incorporates constructivist approaches to teaching and learning; recognizes teachers as professionals and adult learners" (Abdal-Haqq, 1995, as cited in Wilson & Berne, p.175). They emphasized that teachers have little experience engaging in "professional discourse" so they can develop "critical collegiality." However, in the current study, because the guiding teachers were working with student teachers and thus were viewed as "experts" by the surrounding school community, they may have been more willing to engage in the kind of professional, "critical" interactive discourse that eventually resulted in changes in their points of view towards their students. These changes in their conceptual orientations about their students were reflected in changes in their practice. One example of this change was their seeing students as being capable of

work in small groups, which they were unable to acknowledge before having a student teacher in their classroom.

*Three main sites of change* emerged in the dialogue journals: one based on grouping children in the classroom; one based on building community in the classroom; and one based on opposing the practices at school sites. Those areas are exemplars in which the conceptual orientation that novices brought to the setting was contradictory to the practices of the guiding teachers or the school.

### *Grouping Children/Challenging Practices of the Guiding Teacher and School*

One guiding teacher whom we have been studying longitudinally, began the 1996-1997 school year, the first year of our study, by informing her student teacher that group work, even pairing students, did not work with her fifth grade students because they were *"incapable"* of engaging in this kind of work; she mainly taught directed individual lessons from textbooks to her students. Seven months later, on April 21, 1997, she wrote to her student teacher in their interactive journal: "Hats off to you for taking the challenge of cooperative groups! You did a great job of choosing assignments, or projects, that eased the students into the roles of their groups." Two weeks later, on May 5, 1997, she wrote: "I can't stress enough how you've been able to convert me over to being a believer in cooperative groups. You've done an EXCELLENT job of organizing and structuring the activity. All your hard work has truly paid off."

During the following school year, the guiding teacher changed her own practice to become more constructivist. An interview with the principal (one of the researchers in this study) revealed that during this school year, this teacher began planning integrated units with her student teachers, which involved group work as their base. Over the next two years, she and her student teachers gradually incorporated themes into these jointly planned units involving social justice, using art by Diego Rivera and other artists who made social statements in their work. The principal emphasized that all of this was new for this teacher, and reflected a renewed excitement about teaching. This teacher continued to sustain this constructivist pattern during the 1998-1999 school year. She involved herself in team teaching and wrote supportive comments to her student teacher about using group work. During the 1999-2000 school year, there was no dialogue between this guiding teacher and student teacher in the dialogue journal about grouping issues that was *not* supportive of small group work.

Another participant, a first year teacher, reflected on her issues with grouping and taking ownership during her first year of teaching in an urban school, after she had completed her student teaching. She was under pressure by others at her site to conform to the norms of the school and stop using groups, but she didn't waver in her beliefs. She wrote: "Other teachers recommended eliminating my groupwork and concentrating on direct instruction, focusing on 'the basics.' My philosophy

that children learn by constructing meaning by interactions with others and engaging in meaningful tasks negates this concept of students passively learning. Fellow teachers tell me that English Language Learners are the hardest to teach—that they have just given up. I will not accept that as a reason for non-participation and failure. I encourage them and attempt to make conversations and dialogues as comfortable and authentic as possible."

### *Building Community/Challenging Practices of the School and Guiding Teacher*

Another recurring theme that emerged involved building community in the classroom. Two student teachers during the 2000-2001 school year introduced ideas that challenged their guiding teachers' notions of classroom community. One student teacher wrote:

> When I first observed my guiding teacher's classroom, I noticed the children did not ask a lot of questions. I challenged my guiding teacher to come up with ways to have the children talk more, share, and ask each other questions. I think it came down to encouraging and asking more about the students' home life. My guiding teacher has been challenged to see home more as a resource. He has seen results from activities that have focused on home and students' lives. I think he is realizing that, although structures and schedules are important, spontaneity and freedom in their writing can also be valuable.

Here, the student teacher was explicitly challenging his guiding teacher to think about his practice in new ways. The student teacher was encouraged to write about this and reflect on his "mission" to his university field supervisor (who was also the principal at his school.) This kind of challenge and support is unusual for a teacher education program.

The second student teacher wrote in a similar vein about her relationship with her guiding teacher: "I have challenged him with the activities I have put forth in the community building in the morning. I present activities that require him (guiding teacher) to participate also. I give students journal prompts to write about after sharing time. When we had the journal prompt: 'I feel sad when,' the journal entries shocked my guiding teacher. It opened a new world for him to know his students were feeling this way. I think it scared him to see his students talk about things that scare them or sadden them."

A first year teacher reflected about a difficult challenge she faced in her third grade class of eighteen students. She decided to challenge the practices of the school. Some students, because they were Jehovah's Witnesses, were prohibited from observing Christmas. She wrote:

> It made me think about how different each of my students was and it opened my eyes to the lives they [the children] led outside of the classroom. The question of whether or not we would participate in the Christmas Assembly was on every

student's mind. We had three class meetings about the assembly where we talked about why it would be difficult to participate. The students who wanted to perform were very understanding about the situation we faced since we had three students who did not celebrate Christmas. We needed to put community first to demonstrate its importance in our classroom. Together we decided to value the beliefs of our classmates and not participate in the assembly.

## Remaining Questions/Further Research

Developing change agency in teachers as the mission of teacher education has implications for changing the structure of teacher education programs. Further research should examine how to identify guiding teachers who are open to interactive dialogue with their student teachers, and thus perhaps interested in examining their practice. In addition, the extent to which guiding teachers need special training to engage in effective dialogue/reflection should be investigated.

Besides trying to define the characteristics of teachers who may hold differing conceptual orientations, but still be open to changing their practice, we need to examine the significance of the settings (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Perhaps the settings influenced these interactions. Some questions that can be examined: What are the kinds of settings (school sites, communities) that help shape teachers' beliefs? What is the influence of principals? Some of the change we observed in teaching practice may have resulted from the direct charge the student teachers received from their university field supervisors (the principals and university liaison) and the entire teacher education program's philosophy. The student teachers' mission was to reform the schools while learning how to teach children in urban schools. As documented above, the student teachers took this charge seriously.

Another reason for some of the changes in the practice of the guiding teachers may result from a close working relationship with the principals at the participating schools who had special knowledge about the setting: the principals also ran the seminars on teaching for the student teachers. Sometimes, universities undervalue principals of urban schools, viewing them as "the enemy" instead of partners and try to bypass them instead of work with them. However, principals can contribute to the knowledge of both the student teachers and university personnel. "By virtue of that unique school-based perspective, the principal can observe the student teacher with knowledge of the classroom setting and environmental conditions that the university supervisor simply does not have" (Vann, 1988-89, p.61). Thus, principals could fill in the needed information about the community to enhance the practice of the student teachers. In addition, Vann discusses other special knowledge of the principal as the instructional leader of the school. Vann advocates the need for regular meetings among the university supervisors, the student teachers and the principal. Perhaps the teachers were open to change because of the strong university-school partnership and the close working relationship with the principals that existed at these schools. Thus, linking with school principals in innovative

university-school partnerships can work to effect change in urban schools even when those schools have guiding teachers with contradictory conceptual orientations.

A commitment to empowering novice teachers who meet the highest standards for urban schools raises additional questions. Can novice teachers meet these standards if they student teach with teachers whose beliefs are contradictory to the conceptual orientation of the novice? How does the university have to change its program to meet the challenges posed by these dilemmas? Does the university need to ask new questions about the appropriateness of certain teachers as guiding teachers, such as: Which teachers will be willing to listen and engage in an open discussion about their beliefs? What are the characteristics of a guiding teacher that would support this "critical" model? Are most guiding teachers and schools changed by the experience of working with student teachers in these ways?

## Conclusion

In the situations cited, guiding teachers appeared to change their practices. The student teachers became "change agents" in part by engaging their guiding teachers in dialogue about how students learn and how best to facilitate their learning. By confronting and reconstructing their own beliefs, the student teachers were able to define their social justice, critical agenda and develop their own conceptions of equity for their students, all of which they conveyed to their guiding teachers with the knowledge that this might spark a lively interactive dialogue.

The student teachers' focus on grouping students and building community in the classroom were the ways they communicated their social justice agenda in their daily practice. Since grouping students is based on a philosophy of how students learn, it is not surprising that this issue became a recurrent concern and area of difference and discussion between student teachers and their guiding teachers.

Cochran-Smith (1991) has stated that in most preservice programs "the role of the teacher as an agent for change is not emphasized, and students are not deliberately socialized into assuming responsibility for school reform and renewal" (p.285). Instead, "student teachers are encouraged to talk about 'relevant' and technical rather than critical or epistemological aspects of teaching" (p.285). Zeichner and Liston (1987) elaborated on this issue: ". . . a great deal of inconsistency exists between the role of teacher as professional decisionmaker, . . . and the dominant role of teacher as technician, one our society and its institutions seek to maintain" (p.304).

Thus, a key element in a new "critical pedagogy-oriented" student teaching model, where urban student teachers challenge the conditions they find and feel empowered to change them, is the weekly teaching seminar in which student teachers critically reflect on their experiences with their peers and university educators. In seminar, the issues named by Tom are the kinds of problems that the student teachers discuss, and where they are urged to *raise them again* with their

guiding teachers. Smyth (1989) submits that the benefits of such discussions at school sites as well as at the university are "mutually reinforcing . . . so that both preservice and inservice teachers are able to support one another in the effort to reclaim the classroom . . ." (p.7). By following the critical pedagogy model, student teachers and first year teachers were explicitly encouraged to become more than technicians, to become agents of social change, and this commitment was mani fested in their practice and interactions with their guiding teachers and their schools. This kind of goal, where both student teacher and guiding teacher challenge structural inequities in the system, has not been explicitly fostered by most teacher education programs.

The needs of urban schools and the diversity of their environments, both the student body and the teachers, demand creative measures which can use this richness in diversity to better educate all participants. Teacher preparation programs can work with urban educators to open an authentic dialogue that emphasizes reform.

## Note

[1] The Center X program refers to those full time veteran teachers who agree to mentor student teachers as guiding teachers. In other programs, they call them cooperating teachers or supervising teachers.

## References

Ariav, T. & Clinard, L.M. (1996, June-July). Does coaching student teachers affect the professional development and teaching of cooperating teachers? A cross-cultural perspective. Paper presented at the International Conference on Teacher Education, Natanya, Israel.

Clark, C.C. & Peterson, P.L. (1986). Teachers' thought processes. In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd Edition), pp.255-296. New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

Cochran-Smith, M. (1991). Learning to teach against the grain. *Harvard Educational Review, 51*(3), 279-310.

Feiman-Nemser, S. (1991, January). Conceptual orientations in teacher education. Issue paper 90-2, RIE. Lansing, MI: National Center for Research on Teacher Education.

Ganser, T. (1997, March). The contribution of service as a cooperating teacher and mentor teacher to the professional development of teachers. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the AmericanEducational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Giroux, H. (1986). Authority, intellectuals, and the politics of practical learning. *Teachers College Record, 88*(1), 22-40.

Haberman, M. (1993). Predicting the success of urban teachers. *Action in Urban Education, 15*(3), 1-5.

Hamlin, K. (1997). Partnerships that support the professional growth of supervising teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly, Winter,* 77-88.

Hollingsworth, S. (1989). Prior beliefs and cognitive change inlearning to teach. *American*

*Educational Research Journal, (26),*160-189.

Kagan,D.(1992). Professional growth among preservice and beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research, 62*(2), 129-169.

Ladson-Billings,G.(1999). Preparing teachers for diverse student populations: A critical race theory perspective. In A. Iran-Nejad & P.D. Pearson (Eds.) *Review of research in education, 24,* (pp.211-247). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.

Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Murrell, P.C. Jr. (2002, April). Community teachers: Promoting teaching in culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse urban schools and communities. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Smyth, J.(1989). Developing and sustaining critical reflection in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(2), 2-9.

Stake, R. (1985). Case study. In *Research, Policy and Practice. World Yearbook of Education.* New York: Nichols Publishing Company, pp. 277-285.

Tom, A.R. (1985). Inquiring into inquiry-oriented education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 36*(5), 35-44.

Vann, A.S.(1988-1989). Student teachers and the building principal...The missing link. *Action in Teacher Education,*(4), 59-62.

Weiner, Lois (1993). *Preparing teachers for urban schools: Lessons from thirty years of school reform.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Wenger, E.(1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wilson, S.& Berne, J. (1999). Teacher learning and the acquisition of professional knowledge: An examination of research on contemporary professional development. In A. Iran-Nejad & P.D. Pearson, (Eds.) *Review of research in education, 24,* pp.173-209). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association

Yin, R.K. (1989). *Case study research: Design and methods.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Yost, D.S.(1997). The moral dimensions of teaching and preservice teachers: Can moral dispositions be influenced? *Journal of Teacher Education, 48*(4), 281-292.

Zeichner,K.M. & Liston,D.P. (1987). Teaching student teachers to reflect. *Harvard Educational Review,* (57), 23-48.

Zeichner, K. (1993). Connecting genuine teacher development to the struggle for social justice. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 19*(1), 5-20.