

Executive Summary

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Teacher Education and College and Career Readiness for All Students: A 3-Year, Longitudinal Study



Jansky, McDonough, & Nunez, 2010; Oseguera, Locks, & Vega, 2009). Novice teachers who graduate from teacher education programs are expected to teach content and to instill in their students “marketable skills” for postsecondary opportunities. Thus, college and career readiness is an important topic for teacher educators to address. This study looked at ways to do that, via a focus on small groups of students in a teacher education program as they transitioned into their first teaching jobs. This study brings together complementary lines of research, teacher education, and college and career readiness. This paper specifically focuses on data collected during a 3-year, longitudinal, qualitative, action research study.

In this paper, I outline the relevant literature, research methodology, and study design, along with findings and implications. There is an ample body of qualitative data from the study, making this particular paper a broad overview of some of the most interesting findings to date. In particular, I highlight two findings that have been prominent since the first year of data collection: 1) college and career readiness as a partnership, and 2) the English Language Arts as a vehicle for college readiness. Data indicate that pre-service teachers can shift their perspective and begin to see college and career readiness as a partnership between student and teacher

in the classroom, and that this perspective carries over into their future classrooms. At the same time, participants began to understand the ways in which their Language Arts curriculum could easily contribute to postsecondary readiness for their future students. This continued with planning curriculum and executing lessons in their future classrooms. A new finding has emerged from data that were not previously discussed in my first two white papers, however, involving tensions for novice teachers in their classrooms. Data indicate that novice teachers experience tensions between competing political landscapes: minimum standards-based testing and accountability systems and the push for college and career readiness standards for all students. These data are published in more detail in a recent paper (Hungerford-Kresser & Vetter, 2017). The paper concludes with implications for teacher preparation, policy, and future research.

Implications include the following: 1) the potential benefits of exposing pre-service teachers to college and career readiness via an autobiographical lens, 2) a suggestion to policymakers to consider the tensions between standardized testing systems and the mandate to prepare all students for postsecondary pathways, and 3) a call for future research looking at college and career readiness in teacher education across the state, on a variety of campuses and in a variety of disciplines.

While college and career readiness (or postsecondary readiness) has grown in favor as an educational goal for secondary students via schools, and encouraged by states and their economic partners (Conley, 2005, 2010; EPIC, 2009; McCaughey & Venezia, 2015; Symonds, Schwartz, & Ferguson, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2000), there are still large achievement gaps among student populations, which many view as an access gap (Byrd & MacDonald, 2005; Camera, 2015; Hungerford-Kresser & Amaro-Jimenez, 2012; McClafferty

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