

Democratizing Knowledge in University Teacher Education Through Practice-Based Methods
Teaching and Mediated Field Experience in Schools and Communities¹

Ken Zeichner
University of Washington, Seattle

Katherina Payne
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Kate Brayko
University of Washington, Seattle

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Abstract

Despite the tremendous growth in teacher education programs offered by non-university providers, most teachers still enter teaching in the U.S. through some type of college or university program. We argue in this paper that university teacher education needs to make a fundamental shift in whose knowledge and expertise counts in the education of new teachers. Using tools afforded by cultural historical activity theory (CHAT), we argue that by recasting who is considered an expert and rethinking how university faculty cross institutional boundaries to collaborate with communities and schools, college and university teacher education programs can better interrogate their challenges and invent new solutions to prepare the teachers our students need. Drawing on examples from joint-work among universities, schools, and communities, we highlight possibilities and complexities in pursuing more democratic work in university teacher education.

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One of the central issues underlying current debates about teacher education and teacher quality is concerned with the knowledge that teachers need to be successful in teaching all students to high academic standards. Although there has been extensive writing over the years about the so-called “knowledge base” in teacher education (e.g., Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005) and about the particular teaching practices that novices need to learn how to enact (Ball & Forzani, 2009), this work has focused on analyzing **what** teachers need to know to be well started beginners. Similarly, over the years, a substantial literature has emerged in the U.S. and elsewhere on the question of **who** should be prepared as teachers to teach in democratic societies (e.g., Villegas & Lucas, 2004; Villegas & Irvine, 2010) and **how** this preparation should occur (e.g., Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2003; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Very little attention has been given however, to **whose knowledge** should count in teacher education.

Currently, there are basically two general approaches to the pre-service education of teachers in the U.S. despite all of the specific program variations: “early entry” and “college recommending.” (Grossman & Loeb, 2008). Even with the advent of “early entry” programs in the 1980s where much of pre-service preparation is completed by individuals while they serve as teachers of record, college and university-based teacher education programs that include significant coursework and fieldwork prior to a candidate becoming a teacher of record continue to be the major source of teachers for our public schools (National Research Council, 2010).²

College-Recommending Programs

The traditional model of college-recommending teacher education emphasizes the translation of academic knowledge into practice.³ Candidates are supposed to learn what and how to teach in their courses and then go out and apply what is learned in schools during their

² According to the most recent U.S. Secretary of Education report on teacher education, 92% of teacher preparation programs in the U.S. in 2010 were based at colleges and universities.

³ Clandinin (1995) has referred to this as the “sacred theory into practice story.”

field experiences. Historically, very little success has been achieved in coordinating what is done in the course and field components of teacher education programs. Oftentimes, the teachers in P-12 with whom teacher candidates are placed for their field placements know very little about the course-based portion of the program and the course instructors know very little about the placement sites and the work of the cooperating teachers (Zeichner, 2010a). Even in the current era of school-university partnerships, partner and professional development schools, colleges and universities continue to maintain hegemony over the construction and dissemination of knowledge for teaching in teacher education (Duffy, 1994; Zeichner, 2009) and schools remain in the position of “practice fields” where candidates are to try out the practices provided to them by the university (Barab & Duffy, 2000).

Oldenburg (1999) has analyzed the role of “third places” such as cafes, coffee shops, bars and hair salons in the building of community. He discusses the concept of leveling that nicely describes the kind of situation involving university academics and school-based educators that does not often exist in traditional models of university-based teacher education even when they claim to be engaged in partnerships with schools. Oldenburg argues that “leveling” is where “worldly status claims must be checked at the door in that all may be equals.” This surrendering of outward status or “leveling” transforms those “who own delivery trucks and those who drive them into equals.”(p.25) These third places create places where people engage as communities separate from their status within those communities.

We are not suggesting that power can or should be equalized and that the goal should be to reach consensus on all issues. We are suggesting though that power hierarchies be lessened in teacher preparation programs in which colleges and universities are involved, that more participants and more perspectives be brought into the decision making process, and that

different views are seriously considered despite important differences that will continue to exist about what constitutes good teaching and how teachers should learn (Apple, 2008; Sanders, 1997).

Although the reality of how and from whom teacher candidates learn to teach is much more complex than portrayed here (e.g., Valencia, et.al. 2009), the way in which college and university-based teacher education is usually structured is fundamentally undemocratic and largely fails to strategically access knowledge and expertise that exist in schools and communities that could inform the preparation of teachers. Although most prospective teachers spend a substantial amount of time in schools during their preparation, there is typically very little planning that is done (e.g., a practicum curriculum) as to how they can access practitioner and community-based knowledge to inform their preparation as teachers (Turney et.al. 1985). Further, there is generally a lack of investment of resources and careful attention to the placement and supervision of teacher candidates during their clinical experiences (NCATE, 2010; Greenberg, Pomerance, & Walsh, 2011).

Early-Entry Programs

The rapidly expanding number of “early entry” programs place teacher candidates in schools with very little pre-service preparation and emphasize and sometimes uncritically glorify practice and practitioner knowledge and minimize the importance of professional education coursework that is not seen as directly connected to daily teaching practice. This kind of thinking leads to such things as the definition of social foundations content as “non essential” in a teacher education program (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007), to teachers who can implement teaching scripts but who have not developed the professional vision and adaptive expertise they need to meet the changing learning needs of their students as well as to continue to learn in and from their practice

(Hammerness et. al. 2005; Sherin, 2001). Importantly, neither college-recommending nor early entry programs often give much attention to the role of community-based knowledge in teacher preparation (e.g., Murrell, 2001).

Neither of these two stances toward a “knowledge base” for teacher education (an emphasis on academic or practitioner knowledge to the exclusion of serious attention to other knowledge sources) is sufficient for preparing teachers to be successful in the public schools today in the U.S. Despite the social justice multicultural content that is common in college and university teacher education programs across the nation, the hidden curriculum of teacher education (Ginsburg & Clift, 1990) often sends a very clear message about the lack of respect for the knowledge of P-12 practitioners and non-professional educators in communities.

In our view, the preparation of teachers for democratic societies should be based on an epistemology that in itself is democratic and includes a respect for and interaction among practitioner, academic, and community-based knowledge. Whether this can take place in newly created spaces within universities such as “Centers of Pedagogy” (Patterson, Michelli, & Pacheco, 1999) or whether new institutional spaces need to be created for teacher education with different knowledge histories (Gorodetszky & Barak, 2008) remains to be seen. This is very different than the current wave of interest in teacher residency programs that place teaching practice at the center of preparation and that wraps coursework around this practice. (Duncan, 2009). What is involved in what we are proposing is the creation of new hybrid spaces where academic, practitioner and community-based knowledge come together in new ways to support the development of innovative and hybrid solutions to the problem of preparing teachers.

Conceptualizing Hybrid Spaces in Teacher Education

What we think is needed is the creation of new hybrid spaces in university teacher education where academic, school-based and community-based knowledge come together in less hierarchical and haphazard ways to support teacher learning. To further theorize collaborations between university, school, and community-based sources of knowledge, we use some of the conceptual tools afforded by cultural historical activity theory (CHAT). CHAT provides a way to think about bringing together the expertise that teacher candidates need that is located in schools, colleges and universities, and communities. Two of the key ideas in cultural-historical theories are that expertise is distributed across systems and that individuals develop into the ways of thinking and acting that are afforded by the cultural practices and tools made available to them in the settings of their development (Ellis, Edwards, & Smagorinsky, 2010). From a CHAT perspective, teacher candidate learning takes place in “a changing mosaic of interconnected activity systems.” (Engestrom, 2001,p.147).

The concept of “activity system ” emerged from Leont’ev’s (1978) and then Engeström’s expansion of Vygotsky’s (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD), which Vygotsky defined as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). Vygotsky’s development of the ZPD recognized the importance of tools, from language to physical objects, in mediating individual learning and development. Engeström expanded the ZPD into cultural-historical activity theory, which emphasizes the productive means of learning through joint mediated activity.

Importantly, Engeström emphasizes that human activity is simultaneously constrained by macro-structures and sociopolitical contexts as well as transformed by individuals' actions, proclivities, and tendencies within their everyday activities. Specifically, activity theory acknowledges the community, distribution of work, and rules that affect both individual and collective activities. Thus, Engeström elaborated the ZPD from an individualistic account of learning and development toward a more expansive view of learning through participation with others within activity systems that are simultaneously enabling and constraining.

Engeström (1987; 2001) emphasizes the expansive aspects of learning that occur through engaging in the activity, particularly through the contradictions and tensions that are the “engines” of change and transformation in practices, tools, and activities. By centering the activity of teacher learning in the contradictory, conflictual spaces among the university, school, and community knowledge and practice, the possibility for collaborative efforts around these contradictions can lead to re-mediation of preservice teachers' learning. Further, through these tensions in learning how to work with diverse learners, and toward the goal of accessing both school and community knowledge, activity theory allows us to look at preservice teachers' learning in and across multiple spaces to recognize how those spaces both expand and constrain learning opportunities.

Assuming that the knowledge and expertise needed by teacher candidates is located in schools, colleges and universities, and in communities, and that the key problem of teacher education is to figure out how to provide teacher candidates with access to this needed expertise from these different systems, the concepts of “horizontal expertise,” “boundary-crossing,” and “knotworking” prove particularly useful in theorizing these hybrid relationships. These conceptual tools are rooted in Kerouso & Engeström's (2003) examination of work that occurs

across organizations, such as healthcare providers. Of import, the impetus for the collaborative efforts were the tensions and contradictions that emerged for patients who navigated multiple types of healthcare providers (e.g., clinics, hospitals). A major issue was that there was a disruption in the communications within and across providers, resulting in significant ruptures in the continuity of patient care. Moreover, multiple and different rules, tools, reporting systems, and patterns of interaction guide these organizations, which made the establishment of common goals difficult to pursue concurrently.

In order to work collaboratively to articulate new goals, practices, and tools, participants had to cross the boundaries of their own organizations and work with others to create new solutions to their common problems. By crossing these boundaries and creating new practices and tools, horizontal expertise emerged as “professionals from different domains enriched and expanded their practices through working together to reorganize relations and coordinate their work” (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2007, p139). In contrast to vertical notions of learning and expertise (i.e., “lower” and “higher” forms), these professional collaborative efforts relied on horizontal expertise. That is, the unique knowledge and understanding that each professional brought to the collective activity was treated as more equally valuable, relevant, and important. Each professional develops a range of expertise across work and organizational spaces but working collaboratively, these forms of expertise serve as resources in joint problem-solving activity. Further, these collaborative processes reorganize the traditional hierarchies of expertise (vertical expertise), as they help individuals and groups find innovative solutions to the compelling dilemmas that characterize their everyday work life. Creating these innovative tools, practices, and solutions not only addresses the joint-activity and dilemma, but also expands

individuals' learning as they appropriate new tools and work languages that they could not have created on their own with access only to their particular languages, rules, and systems.

While originally developed in studies of workplace learning in Finland and later elaborated in studies throughout the world which depict a mixing of domain-specific expertise from different spheres of activity, these conceptual tools are useful for thinking about the more democratic political economy of knowledge that we believe is necessary to educate teachers well to be successful in the complex and underfunded public schools where many of them will teach (e.g., Ellis, Edwards and Smagorinsky, 2010; Edwards, 2010; Edwards, et. al., 2009; Engestrom, 2001, 2008).

A group of teacher educators led by a faculty member at Michigan State University have used the concept of horizontal expertise to address aspects of the “two-worlds pitfall”(Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985) that has characterized the loose and sometimes conflicting relations between school-based experience and coursework in university-based programs. They have argued that:

Achieving common goals requires professionals to cross organizational boundaries and combine the resources, norms and values from their respective settings into new hybrid solutions. Horizontal expertise emerges from these boundary crossings as professionals from different domains enrich and expand their practices through working together to reorganize relations and coordinate their work (Anagnostopoulos, Smith & Basmadjian, 2007, p.139).

Anagnostopoulos and her colleagues worked together as university faculty with teachers to solve problems of teacher learning about discussion in the classroom. During the student teaching year of the secondary-English teaching program at Michigan State, many of the mentors

felt that the university assignments disrupted their curricula and endorsed practices counter to their own, while the university professors felt that the mentors were limiting student teachers' "learning-to-teach opportunities" (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2007, p. 140) and were also promoting ineffective practices. To problem-solve this conflict and tension around learning to teach English faculty and mentors began a series of meetings to discuss literature and practices around teaching English, particularly facilitating discussion. By allowing the multiple stakeholders (i.e., university professors and practicing teachers) to come together to create a new solution—a performance-based discussion rubric for preservice teachers—the two organizations (the university and the school) addressed their common problem of helping novice teachers effectively lead discussion in secondary English classrooms. Essential to this work was the co-creation of the rubric, which they refer to as a boundary-crossing object, and the crossing of the institutional boundaries of school and university. The development of the rubric employed diverse forms of horizontal expertise represented across teachers and university faculty, allowed robust opportunities to negotiate each institution's language, and provided opportunities for the significant negotiation and argumentation about the concept of discussion and its purpose in the classroom.

Throughout the collaborative process, the negotiation of language and argumentation among participants allowed for competing views about classroom discussion practice to emerge. This negotiation of contradictions and dilemmas of everyday educational practices supports the type of innovation and change for teacher education programs that can lead to expansive learning. Yet, the researchers also noted that the horizontal expertise that served as a resource in the creation of the rubric cannot be easily appropriated by others who were not involved in the initial problem-solving practice. While an important caveat, we believe that the creation of

opportunities to cross institutional boundaries and the valuing of horizontal expertise between school, university and community teacher educators holds an important possibility for creating more democratic collaborations that will focus teacher education around the re-organization and re-mediation of social practice. The task of bringing together of expertise from the different activity systems of university, school and community for the benefit of teacher candidate learning can be considered analogous to the problem of coordinating the work of healthcare professionals who work in different systems but who all serve the same patients or the task of coordinating the work of a group of individuals from different education and social service agencies who are all serving the same children and families (Edwards, et al., 2009; Edwards, 2010; Engestrom, 2008).

The concept of “knotworking” offers a way to understand the learning of teacher candidates that occurs when there is collaboration across activity systems (university, school, and community). The different interests, values and practices that exist in these different systems are mediated in the knots (Engestrom, 2008; Engestrom, Engestrom, & Vahaaho, 1999).⁴ Insights from international research on the pooling of expertise in these knots, or boundary settings between organizations (e.g., Edwards, 2010; Engestrom, 2007), can benefit efforts in teacher education to build new hybrid or “inter-spaces” (Hartley, 2007) between schools, universities, and communities in ways that support teacher learning.

Norton-Meier & Drake (2010) argue that a hybrid or “third space” in teacher education is more than moving university courses to schools or bringing K-12 teachers to the university

⁴ The notion of a knot refers to “a rapidly pulsating, distributed, and partially improvised orchestration of collaborative performance between otherwise loosely connected actors and activity systems” (Engestrom & Vahaaho, 1999, pp. 346-347).

campus. Merely bringing people together in the same physical space from schools, colleges and universities, and communities to plan, deliver and renew teacher education programs will not necessarily alter the ways in which knowledge is utilized in the preparation of teachers and create the kind of leveling and greater social equality that is needed (Noel & Nelson, 2010; Popkewitz, 1975).

As noted above, there is substantial evidence that traditional knowledge hierarchies are maintained among universities, schools and communities even in situations that have been characterized as genuinely collaborative. Bringing P-12 teachers to the university campus or university faculty and staff and their teacher education courses to schools and bringing in community people to sit around a table with professional educators from schools and universities does not necessarily change anything in terms of undemocratic knowledge hierarchies (Popkewitz, 1975).

As we indicated earlier, we are not suggesting that it is possible to create a situation of democratic deliberation free of power differentials, the kind of “ideal speech situation” that has been suggested by Habermas (1984) and Rawls (1971). There are real dangers involved in merely rhetorically romanticizing a model of teacher education based on deliberative democracy (Apple, 2008). There is no question that the negotiations that will need to take place in the hybrid spaces that we are suggesting (e.g., over different visions of what makes high quality teachers and how to prepare them) will be difficult to navigate (e.g., Bartholomew & Sanholz, 2009). As Klein and colleagues have pointed out, “a third space is a continual construction, a utopian prospect that is never fully achievable” (2011, p. 14).

Sanders (1997) has argued that efforts to deliberate in a democratic manner toward a common view often reinforce status inequalities. He calls for attempts to represent a fuller range

of voices under conditions of mutual respect rather than trying to reach consensus and seeking to equalize power differentials. In creating hybrid spaces in teacher education that bring in school and community perspectives that are often marginalized in traditional university-based models, Sanders' goals of the inclusivity of voices and mutual respect are reasonable ones to strive for in the deliberation process (also see Zeichner, 1991). There is some evidence in recent studies of collaborative efforts in inter-organizational spaces that achieving this inclusivity and reaching a situation where participants achieve "reasonable agreements" about certain elements of the situation at hand is generative of productive boundary work that results in new and creative solutions (e.g., Edwards, 2010).

In the following sections, we will examine how teacher education, and in particular preservice teacher education, can attempt to use some of the conceptual tools of CHAT to create more expansive learning opportunities for preservice teachers by creating spaces for the kind of boundary-crossing, horizontal expertise, and knotworking that will lead to more democratic teacher education.

Examples of Hybrid Spaces in Teacher Education

There are a number of examples of the kind of knowledge system and inter-institutional community of practice in which horizontal expertise is developed and utilized with regard to the continuing professional development of teachers and educational research. Two of the best known of these are the "Funds of Knowledge Project" in Arizona where university academics and teachers came together to collect information about the expertise and social networks in particular communities and to think about how to redesign the schools that served these communities to take better advantage of that knowledge to improve student learning (Gonzales, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). A second example is the Cognitively Guided Instruction in Mathematics

Project where academic researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison came together with local elementary teachers to figure out how to develop strategies for teaching elementary mathematics based on academic research about how pupils learn to add and subtract in the early grades (Carpenter, et al. 2000). In both of these examples, there was a utilization of the expertise of both academics and teachers who produced new and creative solutions to problems that could not be solved by either alone.⁵

Other examples of hybridity in pre-service teacher education involve sustained efforts to involve expert teachers in all aspects of university-based teacher education, including program planning, instruction, and ongoing evaluation and renewal. Two examples are the Teachers' in Residence Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the Faculty Associate positions at Simon Fraser University in Canada (Beynon, Grout & Wideen, 2004; Post et. al., 2006). Another example is the work done at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching that led to the utilization of web-based documentation of the work of outstanding K-12 teachers in methods courses taught by university faculty (Pointer-Mace, 2009). Faculty members in several university-based teacher education programs have used these teacher websites in their courses to give their teacher candidates access to the thinking and practices of master teachers who were using the same practices and approaches promoted in the university courses (Hatch & Grossman, 2009).

Hybrid Spaces in the University of Washington-Seattle's Teacher Education Programs:

Practice-Based Methods Courses

At the University of Washington in Seattle, some of the methods courses in the elementary and secondary teacher education programs (both post-baccalaureate certification

⁵ While in both of these cases, the university educators and researchers played the dominant role in framing how the work would proceed, these examples represent clear movement toward the kind of the kind of democratic spaces that I am advocating.

programs) are taught in local public schools where instructors strategically attempt to connect academic and school-based expertise. For example, in addition to the usual practice of professors providing teacher candidates with the theoretical basis for particular teaching strategies and showing them video examples of teachers using these practices, teacher candidates also have opportunities in these courses to observe the professor or a classroom using the teaching strategy with students, to plan and rehearse lessons using these strategies that they then go and teach with students, and to debrief their teaching with their peers, and with the professor and teachers in the school (Kazemi, Lampert, & Franke, 2009). These opportunities are not common in typical university-based courses, which are often disconnected from schools and from practices candidates may encounter in their individual field experiences.

In the elementary mathematics methods class, teacher candidates regularly use small video cameras to record their attempts to try out the teaching strategies they are learning about with individual and small groups of pupils and they review these tapes as part of the debriefing process. They also submit the tapes to their university instructor who provides each candidate with feedback several times per quarter. This enables the instructor, who usually is not able to get around to see all of the candidates trying out the strategies each week, to gain an understanding of how each candidate is using the strategies and what they need to work on. When the instructor, her TAs or the classroom teacher are in a small group directly observing candidates practicing specific teaching strategies, they also strategically intervene at times to model particular ways of asking pupils questions to accomplish such goals as eliciting students' reasoning in solving problems.⁶

⁶ See Kazemi, Franke & Lampert (2009) and <http://www.teachingworks.org/schedule/> for more detailed information about this course.

In the elementary literacy classes, teacher candidates work with individual children and groups of children, many of whom are English learners. To learn about children's literacy abilities and development, teacher candidates support classroom teachers by administering "high-leverage" literacy assessments and closely observing students as they engage with reading and writing. In collaborative peer groups and with the support of the course instructor, students analyze children's literacy abilities and then plan and implement appropriate instruction.

Debriefing with instructors and colleagues, teacher candidates continually analyze their own teaching and students' learning, using those insights to plan follow-up lessons. They provide feedback to the children's classroom teachers to support the instruction they are designing for children in their classrooms.

The secondary math course meets once a week over a 10-week quarter at a local high-needs partner high school where teacher candidates observe teachers as they instruct their 9th grade Algebra classes. These teachers implement many of the same equity-oriented teaching practices as those taught in the methods course and are often graduates of the University of Washington-Seattle program. Following the observations, the teacher candidates, university course instructor and classroom teachers meet to debrief the lesson, during which time they examine the relationship between students, mathematics, and particular teaching practices. Further, during these debrief meetings the teacher candidates have opportunities to question the teachers about the students they observed and about particular teaching decisions that may have been made. In this particular version of a practice-based methods course that comes in the first quarter of a 4-quarter MIT program, teacher candidates do not have opportunities to try out the practices themselves. This comes during the second methods course when teacher candidates

enact the strategies with students and then carefully analyze them in a campus-based methods course. (Campbell, 2008; Campbell, 2012).

It is our belief that this kind of more situated instruction in teacher education programs better prepares teacher candidates to successfully enact the research-based teaching practices that they are learning about in their programs and that are not commonly used in schools currently. There is a laser like focus on building the capacity of teacher candidates to enact particular research-based teaching practices in the complex world of high need urban schools (Zeichner & McDonald, 2011) and evidence is beginning to accumulate that this approach leads to greater enactment of the teaching strategies that focused in these courses (Campbell, 2008, 2011). Further, Campbell's (2012) study of the practice-based methods course in secondary mathematics showed that this approach helped disrupt candidates' deficit oriented views of the students and helped them position their students as competent.

Despite the many logistical and resource issues involved in running these practice-based courses, other universities in the U.S. are also beginning to situate their courses more in the context of public schools and to strategically supplement their own contributions with the expertise among teachers in the schools where the courses are taught. Examples include Montclair State University (Klein et al, 2011; Onore & Gildin, 2010), Boston College (Shirley, et al. 2006), New York University (Jeffrey & Pollack, 2010), and Texas Tech (Morgan-Fleming, Simpson, Curtis, & Hull, 2010).

Crossing the Community Boundary

While the role of schools is essential in teacher preparation and to innovations in teacher education, the role of communities and the knowledge that communities offer teacher preparation is also particularly important given a focus on schools as places for democratic

education (see Parker, 2005). The idea of “community teachers” (Murrell, 2001) can guide the preparation of teachers who are working in and for an increasingly diverse democratic society. Murrell defines a community teacher as “one who possesses contextualized knowledge of the culture, community, and identity of the children and families he or she serves and draws on this knowledge to create the core teaching practices necessary for effectiveness in diverse setting” (Murrell 2001, p. 52). Key to Murrell’s definition and the argument we are making here is that the knowledge is contextualized; it cannot be learned in a university classroom away from the communities in which teachers will work. All preservice teachers must engage with diverse communities, both inside schools and outside of schools, as part of their preparation. Teacher education programs’ collaboration with communities ought to aim for preservice teachers not only understanding, but also utilizing community and cultural knowledge in their teaching.

Communities have the possibility to serve as resources for accessing and learning about other forms and spaces of knowledge outside of schools. Teacher education programs must deal with the question of encountering difference in the classroom, not only for the benefit of student achievement, but also because it is this diversity that makes public schools ideal places for cultivating democratic citizens (Parker, 2005). Allen (2004) argues that encountering difference or as she terms it, “talking to strangers,” is precisely what democracy in the United States requires to overcome the distrust that has fossilized patterns of mutual disdain among different groups. If schools are ideal places for cultivating democratic citizens, then teacher education programs need to emphasize the assets of this diversity in its curriculum to help teachers facilitate this cultivation. Creating mediated cross-cultural or community-based learning experiences is one way that teacher education can both work toward inclusion of multiple knowledge spaces in preservice education, as well as work toward a more democratic ideal in

teacher education.

Cross-cultural community-based experiences represent one way in which teacher candidates can encounter and learn about social and geographical communities that were previously unfamiliar to them (Sleeter 2001; Sleeter & Boyle-Baise, 2000; Zeichner & Melnick, 1996). Cross-cultural community-based experiences span a broad range, and often differ in their purpose and how they are situated in teacher preparation programs. These experiences can be short-term in a single course and /or community which may be characterized as visiting a community, or experiences can also be longer and more intensive, which may be thought of as immersing preservice teachers in the community. Some programs are elective, such as Indiana University's Cultural Immersion programs which allows student teachers to work in local schools in other countries and within diverse communities in the U.S. (Longview Foundation, 2008). Other community experiences are required portions of teacher education programs, such as University of Washington's community-based practicum experience, which we will detail later in this paper.

While cross-cultural community- based experiences can occur in the community in which the university/school is located, in other cultural contexts in the United States, or in other countries, the experiences highlighted in this paper are located nearby to two university programs. We specifically chose these two programs because they have utilized their own community resources in crafting teacher education experiences. In this way, the programs themselves are exemplifying the kind of community learning that they encourage teacher candidates to engage in as teachers.

The two programs represent a variety of ways of collaborating and emphasize to different extents the concepts of horizontal expertise and boundary crossing, concepts that are essential to

the kind of democratic collaboration which we believe is necessary for teacher education to prepare teachers to engage diverse learners and draw upon their communities as sources of knowledge to inform their practice. Using a CHAT lens focused on horizontal expertise and boundary crossing allows us to examine the expanded learning opportunities for preservice teachers, how the programs attempt to work toward more democratic relationships between universities and communities, as well as the continuing conflicts and dilemmas in pursuing joint-activity in teacher education. These democratic relationships attempt to value and access the knowledge that each institution bears on preservice teachers' growing identities and pedagogy as multicultural, critical teachers.

Community Based Organizations as Sites of Teaching and Learning Relational Practices: The University of Washington's Community-Based Field Experience

McDonald and colleagues' recent work at the University of Washington examines the implementation and integration of community-based field experiences across an elementary teacher preparation program (ELTEP). For one quarter early in a four-quarter (one-year) graduate certification program, preservice teachers are placed in community-based organizations (CBOs). These organizations range from neighborhood community centers to culturally focused programs (e.g., one program specifically serves Vietnamese-Americans). In some cases, CBO field sites are located in the same neighborhoods as U.W. partner schools. The community-based field experience is connected to and mediated by concurrent ELTEP coursework and projects throughout the quarter.

The design, implementation, and analysis of these experiences have been grounded in sociocultural theories of learning, including cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT). Ongoing study of this work focuses on: the opportunities for teacher candidates to learn that are facilitated

by the community-based placements and corresponding ELTEP coursework (Brayko, in 2012; McDonald et al., 2011; McDonald, Brayko, & Bowman, in press), individual factors and contextual components in CBO placement activity systems that shape the candidates' learning (McDonald et al., 2011; McDonald et al., in press); programmatic implementation and integration (McDonald et al., 2010); and most recently, the expertise of CBO educators and directors (Bowman, Brayko, McDonald, & Tyson, 2012). In this article, we look across these analyses to identify present and potential instantiations of boundary crossing, horizontal expertise, and knot-working. We highlight how these instantiations led or might lead to expanded opportunities to learn for teacher candidates; we examine how this work attempts to develop more democratic relationships between UW's ELTEP and communities; and finally, we note continuing dilemmas in pursuing joint activity.

Expanded opportunities to learn for preservice teachers. The expansion of ELTEP's activity system to include CBOs has led to expanded learning opportunities for teacher candidates. Analyses of a three-year longitudinal data set showed that the community-based placements facilitated opportunities to learn key principles and practices related to *seeing children*—which McDonald and colleagues view as core to one's capacity to build relationships with and teach students (McDonald et al., 2011; in press). Specifically, they found that CBO placements afforded candidates opportunities to: develop deeper understandings of students and communities; develop more nuanced understandings of diversity, including intra-group diversity; examine schools from an out-of-school perspective; and attend to the role of context in learning (McDonald et al., in press). Furthermore, an in-depth comparative case study showed that CBO placements have the potential to enhance candidates' opportunities to learn and enact important *relational practices of teaching*—particularly around building and sustaining relationships with

children and families, and mediating the connections between various ecologies in children's lives (McDonald et al., in press). A close look at factors that contributed to the quality and salience of the learning opportunities mentioned here revealed that *CBO educators' expertise* was a crucial component.

There were several elements of CBO educators' expertise that seemed to particularly enhance learning for teacher candidates. These educators demonstrated deep and contextualized knowledge of children and families, and nuanced ecological perspectives of the children in their care. They also demonstrated a repertoire of relational practices. The nature of their work requires them to cross boundaries in order to mediate and advocate for students in and across multiple contexts. Several CBO educators explained that building relationships and alliances across "The Triangle"—school-CBO-home—was the keystone of their work. The recognition of how influential CBO educators' role is for preservice teacher learning has prompted ELTEP's increased interest in understanding and engaging the expertise that thrives in community-based contexts, particularly among adults in those contexts.

More democratic relationships between universities and communities. The mere existence of community-based placements in teacher education programs does not necessarily guarantee heightened democratic engagement or increasingly horizontal paradigms⁷; however, there is evidence that the partnerships between UW and the CBOs are moving in this direction. Interestingly, one signal of this development is the types of research questions being asked of the work. While a core empirical interest initially was to investigate outcomes related to opportunities for preservice teachers to spend time with children from nondominant backgrounds outside of school, McDonald and colleagues have turned their empirical focus more sharply

⁷ Research suggests that programs and preservice teachers run the risk of conceptualizing these field experiences as volunteer charity work (Seidl & Friend, 2002a,b) rather than collaborative efforts to work toward a jointly held problem.

toward the expertise of personnel in community-based organizations (McDonald et al., in press; Bowman, et al., 2012). This development has led to enhanced potential for instantiations of horizontal expertise. From the start, the partnerships served to benefit both the CBOs and ELTEP in a number of ways. For example, the CBOs appreciated having extra adults in the room to give more attention to children (at no fiscal cost); UW's ELTEP appreciated having spaces for candidates to spend time with and learn about children outside the confines of schools and schooling (McDonald et al., 2011). Some of these first-identified benefits signaled advantageous mutual exchange, but perhaps did not necessarily immediately signal joint-work toward a joint problem. However, McDonald and colleagues' recent research on expertise has unearthed the ways in which these benefits can—and perhaps do and will—represent a developing, jointly-held object and enterprise.

Through interviews and in strategy meetings with CBO partners, McDonald's team learned that several CBO educators viewed the UW-CBO partnership per se as an example of the “The Triangle” (home-school-CBO) networking that is so central to their work (Bowman et al., 2012). Conceptualizing the teacher education program as a component of the “schools” point of the triangle, these CBO educators approach the partnership as an effort to improve relationships and connections with schools—or in this case, an institution they see as an influencing agent of schools, an ally of schools, and/or at least a producer of teachers for schools. At a local level, they hope that candidates' tutoring and support will help the children negotiate the demands of schools; at a more systemic level, they hope their own work with preservice teachers will result in more new teachers entering Seattle schools with greater willingness and capacity to network with families and communities, and an overall greater understanding of and dedication to- in their words-“our kids” (Bowman et al., 2012).

Having more empirical insight about CBO educators' expertise (and specifically their "Triangle" work), has prompted McDonald and several others in ELTEP to emphasize this ecological model in their courses "as a way to guide preservice teachers' thinking and learning about the relational aspects of teaching" (Bowman et al., 2012). The teaching and learning of this relational work has not been extensively engaged in teacher education efforts (Broussard, 2000; Grossman & McDonald, 2008), despite its importance. So perhaps it is in the work of "The Triangle" that UW and CBOs find their jointly held problem and can engage horizontally toward the (emerging) shared object of better facilitating relationships that strengthen opportunities for children's learning and well-being.

Continuing conflicts and dilemmas in pursuing joint activity. While there are some signs of increasingly horizontal models in these university-community partnerships, the work of pursuing more democratic paradigms is difficult and presents many dilemmas. As noted in Anagnostopoulos et al.'s (2007) study, a key feature is the authentic participation of each group, as well as recognition of the groups' varied social language, and work toward a real shared problem. The CBO partnerships at UW are still relatively new, and those involved in mediating the field experiences and those involved in studying the innovation continue to ask the question: To what extent do these partnerships represent authentic participation?

The university selected the CBO sites where students would be placed—paying particular attention to CBO's framing of P-12 students in assets-based language, and eventually to CBO directors' expertise. Working with "School's Out Washington," an NGO that supports the work of afterschool programs, the university selected CBOs based on the reputed quality of their work and the perceived fit with the ELTEP's goals. This selection by the university illuminates the concern over the power dynamics in collaboration; those concerns should be acknowledged

during collaboration, particularly as they present conflicts and dilemmas. Arguably, who initiates collaboration is less important in the enterprise of developing horizontal expertise, than how that initiation occurs and is taken up, along with how continuing collaboration unfolds.

ELTEP, like other teacher education programs, operates within many constraints—as do CBOs. The constraints of certification regulations and the relatively short and packed course of study for MIT programs (4 quarters) means that the CBO placements have taken place for only one quarter, and the university has dictated the timing of the 10- week period when the candidates are placed in CBOs. While the presence of the teacher candidates is generally appreciated by the CBOs during those 10 weeks, from the perspective of CBO directors, a placement that would span the entire academic year would be more beneficial. Again, this highlights power relationships and the ways in which the constraints of participating groups impacts collaboration.

Another dilemma involves the “uneven” experiences teacher candidates have at different CBOs. From ELTEP’s perspective, there are certain sites that are of higher quality in relationship to the kinds of opportunities ELTEP hopes will be available for candidates. This mirrors the well-documented issue of uneven opportunities in school-based placements (NCATE, 2010). Also, even if CBO educators do high-quality work for children and families, McDonald and colleagues’ research suggests that some CBO educators are more skilled than others in their new roles as teacher educators. For example, there is a range in their ability to (1) articulate their knowledge and relational practices, (2) invite teacher candidates into these practices, and (3) support and guide candidates as they “try out” the practices (McDonald et al., in press). Joint work can require new forms of activity, and the CBO educators’ experiences in developing roles highlight some dilemmas that can surface from this, and raise questions about how the expertise

from university-based teacher educators might be leveraged to support CBO educators in their new roles.

Questions of quality, of course, go both ways. It is possible and likely that those in CBOs have concerns about the “quality” of the teacher education program, as well; there are arguably fewer feedback loops in that direction currently. What arrangements can be systematically created for CBO groups to raise issues, problems, and dilemmas related to the ways in which teacher candidates and the university frame and discuss diverse learners and their communities? One proposal could be the development of key boundary objects around which both groups can engage and converse. There have been instances when CBO educators have weighed in on the university course assignments that candidates complete in their CBO placements. For example, in a meeting with CBO educators and ELTEP administrators and faculty, they listened to faculty describe their planned assignments, and were forthcoming with their suggestions of ways to make the assignments more meaningful in their contexts. Such meetings are rare, and thus, this example does not represent a systematic model of horizontal expertise; however, the example does indicate that ELTEP course assignments may have potential as boundary objects. Similar to the discussion rubric in Anagnostopoulos et al.’s (2007) study, assignments (or assignment evaluations, perhaps) as boundary objects might serve as powerful tools for facilitating authentic participation, and the sharing of expertise. Incorporating regular “triad” supervisory conversations with CBO educators, teacher candidates, and a university supervisor/coach, is another possibility to explore (see Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008). This type of conversational collaboration has the potential to further horizontal expertise via the exploration of varied social language, and more involved participation across groups through joint problem solving.

There are signs that indicate CBO educators and directors are becoming an integral, rather than peripheral, part of the teacher education program at UW. While McDonald et al. (2011) found that teacher candidates experienced expanded learning opportunities due to these collaborative partnerships, it is less clear how these collaborations have influenced the two institutions participating in the work. Beyond anecdotes, how has CBO knowledge influenced the university and vice versa? What will be the challenges in ongoing collaboration to continuously renew these relationships so that they do not become fossilized in one way of knowing the other? Recognizing that the university is the ultimate certifying institution, there may be limits to the influence that CBO directors have on programmatic decisions. Yet, if the university continues to recognize the CBO educators and directors' expertise and role in the preparation of teachers, the university could work toward both programmatic and epistemological shifts.

Multicultural Apprenticeships at The Ohio State University

Maintaining a similar focus on preparing teacher candidates to better “see students”, a unique program within The Ohio State University’s Early and Elementary Masters in Education (MEd) also sought to help candidates better “see” and challenge their own identities and status through multicultural apprenticeships⁸. The goal of these apprenticeships was to provide teacher candidates with an equal-status cross-cultural experience that afforded them the sociocultural knowledge and expertise necessary for antiracist education (Seidl & Friend, 2002a,b). Importantly, Seidl and Friend (2002a) note that “equal-status, cross-cultural experiences place students not as helpers within a context but as learners and participants in a community that is not essentially dependent on their service” (p. 149). The partnership between the university and the Mt. Olivet community, which is a large African American church community in Columbus,

⁸ While this program ran for 8 years, it no longer exists (Seidl, personal communication, 09/11/11).

Ohio, was guided by a joint commitment to social transformation, mutual respect, mutual benefit, collaborative work, and recognition of the expertise in antiracist teaching embodied in the Mt. Olivet community (Seidl & Friend, 2002a,b). Seidl and Conley (2009) argue that through long-term engagement in a cultural community that is different from their own, teacher candidates learn to develop relationships with community members – both adults and children – that allow them to begin to rewrite their own multicultural identities in ways that matter for their future students and their families.

Three elements structured the multicultural apprenticeships: (1) long-term experience in a community, (2) sustained meditative space supporting that experience, and (3) co-operative, narrative self-study about the experience. The program’s main partnership was with the Mt. Olivet community (see Seidl & Friend, 2002a,b), which will be considered here as an example of horizontal expertise and democratizing teacher education. In this apprenticeship, teacher candidates worked with adult church community members, helping with tutoring, Sunday school, and after-school and mentoring programs. Candidates spent three hours a week working in this program across the entire academic year and also attended church services and community-based activities throughout the year. *Most of the teacher candidates were white and from middle class backgrounds and* within this apprenticeship, the status and preconceptions of the candidates were challenged as they became novices within a community context that was not familiar to them. Research suggests that many white candidates come into teacher education having led monocultural lives or holding monocultural perspectives (Sleeter, 2008).

Seidl and Friend (2002a) found that the cross-cultural experience at Mt. Olivet preservice teachers “de-center their privileged stance and helped the candidates “de-center their privileged stance and help(ed) them begin to question their own hegemonic cultural beliefs and the

oppressive social practices that sustain them” (p. 149). Importantly, in this apprenticeship the adults from the community with whom the preservice teachers worked were seen as experts holding critical and valuable information related to learning to teach.

The apprenticeship at Mt. Olivet was co-mediated by both Seidl, who is a faculty member in the teacher education program, and a member of the Mt. Olivet community (Seidl & Conley, 2009; Seidl & Friend, 2002a,b). This structure created the “sustained meditative environment” (Seidl & Conley, 2009, p. 119) necessary for students to interrogate their experiences and identities. This structure also created another possibility for horizontal expertise between the university faculty member and a community facilitator. The university faculty crossed the institutional boundary into the community space, and the community facilitator crossed the pedagogical boundary into the teacher education program. In this case, the community facilitator also participated in the research around the community experience, co-presenting at national conferences and co-authoring several papers (Seidl & Friend, 2002a,b).

As with Agnastapoulos et al. (2007), the crossing of boundaries and leveling of expertise was facilitated by boundary-crossing objects – in this case co-operative, narrative self-studies. These narratives became the object of joint analysis. Seidl & Conley (2009) note that faculty, the community facilitator, and teacher candidates were considered “co-researchers,” and through the meditative space, preservice teachers engaged in “dialogue and recursive group analysis of stories.” Writing, analyzing, and discussing these personal narratives led to preservice teachers authoring new stories of teaching, many of which were drawn from their experiences in their current school placements (Seidl & Friend, 2007) as they attempted to live out their new understandings in their pedagogical practices with children.

Seidl & Conley (2009) report that teacher candidates encountered culturally relevant

teaching practices in their apprenticeships at Mt. Olivet, which represented an important learning opportunity for them. In order to leverage the benefits from these types of encounters with culturally relevant pedagogy, particular pedagogical efforts must be employed. These experiences must be mediated to facilitate candidates' recognition and articulation of culturally relevant teaching practices, otherwise we risk losing valuable opportunities for learning. We believe that this point highlights the role of the university in community-based experiences. It is not enough to just create spaces for teacher candidates to encounter difference. Those spaces must be mediated to truly create expansive learning opportunities. Further, mediation must come through the joint-activity of experts in both spaces – in this case both Seidl and a member of the Mt. Olivet community. This involves collaboration and joint problem solving regarding the design and selection of tools and pedagogies in co-mediation efforts.

The Future for Hybrid Spaces in Teacher Education

One potentially promising way to create the kind of shared responsibility for educating teachers that we think is needed is to create new structural and governance models for teacher education programs like the teacher residency programs that are expanding across the U.S. with help from the Obama administration.(Berry et al. 2008) As stated above though, merely establishing the structure for a teacher residency program does not necessarily mean that schools, universities and communities participate in genuinely collaborative ways. Although teacher residency programs share certain general characteristics, they also vary both in terms of how the curriculum is structured and the roles that are played by the various partners. From our observation and study of some of the existing teacher residencies, the power and influence of school, university and community partners seems to vary.

Generally, we know very little as a field about the various ways in which these hybrid activities operate and we need to be careful not to assume that merely bringing people together from different spheres of universities, schools and communities is necessarily any different epistemologically than what went on before or is any more educative for teacher candidates or students.

What is needed in our view is a fundamental shift in whose expertise counts in the education of new teachers and in the work of college and university teacher educators. It is no longer enough to implement special projects here and there that are funded on temporary money and to then see the innovations disappear after the money is gone and the conference papers are presented and the articles and books are published. It is no longer enough to have university academics alone framing the discourse and inviting school-based educators and people from the broader community in to “participate” in a university-owned teacher education program or have school-based teacher educators in early - entry programs shut out the potential contributions of university academics. It should no longer be alright for teacher educators in both schools and universities to marginalize or shut out the perspectives of those who send their children to public schools and live in the communities that schools are supposed to serve.

Given the labor- intensive nature of building inter-institutional communities of practice in teacher education, the habits of those from schools and universities, and the low status of teacher education in many research universities, it is going to be difficult to achieve this cultural shift in teacher education. Figuring out how to achieve this shift is also complicated by the defunding of public schools and the continual decline of the percentage of state support for public universities where most teachers in the nation continue to be prepared (Newfield, 2008).

Conclusion

Almost every week, a new report is released in the U.S. criticizing the quality of the contribution of colleges and universities to initial teacher education or praising one of the newly emerging alternative providers of teacher education programs. In 2010, the Obama government's Education department distributed \$263 million dollars on a competitive basis to promote innovation in various sectors of education. The only teacher education projects that were funded in this competition were those from two of the major alternative certification providers, "Teach for America" which received \$50 million dollars and "The New Teacher Project" which received \$20 million dollars. None of the proposals for innovation in teacher education submitted by college and university teacher educators were funded.⁹

Although there continues to be some federal investment in recruiting talented individuals to teaching through various scholarship and loan programs, university teacher education is generally not seen today as worthy of investment by the federal government or many foundations even though it still prepares most of the nation's teachers (e.g., see Suggs & deMarrais, 2011). A situation has been framed in the U.S. where colleges and universities are seen as obstacles to reform and efforts are being made at the highest levels of government to figure out how to shut down university programs and to support the spread of non-university teacher education providers (Zeichner, 2010b).

Despite the weaknesses that have existed in university-based teacher education in the U.S. and elsewhere, including its lack of attention in educator preparation to the complexities of schooling, its failure to supply schools with enough fully qualified teachers in remote rural and urban schools in areas of high poverty, and lack of respect for the expertise that exists in schools

⁹ The Boston Teacher Residency Program which is a joint effort of the Boston Public Schools and the University of Massachusetts Boston also received \$ 4.9 million in a project submitted by a local foundation.

and communities, the solutions to problems of inequality in public education are not to be found in the deprofessionalization and commodification of teaching and teacher education and supplying schools with underprepared teacher technicians to teach the children of the poor (Tucker, 2011).

This is both a very exciting and dangerous time for university-based teacher education. There is a real opportunity to establish forms of democratic professionalism in teaching and teacher education (Apple, 1996; Sachs, 2003) where colleges and universities, schools and communities come together in new ways to prepare professional teachers who provide everyone's children with the same high quality of education. There is also a real danger however, that teacher education will be transformed into a pure market economy divorced from universities where a constant supply of underprepared and temporary teachers will be sent into schools to teach other people's children. In the U.S., Hess (2009) has articulated a view shared by many others when he proposed decoupling the preparation of teachers from institutions of higher education rather than calling for an investment in the improvement of college and university programs. Hess and others want to create a system where teacher preparation is controlled by local school districts and where university faculty and staff are brought into the picture when the schools want to do so and on their terms. Hess (2009) writes,

A shift from the assumption that teacher preparation and training should necessarily be driven by institutions of higher education toward a more variegated model that relies on specialized providers, customized preparation for particular duties, and a just in time mindset regarding skill development and acquisition. Abandoning the default role for colleges and universities creates new opportunities. Rather than struggle to connect college-based education programs with site-based mentors or to boost the quality of

practice teaching, new models might provide new providers or district-based operations to host training in more client-friendly locales and to import academic expertise, input and structure as they deem useful. (p. 456).

It is very important for university teacher educators to pay attention to what is happening around them in the larger policy context and to take it seriously. It is not going to go away. It is also very important for university teacher educators not to act defensively to only try to protect their own position. It is our belief that attempts to defend college and university-based teacher education that are isolated from the struggles for greater social justice in other sectors of societies will be seen as largely self-serving and will fail.

In this paper, we have suggested that what is required for university teacher education is a political response and a paradigm shift¹⁰ in how we think about whose expertise should contribute to and who should be responsible for the education of professional teachers for public schools. We believe that without the shift in power relationships and the formation of the kind of political alliances that we have suggested, the future of teaching as a profession and the university's role in teacher education are in serious danger and the future for teacher preparation that is outlined by Hess (2009) above will become the norm.

The idea of multiple pathways into teaching has long been a part of teacher education in the U.S. except for a brief period of time (Fraser, 2007) and in our view multiple routes into teaching should be maintained. Different models of teacher education and pathways into the profession can potentially stimulate innovation, generate research, and provide access to teaching to individuals in different life circumstances. Currently, it is clear that there is a range of quality within both early entry and college recommending programs (National Research Council, 2010)

¹⁰ A recent national report on teacher education in the U.S. has referred to the kind of paradigm shift that I am calling for as “turning the education of teachers upside down.” (NCATE, p.ii).

and that there are weak programs of all kinds that probably should be shut down, as well as practices in both college recommending and early entry programs that merit wider use.

We have argued in this paper that neither schools nor universities can educate our nation's teachers alone and that even together, schools and universities cannot educate teachers well without accessing the expertise that exists in the communities that are supposed to be served by schools. Both early entry and college recommending programs have a role to play in providing high quality teachers to everyone's children.

For their part, schools, colleges and departments of education need to reverse the "mission creep" (Ogren, 2005) that has drawn many of them away from a serious commitment to teacher education and return to their central mission as professional schools (Clifford & Guthrie, 1988; Ball, 2007). Education schools must focus the intellectual expertise of some of its tenure line faculty and clinical faculty on working in new and more respectful ways with those in schools and communities to build and learn how to sustain over time high quality pre-service teacher education programs that draw on the expertise that exists in each domain.

Unless a college or university education school is willing to make a serious commitment to offering high quality teacher education programs in which faculty invest their intellectual talent, then it should get out of the business of preparing teachers. Making a commitment to high quality teacher education programs in research universities does not mean an abandonment of the responsibility for conducting research, including research on teacher education. On the contrary, a serious commitment to teacher education in research universities would involve utilizing their teacher education programs as laboratories for the study of teacher learning and development and effective practices in preparing teachers. We argue that by recasting who is an expert and rethinking how universities can cross institutional boundaries to collaborate with communities

and schools, teacher education programs can more thoroughly interrogate its challenges and innovate with new solutions to prepare the teachers our students need.

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