Evidence 2.1.5 PK-12 Univ. Task Force Charge and Recommendations

Education Programs' PK-12/University Task Force

Purpose and Scope of the Education Programs' PK-12/University Task Force
Earlier this year, the leaders of the Council on Postsecondary Education (Bob King), Kentucky Department of Education (Terry Holliday) and the Education Professional Standards Board (Robert Brown) developed the Vanguard Project white paper and invited each education program in the state to develop a Vanguard proposal. This project was discussed among the education faculty in the College of Education and Human Services at Northern Kentucky University and with our PK-12 community partners through the NKCES Superintendent meetings. In general the education faculty were interested in the project and the possibilities that it proposed for our education programs and graduates.   Likewise, area superintendents were interested in the project and, in particular, were interested in developing an even closer collaboration with NKU to review and revise our educator preparation programs.
However, several superintendents stated they had reviewed the Vanguard Project with their school boards and legal counsel and the decision was made that they could not engage in discussions about the "Vanguard Project".   The general consensus among the NKCES superintendents was that none of the northern Kentucky school districts were able to engage in conversations about "Vanguard" but were very interested in partnering with NKU to discuss, review, and revise our educator preparation programs. We brought this information back to the education faculty, President Mearns, and Provost Wells and we came to a consensus that NKU will not submit a proposal for the Vanguard Project at this time. Instead we will collaborate with our area school districts to discuss revisions to our educator preparation programs consistent with many of the recommendations in the Vanguard Project, as well as other state and national standards and position papers.

The main purpose of this task force is to develop the priorities for action that will guide the education programs' efforts to review and revise each program to meet the needs of the 21st Century educator. This task force will have representation from the College of Education and Human Services, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the PK-12 school districts.   The task force recommendations are envisioned to be approximately three to six pages long and will focus on three broad areas: admissions' standards, field and clinical experiences, and pedagogy. In addition, it is envisioned that the task force will research and review current information about "best practices" in educator preparation. This will include such items as reviewing professional literature, researching model programs across the nation, and program, state, and national standards.

Timeline

November, 2013:   Members identified for Task Force and work begins

February , 2014:   Initial recommendations for admissions' standards discussed with education
                                    faculty
April, 2014:   Preliminary report to the education faculty from the Field and Clinical Experiences
                                    and the Pedagogy sub-task committees
April- May, 2014: Discussion and decisions among education program faculty to determine program
                                    revisions based on task force recommendations

Charge of the Task Force

The charge of the task force is to develop recommendations for revised and updated: admissions criteria, field and clinical experiences, and pedagogy courses. The entire task force shall be responsible for developing the recommendations for the admissions' criteria and will coordinate sub-task committees as needed to meet the charge of the task force. Two sub-task committees are suggested to effectively accomplish this work: 1) Field and Clinical Experiences (includes, but is not limited to, collaboration with PK-12 community and Arts/Sciences faculty; teaching hospital model; and connecting field and clinical experiences into a year- long model; and 2) Pedagogy (includes, but is not limited to, methods courses, classroom management, assessment, and foundation courses and experiences.

Task Force Members:

- Shawn Faulkner, Chair of the Teacher Education Department (Facilitator of task force)
- Steve Crites, Special Education
- Jaesook Gilbert, Early Childhood
- Lenore Kinne, MAT
- Doug Feldmann, Secondary
- Jonathan Thomas, Elementary and Middle Grades, Mathematics Education
- Tammie Sherry, Elementary
- Sara Runge, Coordinator, Admissions' Field Experiences
- Chris Cook, Middle Grades
- Brandelyn Tosolt, Foundations
- Sarah Kasten, Secondary and Mathematics Education
- John Huss, Foundations
- Jill Niemeyer, Clinical Experiences Coordinator
- Carol Ryan, Physical Education and Interim Dean
- Jonathan Cullick, College of Arts and Sciences, English Education
- Bethany Noblitt, College of Arts and Sciences, Mathematics Education
- Karen Cheser, Chief Academic Officer/ Deputy Superintendent, Boone County School District
- Ginger Webb, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, Ft. Thomas School District
- Dan Ridder, Director of Curriculum, Bellevue School District
- Tracy Mann, Assistant Superintendent, Kenton County School District
- Curtis Hall, Director, NKCES Executive Director
- Abby Cunningham, Elementary Teacher Candidate

Resource Members:

- Education Advisors
- Education program faculty
- Arts/Sciences education program faculty

- PK-12 partners, including building principals at each level of education
- Other community or university personnel (Admissions, financial aid, etc)
- Teacher Candidates

PK-12 Task Force – Field and Clinical Experiences Task Force
March 17, 2014

CAEP Standard 2: CLINICAL PARTNERSHIPS AND PRACTICE
The provider ensures that effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P-12 students' learning and development.

2.1 Partnerships for Clinical Preparation
Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements, including technology-based collaborations, for clinical preparation and share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation. Partnerships for clinical preparation can follow a range of forms, participants, and functions. They establish mutually agreeable expectations for candidate entry, preparation, and exit; ensure that theory and practice are linked; maintain coherence across clinical and academic components of preparation; and share accountability for candidate outcomes.

2.2 Clinical Educators
Partners co-select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators, both provider- and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and P-12 student learning and development. In collaboration with their partners, providers use multiple indicators and appropriate technology-based applications to establish, maintain, and refine criteria for selection, professional development, performance evaluation, continuous improvement, and retention of clinical educators in all clinical placement settings.

2.3 Clinical Experiences
The provider works with partners to design clinical experiences of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure that candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on all students' learning and development. Clinical experiences, including technology-enhanced learning opportunities, are structured to have multiple performance-based assessments at key points within the program to demonstrate candidates' development of the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, as delineated in Standard 1, that are associated with a positive impact on the learning and development of all P-12 students.

Field/Clinical Placements Discussion/ Ideas

- **Identify best placements for our candidates**
    - We need the buy- in of school district – buy-in of superintendents and principals are vitally important
    - Should we identify a school district first and then work with their schools?
    - Important to remember diversity when placing candidates—inclusive of all diversity criteria; in particular socio-economic, ELL, racial/ethnic, exceptionalities
    - Important to rotate placements, so we are not using the same teachers and schools each semester
- **Identify best teachers-**
    - What criteria do we use to determine the instructional strengths of teachers?

- New Professional Growth Effectiveness System (PGES) for all teachers starting in 2014-15—could this help us identify good CE?
- There is an overall evaluation as well as an evaluation on each standard
  - PGES levels of evaluation: Ineffective, Developing, Accomplished, Exemplary
  - 4 domains: Planning, Classroom management, Instruction, Professional Responsibilities
- It would be helpful to know more about the PGES system—can we schedule Jenny Ray, from the   co-op, to give faculty a PD on the PGES system?
- Can principals provide us a data base of recommended teachers at the beginning of the academic year?
- Perhaps the most important criteria for a CE is someone interested and enthusiastic! We can provide PD, develop in our system, etc.

- **How do we identify teachers who want to serve as mentors?**
  - Co-teaching should help; How can we be true collaborative partners with the PK-12 schools and teachers and vice versa
  - Need a mutual benefit to school and NKU - more intentional interaction with NKU and the school district
    - University provide PD as part of our presence in schools
    - Provide a building liaison from NKU (NExT model)—present in school when candidates are in the school; answer questions, recruit new teachers, provides continual NKU presence, etc.
- **Embed our EDU classes in the schools—**
  - What are the logistics?
  - Are we thinking of embedding the methods courses only and/or other pedagogy courses, such as classroom management or assessment?
- **Collaboration with A/S for MG and Sec.—**
  - Field experiences are sometimes challenges because of overlap with content courses
- **Classroom management is an area that is always rated low by candidates and CE**
  - How can we use field/clinical experiences to help candidates learn and understand more about classroom management?
  - Can we make Pro Sem I the classroom management semester
    - Closely connect the classroom management class information with the field experiences-— through assignments, reflections, discussions, etc.
    - Purposefully connect the knowledge gained in class to what candidates have observed and experienced in the PK-12 classroom
- **Assessment is important - Data is vital;**
  - Can we have our candidates work closely with the PK-12 teachers to see how they work with student data, use it to make decisions, work in the Continuous Instructional Improvements Technology System (CIITS), etc.
  - How do we introduce our candidates to the CIITS system?
  - What decisions do teachers make based on assessments? How can our candidates see this in action?
  - Are the assessments we use in our programs current—appropriate for the current PK-12 schools?
  - Make Pro Sem II the assessment semester?
    - Closely connect the assessment class information with the field experiences- through assignments, discussions, etc.
    - Purposefully connect the knowledge gained in class to what candidates have observed and experienced in the PK-12 classroom
- **Focus on developmental progression of field experiences**

- Pre-admissions field experiences—can focus on tutoring or other skills; can use community based settings
- Admissions semester— re-evaluate the emphasis on observation – what other activities can we add to this semester?
- Pro Sem I- introduce and emphasize co-teaching; assign candidates to schools in pairs and have them practice co-teaching, along with the PK-12 teacher
- Pro Sem II- candidates in school longer; focusing on assessment;
  - How can we have candidates in PK- 12 school for a full day?
  - Challenge with candidates working—but can we schedule several full days throughout semester so candidates would be able to plan work schedule around class schedule?
  - Can we have candidates in school one full day a week throughout the semester, instead of the two partial days?
- Pro Sem III would perhaps stay as is or be a hybrid of Pro Sem I and II
- Use a developmental approach to assessment—i.e. For the dispositions checklist, list the criteria appropriate for that semester and expectation of candidates; build on it until you have all criteria listed for Pro Sem II and/or clinical experiences

- **Pro Sem II or Pro Sem III into Clinical Experiences**
  - Easiest transition is to keep Pro Sem II/ III as they are and move candidates into the same placement for clinical experiences
  - Clinical experiences office will need to work with the Pro Sem II/ III faculty to make the placements
- **What about an alternative schedule of field experiences and courses on campus?**
  - It might be good to rethink the schedules of Pro Sem I, II, and III—candidate and CE feedback indicate a need to have candidates in school for a **FULL DAY** before the clinical experience begins
    - Perhaps make Pro Sem II one full day a week (rather than 2 half days) which will help transition them to the full days of clinical experience
  - Front loading info in courses so candidates can spend several consecutive weeks in the PK-12 classroom
  - Or other alternative scheduling?
- **Is there a place for recording candidates teaching and then using the recordings for candidate self-assessment and analysis and/or faculty evaluation?**
  - Foliotek allows candidates to have 500mb of memory; compressed video is approximately 1MB per minute
  - Can also have candidates upload video lesson to Vimeo or YouTube—privacy features prohibit others from viewing video
  - Work with school district to sign MOU that allows our candidates to video—Texas Tech model
  - Video would allow analysis of same lesson by candidate, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor—will allow us to show inter-rater reliability and non-bias (needed for CAEP accreditation)
  - Use a developmental progression—could start with small video clips—assignment in a class-and build to a full lesson in Pro Sem II
- **Probably would be best to start with a pilot group for any changes**
  - Smaller numbers of candidates would help with placements
  - Pilot would allow us to determine strengths/ challenges of suggested changes and make recommendations for full programs
- **It would be good to use our program advisory committees to help answer questions – get the teachers' perspective**

Admission requirements draft recommendations

Dispositions Recommendations:
- Assess candidates' interactions with PK-12 students
  - Develop an intro course that would infuse tutoring of PK-12 students as a main course requirement; example of a similar course at UK
  - Develop this as a gen ed course, but it does not have to be;
  - Individualize the candidates' assignments for appropriateness of each level of PK-12;
  - Could we develop EDU 104 into this course?
    - If not, where does EDU 104 and this new course fit into the programs; remembering that we need to stay at 120 semester hours for graduation
  - Offer this course as a dual credit for school based scholars
- Design the course also to catch most common dispositional challenges of candidates; i.e. common sense; judgment; proper use of social media; respect for others
  - Use questions/scenarios within course content to get to the above
  - Observe for interaction with other professionals and children
- Admissions' process should include a personal interview –
  - Use group interviews of candidates;
  - Have groups of faculty interview the candidates;
  - Include PK-12 professionals in the interview sessions;
  - Have different faculty/ PK-12 professionals lead the interviews;
  - Purpose is to see how potential teacher candidates interact with others;
  - Professionals conducting the group interviews will make a recommendation on admitting or not admitting the student;
- Add a dispositional question to the admissions' application
  - Make it an on demand response;
  - Complete within a time limit before the personal interview
- Review and revise the current dispositions checklist –
  - Once revised and updated, provide training on dispositional checklist to ALL personnel using it to assess candidates' dispositions (CT and US); conduct this each semester with all new personnel
  - Focus on professionalism - how do we measure this for admissions?

Skills Recommendations:
- Assess the student's ability to communicate well with others— Refer to the personal interview and on demand writing assignment in dispositions above—these will also indicate the student's ability to communicate
- Develop a system for putting "Red flags" on students that have been admitted, but might need some extra attention—who will be involved in determining if a "red flag" is needed; can be determined at any level—admissions, pro sem I, pro sem II, pro sem III and clinical experiences
- Develop an action plan for improvement and growth for students who have been "red flagged"—who will develop it and who will monitor it?
- No need to implement anything additional for reading, writing and mathematics skills - Praxis I gives us a baseline on this information
- No need to review instructional skills for admissions, they are developed in pro sem I, II, III, and clinical experiences

Knowledge Recommendations:
- Stay with our current admissions requirements for now: 2.75 and Praxis I cut scores;   with the new admissions' requirements we have lost 80-100 students in fall/spring admissions; and there are new Praxis I tests that are based on the common core—students will take them starting in fall and the speculation is that they will be more demanding than the current Praxis I tests
- Complete a comprehensive review of research literature on GPA/Praxis I cut scores - what scores make a difference in the performance of a teacher?