



Teacher Educator Practice Framework

June 2018

Research overwhelmingly states that the single-most influential in-school factor in student success is the K-12 classroom teacher.¹ The same could be said about teacher educators for their role in training novice teachers.² Yet, despite decades of research, the field of teacher preparation still struggles to cohere around what teacher educators need to know and be able to do to, how they should be deliberately prepared and continually supported to know and do these things, and when and how to collect data on how they do what they do for the purposes of strengthening and improving their practice.³

To address this lack of coherence, we - representatives from four national teacher preparation centers⁴ working with over 100 teacher preparation programs across different teacher training contexts and areas of expertise - formed a working group to create a shared developmental framework to improve teacher educator practice. The purpose of this working group is to focus on a set of practices that are specific to work of practicing teacher educators. We see teacher educators as people who play a formal role in the training of novice teachers. They are people who provide instruction or who give guidance and support to novice teachers, and who thus render a substantial contribution to the development of novices into competent teachers. Teacher educators may hold roles such as: course instructors, professors, site coordinators, coaches/clinical instructors, P-12 mentors, or P-12 instructional leaders. Not included in this definition are people who support novice teachers in roles such as: informal mentors or coaches, P-12 leaders who do not work in an instructional leadership role, research professors, professional development providers, or teacher scholars. Teacher educators play a formal role in the training of novice teachers - they provide

¹ Chetty, R.; Friedman, J.N.; & Rockoff, J.E. (2011). The long term impacts of teachers: Teacher value-added and student outcomes in adulthood. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research; Hamre, B. & Pianta, R.C. (2006). Student-teacher relationships. In Bear, G.G. & Minke, K.M. (Eds). Children's Needs III: Development, Prevention, and Intervention, 59-71. Washington, DC, US: National Association of School Psychologists. See also: McCaffrey, D. F., Lockwood, J. R., Koretz, D. M., & Hamilton, L. S. (2003). Evaluating modeling Student-Teacher Interactions: 26 value-added models for teacher accountability, (MG-158-EDU). Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

² Sharma, U. & Sokal, L. (2013). The impact of a teacher education course on pre-service teachers' beliefs about inclusion: an international comparison. *Jorsen*, 15(4): 276-284. See also: Brouwer, N. and Korthagen, F. 2005. Can teacher education make a difference? *American Educational Research Journal*, 42(1): 153-224; Korthagen, F.A.J. (2010). How teacher education can make a difference. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 36(4): 407-423. Day, C. (1999). *Developing Teachers: The Challenge of Lifelong Learning*. New York, NY: The Falmer Press.

³ National Center for Teacher Residencies (2016). Drivers of teacher preparation: Landscape analysis. Chicago, IL: NCTR; Goodwin, A.L., Smith, L., Souto-Manning, M., Cjeruvu, R., Tan, M.Y., Reed, R., & Taeras, L. (2014). What should teacher educators know and be able to do? Perspectives from practicing teacher educators. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 65, 284-302.

⁴ [Massachusetts Department of Education EPIC](#), [National Center for Teacher Residencies](#), [TeacherSquared](#), [US Prep National Center](#)

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To date we have created a set of **12 teacher educator practices**. The table below organizes 12 teacher educator **practices** into three domains: plan, implement, and improve. Each practice has a **definition** and series of **components** that describe how teacher educators go about enacting it in their work. Together, the practices, their definitions, and their components provide an organizing framework for thinking about a slice of what teacher educators need to know and do to improve novice practice. The current practices represent multiple rounds of feedback from expert teachers and teacher educators, policy makers, state education departments, regulatory agencies, teacher education program leaders, scholars, and researchers.

Please note that the Framework does not represent an exhaustive list of everything teacher educators need to know and be able to do. There are essential aspects to the work of teacher educating that are not addressed here, and which in many ways serve as prerequisites for teacher educators to be able to enact the practices listed (e.g., pedagogical content knowledge, content knowledge for teaching, professional dispositions about teaching, learning, and learning to teach). We see this Framework as an important part of a larger body of teacher educator knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Thank you in advance for engaging with these materials, and for your future feedback on these tools.

⁵ Koster, B., Brekelmans, M., Korthagen, F. A. J., & Wubbels, T. (2005). Quality requirements for teacher educators. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(2), 157-176.

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TEACHER EDUCATOR PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

PLAN					
Design Rigorous Learning Experiences	Bridge Theory and Practice	Assess What Novices Know and are Able to Do	Construct Coherent Learning Experiences		
IMPLEMENT					
Establish a Productive Learning Environment	Communicate and Maintain Rigorous Expectations	Make the Work Teachers Do Explicit	Provide Multiple Opportunities for Practice	Provide Targeted and Continuous Feedback	Promote Principles of Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice
IMPROVE					
Use Data to Improve Novice Teacher Practice			Improve Through Continuous Learning		

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Design Rigorous Learning Experiences

Definition: Design and/or select learning experiences that meet novice teachers where they are and engage them in rigorous instruction to ensure they meet programmatic standards and expectations for performance.

Components:

1. Ground experience in rigorous outcomes and criteria for success aligned to program standards
2. Apply adult learning theories when designing learning experiences
3. Scaffold instruction to the appropriate developmental stage of NTs current practice
4. Create activities where NTs do the majority of the thinking and the work, not TEs
5. Select appropriate resources to support and extend NT knowledge of content and pedagogy
6. Differentiate instruction for groups of students or individuals when necessary (e.g. leveraging strengths, addressing weaknesses, and adjusting instructional styles or activities)
7. Design individual (and sequences of) learning experiences within units or unifying ideas about teaching and learning
8. Incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy into the design of learning experiences
9. Intentionally select content that provides rich opportunities to explore pressing questions of justice
10. Evaluate how activities and learning experiences might disadvantage students with certain disabilities and design accommodations that use technology and other means to include a wide variety of opportunities for engagement

Bridge Theory and Practice

Definition: Make deliberate and explicit connections between theory and P-12 classrooms and students.

Components:

1. Connect teaching practice to the theory and/or research that undergirds the practice
2. If not already working in the P-12 space, spend time in P-12 schools and develop strong cross-institutional partnerships and relationships (e.g. with students, parents, teachers, and administrators)
3. Know and understand the historical, political, social, and economic contexts of communities in which NTs learn and work
4. Gain and use knowledge of the organizational and educational context of districts and schools in which NTs teach to inform instruction (e.g. structure of district offices and key personnel, types of P-12 schools in districts served, knowledge of leadership and teacher turnover, standards and assessments being used in schools, and instructional methods)
5. Leverage P-12 student, family, school, and community assets in planning learning experiences
6. Provide clear justifications for practices through a lens of how they advance justice, and make explicit the ways in which enacting the practice poorly could reinforce inequity

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Assess what Novices Know and are Able to Do

Definition: Assess what novice teachers are able to do through their performance on tasks that mirror the actual work of teaching and the skills they have been taught.

Components:

1. Prioritize NT application of skill by aligning assessment type to knowledge or skill being assessed (e.g lesson planning assessed via a lesson plan, questioning strategies assessed via video or observation of NT enacting strategy in front of PK-12 students, mock classroom, or rehearsal)
2. Align assessments to program standards
3. Align assessments to level of rigor in which content/skills were taught
4. Ensure assessments include clear criteria for success including articulated levels of performance
5. Ensure assessments are valid, reliable, efficient, and fair
6. Ensure assessment accommodations and modifications are provided for all NTs who require them

Construct Coherent Learning Experiences

Definition: Contribute to a coherent learning experience for novice teachers in order to provide a seamless, integrated and progressive learning trajectory

Components:

1. Take time to learn about learning experiences NTs receive within and beyond the program
2. Develop positive working relationships with TEs within and beyond the program
3. Make explicit connections to learning experiences NTs receive within and beyond the program (e.g. vocabulary, concepts, resources)
4. Help NTs draw parallels between their placement, training and coursework experience
5. Collaborate with other TE peers to ensure feedback NTs receive about their practice is consistent
6. Identify clear, common learning objectives for NTs with regard to advancing equity and justice, and attend to the ways in which these objectives are embedded within and across learning experiences

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Establish a Productive Learning Environment

Definition: Create and maintain a safe space that supports risk taking, views error-making as part and parcel to the work of learning to teach, challenges ideas, and leads to the development of respectful relationships with and between novice teachers.

Components:

1. Establish, model, and reinforce norms and routines that support a productive learning environment in which all members thrive
2. Create a culture that sensitively and respectfully considers differences of identity and perspective among and between NTs and TEs (race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability status)
3. Ensure nobody is (dis)advantaged as a result of disability status
4. Have asset-based, growth-minded interactions with NTs
5. Be flexible and responsive to the experiences and skill sets of NTs
6. Encourage and model the respectful sharing and challenging of diverse ideas

Communicate and Maintain Rigorous Expectations

Definition: Assume professional responsibility for novice teacher performance in relation to a set of program standards by clearly communicating about and upholding those standards

Components:

1. Internalize program standards
2. Communicate program standards to NTs through multiple means, and at multiple times
3. Set and communicate ambitious goal(s) for NT performance, and monitor performance relative to those goals over time
4. Uphold a high bar for NT success when enacting other practices
5. Hold NTs accountable for mastering essential skills and help them develop ownership for their own learning
6. Constructively push NTs who struggle to meet program standards and celebrate when those standards have been met or exceeded
7. Provide NTs multiple entry points to meet rigorous expectations (e.g. by honoring verbal and nonverbal modes of participation in learning experiences and discussion)

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Make the Work Teachers Do Explicit

Definition: Make the work that teachers do (e.g. enacting practices, using content knowledge, and making in the moment decisions) explicit for novices by naming the work, modeling, and making thinking and decision-making visible.

Components:

1. Name and frame the teaching practice or strategy and its alignment to program standards
2. Deconstruct and label the components of a particular teaching practice into manageable parts
3. Model high-quality enactment of teaching practices for NTs
4. Make decision making and thinking about teaching practice visible by surfacing the knowledge, principles, and beliefs that underlie instructional choices
5. Analyze how a particular teaching practice plays out/enacts in multiple teaching settings
6. Explicitly name ways in which a particular teaching practice can disrupt (or entrench) patterns of inequity in classrooms
7. Model and decompose ways of thinking that support NTs to apply an equity lens to their decisions about content, teaching moves or classroom structures, norms and expectations

Provide Multiple Opportunities for Practice

Definition: Facilitate intentional and repeated opportunities for novice teachers to practice teaching in safe and varied learning environments. Practice opportunities increase in complexity and authenticity over time and lead novices to meet programmatic standards and expectations for performance.

Components:

1. Isolate skills for NTs to practice, determine criteria for success, and identify possible misconceptions
2. Create and facilitate practice protocols
3. Provide frequent and multiple opportunities for practice
4. Provide concrete, concise feedback based on criteria for success, and give NTs opportunity to practice again and improve
5. Ensure practice opportunities increase in complexity and authenticity over time
6. Ensure opportunities for practice are equitably distributed
7. Build in opportunities to address issues of equity in practice (e.g. in practicing the work of leading a mathematics discussion, provide NTs with opportunities to try out responding to incorrect 'student' solutions)

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Provide Targeted and Continuous Feedback

Definition: Engage in frequent cycles of concrete, actionable, and timely feedback that clearly communicate novices' strengths and growth areas, that are grounded in programmatic standards and expectations for performance, and that are followed up upon by both teacher educators and novice teachers.

Components:

1. Ground feedback in program standards
2. Provide growth-minded feedback to improve NT practice
3. Share strengths in addition to growth areas
4. Ensure feedback is specific, concrete and actionable with clear and manageable next steps
5. Ensure feedback is timely and relevant to promote rapid cycles of improvement
6. Collect and store feedback to monitor NT growth and development
7. Create structures that facilitate follow through on next steps, on behalf of the NT and TE
8. Demonstrate awareness of the ways in which feedback implicitly communicates values, and consider whether those values are universally shared among diverse NTs
9. Maintain awareness of how feedback is delivered with regard to how it might be differently received based on NT (and TE) identity, values and perspective

Promote Principles of Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice

Definition: Actively address patterns of inequity by modeling principles of diversity and inclusion and promoting equity and social justice in the daily work of teacher educating. Use this lens to inform all other practices.

Components:

The components for this practice have been intentionally incorporated into every other practice on the Framework. We believe it is imperative to explicitly name promoting the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice as a practice that teacher educators enact by realizing the core components of the Framework in their entirety.

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Use Data to Improve Novice Teacher Practice

Definition: Gather multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data about novice teachers' practice and use those data for the purpose of improving their practice at multiple points throughout a course and/or school year.

Components:

1. Gather multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data about NT practice (e.g. performance on assignments, scores on observation rubrics, comments during one-on-one conversations, NT demeanor during class sessions or coaching meetings)
2. Analyze data to identify emerging strengths and weaknesses
3. Identify root causes, and prioritize areas of practice for improvement
4. Create and implement action plans based on data analysis
5. Communicate how data use has impacted TE practice with NTs
6. Disaggregate data and study systematically for patterns of inequity in NT performance; if patterns of inequity emerge, implement strategies to address these results
7. Identify appropriate cycles for data collection and analysis

Improve Through Continuous Learning

Definition: Use data, research, best practice and professional resources in order to reflect upon, adapt and improve practice.

Components:

1. Model a continuous learner mindset for NTs
2. Collect and analyze data from multiple sources in order to identify strength and areas of growth in TE practice (i.e. NT perception data, TE observation feedback, NT assessment data)
3. Use data analysis and reflection to set goals for improvement
4. Find and utilize the resources necessary in order to meet improvement goals
5. Seek out and incorporate learning from current scholarship in the field to improve TE practice on a regular basis
6. Observe and incorporate best practices from colleagues and other effective teacher educators to improve TE practice on a regular basis
7. Actively pursue research and writing that offers different and varied perspectives
8. Apply an equity lens to continuous improvement efforts by interrogating best practices, research and writing in order to support NT and TE success

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