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Feature Article

It Takes a School to Raise a Teacher

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Abstract

Preparing teachers to succeed in urban schools is a critical issue that has become even more significant, given the challenges of No Child Left Behind. This report clarifies the premises and components of a program designed to ameliorate the problem. The program's results correlate with studies that have found that site-based teacher preparation adds substantial value to the future effectiveness and retention of teachers. This model should be incorporated in undergraduate teacher certification, a change that would enable college graduates to enter the classroom with competencies that principals and teachers indicate are absent from their preparation.

Article

Introduction

In 1990, with funding from the AT&T Foundation and the US Department of Education, DePaul University developed the Urban Teacher Corps (UTC), an internship-based program that trained career changers and former Peace Corps volunteers to teach in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). The UTC curriculum, like the standard DePaul program, offered 11 courses for meeting the certification requirements for elementary school and high school; however, its courses were sequenced, designed, and delivered in a structure responsive to schools that serve poverty-level communities.

The UTC program was both accelerated and comprehensive, and it provided an intensive induction support system. It differed, however, from the standard alternative certification program in that its program requirements were identical to the on-campus pre-service graduate program. Illinois did not enact alternative certification (105 ILCS 5/21-5b) until 1997, which meant that UTC operated without those standards for seven years. Initially,

alternative certification in Illinois meant "fast track" rather than a reduction of professional education requirements. The principle differences between UTC and DePaul's traditional on-campus pre-service program were in mentoring support, sustained site-based field engagement, and the interconnection of theory and practice to the real world of teaching.

Researchers (eg, Houston, Marshall, & McDavid, 1993) who have considered nontraditional approaches comparable to UTC's advise universities to restructure teacher preparation programs to provide early experiences and teaching responsibilities with incremental stages of teaching capacities during the program. Studies have demonstrated that this form of training allows teachers to gain a better understanding of student behavior and learning experiences, especially regarding lesson presentation in the classroom. In addition, teachers are better able to relate theory to practice through direct interaction with students.

An extensive longitudinal study (Odell & Ferraro, 1992) found high retention rates for teachers who received on-site support from mentor teachers in collaboration with a university and the local school district during their first year of teaching. Of the 140 teachers who were located from the original group of 160, 134 (96%) were still teaching. In another study, Colbert and Wolff (1992) found significant growth in teacher retention in districts that collaborated with university education departments to provide systematic support to new teachers. Results indicated that, after three years in the partnership program, retention of beginning teachers was 95% for both elementary and secondary teachers. Prior to the study, the retention rate after three successive years in the classroom had been 76% for new elementary teachers and 81% for new secondary teachers.

UTC's inaugural cohort was equally successful. All but two of the participants (n=21) completed program requirements, and the retention rate of program graduates teaching in high-need Chicago Public Schools was 95.2% after three consecutive years, even though many were assigned to hard-to-staff schools, where high attrition was endemic.

An outcome that is more difficult to quantify is UTC's goal of developing capacity in schools that participated in the program. The program was designed not only to prepare individual teachers but also to improve Chicago Public Schools. The nation's best-known alternative certification program – Teach for America – lost an average of 80% of its teachers in Houston, Texas after just two years (Raymond, Fletcher, & Luque, 2001). This model, which provides a fast track into and out of teaching, imposes a burden in economic and human costs on already beleaguered high-need schools and districts. According to Danielson (1999), administrative time devoted to screening and interviewing candidates, checking references, conducting school and district-level orientations, and performing other new-hire procedures can increase costs appreciably. Moreover, schools that hire these new teachers often make sizable investments in further professional development to compensate for perceived inadequacies in the preparation of these teachers.

UTC incorporated elements that are recognized today as essential to the preparation and retention of successful urban teachers. When first- and second-year teachers at high-poverty Chicago schools were asked what should be added to teacher preparation courses, they made the following comments:

1. Walk through a typical day.
2. Requirements and their realistic completion
3. Special education
4. Lesson planning specific to Chicago and our schools
5. What to think about – the kids' potential, what you need to bring it out
6. How to connect with students and families
7. Have a class list.
8. Prepare notes to parents.
9. The culture of teaching
10. Clarify your philosophy of education.
11. Core curriculum
12. Practice with the children.
13. Collaborative planning

14. Classroom management

15. Getting to know the culture of the school

16. Rules and regulations; standards and structure

17. Don't be shocked when the student says "I don't have a pencil."

18. How to keep up with the demands of the job

19. Remember that some [students] run their homes themselves.

20. I don't know how to teach the children how to read. I'm lucky I'm set up with another teacher who helps me with everything. If I didn't have him, I'd be clueless.

21. Inner city program—my school didn't offer any courses to prepare me for this.

22. What they taught you in college, that's not what's happening now.

This "theory-practice divide" (Pagano, Weiner, Obi, & Swearingen, 1995) illustrates a notable concern as educational programs attempt to prepare novice teachers to be skilled in meeting the unique demands and challenges often found in urban schools. Other studies highlight specific elements as essential for comprehensive teacher education: 1) providing prospective teachers an opportunity to practice their teaching skills and become socialized into the role of teacher (Dueck, Altmann, Haslett, & Latimer, 1984); 2) connecting theory with practice (Engeström, 1994); and 3) working with students they are likely to serve (Flores, Tefft-Cousins, & Diaz, 1999).

Some of the suggestions – such as item 7 ("have a class list") – are extremely practical. Others indicate gaps in the curriculum that can limit the ability of teachers to succeed. Consider item 8: "Prepare notes to parents." If a pre-service teacher does not learn how to prepare homework or communicate with parents and guardians, the teacher may have limited home support and even may alienate parents. Yet, state requirements for teacher certification usually do not include working with parents. Just as researchers have identified different kinds of thinking, such as those discussed in *Seven Kinds of Smart*, (Armstrong, T., 1999), some educators are concerned with enabling students to develop varieties of "cultural competence." There are different kinds of competence that a teacher needs, such as item 13 ("collaborative planning") and item 6 ("how to connect with students and families"). Interestingly, in a recent survey, UTC graduates (n=56) with at least five consecutive years of teaching experience rated their skills in "communicating with parents" as M=2.27/3, SD=0.70, indicating an above-average rating in this area. Nevertheless, teachers graduating from other teacher education programs are reporting the same concerns in 2002 as the first UTC class reported in 1990. This suggests a continuing gap between the standard teacher certification curriculum and the realities of urban schools.

The Design

The UTC program responded to the expressed needs and recommendations of individuals working in local public schools (Table 1). Based on established principles of education, UTC was modeled after executive MBA programs. These programs recruit a cohort of individuals who complete a sequence of courses. Students meet every other weekend to deal with business cases and learn principles that are applied to each individual's workplace.

Instead of meeting every other week, the UTC program began with an intensive summer orientation to teaching and then convened all-day Saturday sessions, meeting weekly except during public school vacations. This schedule allowed UTC resident interns the ability to complete the required coursework with the requisite number of contact hours, 12 weeks of full-time formal student teaching, and 100 hours of clinical experience – all in an 11-month period. Every Saturday, resident interns would learn principles of education that were applied to real situations in the schools to which they were assigned. Those in-school experiences were highly organized, following a sequence that started with item 18 ("getting to know the culture of the school").

Although the development of effective teachers historically has been under the domain of university and college education departments, the ever-changing environment of the urban classroom means that local schools must share in the responsibility of preparing and retaining effective teachers. UTC organizers were cognizant that novice teachers often felt inadequate, overwhelmed, and disillusioned because of a lack of formal support, weak leadership, and fluctuating school values. Many left the profession because they felt powerless to change it. In response, UTC insisted that teacher quality *and* high teacher retention were key components of school quality (Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Interventions designed to increase teacher retention included facilitation by mentor

teachers, on-site preparation, reflective exercises, individual development within a community of learners, and guided disciplined inquiry and discourse. In this fashion, UTC was designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Teacher training for urban schools requires teacher candidates to learn more than just theoretical methods of teaching. Attrition rates soar in urban schools when new teachers experience difficulties in learning how to relate to urban students and teach them effectively (Grant, 1989). Through on-site preparation, UTC fostered a paradigm shift from "a technocratic view of teaching to one that is rooted in concepts of learning based on long-standing views that learning is the consequence of social constructions between and among students and teachers" (Griffith & Early, 1999, p. vii). Reinforcing this stance, Nieto (1999) calls for a resurgence of efforts to develop the cultural awareness that is necessary for teachers to negotiate cultural structures for success in diverse urban schools.

While many cite Vygotsky's notion of the social context in cognition (1978), it is important to note that Piaget, too, highlighted the importance of the social, for it is the learner's experiences in a social context that expose new factors for assimilation and accommodation. The roles of community, culture, and language that are the tools and signs of everyday experience serve as mediators in the development of higher-order thinking skills (Phillips & Soltis, 1998; Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992). According to Vygotsky, full understanding of resident interns' learning is dependent on the context in which learning takes place and what interns can accomplish under the tutelage of others. This is the basic premise behind Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development, which he has defined as "the distance between the actual developmental 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" (1978, p. 86).

Vygotsky's concept of proximal knowledge was applied in the design of the in-school experiences, the plan for each course, and the sequence of courses. There was a yearlong developmental progression, which began with an orientation to the public school, continued with the development of the disciplinary and pedagogical competencies a teacher needs, and concluded with the resident intern taking full responsibility for a classroom. Courses included topics that the resident interns needed to understand in practical terms, such as how to grade student work. These practical applications were linked to philosophies of education and principles of educational psychology, such as positive reinforcement. The curriculum included the same course requirements as the standard teacher certification program at the university, but the content of the courses was contextualized to fit urban school situations. For example, the educational philosophy course continued throughout the program. Students analyzed perspectives ranging from Locke to Freire and "tested" their own philosophies in practical applications. Other strands running through the program included principles of psychology that were developed formally in a course on educational psychology and woven into courses on methods of teaching reading, math, and science.

It is important to note that proximal knowledge remains in proximity unless it is learned through application. The courses were constructed so that theory and practice were interconnected. Each week's assignment required resident interns to develop applications for their schools. UTC also required resident interns to complete weekly "quests," in which they interviewed two people at their assigned schools about a topic relevant to the course content. The course sessions included not only university faculty but also presenters and commentators from schools. For example, the course on educational psychology included a dialogue with parents about their perceptions of schooling and their children's needs. Highly effective teachers were panelists and session leaders during the first year. However, during the second program year, resident interns communicated that they "wanted to hear from 'teachers like us' with little prior experience who are having the same kinds of problems we are having, but are dealing with them better." The course sessions were changed to include greater diversity of experience so that resident interns could hear from colleagues who recently had solved some of the problems they were struggling to overcome. In this sense, one can conclude that traditional teacher education outside of an urban classroom context is often diaphanous, impeding the development of skills relevant to specific communities that have complex and specialized divisions of labor. The only way teachers truly can understand these classroom dynamics is by immersing themselves in the culture of their schools. From a contextualized cultural perspective, the transmission of shared cultural knowledge is a social negotiation within constructivism that focuses on how concepts in a particular culture are understood and applied by its members.

The emphasis on teacher experiential education originated with John Dewey (1938) as an intentional response to concerns of school principals that teachers came to their schools fully certified but only partially prepared. Although this problem persists today, institutions of higher learning have the capacity to organize teacher preparation programs that incorporate structures demonstrated by UTC and other pathways-to-teaching programs.

Case in point: Illinois State University developed its charter Professional Development School (PDS) in Chicago's Little Village community in 2005-2006. Little Village is located on the southwest side of Chicago, and its residents include many low-income Mexican immigrants. Through a Teacher Quality Enhancement grant funded by the US

Department of Education, the PARTNER Project – an acronym for "Professional Articulation for Recruiting/Retaining Teachers for Neighborhood Engagement and Renewal" – will expand this Chicago-based PDS network in 2006-2007 to include two additional schools in the Little Village community. Although the program is not mandatory, undergraduate students at Illinois State can opt to devote their entire senior year to working at one of these PDS sites. They will complete a sequence of methodology courses correlated with experiences that come from working directly with teachers and students, such as learning the rhythm of the school year, building relationships, and using strategies that enable a teacher to succeed in urban schools. To further the cultural understanding and the urban community context, State Farm Insurance Companies ® has partnered with Illinois State University to develop and establish a community-based residential housing facility in Little Village for student teachers in their senior year. With partnership support from the Little Village Community Development Corporation, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and CPS, the residential facility will help students engage beyond the classroom and immerse themselves in rich, sustained, and contextually-situated experiences bound within a nexus of social, cultural, historical, economic, political, and geographical contexts, and shared by a community of learners.

The delineation of induction responsibilities in many cases remains unclear among local schools, districts, and teacher preparation programs (Kestner, 1994). Nevertheless, lessons learned from UTC and the PARTNER Project show that induction must encompass local professional and community supports to excel in a particular environment. This can be achieved best through a collaborative model involving both the local school and the district. Working together toward common goals facilitates the creation of a continual professional development program relevant to the personal aims of novice teachers and the global aims and objectives of the school, the district, and federal NCLB mandates.

According to *Recruiting New Teachers* (2000), "good programs improve new teachers' knowledge, skills, and performance; provide personal support; introduce new teachers to school system norms and procedures; and familiarize them with school system values" (p. 1). Although the classroom cannot be seen as a purely homogenous community, particularly in the urban multicultural arena, Lemke (1994) argues that it is not enough merely to be exposed to common practices, language, and rituals. To be counted as a member of the community; one also must be entrenched through a socialization process. In this manner, the influence of biography, history, and culture over the "here-and-now" situation may alter views on learning and schooling, with the understanding that these conceptual tools are defined interdependently through contextualized activity. Through this process, interns are prepared on-site with robust opportunities to attach meaning to each new experience and relate it to its relevant historical context, whether governed by historical facts or their unique personal histories. By participating in this community with its complex framework of language, rituals, symbolism, and culture, which is guided in socialization toward situated norms and adept performances (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989), the history-forming patterns allow individuals to deviate from this norm, dependent on their unique history and background within schools (Lemke, 1994). This learning crossroads, illustrated by the central element in Lave and Wenger's intersection of meaning, practice, community, and identity (1991), has the power to affect both teacher change *and* school change.

Both graduate and undergraduate programs must recognize that proximal knowledge takes time and structure to develop. The educators who assert that Teach for America shortchanges schools and incoming teachers with its brief preparation period have substantial evidence of that shortcoming. Even the program's own graduates have voiced dissatisfaction with their preparation. In fact, the first UTC cohort included a teacher who had completed Teach for America and felt that he had to "start over" learning how to teach. What has not been analyzed yet is the drain on school resources posed by teachers who supposedly are "highly qualified" after a summer at a teaching "boot camp." An evaluation of UTC by the Urban Institute found that its graduates were rated as significantly better prepared to be first-year teachers than graduates of traditional and other nontraditional teacher preparation programs (Clewell & Villegas, 2001). That principals decided to invest school funds in the salaries of UTC resident interns and sought to hire them after they completed certification is marked evidence of the value that principals saw in the program.

The School Connection

UTC was introduced and carried out as a school development program rather than as a teacher certification program. Its model focused on learning by public school students, and any learning by UTC interns was correlated with and dedicated to learning by CPS students. Individual CPS schools provided "scaffolds" for the preparation of UTC interns. The program placed interns at schools with which the Center for Urban Education (CUE) had worked for several years on matters of professional development, including the implementation of a curriculum framework. CUE interns had participated in school professional development sessions that correlated with their coursework, later working in classrooms to help implement activities based on this framework. Established in

1980, CUE brought a resource to the initiative that was essential to its effectiveness – CPS partnerships.

Under CUE's system, partnership schools would invest in the program, paying the salaries of the intern teachers and providing guidance. Typically two interns worked at the same school, and some schools employed three-to-five interns in a given year. These interns were integrated into the school's teaching staff rather than being assigned to one teacher. CUE had established professional development programs with the participating schools, and teachers who had been leaders of those programs became mentors to the incoming interns. Interns would work with a different mentor every quarter. Instead of assigning individual mentors to a resident intern, CUE provided for a mentoring school, with active guidance by a variety of people including the school clerk, librarian, teacher aides, parents, and teachers. A critical factor noted by Cochran-Smith (1991) is that pairing an intern with only one mentor as found in typical field-placements could lead to detrimental consequences. For a new teacher to be mentored by one teacher would "…simply accept the prevailing culture" (Tell, 2001, p. 41). In situations where mentors and their respective student-interns clash or disagree on pedagogical methodologies, classroom management, and/or philosophical (stylistic) approaches to teaching, student interns often are forced to accept practices they do not support to avoid internecine conflicts.

UTC established a partnership with the US Peace Corps through the Fellows Program. The participation of returned Peace Corps volunteers enriched the program significantly. The former volunteers brought cultural understanding, communications abilities, and a different sense of time to the project because they had worked patiently and persistently in impoverished communities. They already were experienced in focusing on an important UTC goal – building the capacity of the community. UTC differed from other Peace Corps fellowship programs in that its cohort included career changers who wanted to become teachers. The mix of career changers and Peace Corps veterans was deliberate. The intention was to help reorient volunteers to the United States while taking advantage of their unique perspective and experiences.

UTC training emphasized building relationships to improve teaching and learning, so resident interns had flexible schedules. They were not bound to any one classroom and could facilitate projects that benefited a number of classrooms and even the entire school. During the first two weeks of the school year, they were assigned to the main office to help with the many tasks associated with the beginning of school. Through that activity and other assignments during the year, resident interns came to know more about the school and the community than many teachers who had been working in the school for years. Often, resident interns worked with staff and community members to implement projects that the school had deferred for lack of resources. At one primary school that had no library, resident interns worked with parents to construct a library – building bookshelves, collecting books, and getting funds allocated to buy more books. At another school, resident interns organized a school supply store, with students doing the math to keep track of the inventory. Resident interns contributed to school progress as they expanded their collaboration abilities.

Potholes and Resilience

In retrospect, UTC's success is the result of multiple factors. The three most significant factors, which ordinarily are not encountered in conventional teacher preparation programs, generated both problems and benefits. First, the program was embedded in a school development structure that resembled the Comprehensive School Reform designs even though it predated them. Second, the program was designed collaboratively by university faculty and school personnel. Third, the program had a coherent structure. This section discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each of these factors.

Because the program was embedded in a school development structure, it enabled incoming resident interns to work collaboratively with teachers who also were learners. However, the program was based at schools that faced critical challenges not only of poverty but also of teacher transience and, in some instances, teacher competence. At one school, one longtime teacher initiated a union grievance against the program because a resident intern was providing tutoring to students after school. The teacher alleged that the resident intern was not qualified to tutor. At another school, a teacher was able to participate in a professional development week at the university while the resident intern took over his class. After completing the instruction, the teacher retired because he had decided he was "burned out" and could not do his job as well as he should. In both instances and several others each year, the program caused problems for the school. One of the major assets was DePaul's Assistant Dean of the School of Education, Charlie Doyle, a master of human relations who resolved the union complaint and also helped the principal of the second school deal with the sudden resignation.

The program's collaborative design by school personnel and university faculty assured that it would be based in

the reality of each individual workplace; however, it also diluted the power and challenged the authority of the university. Distributing hours of the "Philosophy of Education" course meant that the student interns would have an opportunity to study Dewey in relative context. In fact, the assignment for reporting on Dewey's ideas – referred to as "Do we do Dewey?" – took the form of a debate about the relevance of Dewey's ideas to current Chicago issues. The courses were organized to involve interns in answering "big questions" like those advocated in *Understanding by Design* (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Table 2 presents the content sequence and the essential questions that focused the learning in each course.

The DePaul faculty was accustomed to a ten-session course sequence that allocated three hours per session. UTC courses were conducted in seven-hour sessions on Saturdays, which might include a morning on educational psychology and then an afternoon on methods of reading instruction, which applied the morning's psychology principles. Sessions included university faculty as well as presentations by veteran urban teachers, principals, and parents. To reassure the university faculty, outlines of the principles and exemplary activities for each course were prepared. Just as Assistant Dean Doyle interceded in CPS disputes, another dedicated problem solver helped resolve university-related issues. Dr. Geraldine Brownlee, an esteemed local educator, took a one-year position to guide curriculum development and negotiate any obstacles that arose.

Intended to help teachers gain practical knowledge useful in the urban classroom, the partnerships between the university and local schools were weak, resulting in a structural collapse (Chubbuck, Clift, Allard, & Quinlain, 2001). Since then, the importance of successful partnerships in bridging the gap between theory and practice and assisting new teachers in developing instructional and management skills has been established firmly (Holland, Clift, & Veal, 1992). According to a US Department of Education report, *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge* (2003), "…many state regulations for certifying new teachers are burdensome and bureaucratic" (p. 7). Although standards have been implemented in some areas of new teacher induction and certification, this is not a uniform process. Professionally, it is up to the local state infrastructure to design and implement benchmark standards. Taking note of the highly fluid terminology that allows university programs to decide the meaning of *internship* and *induction*, Whitehurst (2002) asserts that a professional consensus based on teacher preparation research is a long way off. In most cases, universities merely use the state regulations as a basis for meeting teacher certification requirements, such as a bachelor's degree in a specialty subject, pedagogy courses, other prescribed coursework, credit-hour requirements, minimum grade point average, credit requirements within a specified time period, practicum or student teaching, and assessments (US Department of Education, 2003). Obviously, standard terminology and requirements must be determined before a global assessment of the best ways to induct new teachers into their specific school environments and cultures can be undertaken.

The coherence of UTC structure meant that changing a single feature required examination of the entire structure to see if other adjustments were needed. The program's flexible design incorporated ongoing formative evaluations that led to changes both during the year and at the year's end. An example of a midyear change was adjusting the science course to include science fair projects, which implemented the goal of project-based science learning; an example of a year's end adjustment was moving the psychology course from first semester to second semester because resident interns needed more preparation in reading, math, and science instruction. Even so, some principles of psychology were included in the courses on reading, math, and science methods so that considerations of the psychology of learning would not be wholly absent from the first semester.

Other problems emerged from the realities of urban schools rather than from the program's design. Principals retired or moved to other positions, and some successors did not understand or appreciate the program. Still other principals made curriculum changes that were unsuitable to the program. One principal, who not only had two interns per year for three consecutive years but also hired them post-program completion, decided to change his school's curriculum to a direct-instruction model. Although UTC did not take a position on which kind of curriculum worked best, the program insisted on a diversity of instruction to respond to individual differences. When direct instruction became the school's sole mode of instruction, UTC interns could not continue to work with that school. Subsequently, the four program graduates on that school's staff left to go to another school that was active in the UTC program model.

After eight years, UTC had the opportunity to work with teachers from other countries. The CPS district started a program to recruit and hire teachers from other countries to work in Chicago and fill high-need positions in math, science, and world languages. DePaul agreed to enroll the incoming teachers in UTC courses to prepare them to work in local public schools. Supposedly, they would work as "associate" teachers for one semester so that they would learn about Chicago schools before becoming full-time teachers of record. However, while the summer coursework was in progress, it became known that funding was not available for that "scaffolded" first semester. Consequently, on top of the pressures associated with foreign employment, the incoming teachers had to deal with the pressures of teaching in a system that was very different from the schools in which they previously had taught. Many were surprised that this country did not have a national curriculum and customs. "In my country, the students stand and salute me when I come into the classroom. Here I am expected to stand outside my door and greet them as they come in," exclaimed one student.

Despite these challenges, preliminary retention data of these foreign teacher recruits reveal that many are still teaching in Chicago Public Schools. Even with a difficult transition, the program model is one that works to prepare and retain urban teachers effectively.

Resourceful CUE staff members and cooperative school and district personnel helped solve the problems resulting from the international teachers' abrupt entry into full-time teaching. The international teachers were not assigned to schools that had participated in CUE, so two full-time CUE staff members worked to develop relationships with administrators and teachers at these schools. A second cohort of international teachers joined the program in the second semester of the first year, so the staffers' workload doubled. The second group, however, were able to serve as associate teachers for one semester, so the potholes encountered were less of a problem for the second group.

The situation described above illustrates the concept of collaborative resilience: Challenges that are overwhelming to an individual are less formidable when support is available. Resident interns could look to supportive teachers at their assigned public schools for help, and the Saturday sessions allowed them to debrief and consider alternative responses with other resident interns who were experiencing similar challenges. As a result, they returned to school each Monday with renewed persistence.

Problems in UTC design and administration also were solved collaboratively. For example, an annual problem was the CPS payroll system's failure to pay the intern teachers until October or November. To solve that problem, UTC worked with principals and administrators within the district's central office to arrange for expedited payment on a daily basis.

An overwhelming challenge can not only drive individuals from the classroom, but it can end a program if it acts as a roadblock to the program's implementation. If a university has working partnerships with schools and the school system itself, collaborative resilience is possible at the organizational level. In consequence, the years of partnership with schools and the system that preceded its development were invaluable to UTC.

At this point, UTC retention results are strong. During the first years of teaching, when national attrition data indicate that approximately 50% of new urban teachers desert the often challenging and tenuous teaching environment (Ingersoll, 2000; Henke, Chen, & Geis, 2000, Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996), the retention of UTC graduates is above 80%. In fact, the retention rate for the initial cohort was 95.2% over the first three years even though this group, in all likelihood, faced the greatest challenges. Many UTC graduates continue to work in and with urban schools beyond that five-year benchmark. Today, not only are more than 75% of the program graduates still working in urban public schools, but 18 of the 185 who completed the program have advanced to leadership roles in Chicago schools for a total of four principals, six assistant principals, and eight curriculum coordinators. Although not prevalent in published research, "advancers" – individuals who take leadership roles in public education, but not necessarily as classroom teachers – are not viewed as threats to teacher retention because these individuals continue to enrich public schools and teachers through their efforts.

Conclusion: Implications for Teacher Certification Programs

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UTC no longer continues at DePaul because the school has recognized a greater need to improve the transition into teaching for all incoming teachers. Through funding from the US Department of Education, CUE has been working on the adaptation of its model for Special Education majors. The CPS Office of Specialized Services has supported the inclusion of components of the UTC model in the First Class program, an initiative that the Chicago Public Schools has established to support the certification of teachers in areas of need. Given the challenges of budget cuts, schools have less discretionary funding to support internships. However, CUE is currently working on a variation in which incoming resident interns will work as teacher aides.

The lasting outcome of this work is the model itself, which is adaptable to both graduate and undergraduate levels. In fact, it is particularly appropriate for undergraduate education because no additional funding for stipends would be needed. While it would be ideal to have a fifth-year program, individuals need incomes and schools need help. Both local urban schools and schools of higher learning would benefit if the latter could organize a sequence of courses, allowing Education majors a senior year in residence at urban schools. This would provide a much-needed opportunity for students to apply what they have learned while completing required coursework.

The problem that UTC tackled – training and retaining high-quality faculty for high-need schools – persists today. Analysis of the outcomes of fast-track curriculums indicate that inadequately prepared teachers are likely to leave, while those who complete certification requirements with strong, supportive induction processes are much

more likely to stay in urban schools. If, however, universities continue to graduate students who are prepared with limited in-school experience, the critics of teacher preparation will have data to support their contentions that teacher education is not needed. Jack Wenders' statement (2003) on the *Texas Education Review* website that "empty certification and licensing requirements do nothing to produce better teachers" typifies the position that critics of teacher preparation have taken. The purpose of this article is to emphasize the need for such preparation and the importance of embedding it in schools, which contributes both to the school's progress and long-term teacher retention. The National Council for Teacher Evaluation has advocated such an approach, and this article confirms that it works and can be organized within the requirements of universities. After all, if it takes a village to raise a child, it makes sense for a school to raise a teacher.

Table 1

Priorities for Teacher Preparation: Blueprint for Planning Teacher Preparation for Inner-City Schools

(DePaul Center for Urban Education, October 1990)

The DePaul planning process has developed the following answers to these questions:

A teacher has a multitude of roles, including parent, psychologist, actor, social worker, and much more.

1. What do teachers need to work effectively in an inner-city Chicago school?

a. attitudinal adjustments

    1. be teachers of children/not subjects

    2. positive expectations

    3. know yourself

b. strong knowledge base in your field

c. management skills/communication skills

d. knowledge of the community

e. knowledge of the city

f. interpersonal skills

g. a sense of humor

2. What kinds of preparation are possible and appropriate?

a. experiences--school and community based activities, not just visits

b. multicultural/multiethnic social experiences

c. continuing seminars

d. meetings with people from a range of positions

3. Who should prepare the new teachers?

a. teachers already in the field

b. educational specialists

c. students

d. parents and other community members

e. mentors

f. administrators

4. What formats should be used for teacher education?

a. cooperative learning

b. cooperative teaching

c. working as lunchroom aides, other non-instructional positions

d. working visits to a variety of schools

e. continuing working relationships with students over an academic year

f. research into the community

g. participation in meetings of parents, teacher groups

5. What sequence should these activities take?

a. they should be ongoing.

b. as the incoming teacher gains confidence, he or she should take a formal

position in partnership with other members of a team or network

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Table 2

Urban Teacher Corps Courses: Sequence and Focus

Courses	***Focus***
T&L 585/590 *Student Teaching and Seminar**	• *How do students learn?* • *What can teachers do to facilitate learning by all students?* • *How can teachers assess student needs and progress?*
T&L 409/405 *Professional Practice* *Yearlong course*	• *How can the school community collaborate?* • *What can I do to support the school's progress?* • *What can I learn from the successes and obstacles I encounter?*
T&L 413 *Reading and Language Arts in the Middle School*	• *How can you teach reading in the content areas?* • *How can you help parents help children read well?* • *What is the reading/writing connection?* • *How can you assess reading needs and progress?* • *How can you prepare for standardized tests and maintain the curriculum?*

CUG 439 *Middle school psychology*	• *What are the patterns of adolescence?* • *What affects the situation of a Chicago adolescent?* • *How can you respond effectively to the adolescent's needs?*
T&L 416/446 *Teaching/Learning Math*	• *What is mathematics?* • *How can you teach it meaningfully?* • *How can you involve families in learning math?* • *How can you tell when students have learned it?* • *How can you prepare for standardized tests and maintain the curriculum?*
T&L 415/439 *Teaching and Learning Science*	• *What is science?* • *How can you teach science conceptually?* • *What is the reading/writing science connection?* • *How do you make the math connection?* • *How can you make the art connection?* • *How can you make family and city science connections?*
CUG 403 *Human Development and Learning*	• *What are different views of the stages of human development and learning?* • *How do those views affect the teacher's choices?* • *What are your views?* • *How can teachers work with parents to support learning?*
R&L 446 *Characteristics of the Exceptional Child*	• *What are different views of the ways students are exceptional?* • *How do those views affect the teacher's choices?* • *How do those views affect the student and the parent?* • *What are your views?*
T&L 419/447 *Teaching/Learning Social Studies*	• *What are the important concepts of social studies?* • *What are effective ways to teach those concepts?* • *What are the reading/writing, math, and art connections?*

	• *How do you organize effective social studies that links students to their community, city, and future?*
SCU 408 *Education and the Social Order**	• *How does a Chicago public school work?* • *How do people work there effectively?*

*Yearlong course, culminates in spring

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