

Creating an Urban Teacher Preparation Program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY¹

- Existing alternative certification teacher education programs like the New York City Teaching Fellows program (NYCTF) insufficiently prepare candidates to teach in urban schools. Such alternative teacher preparation programs lack coursework and fieldwork experiences that discuss and deconstruct topics of race and culture as they relate to the classroom, pedagogy, curriculum, and student-teacher relationships.
- These omissions are especially problematic because candidates in alternative programs are typically required to begin teaching after only one semester of coursework. This leaves little opportunity to acquire insight, perspective, or consciousness that can be developed over the length of a traditional teacher education program.
- Insufficiently prepared graduates of these programs often utilize deficit thinking about minority populations to explain urban students' poor academic performance. Culture, parents, and home experiences are blamed for students' lack of school success.
- Attrition rates in cities of teachers from these alternative programs are very high. Urban schools in high need of pedagogical capacity are destabilized when alternatively certified teachers leave shortly after placement.
- The Urban Teacher Preparation Program described in this brief is a rigorous road to alternative certification that requires teacher candidates to engage in non-traditional coursework in minority studies as well as education, an apprenticeship with a master teacher, and an action research study in order to earn their credentials. This program will better prepare candidates for teaching in urban schools.

Statement of Problem

Alternative certification programs like the New York City Teaching Fellows program are not adequately preparing teacher candidates to work in urban schools with predominately African-American and Latino student body populations.² Coursework and fieldwork requirements in such programs insufficiently address the issue of race and its impact on pedagogy, curriculum, and student-teacher relationships. Alternative certification programs do little to disrupt static, stereotypical beliefs that may exist

¹ This policy brief is directed to program officers of alternative certification programs.

² In this paper, I use the term students of color to refer to urban schools' majority African American and Latino students.

within teacher candidates with limited prior interface with African-Americans and Latinos. In fact, some research suggests that coursework and fieldwork in even traditional teacher education may actually reaffirm these ideas (Marx, 2006; Foley, 1997, Swartz, 2003; Mitchie, 2007; Saffold & Longwell-Grice, 2007). The failure to discuss and deconstruct racial issues contributes to teachers' unreflective teaching practices, difficulties establishing rapport with students, weak pedagogical skill, and ultimate departure from the school (Swartz, 2003; Mitchie, 2007; Dee, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Marx, 2006). This brief presents ways in which these shortcomings can be overcome in alternative certification programs in New York City.

Key History, Trends, and Current Research

In New York City, Chancellor Harold Levy faced three dilemmas as the new millennium dawned regarding teacher certification:

1. a shortage of approximately 7,000 teachers at the start of the fall 2000 school year;
2. a projected shortfall of over 25,000 teachers across several years;
3. the threat of a lawsuit by the New York State Board of Regents for high numbers of uncertified teachers in city schools³

In the summer of 2000, Chancellor Levy, Commissioner of Education Richard Mills, and the New York State Board of Regents implemented the New York City Teaching Fellows Program in an attempt to alleviate the impending threat of a teacher shortage in city schools (Stein, 2002). Policymakers sought to address teacher shortages they projected would be caused by retirement, movement to the suburbs, and resignation (ibid; Swartz, 2003). Stein suggests that retiring teachers were waiting for a new contract—and any pay increase that it might net—before leaving. Furthermore, other teachers were “lured into suburban Long Island, Westchester, and New Jersey by the chance to earn far better pay, as well as the opportunity to face students who are far more interested in learning than many of the city students” (p. 2). Finally, a third group of teachers projected to resign from the profession altogether based on historical trends further exacerbated the threat of a teacher shortage. Stein writes:

The third group of teachers who exit the profession altogether is an enormous but elusive problem. Professor Richard Ingersoll's study of new teacher turnover showed that the rate of turnover in NYC (25% within 3 years and 42% within 6 years) has created a recruitment crisis (2000, p. 3).

³ The approximate number of uncertified teachers in 2000 is difficult to determine. Stein (2002) suggests that 1/3 of the teaching force was uncertified yet a thorough search for the total number of teachers in the system was inconclusive. On the other hand, the U.S. Department of Education states that In 1999-2000, 15 percent of New York City's public school teachers and 60 percent of new hires lacked certification. (ed.gov/admins/.../report_pg13html). That seems to suggest an even higher proportion of uncertified teachers in the fall of 2000.

According to Stein, the confluence of retirement, flight to the suburbs and resignation made alternative certification a necessity in New York City.

The New York City Teaching Fellows is an alternative pathway for individuals without backgrounds in education to earn a Master's degree in education and teacher certification. Initially, Fellows received a subsidized degree while teaching in New York City classrooms⁴. Fellows begin coursework the summer prior to entering the classroom with the graduate courses at participating universities and student-teaching at public schools. They earn a \$2,500 stipend during these summer months. In the fall, fellows are assigned their own classrooms, receiving a full teaching salary and continuing coursework within two years. Upon successful completion of approximately 45 credits and teacher certification exams, Teaching Fellows earn New York State Teacher Certification in specific content and grade areas (either early childhood, elementary, or secondary) as well as their Master's degrees. Some changes to compensation and degree subsidy have been applied since the inception of this original program model.

Although the model of alternative certification through the NYTCF seems to directly address the goals set forth by Chancellor Levy, fast-track preparation and certification programs have been highly criticized as catalysts that spark new problems. Linda Darling-Hammond (1999) argues that alternatively certified teachers—often placed in high poverty urban schools—are poorly trained and lack effective teaching skills. Furthermore, although these teachers staff high-need schools, they leave the classroom shortly after earning certifications and degrees. High teacher turnover further destabilizes already failing schools as new sets of teachers require additional mentoring, coaching, materials, and supervision. Precious resources, including time and energy, are spent training an ever-shifting staff rather than on building pedagogical capacity in the building (Haselkorn, 2001).

Racial Insensitivity in the Classroom

Arthur Costigan's (2005) narrative ethnography of three New York City Teaching Fellows after two years in the field is consistent with several other studies on retention and alternatively certified teachers. A reoccurring theme of cultural disconnect emerged from Costigan's study of three white teachers (one male, two female) who were considering either quitting or teaching in the suburbs after earning their credentials. Costigan writes:

A consistent theme in talking to Fellows was the fact that their schools were located in areas of public housing and poverty, areas where the local culture of gang and drug violence was reflected inside the schools' hallways and classrooms. A minority of students who were disengaged from education, or verbally and physically disruptive were a serious problem for almost all the Fellows who participated in this study (p. 131).

⁴ At the onset of this program, the degree and license were fully subsidized by the program. In 2003, the program required the city school district to pay \$8,000 and the candidate to pay \$4,000.

Costigan found that Fellows articulated frustration towards the community, the administration, parents, and the students when discussing the problems they experienced with establishing relationships and developing pedagogy.

Galia Siegel's (1999) case study on the perspectives and practices of a novice alternatively certified teacher are consistent with Costigan's findings. Siegel employs the term "unreflective detachment" (p. 4) to describe the cultural practices of a white male teacher in a predominately African-American school. She defines his approach as an "indifference to and denial of: 1) the meanings and significances of race in his life; 2) his pedagogical responsibilities as an educator; and 3) connection to the lives of his students and their families" (p. 4). In her observations, Siegel found that this teacher "refused to recognize, confront, and take responsibility for the significance of race in his classroom. Instead, he focused on supposedly non-raced factors—parenting, economics, and environmental influences—as the key issues challenging his teaching efforts" (p. 10). Furthermore, he repeatedly employed stereotypical rhetoric to describe his students and their lives—dismissing them as poor, living in violence, and lacking morals. This teacher's pedagogical practices demonstrated his low expectations for students of color. He focused on social control through an elaborate behavioral management system but dedicated little time to lesson planning, grading, or teaching (p. 16).

Seigel's study has significant implications for teacher education, as the researched teacher's reflective detachment exemplifies a lack of racial consciousness. Like many New York Teaching Fellows, this teacher was taking graduate courses while he was in the classroom working with students of color. He refused to pay attention to the ways that race impacted his practice, relationships, and curriculum, and most importantly, his failures in the classroom. This positionality places blame for academic and behavioral problems squarely on the students, their cultures, their home environments, their neighborhoods, their poverty, and their race (Douglas et al, 2008). The teacher did not see himself as being responsible for their difficulties in the classroom nor did he question how he might improve his practice. Although Siegel's research is a case study, other studies on teacher dispositions have extended this analysis. Douglas et al. write:

Researchers (Boykin, 1992; Darder, 1991; Scheurich, 1993) agreed that many White teachers work from within a hegemonic, Western epistemological framework, which often predisposed them to have lower expectations of Black students and a lack of respect for the students' families and primary culture. Therefore, the possibility of effective teaching by these teachers is greatly reduced (p. 49).

Similarly, Swartz' (2003) research on white pre-service teachers indicates that because many of these educators lack an understanding of America's racial history and experiences with people of color, they quickly take on roles as either "remediators," "leavers" or "wardens." Swartz writes:

When most White preservice teachers enter urban schools for fieldwork and later for jobs, they have little or no awareness of the history of racism and colonialism in America

and no knowledge of the past and present strengths, accomplishments, and resources of the neocolonized cultural communities they are entering. Along with this lack of knowledge, their limited or nonexistent personal relatedness to communities of color confirm for them their students' cultures are substandard, having nothing worth knowing and building on" (p. 256).

For example, in their role as remediators, white teachers Swartz observed had low expectations, assigning rote memorization tasks that required minimal thought to complete. When asked why they did not engage in more creative, unconventional methods of teaching that related to their students' cultures, these teachers responded that they were colorblind and that they did not see race in their students (p. 258). Like the teacher in Seigle's case study, these teachers absolved themselves of questions about their pedagogical decisions and asserted a post-racial stance. Geneva Gay (1995) argues that this philosophical approach is dangerous. Furthermore, she argues that the cultural/racial mismatch between teachers and students inherently leads to "incongruences in the classroom that can mediate against educational effectiveness. These incompatibilities are evident in value orientation, behavioral norms and expectations and styles, social interactions, self presentation, communication, and cognitive processing" (p. 159). According to Gay, race *is* relevant in the classroom and colorblind rhetoric has a negative impact on children of color in those schools.

Attrition

Alternatively certified teachers who lack prior experience with people of color may have difficulty recognizing their misconceptions about urban students and coping with their classroom experiences (Marx, 2006). This frustration may lead to attrition from urban schools. The most recent data on teacher attrition of New York City Teaching Fellows suggests that teachers leave schools of poor, low-performing students (Boyd et al. 2009) when given the opportunity and that teachers from alternative routes are more likely than traditionally certified teachers to leave (Boyd et al. 2006). According to the New York City Department of Education, 92% of Fellows complete their first year, 87% complete two years, 74% complete three years and only 50% remain for five years. It is difficult to draw exact conclusions based on these figures. The total number of teachers and year four statistics are not provided. However, this data indicates that the percentage of alternatively certified New York City Teaching Fellows who leave each year doubles. Seemingly, a significant proportion of Fellows are leaving New York City public schools just as they completing their certification requirements.

This exodus of teachers who potentially are beginning to gain proficiency contributes to the instability within schools and classrooms (Boyd et al. 2007). Some data suggest New York City Teaching Fellows placed in urban schools leave low-performing schools at a faster rate of 44% and 55% in low-performing middle schools. Students of color are the biggest losers in this equation, as they are subjected to sub-par teaching and faced with subjective academic assessment by inexperienced teachers.

Teacher-Student Cultural Mismatch

In addition to racial insensitivity and high attrition rates on the part of alternative route teachers, many researchers have documented a teacher-student cultural mismatch among products of these programs (Cross, 2003; Saffold & Longwell-Grice, 2007; Swartz, 2003, Douglas et al. 2008). Approximately 90% of public school teachers are white and “those studying to be teachers are predominantly White and female” (Saffold & Longwell-Grice, 2007). The racial makeup of America’s teaching force is unlikely to shift without considerable reform efforts: Only 8% of teachers are black and 2% are black males (Douglas et al. 2008; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). These trends are likely to be consistent in New York City given the historical battles to hire, recruit, and retain teachers of color (Podair, 2002). On the other hand, students of color in America’s public schools are clustered in racially segregated schools. In public elementary and secondary schools throughout the nation, black and Latino children make up the highest respective proportions of students of color in those buildings. In New York City, 30.9% of New York City public school students are black and 34.7% are Latino (Hentoff, 2010, p. 1).

Compelling research suggests that teacher-student racial mismatch is a significant issue that cannot be ignored in teacher education—particularly given the trends that suggest that students of color will most likely be taught by white teachers. White teachers, lacking contact, experience and/or significant relationships with people of color can also lack an understanding about racial identity, passive racism and white privilege (Marx, 2006, McIntosh, 1997). Swartz (2003) writes:

Thus, many [white pre-service teachers] will be teaching students of color in urban schools and communities where they know no one and where they have never been. Their perceptions of these communities are largely media based and exogenous; they typically have low expectations and conscious or unconscious racist assumptions about the supposed deficiencies of people of color, including children. In this deficit model framework, “success” and “urban schools” are oxymoronic, with success viewed as a deraced phenomenon achieved through meritocracy—if only individuals would try harder to do better (p. 256).

Recruitment

An examination of the recruitment practices of the NYTCF reveals that the program does little to attract more racially diverse candidates. The program’s marketing strategy is comprised of word-of-mouth discussion and subway advertisements. NYCTF requires applicants to have a bachelor’s degree, a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and be a U.S. citizen. After candidates submit their applications online and are accepted, they must teach a five-minute lesson that is intended to reveal their critical thinking and problem-solving skills and to demonstrate how they use language. They must also participate in a one-on-one interview. The final step in the recruitment process of NYCTF is an assignment to a region and enrollment in a university based on their subject area. Teaching Fellows are then required to find a job within that region through job fairs, program references, and individual searches. The recruitment practices do not explicitly

present obstacles for teachers of color to apply but the program makes no explicit attempt to seek them out.

Limited data from the New York City Department of Education suggest there is a “diverse pool of teachers...37% of 2009-10 cohort are Black or Latino (nycteaching fellows.org/purpose/mission). However, several questions remain unanswered by these statistics. Those include:

1. What are the data on the racial makeup of previous cohorts?
2. What was the racial makeup of the schools the schools in which they were placed?
3. How has the racial makeup of the Fellows shifted over time?
4. For 2009-10, in what schools were the Black and Latino teachers placed?
5. For 2009-2010, who are the remaining 63% and in what schools are they placed?

The data fall short of addressing these questions and further demonstrate a lack of attention towards issues of teacher-student cultural mismatch.

Thus, the existing structure of alternative certification through the NYCTF is in need of significant improvement for the following reasons:

1. Coursework does not sufficiently address issues of race in the classroom and schools.
2. A high percentage of NYCTF leave the classroom shortly after earning their certification and degrees. This creates a revolving door of teachers in urban schools that further destabilizes buildings in high need of pedagogical capacity.
3. Many of the teachers employ deficit thinking to explain their students’ performance rather than alter their teaching practices.
4. Racial/cultural mismatch between teachers and students impacts learning experiences.

Attrition and student/teacher mismatch are complex problems in education. However, alternative certification programs can better prepare novice teachers for their important work in urban schools by providing a holistic, critically-based model of intensive coursework, guided fieldwork, and classroom apprenticeship. The final section discusses in detail how this model might address the existing problems outlined in this paper in the context of New York City.

Proposed Policy Solution

The Urban Teacher Preparation program described next is a rigorous road to alternative certification that requires candidates to engage in non-traditional coursework, reflect on issues of race and identity, apprentice with a master teacher, and complete a study of their own practice.

The theoretical framework of this Urban Teacher Preparation encapsulated by the phrase ‘culturally relevant pedagogy.’ This model emphasizes equity in the classroom by asserting that teachers pay attention to the racial and ethnic identities of their students and utilize their knowledge of students’ backgrounds to develop relevant and empowering curriculum. In her discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy, Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009) contends that pedagogues can transcend the negative effects of

dominant culture that students can experience when their histories and cultures are absent or distorted in traditional textbooks or curriculums (p. 19). Ladson-Billings continues by suggesting that pedagogues can design curriculum that uses students' cultural referents so that students *can* see themselves in the academic sphere while also maintaining their racial and ethnic identities. The author calls for culturally relevant pedagogy that "...empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally" (p. 20). And although Ladson-Billings discusses this model in the context of teaching African American students, I suggest that this model can be applicable to any racial or ethnic group that has historically experienced discrimination and/or marginalization within the public education system in this country.

Within the Urban Teacher Preparation, the culturally relevant pedagogical model prepares candidates to value the funds of knowledge (Moll et. al, 2001) that students bring to the classroom—including understandings, values, and histories. The teacher's role is to draw out and extend that knowledge base student have by facilitating learning about the students' culture. In this way, culturally relevant pedagogy emphasizes the growth of the whole child with the classroom teacher acting as both a model for and facilitator of that process. In summary, this framework develops teachers who:

- have high self-esteem and high regard for others
- see themselves as part of the community
- see their work as giving back and encourage students to do the same
- see teaching as an art and themselves as artists
- believe that all students can succeed
- help students make connections between their community, national and global identities
- see themselves as 'digging knowledge out of' students (Ladson-Billings, 2009)

The following sections discuss how the program develops pedagogues to teach and reach African American and Latino children in urban schools. This section is divided into several sections: 1) recruitment and interview process; 2) financial subsidy; 3) faculty; 4) coursework; 5) apprenticeship; and 6) evaluation.

Recruitment and Interview Process

Active recruitment at New York City high schools and historically black colleges and universities would attract minority candidates. At the interview stage, the program's philosophical framework of culturally relevant pedagogy would be discussed at length to ensure that the candidate fits the program design. Accepted candidates would demonstrate a commitment to teaching in urban communities in New York City in their pre-surveys and one-on-one interviews. In addition, they would express a willingness to engage in extensive reading, writing and discussion about race, identity and teaching. Finally, the ability to commit three years to teacher education and live in the neighborhood he or she will teach in would also be required of candidates.

Financial Subsidy

Each teacher candidate would receive a fully subsidized degree and housing in a complex designed just for teachers within the neighborhood in which s/he would be assigned to teach. In addition, successful applicants would receive a stipend during years one, two, and three. During year one, candidates would receive \$20,000. Year two, the candidates would continue to receive fully subsidized housing and a stipend of \$10,000. Year three, the candidates would receive housing only. During years two and three, candidates receive a full salary through the New York City Department of Education at the regular pay scale. This housing and financial supplement enables the candidate to fully concentrate on coursework and become familiar with the students' community.

Faculty

Faculty for the Urban Community Preparation Program would be carefully selected, based on a proven record of teaching and scholarship towards equity in public education. More specifically, instructors would be chosen who have a background in the social sciences including anthropology, sociology, African-American studies and/or Latino studies as well as teacher education. This faculty of scholars would have an extensive body of research in critical social theory, liberation theory, critical pedagogy and participatory action research. Furthermore, in their practice with students, they will have a record of setting high expectations, the capacity to engage in difficult discussions about race and identity, the ability to foster scholarly debate about provocative topics, and to provide extensive verbal and written feedback to students.

Program of Study

Texts

Because African American and Latino students make-up approximately 70% of the student body population in New York City public schools, the coursework for teacher candidates focuses issues relevant to the students' racial and ethnic background. The topics – divided into four categories include:

- **Literature:** African American and Latino/Chicano/a
- **Racial Oppression & Discrimination:** Slavery; Jim Crow; passive racism & post-racialism
- **Policy:** Post-Fordism; the crack epidemic; gang warfare; the War on Poverty; A Nation at Risk; No Child Left Behind; and Race to the Top
- **Activism:** The Civil Rights Movement; The Black Power Movement; PUSH; The Chicano Labor Movement; ASPIRA; La Raza; and El Puente

This coursework would provide teacher candidates with a foundational understanding of the historical and contemporary contexts of the experiences of African American and Latino people in the United States. Thus, whereas Siegel (1999) suggests that the teacher in his study failed to take responsibility for the significance of race, the rationale for this schedule of coursework is for candidates to gain a greater awareness of the significance of race. Exposure to the stories,

experiences and histories of these marginalized groups are the first step in the process of developing sensitivity and the capacity to critically reflect on their own perceptions.

Assignments

Although some of the assignments in the courses will resemble typical graduate level work like readings of scholarly books and articles, classroom discussions, group projects and examinations, other assignments will specifically address the need to develop students' critical consciousness about race and education. Further, these assignments will be designed to engage students in deep reflection and challenge them to deconstruct assumptions. The experience, skill, and commitment on the part of the instructors are integral to this process and the selected faculty will be well prepared to facilitate difficult conversations.

Lyndall Muschell's (2008) study of preparing culturally responsive teachers provides a useful curriculum from which the assignments to develop candidates' critical consciousness in the Urban Teacher Preparation and Certification program are drawn. Muschell's study of her practice in an undergraduate education course of predominately white female students 1) encourages students to reflect on their cultural roots; 2) challenges students to explore their awareness of group dominance; and 3) counteracts resistance through multicultural texts that enable students to explore the world from another person's perspective. This final component is crucial, as the ability to "better understand the context of the 'other's' history and social world as well as the meaning behind actions" (p. 103) can foster the ability to feel empathy and compassion for people from racial and ethnic different backgrounds. In order to teach students in urban communities, teachers—especially those who do not share racial and ethnic ties with their students and/or cultural ties with African American and Latino people—need to develop their capacity to understand who their students are as a means to foster relationships with students and build connections with families.

Based on Muschell's culturally responsive curriculum, the list of assignments below will be included within the Urban Teachers Preparation and Certification program of study. Faculty, fieldwork supervisors and cooperating teachers will collaborate to organize these assignments within the program of study. Each assignment is described below and includes an explanation of its purpose. Assignments will be programmed in the following order:

1. *Reading and discussing instructor's ethnic autobiography*: helps students understand the assignment and build a sense of trust. Student can relate to the realness of the instructor as a person with hardships and triumphs (Muschell, p. 99).
2. *Creating students' ethnic autobiography*: enables teacher candidates to critically examine their own identities and beliefs. The sharing of these autobiographies enables candidates "to understand more about each other ... and see one another as individuals who could be understood, respected, and valued" (p. 99)

3. *Viewing and responding to popular films about urban schools*: explores awareness of group dominance and marginalization of urban youth. This viewing and discussion can explore how stereotypes about African American and Latino youth are re-inscribed into the popular imagination through film. This discussion may prove uncomfortable for participants and the facilitator will carefully probe to challenge students to dig deeper and confront these issues. “Once these issues are confronted openly by individuals, they become vulnerable; by opening themselves up to others, they open themselves up to a multitude of feelings and emotions including guilt, blame, denial and responsibility” (p. 101).
4. *Reading, discussing, and writing about personal narratives of teachers in urban schools*: the power of complex personal narratives can enable candidates to mediate feelings that can compel them to resist or shut down. In these texts, the authors—former and current classroom teachers—use storytelling to share negotiations of classroom experiences where race was a central factor. Often, these stories explore how the teacher manages the racial-cultural mismatch between himself and his students. In these stories, they make sense of their experiences—mistakes, hurdles, and triumphs—and teach readers about the process of critical self-reflection. The texts would include, among others: *Holler If You Hear Me* (Mitchie, 2009); *We Can’t Teach What We Don’t Know* (Howard, 2006); *The Girl with the Brown Crayon* (Paley, 1998); *Teacher Man* (McCourt, 2005); *To Teach* (Ayers, 2010); and *Black Teachers on Teaching* (Foster, 1998).

Apprenticeship

Teacher candidates will be placed in schools within the community in which they are housed. Extensive search to locate master teachers in these schools will be undertaken. These communities will be predominately African-American and/or Latino. The field experience will follow the collaborative team teaching model (Zelkowitz, 2008) with the teacher candidates and cooperative teacher sharing responsibility for instructing students. The model will allow teacher candidates to gradually take on more responsibility for instruction as they develop their skills. The model is: 1) one teach, one observe; 2) one teach, one assist; 3) alternative teaching; and 4) co-teaching (p. 1). Faculty and cooperating teachers will decide when teacher candidates are ready to progress to the next stage in the model. Each stage is described below:

1. *One teach, One Observe*: The cooperating teacher instructs the students while the teacher candidate observes and takes notes.
2. *One Teach, One Assist*: The cooperating teacher instructs the students while the teacher candidate tutors individual or small groups of students as necessary.
3. *Alternative Teaching*: The cooperating teacher and teacher candidate evaluate the instructional needs of the students in the class. They plan lessons with modifications based on these needs. A small group of students is assigned to the teacher candidate. During the teaching period, the cooperating teacher delivers the main lesson and the teacher candidate instructs the small group.

4. *Co-Teaching*: The cooperating teacher and teacher candidate plan and deliver the lesson together.

During the first year, candidates will complete 300 hours in three semesters (fall, spring and summer) of fieldwork as teacher assistants. Their work will largely entail classroom observations and supporting the cooperating teacher with instruction. Towards the end of the first year, the candidates will begin to take on more responsibility for instruction by working closely with small groups of students. In the following year, candidates will complete an additional 300 hours in the field as student teachers. In this role, they will collaborate with the cooperating teacher to design instructional units and execute whole class lesson plans on a weekly basis. As candidates begin the second semester of this year, they will teach more frequently, teaching the classroom with the cooperating teacher acting as an instructional coach. In the final year of apprenticeship, the cooperating teacher and student teacher will co-teach lessons. During this final year they will undertake a research project on their own pedagogy.

Evaluation

Faculty and cooperating teachers will collaborate to review each teacher candidate's progress during the semester. Their evaluations will be based on the teacher candidate's academic progress in coursework and development as a teacher in the field. During this time, they will make decisions about each teacher candidate's academic needs, make individualized plans for the following semester and/or decide if a student will remain in the program. *The evaluations will follow a protocol based on the culturally relevant pedagogical framework discussed earlier.* Both the faculty and cooperating teachers will create benchmarks (e.g., awareness, proficiency, and mastery) for each year to measure how the teacher candidates are developing a critical consciousness about race and education. That consciousness would be evidenced in coursework including: 1) oral and written reflections; 2) the ethnic autobiography; 3) papers; 4) presentations; and 5) instructional plans and implementation. Faculty and cooperating teachers would evaluate teacher candidates in their field sites based on the culturally relevant practices they engage in with students. The protocol for this evaluation is based on practices including the candidate's

1. recognition and appreciation of individual characteristics of students
2. caring and belief in their student's potential
3. use of students' strengths, interests, values, and feelings to design and execute lessons
4. demonstrating that they see themselves as part of the community
5. helping students make connections between their lives, their communities, and the world
6. providing each child equitable access to necessary learning resources and sufficient opportunities to learn
7. ensuring that learning outcomes are meaningful, relevant, useful, and important to each

Upon successful completion of the program, teachers will have earned a New York State teaching license and a Master's Degree in their subject area. As an incentive to remain in the urban schools in which they were placed for practicum, graduates will have the option of: 1) remaining in the housing at below-market rates; 2) receiving a \$1000 stipend for classroom supplies or 3) taking up to 9 additional credits at a participating university at no cost.

This alternative urban teacher preparation program addresses the issue of attrition by providing teachers with meaningful coursework and fieldwork that is framed in culturally relevant pedagogy. Coursework that challenges candidates to consider their preconceptions about race and culture will better prepare them to engage with students of color in classrooms. Furthermore, these exercises can inspire the development of critical pedagogies and curriculum crucial to teaching in the urban context. Candidates will gradually teach their own classes under the tutelage of master teachers. Novice teachers will be more likely to stay in the field as they have more time to develop their pedagogical skills relative to alternative certification programs like the NYCTF.

As a result of intensive recruitment, the program should be more diverse. But the program would not make the assumption that teachers and students of the same race will have a utopian classroom experience or are free from biases. However, this policy is one way to increase the presence of qualified teachers of color in urban classrooms—an initiative supported by U.S. Department of Education Secretary, Arne Duncan (<http://www.educationnation.com>).

In summary, the Urban Teacher Preparation Program addresses significant areas of concern in alternative certification: attrition and teacher/student racial mismatch. These complex problems can be mollified through better alternative teacher education policy. A rigorous three-year program that includes residency in the community, coursework in minority studies, action research, apprenticeship in classrooms and post-graduate resources can better prepares candidates for becoming urban teachers.

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