



Fall 2009

Inside Gateways Newsletter—Fall 2009

Greetings! And welcome to the 2009 fall edition of Inside Gateways.

We have a challenge in our society today: how to prepare teachers to provide the best possible education to the wonderful array of children and families in our diverse communities. Part of this challenge comes from the multiple layers of diversity in our society: linguistic, cultural, ability, socioeconomic, racial, geographic, etc. Part of this challenge comes from an educational system that does not always offer adequate professional preparation for meeting widely diverse needs or that does not clearly provide identified, flourishing models of education to replicate. Our models of teacher professional preparation tend to provide skill sets in some, but not all, areas of diversity. As teachers self-select areas in which to focus their education, they are inadvertently eliminating other skill sets that they may need in the classroom.

When you consider today's rich, multicultural society, it is obvious that teachers need in-depth and wide-ranging professional preparation as they strive to fully meet the needs of each and every child. As educators, we want to identify and implement educational strategies that are individualized according to the diverse strengths and needs of each and every child. The theory is sound...the reality inside the classroom is so very complex. Each decision we make related to professional development and teacher preparation ultimately impacts the quality of education provided to our children. Please read about the innovative educators and leaders profiled in this issue who are creating new models of teacher preparation to address the complex layers of diversity in our classrooms:

- Gayle Mindes (DePaul University's new Type 04 teacher certification that includes a Bilingual Endorsement)
- Cheryl Bulat (Morton College's strategies to recruit and retain students in their Early Childhood Education Department, where over 70% of the student body is Spanish speaking)
- Johnna Darragh (Heartland Community College's blended curriculum to prepare teachers for populations of children that are linguistically, culturally, and ability diverse)

This *Inside Gateways* issue also contains links to a variety of resources that are available to help teachers address the diverse needs of today's students. I also encourage you to join the discussion via the Gateways to Opportunity [Higher Education Listserv](#) and share "best practices" to create a stronger workforce for today's children. And please read Lilian Katz's article on the "dilemma" of innovative practices versus current practices in teacher education and professional preparation.

In closing, as many of you may already know, we are saddened by the loss of Carol Ann Stowe, who passed away on October 4, 2009. Carol was an early childhood educator who brought the Reggio Emilia approach to teacher education in the Chicago area. She was an integral part of the Gateways to Opportunity Core Knowledge Committee and a valued member of the Professional Development Advisory Council. The impact of Carol's life and her focus on early childhood education will be felt for years to come.

Make your life count...go the extra mile...make extraordinary efforts on behalf of all children and families in Illinois!



Joni Scritchlow and the
Gateways to Opportunity
Professional Development Team

Profiles in Leadership

Preparing Teachers to Work with All Children

Periodically in this e-newsletter, we profile Gateways leaders to acquaint you with their work and to illustrate through their experiences the range of career options available in early care and education and school-age and youth development programs.

One of the central findings of the 2008 report *Who's Caring for the Kids?* is that early childhood teachers in Illinois "are not representative of or prepared to teach the changing population of children in Illinois" (p. 95). The population of children and families in Illinois is increasingly diverse by ability, language, and culture. This issue of *Inside Gateways* profiles three teacher educators who discuss practices at their colleges and universities that focus on preparing teachers to work with all children and families, including culturally, linguistically, and ability-diverse populations.

Gayle Mindes discusses DePaul University's new Type 04 teacher certification program that includes the English as a Second Language (ESL)/Bilingual Endorsement. Cheryl Bulat shares strategies used at Morton College to recruit and retain students in their Early Childhood Education Department, where over 70% of the student body is Spanish speaking. Johnna Darragh explains the curriculum developed at Heartland Community College that blends early childhood education and early childhood special education standards and utilizes its fully inclusive Child Development Lab School to prepare students to teach a diverse population of learners. At the end of each profile, Gayle, Cheryl, and Johnna share recommended resources that they use in their teacher education programs. If you have other resources that you find effective in your teacher preparation program, please post them on [Gateways' ECE-Faculty Listserv](#).

Gayle Mindes



DePaul University prepares students to work with diverse populations of children and families enrolled in our early childhood and elementary school classrooms.

In September 2009, early childhood education students at DePaul University began to be prepared in greater depth to more effectively teach all children, including linguistically, culturally, and ability-diverse populations. The revised Early Childhood Education Program leading to a B.S. in the **School of Education** meets all of the requirements for the **Type 04 certificate** for teaching children from birth through age 8. The degree program also meets the requirements for approval in **early childhood special education** for those working in programs with children

ages 3 to 6 years old.

This new degree program builds on the current program at DePaul and is required for all education candidates entering the university after June 1, 2009. All graduates of the program will be eligible for the **English as a Second Language (ESL) or the Bilingual Education endorsement.**

The development of the proposal for the new degree program was led by **Gayle Mindes**, Professor of Education at DePaul University. Over the course of a year, Gayle and a small group of other education faculty met and shared drafts to develop the details for the new degree program, along with the rationale for the degree change. According to Gayle, the rationale for the new program is congruent with DePaul's social justice mission: "The School of Education has long worked toward providing opportunities and access for underserved populations. The degree program's emphasis on working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations is consistent with our philosophy of social justice."

Now, DePaul students are taking their first education classes in the new degree program. "The new program will provide greater depth of preparation and will provide teacher candidates with more tools to work with diverse populations," says Gayle. "Some of the course content is new, and other courses build on existing curriculum and the social-cultural foundations of our program." The new degree program also includes a third practicum teaching experience, which must be in a program serving children who are culturally and linguistically diverse in infant, preschool, or primary settings. DePaul's location in the center of Chicago offers many practicum placement opportunities for working with diverse populations.

Student responses to the new program have been favorable. "The freshmen students I advise, particularly those who are bilingual, are very excited about the new program," says Gayle. "I have also had notes from elementary education majors asking if they could enroll in the program as well."

DePaul is the first university in Illinois to offer this new Type 04 program that includes the ESL/Bilingual Endorsement. "We were able to put the new program in place and make changes to our education curriculum because of the flexibility we have in our degree requirements." Gayle hopes that the experience at DePaul will encourage other institutions of higher education in Illinois to consider new degree options to better prepare education students to work with the diverse populations of children and families who attend our early childhood and elementary school programs in Illinois.

Contact Gayle by email if you are interested in the proposal materials and rationale that they used at DePaul University to justify the degree change.

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Gayle recommends the following resources for preparing teachers to work with all children.

General Resources

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
Position Statements on Linguistic and Cultural Diversity
www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/linguistic

Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Early Childhood Research Institute
clas.uiuc.edu/links.html

National Association for Multicultural Education
www.nameorg.org

World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium
www.wida.us

Para nuestro niños
National Task Force on Early Childhood Education for Hispanics
www.ecehispanic.org

Ed Source (California)
www.edsource.org

George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education
ceee.gwu.edu

Internationals Network for Public Schools
www.internationalsnps.org

LEP Partnership
www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/lep-partnership/index.html

Migration Policy Institute
www.migrationpolicy.org

NAEP Data Explorer (National Center for Education Statistics)
www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde/criteria.asp

National Center on Educational Outcomes
cehd.umn.edu/nceo

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Education Programs
www.ncela.gwu.edu

National Council of La Raza
www.nclr.org

National Institute for Early Education Research
nieer.org

Office of English Language Assessment (U.S. Department of Education)
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html

Texas Institute for Measurement, Evaluation, and Statistics
www.tlc2.uh.edu/times

English Language Learning Resources

¡Colorín Colorado!: A Bilingual Site for Families and Educators of English Language Learners
www.colorincolorado.org/

La Mansión del Inglés
www.mansioningles.com

English Grammar: The Easy Way
www.english-the-easy-way.com

Breaking News English (EFL and ESL lesson plans for studying current events)
www.breakingnewsenglish.com

NetGrammar
netgrammar.altec.org

Dave's ESL Cafe
www.eslcafe.com

ESL/EFLTeachers Chatboard
www.teachers.net/mentors/esl_language

ESL Magazine Online
www.eslmag.com

Activities for ESL Students
a4esl.org

U.S. Office for Civil Rights
Resource Materials for Planning and Self-Assessment
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/index.html

Bilingual Education Resources

Bilingual Education Resources on the Net
www.estrellita.com/bil.html

U.S. Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA)
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html?src=mr

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)
English Language Instructional Education Programs.
www.ncela.gwu.edu

Especialty Español
www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/espanol

English Grammar Resources

Guide to Grammar & Writing
grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar

Dave's ESL Cafe: Grammar Quizzes
www.eslcafe.com/quiz

Phrasal Verbs: lists, definitions, and examples.
www.eslcafe.com/pv

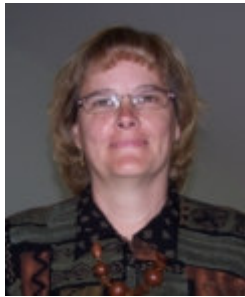
Self-study Grammar Quizzes: articles, prepositions, plurals, dialogues, and sentence structure.
a4esl.org/q/h/grammar.html

Vocabulary and Idiom Resources

Self-Study Idiom Quizzes
a4esl.org/q/h/idioms.html

Self-Study English Vocabulary Quizzes
a4esl.org/q/h/vocabulary.html

Gayle Mindes



A number of strategies are in place to recruit, support, and retain students through graduation in Morton College's Early Childhood Education Department, where over 70% of the student body is Spanish speaking.

Morton College is located in Cicero, Illinois, where nearly 84% of the **population** is Hispanic or Latino of any race. Four years ago, Morton College received a **Title V federal grant**, which is awarded to institutions of higher education to expand and enhance their capacity to serve Hispanic and low-income students. Cheryl Bulat, an Early Childhood Education Coordinator and full-time faculty member at Morton College, describes several successful strategies used to recruit, support, and retain through graduation Spanish-speaking students in Morton's Early Childhood Education (ECE) Department.

Two years ago, Morton College and two community high schools developed a dual-credit program. Faculty aligned their early childhood coursework so that their learning objectives and course requirements were complementary. When high school students have completed four semesters of early childhood courses and have met a grade point requirement, they receive credit for the introductory early childhood course at Morton College.

Because the majority of students at Morton are the first in their families to attend college, workshops are held for parents of the high school students entering Morton to help them know what the college experience will be like.

Recruiting students to the early childhood program at Morton is only half of the challenge. Students must also receive adequate support to complete their degree program. Morton College has a variety of practices in place to make its program successful and welcoming to Spanish-speaking students, in general, and to its ECE Spanish-speaking students, in particular.

Most of the college's resources (e.g., catalogues, academic information, and resource staff) are available in Spanish. A large percentage of the staff and faculty at Morton are bilingual. The Early Childhood Conference held at Morton each year offers half of its presentations in Spanish and half in English. The conference also includes a bilingual keynote address. Early childhood student teaching placements are in settings with Spanish-speaking populations, which are widely available in Cicero.

Morton recently added the **Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT)** degree in Early Childhood Education option, which creates a pathway between two- and four-year institutions of higher education for students who wish to complete their bachelor's degree.

One year remains on the federal Title V grant, and Morton intends to continue to look for additional grant programs. "We have seen real progress in the number of students enrolled in ECE at Morton as well as the number of students graduating from ECE programs," says Cheryl. "Enrollment rates have risen each year. The number of duplicated students in the ECE Department four years ago was 269. The number enrolling this fall is 400, a 30% increase in enrollment from the previous year. Informal surveys suggest that a variety of factors have contributed to the dramatic rise in ECE enrollment this year, including new career options for those recently laid off due to the economic crisis."

The number of students graduating from Morton's ECE program has risen from two in 2005 to fourteen this past year. "Graduation rates lag enrollment rates but are impressive when you consider that many students at Morton work full time and are on the three- and four-year graduation plan," Cheryl points out.

Cheryl has been on the faculty of Morton College since 2003. When asked for some of her recommended resources for preparing teachers to work with all children, Cheryl said that her best new ideas come from other teachers at professional development conferences and through **ACCESS**—the organization of ECE associate degree faculty, of which she is an active member. Cheryl also recommends the resources available on the **Illinois Early Learning Web site**, which provides Tip Sheets (in English, Spanish, and Polish), activities to implement the Illinois Early Learning Standards, and Ask an Expert resources.

Johnna Darragh



A curriculum that blends early childhood education and early childhood special education standards and access to a fully inclusive lab school prepares students at Heartland Community College to teach a diverse population of learners.

The early childhood program at **Heartland Community College (HCC)** in Normal, Illinois, uses a variety of approaches to prepare teachers to work with all children. Johnna Darragh is a full-time faculty member at HCC and is responsible for program development and oversight. HCC currently offers the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree in early childhood education (ECE) and is in the process of developing the Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degree.

Heartland's early childhood program uses a curriculum that blends early childhood education (ECE) standards, early childhood special education (ECSE) standards, and standards supporting populations of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse. To blend the different standards, a team was coordinated by the Illinois component of the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion, which included two- and four-year faculty from around the state. This team identified the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for students to acquire at the community college level to support populations of children who are culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse. The result was fully blended standards and competencies reflecting standards articulated by the **Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children**. In addition, standards supporting cultural and linguistic diversity were established through statewide review. Now, instead of offering courses on children who are developing typically and separate courses on children who are developing atypically, HCC interweaves the needs of all children in the early childhood curriculum.

"One example that exemplifies the shift in our instructional approach regarding supporting children's diverse abilities is the emphasis on developmental red flags as opposed to developmental milestones," says Johnna. "This approach helps teachers better understand the full range of diverse development and learning patterns and helps practitioners identify when they need to be concerned about children's development. In terms of supporting children and families who are culturally and linguistically diverse, one of the first things that we strongly emphasize is the importance of understanding our own culture, as well as the culture of the field, and its impact/intersections with the culture of children and families."

Heartland's Child Development Laboratory serves children birth to age 5 and is a placement site for practicum students and an observation site for all ECE students at HCC. The HCC Lab School has been an inclusive early childhood setting since it opened nine years ago. Approximately 20% of the children in the Lab's program have developmental delays and diagnosed disabilities. The HCC Lab setting provides a rich environment for observation of inclusive principles in action. Students who attend classes at HCC can observe inclusive teaching practices directly at the Lab School or can view one of the many video segments of the Lab School that are part of HCC courses. The **video segments** were developed to demonstrate inclusive teaching strategies and are especially valuable for students enrolled in online courses who cannot easily access the Lab School.

Johnna is the Illinois liaison to the **National Professional Development Center on Inclusion** and recommends the following resources for preparing teachers to work with all children.

Resources

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion
NPDCI works with states to help early childhood teachers care for young children with disabilities in natural environments.

community.fpg.unc.edu/npdci

CONNECT: The Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge
CONNECT is piloting a compilation of resources on inclusion that teachers can use in their teacher preparation programs.

community.fpg.unc.edu/connect

community.fpg.unc.edu/connect/CONNECT-FactSheet-2008.pdf/view

Videatives, Inc.

Videatives are low-cost video clips with narratives that emphasize inclusion.

www.videatives.com

Crosswalks Care Packages

The Crosswalks project develops and distributes “Care Packages” of resources related to cultural, linguistic, and/or ability diversity.

www.fpg.unc.edu/~SCPP/crosswalks/pages/carepackages.cfm

Lilian Katz: Reflections

Dilemmas in Teacher Education: Current Practices versus Innovative Practices

Many groups have a stake in the preparation of teachers: federal and state governments, local education authorities, principals and directors, and practicing teachers in schools and child care centers—as well as parents, teacher educators, and the children themselves. Each group has expectations of what teacher education should accomplish and its own favorite explanations for why teacher education appears to fall short some of the time. Graduates themselves have been heard to characterize their experience in teacher education programs as less than satisfying and of doubtful practical value.

In this article, I discuss these issues in terms of a dilemma that seems to apply to all teacher education programs—a dilemma that helps to account for both the apparent low level of impact and for the dissatisfaction with teacher education by critics. I start with the definition of the term *dilemma* and follow with a discussion of a dilemma inherent in the education of teachers, a dilemma that is relevant to the focus of this issue of *Inside Gateways*—preparing teachers to work with a diverse population of children and families. I will share other dilemmas for teacher educators in future Reflections articles.

Definition of a Dilemma

The term "dilemma" refers to a predicament with two main features, often referred to as the “horns” of a dilemma (Room, 1985):

- It involves a situation that offers a choice between at least two alternative courses of action, each of which is problematic.
- It concerns a predicament in which the choice of one of the alternative courses of action sacrifices the advantages that might accrue if the other alternative were chosen.

In sum, a dilemma is a situation in which perfect alternatives are not available—each of the available choices in such predicaments involves a choice of negative factors as well as positive ones.

The “Current Practices” versus “Innovative Practices” Dilemma

Given the finite amount of time available in a teacher education program, not all possible teaching methods and practices can be learned. Teacher educators are pulled in opposite directions. The thrust of some teacher education programs is to prepare students to perform successfully in today's early childhood classrooms. The thrust of other programs is to prepare students for future settings that might represent improvements over today's classrooms and curriculum. In the past, for example, some teachers were prepared to teach the "core curriculum" at a time when most schools rejected the idea of a core curriculum. Today, the controversy surrounding instruction of young children tends to be about current practices that emphasize academic teacher-directed instruction versus more informal child-initiated activities, including play.

The Case for Emphasizing Current Practices

A good grounding in current teaching practices prepares graduates to take up their positions with a minimum of adjustment problems. New teachers can seek suggestions and advice from experienced colleagues, knowing that they are in the early stages of learning the teaching methods others in the school or center have long employed. When they have been trained in current standard practices, new teachers are likely to experience some continuity between their student teaching experience and their first teaching assignment.

In addition, an emphasis on current practice is likely to minimize conflicts between teacher education faculty and cooperating teachers during student teaching. No studies have been done of the discrepancy between the practices that professors urge upon their students and those that cooperating teachers prefer. But the lore has it that cooperating teachers often dismiss student teachers' efforts to try innovative practices by reminding them that the classroom, unlike college, is the “real world.” When professors continue to insist on the use of innovative practices, student teachers may react by forming a united front with cooperating teachers against the teacher educators. It is clear that some students are more likely to be satisfied with their teacher preparation if it equips them to settle into the patterns of the classrooms in which they practice teach—and in which they are likely to work after graduation.

This option may help the new teacher to quickly take on initial teaching responsibilities, and students and graduates of such a program may evaluate it as satisfactory. However, the same impact might have been achieved by simply putting the students in classroom internships or apprenticeships; they could bypass the coursework and other on-campus aspects of teacher preparation. Graduates of such programs are not likely to try new methods that could improve children's experiences in classrooms.

The Case for Emphasizing Innovative Practices

The purpose of a professional school is to develop new knowledge and innovative practices that improve the standards of the profession and contribute to the general welfare. Research and development are part of the mission of a university. Teacher education programs can contribute to this mission most effectively when faculty members introduce and encourage innovative practices.

This second option—equipping teacher education students with the latest improved methods of teaching that seem likely to benefit children—may result in difficult adjustments and higher levels of stress for

graduates when they have their own classrooms, particularly if they feel unprepared for current classroom practices. They may also become discouraged if the innovative practices they have learned are either rarely used or actively discouraged by local school norms.

When new teachers are equipped with new knowledge and better techniques, they will help to upgrade professional practice. Many teacher educators pride themselves on helping new teachers develop innovative practices. Schools of education that emphasize innovative practices are likely to help improve the field.

Conclusion

One of the main concerns of those who have a stake in teacher education is that it seems to have insufficient impact on graduates. Indeed, teachers themselves are sometimes among the most severe critics of their own teacher preparation. Certainly there is some variation: some teacher education programs are more effective than others, and some are evaluated more positively by their graduates than others. The dilemma described here seems to apply to all teacher education programs. If the formulation of this dilemma is correct, then we are faced with a series of choices or errors: there are no error-free alternatives. The next step seems to be to determine which are the "least worst" errors in considering the long-term development of the members of the teaching profession.

References

Katz, Lilian G., & Rath, James D. (1985). Dispositions as goals for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 1(4), 301–307.

Room, Adrian. (1985). *Dictionary of confusing words and meanings*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Current Early Care and Education (ECE) and School-Age and Youth (SAY) Initiatives

Periodically in this e-newsletter, we provide updates on key professional development initiatives taking place in Illinois. Additional information and updates about each initiative are made available on the Gateways Web site.

Gateways to Opportunity Registry

In July 2009, the **Gateways to Opportunity Registry** was officially launched. The Registry, which had been under development in Illinois since 2004, is a resource and tool for early care and education and school-age and youth practitioners and programs to drive quality and accountability. The Registry provides a system to track professional attainment and completion of training requirements by individual practitioners, from college coursework to community-based training. For Registry Members, the system will maintain a permanent record of these achievements (a Professional Development Record), which can be updated on a regular basis.

The Registry also includes a trainer and training approval process that will recognize and validate trainers and trainings that meet the standards and criteria of the Registry. That approval process will strengthen the integrity of the professional development system in Illinois. **Trainers** and **trainings** approved through the Registry process will be listed on a statewide online **training calendar**, which is still under development.

In the first three months of operation, the Registry has added nearly 500 members and includes 49 approved trainers and 43 approved trainings. The approved trainings are applicable to staff working in a variety of sectors (e.g., child care, Head Start, PreK, and school-age and youth development). The approved trainings also include a range of topics related to serving children from birth to 21 and their families in Illinois.

The first phase of the online statewide **training calendar** should be operational in November 2009 and will include Registry-Approved trainers and trainings sponsored by the state's **child care resource and referral agencies**.

In phase two, the statewide training calendar will be expanded to include trainings offered by other entities so the calendar is a comprehensive listing of training events in the state. Approximately **30 states** around the United States offer training and trainer registries as a component of their professional development systems. Gateways to Opportunity is pleased that Illinois is part of the **National Registry Alliance** and anticipates continued growth of the Gateways to Opportunity Registry in rates of participation and in the overall impact on the quality of professional development in Illinois.

New Gateways Resources

The following resource links have been added to the Web site since the last issue of *Inside Gateways*.

Research Centers

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
www.nectac.org

National Youth Development Information Center
www.nydic.org/nydic/index.html

Parent Support

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center
www.nectac.org

Research Reports

Dual Language Learners in Early Care and Education Settings
www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/Dual_Language_Learners.pdf?docID=6741

Illinois After 3PM
www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM_states.cfm?state_abbr=IL

New Leaders, New Directions: Tools for Advancing an Early Childhood Agenda for the Latino Community
www.nclr.org/content/publications/detail/58483

What Happens when the School Year Is Over?: The Use and Costs of Child Care for School-Age Children during the Summer Months
www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310497&renderforprint=1