Successful Teacher Preparation Program Characteristics

by

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my kids. This world revolves not around the smartest people, but the people most determined to succeed. You can do anything you set your mind to. You are my sun, moon, and stars.

Your Biggest Cheerleader,

Mom
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NOMENCLATURE

BSU  Bemidji State University
ST   Student Teacher
FE   Field Experience
GPK  General Pedagogical Knowledge

[The nomenclature for your thesis is optional. This list may be placed in the following places: as the last preliminary page, before the Reference section, or as an Appendix. The heading is bold if other major headings are bold, and the list is in the same font size and style as text.]
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Acknowledgments

NW MN K-12 administrators and teachers

Professional Education Candidates and Faculty
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to pinpoint specific characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program which produces successful teachers for the K-12 educational system. Today’s K-12 educational systems have evolved faster than most teacher preparation programs. The researcher utilized four mixed methods surveys to ascertain the viewpoints of administrators, teachers, and recent teacher candidate graduates from the past two years, as well as teacher preparation program faculty perceptions of the recent graduates’ self-reported opinions. In addition, two small focus groups discussed survey topics in further depth. One key aspect of the research exposed classroom management as the quintessential skill new teachers must possess to be successful, yet most new teachers, administrators, and seasoned teachers reported ill-preparedness. Vast amounts of clinical experiences were exposed as the crucial element of a teacher preparation program. The measurements researcher credited an extensive and intentional clinical experience program as the most important piece of a teacher preparation program. Due to the localized research, this study is not transferrable but may be used as a stepping stone for further research.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

There were over 3.5 million teachers working in the field of education and each year more are joining the profession (NCES, 2021). Across the country, many new teachers who have joined the workforce were deemed ill-prepared to effectively maneuver K-12 education demands. School administrators have corroborated this inadequacy (Meyer, 2016), and equally significant, new teachers have expressed feelings of defeat due to a lack of teacher candidate preparedness by some teacher education programs. Deep concern and debate related to inadequate training have arisen causing professional struggles and unwanted challenges for many students and new teachers (Sawchuk & Rebora, 2016). Numerous researchers have recognized some teacher preparation programs as inadequate (Kurth & Foley, 2014; Sharma & Sokal, 2015). The issue of unpreparedness in new teachers has resulted in a multi-faceted list of negative effects. Lack of efficient and effective teacher training was linked to premature attrition in the profession, self-efficacy issues, and a decline of interest in teacher preparation programs. Teachers with low self-efficacy struggle with their foundation of teaching (Cameron, 2017; Kunter et al., 2013; Ljubetic, 2008; Tiwari et al., 2015). Furthermore, inefficient and ineffective teacher preparation programs do not foster self-efficacy, resulting in a gap in teaching skills. This lack of efficacy and skills also leads to achievement declines in students. Moreover, the most influential component of a school that determines academic achievement is the teacher (McKinsey & Company, 2007). As a result, teachers must be equipped with efficient and effective teaching skills and possess high self-efficacy to create an environment that produces high student achievement.

Additionally, research indicates the lack of effective training by a teacher preparation program is linked to premature attrition, as well as a decline in general interest to join the
SUCCESSFUL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

education profession. (Brunsting et al., 2014; Flower et al., 2017; Oliver & Reschly, 2010). In Minnesota, for example, according to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) in 2015:

On average, 16.4 percent [of teachers] were no longer teaching in Minnesota after their first year [as a classroom teacher], 22.4 percent left teaching within two years of entering the profession, 26.8 percent left within three years, 30.2 percent left within four years, and 32.3 percent left within five years of entering teaching. (p. 37)

In 2021, MDE reported less than 50% of licensed teachers were active classroom teachers. The latest reported retention rates by MDE (2021) stated “data shows a relatively consistent 11% attrition after one year, 17% after two years, and 22.5% after three years. Nearly 33% of new teachers leave teaching within the first five years in the profession” (p. 44). These statistics strongly support attrition concerns.

To elaborate further, new teachers that are ill-prepared in the student learning process which has a deep impact on students with disabilities (Killoran et al., 2014). To corroborate, researchers recognized high teacher turnover rates as a contributor to a loss in general student learning (Walker-Davidson, 2018). Allday et al. (2013) and Killoran et al. (2014) also emphasized a loss of student learning has affected students with disabilities the most and went on to discuss high attrition rates frequently result in classroom instruction given by less experienced teachers. Bradbury (2021) noted, “the luster of teaching has been tarnished or lost altogether for some” (p. 4). Across the country, a decline in interest in teacher preparation programs has occurred.

The lack of efficient and effective teacher preparation programs has led to ill-prepared teachers. Subsequently, ill-prepared teachers contribute to gaps in academics, which impact teaching success. In further explanation, numerous researchers conveyed poorly, or untrained
teachers were more likely to use unsuccessful management methods (Brunsting, et al., 2014; Kaff, et al., 2007; Oliver & Reschly, 2010). According to Wong & Wong (2018), an efficient and effective teacher must have mastered classroom management strategies to support students’ diverse needs. Multiple studies identified behavior management as one of the principal stressors new teachers encountered (Brunsting, et al., 2014), which subsequently contributed to new teachers prematurely leaving the profession.

Student achievement declined when students were taught by teachers who were ill-prepared in the categories of classroom management and pedagogy. “The single greatest effect on student learning and achievement is the effectiveness of the teacher.” (Wong & Wong, 2018, p. 2) Crawley (2018) validated this finding and further emphasized student achievement was tied to the level of preparedness of a teacher of record.

There is a domino effect of concerns pertaining to ill-prepared teachers that graduate from teacher preparation programs such as research which supports the long-term quality of life for students being at jeopardy. Academic achievement was acknowledged as the characteristic most tied to the quality of life for a student. In addition, academic achievement was determined to be key to a student’s future, impacting their socioeconomic status as adults. According to Pinto & Jones (2020), “lower educational attainment is associated with lower earnings, higher crime rates, poorer health and mortality outcomes, and reduced participation in political and social institutions.” This is discussed further in section two.

**Conceptual Framework**

This research utilized a conceptual framework guided by seeking out the answer to Darling-Hammond’s question during her interview with Martin & Mulvihill (2017), “how do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?” (p. 82). It was believed specific components were essential for efficient and
effective teacher preparation programs that produced educators ready to lead today’s classroom demands. The central premise of this research was to examine the attributes numerous other researchers identified as essential teacher preparation elements in addition to measuring opinions of over 200 administrators, teachers, recent teacher graduates, and education faculty. Clinical experience, pedagogy, and content knowledge were identified as vital categories.

The researcher addressed teacher preparation from a viewpoint of a previous K-12 educator, administrators, and currently, an Associate Professor of Professional Education. The researcher’s university agreed to support the researcher’s efforts. The end goal was to ensure the teacher preparation program encompasses the identified vital categories to produce efficient and effective teachers.

The researcher utilized four mixed-method measurements to assess each of the four identified stakeholder groups: administrators, current teachers, recent teacher candidate graduates from the past two years, and teacher preparation program faculty. Each measurement acknowledged numerous categories of importance in producing efficient and effective new teachers. Following survey completion, two focus groups were completed to gain further insight into each category of highest importance.

The surveys were created using Qualtrics which creates detailed reports of analysis after the measurements were completed. The descriptive analysis pinpointed the frequency of choices selected and percentage of participants that acknowledged each option. The Quirkos platform was used to conduct thematic analysis of the qualitative portions of the measurements and focus groups. Qualtrics and Quirkos are both password-protected programs.
Statement of the Problem

Educational demands are ever evolving. Subsequently, teacher preparation programs are expected to evolve in sync with changing educational demands. Many teacher preparation programs struggle to keep up with this responsibility. Consequently, new teachers experience “reality shock” and struggle through their first year of teaching in multiple areas causing many to seek alternative professions. Ill-prepared new teachers are detrimental to the academic development of K-12 students, their futures, and their communities (Shockman, 2020, October 12). The underlying question was one Darling-Hammond (2016) posed. “How do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?” In other words, what categorical characteristics do teacher preparation programs need to possess to produce efficient and effective teachers?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the essential characteristics of a teacher preparation program based on feedback from multiple stakeholders. According to Darling-Hammond (2017), “…part of the ultimate solution [when creating a teacher preparation program]; … [we identify] key features without which a program will not be a program” (p. 82). Due to the small locality of participants, this study is useful on a local level. The Northwestern Minnesota (NW MN) university participating in the study strives to produce the most efficient and effective new teachers possible for the K-12 school systems. The participants felt strongly about the importance of properly preparing new teachers as they volunteered their limited time to complete the measurements with integrity and honesty. The K-12 schools need teachers who strive for continuous improvement and plan for longevity as active classroom teachers. This, in turn, improves educational situations for students. Educational achievement is a
strong predictive factor for a student’s quality of life into adulthood. This study might serve as a template for other teacher preparation programs to explore similar findings. In addition, it could lead to other studies based upon categories of a quality teacher preparation program, both exploratory and explanatory in nature.

Reflecting on the researcher’s experience, K-12 educators and administrators watch as new teachers excitedly enter their first classroom. These new teachers demonstrate a mixture of excitement and nerves. They [new teachers] come in early, stay late, and prepare time-consuming brilliant activities and magnificent bulletin boards. To the outside world, these new teachers appear to be efficient and effective. According to the researcher’s experience, visually appealing bulletin boards do not equate to quality instruction. What many people do not realize is that the majority of new teachers struggle to be efficient and effective in key areas such as classroom management and instructional pedagogy. These excited new teachers will need to be intrinsically committed or provided with additional support from their K-12 administrators, colleagues, and schools to defy the odds of attrition and produce students who find success in the classroom.

In 2020, MDE surveyed numerous teachers across the state of Minnesota and found as many as one-third of teachers planned to leave the profession (Shockman, 2020). By the time new teachers reach their fifth year of active classroom teaching, almost 33% pursue a new profession (MDE, 2015). More than 50% of active teaching licenses are not utilized for classroom teaching (MDE, 2021).

Confirming the researcher’s claims of new teachers being unprepared, Meyer (2016) determined principals and teachers reported a vast amount of new teachers were characteristically ill-prepared. In the researcher’s experience, new teachers were told to create
relationships with their students but were not given a solid path to accomplish this. New teachers were taught the theory of classroom management but did not receive assistance to put that theory into practice. New teachers were told to practice procedures and routines but never given a chance to experience just how many times it would be needed. These new teachers were called an undesirable names by students without a positive way to respond. Many of these new teachers shed tears and second guessed their profession a month into the school year.

Feelings of failure were so widespread amongst new teachers across the profession that mental health professionals published diagrams warning them [new teachers] of what the [new teachers] were about to experience.

Of those who do enter the profession, many go on to report overall job dissatisfaction, a loss of autonomy, and limitations in feedback, recognition, advancement, and reward.

Though their effects vary, these conditions can and do contribute to teacher turnover.

(Aragon, 2016)

As a result of multiple negative experiences, new teachers experienced reality shock. “Reality shock” is so prevalent, is it a coined term discussed further in Chapter Two.

**Research Questions**

This research utilized an exploratory, mixed-methods approach. Anonymous surveys comprised of simultaneous quantitative and qualitative questions were sent to four stakeholder groups: NW MN administrators, NW MN teachers, graduates of a specific public university teacher preparation program within the last two years, and the education faculty from that specific teacher preparation program. The results will be discussed further in Chapter Four.
Research Questions

1. What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN teachers?

2. What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN administrators?

3. How prepared do recent graduates feel after completion of the NW MN public university’s teacher preparation program?

4. What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to a NW MN professional education faculty?

Data Collection and Analysis

All measurements were surveys sent by email to the NW MN K-12 teachers and administrators, Professional Education faculty, and recent teacher graduates on three separate occasions throughout December 2020 and January 2021. These questionnaires (see appendices A, B, C, D) were comprised of mixed method questioning to allow for elaboration of ideas and thoughts. The survey was sent in an anonymous email link to ensure protection of the identity of all volunteer participants.

Quantitative descriptive data analysis was utilized for the areas of frequency and respondent percentage through the Qualtrics platform. The qualitative portions of the measurement were uploaded to the Quirkos platform for thematic coding analysis. Although each of the four measurements were not identically duplicated for each group, there were several categories of interest revealed by each survey, including: (a) which prescribed categories were essential for new teachers to be considered efficient and effective (b) how prepared were first-
year teachers (c) which length of time should teacher candidates spend in clinical experience (d) were teacher preparation programs preparing teacher candidates for reality.

The two focus groups were homogeneously clustered. Each focus group convened after thorough analysis of the mixed methods survey data. Both focus groups were asked identical questions that allowed further elaboration addressing survey results. The participants in the focus groups were NW MN teachers and recent professional education graduates. The Zoom platform was utilized in a video conference setting which utilizing recording and transcript capabilities. The researcher reviewed the transcription to ensure accuracy of the conversation. The requests for participation were sent out three times in March 2022. Out of over 300 participants invited, six teachers and five recent graduates volunteered to participate. Two recent graduates canceled within minutes of the start of the focus group. The two recent graduates unable to participate in the focus group volunteered to complete the questions in writing on their own time. The transcription from Zoom was uploaded into the Quirkos platform for thematic coding.

**Significance of the Study**

The local public university in this study has provided schools with new teachers for the last 101 years. During a previous meeting with the NW MN administrators and teachers, they questioned the quality of the teacher preparation program. Furthermore, there is a teacher shortage across the country, which is driven in part by the early exodus of teachers from the profession. Demonstrated previously, a teacher candidate being ill-prepared is a significant contributor to early departure. As COVID-19 intensified, more expectations were laid on teachers causing additional stress, and in turn, early attrition of teachers in the field. According to Vanessa Pulkrabek of Education Minnesota (2021), the number of licensed teachers has not decreased, the number of licensed teachers willing to teach has decreased. Teacher preparation programs are likely part of the solution to helping with the teacher shortage (Darling-Hammond,
Proper teacher preparation programs will assist in the issues of premature attrition in the profession, high teacher turnover rates, and a decline in interest of teacher preparation programs. Although self-efficacy is frequently overlooked in teacher preparation programs, the foundation of a teacher’s success is determined by a teacher’s level of self-efficacy (Cameron, 2017; Kunter et al., 2013; Ljubetić, 2008; Tiwari et al., 2015). Properly prepared new teachers will additionally improve the achievement gap. In summary, this study is important because it strives to identify the essential characteristics a teacher preparation program must possess to produce efficient and effective teachers ready for today’s classrooms.

**Definition of Terms**

*Teacher* implied a classroom teacher or other similar professional employee required to hold a license from the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (Revisor of Statutes, State of Minnesota, 2019).

*Teacher Preparation Program* was defined as a college or university program approved by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board for the purpose of preparing individuals for a specific teacher licensure field in Minnesota (Minnesota Legislature, 2017, August 21).

*School administrators* were the professionals who carry out these different administrative tasks that keep a school running smoothly. At elementary, middle, and high schools, school administration was typically led by a principal and, depending on the school, may also include assistant principals, instructional coordinators, athletic directors, and other support staff. School administrators could also be superintendents, who help oversee multiple schools in a district (Learning.org, 2020).
Teacher Candidate referred to “an individual working toward licensure in a teacher preparation program” (Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, 2019, February 04).

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

There were several limitations to this study. Two limitations predicted were the general usage of mixed-methods surveys and the localized nature of the project. An unintended limitation was the appearance of COVID-19 which resulted in drastically and continuously evolving the educational situations.

One limitation was the usage of mixed methods research, which utilizes both open-ended and closed measurements. Issues presented, according to Fraenkel and Collaborators (2019), were closed-ended questions created a limited breadth of responses, took more time to construct, and required more questions to cover the topic at hand. Disadvantages to open-ended questions were that they tend to produce responses that were inconsistent in length and content across respondents, both questions and responses were subject to misinterpretation, and they were harder to tabulate and synthesize (p. 366). “Poorly worded questions can doom a survey to failure” (p. 365). Additionally, there may be “…ambiguous, poorly worded questions, questions that are not understood, and unclear choices” (p. 368). The researcher counter-balanced some of these issues by ensuring the questions were uncluttered, easily read and easily responded to. The research brought the survey to the Field Experience committee to ensure the questions and layout were clear and concise. The Field Experience committee was located inside the Professional Education Department at the local public university utilized for this project. It was comprised of education professionals that taught courses to teacher candidates. Feedback was given pertaining the order of questions asked, missing questions, and question clarity, as well as maneuverability and to ensure the surveys were aesthetically pleasing.
A major source of limitation was the COVID-19 pandemic. There were numerous additional stressors placed on ideal participants both personally and professionally. Many potential participants felt it inappropriate to request volunteers when time was already limited. Due to the lack of participants, the descriptive analysis may be misleading. To offset this issue, the researcher also included the frequency.

Another limitation of conducting this research during the COVID-19 pandemic involved the issue of evolution. Predictions surrounding the evolution of the education system due to COVID-19 are everchanging with scientific advancements. It was difficult for respondents to accurately predict the needs of the educational system post pandemic.

Finally, the third limitation was the localized nature of the research. Due to the focus on NW MN educational needs, the results cannot be generalized. The research, however, may serve as a template for other teacher preparation studies. The studies may fill in further gaps addressing vital characteristics of teacher preparation programs.

The research was conducted in a NW MN area with the intent of using the results to assess effectiveness and change direction of one specific NW MN public university. Further research into a more generalized study is desired. The teacher preparation faculty may or may not have been active classroom teachers in the last five years.

**Ethical Considerations**

In addition, privacy was an important aspect of this research. Honesty and integrity were sought so data were accurate. Data safety and monitoring was priority ensuring each measurement was untraceable, protecting the privacy of all participants. Focus groups were held via webinar on the Zoom platform so participants remained anonymous. Participants were on a first name basis only. Results cannot be tracked to specific participants and all data were kept on
a password protected computer, additionally each program had an additional password requirement. The results were used to direct assessment and improvement to the local public university’s teacher preparation program which in turn benefits the communities and schools as the teacher preparation program successfully prepares new teachers.

**Researcher Historical Background**

The researcher brought experience as a graduate of a teacher preparation program, classroom teacher, behavioral and instructional coach, administrator, and teacher preparation program Associate Professor. At the time of conducting this research, the researcher worked closely with the other faculty in the teacher preparation program. This was beneficial as participants were more willing to complete the survey due to existing relationships. The anonymous link assisted to counteract concerns of faculty apprehension in responding with integrity.

In addition, as an active faculty member, the researcher was familiar with numerous recent graduate participants. Due to a relationship with several recent graduates, the recent graduates were more willing to voluntarily participate. To prevent identification and correlated measurement results, anonymity was of utmost importance.

Additionally, the researcher was a participant in the Northwest Minnesota Service Cooperative (NWSC). The leader of this group was the researcher’s previous principal. Equally critical, numerous administrators in the NWSC group were the researcher’s previous teachers and/or personal acquaintances. This may have been valuable as the administrators may have been more willing to participate in the survey. Due to the prior relationship that the researcher had created with several of the participants, again, anonymity was of utmost importance.

As a previous teacher candidate at the forementioned NW MN public university, the researcher was aware of the changes in the teacher preparation program between her attendance
in the program and current day. For example, the research student taught an entire school year instead of a minimum of 4-16 weeks as is current expectations. Another acknowledgement is some courses’ focus has changed, while some remain the same. When K-12 schools started to rely heavily on technology, the university did not require teacher candidates to learn applicable technology practices for enhancing student learning.

Following the teacher preparation program completion, the researcher spent nearly two decades as an elementary, middle, or high school teacher/leader where they encountered numerous new teachers entering the field. Unintentionally, this may have created bias toward quality teacher preparation categories. Working with seasoned teachers and administrators, the topic of whether teacher preparation programs were producing efficient and effective new teachers for the reality of today’s educational system came into question.

The researcher prevented bias in data collection by creating a plan and following through with fidelity. Participants were asked direct questions and in return, the researcher received direct answers. There were a dozen peers from the Professional Education Department who also reviewed the data as it was used at the university level to steer the improvements of the teacher preparation program.
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature analysis explored the necessary characteristics of a teacher preparation program to produce efficient and effective teachers who can succeed in the K-12 classroom. Although there is a lack of general research on this topic, further evaluation revealed previous research focusing on quantitative and mixed methods research rather than qualitative research. Additionally, the research produced more of an emphasis on why efficient and effective teacher programs exist rather than a playbook on characteristics universities can implement to become an efficient and effective teacher preparation program. Throughout the review of literature, seven central themes were revealed:

1. Issues related to unpreparedness
2. Self-Efficacy
3. Classroom Management
4. Reality Shock
5. Clinical Experience
6. Pedagogy
7. Content Knowledge

The first four themes presented concerns of producing unprepared teachers followed by three pinpointed intertwined solutions teacher preparation programs can implement to produce efficient and effective new teachers.

Researchers addressed a variety of discerning reasons why teacher preparation is a highly debated topic, including that many new teachers joining the workforce are viewed as ill-prepared for their classroom (Bahr & Mellor, 2016; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Education International, 2017; Gauthier & Dembélé, 2004; Latham et al.,
2015; Maxwell et al., 2016; National Research Council, 2010; Rickards, 2016). More specifically, producing unprepared teachers generates the domino effect of low student achievement compared to other countries and high early exodus of classroom teachers from the profession. Another essential point targeted a universal demand for auxiliary research to be conducted addressing efficient and effective teacher preparation programs. Inadequacy of quality instruction and consistent staffing hinders student academic growth which lead to lowering the quality of life in adulthood (Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, 2020).

In line with previous studies, Darling-Hammond (2016), determined teacher preparation programs were likely the key element in a solution to offset the various concerns of unprepared new teachers. Early exodus rates were determined to be one, of many, grave causes of the teacher shortage. A decrease in student achievement is an additional serious effect of high attrition rates in teachers. Furthermore, self-efficacy was another characteristic proven to lead to high attrition rates. It is important to highlight the fact that much evidence of increasing self-efficacy was identified to tie into the number of hours spent in field experience during a teacher preparation program experience. Subsequently, low self-efficacy corresponded to high stress levels, which also contributed to higher exodus rates (Brown, 2012).

Extensive results branded classroom management as a key skill new teachers must possess to be an efficient and effective teacher. A teacher with excellent classroom management frequently produces high academically achieving students. In congruence with solutions to improving other skills, classroom management fluency was best acquired in a teacher preparation program through an abundance of field experience.

*Reality* shock was a fourth common contributor to early attrition. Reality shock is sometimes referred to as “transition shock” and “…cited as indicating the collapse of optimistic
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ideals and the harsh reality of everyday classroom teaching” (Voss & Kuner, 2020, p. 293).

“This transition shock is often attributed to increasing levels of emotional exhaustion, defined as
the feeling of being emotionally drained and depleted of emotional resources” (Maslach et al., 1996).
In line with other categories of concern, reality shock can be diminished by teacher
preparation programs requiring an abundance of time in field experience (Overschelde, 2017).

When conducting the literature review, the researcher searched for peer-reviewed articles
that stated in detail the intricate components of a successful teacher preparation program,
including the number of field experience hours needed. Another essential point was that although
numerous articles discussed an abundance of hours in a field experience as the key factor, many
of the researchers did not dictate a predictive number for success. Despite this lack of
acknowledgement, in an interview conducted by Martin and Mulvihill (2017) with the respected
Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus at the Stanford Graduate School of
Education at Stanford University, Darling-Hammond, determined teacher candidates must have a
minimum of one-year experience under the influence of expert teachers to be considered a
properly trained teacher. Watson et al. (2008) determined an essential point which discussed a
correlation between the confidence and skillset of a new teacher and the performance of an
extensive field experience. The more hours of field experience, the stronger skills a teacher
candidate acquires. Similarly, to other researchers, Watson et al. (2008) focused the literature
review on the reasons why new teachers join the field with inadequate skills rather than key
components of a successful teacher preparation program that produces efficient and effective
new teachers. According to Briggs, Coleman, & Morrison (2012),

The ‘why’ question is critical since it is through methodological understanding that
researchers and readers of research are provided with a rationale to explain the reasons
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for using specific strategies and methods in order to construct, collect, and develop particular kinds of knowledge about educational phenomena (p. 15).

Also importantly, we must understand the reason behind ill-prepared teachers before finding a natural solution.

**Literature Review**

Whether or not teacher preparation programs were producing efficient and effective new teachers was an ongoing debate by many (Bahr & Mellor, 2016; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Education International, 2017; Gauthier & Dembélé, 2004; Latham et al., 2015; Maxwell et al., 2016; National Research Council, 2010; Rickards, 2016). Labaree (2004) discussed concerns that teacher preparation programs were not, in fact, preparing new teachers for today or tomorrow’s student demands. According to Labaree (2004), “unprepared teachers report diminished student learning outcomes associated with poor classroom management, increased stress resulting from student behavior problems, low levels of job satisfaction, and high rates of teacher turnover” (p. 163). Brunsting et al. (2014) and Oliver & Reschly (2010) corroborated Labaree’s (2004) finding.

Crawley (2018) determined low academic accomplishment of students as another domino effect of ill-prepared teachers. In addition, Pinto and Jones (2020) conducted a thorough analysis of low academic accomplishment and found correlations that the K-12 students with low academic accomplishment frequently obtained a lower socioeconomic status, higher criminal activity, poorer health which led to higher mortality rates, and decreased participation in political and social institutions.

The concern of unprepared new teachers triggered the nation to call for reform of teacher preparation programs (Walker-Davidson, 2018). Bradbury (2020) confirmed the ever-changing world of education demanded teachers must evolve from past approaches. Therefore, the
preparation programs for teacher candidates required evolution to meet the needs of a moving target (Nochols, 2020; Hooks et al., 2019; Zhong et al., 2019).

An abundance of researchers validated that teacher preparation was found to be drastically under-researched (Crawley, 2018; König et al., 2017, Kurth et al., 2014; Parliament of Australia, 2016; Parliament of NSW, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2011; Wasburn-Moses, 2018). The controversy that surrounded the production of teachers per teacher preparation programs, created college and university teacher preparation programs to feel significant pressure (Wasburn-Moses, 2018) as it was their task to produce superior new teachers (Miller-Levy, 2014). Crawley (2018) argued successful teacher preparation programs had a direct correlation to the quality of teachers, which enhanced student learning and student achievement. McKinsey et al. (2007) and OECD (2005, 2012) argued further that highly skilled teachers produced the most influence on student achievement.

An additional issue of ill-prepared new teachers is that the ineffective teachers left teaching prematurely at higher rates than expected (Nichols et al., 2011). Schools struggled to find new teacher candidates to replace the new teachers who prematurely left the field (Flower et al., 2017; Bradbury et al., 2012; Husser et al., 2016; Raue et al., 2015), many due to dissipated passion (Bradbury, 2020). Walker-Davidson (2018) dissected attrition issues further which uncovered lower student learning, therefore achievement, as a result. Moore (2016) and Walker-Davidson (2018) argued that the significant number of inexperienced teachers in the schools created an environment that utilized low amounts of effective strategies. Teachers who struggled to meet individual learner needs also experienced job dissatisfaction which contributed to early attrition (Thorton, 2014).
**Self-Efficacy**

As mentioned, early exodus of teaching can be attributed to lack of skills in numerous areas. A lack of self-efficacy was identified as an additional contributor to attrition, as well as efficiency and effectiveness (Brown, 2012). In addition, Sawchuk et al. (2016), Allday et al., 2013, and Killoran et al (2014) highlighted students felt unprepared to support the needs of the students in their classrooms after completion of teacher preparation programs. An abundance of findings supported pedagogy and content knowledge as a part of teacher preparation programs. Other research demanded that in addition to pedagogy and content knowledge, teacher preparation programs must build self-efficacy (Dorel, 2016; Shore 2004). Shore (2004) defined self-efficacy as a sense of accomplishment, greater job satisfaction, a sense of control in the classroom, and a willingness to try innovative strategies and practices. The more sense of self-efficacy a teacher demonstrated, the more successful their foundation of teaching (Cameron, 2017; Kunter et al., 2013; Ljubetić, 2008; Tiwari et al., 2015). Darling-Hammond (2012) recognized “empowerment” through self-efficacy was a key contributor in teaching and education. In addition, a widely accepted theory to attain stronger self-efficacy, teachers must gain more experience in classrooms (clinical experience) according to Lamorey & Wilcox (2005).

Prior research by Bandura (1986) and Watson (2008) highlighted clinical experience heavily influenced new teacher self-efficacy. Both Hudson’s (2010) and Watson et al.’s (2008) research emphasized self-efficacy grew from gained skills and confidence during clinical experience. This corroborated research that supported new teachers who reported that attrition was caused by burnout and stress according to Saas et al. (2010). Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2007) also added that attrition was linked to low self-efficacy. Clinical experience was tagged as most essential to achieving a higher sense of efficacy (Bulder, 2013).
Classroom Management

Teachers who self-reported attending a poorly run teacher preparation program were more likely to practice ineffective classroom management (Kaff et al., 2007). Many researchers investigated and identified classroom management as one of the foundational elements of a successful teachers (Flower et al., 2017). Many new teachers reported inadequacy in the area of classroom management (Mitchell, 2004; Beran, 2005).

Flower et al. (2014; 2017) and Kaff et al. (2007) investigated teacher preparation programs that were reported as not properly preparing teacher candidates with classroom management skills by graduates. These teacher candidates struggled with student behavior as novice teachers and spent energy using ineffective methods. A lack of classroom management skills created an environment of continuous negative student behaviors which lowers the teacher’s self-efficacy. Due to classroom management affecting self-efficacy, classroom management was pegged as a critical skill for being a highly effective teacher. Strong classroom management skills were proven to reduce behavior issues, increase student engagement (Reinke et al., 2008), and showed large gains in student achievement (Brophy, 1986; Kane et al., 2010). Subsequently large gains in student achievement led to a potentially healthier future (Huynh, 2017). Konig et al. (2017) attributed the biggest growth in classroom management to clinical experience.

Reality Shock

Unprepared new teachers reported that they experienced reality shock. Reality shock was identified as the “collapse of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (Chubbuck et al., 2001, p. 367). A collaborative partnership that benefited both the universities and the K-12 schools was targeted to prevent reality shock (Chubbuck et al., 2001; Goodlad, 1994; Holmes Group, 1995). Reality shock stemmed from what Darling-
Hammond (2006) found as a lack of understanding of what good teachers do. Overschelde et al. (2017) ensured teacher candidates were under direct supervision and guidance of current teachers for several semesters prior to student teaching and identified clinical experience as the preventing factor of reality shock. These purposeful real-world experiences assisted beginner teachers during their transition from student identity to teacher identity successfully (Overschelde et al., 2017).

**Clinical Experience**

Clinical experience was recognized as the most crucial piece of a teacher preparation program by an abundance of researchers (Dorel et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2006; & Levi-Ari, 2015; Wasburn-Moses, 2018). Clinical experience “can be broadly defined as experiences that provide opportunities to directly and actively engage with learning and teaching in school settings” (Fitzgerald 2020, p. 293). Clinical Experience was substantiated to be the most influential aspect in teacher preparation programs by numerous researchers such as Wasburn-Moses (2018), Dorel et al., (2016), and Darling-Hammond (2006). Other researchers corroborated that statement and found a correlation of hours in the field to new teacher performance (Powell, 2015). Many organizations Worldwide, such as government agencies, researchers, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), and National Education Association (NEA) demanded an increase in intentional field experience during teacher preparation programs (Jones, 2008; Moseley, 2004; Rowley, 2013; Wasburn-Moses, 2018). Additionally, numerous researchers such as Moseley et al., (2004), Smith & Levi-Ari (2015), and Walker-Davidson (2018) further discussed that teacher preparation candidates supported the practice of supplementary hours. Researcher Wasburn-Moses (2018) contributed to these reports stating clinical experience is the “bedrock of quality teacher preparation” (p.
704) as it provides opportunity to engage in real-time teaching (Fitzgerald & Corrigan, 2018; Kenny, 2009).

“According to several national and state studies, school administrators do not believe first-year teachers are prepared to put theory into practice” (Walker-Davidson, 2018, p. 1). Clinical experience was deemed to be vital in teacher preparation as it directly addressed putting theory into practice armoring new teachers with the skills which met individual needs of each student (Walker-Davidson, 2018; Wasburn-Moses, 2018). Clinical Experience also assured teacher preparation candidates built their knowledge and skill in their academic field (Hudson, 2010), as well as day-to-day and classroom management adeptness (Paquette & Laverick, 2017) that was best accomplished through authentic experience (Billett, 2009; Derosier & Soslau, 2014; Dorel 2016; Ferns & Zegwaard, 2014; Goh & Matthews, 2011; Jones, 2008; Loewenberg Ball, 2009; Orrell, 2004; Rowley et al., 2013). Loewenberg Ball et al., (2009) believed teacher preparation candidates, given a safe and authentic space to practice classroom skills, gained an abundance of knowledge imperative for becoming a teacher. This moved the teacher skillset from student identity to teacher identity (Overschelde et al., 2018).

The dire need for clinical experience to be a large part of teacher preparation programs was extensively documented in research (AACTE 2010; Allen, 2003; Alquraini & Rao, 2017; Brownell et al., 2005; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond 2006; EPIC EDUCATION MN, N/A; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gable et al., 2012; Grossman, 1990; Hooks et al., (2019); Kosnik et al., 2011; Loewenberg Ball et al., 2009; Plourde, 2002; Stites et al., 2018; Walker-Davidson, 2018; Wilson et al., 2001; Wilson et al., 2002). Washburn-Moses (2018) also confirmed the dire need for additional and extensive clinical experience. As previously discussed in this literature review, clinical experience was pegged as the most imperative piece due to the
fact that teacher candidates received an authentic experience to meet the current needs. Anderson et al. (2013) discovered the extent of the importance of clinical experience when multiple groups such as National Education Association and American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) demanded teacher preparation programs expanded clinical experiences.

**Pedagogy**

The second most frequently mentioned characteristic of a successful teacher preparation program was pedagogy (Alquraini et al., 2017; Brownell et al., 2005; EPIC EDUCATION MN, N/A; Gable et al., 2012; Loewenberg Ball et al., 2009; Stites et al., 2018; Walker-Davidson, 2018). Educational pedagogy addressed necessary strategies to meet the needs of each student. Although there were numerous instructional and managerial pedagogical topics brought to light, some specifically mentioned examples were classroom management strategies, the teaching cycle, and parent relationships (Flower et al., 2017; Goldhaber et al., 2011; König et al., 2017; Nichols, 2020; Walker-Davidson, 2018). According to Bannister-Tyrrell et al. (2018), teaching the knowledge of a content was not considered teacher competency, but knowledge about how to teach effectively was a mandatory component of the pedagogy focus during the teacher preparation program. Researchers König et al. (2017) emphasized,

“[Teacher candidates] should have general pedagogical knowledge allowing them to account for the heterogeneity of their learning groups in the classroom (“adaptivity”), prepare, structure and evaluate lessons (“structure”), manage the classroom and motivate their students (“classroom management/motivation”), and assess students (“assessment”). (p 123)

**Content Knowledge**

The last commonly mentioned aspect of a thorough teacher preparation program was content knowledge (Alquraini & Rao, 2017; Brownell et al., 2005; Cochran-Smith et al., 2005;
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Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Gable et al., 2012; Grossman, 1990; Hooks et al., 2019; Loewenberg Ball et al., 2009; Stites et al., 2018). Putman (2021) addressed the need for teacher preparations to include content knowledge due to "higher levels of background knowledge enable children to better comprehend a text.” (para. 8) Additionally, “learning core content builds the foundation for later grades and supports students' ability to enter postsecondary education.” (para. 8)

**Conclusion**

As documented in this chapter, there were numerous characteristics that played a role in teacher preparation, some more vital than others. The researcher discussed issues related to unpreparedness, self-efficacy, classroom management, reality shock, clinical experience, pedagogy, and content knowledge. According to a wide variety of researchers, the best dissection of topics for teacher preparation programs to focus on were clinical experience, pedagogy, and content knowledge. If addressed correctly, all other topics would fit into one of those three categories. Much of the peer-reviewed research concluded clinical experience as the significant contributor that built the fundamental components in efficient and effective new teachers while they attended a teacher preparation program (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Derosier & Soslau, 2014; Dorel et al., 2016; Goh & Matthews, 2011; Levi-Ari, 2015; Powell, 2015; Washburn-Moses, 2018). Throughout the variety of research presented, several researchers addressed the topic of classroom management as their main focus while they integrated the topics of attrition and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Flower et. al., 2014; Washburn-Moses, 2018). Surprisingly, compared to clinical experience, a substantial lesser amount of research pinpointed academic pedagogy and content knowledge as critical.
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized an exploratory mixed methods research design to investigate the characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program from the perspectives of NW MN teachers, NW MN administrators, recent (within the last two years) NW MN public university professional education graduates, and NW MN public university faculty. This study’s intent discovered essential elements of an efficient and effective teacher preparation program to graduate successful teachers. The researcher further examined these identified components as imperative in a teacher preparation program in chapter four per survey and two focus groups.

In making the decision to utilize mixed methods research, the researcher considered the necessary steps involved with mixed methods. Briggs et al. (2012) listed the following steps:

1. Determine whether a mixed design is appropriate.
2. Determine the rationale for using a mixed design.
3. Select or construct a mixed research design and mixed sampling design.
4. Collect data.
5. Analyze data.
6. Continually validate the data.
7. Continually interpret the data.
8. Write the research report.

The exploratory mixed methods research was described in further detail through research design, setting and sample, data collection strategies, surveys, mixed methods, and data analysis and validation procedure.

Research Design

The researcher conducted an exploratory study with a mixed methods approach to obtain a thorough analysis of vital characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program.
“Qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study can complement each other by providing results with greater breadth and depth” (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019, p. 144). The quantitative portion of this study allowed for summarizing copious amounts of data. The qualitative components gave a rich, more in-depth description based on personal experience. The researcher strategized using Quan-Qual, in which the qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously and were analyzed equally. “Convergence and corroboration of findings can enhance of a particular claim (called triangulation)” (Briggs et al., 2012, p. 126). Triangulation, which provided a complement of findings and counterbalanced weaknesses, also created a strength in the reliability of the results as the Quan-Qual corroborated each other. Fraenkel et al. (2019) determined “the researcher uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to study the same phenomenon to determine if the two converge upon a single understanding of the research problem being investigated. (p. 507) At times, qualitative research can be subjective, therefore having added the quantitative portion prevented bias. The researcher conducted exploratory research, which aimed to address the phenomenon of fundamental characteristics of a teacher preparation program that produced efficient and effective new teachers.

Setting and Sample

Roberts and Hyatt (2020) declared the existence of ample research that distinguished the difference between sampling and population.

Sampling is the process of selecting several individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. The individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population (p. 147).
More specifically, the researcher utilized cluster sampling. Latpate et al. (2021) recognized that “clusters are generally made up of neighboring units or of compact areas and, therefore, the units within the clusters tend to have similar characteristics” (p. 61).

The four targeted populations equaling over 200 total survey participants were clustered as follows:

1. NW MN teachers
2. NW MN administrators
3. NW MN public university professional education faculty
4. NW MN public university professional education recent (within the past two years) graduates

The population unit for the research focused on various educators from NW MN. The researcher sought out professional perceptions about new teachers joining the workforce, as well as what a successful teacher preparation program should have looked like to produce more efficient and effective new teachers. Instead of seeking participants who are educators in general, the clustered sampling frame included NW MN teachers and administrators who have worked with a new teacher in their building the past two years. These two groups were chosen due to their proximity to the new teachers. A third cluster group was NW MN public university professional education faculty. The researcher aimed to understand if these faculty perceptions aligned with the other cluster groups. The final cluster group was NW MN public university professional education recent graduates who joined the field of teaching in the past two years. The researcher chose the criteria of two years to preserve reliable memories from the participant’s teacher preparation program. It is important to have noted that it takes approximately six months for full-time new teachers to gain an accurate understanding of the
demands it takes to be an efficient and effective teacher. These new teacher participants also were considered a full-time, general education classroom “Teacher of Record”. According to the Minnesota Legislature (2018),

"Teacher of record" means an individual who is responsible for the planning, instruction, and assessment of students in a classroom and authorized to grant students credit for meeting standards attributed to the content taught, or is part of a co-teaching assignment and has shared responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment of students in a classroom. (para. 14)

Following the completion of the exploratory survey and analysis, two clustered focus groups were formed which were comprised of NW MN teachers and NW MN recent teacher preparation graduates. These two groups were chosen due to the closeness of new teacher candidates who experience the teacher preparation program. The recent graduates gave insight as teacher preparation program graduates and if it prepared them to be a successful teacher. NW MN teachers, who were frequently assigned as mentors, were selected due to theproximately of closely working with the new teachers. The focus group sessions were held via Zoom. The purpose was to expand upon the information that the researcher gleaned from the quantitative portions of the survey. The focus group provided the researcher with the opportunity to gain more detailed explanations of these quantitative findings.

Data Collection Strategies and Data Analysis Overview

All cluster group mixed methods surveys were designed using Qualtrics. To ensure the survey was clear and concise, the researcher sent the draft of the surveys to numerous education professionals for feedback. Per the feedback from the education specialists, surveys were altered.

Once the surveys were completed by volunteer participants, the results automatically uploaded onto the analysis portion of the Qualtrics platform. The exploratory study focused on
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descriptive statistics, all provided by Qualtrics. This was designed to construe and outline the components of a data set which mainly identified the frequency and percentage. The researcher analyzed the frequency and percentages to create concentrated questions that were designed to dig deeper into the meaning of the results with the two focus groups: NW MN teachers and NW MN recent teacher preparation graduates.

Qualitative data questions were analyzed for themes through the Quirkos platform following Creswell’s (2004) five step process:

1. Initially read through the text data
2. Divide the text into segments of information
3. Label the segments of information with codes
4. Reduce the overlap and redundancy of codes
5. Collapse codes into themes (p. 34)

Results were exported from Qualtrics to a Word document, then were copied and pasted from the Microsoft Word documents into the Quirkos information board. The researcher read the Quirkos board numerous times to gain familiarity with the information. The researcher created a division of text by cluster group responses. While reading segments, the researcher created 46 codes ensuring minimally one code attached to each answer of information. Creswell (2004) recommended cutting out the overlap and redundancy of codes. Due to the fluidity of Quirkos, this was a quick step in the process. The researcher reduced these to nine codes per cluster group, as well as two themes for each.

The qualitative thematic analysis from the open-ended responses helped to inform the focus group interview scripts, and the themes were utilized later for seeking corroboration and divergence between the qualitative data from the questionnaire and focus group transcriptions.
The objective of the survey was to collect data that presented enough evidence to confirm definitive, vital characteristics that must be encompassed by a teacher preparation program to produce efficient and effective new teachers ready for today’s classroom. These efforts led the researcher to adopt a mixed methods approach. The mixed methods survey was utilized concurrently, or parallel, as participants answered a mixture of quantitative and qualitative questions all within the same survey. Collecting numerical and textual data concurrently can help the researcher understand the topic in larger breadth and depth. The mixture of numerical and text questions were inter-mixed amongst each other in the questionnaire.

**Participants**

There were four cluster groups of participants located in Northwestern Minnesota. Each of these groups were identified as having the professional knowledge to provide vital information for the goal of this project; what are fundamental characteristics for a successful teacher preparation program. All chosen cluster groups were comprised of educators. This group provided real-time understanding of area school issues and updates for the public university.

**NW MN Administrators**

The researcher utilized connections with the Northwest Service Cooperative (NWSC) in Minnesota (MN) which consisted of over 100 administrators. These administrators were identified as possible participants in this research and were sent participant invites. This group is located in Northwestern MN near the public university, who held faculty that participated in this project.

**NW MN Teachers**

All NW MN teachers of record were included as participants in this study. The survey results identified which participants worked with a new teacher in the past two years. Many schools in the NW MN area required mentorship programs for new teachers provided by the
school district. The mentors are typically identified by the building principal and teacher in a similar scope and content as the new teachers. The mentors worked closely with new teachers aiding in problem solving and celebrations. Due to these close working relationships, the NW MN teacher feedback on the preparedness of the new teachers was vital.

**Recent Teacher Preparation Graduates**

Teacher candidates who graduated minimally six months prior were invited to participate and deemed competent to give experienced opinions pertaining to the needed skillset of teachers. It takes approximately six months to comprehend the needs it takes to be successful in a job (Lynch & Buckner-Hayden, 2010). Within those six months, the new teachers experienced students, guardians, systemic operations, and self-efficacy challenges.

There was also a maximum of teaching for two years to contribute to this study as a new teacher. After two years of completing a teacher preparation program, certain tasks and practices throughout their learning journey are forgotten. As data are collected, those producing the data must possess accurate recollection pertaining to their teacher preparation program.

**NW MN Public University Professors**

The university has encountered skepticism by area administrators and teachers as a thorough, successful teacher preparation program. The fourth cluster of participants was the professors of the teacher preparation program. The desire for this data was to evaluate faculty perceptions of the program and new teachers' preparedness to effectively teach in a K-12 classroom.

The researcher contacted the Data Analyst at the NW MN public university to gain email access to teacher preparation graduates from the past two years. The analyst sent out the survey to this group of participants twice via email. Due to the anonymity of the survey, all participants were encouraged to answer with sincerity.
The researcher was a faculty member at the NW MN public university in the teacher preparation program. As peers, faculty were willing to participate in this research project. It was planned to send the survey via email twice, but the qualified participants took the survey during round one.

Surveys

There were four mixed methods surveys created for educational cluster groups. These surveys were piloted with a dozen professional educators who gave feedback. These educators ensured each question set up was user-friendly for both participants utilizing cell phones and computers. This meant the pilot participants reviewed the survey twice, once via cell phone and once via computer. It was reported the questions were cell phone friendly except for the qualitative measurements. It was naturally harder to type open-ended answers on a cell phone versus a computer. The researcher recognized the vital component of offering qualitative questioning to gain further information so moved forward with the qualitative measurements.

The surveys included different modes of questioning such as multiple choice, open-ended questions, and drop and drag questions. This variety, in addition to the brief length of each survey, offered an opportunity to avoid survey mortality as the participants were not answering the same style of questions many times over and over. The surveys were anticipated to take ten minutes or less to complete. During this stressful COVID-19-time, respect for the participants’ time was taken into great account when creating the surveys. Due to all questions being on one page, navigation was clear and simple. The questions were straight forward, understandable, and realistic. Positive feedback was given pertaining to drop and drag questions. It was visually appealing and gave a lot of needed information in a small amount of space. The researcher corrected a few grammatical errors and needed to reword some of the questions to stay in the proper tense of who is reading the question. For example, in some questions it was stated as “Do
you think…” instead of “I think…”. There were also two questions in the original surveys that asked for the same information stated differently. One of those questions was eliminated for redundancy.

**Participant Breakdown**

The researcher believed there was a specific set of characteristics key to creating an efficient and effective teacher preparation program that could be implemented to increase the success of teacher candidates which mixed methods measurements utilized ensure there was not influential bias. Exploratory mixed methods surveys were used to address the bigger question of “What characteristics create an ideal teacher preparation program that produces effective new teachers ready to succeed in a K-12 classroom?” These surveys were digitally completed by four various stakeholder groups. Each of the four exploratory mixed methods measurements were created ensuring the construct produced quality responses with the individual cluster group perceptions in mind, as shown in Table 1.
**Table 1**

Survey Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Groupings</th>
<th>Mixed Methods Survey Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW MN teachers</td>
<td>First-hand experience with new teachers who have joined their school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW MN administrators</td>
<td>First-hand experience with new teachers who have joined their school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW MN public university professional education faculty</td>
<td>Faculty perception of how prepared the recent NW MN Professional Education Graduates weren.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW MN public university professional education recent graduates</td>
<td>Participant evaluation of their completed teacher preparation program and characteristics of their ideal teacher preparation program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* This table demonstrates the different perspectives on which each cluster group focused.

These digital measurements included assorted styles of questions with individual surveys targeting their specified stakeholder group. Each survey pinpointed specific questions that would produce relevant answers. A brief breakdown of survey details can be found in Table 2. See Appendix A-D for complete surveys.
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster Groupings</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Total Survey Questions</th>
<th>Multiple choice</th>
<th>Multi-Select</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Open-Ended</th>
<th>Matrix Table</th>
<th>Drag and drop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW MN teachers</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW MN administrators</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW MN public university professional education faculty</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW MN public university professional education recent graduates</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant Breakdown

*Note.* This table demonstrates the numerical data of the number of participants and the measurement data of which each cluster survey was comprised.
Mixed Methods Research

**Qualitative Method**

“Qualitative (thematic) data analysis is the analysis of narrative data using a variety of different inductive and iterated techniques including categorical strategies and contextualizing (holistic) strategies.” (Tashakkori et al., 2020, p. 7) Qualitative measurements are commonly used in exploratory, under-researched topics. It presented a broader range of data that contributed to thematic analysis.

In addition to Creswell (2004), numerous other researchers supported the qualitative method. According to Leavy (2020), “qualitative research is an expansive and continually evolving methodological field that encompasses a wide range of approaches” (p. 2). The researcher applied an inductive coding as a type of thematic analysis approach to identify concepts or themes amongst raw data by the researcher allowing theories the freedom to emerge unlike in quantitative data. All qualitative data questions were analyzed for themes through the Quirkos platform following Creswell’s (2004) five step process:

1. Initially read through the text data
2. Divide the text into segments of information
3. Label the segments of information with codes
4. Reduce the overlap and redundancy of codes
5. Collapse codes into themes (p. 34)

The researcher utilized Quirkos to aid in the inductive coding process for both the survey measurement and the cluster grouping focus session. This program produced a diagram and color-coding opportunities of specific emerging themes such as categorical labels and descriptions. Linking of information opportunities presented themselves as well.
Following the survey measurement, two separate focus groups comprised of six participants each were gathered for an in-depth discussion. The cluster grouping categories chosen for the focus group were NW MN teachers and NW MN public university professional education recent graduates. These cluster groups met separately allowing for open dialogue without fear the statements would offend the other focus group participants. The participants for the NW MN public university professional education recent graduate focus groups were identified by the data analyst emailing any new teachers who graduated between six months and two years prior. The first six respondents were accepted of each of the two focus groups. The second focus group included the NW MN teacher cluster grouping. TheNW MN administrators were contacted requesting six total teachers to volunteer to participate in this more in-depth focus group. The conversations in these group meetings stemmed from thematic analysis identified in the survey. The focus groups consisted of recent teacher graduates who have been in the field for six months to two years and teachers of records who have trained recent teacher candidates.

Following Creswell’s (2004) inductive coding process, the researcher first read all raw data, all in the same format, ensuring easy to read font and spacing. The qualitative surveys raw data was exported from Qualtrics into a report document utilizing Microsoft 365’s Word program. The data were copied and pasted into Quirkos to analyze data. The data was divided into segments of information. Next data were labeled and rechecked for redundancy. Finally, all codes were collapsed into themes. The focus groups were conducted virtually through Zoom. Zoom’s platform offers dictation. Once Zoom provided a dictation report, it was uploaded into Quirkos to begin analyzing the focus group data using Creswell’s (2004) process.
Per Thomas (2006), the researcher conducted extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, established clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings, and developed a theory about the underlying structure of experiences.

Once the raw data were systematized, the researcher read through the material several times ensuring familiarity with each data piece. While analyzing the raw data line by line, themes, or categories, began to emerge. Some data provided general themes while others were classified as specific details pertaining to those general themes.

**Quantitative Method**

“Quantitative methods may be most simply and parsimoniously defined as the techniques associated with gathering, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of numerical data and information” (p. 5). Quantitative research is comprised of straight forward questioning with specific options the participant must choose from. It was a highly debated topic discerning whether quantitative portions of research should or should not carry more weight.

This research targeted frequency and percentages for each of the four cluster groups. Once these results were available, the researcher utilized the analysis portion of the Qualtrics platform. All data sets were organized per variable. Once all data sets were organized, the researcher used the descriptive statistics which identified the most chosen option to least chosen option. These charts were uploaded and discussed further in chapter four.

The researcher desired descriptive statistics for quantitative analysis and provided context for the focus group interviews. This was completed through the utilization of frequency and percentages. Each focus group question was built to deepen understanding of the survey responses.
Validation Procedure and Data Analysis

Validation Procedure

The validation procedure consisted of the researcher exploring self-created surveys that targeted each of the four research questions. When completed, each of the four surveys were presented through email to a dozen professional education specialists. These specialists vetted the surveys, responding with feedback based around the order of questions asked, missing questions, and question clarity, as well as easy to maneuver and visually pleasing. Edits were made to each survey based upon these evaluations. Additional demographic questions were added to better dissect the responses from the recent teacher preparation graduates. Technology was originally omitted from surveys as technology changes rapidly and technology differs by location. The researcher edited each of the four surveys to add this piece in. Originally, the NW MN administrator and teacher surveys discussed how many hours they viewed as most appropriate for clinical experience as a qualitative question. After receiving feedback, the researcher altered this to a quantitative piece. The team that provided feedback also ensured proper grammar and punctuation. The researcher received great feedback pertaining to the drag and drop questions.

Focus Group Qualitative Data Analysis

After the survey analysis, two focus groups comprising of recent teacher graduates and NW MN teacher were organized via Zoom further addressing the exposed thematic concepts. These clustered focus groups held six participants and were conducted separately. Running separate groups gave each participant more privacy to respond to questions sincerely without the worry of offending the other population. These meetings lasted 60 minutes answering a total of eight-twelve questions. The researcher utilized the Zoom platform for transcribing each focus group discussion and Quirkos to assist with coding according to Creswell (2004).
**Conclusion**

The educational world is swiftly evolving. Teacher preparation programs struggle to keep up to date with their practices. It is of utmost importance the teacher preparation programs produce efficient and effective teachers that meet the demands of today’s classroom. Ill-prepared teachers are proven to have extensive and substantial detrimental effects on society. This research project aimed to pinpoint the crucial characteristics of teacher preparation programs that consistently produce efficient and effective teachers through exploratory mixed-methods research following Briggs (2012) research design, including cluster surveys and two focus groups. These data were based off Darling-Hammond’s question presented in 2017 “how do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?” (p. 82).
CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

Introduction

The world of education is quickly changing, and teacher preparation programs are being left behind (Labaree, 2004). Teacher preparation programs are struggling to evolve their programs to meet increasing demands and produce efficient and effective teachers for today’s birth-12 schools (Kurth & Foley, 2014; Sharma & Sokal, 2015). Numerous administrators have corroborated such observations (Meyer, 2016), with widespread negative effects. During an interview with Martin, & Mulvihill (2017), Darling-Hammond stated, “how do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?” (p. 82). The research from the literature review addresses seven main categories of topic: (1) issues of unpreparedness; (2) self-efficacy; (3) classroom management; (4) reality shock; (5) clinical experience; (6) pedagogy; and (7) content knowledge.

Issues Related to Unpreparedness

Outdated teacher preparation programs produce ill-prepared new teachers (Bahr & Mellor, 2016; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bronsford, 2005). An ineffective teacher is more likely to leave the teaching field prematurely than an effective teacher (Nichols, Goldhaber, Gross, & Player, 2011). High teacher turnover causes low student academic achievement and lower quality of life for their students (Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, 2020). Classroom management, self-efficacy, and reality shock are other common struggles of ill-prepared teachers, leading to early attrition as discussed below, and fueling a negative cycle in which new teachers find themselves.
Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is a sense of accomplishment, greater job satisfaction, a sense of control in the classroom, and a willingness to try innovative strategies and practices (Shore, 2004). Low-self efficacy causes a decline of interest in the teaching profession, early attrition, and decrease in student achievement while increasing the achievement gap (Cameron, 2017; Kunter et al., 2013; Ljubetic, 2008; Tiwari et al., 2015). Low self-efficacy creates insecurity of efficient and effective teaching skills (Brown, 2012), especially in feeling unprepared to meet general student needs (Sawchuk et al., 2016; Allday et al., 2013; Killoran et al., 2014).

Classroom Management

New teachers often report feeling unprepared with efficient and effective classroom management strategies after completion of their teacher preparation program. Flower et al., 2017, recognized classroom management as a vital skill for proficient teachers. A lack of classroom management skills contributes to low self-efficacy, which plays a role in early attrition.

Reality Shock

Numerous new teachers encounter a “collapse of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (Chubbuck et al., 2001, p. 367). This is referred to as reality shock. Teacher preparation programs do not instill the confidence teachers need to manage classrooms which leads to early attrition.

Clinical Experience

A great number of researchers have indicated the best way to combat the negative effects of ill-prepared teachers is for teacher preparation programs to have an in-depth clinical experience (AACTE 2010; Allen, 2003; Alquraini & Rao, 2017; Brownell et al., 2005; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond 2006; EPIC EDUCATION MN, N/A; Feiman-
SUCCESSFUL TEACHER PREPARATION CHARACTERISTICS

Nemser, 2001; Gable et al., 2012; Grossman, 1990; Hooks et al., (2019); Kosnik et al., 2011; Loewenberg Ball et al., 2009; Plourde, 2002; Stites et al., 2018; Walker-Davidson, 2018; Wilson et al., 2001; Wilson et al., 2002). According to Darling-Hammond, Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education Emeritus at the Stanford Graduate School of Education at Stanford University, in an interview with Martin and Mulvill (2017), the optimum recommendation is for a minimum of one year of clinical experience while paired with expert teachers.

**Pedagogy**

Pedagogy was identified as a second vital characteristic in a teacher preparation program. (Alquraini et al., 2017; Brownell et al., 2005; EPIC EDUCATION MN, N/A; Gable et al., 2012; Loewenberg Ball et al., 2009; Stites et al., 2018; Walker-Davidson, 2018). Pedagogy refers to strategies used to address fundamental elements in a prek-12 classroom, such as classroom management, the teaching cycle, and parent relationships (Flower et al., 2017; Goldhaber et al., 2011; König et al., 2017; Nichols, 2020; Walker-Davidson, 2018) Efficient and effective teaching leads to greater academic achievement in students (Brophy, 1986; Kane et al., 2010)

**Content Knowledge**

“Content knowledge indicates how teachers understand the facts, structures, and difficulty levels of content” (Huang & Lajoie, 2021, p. 2). Common content knowledge examples are math, science, social studies, and English. Sequential content knowledge builds the foundation for student academic support as the student increases in grade level (Putman, 2021).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this mixed-methods exploratory study was to answer Darling-Hammond’s question “how do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?” More specifically, the purpose of this research was to identify critical characteristics of a teacher preparation program which produces efficient and effective
new teachers. The researcher completed the project with two homogeneous cluster groups comprised of NW MN teachers and recent public university teacher preparation graduates.

**Research Questions**

This research embodied the mixed-methods explanatory design through a survey measurement. The survey was comprised of both quantitative and qualitative components. Two homogeneously clustered groups consisting of recent teacher preparation program graduates and NW MN teachers completed the survey. The researcher also conducted focus groups and utilized open-ended questions.

1. What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN teachers?
2. What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN administrators?
3. Do recent graduates feel well-prepared or ill-prepared after completion of the NW MN public university’s teacher preparation program?
4. What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to specific NW MN professional education faculty?
Research Question 1: What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN teachers?

Survey - Qualitative

There were 176 participants who completed the survey, though not all participants responded to every measurement. These participants were asked to identify vital components of an ideal preparation program. Even with less than half of the participants responding to the qualitative portion of the survey, numerous themes materialized: (1) field experience; (2) field experience setup; (3) behavior management; (4) academic pedagogy. These themes are carried by various codes.

Field experience was the first theme to emerge. It is supported by codes such as hands-on, experience, and student teaching. Teachers indicated/provided recommendations for the appropriate number of field experience hours which a teacher preparation program should provide. Participants provided a range of recommended increments from “at least a semester long student teacher program” to “[teacher candidates] should experience two years of internship.” A general “as much field experience as possible” response was also given by other participants.

A significant theme that also materialized was field experience characteristics. Numerous participants recognized diverse pieces imperative to be considered an efficient and effective field experience program. The assortment of supportive codes can be found in APPENDIX G. There was articulation from participants regarding prioritization of teacher candidates receiving field experience at the beginning of the school year. “A time to observe setting up a classroom, what the beginning of the year looks like.” This allows teacher candidates to hone their skills in setting up their classroom for success starting on day one.

During field experience, teacher candidates are placed with host teachers per PELSB rule.
One participant indicated it is necessary for teacher candidates to have “a good mentor teacher when you enter a school system,” while another asserted the importance of teacher candidates experiencing good and bad host teachers. “I would hope students could be placed in an environment where they could observe rock star teachers and teachers that are not rock stars to see success and failures.” Experiencing good and bad teachers “would take the supervising staff doing some investigation prior to placement” making this type of intentional placement difficult. A participant reinforced that regardless of the type of host teacher, the teacher candidates should be “glued to the teacher, learning everything the teacher has to offer.” All teachers have something the teacher candidates can learn from.

Another controversial topic regarding field experience characteristics was the variety of experience a teacher candidate receives. An array of general comments were made such as “[teacher candidates need] a variety of experiences”, “[teacher candidates need] time in different grades with different teachers”, and “[teacher candidates should be] working in many classrooms.” The majority of participant responses were lacking specificity. For example, respondents did not define/provide examples of what a variety of experiences would look like. One participant further elaborated that “[the teacher candidates] would have to spend time with a grade level not in their licensure.” Other participants expanded it to:

working in many different classrooms to see different teaching strategies. [teacher candidates] could do a year long program [in field experience] so they see all parts of the year, but one week each quarter they go to a different school so they see different approaches. They will see what teachers in other schools are doing at the same time. They will see other teachers. They need to experience more.

Variety may also look like “if they [teacher candidates] are an elementary teacher they spend
time in the middle school or high school level. Not to teach but to observe their profession as a whole.” Additional discussion indicated a bigger experience in which teacher candidates need to be placed in both small and large schools as a teacher’s workload can be more overwhelming in small schools due to teachers wearing many extra hats.

Moving on to the next subtopics for field experience characteristics, participants had an assortment of tasks they felt teacher candidates must experience. “I would also make sure students at all levels teach at least a short lesson,” “have teacher candidates experience PLCs, data meetings, and team planning before student teaching,” and “working and planning with specific student needs in mind.” Additionally, general observations were advocated as an essential piece to the field experience portion of teacher preparation.

Other participants were more explicit in their thoughts of a deeper field experience plan, “Three stages of clinicals prior to student teaching: 1) observational, 2) practical with assistance, 3) practical co-teaching then student teaching”. It was also thought that an ideal field experience plan should be as follows:

Pre-service teachers should be paid to learn to be a professional teacher. They should experience two years of internship, building classroom management skills, relationship building skills, instructional content creation and instruction with multiple ages of students. This experience should be nearly continuous with theory learning seminars and courses included at intervals. At the end of this field experience and seminar program, the fully qualified and prepared teacher should be presented with a master’s degree with commensurate pay. The next two years, the teacher will continue to have mentorship and seminar experiences that count toward continuing education for license renewal but is more specifically designed for early career teachers.
A third theme identified was behavior management which was supported by the codes of management, behavior, and establish. Behavior management was listed as an important component to a teacher preparation program. Participants recommended to “not just focus on academics, but behavior too.” “Responsive Classroom [training] or a program similar to it [is needed], to help teach student management.” The topic of behavior management was corroborated by numerous participants as essential to a teacher preparation program.

The final theme highlighted during data analysis were teaching strategies. According to various participants, the teacher preparation program must provide practice in differentiation. “A chance for the prospective teacher to see all types of students, not just easy ones [and] to discuss how the lesson was differentiated” which weaves into another participant’s response of “working and planning with specific student needs in mind.” Furthermore, teacher candidates must possess skills in differentiation due to the impact differentiation may place in individual student success.

Further reinforcement that teacher candidates must acquire teaching strategies, participants recognized the necessity of “theory behind instruction.” Participants also mentioned that “a checklist of pedagogy and content skills requiring mastery over the entire experience” to ensure these pieces are addressed during the teacher preparation program.

**Survey- Quantitative**

Figure 1 is a snapshot representation of how many new teachers were hired in the same buildings in the last two years as the participants who completed this measurement. Table 3 breaks down the findings into percentages for further descriptive analysis. There were four (2.42%) participants who reported no new teachers were added to their building in the last two years. Meanwhile, 41 (24.85%) participants worked with 1-2 new teachers, 51 (30.91%) participants worked with three to four new teachers, 38 (23.03) participants worked with five to
six new teachers, and 31 (18.79%) participants worked with seven or more new teachers. Most participants had experienced three to four new teachers.
Figure 1

*How Many New Teachers were Hired in Your Building the Last Two Years?*

*Note.* The first number is associated with how many new teachers were in the building in the past two years.
Table 3

*How Many New Teachers were Hired in Your Building the Last Two Years?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 new teachers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 new teachers</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 new teachers</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 new teachers</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7+ new teachers</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18.79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The first number is associated with how many new teachers were in the building in the past two years.
The participants were asked to identify the key skills or characteristics for a new teacher to be considered efficient and effective as shown in Figure 2. Sixty-four NW MN teacher participants (41.56%) identified classroom management as the most important skill new teachers must possess for success. In addition, 50 (32.47%) participants expressed relationship building as the most important skill, followed by preventing reality shock, identified by 15 (9.74%) participants, and high self-efficacy by 10 (6.49%). Furthermore, content knowledge received acknowledgement from eight (19.25%) participants and understanding the instructional cycle by four (8.33%) participants. Note that three categories were pinpointed by one (0.06%) participant: differentiation, routine and procedures, and technology integration. This steers teacher preparation programs in a different direction of addressing additional topics that were reported as being fundamental. Academic language did not receive any acknowledgement of importance. The was illustrated in Table 4.
In Which Category is Most Important for New Teachers to be Fluent to be Considered an Efficient and Effective New Teacher?

Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.
Table 4

In Which Category is Most Important for New Teachers to be Fluent to be Considered an Efficient and Effective New Teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Classroom Management</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>41.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Self-efficacy</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Differentiation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Relationship Building</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Instructional Cycle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Routine and Procedures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Reality Shock</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Technology Integration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Academic Language</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.

NW MN teachers were asked to identify the pre-determined categories in which new teachers were ill-prepared. Nearly half (71, 47.37%) of the participants conveyed a concern in the category of classroom management. Classroom management is the skillset in which many new teachers are ill-prepared. All other categories were selected by 10% of participants or less. Relationship building was targeted as the second most concerning category with 16 (10.53%) participants who selected it. Differentiation and self-efficacy were acknowledged by thirteen (8.55%) of the participants. Further data analysis showed fewer than five people identified
instructional cycle (4, 2.63%), technology integration (4, 2.63%), reflection (3, 1.97%), content knowledge (3, 1.97%), and academic language (2, 1.32%) as categories in which new teachers were ill-prepared. Refer to Figure 3 and Table 5.
Figure 3

_In Which Categories are New Teachers Ill-prepared? Select all that Apply._

Note. Frequency represents the number of participants that identified the topic in which new teachers struggle.
Table 5

*In Which Categories are New Teachers Ill-prepared? Select all that Apply.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Classroom Management</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>47.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Differentiation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Reflection</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Self-efficacy</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Relationship Building</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Instructional Cycle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Routine and Procedure setup</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Technology Integration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Academic Language</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Frequency represents the number of participants that identified the topic in which new teachers struggle.
As Figure 4 and Table 6 demonstrated, NW MN teachers shared their opinions regarding new teachers experiencing reality shock upon entering the workforce. Reality shock is defined as the “collapse of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (Chubbuck et al., 2001, p. 367). The majority of participants, 129 out of 167, felt new teachers did indeed experience reality shock which equated to 77.25%. Meanwhile, 38 (22.75%) of teachers did not feel the new teacher(s) with whom they worked experienced reality shock.

Figure 4

Do the New Teachers Tend to Experience Reality Shock?

Note. The number represents the number of participants that identified if new teachers struggled with reality shock.
Table 6

Do the New Teachers Tend to Experience Reality Shock?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>77.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The number represents the number of participants that identified if new teachers struggled with reality shock.

Darling-Hammond (2016) determined teacher preparation programs should mandate a minimum of one year of clinical experience. Teacher participants were asked if they supported a year-long clinical experience option. As seen in Figure 5 and Table 7, 71.17% of teachers support the year-long clinical experience, while 28.83% of participants reported that length of time in a classroom is unnecessary.
Figure 5

*Would You Support an OPTIONAL Year-Long Student Teaching Experience?*

Note. The number represents the number of participants that would or would not support a year-long student teaching experience.

Table 7

*Would You Support an OPTIONAL Year-Long Student Teaching Experience?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>71.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>28.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The number represents the number of participants that would or would not support a year-long student teaching experience.

*NW MN Teacher Focus Group- Qualitative*

The first focus group was comprised of six NW MN teachers from six different schools, whose teaching experience ranged between 3-26 years. All participants were teachers of record in grades K-12. The researcher utilized the Zoom Webinar option which ensured anonymity.
Participants could view the researcher, but not each other. All participants could hear each other and the researcher throughout the focus group. As noted in APPENDIX G, data were analyzed producing several themes: (1) Field Experience; (2) Pedagogy; (3) Content; (4) Classroom Management; (5) Relationships; (6) Administrative; (7) Reality Shock; and (8) Attrition.

To begin the discussion, the participants reflected on their ideal teacher preparation program. Although it was announced that all group members were entitled to their individual beliefs, and encouraged to vocalize their individual responses, all six focus group participants quickly came to a consensus which resulted in emergence of the first theme: field experience (clinical experience). Various codes, such as learning, student teach, skills, and experience were common word choices to participants used when discussing field experience. This category is recognized as the first and most crucial component of a teacher preparation program. The participants explained the vital need of the majority of the teacher preparation experience to be comprised of field experience due to student teaching being where the teacher candidates learn crucial skills for the reality of teaching. Although field experience was most crucial component, the focus group also illustrated the need for courses that teach content, theory, and strategy. Rather, minimal instructional time in the higher ed classroom should be devoted to these topics as they are best learned through field experience practice. As the focus group participants deliberated about the length of time teacher candidates should spend in field experiences, they agreed that approximately two years of nearly full-time, real-world experience during a teacher preparation program would be ideal. Participant one vocalized the great priority of field experience, “more clinical experience, I think, would be huge.” Participant three elaborated, “[run] every year of your education program similar to how you student teach.” Further exploration revealed that the great influence of real-world experience as most efficient and
effective new teachers spent an abundance of days in the field as paraprofessionals or substitute teachers compared to ineffective new teachers. New teachers considered efficient and effective by the participants reported experience working at different camps or volunteer to work with kids at church. It was additionally acknowledged that most new teachers were not themselves parents and that was seen as a disservice to the skillset of new teachers due to the fact that they have less child interactions. Participant one disclosed:

> When I graduated, I was like, I can’t be a teacher, I’m not ready for this. I totally took that route [paraprofessional in the classroom instead of a classroom teacher]. Then I finally, like, built up my confidence [in my teaching skills] so that I felt I was kind of ready.

Deliberation further expanded into potential ideas of what field experience could look like. All in consensus, participants reported teacher candidates should be in field experience starting at the very beginning of the teacher preparation program. It is essential that teacher candidates assist and be actively engaged in the beginning of a school year with a mentor teacher due to the beginning of the year set-up being the most vital portion to the school year. The beginning of the school year establishes the tone for the remainder of the school year. Universally supported, participant one declared that teacher candidates should “start with active observation to learn the basics and gradually take over tasks in the classroom.” Participants definitively insisted that teacher candidates need time to apply their theories and strategies to real-life situations.

Additionally, field experience was further identified as the critical element that prevents common issues that new teachers experience. All six participants reported that experience in the classroom is where they cultivated the most skills for teaching. Participant three noted that real-
world experience is most crucial because “the dynamics of teaching experience made things so much more comfortable [for me] going into the field.” Further discussion exposed that “it is important to get them [teacher candidates] more experience so they [teacher candidates] know the ins and outs from the beginning.” Presently, not all new teachers are receiving an appropriate clinical experience and as a result are finding their first year of teaching more difficult than necessary. This results in early attrition. Participant five reinforced the urgency of necessity of clinical experience in a teacher preparation program as, “extra time being immersed [in field experience] will help [prevent] reality shock.”

The next component of the focus group addressed new teachers being prepared to be efficient and effective new teachers in general. Participant two reflected on a new teacher. It was indicated that the new teacher seemed prepared; however, they had been a student teacher in that classroom the semester prior with the same students so was familiar with the school and students. Although there was a licensed teacher in the room during the student teaching experience, the student-teacher acted as the main classroom teacher on day one, rather than the typical gradual student-teacher takeover routine.

In addition to field experience, classroom management developed as another theme supported by the two codes, behavior and management. The same teacher noted that this as a large gap in skillset for new teachers. “[New] teachers [are not] being prepared to deal with the current behavior problems that are going on.” Furthermore, another respondent declared, “the thing that I would say that I have seen lacking is [new] teachers being prepared to deal with the current behavior problems that are going on.” Likewise, another participant articulated, “they [new teachers] struggle with classroom management.” Extended exploration on this idea presented that “it’s hard to be able to manage some of those behaviors and still teach your class.”
As a result of additional analysis, the codes of respect, connect, and relationships supported the larger theme of relationships. In deliberation concerning relationship skills, various thoughts culminated, such as new teachers must come across as having a genuine connection to the students. Participant four considered the possibility that the teachers who have the least amount of stress are the ones who build relationships with those kids. One participant was steadfast that “tough kids don’t want to disappoint the teachers. It’s a respect thing.”

The participant four also noted struggles with student behaviors and the lack of support from principals. This became theme and code: administrators. Participants claimed, “administrators are doing less with behaviors, so teachers need the skills to handle it themselves.” Similarly, participant two indicated that, “you see people doing the right thing, but they [administrators] don’t have the backup that’s very discouraging, you know, school wide.”

Next, conversation explored ideas that a teacher preparation program can do to create more self-confident new teachers. This naturally directed the focus group back to the importance of a theme previously discussed, field experience. Participant four remarked, “the more you do it [practice teaching in the classroom] the better you’ll get at it.” Further exchange targeted experience at a juvenile center had been beneficial, but the teacher candidates should be in a situation where they were fully responsible for getting the students to sit, listen, and learn. This frequently does not exist until after teacher candidates become a teacher of record after a teacher preparation program. All participants strongly corroborated participant four’s statement expressing the importance of “experience, experience, experience”.

Participant five shared that during the field experience portion of the teacher preparation program is where teacher candidates began to hone in on classroom management skills, “I know I didn’t feel like I got really prepared in that [classroom management].” The participant
contributed their success in classroom management to a special education field experience, as well as being a parent, not the teacher preparation program in general. Organic conversation lead the group to the next theme of attrition. Codes applied were leave, left, and hate. Participant five confidently stated, “I would have left [teaching] my first year [without those two experiences].” Further discussion uncovered that one participant hates their job and many teachers are leaving the profession. Another participant corroborated teachers leaving the profession and insisted, “I’ve seen a lot of people ready to leave their [teaching] job within months.” All participants agreed that being set up for failure in needed skills only contributes to low self-efficacy which leads to the attrition issue.

Participant one postulated a potential offset for low self-efficacy was a solid mentorship program that schools may provide not during the teacher preparation program. Participant six agreed the mentoring program played a key role in new teacher success. Mentors were needed for teaching the routines, policies, and procedures that vary with each individual school such as the routine for walking students out to the bus and other basic policies and procedures, though that solution would be after the teacher preparation program was completed versus a solution contributed by the teacher preparation program. In addition to mentors, increasing self-reflection capabilities were also explored to help prevent low efficacy.

Participant three insinuated agreement with all other participants’ comments thus far but proposed that new teachers were excited coming into the classroom ready to implement numerous up-to-date great ideas. However, they experienced many failures because their classroom management was lacking. “I’ve seen a lot of people ready to leave their [teaching] job within months”. The remainder of the participants nodded in agreement.

Reality shock was the next theme to materialize. Reality shock is defined as the “collapse
of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (Chubbuck et al., 2001, p. 367). Undisputedly, participant five argued that COVID is causing tremendous amounts of reality shock. Even the veteran teachers were struggling to deal with all the COVID demands. In opinion and experience, participants concluded COVID has been the hardest for new teachers. As participant one referenced her first year of teaching, that’s what COVID felt like.

Participant three illustrated a specific experience when it came to reality shock at the beginning of student teaching:

> When I think of like, reality shock, like I remember back to like when I was in the teacher preparation program, and I would just sit on Pinterest and see all these Pinterest classrooms. That’s how I viewed a classroom. Like everything’s organized and students are working in centers. But like, really not knowing how to teach those things and not really having any way to organize and just what you see online isn’t truly what it is like in a classroom.

Participant two determined the latest student teacher in their school experienced exorbitant reality shock. The school is a religious school on a Native American Reservation, neither variable of which the teacher candidate had exposure to prior. The student teacher struggled to comprehend the difference between the poverty-stricken students and middle-class teacher. Participant two clarified:

> Within the first week or two that he started, I mean it like smacked him right in the face, and you know, took quite a bit of adjustment, but [with time and direction] he really, you know, really got to capitalize on his opportunities and overcoming that reality shock.

Participant one suggested a bottom-line solution: “increasing clinical experience time prior to student teaching. Student teaching [should be increased] to at least a year.” Discourse
continued pertaining to the necessity of experience in multiple settings. Exploration produced agreement of participants that even two elementary schools in the same school district really differ in school climate and culture. Furthermore, participant four added the additional time teachers work is a shock to student teachers as well. An example given was the amount of meetings teachers should attend. The most experienced participant (four) declared, “it was a lot easier to do when I was younger.” In an effort to represent some of the extra demands of a teacher, the participants highlighted existence of a multitude of committees requiring some teachers to have a meeting every day after school if involved. Participant one revealed the Special Education paperwork aspect being overwhelming for even veteran teachers. Participant three displayed support further highlighting the extra duties included in the teaching assignments. The discussion naturally transitioned into the stress of COVID, which has promoted even deeper reality shock in new teachers. Participant four exposed the present limited options of employees:

I haven’t had a sub for my paraprofessional all year. And they haven’t replaced me…[they expect] other people to pick up the slack…it’s stressing me out. Participant one agreed to feeling burnt out as well. My administrators found someone to sub for me twice.

Participant one expressed an opposite experience with administrators:

I have respect, and like my administrators, however… if somebody standing on the side of the river yelling at you to just keep swimming hard or swim harder, swim harder. I have a little bit more respect for somebody who’s willing to say okay, we don’t have this, it’s a teacher saying I’ll go in there and do it.

The researcher transitioned the conversation back to preparing efficient and effective
teachers in classroom management. Participant two articulated the gravity of instilling the belief that the teacher candidates are the leaders in the classroom whether teaching or substitute teaching. “Unfortunately, I talked to my student teacher about this, like don’t worry, you know they will try to manipulate you.”

Going further, participant one elaborated, “classroom management is almost like a trial by fire type of situation.” They also added, “it’s a team, it’s not just a classroom. It’s a team. You’re there to work together to learn different things and do things together.” Participant four continued to build on the deliberation of classroom management citing relationship building as a key component of supporting successful classroom management, “I greet every kid when they come down the hall.” Relationships help teachers translate student body language and moods. When this relationship forms, they [teachers] can recognize if the student is having a bad day and may be in need of extra support. Routines are vital, however, if there isn’t a solid relationship with the students, the student is more likely to not follow the routine and the teacher will spin their wheels. Another point several participants agreed with is that new teachers must learn not to take student behavior personally. Participant four insisted, “it might not have anything to do with them, it might have to do with everything at home and they really wanted to see their dad and their dad is in prison.” A side comment that participant four divulged was “I hate everything about my job, with the exception of the kids and the kids will know if you really don’t like them.” Although participant four was unsure of exactly how to teach teacher candidates hone relationship skills, further examples were presented:

I give them my full attention when they’re talking to me, and I greet them every time I see them. I make sure I say good morning, how are you? Aren’t you glad its Friday? Me too! What did you do this weekend? You have to talk to them.
Participant one reiterated the importance of not taking student behavior too personally.

Participants specifically illustrated the importance of routines, “routines are huge when everybody, you know when everybody follows the routine everything runs pretty smooth. Through this discussion, pedagogy developed as another theme. The codes routine and expectations support this theme. Participant three contributed to the discussion addressing classroom routines and pedagogy behind running a successful classroom. The participants conveyed that it is vital to teach the students the expected routines and have the students learn those high expectations. Discussion transitioned into routines which also helped with classroom management. One concern expressed was that new teachers do not have a lot of resources to pull out of their toolbox. Participant three reflected on their own past experience, “a lot of the things I have in my toolbox I’ve gotten from other teachers that I’ve observed or saw online from the past six years [as a teacher after the preparation program].” Participant two, three, and four voiced support of participant one’s comments. The data further supported this statement as the remaining participants, in various words, reasoned pedagogy as a fundamental component learned through field experience.

Going hand in hand with pedagogy, content was the final theme that derived. Participants commonly referred to the topic of content by using the codes classes and content. This produced dialogue pertaining to necessity of taking content classes simultaneously to field experience. One participant considered the fact that new teachers will learn content by the second year of teaching if a teacher preparation program does not properly prepare new teachers in this area. Unanimously, participants recognized the importance of content as a component of an efficient and effective teacher preparation program.

Starting to wrap up the webinar focus group; the researcher requisitioned the participants
to rank the order of the following and give a reason for their conclusion:

1. Clinical Experience
2. Pedagogy
3. Content

Although the participants were encouraged to provide individual recommendations on the designated order, all participants collaborated on the order of importance as follows: (1) clinical experience; (2) pedagogy; (3) content. Participant four explained that the content comes by your second year regardless the level of focus on it during the teacher preparation program.

Reiterating the previous discussion about field experience being the dominant essential component to a teacher preparation program, participant one acknowledged pedagogy and content were important, but cautioned, “book learning only goes so far. Ninety-nine percent of learning is failure.” The statement was universally endorsed.

The researcher opened the floor to any closing thoughts. Participant two added that when teacher candidates were doing clinical experience, it was vital for the teacher candidates to actively participate in the classroom. “The more experience you can gain ahead of time, the better off you’ll be here once you actually get your license.” Participant three noted further that merely observing a teacher during clinical experience was not nearly as fun in general, as being an active participant in the classroom while learning from a host teacher. Although it is good for the teacher candidates to understand the additional work required of teachers, such as grading papers and making copies, during clinical experience the teacher candidates need active experience versus being treated like an office assistant. The teacher candidates chose this profession, they need to experiment to ensure this is the correct career path from them.

Participant four added this can even be something as simple as “working with students during
their individual work time.”

**Summary**

NW MN teachers identified classroom management as a struggle for new teachers. Relationship building was noted as an important skill that teachers must possess. A highly recommended solution by many participants was to increase the time out in the field (clinical experience). The participants pinpointed clinical experience as the imperative piece that will serve as a solution for most areas in which new teachers are lacking. Accompanying the presented solution of clinical experience is that the clinical experience would include identified goals. When comparing the most essential characteristics of a teacher preparation program, NW MN teachers recognized the order of importance as clinical experience, pedagogy, and content.

**Research Question 2: What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN administrators?**

**Admin Survey-Qualitative**

NW MN administrators were the homogeneous participants group that the researcher focused on for research question two. These participants were asked to identify critical components of an ideal preparation program. There were 12 participants all of whom completed the survey in its entirety.

There was one theme that materialized from the NW MN administrator participants’ data as demonstrated in APPENDIX H: field experience. A significant number of supportive statements lead to numerous codes such as (1) classroom; (2) face to face; (3) experience; (4) work directly; (5) serve; and (6) time with. Several participants discussed the need for multiple field experience placements:

More time in the classroom with multiple experiences. This would provide the student teacher with multiple exposures to different grade levels. The student teacher would get
more experience as well as be able to get a feeling for what grade level they would like to teach.

Participants also supported being “in [the] classroom [doing] hands-on work from day one.”

While in the classroom, participants voiced the need for experience as a paraprofessional or with special education students resulting in further exposure to different strategies and methodology. This necessity of gaining SPED experience stems from “many of these [SPED] students are integrated into classroom and new teachers struggle at how to accommodate SPED students’ needs in the classroom” due to the fact that teacher candidates “working more closely with SPED staff would help new students understand ways in which they can reach these students as well.”

Additionally, participants argued that teacher candidates should be actively involved in the “first week of school experience, observation/participation in parent-teacher conferences, observation time on a school committee and assisting an extracurricular program” as well as “face to face communication and [participate in] collaborative meetings.” One participant discussed the field experience must be in the classroom with “a demonstrated leader within the building” as this placement type would provide optimal outcomes.

**Admin Survey-Quantitative**

The following data (Figure 6 and Table 8) were reported from administrators regarding new teachers hired within the last two years. The data conveyed a quarter of administrators identified one to two new hires during the given timeline. However, two administrators reported zero new teachers were hired within the past two years. Additionally, three administrators reported three to four new teachers, two reported five to six new teachers and one administrator reported having seven or more new teachers join their staff in the past two years.
**Figure 6**

*How Many New Teachers were Hired in Your Building in the Last Two Years?*

![Pie chart showing the distribution of new teachers hired in the last two years.](image)

**Note.** The first number is associated with how many new teachers were in the building in the past two years.
Table 8

*How Many New Teachers were Hired in Your Building in the Last Two Years?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The first number is associated with how many new teachers were in the building in the past two years.

Administrators were asked to rank the following ten prescribed categories in order of importance: classroom management, content knowledge, self-efficacy, differentiation, relationship building, instructional cycle, routines and procedures, reality shock, technology integration, and academic language. The study sought to identify only the crucial characteristics of a teacher preparation program, therefore the data were used to analyze the top-ranking categories.

As illustrated in Figure 7 and Table 9, administrators only identified four of the categories as fundamental. Classroom management was suggested by the greatest number of administrators, six (50%), as the most acknowledged category. Following closely behind classroom management, relationship building was chosen as the second most importable characteristic. Fluency in the instructional cycle and solid self-efficacy each were acknowledged by one (8.33%) participant. Content knowledge, differentiation, routine and procedures, reality shock, technology integration, and academic language received no recognition from any administrators as being a most significant category in which new teachers were being prepared.
Figure 7

_In Which Area is Most Important for New Teachers to be Fluent to be Considered Efficient and Effective Teachers?_

*Note.* Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.
Table 9

*In Which Area is Most Important for New Teachers to be Fluent to be Considered Efficient and Effective Teachers?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Classroom Management</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Self-efficacy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Differentiation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Relationship Building</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Instructional Cycle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Routine and Procedures</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Reality Shock</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Technology Integration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Academic Language</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.
The NW MN administrators identified which options in each set of categories new teachers were ill-prepared. Each administrator selected multiple topics, with the results demonstrating several areas of weakness. At the top of the list of weaknesses were classroom management, differentiation, and self-efficacy as illustrated in Figure 8 and Table 10. These three areas were tied with four (17.29%) administrators voting for them as areas new teachers are not prepared. Relationship building and the instructional cycle received three (13.04%) votes. Academic language, technology, and reflection all received one (0.04%) vote each. The results in Figure 7 and Table 10 demonstrated competency in both content and procedure setup.
Figure 8

*In Which Areas are New Teachers Ill-Prepared?*

*Note.* Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.
Table 10

In Which Areas are New Teachers Ill-Prepared?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Classroom Management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Content Knowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Differentiation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Reflection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) self-efficacy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Relationship Building</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Instructional Cycle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Routine and Procedure setup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Technology Integration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Academic Language</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.

Reality shock is defined as the “collapse of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (Chubbuck et al., 2001, p. 367). As depicted in Figure 9 and Table 11, only eleven of the twelve administrators answered the question which asked if the new teachers tended to experience reality shock. The analysis presented revealed seven (63.64%) administrators recognized that new teachers experienced reality shock while four (36.36%) participants had not observed reality shock in new teachers.
Figure 9

*Do New Teachers Tend to Experience Reality Shock?*

![Pie chart showing Yes, 7 (64%) and No, 4 (36%).]

*Note.* The number represents the number of participants that identified if new teachers struggled with reality shock.

Table 11

*Do New Teachers Tend to Experience Reality Shock?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>63.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36.36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The number represents the number of participants that identified if new teachers struggled with reality shock.
As conveyed in Table 12, all twelve administrators responded to the final quantitative question “Would you support an OPTIONAL year-long student teaching experience?”

According to Figure 10, the findings showed most administrators supported a year-long program with 10 (83.33%) supporting and only two (16.67%) administrators did not feel a year-long clinical experience was necessary.

**Figure 10**

*Would You Support an OPTIONAL Year-Long Student Teaching Experience?*

Note. The number represents the number of participants that would or would not support a year-long student teaching experience.

**Table 12**

*Would You Support an OPTIONAL Year-Long Student Teaching Experience?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The number represents the number of participants that would or would not support a year-long student teaching experience.
Summary

NW MN administrators identified classroom management as a skill that lacked in new teachers, while also indicating fluency in relationship-building skills was an essential skill for new teachers. The majority of NW MN administrators supported a year-long student teaching experience rather than one semester as is current practice.

Research Question 3: Do recent graduates feel well-prepared or ill-prepared after completion of the Northern Minnesota public university’s teacher preparation program?

Survey - Qualitative

There were 67 participants in this exploratory mixed-methods measurement. A considerable number of codes (as shown in APPENDIX I) supported the following themes: (1) field experience; (2) field experience characteristics; (3) strategies; (4) mentor teachers; (5) data collection. Each of these themes were recognized by the participants as vital components of a teacher preparation program.

The first theme was comprised of field experience, more specifically, the length of time teacher candidates should be placed within field experience for a proper experience. General explanations by participants were prevalent, such as “much more time in classrooms,” “longer amount of time in the classroom,” and “the maximum amount of time in classrooms as possible.”

One participant specified “my ideal teacher preparation program would be 50% in the field and 50% in the classroom, directly relating the field experience to current practices” while another recommended “80% of the teacher preparation program is in the classroom.” “Allow more full-day experiences” was deemed imperative to another participant. Furthermore, participants expressed interest in being out in the field rather than in content courses. “Time that would have been spent in the teacher preparation courses could instead be spent doing field
experience.” The necessity of having teacher candidates in more field experience is due to the fact that “real life happens in the class, being in the class and practicing with it is the most beneficial. More like an apprenticeship rather than an internship.”

Additionally, participants recommended: getting to teach as soon as possible. My cooperating teacher threw me to the wolves during my student teaching experience, in the second week. And I think it was the most beneficial thing that happened to me during my time at BSU. I learned from mistakes, and successes, from instruction, planning and management. Practice really does make perfect, in a way, forced, or thrown to the wolves, to teach, makes you more confident and competent by the time you graduate and start looking for the first teaching job.

This quote transitions into the next theme; field experience characteristics. Participants provided numerous suggestions to consider, many of which encourage teacher candidate choice. Teacher candidates should receive experience in the scope of their license. Likewise, “give them more lessons to teach and more opportunities to go in other grade levels.” Participants articulated the importance of teacher candidate choice during the teacher preparation program. Candidates should “be able to list options of what schools you would like to do field experience at.” Due to this not being an option, “being denied opportunity to student teach here deprived me of my relationships with teachers and admin in that school [I wanted to get a job in].” Furthermore, participants demanded the program not “assign days that students need to go to their field experience,” and the teacher preparation program should allow teacher candidates to assess host teacher biographies to determine which would be the best host teacher for them:

I think that having a short biography about each teacher who is willing to have practicum students would be helpful. I feel that I learned more from teachers who had similar
personalities and teaching styles rather than learning from teachers who were very different. I realize that sometimes it is beneficial to learn different perspectives, or observe ways that we do NOT want to teach our own classes... but as we know it is difficult to learn in an environment that we do not feel comfortable in.

Furthermore, additional participants voiced a need to be able to cancel their own placement if the teacher candidate does not see their experience as “ideal.”

Other participants further discussed the importance of teacher candidates being placed in the schools “right away” at the beginning of their teacher preparation program. The “more time in control of the classroom and really running the show” the more efficient and effective teacher candidates will be. During this experience, participants expressed, being placed in a classroom with another teacher candidate would be beneficial. The professors should give direct instructions for the outcome of field experience to the teacher candidates.

Strategies was the third theme that manifested through data analysis. Participants wanted to “learn how to engage students at different learning points” through strategies such as “stations and small groups.” “Gathering up resources,” “more curriculum building skills, more unit building on REALISTIC units”, and “just more strategies” were ideas the participants express as being beneficial.

During field experience, all teacher candidates are in a classroom with a mentor teacher. This brings us to our next theme; mentor teachers. A few participants discussed the necessity of having a mentor teacher who is of similar personality:

I think that having a short biography about each teacher who is willing to have practicum students would be helpful. I feel that I learned more from teachers who had similar personalities and teaching styles rather than learning from teachers who were very
different. I realize that sometimes it is beneficial to learn different perspectives, or observe ways that we do NOT want to teach our own classes... but as we know it is difficult to learn in an environment that we do not feel comfortable in.

Only allow mentors “who truly want college students there. There were many who could care less about the student improving as a future educator.” The participants did not feel comfortable when mentor teachers were not interested in helping educate the teacher candidates.

The final theme that emerged was data collection. Participants felt inadequate in the area of data stating, I needed to “learn more on data and progress monitoring. I feel I struggled with data collection.” Teacher candidates must “learn how to implement data to increase student knowledge” which enables “watching growth and progress monitoring of students” that allows higher student academic achievement. Another participant stated they needed “prep on things not often thought about: reading test scores.” Data analysis was minimally addressed in the teacher preparation program.

**Recent grads Survey- Quantitative**

The NW MN public university’s recent graduates were asked to reflect on the level of preparedness in pre-selected categories by the time they graduated from their teacher preparation program. There was a total of 22 categories identified as fundamental skills to be considered an efficient and effective teacher. Due to the number of categories, the researcher divided this measurement up into three separate segments to make it easier for participants to maneuver. Participants ranked each category as one of the following, teacher candidates were: well-prepared, had general knowledge of, or were not prepared. The researcher conducted data analysis of these categories in their divided segments to ensure a true representation of the measurement. For this report, each segment's data were organized into three levels of preparedness, teacher candidates well-prepared, had general knowledge, and not prepared, for
each individual segment. The Table 13 below illustrated each category and the recognized level of preparedness in order of the most identified category to the least.

According to Table 13, the first of three segments were comprised of eight categories: content knowledge, self-efficacy, instructional cycle, data-based practices, self-reflection, growth mindset, providing feedback, and engagement. All categories received minimally one acknowledgement in which teacher candidates stated they were well-prepared by the end of their teacher preparation program. Self-reflection scored the highest with 26 (29%) participants that recognized it as a category in which they felt fluent. Numerous participants indicated they, recent graduates, were less well-prepared in categories of growth mindset (20, 62.50%), instructional cycle (18, 56.25%), student engagement (17, 53.13%), and meaningful feedback (16, 50.00%). Further analysis determined self-efficacy, content knowledge, and data-based teaching were ranked as the lowest three areas of competency by teacher preparation program graduates.

The next level of acknowledgement for categories needed to be considered an efficient and effective teacher referred to a general knowledge of a category but the teacher candidates did not have a plan of how to implement the categories. Many of the categories were ranked similarly, although 15 teachers (46.88%) noted that providing meaningful feedback was a critical skill. Additionally, as indicated by Table 13, self-efficacy (14, 43.75%), instructional cycle (12, 37.50%), data-based teaching (12, 37.50%), content knowledge (11, 34.38%), student engagement (10, 31.25%), and growth mindset (9, 28.13%) were all acknowledged by 20% of recent graduates. Self-reflection was identified by five participants as an area in which the teacher candidates received a general knowledge of during the teacher preparation program.

Educators recognized there were an abundance of characteristics and skills a teacher must possess to be efficient and effective. The third part of this segment asked the recent graduates to
pinpoint which categories were lacking in their teacher preparation program. The results clearly supported data-based teaching as a frontrunner, with 17 (53.13%) of participants indicating they were ill-prepared in data-based teaching techniques. At the opposite end of the spectrum, self-efficacy (5, 15.63%) and student engagement (5, 15.63%) were reported with equal selection by participants. Content knowledge, self-reflection, and meaningful feedback were identified by one (3.13%) participant as lacking. In other words, recent graduates, overall, felt confident in their abilities to teach content knowledge and meaningful feedback, as well as being fluent in self-reflection.
Table 13

According to NW MN Education Faculty, How Ready are New Teachers in the Following Categories?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Descriptive statistics measured</th>
<th>Content Knowledge</th>
<th>Self-Efficacy</th>
<th>Instructional Cycle</th>
<th>Data-Based Teaching</th>
<th>Self-reflection</th>
<th>Growth Mindset</th>
<th>Meaningful Feedback</th>
<th>Student Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Teacher candidates are well-prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>9.38%</td>
<td>40.63%</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
<td>9.38%</td>
<td>81.25%</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Teacher candidates have general knowledge</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>34.38%</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>15.63%</td>
<td>28.13%</td>
<td>46.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Teacher candidates are not prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>15.63%</td>
<td>6.35%</td>
<td>53.13%</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>9.38%</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages calculated by response.
The second segment in this measurement was comprised of six categories: real-world connections, procedures and routines, positive behavior management, inclusion, differentiation, and technology integration. All 32 participants finished this segment in its entirety and indicated that they were well-prepared, had general knowledge, or were not prepared at the end of the teacher preparation program.

As seen in Table 32, the results supported recent graduates feeling most prepared in the categories of real-world connection (18, 56.35%) and inclusion (16, 50.00%). Furthermore, technology integration results demonstrated 12 (37.50%) participants were confident in that category. Next, routines and procedures were deemed as fluent skills by 11 (34.38%) participants. From these results, it was clear recent graduates were least confident in positive behavior management (9, 28.13%) and differentiation (8, 25.00%).

The participants then reflected on categories in which they possessed general knowledge as a result of their teacher preparation program but did not have enough knowledge to be confident in implementing. All categories, in comparison, were evenly identified. Participants, 18 (56.25%), acknowledged differentiation, and procedures and routines as the two categories in which most participants felt they have a general understanding. Close behind, 15 (46.88%) participants conveyed technology integration as in which teacher candidates were well prepared. Additionally, real-world connections and positive behavior management were reported by 13 (40.63%) participants. The final category, inclusion, was recognized by 12 (37.50%) participants as having general knowledge.

Finally, recent teacher graduates recognized in which areas they had not been properly prepared. There results were more evenly dispersed. Importantly, positive behavior management was identified by the most participants, 10 (31.25%), as not being prepared enough. Moreover,
differentiation, technology integration, and inclusion followed closely behind with six (18.75%), five (15.63%), and four (12.50%) participants respectively reported being ill-prepared. In contrast to positive behavior management, participants felt the most unprepared, for routines and procedures (3, 9.38%) and real-world connections (1, 3.13%). (See Table 14)
Table 14

According to NW MN Education Faculty, How Ready are New Teachers in the Following Categories?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
<th>Real-world Connections</th>
<th>Routines &amp; Procedures</th>
<th>Positive Behavior Management</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Differentiation</th>
<th>Technology Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Teacher candidates are well-prepared</td>
<td>Percentage 56.25%</td>
<td>34.38%</td>
<td>28.13%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency 18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Teacher candidates have general knowledge</td>
<td>Percentage 40.63%</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
<td>40.63%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>56.25%</td>
<td>46.88%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency 13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Teacher candidates are not prepared</td>
<td>Percentage 3.13%</td>
<td>9.38%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
<td>15.63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Percentages calculated by response.
Table 15 displayed the results of the measurement in which recent graduates identified categories to which level of understanding and preparedness they reached during the teacher preparation program. This section illustrated the reported results for the final eight categories: student-centered teaching, student choice, deep student relationships, parent relationships, parent communication, parent/community needs, positive reinforcement, and resourcefulness. The results indicated that deep student relationships (23, 71.88%) and student-centered learning (22, 68.75%) were two categories that most students identified as having been well-prepared to implement as a result of the teacher preparation program. In addition, 19 (59.38%) participants conveyed resourcefulness as a learned strength. Positive reinforcement and family relationships each followed close behind with 16 (50.00%) participants who reported being well-prepared. Further analysis portrayed student choice and parent communication were indicated with 12 (37.5%) participants feeling satisfied with their preparedness. Parent and community needs were selected by 10 (31.25%) participants.

Participants reported the categories in which they identified a general understanding by the end of their teacher preparation program. The results stated half (16) of the participants felt they obtained general knowledge in the category of student choice. Positive reinforcement (13, 40.63%) and parent communication (11, 34.38%) were identified as well. Further data analysis demonstrated student-centered learning and parent and community needs were each selected by 10 (31.25%) participants. The least recognized areas of general knowledge were family relationships (9, 28.13%), deep student relationships (23, 71.88%), and resourcefulness (7, 21.88%).

The last level is the measurement of areas in which participants felt ill-prepared. Community needs scored the highest at 12 (37.5%) participants who recognized their teacher
preparation program did not prepare teacher candidates in that category. A lower, yet still concerning category of parent communication was identified by nine (28.13%) participants as being ill-prepared. Additionally, family relationships (7, 21.88%) and resourcefulness (6, 18.75%) followed with slightly fewer participants reporting a concern. Another category went unrecognized by a few more participants with four (12.5%) participants reporting feeling ill-prepared. On the opposite end of the spectrum from parent and community needs, student-centered learning received a score of zero, which earned a consensus of participant support that the teacher preparation program prepared the teacher candidates for student-centered learning.
### Table 15

Accompanying the NW MN Education Faculty, How Prepared are New Teachers in the Following Categories?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
<th>Student Centered</th>
<th>Student Choice</th>
<th>Deep Student Relationships</th>
<th>Family Relationships</th>
<th>Parent Communication</th>
<th>Parent &amp; Community Needs</th>
<th>Positive Reinforcement</th>
<th>Resourcefulness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Teacher candidates are well-prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>68.75%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>71.88%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Teacher candidates have general knowledge</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>28.13%</td>
<td>34.38%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
<td>40.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Teacher candidates are not</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>21.88%</td>
<td>28.13%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>9.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prepared</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages calculated by response.
Furthermore Figure 11 and Table 16 confirmed participants reflected on and recognized the piece of their teacher preparation program that was the most beneficial. One (3.13%) participant recognized on-campus courses as the most beneficial element of their teacher preparation program. However, 24 (75%) of participants recognized being out in the classroom (clinical experience) as most beneficial. In addition, seven (21.88%) participants conveyed both on-campus courses and clinical experience were equally beneficial.

**Figure 11**

*What Part of the Teacher Preparation Program was the Most Beneficial?*

*Note.* The number represents how many participants acknowledged each area as most important.
Table 16

What Part of the Teacher Preparation Program was the Most Beneficial?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Out in the classroom (Clinical Experience)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Courses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both were equally important</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The number represents how many participants acknowledged each area as most important.

To further determine the extent to which reality shock was an issue, participants reported whether teaching was easier than expected, harder than expected, or as was expected. Many participants, 14 (43.75%), suggested teaching was harder than they expected. Similarly, thirteen (40.63) participants indicated teaching was as hard or easy as they expected. Only five (15%) participants conveyed teaching to be easier than expected as portrayed in Figure 12 and Table 17.
**Figure 12**

*Was Being a Classroom Teacher...?*

![Pie chart showing responses to the question about the difficulty of being a classroom teacher.](image)

*Note.* The number represents how many participants identified each choice.

**Table 17**

*Was Being a Classroom Teacher...?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easier than expected</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harder than expected</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As expected</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40.63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The number represents how many participants identified each choice.

In the NW MN teacher preparation program, teacher candidates received a minimum of 100 hours in Clinical Experience prior to 16 weeks of student teaching. As depicted in Figure 13 and Table 18, when new teachers were asked to identify a recommended time split between clinical experience and on-campus courses the majority, 22 (68.75%), stated there should be more time spent in clinical experience. Most of the remainder of the participants, nine (28.13%)
determined splitting the time should remain as is, while one (3.13%) suggested more time in on-campus courses.

**Figure 13**

*Do You Think the Teacher Preparation Should...?*

*Note.* The number represents how many participants identified each choice.
Table 18

Do You Think the Teacher Preparation Should…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spend more time out in the classroom (Clinical Experience)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>68.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend more time in On-Campus Courses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue with current combination</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28.13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The number represents how many participants identified each choice.

The researcher connected this question to attrition. Participants were asked to contemplate if the length of time they planned to be a teacher changed after they gained experience as a new teacher. As represented in Figure 14 and Table 19, the most common response from participants, 28 (87.50%), did not change their mind on the length of time they planned to be a teacher. Subsequently, no participants anticipated teaching longer than initially forecasted. Once four (12.5%) participants found out what teaching really entailed, they planned to utilize early attrition options.
Figure 14

Now That You are a Teacher, Do You...

Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.
Table 19

*Now That You are a Teacher, Do You...*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan to teach a longer length of time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to teach a shorter length of time</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to teach the same length of time</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>87.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.*

**Focus Group- Qualitative**

As noted in APPENDIX H, numerous themes emerged throughout analysis of data from the focus group of recent teaching graduates such; (1) Field Experience; (2) Pedagogy; (3) Content; (4) Classroom Management; (5) Relationships; (6) Administration; (7) Reality Shock. The recent teaching graduates’ focus group was initially comprised of five participants. However, two of the five graduates canceled at the last minute. They both disclosed it had to do with the time of the webinar, and they were willing to type out their responses to the focus group questions and send those to the researcher via email. Participants one, two, and three have been teaching for up to two years. Participant one teaches students in K-6 physical education and 9th-grade grade health, participant two teaches kindergarten students, and participant three teaches second grade students.

To start the educational based exploration, the new teachers determined how well their teacher preparation program prepared them to be efficient and effective new teachers. Participant one felt she was as prepared as she could have been, however, “there is a hurdle they [new teachers] need to get over to actually do the job.” Participants two and three disagreed, stating they were not well prepared in several different areas such as a lack of clinical
experience, as indicated by participant three.

The recent graduates reflected on their preparedness impacting their levels of self-efficacy (confidence levels). Universally, the participants acknowledged confidence levels were influenced by the level of training they received in the duration of their teacher preparation program. Participant three considered the point that all teachers feel they could do better. Participant one went on to explain her experience with formal observations by her district administrators which brings us to one theme; administration which is supported by the code principal. The principal said, “you are still trying to find your teaching feet.” The principal offered to allow the teacher to try the observation again because they were so nervous the first time around. The participant stated there is a lot of administrative support due to the district focusing on new teacher success.

Next, the participants conferred on how a teacher preparation program might ensure higher levels of self-efficacy. Participant two explored the idea of “having us teach more.” This topic provided the theme field experience. The codes which support this theme are experience, in charge, classroom, field experience, teach, and student teaching. Examples of opportunities included by participants are to teach peers in the college courses or being out in the field teaching real students. Participant one clarified their thoughts on those specifics by demanding “more experience teaching but not with your peers, with clinicals [out in the schools].” Furthermore, the participants expressed it would be ideal if a classroom would give the illusion that the teacher candidates were fully in charge of the real-world class experience. “This [the classroom] is totally your [teacher candidate’s] show.” Although the participants agreed this would be an influential learning opportunity, they acknowledged the Minnesota laws of always having a currently licensed teacher in the classroom prevents this type of experience. Due to the
constraints, participant three recommended the potential of “more time in the classroom even if it is in small groups.”

The conversation organically changed direction to the difference between student identity and teacher identity, “[what] I was worried about in college was grades, and not to be the best teacher I can be.” This participant indicated that in the real-world teachers get more chances to fix mistakes and do better on the next lesson than is permitted in teacher preparation programs. Participant two elaborated, “if you taught one lesson for field experience, you didn’t get a chance to redo or fix it for the next time.” This was a result of the structure of field experience set up this way.

Another theme that materialized was reality shock. Various codes supported this theme such as not knowing, didn’t know, learning, shock, find, legitimate, and nervous. Due to being fresh to the profession, each candidate illustrated very specific reality shock experiences although one participant initial denied experiencing reality shock until they shared numerous elements of surprise that come with being a teacher. Participant two was quick to share their experience in upper elementary as some students could not read yet. As far as participant two was aware, all students learned to read in kindergarten so she would not have to teach it in any other grade. Participant one had been prepared to have between 20 and 30 students at one time, but there were more than 40 students in some class periods. Embarrassed, but still willing to contribute, participant one announced, “it was really hard for me to learn their names” and continued to admit that it is March, and still does not know all of the student names in the classes.

Universally, participants voiced concern that students older than kindergarten have to practice basic rules, routines, and procedures, such as keeping their hands to themselves. A
glimmer of the theme pedagogy came to light. Codes from this data were step by step, didn’t know, learned, and routines. In addition, although the participants expected to struggle a bit with classroom management, all three participants are having to put classroom management strategies into place every single day. “That was my reality shock.” As they continued, participant two recognized unexpected challenges of working with second graders. Socially and emotionally, “it was insane how much they didn’t know. They didn’t know how to sit in a chair nicely.” Participant three stated in agreement, “I have this little guy super-duper tough on me. Just a shock of like, okay, I can’t control everyone, and this is so frustrating to me. I have to call the principal like twice a day.” The participant discussed that the feeling of self-blame gets to be overwhelming. Trying to express support, the other two participants insisted the struggle was on the students.

The discussion turned toward the next topic and theme of struggling, relationships. Explanation of relationships frequently utilized the codes parents and communicate. Participant three started to argue the existence of parent difficulty. Stories of parent struggle naturally manifested. “Parents are really hard, I agree” (participant two). Referring to their teacher preparation program, these candidates expressed they were never taught how to handle parent relationships. Participant one had a fistfight in her classroom and the principal wanted her to call the parents. She didn’t know how to communicate with the parents that she ‘let a fistfight happen’ in her room.

Participant two reflected on an additional theme, classroom management, in which students were calling new teachers crude names, and none of the new teachers knew how to appropriately maneuver address the issue. Coding that supports classroom management were tough, classroom management, can’t control, and fistfight. Jumping topics again, participant one
revisited the topic of reality shock, “non-English speaking Hispanics [caused me reality shock]. They come for a week. They come and go.” As a solution, this participant was told to put the student next to someone who speaks the language and try to do the best they could. That was the only solution advised. Participant three built off that example and declared, “learning the backgrounds [of each student] and teach [at the same time] was really tough.” Participant three described not being prepared for “how specific you have to be when you give directions”. Participant one supported the statement and elaborated, “be specific and give short snippets.” Participant two had the same struggle. To run the classroom better, participant two read a book on classroom management and tried out the recommended solution to give specific directions a small piece at a time. The participants discussed that teachers feel in a rush constantly, so it was hard to slow down and take the time to do that. However, it helped an immeasurable amount. The new teachers were not prepared to be extensively flexible.

Numerous examples of reality shock were presented by the participants. Naturally following a passionate conversation, it would be key to find solutions to prevent this from happening to others. Participant one recommended role-play during courses. Participant three requested actual emails be brought into class to have the students practice how to respond. Participant two argued that you can’t really learn classroom management unless you are in the classroom. Participant one responded, “I agree you can’t learn classroom management unless you are in the classroom.” They further explored how to discipline a student without giving the student exactly what the student wants. In addition, there were special education students in the classrooms without paraprofessionals with them. The participants knew about inclusion but did not predict these special education students would be in their classroom without an assigned paraprofessional.
Addressing field experience further, the participants discussed the need for teacher candidates to be given control of the room as a teacher. Sometimes the students behaved better with the host teacher in the room. Participant two stated, “knowing what to do when it goes too far is really hard.” Another potential option to learn how to address hard moments could be by mandating that journaling during the teacher preparation program could be based upon different scenarios. An issue brought up by participant three was “I feel like when we are doing the practicum, I feel like there was a lot of observing and not actually teaching.” It was also discussed that a big benefit to a teacher candidate would have been the opportunity to watch a math lesson, then go teach that exact same lesson to another set of students. If possible, this should be followed by reflection time with the host teacher to gain insight and feedback. If the participants were to give advice to the next class of teacher candidates, participant three recommended “try what you can” and participant two brought to light that “because you start using one doesn’t mean you have to keep using it. You might have different management for each individual class.”

Participants went in a different direction for the discussion that was around the most beneficial experience in their teacher preparation program, pinpointing different tasks from their courses. Participant one discussed students teaching during the course classes instead of professors teaching, “It gave me an option to create the lesson plan, then to teach it.” Participant two identified putting together items that were useful and was able to use them as a teacher. The participants also targeted the tasks that were not helpful during the teacher preparation program. “Journals are great, but, if it's every week, during student teaching was really nice, but if it’s about something, I’d rather have a discussion in class than write about it. … I’m not writing it for me, I’m writing it for the professor.” Participant three considered content, an additional theme, to
be a partial solution. Content courses is where they created items to keep in their teaching
toolbox. Splitting time out in the field and in courses was one recommendation. The codes to
support content were class, courses, and classrooms. One participant had a professor give
training on number talks. Since number talks are used in the actual schools, learning how to give
those was a great way to spend time in the courses. It was also requested each week they spend
one day in content courses and the remainder in field experience.

The participants were asked to order clinical experience, pedagogy, and content in order
of most importance during a teacher preparation program. Proving to be a complicated and time-
consuming process for the recent teacher preparation graduates, participants deliberated
extensively. Finally, participant two determined their final decision of the most vital component
in their opinion, “clinical because it got me comfortable with being uncomfortable.” Clinical
experience is where they learned how to put theory into practice. Unable to order the remaining
options, their consensus was that pedagogy and content were equally important.

The participants had many ideas for an ideal teacher preparation program. Participant
three moved out of state so recommended having the students live in their ideal geographic
location to complete assignments and field experience in those schools since each school is
different. Participant two would also have really liked a list of realistic consequences for poor
student behavior. It was expressed that clinical experience could be structured like another local
university which has a year-long student teaching option where their student teachers are in their
college classroom on Mondays and in the K-12 classrooms the remainder of the days. One idea
to teach classroom management during the teacher preparation course was to create a toolbox
while in courses.
Summary

Recent Professional Education graduates determined classroom management was the biggest struggle, adding reality shock both in general and reality shock pertaining specifically to classroom management. Increasing clinical experience time was recognized as the solution to both reality shock, which provides being proactive in early attrition, and classroom management. Numerous participants revealed clinical experience was the most crucial piece of the teacher preparation program as it was where they learned the most.

Research Question 4: What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to specific NW MN professional education faculty?

Survey-Qualitative

There were seven participants from the small NW MN public university that responded to the question of pinpointing essential characteristics of a teacher preparation program. Due to the low participant rate, it was difficult to quantify responses as larger themes. There were two common topics, as referred to in APPENDIX J, that were discussed by most of the participants: (1) field experience; and (2) strategies.

The correlating codes used to support field experience were (1) see; (2) placed; (3) mentor; (4) field experience; and (5) practicum. Teacher candidates obtaining “more time in the classroom” was a prevalent response as additional time in field experience allows teacher candidates to “develop a more meaningful working relationships with the cooperating teacher that allows for deeper conversation and discussions.” A participant elaborated with “making sure our teacher candidates see how to set up routines and expectations in the fall.” These experiences must be with a “high quality teacher” and “in the area of the field they plan to teach” for a program to produce efficient and effective new teachers.
In addition to an increase in the amount of time spent in field experience, the participants recognized the importance of educating teacher candidates in diverse teaching strategies as the second theme. “Have more ED classes where they model the instructional practices they want to see” and “greater emphasis on reaching all students and effective differentiation in the classroom” were two interpretations of ways to armor teacher candidates with strategies useful as new teachers. Throughout this experience, teacher candidates can gain these strategies through various examples used throughout courses.

**Survey- Quantitative**

The NW MN public university faculty were asked to rate how well-prepared the teacher preparation teacher candidates were in 22 areas by the time the teacher candidates graduated. This measurement was separated into three sections as it made it easier for respondents to maneuver the measurement. Each of these categories were identified as relevant to working as a teacher. The measurement ranked each category based on the teacher candidate’s implementation capabilities at the end of their teacher preparation program. The rankings were as follows, teacher candidates were well-prepared, had general knowledge, or were not prepared. One hundred percent of respondents completed all three sections with fidelity. These segments continued to be divided for data analysis to report true representation of the measurement. Each of the three segments of data were organized into three levels of preparedness, teacher candidates: were well-prepared, had general knowledge, and not prepared. Tables 20, 21, and 22 illustrated each category and the acknowledgement of category levels of preparedness.

According to Table 20, the first of three segments were comprised of eight categories: content knowledge, self-efficacy, instructional cycle, data-based practices, self-reflection, growth mindset, providing feedback, and engagement. All categories, excluding data-based teaching, received minimally one acknowledgment pertaining to teacher candidates being well-prepared by
the end of their teacher preparation program. Content knowledge, self-reflection, and student engagement were identified by 60% (3 participants) of participants as strong skills teacher candidates gained through the teacher preparation program. Data supported self-efficacy, instructional cycles, growth mindset, and meaningful feedback were each indicated by 40% (2 participants) of respondents felt teacher candidates were well-prepared.

Teacher candidates having a general knowledge in which they did not have a strategic plan to implement was the second measurement for each of the eight categories. Content knowledge, self-efficacy, and growth mindset had the most recognition with 57% (four participants). Additionally, student engagement had 60% (three participants) of respondents identified it as a topic in which teacher candidates only received general knowledge. Table 20 illustrated the instructional cycle, data-based teaching, self-reflection, and meaningful feedback having 40% (two participants) of participants conveying there was a general knowledge by the end of the teacher preparation program.

Not being prepared in any of the eight categories was the final measurement completed by the participants in segment one. Content knowledge, self-efficacy, growth mindset, and student engagement were not identified as areas of being ill-prepared. The measurement illustrated data-based teaching as receiving the highest acknowledgement at 57% (four participants). This was followed by 43% (three participants) indicating teacher candidates were ill-prepared pertaining to providing meaningful feedback. In the categories of instructional cycle and self-reflection, 40% (two participants) acknowledged teacher candidates being ill-prepared by the end of the teacher preparation program.
### Table 20

How Ready are New Teachers in the Following Categories?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
<th>Content Knowledge</th>
<th>Self-Efficacy</th>
<th>Instructional Cycle</th>
<th>Data-Based Teaching</th>
<th>Self-reflection</th>
<th>Growth Mindset</th>
<th>Meaningful Feedback</th>
<th>Student Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Teacher candidates are well-prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Teacher candidates have general knowledge</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages calculated by response.
The second segment was comprised of six categories: real-world connections, procedures and routines, positive behavior management, inclusion, differentiation, and technology integration. Identical to the first segment, each of the seven participants identified each category: as teacher candidates being well-prepared, had general knowledge of, or were not prepared at the end of the teacher preparation program. All seven participants completed this segment fully as well.

As can be seen in Table 21, the majority of participants, 57% (four), identified teacher candidates as having been well-prepared in knowing how to implement procedures and routines in the classroom. The real-world connections and inclusion categories depicted 33% (two participants) felt teacher candidates were strongly prepared. Additionally, technology integration received acknowledgement from 14% (one participant) and two categories received no consideration in which teacher candidates: were identified as well-prepared; positive behavior management and differentiation.

General knowledge lies between the ranking of teacher candidates being well-prepared, and not being prepared at all. 71% (five participants) of participants acknowledged teacher candidates were generally prepared in positive behavior management strategies. Technology integration was the next area of ill-prepared with 43% (three participants) of participants stating teacher candidates contained a general knowledge of content. Additionally, differentiation and procedures and routines each received acknowledgment of general knowledge by 29% (two participants) of participants.

The final data collected for segment two pinpointed the lack of preparedness in each category. Over half (71%, five participants) of participants indicated differentiation as the category teacher candidates were not prepared for during the teacher preparation program. Real-
world connections, inclusion, and technology integration had the second highest recognition with 43% (three participants). The last two categories were positive behavior management and procedures and routines, with each at 14% (one participant) who acknowledged teacher candidates were not prepared to implement these categories.
### Table 21

*How Ready are New Teachers in the Following Categories?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
<th>Real-world Connections</th>
<th>Routines &amp; Procedures</th>
<th>Positive Behavior Management</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Differentiation</th>
<th>Technology Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Teacher candidates are well-prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td>44.44%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Teacher candidates have general knowledge</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>35.71%</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Teacher candidates are not prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
<td>6.35%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
<td>31.25%</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentage of responses.
Finally, the third segment in which participants rated categories as well-prepared, having general knowledge, and not prepared. This segment has eight areas: student-centered teaching, student choice, deep student relationships, parent relationships, parent communication, parent/community needs, positive reinforcement, and resourcefulness. Table 22 illustrated creating deep student relationships was identified by the most participants at 57% (four participants). Next, student-centered learning and student choice each received 43% with three participants recognizing teacher candidates were well-prepared. Parent relationships received 29% (two participants) vote. Additionally, 14% (one participant) of participants acknowledged parent communication, positive reinforcement, and resourcefulness as categories in which teacher candidates were well prepared. There were no participants that implied preparedness addressing parent and community needs as being well prepared.

In the general knowledge category, the researcher found 43% (three) of participants equally identified student-centered learning, parent/community needs, positive reinforcement, and resourcefulness. Close behind, 29% (two participants) pinpointed parent communication as a general knowledge level of preparedness. Finally, student choice, deep student relationships, and parent relationships received 14% (one participant) of participant acknowledgement of teacher candidates who had a general implementation knowledge by the end of the teacher preparation program.

The participants recalled areas in which the teacher candidates were not prepared for by the end of the teacher preparation program. Parent relationships and parent communication were the most noted topics for teacher candidates being ill-prepared with 57% (four participants) of participants. Closely rated topics with 43% (three participants) of participants were student choice, parent/community needs, and resourcefulness. Other categories that represented teacher
candidates not being prepared by 29% (two participants) of participants were deep student relationships and positive reinforcement. Finally, 14% (one participant) recognized student-centered learning as a category the teacher candidates were not prepared for by the end of the teacher preparation program.
### Table 22

**How Ready are New Teachers in the Following Categories?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Descriptive Statistics</th>
<th>Student Centered</th>
<th>Student Choice</th>
<th>Deep Student Relationships</th>
<th>Family Relationships</th>
<th>Parent Communication</th>
<th>Parent &amp; Community Needs</th>
<th>Positive Reinforcement</th>
<th>Resourcefulness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(a)</em> Teacher candidates are well-prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(b)</em> Teacher candidates have general knowledge</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(c)</em> Teacher candidates are not prepared</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Percentages by responses.
Furthermore, participants were asked to convey the elements of a teacher preparation that was the most significant. The majority, six (85.71%) of the seven participants recognized being in the classroom (clinical experience) as most beneficial. The one (14.29%) remaining participant selected this option stating both on-campus courses and being in the classroom were equally beneficial. (Refer to Figure 15 and Table 23).

**Figure 15**

*What is the Most Beneficial Part of the Teacher Preparation Program?*

*Note.* Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.
Table 23

What is the Most Beneficial Part of the Teacher Preparation Program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being out in the classroom</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Courses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both equally beneficial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.

Related to reality shock, Figure 16 and Table 24 illustrated whether a teacher candidate thought being a new teacher, just finishing the teacher preparation program, was easier than expected, harder than expected, or was what was expected. One of the seven participants, 14.29%, identified new teachers had a realistic view on what teaching entailed. Six (85.71%) participants felt new teachers underestimated the difficulty of being a new teacher.
Figure 16

Was Being a New Teacher…?

Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.

Table 24

Was Being a New Teacher…?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easier than expected</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harder than expected</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exactly as expected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Categories with 0 represent no acknowledgment from any participants.

Summary

The teacher preparation faculty took a different viewpoint on teacher preparation candidates’ preparedness for teaching and what an ideal preparation program should look like. Minimally one participant focused on building upon teacher candidates’ assets rather
than deficits, learning routines and procedures, and eliminating PELSB standards from the curriculum. All but one participant identified clinical experience as the most beneficial experience in the teacher preparation program.
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teacher preparation has been a highly debated topic for years (Bahr & Mellow, 2016; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Brandford, 2016; Education International, 2017; Gauthier & Dembele, 2004; Latham et al., 2015; Maxwell et al., 2016; National Research Council, 2010; Rickards, 2016). Researchers and school administrators have recognized that new teachers are not prepared in areas that are foundational for a successful classroom (Meyers, 2016; Kurth & Foley, 2014; Sharma & Sokal, 2015). These issues are contributing to the teacher shortage across the country (Flower et al., 2017). This study set out to answer Darling-Hammond’s (2016) question, “how do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?”

Throughout this research, seven categories emerged: (1) issues of unpreparedness; (2) self-efficacy; (3) classroom management; (4) reality shock; (5) clinical experience; (6) pedagogy; and (7) content knowledge. The first four categories discuss the main issues connected to poorly run teacher preparation programs. The final three categories identified the imperative characteristics of an efficient and effective teacher preparation program.

Issues of Unpreparedness

Labaree (2004), Brunsting et al. (2014), and Oliver & Reschly (2010) discussed the long-term effects for students when the classroom teacher is ill-prepared. Ill-prepared teachers tend to have larger behavior problems, low levels of job satisfaction, and early attrition. Crawley (2018) further discussed low academic achievements. Students of ill-prepared teachers tend to have low academic accomplishments, lower socioeconomic status, higher crime rate, and poorer health (Pinto & Jones, 2020).
Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is one reason for early attrition (Brown, 2012). Dorel (2016), and Shore (2004) indicated efficient and effective teacher preparation programs must include teaching teacher candidates how to obtain high self-efficacy. Clinical experience is recognized as the best way to teach self-efficacy (Hudson, 2010; Watson et al., 2008). It provides opportunity to gain hands on experience (Fitzgerald & Corrigan, 2018).

Classroom Management

Classroom management has been identified as a top skill imperative for running an efficient and effective classroom, yet the majority of new teachers identified this as a skill in which they are lacking (Flower et al., Mitchell, 2004; Beran, 2005). Classroom management has been acknowledged to affect self-efficacy. Clinical experience has been tied to improving classroom management skills in new teachers (Konig et al., 2017). Clinical experience allows teacher candidates to practice in real-time.

Reality Shock

According to Chabbuck et al. (2001), reality shock is the “collapse of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (p. 367). Reality shock stems from the lack of understanding of what good teachers do (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Clinical experience was determined as the factor of proactively preventing reality shock as teacher candidates transition from student identity to teacher identity (Overschelde et al., 2017).

Clinical Experience

Clinical experience has been tagged as the essential characteristic in an efficient and effective teacher preparation program. Corroborating that statement, researchers such as Wasburn-Moses (2018), Dorel et al., (2016), and Darling-Hammond (2006) determined clinical experience as the most influential aspect while attending a teacher preparation
program. There is a dire need for clinical experience to be a large part of a teacher preparation program (AACTE, 2010; Allen, 2003; Alquaraini & Rao, 2017).

**Pedagogy**

Although there are an abundance of different ideas in which pedagogy is included, a few common examples are classroom management strategies, the teaching cycle, and parent relationships (Flower et al., 2017; Goldhaber et al., 2011; Konig et al., 2017; Nichols, 2020; Walker-Davidson, 2018). Educational pedagogy addresses strategies to meet needs of students. Bannister-Tyrrell et al. (2018) found pedagogy was a mandatory component of an efficient and effective teacher preparation program.

**Content Knowledge**

The last acknowledged characteristic of an efficient and effective teacher preparation program (Brownell et al., 2005; Cochran-Smith et al., 2005; and Stites et al., 2018). Content knowledge is knowing what to teach in each of the content areas such as Math, Science, English, and Social Studies. The content begins with foundational concepts that increase in difficulty as the students increase grade levels.

**Research Question #1: What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN teachers?**

With an exploratory mixed-methods approach, the researcher used a mixed methods survey and a focus group. The survey had 176 participants, some who finished the measurement and some who skipped questions. All participants were teachers of record in a classroom.

The top skill identified by 54 (30.68%) NW MN Teachers as critical for running a classroom efficiently and effectively was classroom management. These results demonstrated a corroboration of other research studies. Flower et al. (2014) determined it is crucial for a
teacher to have efficient and effective classroom and behavior management in their repertoire of skills. Additionally, there is a proven correlation in increased student engagement in a setting with a teacher of strong classroom and behavior management skills (Reinke et al., 2008).

If there is a lack of classroom management, the teacher is unable to efficiently and effectively teach and the students are unable to efficiently and effectively learn. Thus, leading to low academic achievement. Here we compare these results with Brophy (1986) and Kane et al., (2010) who corroborated the finding which concluded that there is increased academic achievement for students with teachers who maximize learning time through efficient and effective classroom management. Participants argued the most efficient and effective way to create high self-efficacy in the area of classroom management is real-time experience in the classrooms [clinical experience].

Additionally, relationships were the second most pinpointed characteristic of a successful teacher preparation program. The 43 (24.4%) respondents discussed the need for training of teacher candidates so they can learn how to build meaningful and trusting relationships with colleagues, families, and students alike. Clinical experience is recognized as being the best route to build relationship skills. Clinical experience hours directly correlate to teacher skills (Powell, 2015). The researcher found an absence of information during the literature review process as being a significant characteristic of a teacher preparation program. This could be due to increase necessity of relationship building during COVID-19.

Self-efficacy and knowledge of the instructional cycle were also mentioned as categories in which new teachers must become fluent (Figure 2 and Table 4). Self-efficacy is the confidence a new teacher feels. This has been shown as connecting to a plethora of
negative domino effects such as early attrition, lower quality of life, and low academic achievement in students. This is in line with Shore (2004) who argued self-efficacy effects greater job satisfaction, a sense of control in the classroom, and willingness to try various strategies and practices. The instructional cycle leads teachers to plan, teach, and assess.

The NW MN teachers were asked to illustrate the skills new teachers are most ill-prepared to face. Classroom management (47.37% of participants) and relationship building (10.53% of participants) were determined to be the two biggest weaknesses in new teachers. According to these participants, the two skills new teachers lack are the two most important skills in which the new teachers become fluent. Although the literature review did not discuss relationships, corroboration of this research finding new teachers are not prepared in classroom management, Flower et al. (2014; 2017) and Kaff et al (2007) established teacher preparation programs that did not properly prepare teacher candidates with classroom management skills.

When asked if new teachers experience reality shock, 77% of participants supported reality shock is happening. As revealed by the literature review, if a new teacher struggles with classroom management, it is common to experience struggles with reality shock, which also affects self-efficacy. It has been argued by many researchers, for example Darling-Hammond (2016), clinical experience is an efficient and effective way to prepare teacher candidates for today’s classrooms.

Darling-Hammond (2016) recommended the clinical experience last a minimum of one-year prior to becoming a teacher of record. The participants in this research were asked if they supported a year-long student teaching experience. The majority (71%) were in support of a year-long student teaching experience leaving 29% of participants feeling that much
clinical experience is unnecessary.

There was a clustered focus group comprised of six NW MN teachers from all different schools. Although it did not need to be a consensus, the group came to an agreement quickly that clinical experience is the most significant piece of a teacher preparation program. This is where the teacher candidates will get real-time experience learning the foundational skills to run an efficient and effective classroom. One participant added to the discussion of the dire need for classroom management stating, “classroom management is almost like a trial by fire type of situation.” Clinical Experience was substantiated to be the most influential aspect in teacher preparation programs by numerous researchers such as Wasburn-Moses (201), Dorel et al., (2016), Darling-Hammond, 2006, and Levi-Ari (2015).

Not only did this focus group discuss the importance of classroom management, but also discussed the need for relationship building skills. The responses from this group were in line with the mixed-methods survey results as well.

**Summary**

It is possible that the rate by teachers was a result of the increased expectations placed on teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic and a tight schedule trying to meet those needs. Frequently, during the qualitative portions of the survey and during the focus group, NW MN teachers mentioned COVID-19 as a struggle. The teachers in both the survey and focus group pointed out their exhaustion from COVID-19. However, many teachers were struggling prior to COVID-19.

In the literature review in chapter 2, creating relationships did not emerge as a common theme. Building relationships was frequently referred to during this research project by NW MN teachers, NW MN administrators, and recent teacher graduates. Although self-efficacy was part of the common themes in the literature review, it was not discussed at great
length during the focus group. When self-efficacy was discussed, the conversation trailed back to classroom management.

In summary, the NW MN teacher responses targeted vital pieces of a teacher preparation program, some of which were directly in line with the literature review in chapter 2, and some were not directly in line with the literature review. NW MN teachers recognized that, although pedagogy and content play important roles in a teacher preparation program, classroom management and relationships were the key skills a teacher preparation program must address. The majority of participants reported clinical experience as the essential characteristic in a teacher preparation program to address the essential skills needed to be an efficient and effective teacher. Darling-Hammond (2016) recommended a minimum of one year of clinical experience. Participants in the research discussed preferring up to two-years in clinical experience prior to being granted a teacher license.

**Recommendation**

The recommendation of this study is to ensure teacher candidates are receiving a minimum of one year in clinical experience and to ensure there is a focus on classroom management and relationship building skills.

**Research Question #2: What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN administrators?**

With an exploratory mixed-methods approach, the researcher used a mixed-methods survey for this cluster group of participants. These NW MN administrators were all principals in one building in their district. The measurement had 12 participants, all of whom completed the questionnaire in its entirety.

The participants were asked to target the most important skills out of a predetermined list of topics that the researcher provided. Although many of the skills were reported as
significant, NW MN administrators ranked classroom management (50% of participants) and relationship-building skills (33.33% of participants) as the fundamental skills a teacher preparation program teaches. Self-efficacy was acknowledged by one (8%) participant as most important.

Next, the NW MN administrator participants determined areas seen as a weakness in new teachers. A lack of classroom management skills, differentiation, and self-efficacy were equally identified by four participants. The participants had the capability of selecting more than one area as a weakness as seen on Figure 8 and Table 10.

Reality shock is defined as the “collapse of ideals formed prior to teaching as one experiences everyday classroom life” (Chubbuck et al., p.367). Over half (64%) of the participants reported they observed reality shock in new teachers. The element of teacher preparation that best prevents reality shock in new teachers is more clinical experience (Overschelde et al., 2017).

As Darling-Hammond (2016) illustrated in her interview, a minimum of one-year of clinical experiences is necessary to produce efficient and effective new teachers. Next, the participants determined if they support a year-long optional student teaching experience. Almost all, 83% of administrators, support the year-long clinical experience initiative. Only 17% of participants stated they would not support this initiative.

**Summary**

NW MN Administrators had a low participant response rate with only 12 respondents out of over 100 administrators invited to participate in this survey. This low participant rate could be due to the unexpected expectations of COVID-19 and lack of time and/or energy. There were 10 administrative participants who had worked with new teachers in the last two years, leaving two participants who had not. The fact that two participants had not worked
with new teachers in the last two years may create an issue of the participant not recalling the situation accurately.

The participants illustrated the most important skills learned in a teacher preparation program are classroom management and relationship-building skills. Even though NW MN administrators identified relationship building as a vital skill new teachers must possess, it was not a theme that emerged during the literature review an important component of a teacher preparation program, researchers such as Wasburn-Moses (2018) determined clinical experience is the “bedrock of quality teacher preparation” (p. 704). They also identified classroom management as an area of weakness for many new teachers. The classroom management results align with the literature review in chapter two with Mitchell & Arnold (2004) substantiated those surveys given to new teachers indicate feelings of inadequate skills to properly manage a classroom.

Reality shock leads to things such as early attrition, lower job satisfaction, and low self-efficacy. Over half of the NW MN administrators have recognized reality shock in their new teachers. Clinical experience has been shown to provide a proactive opportunity to fight not only reality shock, but classroom management and relationship-building struggles. Overschelde et al. (2017) determined assisting teacher candidates to move from their student identity, which can be done through clinical experience, to a teacher identity lessens the intensity of reality shock.

In summary, the NW MN administrator’s responses pinpointed the important pieces of a teacher preparation program which aligned with most research and the responses of the NW MN teacher participants. The key skills highly acknowledged as important components of a teacher preparation program were classroom management and relationship building.
While the participants did not discuss pedagogy and content as a role compared to clinical experience, they recognized clinical experience as a key characteristic of a teacher preparation program. As Darling-Hammond (2016) stated, all teacher candidates must have a minimum of one-year of clinical experience prior to becoming a teacher. Clinical experience has been identified by numerous researchers as the characteristic to solve issues such as insufficient classroom management, poor relationship building skills, and reality shock.

**Recommendation**

The recommendation of this study is to ensure teacher candidates receive a one-year minimum of clinical experience and to ensure there is a focus on classroom management practice, relationship-building skills, increased teacher candidate self-efficacy levels and differentiation.

**Research Question #3: Do recent graduates feel well-prepared or ill-prepared after completion of the Northern Minnesota public university’s teacher preparation program?**

In this mixed-methods exploratory research, there were 67 teacher graduates who graduated from a teacher preparation program in the past two years. The measurement was comprised of a mixed-methods survey and a small focus group. Over half of the participants (40) skipped questions in the questionnaire.

When asked what the most important characteristics of an ideal teacher preparation program were, nearly all (86%) participants recognized clinical experience as most important. One participant stated, “I learned more from my first month student teaching than every class I took.” A second participant declared, “practice makes perfect.” Also mentioned, data and progress monitoring were addressed as a needed piece to a teacher preparation program. These results were corroborated by the literature review in chapter 2 in which numerous world-wide agencies, researchers, the American Association of Colleges for
Teacher Education (AACTE), and National Education Association (NEA) demanded an increase in intentional field experience hours during teacher preparation programs (Jones, 2008; Rowley, 2013; Wasburn-Moses, 2018; Moseley, 2004). Academic pedagogy and content were also identified but by a much lesser margin. The literature review analysis did not recognize academic pedagogy as a theme, but the topic of content was. Dorel et al. (2016) emphasized the need for a content component in teacher preparation.

Quantitatively, the participants rated their acquired knowledge during their teacher preparation program. Over half of the new teachers felt well-prepared in self-reflection (81.25%), growth-mindset (62.50%), and in the instructional cycle (56.25%). Additionally, over half of the participants felt well-prepared in the areas of being student centered (68.75%), creating deep student relationships (71.88%), and being resourceful (59.38%). In self-efficacy, 40.63% of participants felt well-prepared and in classroom management, 28.13% of participants felt well-prepared.

Participants were asked to divulge their opinion on the most beneficial piece of their teacher preparation program. The options presented were clinical experience, on-campus courses, or both were equally important. The majority, 75% of participants, reported clinical experiences as the most beneficial piece of their teacher preparation program. This is in line with numerous researchers such as Wasburn-Moses (2018), Walker-Davidson (2018), and Hudson (2010) who discussed clinical experience as the crucial piece of a teacher preparation program which assures teacher candidates can build their knowledge and skills. Only one participant recognized on-campus courses as most beneficial and seven selected both clinical experience and on-campus experiences were equally important. When asked about the time split between clinical experiences and on-campus courses, 69% of participants requested
more time in the classroom and less in on-campus courses.

Reality shock is real for many teacher candidates when they join the workforce. Giroux (1982, 1983) found educators that walked into the field with disillusions of the demands and absence of knowledge in the hidden rules which can trigger reality shock. When participants were asked if teaching was easier, harder, or the same difficulty as expected, 14 said teaching was harder, five claimed it was easier, and 13 reported it was what they expected. Although 14 participants declared teaching was harder than expected, 28 participants stated they will continue teaching as long as they had originally planned rather than utilizing early attrition.

The homogeneous cluster focus group had five original members. Within minutes of the Zoom focus group meeting, two participants backed out and sent the researcher their responses to the questions in a Microsoft Word document format. The meeting started with a general question asking if the participants felt well-prepared enough to be considered efficient and effective teachers. One participant felt prepared while the other two felt ill-prepared. The ill-prepared teachers stated more time in clinical experience would have likely been the solution. It was connected that self-efficacy naturally tied into feeling if the teacher candidate was well-prepared. A participant that reported feeling ill-prepared and stated their building principal expressed, “you are still trying to find your teaching feet”. This made the recent teacher graduate feel ill-prepared by the teaching preparation program. Potential solutions to this were “having us teach more” and “more time in the classroom even if it is in small groups” both referring to additional clinical experience time during the teacher preparation program.

Contemplating reality shock, one of the new teacher participants claimed not to
experience it. After further discussion, it was recognized reality shock happened, the participant just did not make the connection until reality shock was further discussed. The other two participants felt reality shock for numerous topics. The biggest reality shock was based on classroom management. The biggest reality shock was based on classroom management, which participants stated they were not prepared for what it entailed. Further discussion revealed all three new teachers were having to use classroom management skills every day, they did not recognize this as being part of their daily job. In addition to reality shock for classroom management, they discussed struggling with learning names with over 40 students in the classroom each hour, social-emotional needs, parent interactions, English Language Learners (ELL), and special education students in regular education classrooms.

When the participants were asked to discuss the most beneficial pieces to their teacher preparation program, they did not think about clinical experience as part of this equation. The participants pinpointed the pieces of their on-campus courses that were beneficial. The researcher felt this was important information as well so did not attempt to alter the direction of this organic conversation. Participants discussed the desire to create resources that could be used in the reality of being a teacher. The courses in which teacher candidates regularly taught the lessons, had taught the teacher candidates the most. One participant was adamant that journal writing was a hoop to jump through versus a valuable learning experience. This participant gave the alternative, class discussions, as more beneficial. The participants also mentioned getting teachers as guest speakers for the on-campus courses.

It took this focus group a lengthier discussion time to come to an answer when asked to determine the order of most importance between clinical experience, pedagogy, and
content. After much discussion, all participants decided clinical experience was most important because it is where they can put theory into practice. The participants were unable to come up with a solid idea of which was more important between pedagogy or content.

The participants had some ideas for an ideal teacher preparation program. One idea was for teacher candidates to pinpoint their ideal teaching location and learn the curriculum they used during the teacher preparation program. Another participant mentioned the importance of building a toolbox comprised of realistic resources. The third idea was to mimic St. Cloud State University, where student teachers teach for an entire school year. Each Monday the teacher candidates have courses on campus and spend the remainder of the days in a P-12 classroom setting throughout the school year.

**Summary**

Classroom management and relationship building were imperative skills participants targeted as abilities teacher preparation programs must teach in order to produce efficient and effective teachers. Data and progress monitoring was also acknowledged. This was the only participant group that mentioned the importance of data and progress monitoring in qualitative portions.

Self-reflection, growth-mindset, instructional cycle, student centered, creating deep student relationship, and being resourceful were areas in which over half of the participant population felt well-prepared. Less than half of the participants felt confident in their self-efficacy and classroom management. Clinical experience has been found to solve a lacking skill in the areas of classroom management and self-efficacy for teacher candidates. Although pedagogy and content knowledge were acknowledged, the majority of participants identified clinical experience as the most beneficial characteristic in their teacher preparation program and requested to increase clinical experience time.
Reality shock was an issue for participants in numerous different skill areas on a daily basis. Reality shock has been proven to contribute to early attrition, lower quality of life, and low academic achievement for students. One of the participants stated they would have quit teaching already if it was not for the support they received from their colleagues due to reality shock.

Additional support mentioned for teacher candidates included creating realistic and usable resources. Furthermore, more course discussions should take place and current teachers as guest speakers in teacher preparation classes. Creating an experience that gets teacher candidates out in the field for minimally a year was also desired.

**Recommendation**

It is the researcher’s recommendation that classroom management and relationship building are the most important skills a teacher preparation can teach. Pedagogy and content knowledge should play a role in a teacher preparation program, but the majority of the teacher preparation program should consist of clinical experience. Following Darling-Hammond’s (2016) recommendation, the clinical experience characteristic in a teaching preparation program should last minimally one-year.

**Research Question #4: What are the necessary characteristics of a successful teacher preparation program according to NW MN teacher preparation faculty?**

With an exploratory mixed-methods approach, the researcher used a mixed-methods survey for the participant group of NW MN teacher preparation faculty. The measurement had seven participants. All seven participants completed the survey in its entirety.

Addressing on-campus courses, the participants were asked what could make these courses more beneficial. Although is it contrary to the literature which does not acknowledge the response from faculty stating a need for SEP to be greater in-line with content and
ensuring teacher candidates dig deep into the standards. There were no articles found in the literature review that discusses the need for digging deeper into standards. Another participant stated, “it seems like too many of our courses are too theoretical and too far removed from classroom practices.” This response may indicate reality shock, or job requirement surprises (Chubbuck et al., 2001; Veenman, 1984).

Spinning off the previous question, the participants were asked for feedback on how to make field experiences more beneficial. A commonality among a few answers was that the field experience must be intentional. The students should be in the classrooms starting at the beginning of the year with a strong teacher as a mentor.

Participants were asked to list the characteristics of an ideal teacher preparation program. The participants discussed the need to focus on a candidate’s assets instead of deficits which was not addressed by the literature review. Another participant would like to see students in the classroom for the beginning of the year setup. Darling-Hammond (2016) supports a year-long clinical experience which includes the beginning of the year setup. Two participants recommended that teacher preparation programs eliminate Professional Education Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). This was not recognized in the literature review.

NW MN teacher preparation faculty next identified which areas teacher candidates were well-prepared for by graduation. Over half of the faculty identified they had cultivated efficient and effective teachers in the areas of content knowledge, self-reflection, and student engagement. In addition, procedures and routines, and creating deep student relationships were areas of strength. The teacher candidates needed additional support in the areas of classroom management, differentiation, and parent and community needs with zero
participants stating the graduates were well prepared in those areas.

The faculty were asked to identify which experience during the teacher preparation program was most beneficial for the students. All but one participant recognized clinical experience as the most beneficial characteristic of the teacher preparation program. Hudson (2010) recognized clinical experience as the component in which teacher candidates hone their skills in academics, as well as Paquette & Laverick (2017) elaborated on the day-to-day and classroom management adeptness gained. The one remaining participant illustrated both on campus and clinical experience were of equal importance. No participants recognized on-campus courses as being most beneficial.

When referring to reality shock, faculty were asked to report if their graduates experienced reality shock once the teacher candidates joined the workforce as teachers of records. The measurement asked if teaching was harder than expected, exactly as expected, or easier than expected. No participant stated teaching was easier than the teachers expected. The majority, 86% of participants identified teaching was harder than the new teachers expected and 14% determined teaching was exactly as expected. This is supported by Meyer (2016) finding administrators in agreement to new teachers being ill prepared and struggling with the extent of credentials it takes to be an efficient and effective teacher.

**Recommendation**

In summary, the researcher recommends combining Standards of Effective Practice (SEP) courses with digging deeper into content and directing courses to educate teacher candidates on the reality of teaching in today’s classrooms. Teacher preparation programs must create intentional field experiences with an efficient and effective teacher. To make the clinical experience most beneficial, this experience must start right at the beginning of the year. Skills in which could be improved are classroom management, differentiation, and
parent and community needs. According to the faculty, clinical experience was the fundamental characteristic of a teacher preparation program that teaches the essential skills to become an efficient and effective teacher. It is the researcher's recommendation that teacher preparation programs provide a clinical experience that lasts a minimum of one year, following the recommendation by Darling-Hammond (2016).

**Future Study**

In this research, the researcher found seven emerging areas of need that could be utilized for further research suggestions in the overarching theme of teacher preparation: (1) issues of unpreparedness; (2) self-efficacy; (3) classroom management; (4) reality shock; (5) clinical experience; (6) pedagogy; and (7) content knowledge. The first four discuss the negative impact ill-prepared teachers struggle with and the last three identify the important characteristics of an efficient and effective teacher preparation program.

It is critical for teacher preparation programs to produce efficient and effective teachers ready to tackle the challenges in today’s classrooms. If researchers and educators understand the issues that come from teachers being ill-prepared, self-efficacy struggles, a lack of classroom management skills, and reality shock, teacher preparation programs can identify proactive ways to prevent these issues. The lack of self-efficacy, classroom management skills, and new teachers experiencing reality shock are all contributors to the current bigger issues of the dire teacher shortage felt across the United States of America. Furthermore, if a teacher preparation program adopts the characteristics identified as essential characteristics of a teacher preparation program, they will be more likely to produce efficient and effective new teachers equipped for today’s classroom demands. Additional research could complete a deeper dive into these characteristics.

For example, clinical experience was deemed the most beneficial characteristic in a
teacher preparation program from all four research groups included in this project. Clinical experience could be structured many ways, but which produces the most efficient and effective teachers? Darling-Hammond (2016) recommended a minimum of one year of clinical experience as part of a teacher preparation program but some of the participants in this research felt teacher candidates should obtain up to two years in clinical experience. If a program were to change clinical experiences from one year to two years, would their program completers increase their skills to a much more affluent level of teaching that makes two years of clinical experience necessary?

Some responses from participants in this project touched on using a mentor model for clinical experience, is that indeed the best model which produces the best results? It was recommended for teacher candidates to go to on-campus courses on Mondays to learn theory from a professor, then participate in the field the remainder of the week focusing on what was learned Monday during class. Is that the most efficient and effective learning plan? The variety of options encompassed in a teacher preparation program are multiple, but which is the best?

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this mixed methods exploratory study examined the quintessential components to an efficient and effective program working in line with Darling-Hammond’s interview with Martin & Mulvihill (2017), “how do we create the elements that will guarantee that they [new teachers] have what they need to teach successfully?” (p. 82). There were four cluster groups of participants from NW MN; teachers, administrators, recent graduates, and faculty, in which data were collected. Seven central themes were revealed through the literature review in Chapter 2 and corroborated in the mixed methods exploratory
survey results: (1) issues of unpreparedness; (2) self-efficacy; (3) classroom management; (4) reality shock; (5) clinical experience; (6) pedagogy; and (7) content knowledge. The first four categories represent issues of ill prepared teachers and remaining three established the crucial characteristics of a teacher preparation program. It is the recommendation of this study for teacher preparation programs to require a minimum of one year of clinical experience opportunity for teacher candidates, as well as pedagogy and content course obligations to a lesser extent. During these opportunities, in effort to offset the drastic negative domino effects of ill prepared teachers, specifications of emphasis should be placed on growing self-efficacy, armoring teacher candidates with classroom management strategies and experiences, and diminishing reality shock.
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Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1

Dear Participants, You are invited to participate in a study of successful teacher preparation programs. I hope to learn the specific characteristics needed for a successful teacher preparation program. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been a recent teacher candidate graduate at Bemidji State University or work with new teachers in the field. If you decide to participate, please complete this survey via this link. Your survey completion is implied consent. The survey is designed to pinpoint the most important aspects of strong needed skillsets as new teachers. It will take about 15 minutes to complete the survey. No benefits accrue to you for answering the survey, but your responses will be used to steer the evolution of Bemidji State University’s teacher preparation program. Any discomfort or inconvenience to you derives only from the amount of time taken to complete the survey. Completion of this survey implies consent. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relationships with Bemidji State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time. Please feel free to ask questions regarding this study. You may contact me later if you have additional questions at 218-553-4487 or by e-mail at: renae.spangler@bemidjiSTATE.edu or Boyd Bradbury at 218-477-2095 or by e-mail at: bradbury@mnstate.edu. Any questions about your rights may be directed to Dr. Lisa I. Karch, Chair of the MSUM Institutional Review Board at 218-477-2699 or by e-mail at: irb@mnstate.edu.

Thank you recent BSU Professional Education Graduates for taking the time to help Bemidji State University examine their Professional Education program from a graduate’s perspective. We are looking to ensure that we are successfully preparing teacher candidates for today’s classrooms. These surveys are anonymous. No one will be able to connect your identity with your answers. We hope this will allow you to be honest so that we can collect more accurate data.

Clarifying Terms and Definitions:
Field Experience- 10-90 hours of classroom experience determined by which college course the teacher candidate is enrolled in.
Practicum- Four-week student teaching placement. Additional license area, typically Middle School endorsement.
Student Teacher- 12-16-week student teaching placement. Initial license area, typically Elementary or High School.

Below is the questionnaire that contains two sections: Demographics and Focused-questions.

Demographic questions. These questions ask you to enter basic demographic data (such as: age, gender, ethnicity, etc.). These answers will help us to disaggregate the data and better understand how various sub-groups compare in their responses.

Focused-questions. These questions are directly explore the issue that is being researched: Teacher Preparation programs. For example, interest and confidence in the subject matter being learned in this course.

Q2 In which department are you faculty?
   o Professional Ed
   o Mathematics
   o Social Studies
   o English
   o Science
   o Music
   o Phyed

Q7 Gender identity
   o Male
   o Female
   o Non-binary / alternative gender
   o Prefer not to say

Q11 How ready are our students to become a teacher of record in the areas of... (click and drag into appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSU prepared our teacher candidates well in this area.</th>
<th>BSU's teacher candidates join the workforce having a general idea of what it means.</th>
<th>BSU's Teacher candidates are not well prepared in this area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____ Content Knowledge</td>
<td>_____ Content Knowledge</td>
<td>_____ Content Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Self-efficacy-</td>
<td>_____ Self-efficacy-</td>
<td>_____ Self-efficacy-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher candidates felt</td>
<td>Teacher candidates felt</td>
<td>Teacher candidates felt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confident going into their</td>
<td>confident going into their</td>
<td>confident going into their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first classroom</td>
<td>first classroom</td>
<td>first classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Carrying out the Instructional Cycle-</td>
<td>_____ Carrying out the Instructional Cycle-</td>
<td>_____ Carrying out the Instructional Cycle-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning, Instruction, &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>Planning, Instruction, &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>Planning, Instruction, &amp; Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Reading, Interpreting, and planning based on data from common assessments such as STAR, MAP, &amp; MCAs.</td>
<td>_______ Reading, Interpreting, and planning based on data from common assessments such as STAR, MAP, &amp; MCAs.</td>
<td>_______ Reading, Interpreting, and planning based on data from common assessments such as STAR, MAP, &amp; MCAs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Self-reflection capabilities</td>
<td>_______ Self-reflection capabilities</td>
<td>_______ Self-reflection capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Growth Mindset</td>
<td>_______ Growth Mindset</td>
<td>_______ Growth Mindset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Provide meaningful feedback to their students</td>
<td>_______ Provide meaningful feedback to their students</td>
<td>_______ Provide meaningful feedback to their students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Realistic plan for getting students actively engaged</td>
<td>_______ Realistic plan for getting students actively engaged</td>
<td>_______ Realistic plan for getting students actively engaged</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12 How ready were our students for their first classroom in the areas of... (click and drag into appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSU prepared our teacher candidates well in this area.</th>
<th>BSU’s teacher candidates join the workforce having a general idea of what it means.</th>
<th>BSU’s Teacher candidates are not well prepared in this area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_______ Providing real-world connections when addressing state standards in their classroom</td>
<td>_______ Providing real-world connections when addressing state standards in their classroom</td>
<td>_______ Providing real-world connections when addressing state standards in their classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ PEDAGOGY- Teaching plan for exactly how it will look to teach their students beginning of year procedures, expectations, etc.</td>
<td>_______ PEDAGOGY- Teaching plan for exactly how it will look to teach their students beginning of year procedures, expectations, etc.</td>
<td>_______ PEDAGOGY- Teaching plan for exactly how it will look to teach their students beginning of year procedures, expectations, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Pedagogy: POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT They were confident with a plan for dealing with students who talk back, make loud jokes about them, refuse compliance out loud, etc.</td>
<td>_______ Pedagogy: POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT They were confident with a plan for dealing with students who talk back, make loud jokes about them, refuse compliance out loud, etc.</td>
<td>_______ Pedagogy: POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT They were confident with a plan for dealing with students who talk back, make loud jokes about them, refuse compliance out loud, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_______ Inclusion: satisfying needs of ALL students in the classroom</td>
<td>_______ Inclusion: satisfying needs of ALL students in the classroom</td>
<td>_______ Inclusion: satisfying needs of ALL students in the classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Differentiation:
Meeting every student in their classroom at their current level.

### Technology integration:
Creatively ensuring students gain deeper meaning of topics through the use of technology. (...beyond a "replacement too". Replacement tool: doing work on a device rather than a worksheet. Using the device does not add depth to the learning experience.)

---

**Q13 How ready were our students for their first classroom in the areas of...** (click and drag into appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSU prepared our teacher candidates well in this area.</th>
<th>BSU’s teacher candidates join the workforce having a general idea of what it means.</th>
<th>BSU’s Teacher candidates are not well prepared in this area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____ Using &quot;student centered&quot; approaches. (non-lecture style)</td>
<td>_____ Using &quot;student centered&quot; approaches. (non-lecture style)</td>
<td>_____ Using &quot;student centered&quot; approaches. (non-lecture style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Leading students in creating their own education learning experience. Example: Students choose which activities to do to reach their state standard content.</td>
<td>_____ Leading students in creating their own education learning experience. Example: Students choose which activities to do to reach their state standard content.</td>
<td>_____ Leading students in creating their own education learning experience. Example: Students choose which activities to do to reach their state standard content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Planning how to gain deep relationships with their students</td>
<td>_____ Planning how to gain deep relationships with their students</td>
<td>_____ Planning how to gain deep relationships with their students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Building trusting relationships with families less involved in their child's education.</td>
<td>_____ Building trusting relationships with families less involved in their child's education.</td>
<td>_____ Building trusting relationships with families less involved in their child's education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Clear and concise PARENT COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>_____ Clear and concise PARENT COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>_____ Clear and concise PARENT COMMUNICATION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q14 What part of the teacher preparation program did our students think was most beneficial?
   - Being out in the classrooms
   - On-Campus Courses
   - They were equally beneficial.

Q15 What could have made the courses more beneficial for our teacher preparation program?
   

Q16 What could have made field experiences more beneficial for our teacher preparation program?
   

Q17 Did BSU’s teacher candidate feel being a new classroom teacher was...
   - easier than what they expected
   - harder than what they expected
   - was what they expected

Q18 What do you think was easier or harder for the teacher candidates?
   

Q19 How do you feel about the division of time spent in preK-12 classrooms and in on-campus courses?
More time in the preK-12 classrooms and less time in on-campus courses would have been more beneficial.

More time in on-campus courses and less time in the k-12 classrooms would have been more beneficial.

Keep the combination of on-campus courses and pre-K-12 classroom experience the same.

Q21 List the key components of your ideal teacher preparation program?
________________________________________________________________

Q22 While enrolled in BSU’s teacher preparation program, APPROXIMATELY how long do you think our teacher candidates planned to teach?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>25%</th>
<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q23 In general, do you think teacher candidates changed the length of time they planned to teach after they became a teacher of record?

- Yes, they planned to teach a longer length of time
- Yes, they plan to teach for a shorter length of time
- They planned to teach for the same length of time

Q25 If you could change one thing about the BSU teacher preparation program, what would it be?
________________________________________________________________

End of Block: Default Question Block
APPENDIX B. NW MN ADMINISTRATORS

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Welcome!

Q2 How many new teachers were hired in your building in the last two years?

☐ 0
☐ 1-2
☐ 3-4
☐ 5-6
☐ 7+

Q3 Order these skills starting with "1" for "most important" skills teacher candidates need to become fluent in to be classified as a "Rockstar" first-year teachers

_____ Classroom management- behavior management experience
_____ Content knowledge- Thoroughly understand concepts of each standard
_____ Self-efficacy- Confident in their abilities with proper mentorship
_____ Differentiation- Can create a differentiated student experience
_____ Relationship Building- prepared plan of strategies for creating student, community, and staff relationships
_____ Instructional Cycle- Assessment, Planning, Assessment, Instruction, repeat
_____ Procedure setup- Prepared with a list of classroom policies and procedures
_____ Reality Shock- Prevent first-year teachers from experiencing reality shock
_____ Technology fluency- Already familiar will numerous technology devices and apps
_____ Academic Language
_____ Other
Q16 New teachers are not prepared in the following areas...

☐ Classroom management
☐ Content
☐ Differentiation
☐ Reflection
☐ Self-efficacy
☐ Relationship Building
☐ Instructional Cycle
☐ Procedure setup
☐ Technology
☐ Academic Language
☐ Other ____________________________________________

Q17 Do your new teachers tend to experience "reality shock". They didn't realize all of the demands of teachers.

☐ yes
☐ No

Q6 In your professional opinion, list the skills you think teacher preparation programs SHOULD include to prepare teacher candidates?
Q7 Would you support our teacher preparation program increasing the amount of field experience hours. They currently complete 100 hours/2.5 weeks prior to Student Teaching.

- Yes
- No

Q8 How many student contact days of experience do you think teacher candidates should accumulate prior to student teaching?

- 2.5 weeks (average current practice)
- 3 weeks
- 4 weeks
- 5 weeks
- 6+ weeks

Q9 Would you support an OPTIONAL year-long student teaching experience? Currently it is 16 weeks/1 semester. (It would not interfere in their anticipated graduation date.)

- Yes, they would be better prepared.
- No, that much time is unnecessary.

Q10 Have you been informed of the new state statute that teacher preparation programs must now partner with preK-12 schools in order to graduate new teachers?

- Yes
- No
Q11 Are you and your teachers willing to partner with BSU’s teacher preparation program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q12 If you are unwilling, please share your thoughts on why not.
________________________________________________________________________

Q13 What reasons are you most interested in with partnering with a teacher preparation program?

☐ To recruit future teachers

☐ To recruit future student teachers

☐ To have an extra hand in classrooms

☐ To ensure the teacher candidates are being trained well

☐ To find new ideas for my classroom

☐ I did not have an option

☐ Other ____________________________

Q18 If you were planning an ideal field experience program, what would you include in your plan?
________________________________________________________________________
Q15 FIELD EXPERIENCE: If you are within driving distance (1 hour 15 min) and you are interested in partnering with BSU for field experience, please email me your information. We need approximately 300-400 placements every semester and always run "short". To prepare and graduate licensed teachers, we need your partnership. We appreciate any and all efforts you may contribute. renae.spangler@bemidjistate.edu

End of Block: Default Question Block
APPENDIX C. NW MN TEACHERS

Dissertation Teachers

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Welcome!

Q2 How many new teachers were hired in your building in the last two years?

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7+

Q3 There are skills first-year teachers need to be classified as a "Rockstar". Order these skills starting with "1" for "most important"

- 1 Classroom management- behavior management experience
- 2 Content knowledge- Thoroughly understand concepts of each standard
- 3 Self-efficacy- Confident in their abilities with proper mentorship
- 4 Differentiation- Can create a differentiated student experience
- 5 Relationship Building- prepared plan of strategies for creating student, community, and staff relationships
- 6 Instructional Cycle- Assessment, Planning, Assessment, Instruction, repeat
- 7 Procedure setup- Prepared with a list of classroom policies and procedures
- 8 Reality Shock- Prevent first-year teachers from experiencing reality shock
- 9 Technology fluency- Already familiar will numerous technology devices and apps
- 10 Academic Language
- Other:
Q16 New teachers are not prepared in the following areas...

- Classroom management
- Content
- Differentiation
- Reflection
- Self-efficacy
- Relationship Building
- Instructional Cycle
- Procedure setup
- Technology
- Academic Language
- Other: ____________________________________________________

Q4 Do your new teachers tend to experience "reality shock"? They didn't realize all of the demands of teachers

- Yes
- No

Q6 In your professional opinion, list the skills do you think teacher preparation programs SHOULD include to prepare teacher candidates?

__________________________________________________________________
Q7 Would you support our teacher preparation program increasing the amount of field experience hours. They currently complete 100 hours/2.5 weeks prior to Student Teaching.

- Yes
- No

Q8 How many student contact days of experience do you think teacher candidates should accumulate prior to student teaching?

- 2.5 weeks (current practice)
- 3 weeks
- 4 weeks
- 5 weeks
- 6+ weeks

Q9 Would you support an OPTIONAL year-long student teaching experience? Currently it is 16 weeks/1 semester. (It would not interfere in their anticipated graduation date.)

- Yes, they would be better prepared.
- No, that much time is unnecessary.

Q10 Have you been informed of the new state statute that teacher preparation programs must now partner with preK-12 schools in order to graduate new teachers?

- Yes
- No
Q11 As a teacher, are you willing to partner with BSU’s teacher preparation program?

- Yes
- No

Q12 If you are unwilling, please share your thoughts on why not.

________________________________________________________________________

Q13 What reasons are you most interested in with partnering with a teacher preparation program?

- To recruit future teachers
- To recruit future student teachers
- To have an extra hand in classrooms
- To ensure the teacher candidates are being trained well
- To find new ideas for my classroom
- I did not have an option
- Other: ________________________________________________

Q15 If you were planning an ideal field experience program, what would you include in your plan?

________________________________________________________________________

End of Block: Default Question Block
Dear Participants, You are invited to participate in a study of successful teacher preparation programs. I hope to learn the specific characteristics needed for a successful teacher preparation program. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been a recent teacher candidate graduate at Bemidji State University or work with new teachers in the field. If you decide to participate, please complete this survey via this link. Your survey completion is implied consent. The survey is designed to pinpoint the most important aspects of strong needed skillsets as new teachers. It will take about 15 minutes to complete the survey. No benefits accrue to you for answering the survey, but your responses will be used to steer the evolution of Bemidji State University’s teacher preparation program. Any discomfort or inconvenience to you derives only from the amount of time taken to complete the survey. Completion of this survey implies consent. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relationships with Bemidji State University. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time. Please feel free to ask questions regarding this study. You may contact me later if you have additional questions at 218-553-4487 or by e-mail at: renae.spangler@bemidjistate.edu or Boyd Bradbury at 218-477-2095 or by e-mail at: bradbury@mnstate.edu. Any questions about your rights may be directed to Dr. Lisa I. Karch, Chair of the MSUM Institutional Review Board at 218-477-2699 or by e-mail at: irb@mnstate.edu.

Thank you recent BSU Professional Education Graduates for taking the time to help Bemidji State University examine their Professional Education program from a graduate’s perspective. We are looking to ensure that we are successfully preparing teacher candidates for today’s classrooms. These surveys are anonymous. No one will be able to connect your identity with your answers. We hope this will allow you to be honest so that we can collect more accurate data.

Clarifying Terms and Definitions:
Field Experience- 10-90 hours of classroom experience determined by which college course the teacher candidate is enrolled in.
Practicum- Four-week student teaching placement. Additional license area, typically Middle School endorsement.
Student Teacher- 12-16-week student teaching placement. Initial license area, typically Elementary or High School.

Below is the questionnaire that contains two sections: Demographics and Focused-questions.
Demographic questions. These questions ask you to enter basic demographic data (such as: age, gender, ethnicity, etc.). These answers will help us to disaggregate the data and better understand how various sub-groups compare in their responses.

Focused-questions. These questions are directly explore the issue that is being researched: Teacher Preparation programs. For example, interest and confidence in the subject matter being learned in this course.

Q2 Were you enrolled in BSU’s On-Campus Education program?
   - Yes
   - No

Q3 Are you a substitute teacher?
   - Yes
   - No

Q24 Are you a classroom teacher or an interventionist?
   - Yes
   - No

Q4 What best describes the community in which you serve as a full-time educator?
   - Rural area
   - Urban area
Q5 What best describes the school where you teach?

- More than 40% free and reduced lunch
- Less than 40% free and reduced lunch

Q6 Age as a first-year teacher

- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30+
Q7 Gender identity

○ Male
○ Female
○ Non-binary / alternative gender
○ Prefer not to say

Q8 What licensure area did you complete? (Check all that apply)

☐ Elementary Education
☐ Secondary License
☐ K-12 License
☐ Middle School Endorsement
☐ Preprimary Endorsement
Q9 If you completed a secondary licensure program, indicate your subject area. Check all that apply.

- English
- Health
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Languages
- Health

Q10 If you completed a K-12 Licensure program, indicate your subject area.

- Physical Education
- Music
- DAPE
- Reading
- World Languages
- Special Education
Q11 How ready were you for your first classroom in the areas of... (click and drag into appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was well prepared in this area</th>
<th>I had a general idea of what it means but had no specific plan or steps to follow to achieve this</th>
<th>I was not well prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____ CONTENT Knowledge</td>
<td>_____ CONTENT Knowledge</td>
<td>_____ CONTENT Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ SELF-EFFICACY- I felt confident going into my first classroom</td>
<td>_____ SELF-EFFICACY- I felt confident going into my first classroom</td>
<td>_____ SELF-EFFICACY- I felt confident going into my first classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Carrying out the INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE- Planning, Instruction, &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>_____ Carrying out the INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE- Planning, Instruction, &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>_____ Carrying out the INSTRUCTIONAL CYCLE- Planning, Instruction, &amp; Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Reading, Interpreting, and planning based on DATA from common assessments such as STAR, MAP, &amp; MCAs.</td>
<td>_____ Reading, Interpreting, and planning based on DATA from common assessments such as STAR, MAP, &amp; MCAs.</td>
<td>_____ Reading, Interpreting, and planning based on DATA from common assessments such as STAR, MAP, &amp; MCAs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ SELF-REFLECTION capabilities</td>
<td>_____ SELF-REFLECTION capabilities</td>
<td>_____ SELF-REFLECTION capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Growth MINDSET</td>
<td>_____ Growth MINDSET</td>
<td>_____ Growth MINDSET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Providing meaningful FEEDBACK for my students</td>
<td>_____ Providing meaningful FEEDBACK for my students</td>
<td>_____ Providing meaningful FEEDBACK for my students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Realistic plan for getting students ACTIVELY ENGAGED</td>
<td>_____ Realistic plan for getting students ACTIVELY ENGAGED</td>
<td>_____ Realistic plan for getting students ACTIVELY ENGAGED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q12 How ready were you for your first classroom in the areas of... (click and drag into appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was well prepared</th>
<th>I had a general idea of what it means but had no specific plan or steps to follow to achieve this</th>
<th>I was not well prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>______ Providing REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS when addressing state standards in my classroom</td>
<td>______ Providing REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS when addressing state standards in my classroom</td>
<td>______ Providing REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS when addressing state standards in my classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ Pedagogy: Teaching plan for exactly how it will look to teach my students beginning of year PROCEDURES, expectations, etc.</td>
<td>______ Pedagogy: Teaching plan for exactly how it will look to teach my students beginning of year PROCEDURES, expectations, etc.</td>
<td>______ Pedagogy: Teaching plan for exactly how it will look to teach my students beginning of year PROCEDURES, expectations, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ Pedagogy: Positive BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT. I was confident with a plan for dealing with students who talk back, make loud jokes about you, refuse out loud, etc.</td>
<td>______ Pedagogy: Positive BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT. I was confident with a plan for dealing with students who talk back, make loud jokes about you, refuse out loud, etc.</td>
<td>______ Pedagogy: Positive BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT. I was confident with a plan for dealing with students who talk back, make loud jokes about you, refuse out loud, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ INCLUSION: satisfying needs of ALL students in the classroom</td>
<td>______ INCLUSION: satisfying needs of ALL students in the classroom</td>
<td>______ INCLUSION: satisfying needs of ALL students in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ DIFFERENTIATION: Ability to meet every student in my classroom at their current level.</td>
<td>______ DIFFERENTIATION: Ability to meet every student in my classroom at their current level.</td>
<td>______ DIFFERENTIATION: Ability to meet every student in my classroom at their current level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ Technology integration: How to creatively ensure students gain DEEPER MEANING of topics THROUGH the use of TECHNOLOGY. (...beyond a &quot;replacement tool&quot;) Replacement tool: doing work on a device rather than a worksheet.</td>
<td>______ Technology integration: How to creatively ensure students gain DEEPER MEANING of topics THROUGH the use of TECHNOLOGY. (...beyond a &quot;replacement tool&quot;) Replacement tool: doing work on a device rather than a worksheet.</td>
<td>______ Technology integration: How to creatively ensure students gain DEEPER MEANING of topics THROUGH the use of TECHNOLOGY. (...beyond a &quot;replacement tool&quot;) Replacement tool: doing work on a device rather than a worksheet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the device does not add depth to the learning experience.

Q13 How ready were you for your first classroom in the areas of... (click and drag into appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was well prepared</th>
<th>I had a general idea of what it means but had no specific plan or steps to follow to achieve this</th>
<th>I was not well prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_____ Using &quot;STUDENT CENTERED&quot; approaches. (non-lecture style)</td>
<td>_____ Using &quot;STUDENT CENTERED&quot; approaches. (non-lecture style)</td>
<td>_____ Using &quot;STUDENT CENTERED&quot; approaches. (non-lecture style)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Leading students in CREATING THEIR OWN EDUCATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE. Example: Students choose which activities to do to reach their state standard content.</td>
<td>_____ Leading students in CREATING THEIR OWN EDUCATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE. Example: Students choose which activities to do to reach their state standard content.</td>
<td>_____ Leading students in CREATING THEIR OWN EDUCATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE. Example: Students choose which activities to do to reach their state standard content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Planning of how to gain deep RELATIONSHIPS WITH my STUDENTS</td>
<td>_____ Planning of how to gain deep RELATIONSHIPS WITH my STUDENTS</td>
<td>_____ Planning of how to gain deep RELATIONSHIPS WITH my STUDENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Planning of how to gain trusting RELATIONSHIPS with my students' FAMILIES who are LESS INVOLVED in their child's education</td>
<td>_____ Planning of how to gain trusting RELATIONSHIPS with my students' FAMILIES who are LESS INVOLVED in their child's education</td>
<td>_____ Planning of how to gain trusting RELATIONSHIPS with my students' FAMILIES who are LESS INVOLVED in their child's education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Planning or strategies for clear and concise parent COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>_____ Planning or strategies for clear and concise parent COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>_____ Planning or strategies for clear and concise parent COMMUNICATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_____ Planning for addressing</td>
<td>_____ Planning for addressing</td>
<td>_____ Planning for addressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENT/COMMUNITY NEEDS</td>
<td>PARENT/COMMUNITY NEEDS</td>
<td>PARENT/COMMUNITY NEEDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ Using POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT strategies or programs</td>
<td>______ Using POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT strategies or programs</td>
<td>______ Using POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT strategies or programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ Finding a GO-TO PERSON for when I have questions</td>
<td>______ Finding a GO-TO PERSON for when I have questions</td>
<td>______ Finding a GO-TO PERSON for when I have questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14 What piece of the teacher preparation program was **most beneficial**?

⊙ Being out in the classroom
⊙ On-Campus Courses
⊙ They were equally beneficial.

Q15 What could make the teacher preparation courses more beneficial?

________________________________________________________________

Q16 What could make being in the classrooms more beneficial?

________________________________________________________________

Q17 Was being a new classroom teacher...

⊙ easier
⊙ more difficult
⊙ was what I expected
Q18 What was easier?
____________________________________________________________________

Q26 What was more difficult?
____________________________________________________________________

Q19 How do you feel about your split of time spent in classrooms and in on-campus courses?
   ○ More time in the classrooms and less time in on-campus courses would have been more beneficial
   ○ More time in on-campus courses and less time in the classrooms would have been more beneficial
   ○ Keep the combination of on-campus courses and classroom experience the same.

Q20 What worked well in your field experiences at BSU?
____________________________________________________________________

Q27 What ideas do you have that would make an ideal field experience at BSU?
____________________________________________________________________

Q21 If the sky was the limit, what would your ideal teacher preparation program look like?
____________________________________________________________________
Q22 When you were at BSU preparing to be a teacher, how long were you planning to be a teacher?

- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- Until I retire

Q23 Now that you are a teacher, has your plan changed?

- Yes, I plan to teach a longer length of time
- Yes, I plan to teach for a shorter length of time
- I plan to teach for the same length of time

Q29 What is something teacher preparation program should keep doing?

________________________________________________________________

Q30 What should the teacher preparation program should stop doing?

________________________________________________________________

Q25 What is something the teacher preparation program should start doing?

________________________________________________________________

End of Block: Default Question Block
APPENDIX E: NW MN TEACHERS FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Focus Group will be comprised of 6-8 people in homogeneous groups of recent teacher prep graduates and NW MN teachers. Each of the 2 cluster groups will meet for up to 60 minutes via Zoom on the same day at different times.

Introduce yourself with first names only, your teaching assignment, and how many years in the profession.

Questions

1. If the sky were the limit, what would your ideal teacher preparation program look like?
2. How well do you feel you were prepared in general to be an efficient and effective new teacher? How do you feel it correlated to your self-efficacy?
3. How could your teacher preparation program have helped increase your self-efficacy before graduation?
4. Reality Shock is real for many new teachers. In which areas did you feel you experienced reality shock?
5. How could your teacher preparation program have helped prevent reality shock during your teacher preparation program?
6. Classroom management has been pegged as the piece most new teachers struggle with. To what extent did/do you struggle with classroom management?
7. How could your teacher preparation program have ensured your confidence in classroom management by graduation?
8. Think back to your teacher preparation experience, what experience were you given that taught you the most?
9. Order the importance of the following:
   a. Clinical Experience
   b. Pedagogy
   c. Content

10. Why did you choose to order them in that manner?

11. With COVID, the world of education is evolving quickly. What are the biggest
    struggles in the classroom currently? How can a teacher preparation program prepare
    candidates to overcome those struggles?

12. Is there anything I have missed that you would like to add?

Conclusion

Thank you so much for participating in this focus group. I am excited to organize all the
valuable information I have received and use it to benefit future teachers.
APPENDIX F: NW MN RECENT GRADUATES FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Introduce yourself with first names only, your teaching assignment, and how many years in the profession.

Questions

1. If the sky were the limit, what would your ideal teacher preparation program look like?

2. How well do you feel you were prepared in general to be an efficient and effective new teacher? How do you feel it correlated to your self-efficacy?

3. How could your teacher preparation program have helped increase your self-efficacy before graduation?

4. Reality Shock is real for many new teachers. In which areas did you feel you experienced reality shock?

5. How could your teacher preparation program have helped prevent reality shock during your teacher preparation program?

6. Classroom management has been pegged as the piece most new teachers struggle with. To what extent did/do you struggle with classroom management?

7. How could your teacher preparation program have ensured your confidence in classroom management by graduation?

8. Think back to your teacher preparation experience, what experience were you given that taught you the most?

9. Order the importance of the following:
   a. Clinical Experience
   b. Pedagogy
c. Content

10. Why did you choose to order them in that manner?

11. With COVID, the world of education is evolving quickly. What are the biggest struggles in the classroom currently? How can a teacher preparation program prepare candidates to overcome those struggles?

12. Is there anything I have missed that you would like to add?

Conclusion

Thank you so much for participating in this focus group. I am excited to organize all the valuable information I have received and use it to benefit future teachers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Statements of support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>Hands-on Experience</td>
<td>- They should experience two years of internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student teaching</td>
<td>- I would make sure that there is as much field experience as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Clinical cycle and student teaching should cover at least one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- At least a semester long student teacher program;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience Characteristics</td>
<td>Start</td>
<td>- A variety of experiences,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>- I would hope students could be placed in an environment where they could observe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>rock star teachers and teachers that are not rock stars to see success and failures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observe</td>
<td>but that would take the supervising staff doing some investigation prior to placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teach</td>
<td>- They should experience two years of internship, building classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>skills, relationship building skills, instructional content creation and instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student needs</td>
<td>with multiple ages of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take over</td>
<td>- Glued to the teacher, learning everything the teacher has to offer the Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spend time</td>
<td>Teacher identifying their own strengths, direct interactions/experiences with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hands-on</td>
<td>and teachers, valid responsibility (student teacher) based lessons the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch</td>
<td>teacher teaches, de-escalation of students and class situations, a sense of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Management</td>
<td>Management Behavior establishing</td>
<td>-Responsive Classroom or a program similar to it, to help teach student management. Experience in a proactive classroom management program. -Building classroom management skills. -Also not just focus on academics, but behavior too. -Partner with establishing a classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>Differentiate Student needs Skills Theory</td>
<td>-Working and planning with specific students needs in mind. -Partner with establishing a classroom -A checklist of pedagogy and content -Student relations, and theory behind instruction -Differentiating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## NW MN Administrator Survey- Qualitative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Statements of Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>Classroom, Face to Face</td>
<td>-More time in the classroom with multiple experiences. This would provide the student teacher with multiple exposures to different grade levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experience, Work directly</td>
<td>-Face to face communication and collaborative meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Serve, Time with</td>
<td>-Classroom Experience in classroom hands on work from day 1 (under supervision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Experience at several grade levels, time in special Ed, echo of not seeking sped licensure and discussions with the local teachers union.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX I: NW MN RECENT GRADUATES THEMES AND CODES PER QUALITATIVE SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Statements of Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>- You’re in the classroom right away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More time</td>
<td>- Real life happens in the class, being in the class and practicing with it is the most beneficial. More like an apprenticeship rather than an internship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teach</td>
<td>- Time that would have been spent in the teacher preparation courses could instead be spent doing field experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>- My ideal teacher preparation program would be 50% in the field and 50% in the classroom, directly relating the field experience to current practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience Characteristics</td>
<td>Paired with another student</td>
<td>- Be paired with another student in the program with the same field experience teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personalities</td>
<td>- I think that having a short biography about each teacher who is willing to have practicum students would be helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You would like</td>
<td>- Being able to list options of what schools you would like to do field experience at.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Own schedule</td>
<td>- don't assign days that students need to go to their field experience, let the student and teacher work out their own schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Teach</td>
<td>- Maybe somehow coming up with a more clear plan of what should try to be accomplished with each practicum for each class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Switch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Also when placed in the field, there should be a period of time where we can switch our placement if it is not ideal. Maybe a more required meet up to meet the teacher/classroom environment.
- Give them more lessons to teach and more opportunities to go in other grade levels.

| Strategies | Gather Learning Building Strategies | - Gathering up resources as much as you can from cooperating teachers. They use technology and resources you will most likely use.  
- learning how to engage student at different learning points.  
- More curriculum building skills, more unit building on REALISTIC units, more time in the classroom.  
- doing stations and small groups, and just more strategies. |
| Mentor Teachers | Biography Inclusive Want college students Personality | - I think that having a short biography about each teacher who is willing to have practicum students would be helpful.  
- Working somewhere that was very inclusive of having BSU students  
- Reach out to local teachers and find those who truly want college students there.  
- Find teachers that are similar in personality. |
| Data Collection | Data Test Progress Monitor | Learning more on data and progress monitoring.  
- more prep on things not often thought about: reading test scores  
- Learning how to implement data to increase student |
| knowledge | -Watch growth and progress monitoring of students |
**APPENDIX J: NW MN TEACHER PREPARATION FACULTY SURVEY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NW MN Teacher preparation Faculty Survey- Qualitative</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Themes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Codes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>See</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Field Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Differentiation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX K: NW MN TEACHER FOCUS GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Statements of Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>- Book learning only goes so far. 99% of learning is failure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student teach</td>
<td>- [Run] every year of your education program similar to how you student teach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>- When I graduated, I was like, I can’t be a teacher, I’m not ready for this. I totally took that route [paraprofessional in the classroom instead of a classroom teacher]. Then I finally, like, built up my confidence [in my teaching skills] so that I felt I was kind of ready.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skills</td>
<td>- Experience, experience, experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>- Setting your classroom routines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>- I would agree that routines are very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Routines are huge when everybody, you know when everybody follows the routine everything runs pretty smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Having the the knowledge of the pedagogy and the content is important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Getting in there and the whole trial by fire fire thing is real. And you'll learn the pedagogy during that time, too,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Making sure that their expectations are set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>- You're also taking classes at the same time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The content will come by your second year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Having the the knowledge of the pedagogy and the content is important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>- It’s hard to be able to manage some of those behaviors and still teach your class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>- The thing that I would say that I have seen lacking is teachers being prepared to deal with the current behavior problems that are going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- They struggle with classroom management and reality shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- I didn't feel like I got really, really prepared in [classroom management] that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Respect Connect Relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Tough kids don’t want to disappoint the teachers. It’s a respect thing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- They have to connect with the kid in some way, they have to figure out a way even the kids that are a pain, because those kids are going to be there and administration seems to be doing less and less with.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Build relationships with those kids.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Being able to instill those relationships, once you do that. That really starts to get their hamster rolling upstairs and you notice the difference in kids and in my student teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Administrators are doing less with behaviors, so teachers need the skills to handle it themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I have respect, and like my administrators, however… if somebody standing on the side of the river yelling at you to just keep swimming hard or swim harder, swim harder [is what the administrators are doing].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reality Shock</th>
<th>Shock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I think having that extra time being immersed in what you’re doing and getting that experience is going to eliminate the shock of what's going to happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Extra time being immersed [in field experience] will help [prevent] reality shock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- They struggle with classroom management and reality shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Getting that experience is going to eliminate the shock of what's going to happen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attrition</th>
<th>Leave Hate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I’ve seen a lot of people ready to leave their [teaching] job within months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- I hate everything about my job, with the exception of the kids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teachers leaving the profession</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### NW MN Recent Graduate Focus Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Statements of Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Field Experience</strong></td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>- More experience teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In charge</td>
<td>- Classroom management…you can't really learn it until you're in charge of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>- Like in your clinical experience you learn how to classroom management and like your classroom if your classroom isn't managed then you're not even going to get to the content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Teaching</td>
<td>- Split time in the classroom and out in the field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- More time [out] in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- I learned more from my first month student teaching than every class I took</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedagogy</strong></td>
<td>Step by step</td>
<td>- My math lesson I broke it up so small, and I talked in like a whisper voice and I literally like step by step, how you would do with maybe like preschoolers and it went so much better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Didn’t know</td>
<td>- They didn't know how to sit in a chair nicely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learned</td>
<td>- There's all these things that they should have learned [as routine] from socialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Class Courses</td>
<td>- My content area classes, where we actually all took turns like we had one day or one-week regular week with the professor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>- In one of the reading courses I can't remember which one it was, but we</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
wrote a book or a story
- In math she did number talks and we’re doing that now [in my class]
- Split time in the classroom and out in the field.
- More classes focused on content specific knowledge

| Classroom Management | Tough Classroom Management | - I just have this one little guy who's super-duper tough on me and I'm just trying to figure him out, and I cannot and it's frustrating me.
- Classroom management is probably like my biggest shock
- It's just like a, just a shock of like, okay, I can't control everybody, and this is so frustrating to me
- Like they got into a legitimate fistfight and drew blood. |
| Relationships | Parents Communicate | - Parents are really hard
- Trying to communicate with parents has been really hard
- Have to call parents
- You don't know how the parents gonna react |
| Administration | Principal | - [The principal] came up to me and he's like I'm going to give you another shot to do this lesson, because I can tell you're a, you're super nervous and I'm in here and he’s like you're just, you're still trying to find your teaching, you know you're teaching feet
- My third observation coming up this week on with our principal |
- Your principal coming in and seeing you and giving you another chance like, I feel like that takes a lot of pressure off.
- I have to call the principal twice a day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reality Shock</th>
<th>Not knowing</th>
<th>Didn’t know</th>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Shock</th>
<th>Find teaching feet</th>
<th>Legitimate</th>
<th>Nervous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- It's just like a, just a shock of like, okay, I can't control everybody, and this is so frustrating to me.
- Something just really that shocked me was that it was having a lot [of students] I'm having a hard time learning their names on everything else is.
- [I] thought like social emotionally, it was insane at how much they didn't know how to do. Like they didn't know how to sit in a chair nicely. They didn't know like a bunch of things that you would expect them to know.
- Like I don't think I would have stayed in teaching if I didn't have the people I had at my school.
- Like they got into a legitimate fistfight and drew blood.