

# School of Education

Northwest University

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## Conceptual Framework

### Introduction

This conceptual framework for teacher preparation is an on-going, living document undergirding all certificate and degree programs within the Northwest University (NU) School of Education (SOE). The framework is informed by the NU mission and philosophy and Washington State teaching standards, as well as broad theoretical research. While the teaching profession focuses on student-learners, the performance of adults within and surrounding the profession remain at the center of policy and practice. Candidates, professors, field supervisors, and cooperating teachers find resonance in centering their planning and activities on the heart of schooling: the student-learner.

The Northwest University motto: *Carrying the Call with Heart, Head, and Hand*, inspires members of the community to serve. We desire graduates who have a calling (or vocation) aimed at holistically serving others with passion, reflective and critical thought, and professional action. This service ethic requires one to practice well, to self-reflect, and to acquire knowledge and skills needed to improve. The SOE conceptual framework identifies solidly with the “other,” the student-learner, by building on three dispositions. We strive to be, and to prepare teachers to be, educators who are:

1. Student-Learner Focused Teachers, whose performance is measured by student learning;
2. Adaptive Teachers, who demonstrate flexibility directed by student aptitude; and
3. Holistic Teachers, who exhibit sensitivity informed by student background and situation.

On-going, formative assessment supports School of Education students, staff, and faculty in their efforts to become well-rounded educators in the service of others and encourages them to analyze student learning results, in order to improve their own practice. The assessment system incorporates the knowledge, skills, and dispositions which educators need to fulfill our mission: creating teachers focused on student learning. The following discussion features these three tenants, outlining them in detail and undergirding each one with research, followed by desired candidate proficiencies.

### Learner-Focused Teachers

John Dewey begins Article Four of *My Pedagogic Creed* with the following: “I believe that the question of method is ultimately reducible to the question of the order of development of the child’s powers and interests” (Dewey, 1897). Dewey continues:

I believe that the active side precedes the passive in the development of the child nature. ...I believe that the neglect of this principle is the cause of a large part of the waste of time and strength in school work. The child is thrown into a passive, receptive or absorbing attitude. The conditions are such that he is not permitted to follow the law of his nature; the result is friction and waste. ...I believe that these interests are neither to be humored nor repressed. To repress interest is to substitute the adult for the child, and so to weaken intellectual curiosity and alertness, to suppress initiative, and to deaden interest. To humor the interests is to substitute the transient for the permanent. The interest is always the sign of some power below; the important thing is to discover

this power. To humor the interest is to fail to penetrate below the surface and its sure result is to substitute caprice and whim for genuine interest (Dewey, 1897).

Teacher evaluation has historically been based upon their knowledge, technique and performance in the classroom. While these are, indeed, important components of effective teaching, Dewey reminds us that teaching does not primarily rest in practiced technique or content knowledge, but in the ability to engage a child in their own learning. Here, in Dewey's view, student-directed teaching neither "humors, nor represses" student interest. Often, when we evaluate pedagogic expertise based upon teacher performance, student interest is left by the way side. We instead focus on the energy of the adult, the technique of the adult, and the knowledge of the adult. In doing so, the learner becomes a passive receptacle, or as Dewey says, we "substitute the adult for the child," deadening curiosity and alertness. To be sure, there exists ample anecdotal evidence of the bored student attending to a teacher, supplying meaningless content (at least to the student).

On the other hand, Dewey warns us that we must not simply "humor" the surface interests of the student. Student-directed teaching is not teaching that is driven by student whim, but instead teaching that takes seriously student aptitude and interest, and which seeks to understand the "permanent" below the interest, the power that can drive both student learning and student engagement. From this balance, we seek to measure teacher performance for our candidates not simply on technique or knowledge, though these are important indicators, but more profoundly by evidence of student learning. In other words, if the student can demonstrate understanding, then our candidates have taught effectively. If not, this lack of evidence should move candidates to reflect upon their own practice, making adjustments designed to engage students and attain desired learning results. Under this view, three salient threads of understanding and practice guide our teacher preparation: Student Interest, Student Voice, and Visible Evidence.

### *Student Interest*

Barbara Bartholomew in her article *Sustaining the Fire* poses a vexing problem: "Those who have tried to ignite learning under challenging conditions know that – like building a fire in a damp woods – it is neither easy to spark a flame nor simple to sustain it" (2008, p. 55). "Sustaining an interest in learning," Bartholomew continues:

involves complex personal skills. It requires finding out what others value and empowering them to explore and build upon their dreams. It may mean helping students find the courage to take a risk or overcome habits that undermine progress. It can also involve treading on deeply personal terrain that may house pockets of emotional pain (2008, p. 55).

Training teachers who want to listen to students, who seek to help create safe spaces for students to learn, who exemplify for their students fair and equitable treatment of students, who give students feedback and work with them to create "roadmaps to get there," and who regularly offer encouragement, i.e., who students know is on their side, are the fundamentals of sound preparation programs. These aptitudes represent crucial learner-focused practices, fostering dispositions which allow interest to not only be sparked, but to receive fuel to burn strongly (Bartholomew, 2008).

### *Student Voice/Metacognition*

In the current Washington State Professional Certification handbook, we find the following standard and criterion necessary to be designated as a "Master Teacher." Standard I, criterion b: "Effective teaching [is teaching which uses] a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction" (August, 2007). Obviously, the successful teacher must possess this crucial skill or aptitude. But then, the

handbook goes on to articulate several “descriptors of practice,” or sentences unpacking the standard and criterion. What does this criterion mean according to the handbook? “1. *Students* use a variety of assessment tools and know how those tools measure their performance of the learning targets; 2. *Students* understand the scoring criteria being used, and that the assessment tools being used are fair and equitable; 3. *Students* keep and review with their teacher records of their learning progress to identify their own specific needs for growth; 4. *Students* regularly use their work to examine and reflect on their achievement of learning targets. Students set individual goals and outline the steps required to reach those goals; 5. *Students* are regularly guided through strategies to monitor, evaluate, and self-regulate their process of learning and express it verbally and in writing.” Students can articulate what worked, what did not, and what they need to do differently next time; and so on (August, 2007). One immediately notices that each descriptor in this list begins with the word “student.” Here, student learning moves beyond simple teacher evaluation, to what we might call “student voice.”

Typically, when using the term “student voice,” one thinks of participation or active construction of norms through listening to student opinions and ideas. But, when using the term for Professional Certification, OSPI means instead “metacognition.” “Student voice is a particular type of evidence or artifact. It refers to evidence of learning from the student’s perspective(s)” (Professional Educator Standards Board, 2009, p. 16). According to Wiggins and McTighe, “in daily life, our capacity to accurately self-assess and self-regulate reflects understanding. Metacognition refers to self-knowledge about how we think and why, and the relations between our preferred methods of learning and our understanding (or lack of it)” (2005, p. 101). Musial et al. argue that “as students gain knowledge and understanding, their learning will be enhanced if they also acquire metacognitive skills. Metacognition,” they continue “or thinking about thinking, includes the skills of reflecting on one’s thought processes” (2009, p. 83). Armstrong, elaborating on this view, argues that:

Recent research in cognitive psychology applied to education has supported the notion that children benefit from instructional approaches that help them reflect on their own learning processes (see Marzano et al., 1988). When children engage in this kind of metacognitive activity, they can select appropriate strategies for problem solving. They can also serve as advocates for themselves when placed in new learning environments (2000, p. 31).

This part of effective teaching involves helping the student learner to understand the learning targets for any given assignment or lesson, consider methods of assessment that are unique to the individual student and appropriate measures of understanding and learning, as well as develop individualized strategies in cooperation between student and teacher, which the student can then follow to gain missing insights or clarify misunderstanding. Musial et al. again contend that, “encouraging students to share different approaches to a problem with each other is another effective way to help students learn from their errors and from the work of others” (2009, p. 83). Thus, student voice becomes a method of not only one student thinking about his or her own learning, but a way of sharing strategies with fellow students which may add to their repertoire of learning.

The teacher who is focused on “student voice” (i.e., the student’s ability to think about his or her thinking, to assess personal learning and then to strategize goals and avenues for new learning), allows the student learner to become increasingly active and responsible for her or his own learning. Further, this evidence of learning, communicated through artifacts and dialogue with teachers, provides the teacher strong points of reflection on their teaching practice. But, in order for the teacher to learn how to teach better, based on evidence of student learning, the practitioner must make visible student learning not only to the student, but also to the teacher.

### *Making Learning Visible*

A key element in promoting learner-focused instruction involves making thinking/learning visible. Of course, reaching this result suggests the larger project of good assessment. Ritchhart and Perkins argue that “fostering thinking requires making thinking visible. Thinking happens,” they continue, “mostly in our heads, invisible to others and even to ourselves. Effective thinkers make their thinking visible, meaning they externalize their thoughts through speaking, writing, drawing, or some other method. They can then direct and improve those thoughts. Visible thinking also emphasizes documenting thinking for later reflection” (2008, p. 58).

Ritchhart and Perkins go on to list several tools, or learning routines, that can help make thinking visible, e.g., Headlines, Connect-Extend-Challenge, See-Think-Wonder, Compass Points<sup>1</sup> (2008, p. 59). Preparing teacher candidates to consider ways in which students can make their thinking and learning visible to both themselves, to peers, and to their teachers, again, allows learner-centered practitioners to evaluate their pedagogies for effectiveness, i.e., effectiveness not based on teacher performance, but on evidence of student learning. Without making student thinking and learning visible, practitioners are apt to continue in favored ways of teaching which may connect with some students, but not others. Further, by helping students to make their thinking visible to themselves, we enrich the possibilities of mentoring life-long-learners: students who maintain the critical thinking skills necessary to problem solve throughout their lives.

Linking metacognition with visible thinking, Costa and Marzano contend:

As teachers require students to describe what’s going on “inside their heads,” students become aware of their thinking processes. Similarly, as they listen to their classmates describing their metacognitive processes, they develop flexibility of thought and an appreciation for the variety of ways to solve the same problem. Teachers, too, may share their thinking by making their inner dialogue external. Verbalizing questions they are asking themselves about ways to solve problems and sharing their lesson plans and how they check their own accuracy are ways teachers can model their metacognitive processes to students (1987, p. 32).

Preparing teachers who are focused on student learning, i.e., who measure their own performance based upon evidence of student learning, goes beyond preparation programs. Our intent is to instill a way of life into our candidates, that throughout their careers as teachers they will continually seek evidence that their students are “getting it” as a measure of their effectiveness as a teachers. Student-learner focus requires the candidate to become familiar with a variety of assessment tools by which to measure student understanding and to seek varieties of student evidence, including student voice or evidence of metacognition, from which to evaluate understanding. Here, method is ultimately evaluated on the basis of the development of the child’s powers and interests.

### **Adaptive Teachers**

Returning to the work of Dewey, he argues again in *My Pedagogic Creed* (Article Three: The Subject Matter of Education) that curriculum must connect with each student in a meaningful way. Rather cryptically, Dewey contends that, “the study of science is educational in so far as it brings out the materials and processes which make social life what it is” (1897). Dewey goes on to explain:

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<sup>1</sup> An outline of these tools and nearly thirty other such examples can be found at the Project Zero’s Visible Thinking Web site ([www.pz.harvard.edu/vt](http://www.pz.harvard.edu/vt)).

I believe that one of the greatest difficulties in the present teaching of science is that the material is presented in purely objective form, or is treated as a new peculiar kind of experience which the child can add to that which he has already had. In reality, science is of value because it gives the ability to interpret and control the experience already had. It should be introduced, not as so much new subject-matter, but as showing the factors already involved in previous experience and as furnishing tools by which that experience can be more easily and effectively regulated (Dewey, 1897).

Obviously here, Dewey is espousing his philosophy of education regarding how it applies to science education. Interestingly, however, he moves the emphasis of curriculum beyond simply presenting the correct content in the correct way. Instead, the pedagogy through which content is delivered is driven by the experience and aptitudes of the learner him- or herself. “I believe,” Dewey concludes, “that education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing” (Dewey, 1897). Whose experience, one might ask here? The answer for Dewey is centered upon student experience.

Teaching effectively involves understanding the learners in the room and adjusting curriculum accordingly. As Dewey would say, teaching well (in fact learning and understanding) means being able to connect content with the learner in a way that relates with his or her experience: in ways that are meaningful to the learner. Obviously this involves student interest, as outlined above, but more fundamentally, it involves understanding the ways each student learns, as well as his or her aptitudes for learning. This does not mean that teachers should not pay attention to standards. On the contrary, as teachers seek to move students toward learning targets (aligning with school, state, or national standards), they do so flexibly, adapting curriculum to individual student experience and style. On this view, two salient threads of understanding and practice guide teacher preparation: Student Learning Styles and Flexible Standards-Based Curriculum.

### *Student Learning Styles and Aptitudes*

Perhaps most famously, Howard Gardner championed the notion that not all students learn by the same means. In other words, the ways we accumulate knowledge and skills varies according to experience and learning style. Thomas Armstrong, elaborating on the theory of multiple (eight to be precise) intelligences cautions us in four ways: 1. Each learner typically possesses all eight intelligences; 2. Most people can develop each intelligence to an adequate level of competency; 3. Intelligences usually work together in complex ways; and, 4. There are many ways to be intelligent within each category (2000, pp. 8, 9). While outlining from a broad list of eight “intelligences” (or learning styles) ranging from students who learn best linguistically (in words: e.g., through books, writing, stories, etc.) to those who learn most easily spatially (in images and pictures: e.g., art, video, illustrated books, etc.), multiple intelligences theory contends that different students hold more or less fluency in different learning styles. Here, again drawing our cues from student aptitude and propensity, effective teachers adapt their pedagogy across a spectrum of student difference. “MI theory,” argues Armstrong,

provides a way for all teachers to reflect on their best teaching methods and to understand why these methods work (or why they work well for some students but not for others). It also helps teachers expand their current teaching repertoire to include a broader range of methods, materials, and techniques for reaching and ever wider and more diverse range of learners (2000, p. 39).

Differing student aptitudes and learning styles are important not only in how we teach, but also in how good teachers assess learning. Musial et al. argue that we must also *assess* student learning in light of the nuanced ways in which different students learn.

You already realize that students will arrive in your classroom with a variety of abilities, a broad range of experiences, and unique ways of communicating. And, as you will discover as you move through your studies, differentiation of instruction attempts to meet the needs of learners based on an understanding of specific characteristics, such as learning disabilities or exceptional talents. The psychological and social foundations of education tell us that before we can assess a student's competence in a content area, we need to "size up" the student (2009, p. 30).

We recognize that effective teachers need to pay attention to the developmental, social, motivational, and intellectual aptitudes that affect how each student learns and expresses understanding. Marzano, referring to work by John Hattie (Hattie, 1992), reminds us that differentiated instruction also includes not only themes of instructions: visual or verbal, but also different learning activities from computer-assisted learning, to homework, and to tutoring. By understanding individual students, effective teachers are able to suggest learning activities that will allow for optimum student learning and performance based on student style and aptitude (Marzano, 2003).

Teaching effectively means paying attention to each student who is being taught. Learning styles, student aptitudes, developmental issues, styles of portraying knowledge (learner assessment styles), etc. all become important fields of inquiry for each teacher. Preparing candidates with an understanding of these differences and with propensities to pay attention to such learner differences becomes key elements in preparing competent teachers.

#### *Adjusting Curriculum to Standards with the Student in Mind*

While research has made clear that differentiation in both instruction and assessment is foundational to broad student learning, research has also clearly argued for the importance of learning standards. Effective practitioners must be able to teach toward standards with his or her specific students in view. Carol Ann Tomlinson reminds us that "what we call differentiation is not a recipe for teaching. It is not an instructional strategy. It is not what a teacher does when he or she has time. It is a way of thinking about teaching and learning. It is a philosophy. As such, it is based on a set of beliefs" (2000, p. 6). What kinds of beliefs, we ask? She answers, reminding us that students of the same age differ in their readiness to learn, their interests, their styles of learning; that these differences are significant; and that students learn best when supportive adults push them slightly beyond where they can go without help. (Tomlinson, 2000). But, in this differentiation, Tomlinson is clear that this does not, and should not, mean that learning standards are not appropriate. Instead, argues Tomlinson, "curriculum tells us *what* to teach; Differentiation tells us *how*" (2000, p. 8). In other words, effective teachers maintain the aptitudes and dispositions to use standards-based curriculum, but adjust how they teach it based upon the student-learner in front of them. In fact, Tomlinson argues, "any educational approach that does not invite us to teach individuals is deeply flawed" (2000, p. 11).

In their book, *Succeeding with Standards*, Carr and Harris argue that standards, while stable across schools or districts, need to be approached in a differentiated way. This means curriculum and pedagogy that creates interdisciplinary connections (via real-world questions or the investigation of problems by students), through relevance (allowing students to draw connections between their lives, their worlds and the learning content), and through family connections (creating ongoing two-way communication and support with families) (Carr & Harris, 2001). Under this view, good teachers adjust curriculum, aimed at the achievement of standardized learning targets, based on student capacity, interest and experience.

Finally, Brown & Knowles remind us that if we are to teach middle-schoolers, for example, then we must radically adjust bell schedules, classroom activities, and pedagogic styles based upon the developmental and cognitive changes and realities of our students (2007). Writing of the necessity with middle-schoolers to

include them in the curriculum planning process, the question of “standards” is raised for Brown and Knowles. If we’re allowing students to develop curriculum, if we’re seeking to differentiate curriculum based upon learner propensity and aptitude, what do we do with state learning targets and standards? In answering this question, Brown and Knowles share the following example:

One team of teachers decided to change the way they used the state content standards. These teachers showed the students the standards and had them create units using those standards. Students and teachers worked together to create learning activities and ways of assessment. The project was successful. When achievement tests scores came back, they were higher than in previous years (2007, p. 145).

Good teachers teach toward standards, but adjust curriculum with specific students in mind. To allow for strong and lasting student learning, effective teachers must, as Dewey argues, connect content to the experience of each individual student. Training practitioners to pay attention to student learning styles and to adjust standards-based curriculum with individual students in mind, equips them to provide opportunities for increased student engagement and learning. In short, the teacher adapts practice to serve the student-learner without losing the directive of guiding learning targets and standards.

## **Holistic Teachers**

Vanessa Siddle Walker in her insightful work, *Their Highest Potential*, chronicles a black school (Caswell County Training School - CCTS) as it was built and flourished and, later, as its students transitioned to integrated schools in response to Brown v. Board of Education (U.S. 1954) and the civil rights legislation of the 1950s and 60s. Mainly, Siddle Walker’s historical account highlights what was lost as students moved from the deep community and holistic education of CCTS and transitioned as outsiders into racially integrated academic institutions. Quoting an elementary teacher at CCTS the educational philosophy of the school becomes clear:

We took an interest in the child. For instance, if some of the kids came to school and didn’t have clothes to put on, we would go and buy them for them – like for some of the kids in my class. [I would] just take my own money. I’ve done that ...At that time, we didn’t have a cafeteria. And there was a little store, Mr. Lee’s store, and the kids could go out there and get crackers. And, of course, if they didn’t have the money, we would just let them have the money. It wasn’t but a nickel or a dime or something. So, we were interested in the whole child (1996, p. 124).

“Teaching,” Siddle Walker concludes, “was a worthy occupation and equivalent to a religious calling. Their job [the teachers at CCTS] did not separate the teaching from the taught. They were teaching subject matter to human beings. They were to be interested in ‘the whole child’ ” (1996, p. 150). In fact, Siddle Walker notes that teachers were required to show up at the churches where the families of their students attended, in order to get to know families and their situations. The school principal (Mr. Dillard) actually adopted speaking styles, relays Siddle Walker, that mirrored a black southern preacher, so that he could better connect with the parents of his students.

Schools are most often identified with their academic mission: student learning. While this focus is certainly at the heart of our educational system, the teachers and administrators at CCTS knew that to teach a child academically meant paying attention to the whole child, considering the needs with which he or she came to school (needs that could undermine academic performance) and the less academic pursuits necessary for

holistic education, e.g., moral education and citizenship development, etc. In fact, John Dewey argues toward these non-dichotomous (academic or social) ends of schooling:

I believe that the school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends. I believe that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living (Dewey, 1897).

Teaching effectively means attending to the whole child. This includes being aware of and sensitive to backgrounds and situations which always play into the ability to learn. This also means educating students to live, to use knowledge in living, and to understand that academics, social life and emotional well-being all fall within the purview of good teaching. With this view in mind, two salient threads of understanding and practice guide our teacher preparation: Sensitivity to Student Situation and Teaching the Whole Student.

#### *Sensitivity to Background and Situation*

Shirley Brice Heath undertook an interesting study outlined in her chapter, “Questioning at Home and at School.” In this study, Brice Heath noticed that African American students were often nonresponsive to the questioning of their white teachers. In her study one teacher, speaking about her black students, lamented, “They don’t seem to be able to answer even the simplest questions. I would almost think some of them have a hearing problem; it is as though they don’t hear me ask a question. I get blank stares to my questions. Yet when I am making statements or telling stories which interest them, they always seem to hear me” (Brice Heath, 1982, pp. 107-108). The import of Brice Heath’s work was to understand that the ways in which the black parents of Trackton interacted with their children (i.e., using statements or commands instead of questions) had limited their children’s capacity to respond in an educational setting with white teachers. Different styles of communication, based on socio-cultural experience, were limiting the academic progress of the student at Trackton.

Similarly, Jane Roland Martin in *Reclaiming a Conversation* argues from a philosophical viewpoint that we need to rethink the ways in which we do schooling, differentiating for gender (Roland Martin, 1985). Arguing against the Platonic notion of “gender-blind” education, where we believe gender makes no difference (i.e., education should be exactly the same for men and women) or the Rousseauian notion of “gender-bound” education, where gender makes all the difference (i.e., men and women should be educated in entirely different ways), Roland Martin argues toward an equality of educational experience which requires “gender-sensitive” education. Here she contends that because of the different cultural experiences of men and women, they come to the classroom differently and that, if we are to educate with equity, we must pay attention to those differences. Similarly, Claude Steele’s study of difference in the classroom finds that because of what he calls “stereotype threat,” the level of anxiety for certain students in certain situations causes them to underperform, e.g., women in a science class or black students on standardized tests (Steele, 1997). Steele finds, again, that not only cultural backgrounds, but the stereotypes that are internalized by students affect their ability to perform academically and to learn. James Banks, in fact, takes this a step further arguing that we should not only pay attention to underserved groups of students, such as women and students of color, but also the spectrum of differences within those groupings which impact learning readiness (Banks, 2001).

Thus, effective teachers must take into account the cultural backgrounds of their students, as well as develop sensitive pedagogy aimed at the learning of all students across difference. Good teachers individually know their students, understand through research and family interaction the backgrounds and realities of

underserved populations, and with this “whole knowledge” of the student (including his or her background and situation), adjusts pedagogy (including interactional style) to optimize student learning and performance.

### *Teaching the Whole Student*

Bryce Nelson documents an experiment in progressive education undertaken by the Seattle Public Schools in the early 1900s under the direction of Superintendent Frank Cooper. “Between 1911-1912 and the American involvement in World War I,” contends Nelson

the school board, the superintendent, principals, and teachers all acted toward students with an increased sense of a parental role. Certain expectations for student health, morality, citizenship, and civility were now taught and enforced . . .influencing almost all aspects of a student’s life, including things well outside the formal curriculum. . . .For students who were hungry, dirty, ill, delinquent, or dependent, the schools offered a variety of child welfare services, including a medical clinic and two parental schools for total custodial care of wayward youths (1988, pp. 68-69).

It is, of course, arguable whether schools should be responsible for student health or serve as “child welfare services,” but the mantra of Siddle Walker describing the schooling experience at CCTS rings true here; to educate well, we must educate the whole child. Dewey, predictably again chimes in here:

I believe that much of present education fails because it neglects this fundamental principle of the school as a form of community life. It conceives the school as a place where certain information is to be given, where certain lessons are to be learned, or where certain habits are to be formed. The value of these is conceived as lying largely in the remote future; the child must do these things for the sake of something else he is to do; they are mere preparation. As a result they do not become a part of the life experience of the child and so are not truly educative. I believe that moral education centres about this conception of the school as a mode of social life, that the best and deepest moral training is precisely that which one gets through having to enter into proper relations with others in a unity of work and thought. The present educational systems, so far as they destroy or neglect this unity, render it difficult or impossible to get any genuine, regular moral training (Dewey, 1897).

Effective teachers not only understand that a number of factors affect student learning (cultural and situational backgrounds), but that holistic teaching must also move beyond solely focusing upon academics. Moral education (i.e., in *Deweyian* language, helping students to enter into proper – or healthy – relationships with one another) and emotional education (e.g., helping students as they develop self-identity<sup>2</sup>), as well as academic education, all converge within the confines of schooling. In order for teachers to teach well, they must hold aptitudes in these areas and address these realities in their pedagogies and curricula.

Good teaching, including the preparation of effective teachers, is both an art and a science. The above outline, including research cited and other large bodies of corresponding research surrounding these ideas, have helped us to situate the Northwest School of Education and, thus, our teacher education programs, around preparing teachers with a student-learning focus. This means preparing teachers who measure and adjust their own practice based upon student learning. This also means training standards-directed teachers who maintain flexible pedagogies directed by student aptitude. And, finally, this means mentoring teachers

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<sup>2</sup> Brown and Knowles (2007) argue that in order to teach middle-schoolers well, we must not only understand the developmental and cognitive realities of the age group, but engage students in areas that matter most, including academics, social relations, identity construction activities, physical changes, etc. This is both true as we educate middle-schoolers and as we teach students in general.

with holistic dispositions toward teaching with sensitivity informed by student difference and breadth. From this understanding our training centers on instilling a number of important candidate proficiencies.

## **Candidate Proficiencies**

### *1. Learner Focused Teaching*

- a. The candidate is familiar with a variety of assessment tools through which to gauge student knowledge,
- b. The candidate uses a variety of student evidence to evaluate their teaching, and
- c. The candidate promotes learner metacognition (student voice) to enable learners to monitor and adjust their own learning strategies.

### *2. Adaptive Teaching*

- a. The candidate is prepared to know each student individually, to better understand styles of learning and aptitude,
- b. The candidate practices a variety of pedagogies that lead to student learning across diversity, and
- c. The candidate is able to adjust curriculum to the needs of students while continuing to teach in accordance with learning standards.

### *3. Holistic Teaching*

- a. The candidate is prepared to know each student individually, to understand the influences of cultural background and situation,
- b. The candidate practices sensitive pedagogy aimed at the learning of all students from different cultural backgrounds and situations, and
- c. The candidate understands holistic teaching, seeking to address the academic, moral, social and psychological aspects of learning.

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