A CATALOGUE OF MEASURES USED IN WESTERN OREGON’S LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM EFFECTS ON EARLY CAREER TEACHERS AND THE LEARNING OF THEIR STUDENTS

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PART II. INDIVIDUAL MEASURES, WITH RELATED EVIDENCE OF RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY
AN OUTLINE OF VARIABLES ADDRESSED

From the perspective of the central hypothesis explored

Independent variables (emphases of interest in teacher preparation programs)

Dependent variables
✓ Level 1: Classroom performance
✓ Level 2: Impact on learning
✓ Level 3: Teacher thinking and reflection on practice

Contextualizing variables
✓ The characteristics of students as learners
✓ Other classroom characteristics
✓ School characteristics
✓ District and community characteristics

Personalizing variables
✓ Commitment to teaching
✓ Sense of accountability for student learning
✓ Sense of power to achieve desired outcomes for students
✓ Perceived competence as a teacher in a standards-based school
✓ Stress
✓ Burnout

From the perspective of the “natural history” of teacher maturation during the 1st three years of teaching in Oregon’s standards-based schools

Performance variables (consistency and change in the dependent variables listed above)

Contextualizing variables (consistency and change in related variables listed above)

Personalizing variables (consistency and change in related variables listed above)

Supplementary information that expands or deepens understanding gained through all the above
A STUDY INCORPORATING A MODEL OF TEACHING AND TEACHER DEVELOPMENT THAT ACKNOWLEDGES THE COMPLEXITY OF BOTH IN STANDARDS-BASED SCHOOLS

SELECTED FEATURES OF PREPARATION PROGRAMS

STANDARDS FOR LEARNING AND ADOPTED CURRICULA

1 Program content and practicum experiences receiving different emphases were
1. Alignment with Oregon’s design for standards-based schools;
2. Focus on the connection of teaching and learning, for example through teacher work sampling;
3. Provision of on-going developmental assessment of candidates against clear and public performance standards resembling those encountered in Oregon’s K-12 schools; and
Differentiation by the developmental level of students a candidate is preparing to teach (Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle School, Secondary) was added as supporting information but not used in categorizing programs for inclusion in the research.
AN OVERVIEW OF THE MEASURES USED

I. Preparation program emphases of interest

- Alignment with Oregon’s design for standards-based schools;
- Focus on the connection of teaching and learning, for example, through teacher work sampling; and
- Provision of on-going developmental assessment of candidates against clear and public performance standards resembling those encountered in Oregon’s K-12 schools.

II. Dimensions of classroom performance

- Fall and spring OBSERVATIONS by master teachers of classroom-practices highlighted by a standards-orientation to schooling
  - Communicating to students what is to be learned
  - Aligning and varying instructional activities, materials and procedures to support students in their learning
  - Aligning and varying content to support students in their learning
  - Assessing student progress in learning and providing feedback on their learning
  - Creating a classroom environment that supports students in their learning

- Year 1 and 2 TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS PORTFOLIOS containing artifacts and other forms of information pertaining to
  - teacher planning around instructional units and related lessons
  - implementation of unit and lesson plans
  - attention given to state and district standards for learning in instructional planning, implementation, and assessment
  - sufficiency and quality of assessment(s) used to monitor student progress in learning

III. Teacher impact on learning

- Documented progress in student learning through one or more units of study (reported in each TEP Portfolio)
  - the quality of documentation and analysis around student progress in learning
  - the extent to which non-trivial learning occurred in and through the unit(s) of study reported
  - The cognitive level at which students are engaged (remember, understand, apply, etc) in classroom discourse and related work during each instructional period observed

- Observed impact on learning
  - the engagement of students in learning
  - the nature of student engagement with the subject matter they are expected to learn
  - the level of intellectual activities students are asked to pursue (memorize, understand, apply, etc)

* As conceived initially the project called for evidence from performance on state and/or district administered examinations, but Oregon’s current “benchmarked” system of examinations at grades 3, 5, 8 and 10 does not provide such evidence for teachers at grades K-2, 4, or 6 (nearly half of the teachers taking part in the research). Further complicating the use of such evidence is the impact of K through 2 teachers on student performance assessed at grade 3, and the impact of grade 4 teachers on student performance at grade 5. When these problems were fully understood we thought it might be possible to use school records of student progress toward standards for learning, but found these to vary so much in focus and quality across districts as to make them unusable for purposes of research.
IV. Teacher thinking and reflection on practice

A reflection-on-practice measure derived from Year 1 and Year 2 TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS PORTFOLIOS that is anchored to learning progress made by students in the units of study reported in each portfolio

Teacher thinking captured through Year 1 interviews
- Questions around preparation
- Questions around classroom practice
- Questions around student learning and its assessment/reporting

Teacher thinking captured through annual and end-of-project surveys involving open-end questions
- The nature of the school in which they were working as a context for standards-based teaching and learning
- The nature of their work with colleagues
- Consistency and change in oneself as a teacher during the first three years of teaching

V. Dispositions related to job performance

Commitment to teaching (a 6-item Likert style measure)

Perceived locus of accountability for student learning (a 12-item Likert style measure, accompanied by supplementary information)

Perceived likelihood of helping all students achieve high standards for learning (a 22-item Likert style measure, with 3 sub-scales)
- schooling in general
- one’s own capacity to help students progress in their learning
- one’s own capacity to help students who have difficulty in learning

Self-rating as a first year teacher on proficiencies required for a CONTINUING license to teach

Teacher stress (a 22-item Likert style measure, plus a single “global stress” rating)

Maslach burnout inventory, with 3 sub-scales
- Emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Lack of personal accomplishment

VI. The context in which teaching and learning occur

Classroom characteristics (from teacher surveys administered annually)
- Grade level, number of students enrolled
- Number of ESL students
- Number of IEP students
  - Mildly handicapped
  - Severely handicapped
  - Severely emotionally disturbed
  - Other
- Number of students in pull-out or supplementary programs
  - TAG
  - Title I
  - Other
Number of students unusually demanding of time and energy not identified in other categories (e.g., disruptive, withdrawn, dependent)
State calculated SES level for students at benchmark grades (3 and 5 at the elementary level)
Room equipment, supplies, organization
Teaching disruptions
Overall classroom demand rating of 1 to 6 (low to high) from all the above
Level of classroom support and assistance rating of help available to deal with all the above
Kind and level of mentoring received as a 1st year teacher
- Formal (little, lots)
- Informal (little, lots)

School characteristics
Decision participation
- Classroom level management decisions
- Classroom level curriculum and instructional decisions
- School level curriculum and instructional decisions
School climate survey (a 30-item Likert style measure administered annually)

Community

VII. Supplementary information
Open-ended interview on preparation, background, etc.
Focus group meetings on issues encountered as 1st year teachers
End-of-project reflective survey on perceptions, consistency and change during the 3 years of the project
The Longitudinal Nature of the Research in Perspective

Independent variables

First level intervening variables

Second level intervening variables

First level dependant variables

Second level dependant variables

TEACHER PREPARATION EMPHASES

Personal traits and characteristics

Quality of professional preparation

Year 1 Data

The school and district context in which a teacher works, including the school improvement and continued professional development activities in which teachers engage

The classroom and collegial context in which a teacher works

The number, characteristics, and learning trajectories of students taught

TEACHER CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LEARNING AND LEARNING DISPOSITIONS

QUALITY OF STUDENT WORK

STUDENT PROGRESS TOWARD STANDARDS FOR LEARNING

Year 2 Data

Year 3 Data

Change described; differences identified for purposes of data analysis

Expanded

Further expansion

Expanded

Further expansion