

California State University **Northridge**

Carnegie Corporation of New York

TEACHERS FOR A NEW ERA

with additional support from the Annenberg and Ford foundations

Schools as Clinics

The Teachers for a New Era Initiative (TNE) is guided by three design principles. Principle C describes teaching as a clinical practice profession. This report by the “Schools as Clinics” work group provides a set of general concepts, guidelines, and attributes that should be considered as California State University, Northridge (CSUN) develops clinical sites for fieldwork, student teaching, and related activities that support the creation of schools as clinical sites. The work group reviewed relevant literature, visited current fieldwork sites, and reviewed the practices of more than twenty other institutions specializing in the preparation of education professionals.

Based on the findings of the work group, this report has been created to provide a frame for the creation of District-University partnerships for the purpose of establishing multiple clinical sites that will prepare entry-level education professionals and enhance the effectiveness of experienced educators at all levels of the profession.

The guidelines established in this document are grounded in the recognition of the urban mission of CSUN, in the knowledge that effective learning must be contextualized in the authentic work place, and in the understanding that a true

working collaboration must be established between the District and the University as equal partners. In such a partnership, there must be mutual agreement on goals, governance, parameters, attributes, and other relevant dimensions of the collaboration.

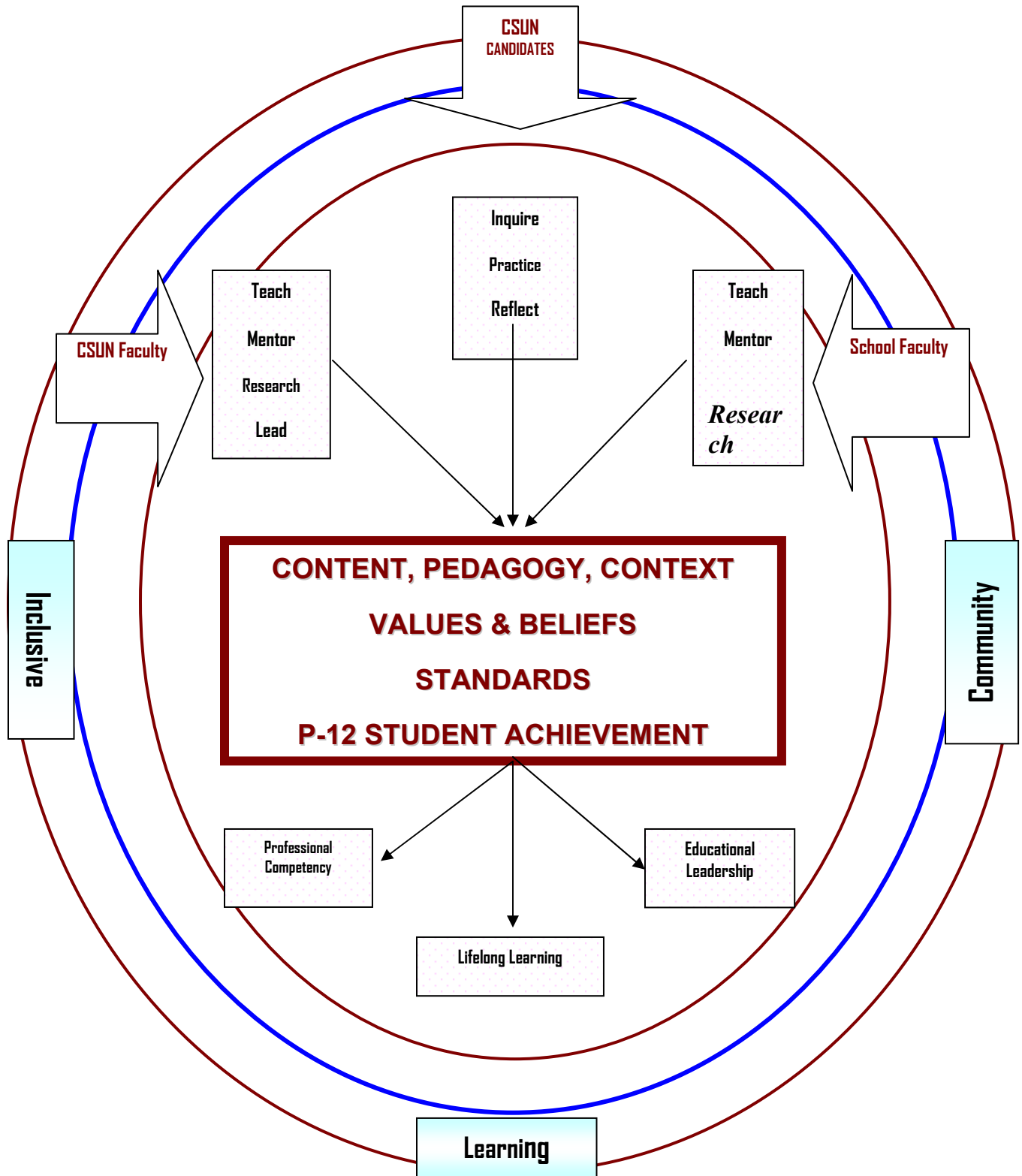
These partnerships are being developed in the context of the guiding principles of the Teachers for a New Era Initiative (TNE), which envisions establishing dynamic collaborative model teacher preparation programs that are responsive to the educational needs of the nation. The Districts and individual programs at CSUN are already accredited by agencies that include the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the Western Association of Secondary Schools, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and a variety of other discipline-based accreditation boards. The standards of these accrediting agencies will be enhanced by the principles of the TNE initiative.

CSUN, the Districts, and the individual clinical sites must work together from the inception to conceptualize all aspects of these partnership endeavors. It is expected that each partnership and each site within the partnership will be somewhat unique because of the individual nature of the physical plants, community missions, finances, and personnel. Thus, a written partnership agreement must be established to define the parameters of each partnership's governance structure, operational policies, personnel roles, and evaluations.

The work group suggests that the dialogue necessary to establish the partnerships begin with the guidelines contained in this document, including the current Conceptual Framework of the College of Education, the vision of the TNE initiative, the values of CSUN Faculty engaged in teacher preparation, and the graphic portraying the interplay of the partners (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Clinical Partnerships for Educational Preparation & Growth

A Developmental Process of Inquiry, Reflection, and Supervised Experience



As shown in figure 1, the TNE initiative conceptualizes all constituent groups as part of an inclusive learning community committed to educational preparation and growth through a developmental process of inquiry, reflection, and supervised experience. Although there are many interstitial groups including unions, parent associations, and school boards that influence the learning community, the primary constituents are faculty from the school site; faculty from CSUN including faculty from all six Colleges within the University; and CSUN students who are candidates for a variety of educational credentials granted by the California Department of Education. P-12 students are direct recipients of the instructional activities at the school site.

Learning community faculty teach, guide, enable, and mentor CSUN credential candidates and enhance the development of teachers and other education professionals at all stages of development. Faculty collaboratively conducts research at the clinical site and provides leadership to candidates and partnership members. CSUN students who are credential candidates inquire, practice their professional competencies, and reflect upon the content and pedagogy they are studying through a system of formative feedback received on their professional practices. P-12 students demonstrate learning as result of effective instructional experiences.

Factors impacting the learning of CSUN credential candidates include the following: their own knowledge of content, pedagogy and educational context; achievement of the school's students; the shared values and beliefs of the learning community; and local, state, and national educational standards. The outcome is P-12 students who are well taught by competent professionals.

The most critical elements that enable the success of educational preparation in the learning community are a shared vision, mission, values, and commitment; the established structure of governance and the unique attributes of the partnership's personnel and site attributes must also be considered. Policy

makers and leaders in the learning community must be engaged in developing operational constructs for these elements in the initiation and maintenance of clinical sites.

CSUN's Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for teacher preparation at CSUN has evolved over the last decade. CSUN has a rich tradition in preparing personnel to work in both school and non-school settings. The strength of this tradition stems from the fact that the preparation of educational personnel is viewed as a University-wide responsibility that is shared by six colleges including: 1) Humanities; 2) Social and Behavioral Sciences; 3) Science and Mathematics; 4) Health and Human Development; 5) Arts, Media and Communication; and 6) the Michael D. Eisner College of Education.

Teachers, counselors, special educators, school administrators, early childhood practitioners, and other education specialists all receive excellent initial and advanced training through the programs, courses, and centers of the six Colleges and their respective departments. The University offers undergraduate degrees in a wide variety of majors, and initial and advanced credentials in a wide range of specializations, including multiple subject, single subject, special education, music, art, counseling, psychology, school nursing, kinesiology, school administration, and others. Also offered are a wide range of master's degree programs.

A significant influence on educational programming is the highly diverse and urban environment in which the University is situated. Faculty recognize that local schools face difficult and complex challenges in educating large numbers of students from underrepresented groups, many of whom speak English as a second language. Examination and discussion of these issues has provided a renewed sense of educational purpose throughout the University. Also

energizing the faculty is the belief that many of the recently designed programs will benefit schools, teachers, students, parents, the community, and the University itself.

Degree and credential candidates enrolled in the programs at California State University, Northridge reflect the diversity of the community. Many are returning or part-time students with responsibilities accompanying full-time employment and families. Increasing numbers are from underrepresented populations, and many are among the first in their families to earn a college degree. These varied backgrounds and experiences present both challenges and opportunities as the University strives to offer programs to meet the needs of candidates and the needs of the broader community.

CSUN's Colleges use a developmental approach to promote reflection, critical thinking, and excellence in teaching through interdisciplinary studies in an inclusive learning community. Our graduates are well educated, highly skilled, and caring persons who are lifelong learners prepared to practice in an ever changing, multicultural world. They are committed to promoting achievement of all students as a primary measure of successful educational practice. Graduates assume service and leadership roles in public and private educational, health, and social programs and institutions. CSUN establishes and maintains productive partnerships with community schools and agencies. The faculty is committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, service, and collaboration with the community and professions.

In view of these beliefs, CSUN is committed to the following values that form the foundation of this Conceptual Framework:

- We value high standards in the acquisition and application of professional knowledge and skills in subject matter, pedagogy, and technology.

- We value the achievement of students at all levels and promote its accomplishment in accordance with national, state, and institutional standards.
- We value an inclusive learning community.
- We value creative, critical and reflective thinking and practice.
- We value ethical practice by caring professionals.

CSUN stresses that well prepared educational personnel are strong in their content knowledge and that they understand the pedagogy appropriate to that content and have insight into the context in which teaching and learning takes place. In pursuit of our outcomes, we utilize a developmental approach in the preparation of educational personnel that involves inquiry, reflection, and supervised experience. Key to these are nurturing clinical sites where aspiring education professionals can demonstrate and assess the depth of their content knowledge and set and achieve learning outcomes for every student in their charge.

If a school is to serve as a clinical site for the preparation of future teachers and other school personnel, as well as the continued development of experienced personnel, the clinical site must be a dynamic learning community—a setting where all participating faculty are committed to the professional growth and mastery learning of P-12 students, educators in training, educational professionals, parents, and citizens. The clinical school site must be an officially designated partnership of all necessary constituents, conducive to a developmental approach to education in a diverse environment, and be a place where learning is the outcome of inquiry, reflection, and supervised experience.

Clinical Sites Recommendation

As a result of studying the concept of schools as clinics, the work group recommends that CSUN form official TNE professional preparation partnerships

with local districts within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for the purpose of developing model clinical sites.

This effort must be informed by two key documents:

1. The Teachers for a New Era Initiative as described in *Carnegie Challenge 2002* written by Michael deCourcy Hinds, which suggests that a modern education professional must be able to assess and diagnose the learning potential and needs of students, then be able to prescribe learning outcomes and intervention which are executable within the context of the school. As learning progresses, the education professional must be able to adjust practice to incorporate new research, concepts of praxis, and experience. These abilities describe the clinical model used in other professions and help define teaching as an academically taught clinical practice.

2. The *Standards for Professional Development Schools* written by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, which suggests that school site learning environments that support candidate and faculty development must operate in the context of meeting all children's needs; that partners must share responsibility for professionals and students; and that partners must blend their expertise and resources to meet shared goals.

The work group recommends that the TNE initiative proceed by establishing a leadership team with the responsibility of initiating a dialogue between LAUSD and CSUN. The following ideal goals must be considered in establishing the written partnership agreement and these goals incorporate the following key elements: 1) Vision; 2) Governance; 3) Oversight Policies; 4) Operating Procedures and Policies; 5) Curriculum; 6) Personnel.

1. Vision

Develop a shared vision of a professional preparation site. Each clinical site must be officially recognized by the district and the university community as schools with a special mission. The parameters of the partnership agreement written for each site will vary based on the unique attributes of the site, but should meet these guidelines:

- Sites are initiated and sustained as a responsibility shared between the equal partners—the school District and the University.
- Designation as a clinical site brings the necessary procedures, personnel, funding, support, and physical plant to accomplish the stated mission.
- Site leadership teams are established and meet regularly to conceptualize, design, initiate, and sustain the partnership. The membership of the leadership team may vary across individual sites since needs and personnel vary.
- Site goals are established and expectations are stated so site personnel share the common vision that effective educators are developed in an inclusive, diverse, dynamic, professional, and collaborative. As experts in their individual professional fields, personnel are knowledgeable about theory and research, model concepts of best practice, are active in professional organizations, and seek opportunities to collaborate with other partnership participants.

2. Governance

Develop a shared governance structure with clear roles and responsibilities that includes all appropriate constituent groups, i.e. district administrators, university administrators, teachers' union, faculty union (UTLA, CFA), site faculty, university faculty (both COE and Arts/Sciences), and the site community (parents or other community members).

3. Oversight Policies

Develop an oversight policy committee with the following responsibilities:

- Meet at the inception of the partnership to legally formalize the partnership and to provide the resources, both financial and personnel, for the partnership to succeed in multiple clinical sites throughout the district.
- Establish contractual structures and language that value and reward faculty and administrator participation in the work of the partnership as a part of the normal work load, and that offer and expect partnership work of all faculty at the site and at the university (COE and Arts/Sciences).
- Establish the mechanisms for each designated clinical site to establish and sustain a viable partnership, assisting site leadership teams to solicit broad participation in the partnership and to design the specifics of the site's work to reflect the needs of the students and the values of the site community.

4. Operating Procedures and Policies

Develop policies and procedures that are executable and acceptable to both the district and the university, which might include:

- Faculty of the school are considered university adjuncts, as they work toward the common goal of educating university candidates. They may co-teach courses, serve as guest speakers, and work with university faculty on matters of curriculum, assessment, fieldwork, joint projects, presentations at professional conferences, etc. On-going support is provided for the continued growth of the site faculty.
- Faculty of the university are considered adjunct district faculty, as they work toward the common goal of educating P-adult students. They may facilitate in-services, serve as guest speakers at site events, and work with district faculty on matters of curriculum, assessment, joint projects,

- presentations at professional conferences, etc. On-going support is provided for the continued growth of the university faculty.
- Faculty at the site and the university have equal opportunity to participate in partnership work, and all are expected to participate. Level of participation varies based on other responsibilities.
 - Tenure and promotion structures value and reward partnership work.
 - Work load of faculty and administrators incorporates partnership duties.
 - Partnership participants are well prepared to provide leadership in designing and facilitating the professional development of others in the field, both novices and professionals at all levels.
 - Mentors and fieldwork supervisors are selected from site personnel and others. On-going training and support are provided for mentors and supervisors, e.g., methods, procedures, stipends/course vouchers.
 - Data gathered from the clinical site provide evidence that P-adult learners are well served through participation in the partnership.
 - A common calendar is developed to meet the needs of the district and the university.
 - The sharing of resources enhances learner preparation, e.g., technology, science labs, media, events, performances, libraries.
 - Observation of professionals in the work environment and students in the learning environment is conducted without disrupting or unduly impacting that environment, e.g., observation of instruction in classrooms, observation of counseling sessions, and observation of IEP meetings.
 - Physical space is dedicated for classes and meetings including classrooms where university courses meet on-site, private rooms for mentors and students to meet, office space for a site liaison or staff.
 - No student or personnel are prohibited from participation, e.g., site meets ADA requirements, distance not prohibitive or transportation provided.
 - Every district and university program (COE and Arts/Sciences) has the opportunity to use the clinical site if that use better prepares students and candidates.

5. Curriculum

Design a meaningful curriculum for P-12 students, CSUN undergraduates preparing for a career in education, CSUN credential candidates, and site personnel and other developing professionals at all stages of their careers. The curriculum should meet the following guidelines:

- Connect to the learner's prior knowledge and experience.
- Be sensitive to issues of diversity.
- Assist learners in the construction of knowledge within a low-risk environment that fosters social justice.
- Remain student centered, involving diverse learners in ways that are both active and interactive.
- Strive for meaningful learning based on effective communication and the development of a community of learners.
- Provide for assessment in a variety of forms which serve as feedback for the professional as well as the learner.
- Advance teaching, learning, and success for all learners.

6. Personnel

Develop a profile of the characteristics of faculty and administrators who share a common vision related to student learning and the development of educational professionals. These partners help the site fulfill its mission by possessing professional attributes that permit them to serve in the key roles of teacher, mentor, researcher, and leader. Valued roles and characteristics include:

Teachers

- Hold the appropriate credential and are experienced, knowledgeable and exhibit teaching success as well as pleasure in the art and skill of teaching.
- Believe that all children can learn and hold high expectations for student learning.

- Exemplify concepts of best practice in establishing a safe, healthy learning environment based on grounded theories of inclusion, engagement, management, assessment, curricular planning, and differentiated instruction.
- Implement California Content Standards and Frameworks using a variety of instructional materials and methods.
- Use reflection, professional reading, and materials from professional development to refine pedagogy.
- Establish good rapport with students, parents, colleagues, and administrators.

Mentors

- Model moral, ethical, professional behavior.
- Commit to the professional growth and development of CSUN candidates and developing professionals at all stages of their careers.
- Model a wide range of effective techniques in all domains of practice.
- Articulate the rationale for best professional practices.
- Provide rich opportunities for candidates and others who seek to refine their practice.
- Supervise novice and developing professionals using proven procedures.

Researchers

- Establish an environment of inquiry learning for P-12 students.
- Analyze the findings of current research and seek applications to current practice.
- Establish action research projects to examine the connection between student and candidate achievement and classroom practice.
- Participate in school-wide projects to investigate, challenge, and improve elements of the learning environment.
- Collaborate on presentations related to the partnership's work.

Leaders

- Assist other partnership personnel to establish an inclusive, dynamic, viable clinical site.
- View self as an instructional innovator who designs and implements research-based curricula and retains currency in a field of study.
- Seek opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and students on projects that strengthen the partnership effort and enhance learning.
- Active in professional organizations related to education and/or a field of study.
- Involved in the school site's community and mission, providing opportunities for CSUN candidates to become involved in site activities.

Summary

In summary, the "Schools as Clinics" work group recommends that an official professional preparation partnership be formed between CSUN and LAUSD to jointly develop a vision, mission, goals, guidelines, and attributes of professional preparation clinical sites.