Charter Colleges of Education:

A Review of the Literature

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Preface and Definition

This review of literature over the past two decades seeks to illuminate the concept of "charter colleges of teacher education." It was undertaken by Teacher Preparation Analytics for the University System of Georgia (USG), and it seeks to provide information that will assist USG's own consideration of charter colleges of education as an option for the state's teacher preparation efforts.

The literature specifically on charter colleges of teacher education is very thin, and apart from a single program evaluation almost all of the literature in the field consists of descriptive studies, accounts of journalists, policy reports (not necessarily unbiased), and opinion pieces. A substantial portion of the literature is unpublished or self-published and likely lacking rigorous peer review. Because there is such a dearth of literature specifically devoted to charter colleges of education, the author of this review also examined articles on charter colleges and universities per se and on several alternative forms of teacher preparation that have affinities with the concept of charter colleges of teacher education. In addition, the author visited relevant Web sites in an effort to obtain additional information that was not otherwise available, especially information about newly developed charter or charter-like teacher education programs and about changes in more established programs.

Thin though it may be, the relevant literature indicates that there is affinity between the idea of charter colleges of teacher preparation and the idea of K-12 charter schools. That affinity principally involves an agreement in both cases between the chartered institution and a state agency that would normally govern the institution's practices and policies. The agreement provides the chartered institution with an increased degree of autonomy and waivers from certain rules and regulations in exchange for the chartered institution's accountability for specific measurable – and often exceptional – educational results.

The first legislation authorizing K-12 charter schools was passed in Minnesota, in 1991, and the first charter school was established there the following year (Junge, 2012). The birth of charters at the post-secondary level occurred at almost exactly the same time, when in 1992 the Maryland General Assembly granted St. Mary's College of Maryland status as public charter institution to be governed by an independent board of trustees. The proximity in the establishment of the two charter institutions does not indicate any sort of link in their origin, however. The impetus for the charter legislation in Minnesota was precisely to gain exemptions from state regulations that charter proponents thought impeded needed reforms in educational quality and to make schools more responsive to parents and teachers (Larson, 2005). The impetus for St. Mary's request for charter status was to gain greater freedom over its programs and internal operations in exchange

for a reduction in state funding (Berdahl and MacTaggart, 2000). The St. Mary's charter was for the institution as a whole and not specifically for teacher preparation.

The first actual charter college of *education* was proposed by the State University of California at Los Angeles, in 1993 – shortly after the establishment of the original two charter institutions – and it was chartered and inaugurated in 1995 (Paul, Wong, and Tierney, 2001). There is some indication in the literature that the effort to develop a charter school of education at Cal State L.A. indeed derived its inspiration from the nascent charter school movement in K-12 education (Paul et al., 2001; Hafner and Slovacek, 1998; and Mims, Slovacek, and Wong, 1998). The charter school movement in K-12 education has continued to grow and has become a major force. This is not the case at the post-secondary level, however, either for charter colleges and universities as a whole or for charter colleges of teacher education. There continue to be proponents of charter colleges, and new articles and papers on the topic appear from time to time – more commonly about chartering entire institutions than about chartering colleges of education or other discrete academic units. (See, for example, Koons, 2011; Mead and Carey, 2011; and Sjogren and Fay, 2010.)

In the end, the author was able to find information about only two unequivocal examples of charter colleges of education in the U.S., though there are other teacher education programs that are highly innovative and have affinities with the charter colleges. One of those charter colleges has been established only very recently, and its foundation may indicate a renewed interest in charter colleges of education and the possibility that they, too, will become an important force in the coming years.

The Charter College of Education at the California State University, Los Angeles – The Nation's First Charter College of Teacher Education

The Charter School of Education at the California State University, Los Angeles was launched in 1995 and granted exemptions from a number of state, institutional, and California State University System policies. After successfully completing its five-year probationary period, the school was given a new, ten-year charter and its name changed to the Charter *College* of Education (CCOE) (CCOE Annual Report 1999-2000). In oral and written testimony given by CCOE founding dean Alan Mori to a 2002 hearing before the Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Mori noted two principal reasons for seeking charter status for CCOE (Mori, 2002):

1. To give the college greater flexibility in its curriculum to meet the perceived education reform needs of the Los Angeles Unified School District that CCOE principally serves
2. To give the faculty greater flexibility in developing appropriate new programs requiring extensive faculty involvement in the K-12 schools.

CCOE appears to have started initially as a post-baccalaureate program only, and then subsequent to receiving its charter status also began developed a bachelor's degree program – a B.A. in Urban Learning – leading to certification (Mori, 2002). CCOE continues to offer primarily post-baccalaureate programs – either a Master's Degree or teaching credential only – with the B.A. in Urban learning undergraduate option (Charter College of Education, California State University, Los Angeles Web site).

Several articles discuss in some detail the events leading up to the establishment of CCOE, the important motivating factors for seeking charter status, and the inspiration for the operating and governance structures the College adopted in becoming a charter institution. A longstanding partnership between Cal State and a K-6 charter school in Los Angeles that had adopted the Accelerated Schools model strongly influenced the College's decision to seek charter status and the College culture that emerged (Mims et al., 1998). The CCOE dean and faculty members believed that the school of education could not be adequately responsive to the needs of the K-6 school and others like it in the L.A. district unless it could make fundamental changes in its structure and program. Given various state policies that were in force at the time, these changes would have been virtually impossible to implement (Hafner and Slovacek, 1998).

The state university system waived a number of standard university program approval requirements for the College, gave it greater control over its budget, approved significant revisions in the College's faculty policies, and allowed the College to implement new governance structures. These dispensations were at the core of CCOE's charter status. In addition CCOE worked out an arrangement with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) to waive several traditional certification requirements that would have impeded the College's efforts to make radical changes in its preparation program (Hafner and Slovacek, 1998). [*] (In light of CCOE's experience, the CCTC has changed its certification requirements so that a waiver for the kind of program CCOE developed is no longer necessary (Mori, 2002)).

In return, CCOE was to be accountable for demonstrable and measurable improvements over the five-year period for which the charter provisions were initially granted. In particular, CCOE had to show increased classroom effectiveness of the teachers it produced and greater achievement gains of the students in the schools the College and its teacher graduates worked with (Mori 2002).

A number of important significant administrative and program innovations resulted from CCOE's charter status:

- CCOE's approval process for new courses and new degree programs and requirements was able to bypass the university-wide committee process, allowing approvals in one

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[*] It is unclear from the literature the author was able to find whether CCOE also waived any state accreditation requirements.

semester's time rather than two years' time (Hafner and Slovacek, 1998). Kim (2004) provides evidence of the level of innovation the College's charter status facilitated.

- The College's tenure and review process was able to count faculty collaboration and community service much more heavily toward tenure and promotion (Paul et al., 2001)
- Teaching schedules of program faculty could be coordinated so that they all taught fall through spring quarters, with summer work voluntary for extra pay, in order to facilitate better coordination of classes and other teaching responsibilities (Hafner and Slovacek, 1998)
- Greater funding was available for faculty travel and release time that were connected to the development of new courses and other program innovations (Hafner and Slovacek, 1998)
- New teacher internship and degree programs were developed to give teacher candidates opportunities to exercise significant authority over their classrooms prior to receiving full teacher certification (Hafner and Slovacek, 1998)
- College faculty were able to spend significantly more time in K-12 classrooms, both in the CCOE's own lab schools and in other schools in the L.A. district (Mims et al., 1998)
- CCOE was able to establish relationships much more autonomously and effectively with schools, business, and other organizations outside the university and to create strong P-20 and College-community partnerships (Hafner and Slovacek 1998)

Particularly significant in the CCOE transformation – and technically one of the hallmarks of a chartered institution in the truest sense (Berdahl and MacTaggart, 2000) – was the adoption of a new College governance structure that signaled its increased autonomy Paul et al. (2001) note a number of the singular features of CCOE's governance system:

- Flat governance structure, with much less hierarchy than in a traditional university, even at the school or college level
- Involvement, on a fairly equal level, of senior and junior faculty as well as staff
- Involvement of teachers and staff from K-12 partner schools, as well as other community stakeholders – also on the level of equals
- Locus of initial decision-making is "Clusters" based on K-12 educational priorities, which defined the focus of the P-20 and College-community partnerships (e.g., technology, literacy),
- A Steering Committee of multiple stakeholders provides guidance and oversight to the Clusters
- A body called the "School as a Whole" approves decisions that have implications for the entire College. It, too, is composed of multiple stakeholders – all faculty and staff in the College, as well as community representatives

Mims et al. (1998) note that one of the notable results of CCOE's reorganization is greatly increased faculty involvement in college decision-making and greater cooperation across

traditional college divisions, e.g., Curriculum and Instruction, Administration and Counseling, Special Education, etc. (Mims et al., 1998).

An initial five-year evaluation of CCOE (Horn 2000) concluded that CCOE had been successful in

- Fundamentally revising its approach to teacher preparation by focusing the locus of preparation on the classroom
- Increasing education faculty collaboration, enthusiasm, and involvement
- Establishing an effective shared governance structure
- Preparing teachers who were well-grounded in subject matter and pedagogy
- Creating strong partnerships between the university and the surrounding K-12 schools
- Responding directly to the city of Los Angeles' teacher shortage with teachers who understood the needs of students and teachers in urban schools
- Making teacher preparation a central focus and commitment of the University

It was less clear, according to the evaluation, whether CCOE had been successful in

- Developing a workable evaluation of its graduates that could demonstrate their superior effectiveness in the classroom
- Significantly improving the achievement of students in their graduates' K-12 classrooms

The evaluation also cautioned that the future of the program could be threatened by

- Any reduction in the strength and effectiveness of the dean's leadership
- Any wavering of support for the continue risk-taking necessary for the further development of the program
- A failure to recognize the time and effort required on the part of administration, faculty, staff, and external partners to make the program successful

Relay Graduate School of Education

Although its initial incarnation was as Teacher U, affiliated with Hunter College, the Relay Graduate School of Education was chartered by the New York State Board of Regents in 2011 as a stand-alone graduate school, completely independent of any institution of higher education. It has the authority to offer an MAT degree in elementary education and in several middle school fields for teachers who are currently in the classroom on a temporary license and have 0-2 years of prior teaching experience. Entering students have required summer classes prior to their inaugural year in the Relay-affiliated classroom and then during the summer between their first and second-and-final teaching year of their Relay program. Relay program participants also take classes on weeknights and Saturdays during the school year at locations near their teaching

assignments (Relay Graduate School of Education Web site). According to Otterman (2011), 40% of Relay's classes are online.

Adopting the model of Teacher U, Relay involves a partnership between the program and several charter school management organizations and charter networks: the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP), Uncommon Schools, and Achievement First (Relay Web site). Relay teachers are prepared while teaching in charter schools managed by the partners or in other New York City or Newark public schools, and many Relay graduates remain in positions in those schools after they complete the two-year preparation program.

Relay's charter status enables it, on the one hand, to enjoy privileges not normally granted to an institution that is free-standing and independent of an institution of higher education; and, on the other hand, to be exempt from requirements imposed upon traditional, institutionally-affiliated preparation programs (New York State Education Department, 2011):

- Relay is authorized to grant graduate degrees and recommend candidates for state licensure
- Relay does not have to meet stringent facilities requirements, although it has a small physical library and access to internet resources which it claims meet the degree needs of the students in its program
- Program faculty members are not doctorate-level scholars engaged in research but are recognized master K-12 teachers who have demonstrated their success in the classroom. Relay does have a research staff, however, which assesses the program's progress, success, and impact. (See Relay Web site, "Research at RGSE.")
- The Relay curriculum does not mirror the mix of theory and pedagogy courses characteristic of most post-baccalaureate licensure programs. Instead of requiring students to complete a certain number of standard 3-credit courses, Relay requires its students to complete a number of modules focused on acquiring pedagogical competencies. The basis for these modules is the 60 effective pedagogical skills identified by Doug Lemov (2010) in *Teach Like a Champion* (Otterman, 2011). These modules, as well as the summer courses, achieve some integration of education theory into their practical focus.
- In order to receive their teaching degree, Relay candidates must demonstrate their acquisition of the 60 pedagogical competencies and provide evidence during their time in the program that their K-12 pupils have made at least one year of academic progress during a given academic year (Sawchuk, 2011).

Somewhat curiously, there was no mention of the Relay board of trustees in the application for charter status. And there was no acknowledgment that the board of a novel and free-standing institution of higher education has a weighty fiduciary responsibility and needs to be highly accomplished. As an autonomous educational institution, Relay does indeed have its own board.

It is composed of representatives of the graduate school's charter network partners and several other nationally known educators and business leaders (Relay Web site).

Relay is set up so that bulk of candidates' learning is gained in the process of teaching in the classroom, under the supervision and critique of master teachers. The program relies heavily on the use of videotapes, both tapes of students' own practice for evaluation purposes and instructional tapes that illustrate exemplary and poor practice by other teachers. Relay instruction is virtually free of lectures, and classes involve a good deal of discussion among students and faculty that focuses overwhelmingly on teaching practice (Osterman, 2011).

Relay's almost exclusive focus on candidates' acquisition of teaching skills has drawn criticism from many educators in the field (Osterman, 2011; Sawchuck, 2011). Critics fault the program for shortcutting what they believe is the necessary focus on learning theory and for giving students a false impression that teaching involves the short-term acquisition of skills and reliance on simplistic protocols rather than the lifelong perfection of a craft that requires deep insight and understanding. Other critics believe students are short-changed by faculty members' lack of academic backgrounds and strong interest in research. Even the state review team that ultimately recommended granting Relay's charter expressed concern that the program did not adequately recognize the importance of scholarly activity for a graduate-level program (New York State Education Department, 2011). In spite of such criticism, however, Relay received interim NCATE accreditation and is a candidate for accreditation from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (Relay Web site).

Other Innovative Teacher Preparation Efforts

A number of additional programs that train K-12 teachers have groundbreaking elements that are similar to those of one or the other of the two true charter colleges of education previously discussed but fall short of being true charter programs.

1. Berry College

Berry College, of Georgia, is a private institution that calls its education division the Charter School of Education and Human Sciences. The move to charter status seems to have been inspired, at least in part, by the suggestion by the National Commission on Teaching for America's Future (NCTAF, 1996) that charter status might enable colleges of education to be more nimble and innovative (McDowell, 2000). Berry's charter college of education was born in 1997, and it began to undertake a significant revision of its pre-existing undergraduate teacher preparation program in 1998, which involved a number of changes including the following (McDowell, 2000):

- Strengthened its Professional Development School model of preparation to enable teacher candidates' K-12 classroom experience to be the principal focus of their preparation program
- Placed all teacher education faculty in the K-12 classroom for one full day a week supervising Berry's teacher candidates
- Greatly increased the integration of technology into the preparation program curriculum and into candidates' K-12 classroom practice

There appears to be no independent governing body for the Berry Charter College, however, that is distinct from the College's own board of trustees. The author cannot find any discussion in the literature about the decision-making structure in the teacher-preparation program or about specific changes in College policies that allowed Berry to make its programmatic changes. It is conceivable that the Charter College had to ask for important changes in faculty-related policies from the Berry College administration or trustees in order to enable education faculty to increase their time in K-12 classrooms, but the author can find no discussion of this possibility. The only noteworthy statement the author can find about Charter College decision-making is a brief mention in McDowell (1998) that the revision of the teacher preparation program was a joint effort of the faculties of Education and Arts and Sciences (p. 7). The College also has a Master's Degree program (Berry Charter College Web site), but the author could find no information about the origin or administration of that program.

Because Berry College is a private institution, not a public institution, the changes it made required no special arrangements with a statewide governing board. Moreover, Berry's program changes did not require it to obtain any waivers or special permissions from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission – the state agency responsible for the licensure and certification of the state's teachers and the approval of public and private preparation programs in the state (Email correspondence between Charles Coble and Penney McRoy, Georgia Professional Standards Commission, January 12, 2012).

It may be that at the time Berry College initiated its Charter College in 1997, public institutions in the state of Georgia would have had to obtain special waivers from the state university system or the Professional Standards Commission in order to revise their teacher preparation programs along the lines of the program at Berry. It is not technically accurate, however, to identify Berry' Charter College as a true charter program. Moreover, many of the changes that made the program innovative in 1998 and may have implied the need for institutions to undertake important policy changes or seek various kinds of state waivers are much more commonplace today and likely consistent with current state and institutional policies.

2. The Learning Center, Douglas County, Colorado

In 2006, the Douglas County, Colorado, School District created The Learning Center as an independent program to license teachers in high-need subjects in the district. (DeGrow, 2008).

The program received waivers from the Colorado State Board of Education for a two-year trial that enabled it to do the following (DeGrow, 2008):

- Issue teacher licenses under its own authority to teacher candidates who successfully complete one of the district's licensure programs. This included candidates with existing licenses who desired a new credential in one of the district's high-need fields and candidates with an undergraduate degree and adequate subject matter coursework who wanted to obtain an initial teaching license in a high-need field
- Hire, with a license waiver, professionals currently working in their chosen fields with content knowledge in high-need subjects (e.g., engineers with knowledge of science and mathematics) who were interested in teaching a single course on a temporary, adjunct basis
- Waive normal state or district guidelines governing contracts, dismissal, or salaries for the teachers hired through the district's licensure program

The District was required to demonstrate measurable improvement in student achievement by those students instructed by Learning Center graduates if the pilot were to be continued beyond its initial two years (DeGrow, 2008).

The actual teacher training for licensure candidates involved an intensive week-long "boot camp" and then additional training two evenings per month. The nature of additional classes varied depending upon the assessed development needs of the teacher candidates. Classes were heavily focused on research-based best-practice, with little focus specifically on education theory. And teacher candidates receive intensive on-the-job training and mentoring (DeGrow, 2008).

All indications are that the Douglas County program is no longer in operation. The author could find neither information about the program on the district's Web site nor independent confirmation that the program still exists. In any event the Douglas County Learning Center program seems to have had more the character of an alternative licensure program that was granted special waivers for a limited purpose than a truly innovative teacher preparation program. Indeed, the character of its licensure training seemed to be much like that of many other alternate route programs that expedite the placement of teachers into the classroom and offer practice-based coursework on the side.

3. Teacher Residency Programs

Teacher Residency Programs are a growing trend in teacher preparation that has been embraced not only by innovators but by mainstream organizations in the teacher preparation field such as the principal teacher preparation accrediting organization, NCATE (NCATE, 2010). The teacher residency model typically is geared toward teacher candidates who already have at least a bachelor's degree. Residency programs put first year teacher candidates in one or more K-12 classrooms alongside accomplished mentor teachers, generally in urban schools, and then give

candidates gradually increasing responsibility until they reach the point when they are ready to assume full responsibility for a K-12 classroom. Residency programs are fundamentally centered around teacher candidates' classroom experience, just as some of the previously discussed programs have been. At the end of the first, or residency, year of the program, teachers who have passed the required examinations and assessments and have shown themselves to be ready to assume full-time responsibility for a K-12 classroom are licensed to teach and generally earn a master's degree. New full-time teachers remain connected to the residency program after they are licensed, however, receiving mentoring and induction support from the residency program usually for at least a year and, in some residency programs, for two or more years (Urban Teacher Residency United Web site; Berry, Montgomery, Curtis et al., 2008).

Some residency programs are developed by colleges of education themselves, and indeed NCATE aspires to have residency programs become the normative model for all teacher education programs (NCATE, 2010). Many residency programs, however, are established by school districts or charter school operators and tailored to serve the instructional needs of teachers in those districts or charter school networks (see, for example, Boston Teacher Residency Web site and Aspire Teacher Residency: Program Overview). All of the current residency programs, however, involve partnerships between the districts or program originators and schools of education at institutions of higher education. The ihes provide appropriate coursework and sometimes supervision, they grant degrees to program graduates, and they recommend successful graduates for teacher licensure.

That school districts and networks of charter schools develop their own teacher preparation programs does not make them ipso facto charter colleges of education. Nevertheless, the hybrid programs appear to accomplish essentially the same goal as the two true charter colleges of teacher education discussed earlier, namely, to focus teacher preparation more fundamentally on candidates' real-world classroom experience and to give K-12 partners a much more central role in shaping the nature of the teacher preparation curriculum and in providing instruction. Moreover, the unconventional nature of the residency programs means that the colleges of education involved with them likely had to obtain institutional support for the design of the programs, as well as institutional agreement that the programs meet academic standards and that successful completion warrants awarding a master's degree.

The Future of Charter Colleges of Education

It is difficult to know what the U.S. education scene holds for the future of charter colleges of education. The Charter College of Education (CCOE) at Cal State L.A. is the only example so far of a true charter college that has demonstrated its long-term sustainability, although there is no reason to assume that the Relay Graduate School of Education won't prove equally viable. But there has been no rush since CCOE's founding in 1995 to replicate its successful effort to radically transform teacher preparation over an entire university-based school of education and to

get state and institutional support for changing governance, budgeting, and faculty policies to make that transformation possible. In an article Richard Wisniewski wrote for *Education Week* in 1997 in which he advocated for the idea of charter colleges of education, Wisniewski suggested that the relevant *state* policies would be reasonably easy to change in order to make charter teacher preparation programs possible. But he cautioned that the traditional structure and culture of *higher education* might present more formidable obstacles (Wisniewski, 1997).

In 2004, the Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction announced that the state would be developing two pilot charter colleges of education as a first step towards the creation of more such programs (Hoff, 2004). It appears that two such pilot projects were indeed funded and developed, one at Wright State University (Wright Charter College of Education, 2006). The current Web site for the Wright State University College of Education contains no mention of the Charter College of Education, however. This fact, as well as independent verification, indicate that Ohio's pilot charter college of education project was ultimately discontinued (Communication between Edward Crowe and Thomas Lasley, former dean of education at the University Dayton, shared June 22, 2012). The author could find no literature, however, that explains the reasons for the termination of the Ohio program.

In 2003 – thus at around the same time as the Ohio charter pilot program – the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill, the Ready to Teach Act (H.R.2211), which would have provided funding for states to establish charter colleges of education and other innovative teacher preparation programs. That bill, however, died in the Senate (Ready to Teach Act of 2003).

The founding of the Relay Graduate School of Education may be the harbinger of a new approach to charter colleges of education, namely, the creation of programs that are completely independent of existing colleges and universities. Indeed, the same openness by the New York State Board of Regents that resulted in the granting of a charter to Relay has led to the establishment of a Master of Arts in Teaching program by the American Museum of Natural History (Sawchuk, 2001). The Museum's MAT program is completely autonomous, with the Museum's own staff teaching all science courses leading to a teaching certificate in secondary grades Earth Sciences. The program is a residency model that places teacher candidates in several New York City Schools during the school year and provides opportunities to work with Museum scientists and educators during the summer (American Museum of Natural History MAT Program Web site).

The Relay program also has spurred interest in replicating its model beyond New York State. In 2011, another bill was introduced in Congress to promote charter schools of education. The GREAT Teachers and Principals Act (S.1250) originated in the U.S. Senate and may have been directly inspired by the Relay program (Riley, 2011). The bill would provide grants to states to create principal or teacher preparation academies. Such an academy is defined as one which "enters into a charter with a State authorizer that specifies the goals and outcomes expected of

the teacher [or principal] preparation academy and the obligations of the State authorizer (Great Teachers and Principals Act, Section 3, Definitions).

These academies must meet the following requirements:

- Ensure that a significant part of candidates' training is clinical and under the supervision of strong mentor teachers or administrators
- Set goals for the number of teachers or principals to be produced and the percentage who must demonstrate measurable proven effectiveness
- Award a degree or certificate of completion only after graduates have a demonstrated track record of success
- Survey alumni to track the percentage who are still in schools and classrooms
- Set a timeline for the production of program graduates

In exchange for meeting these requirements, the preparation programs are freed from various kinds of requirements that are common in more traditional, college-based teacher education programs:

- That faculty have advanced degrees or conduct academic research
- That programs have some minimum level of infrastructure
- That students take specific courses or meet specific credit requirements
- Specifications for candidates' undergraduate coursework, which are waived so long as candidates can pass state-approved content area assessments
- Program accreditation

The bill is presently under consideration in the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

The movement towards creating charter teacher education programs that are independent of established universities is also reflected in a paper from the Brookings Institution calling for the establishment of charter colleges of early childhood education (Mead and Carey, 2011). Echoing the earlier judgment of Wisniewski (1997), the paper argues precisely that traditional colleges and universities are too inflexible and too tradition-bound to respond adequately to the preparation needs of the early childhood education (ECE) field. While some early childhood educators need a deep understanding of child development and sophisticated teaching skills, the article proposes that a great number of ECE classroom staff can fill valuable, less demanding roles successfully with a much less rigorous preparation in the field. It is this less comprehensive kind of preparation, in particular, that Mead and Carey believe traditional colleges and universities are ill-suited to offer.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

The literature related to charter colleges of teacher education is simply too thin to ground any confident conclusions or definitive lessons. It is nevertheless suggestive of possible trends, important issues, cautions, and reasonable conclusions.

One apparent trend is that the evolution of the idea of charter colleges of teacher education is moving away from an affiliation of charter programs with traditional colleges and universities. This may be a consequence of the resistance of colleges and universities, noted by Wisniewski (1997) and Mead and Carey (2011), to the kind of radical change that charter colleges and more field-based teacher preparation programs would require of them. It may be, however, that in the face of efforts by state agencies to pare down requirements for coursework and institutional capacity that have until very recently been seen as a pre-requisite for the approval of teacher preparation programs, more traditional colleges and universities will feel increasing freedom to innovate as well as increasing pressure from non-ihe competitors. On the one hand, this may motivate an increase in the number of more ihes seeking to create charter teacher preparation programs. On the other hand, if state requirements for the development of new teacher preparation programs continue to be reduced, there may be no need for ihes to seek charter status for their programs but only to remove the internal institutional obstacles to their creation.

For many educators, however, the loss of the kind of theoretical understanding and academic rigor that more traditional programs of teacher preparation can instill in their candidates is an intolerable sacrifice and inimical to the expectations of a graduate education, in particular. This can be seen in the objections filed with the New York State Board of Regents to the application of Relay for its graduate school charter program (New York State Department of Education, 2011). Many colleges of education may thus hold out for a model that seeks to blend the residency approach and a more traditional emphasis on theory and intellectual rigor. It remains to be seen what impact the market forces in teaching and teacher preparation will have on what seem to be two competing visions of teacher preparation. It also remains to be seen whether efforts to improve the evaluation of teacher preparation programs provide new information about the superiority of some programs over others that ultimately enables us to determine whether the absence or presence of specific program components is especially important to the career success of program graduates (Kane and Staiger, 2012).

The 2010 report of National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), *Transforming Teaching Education Through Clinical Practice*, clearly emphasizes the need to make teacher candidates' clinical experience the central focus of preparation programs (NCATE, 2010). The entire teacher preparation field, therefore, appears to be moving in a more practice-based direction that will require programs to change substantially. A key question that colleges and schools of education need to address if they intend to embrace this change is the extent to which the present policies and practices of their institutions – and of state agencies that govern teacher licensure and program approval – promote or impede their adoption of a clinically-based

model of teacher preparation. The answer to this question may determine both the necessity and feasibility of seeking charter status for their programs – much as Cal State L.A.'s Charter College of Education (CCOE) did in 1995.

The experience of CCOE may thus be instructive for institutions contemplating charter status today. The varied literature the author reviewed – on CCOE specifically, on charter colleges of education, and on charter colleges and universities writ large – suggests several key points in particular:

- The successful transition to charter status requires strong and committed leadership from the dean of education, the top administrators at the university, and (for state institutions) the head of the state university system
- To the extent that a charter college of education is released from the university's own governance structures, it needs to have its own strong and effective governance system
- Faculty ownership of the charter college, including vigorous faculty participation in the governance and operational decisions of the program is vital to program success and sustainability
- In order to promote faculty participation, the university very likely must revise the rewards and incentives for college of education faculty so that cooperation and community service are emphasized. In a full-fledged university with multiple departments and colleges in which faculty still value scholarship and research above all, it is likely to be that much more difficult to revise the rewards and incentives for one segment of the faculty
- The wider university may resent the charter status of the college of education, and the college of education may need to invest extra effort to forestall or reduce its isolation and alienation
- To the extent that a teacher preparation program requires the participation of faculty across disciplines and colleges, it will be that much more difficult to make it workable. In that respect, it is likely much easier to establish charter status for post-baccalaureate programs that focus much more on pedagogy than for undergraduate programs that also focus on subject matter competence
- A rigorous and effective evaluation plan, which combines assessments of program impacts as well as assessments of program structure and efficiency, is critical for program improvement. Impacts measured should include the effectiveness of the program's candidates and graduates in the classroom

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