URBAN-FOCUSED TEACHER PREPARATION:
A TALE OF TWO PERSPECTIVES

By

John R. Walcott

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education

2012

ABSTRACT

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Given the current crisis in urban education and the frequent calls for urban school reform, a number of colleges and universities have established teacher education programs designed specifically to prepare teachers for work in urban schools. These urban-focused teacher preparation programs seek to provide pre-service teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to meet the challenges that exist in many urban environments and to be successful in providing for the educational needs of the students in their classrooms.

These programs are preparing teachers to enter an environment strongly influenced by a variety of viewpoints and approaches to urban school reform. In this study, I synthesize the various approaches to urban school reform into two leading perspectives: the accountability perspective and the equity perspective. The accountability perspective is characterized by a focus on academic rigor, high academic and behavioral expectations for all students, standardized tests, and accountability. The equity perspective focuses on promoting equity and social justice, multicultural education, culturally relevant and critical pedagogy, and democratic education. These two perspectives dominate the discourse surrounding urban school improvement and are therefore influential in urban-focused teacher preparation. However, given the often complex and competing nature of the relationship between these perspectives, it may be difficult to promote both accountability and equity in useful ways in the preparation of urban teachers.

Through a document analysis of eight urban-focused teacher preparation programs and a case study of two of these programs, I investigated in this study the manner in which the accountability and equity perspectives are understood, presented, and received in these programs. Furthermore, based on the data analysis, I highlighted the relationship between these two perspectives and explored new approaches that may allow urban-focused teacher educators and urban teachers to embrace a new vision for the relationship between accountability and equity.

I found that while both perspectives were clearly represented in these urban teacher preparation programs, there was significant variation both within and between the programs in the way these perspectives were presented by the program faculty and understood by the teacher candidates. In addition, based on the concept of nepantla (Anzaldua, 2002; Gutierrez, 2008), which is a space where existing perspectives are challenged and new realities are considered, I highlighted a new vision for the relationship between accountability and equity that includes a critical stance, a reconceptualized view of accountability, a student-centered approach to teaching and learning, and a social justice orientation. In addition, I described the practices of teacher educators who are working to engage themselves and their students in the complex space that considers how accountability and equity can be affirmed in ways that benefits urban schools and students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

graduate study. Thank you for your understanding when I have been away from home or have been unduly distracted by studies. Thank you for helping me keep my focus on what is most important. You have taught me so much, and I am a better person because you are my kids and I am your dad. And to Katch, my wife and best friend, thank you for your constant love and encouragement. Thank you for sharing this experience with me. You know that I could not have walked down this road alone. And thank you for the love of teaching and learning that flows from you continually. As a teacher, you are an inspiration to me—as you have been to so many others. You have modeled a desire to pursue the best for all of your students, and this in no small way has motivated my desire to seek excellence in my work and to pursue equity and justice for all in our schools and in society.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Throughout its history, the United States has looked to public schooling as a means of educating its citizens, preparing its workers, and promoting equality. Individuals have pursued education in an effort to prepare themselves for their vocational future and as a pathway to increased opportunity and prosperity (Labaree, 1997; Mann, 1842). While in reality our nation's schools have failed to live up to these lofty ideal for many of its residents (Deschenes, Cuban, & Tyack, 2001; Greer, 1972; Spring, 2004), education has repeatedly been asked to serve as the foundation of our quest for the American dream (Hochschild & Scovrnick, 2003). At the same time, dissatisfaction with public schooling and calls for change have been an almost continual reality throughout the history of American education (*Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*, 1918; Lynd, 1950; *A Nation at Risk*, 1983; *Report of the Committee of Ten*, 1893; Sizer, 1984).

Today our nation continues to look to education as a way of growing the economy, fighting poverty, and increasing opportunity for all citizens. However, reports of failing schools, the achievement gap, low standardized test scores, and a high drop-out rate have led to new and intense calls for reform. These concerns about a crisis in education have focused largely on schools located in our nation's urban centers. "States Have More Schools Falling Behind" (Basken, 2006), "In Sharp Rise, 47 City Schools May Close Over Performance" (Otterman, 2010), and "City Graduation Rates Fall" (Macaluso, 2010) are just a few examples of headlines highlighting a current crisis in urban schools. The spotlight on the racial and socioeconomic achievement gap and the alarming failure rates reported in these schools have led to the

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emergence of a wide range of school improvement efforts, the implementation of new federal

and state educational policies, and an increased focus on urban education in our country.

There have been a multiple responses to the growing evidence of crisis and failure in

urban schools. A wide variety of strategies, models, and changes have been proposed. Recent

school efforts have focused on new models of leadership, teacher quality, school structure, and

curriculum and instruction (Ferguson, Hackman, Hanna, & Ballantine, 2010; Lee & Smith, 2001;

Newmann, 1996; Resnick & Glennan, 2002). Furthermore, accounts of high performing schools

in high poverty communities (Carter, 2001; Jacobs, 2005; Levine, 2002; Meier, 1995; Monroe,

1997; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003; Toch, 2003; Wood, 1999) and of inspirational teachers

(Esquith, 2007; Freedom Writers & Gruwell, 1999; Schultz, 2008) have garnered considerable

attention as possible models for school improvement efforts. Many educators and scholars have

also championed the need for an increased emphasis on social justice, multicultural education,

and equity as the foundation of efforts to improve public schools (Ayers, Kumashiro, Meiner,

Quinn & Stovall, 2010; Chapman & Hobbel, 2010; Gutierrez, 2009; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 2005;

Valenzuela, 1999).

In addition, increased attention has been given to the manner in which teachers are

prepared for work in urban schools. Many colleges and universities, in particular those located

in or near large cities, have established urban-focused teacher preparation programs. These

programs recognize the unique challenges of urban communities and schools and seek to provide

teacher candidates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to succeed as urban

educators. Such programs also respond to concerns about the large number of unqualified

teachers in urban schools (Zeichner, 2003) and the growing cultural divide between students and

teachers (Sleeter, 2001; Zeichner, 2003). Preparation for work in urban schools, then, has surfaced as a salient issue in teacher education and is the focus of this research study.

The work of urban-focused teacher preparation programs is complicated, however, in multiple ways. Teacher education is influenced by local, institutional, and policy contexts (Grossman & McDonald, 2008) and therefore must contend with or may be constrained by demands from local school districts, regulations and limitations inherent in the university setting, and state and federal education policies which impact the teaching profession. Furthermore, the lack of agreement about how we should measure and define success in schools, the characteristics of quality curriculum and instruction, and who or what is to blame for poor academic achievement contributes to a lack of consistency and coherence in the field of urban teacher education.

These disagreements about core educational issues also result in a variety of approaches to urban education. The presence of these disparate and at times contradictory views complicates the landscape and adds to the complexity of the task facing both urban teachers and teacher educators. While there are clearly a variety of viewpoints and practices at work in the field of urban education, two perspectives emerge as the dominant discourses and provide the foundation for this research project.

Two Perspectives: A Framework for Exploring Urban Teacher Preparation

Urban education discourses may come from multiple sources and incorporate a variety of characteristics. Currently, the public and policy discourse surrounding urban education is dominated by a focus on standards and accountability. This emphasis is reflected most clearly in recent federal education policies that have focused on the development of a clearly defined set of standards for teaching and content, the use of standardized assessments to measure student

achievement, and the use of these assessments as the basis for the evaluation of teachers and schools (for example: *America 2000*, *Goals 2000*, *No Child Left Behind*, and *Race to the Top*). It is also evident in the practices of schools that stress the importance of rigorous academic standards for all students and accountability based on standardized tests (Carter, 2001; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003; Whitman, 2008). It is affirmed in many well known charter schools—including KIPP, Achievement First, and the Harlem Promise Academy—and many of its characteristics are celebrated in the recent documentary, *Waiting for Superman* (Guggenheim & Kimball, 2010).

A second perspective that is frequently advocated by some urban education scholars and educators focuses on the need to pursue equity and social justice in our schools and society. Advocates of this perspective promote multicultural education, democratic equality, and social justice as necessary components of public education (Apple & Beane, 2007; Ayers, et al., 2010; Chapman & Hobbel, 2010; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). Furthermore, they advance a critical stance toward existing inequities and stress the role of teachers as agents of change in our society (Giroux & McLaren, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1995; McLaren, 2003; Sleeter & Grant, 2003). They assert that unless our educational system recognizes the inequalities inherent in our schools and works to affirm and promote the full and equitable participation of all students, large gaps in achievement will persist and there will continue to be large groups of failing schools and students.

The relationship between these two perspectives and the manner in which they are enacted in urban-focused teacher preparation programs provide the foundation for this research project. I call the first perspective, highlighted by its focus on standards and accountability, the

accountability perspective. The second, characterized by an emphasis on equity and social justice, I label as the *equity perspective*.

These two perspectives, which I outline in more detail in the following chapter, have a significant impact on current practice in urban schools for several key reasons. First, despite the objections of many leading urban education scholars and teachers (Au, 2010; Kumashiro, 2009; Noddings, 2007; Ravitch, 2010), local, state, and federal mandates have made the accountability perspective a reality in urban classrooms and schools. Teachers and schools need to understand the associated policies, recognize its impact on the manner in which they are being evaluated and on the public perception of their work, and be prepared to teach in an environment greatly influenced by values of this perspective. Second, the current discussion in urban education is focused on the achievement gap and the significant challenges facing urban schools. Both an emphasis on accountability and a focus on equity are being touted as solutions to the current crisis and as necessary to the reduction or elimination of the achievement gap. Given the current importance of these two perspectives on teaching and learning, therefore, it would be expected that they occupy a central place in the preparation of teachers for work in urban schools. Consequently, understanding whether or not this is indeed the case, the extent to which they are represented, and the relationship between the two perspectives is an important question in the field of in urban-focused teacher preparation.

It is necessary, however, to acknowledge that describing these two perspectives brings a certain amount of complexity. First of all, it would be incorrect to assume that these two stances are mutually exclusive. Those who affirm the importance of standards and accountability may also believe strongly in promoting social justice and working to reduce inequities in our schools. Advocates of multicultural education and social justice, moreover, may strongly affirm the

necessity of a rigorous academic curriculum and holding high expectations for students. While some might disagree, others would argue that these two perspectives are able to work together.

Second, discussion of these perspectives relies on language that exists in context. For some teachers, talk of standards and accountability immediately brings to mind policies or regulations that they feel have a negative impact on teachers and on classroom learning. Talk of accountability is often negatively associated with "teaching to the test," merit pay, and teacher evaluation. In a similar manner, the promotion of social justice or equity is at times equated with a liberal agenda that devalues academic achievement and offers excuses rather than solutions for challenges facing urban schools. Study of these issues and their impact on urban education requires, then, careful attention to the language of accountability and equity.

Although the relationship between these two perspectives is not always clear, it is certain that there are points of dissonance between them. For example, the focus on using standardized tests to hold students, teachers, and schools accountable is at odds with those who seek to promote equitable testing practices through the use of alternative assessments to measure student achievement and with those who consider existing conceptions of knowledge and achievement as barriers to true equity. Ladson-Billings (1992), for example, argued that culturally relevant teaching is in contrast with "an assimilationist approach" that "sees fitting students into the existing social and economic order as its primary responsibility" and that does not challenge the way society privileges some groups of people at the expense of others (p. 314).

Furthermore, an analysis of several program descriptions and a survey of urban-focused teacher educators have suggested that the promotion of democratic values, multicultural education, and critical pedagogy is valued more highly than an emphasis on standards and accountability (Walcott, 2011). A recent study of teacher education programs entitled *Cracks in*

the Ivory Tower (Farkas & Duffett, 2010) while not focusing exclusively on urban-focused teacher preparation, gave evidence of a similar tension. The report suggested that teacher educators are more concerned with preparing teachers to be change agents in society than to be able to confront the reality of today's public schools. Likewise, although a focus on standards and accountability is the current reality of public education in our nation, only 24% of teacher educators considered that supporting teachers in this role was essential to their task (Farkas & Duffett, 2010). This apparent tension between the values of teacher educators and the current reality of our schools supports the warning sounded by Lois Weiner (1993) when she wrote, "When colleges of education prepare teachers to be change agents who transmit the values and ideals of the teacher educators, the institutions neglect the more difficult task of reconciling the frequently contradictory demands made on education by community, teachers, parents, and students" (pp. 102-103).

The relationship between the accountability and equity perspectives—and the potential tension between the two—clearly has important implications for the preparation of teachers for work in urban schools. Is it possible for teacher education programs to promote a vision of teaching that acknowledges and promotes both of these perspectives? Or, is it more likely that one perspective will be favored against the other? Given this uncertainty about the relationship between accountability and equity and the important place they occupy in contemporary urban education, it is crucial to better understand the way these two perspectives are represented in urban-focused teacher preparation programs and how our nation's future urban teachers, the participants in those programs, understand the message they are receiving.

Research Questions

Investigating the relationship between the accountability and equity perspectives and how they are treated in urban-focused teacher preparation programs serves as the foundation for this research project. The purpose of the study is to determine whether and how teacher educators and teacher candidates in urban-focused teacher preparation programs perceive and treat issues of accountability and equity. The research questions that guide the study are as follows:

- Do teacher candidates encounter both the accountability and equity perspectives in their teacher education program? If so, where and to what extent?

- What messages about these two perspectives do teacher educators intend to give to the teacher candidates with whom they work? Are these perspectives evident in the way teacher educators' talk about educational concepts and practices such as students, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and the purpose of schooling?

- What messages about these two perspectives are being received and understood by the teacher candidates?

Teachers in urban schools clearly work in contested terrain, and the challenges they and their students face are many. In addition, there are diverse and at times conflicting views of how to approach these challenges. Moreover, the demand placed on teacher preparation programs to equip teachers for work in urban schools is great, while the public cry for improvement in our schools and the demands mandated through policy are increasing. It is important, therefore, to understand how current conceptions of accountability and equity along with the potential conflict between the two may impact the preparation of those in charge of educating urban youth.

Dissertation Plan

Although I have briefly described the accountability and equity perspectives in this introduction, it is necessary to provide a more detailed discussion of this framework. Therefore, in Chapter 2 I summarize the literature related to various approaches to urban education in order to give a more complete understanding of the accountability and equity perspectives and their foundations. In addition, I present a theoretical framework that is useful in discussing the relationship between these perspectives and that serves as a guide for the analysis and discussion that follows.

In Chapter 3, then, I explain the research methods employed in this study. I describe the two levels of data collection—a content analysis of program documents from eight urban-focused teacher preparation programs and a case study of two of these programs—and the manner in which the study data was analyzed.

In Chapter 4, I summarize the data gathered from the program documents from the various institutions. This data demonstrate the existence of the accountability and equity perspectives in these programs and provide a clearer understanding of how the two perspectives are valued and treated at each university. It also provides a foundation which informs the case study analysis that follows.

The summary of the case study data is divided into two sections. In Chapter 5, I summarize and discuss data gathered from program participants—faculty member and teacher candidates—with regards to the accountability perspective. In Chapter 6, I focus on the equity perspective and its place in the two case study institutions. These chapters provide a more complete picture of the way the two perspectives are presented and understood through the teacher preparation programs at these institutions.

Finally, I conclude with an extensive discussion of important questions raised by this study, its contribution to our understanding of urban-focused teacher preparation in particular and also urban education in general, and the implications for the field of urban education.

CHAPTER TWO

PERSPECTIVES OF URBAN EDUCATION

There is almost universal agreement that there is currently a crisis in urban education. Kincheloe, hayes, Rose, and Anderson (2006) began their handbook of urban education by stating, "One of the most compelling concerns of our era is the question of what to do about the neglect of our urban schools" (p. xi). They noted that close to one-third of the students in our country attend just 1.5% of the nation's school districts, and they highlighted the challenges of teacher shortages, lack of funding, poverty, and failing schools.

Fueled in great measure by the language of the No Child Left Behind legislation, recent attention on the racial and economic achievement gap has heightened our nation's awareness of the academic challenges facing urban schools. This spotlight on poor test scores and high drop-out rates in urban schools has been accompanied by a renewed interest in raising student achievement and bringing about meaningful reform in these schools. These efforts at school improvement reflect a variety of opinions about urban education and disparate approaches to meeting the challenges. In this chapter, I present a summary of the literature about urban education and argue that the multiple viewpoints evident in the literature can be synthesized into two primary perspectives, accountability and equity, which serve as the foundation of this study. Before turning to the literature review, however, I begin by clarifying what *urban education* means and how it is commonly perceived in the current discourse.

Urban Education

While the word *urban* can be used in a variety of ways and contexts, when speaking of education this term has been used in an increasingly uniform fashion in recent years. In introducing the topic of urban education in 1974, David Tyack defined *urban* in contrast to

village as a way to describe "the highly complex changes in ways of thinking and behaving that accompanied revolutions in technology, increasing concentrations of people in cities, and restructuring of economic and political institutions into large bureaucracies" (p. 5). Recently, however, when describing students, *urban* has become code for poor and minority (Weiner, 2006) and "a signifier for poverty, nonwhite violence, narcotics, bad neighborhoods, an absence of family values, crumbling housing, and failing schools" (Kincheloe, et al., 2006). Weiner (2006) noted, however, that cities "have always had the greatest concentrations of poor, immigrant students of children described at different times in the nation's history as 'culturally deprived,' 'disadvantaged,' or 'at risk'" (p. 16). Urban teaching is unique, argued Weiner, not only because of the need to educate an extremely diverse student population, but also because of organizational and structural factors and persistent scarcity of funding that characterize urban schools.

Current discussions of urban education, then, focus most frequently on deficits and challenges. Urban schools are those which are located in low-incomes areas of high population density and serve large percentages of students of color who traditionally have been marginalized and underserved. Furthermore, these schools are associated with poor academic achievement and low graduation rates. The challenges faced by these schools and the ubiquitous reports of failure have spawned a field of inquiry focused on urban education and efforts at urban school improvement.

While I hope that my work contributes to a conception of urban education that includes both an understanding of the unique and serious challenges that currently exist and an awareness and celebration of the complexity, diversity, strengths, assets, and beauty inherent in urban communities and schools, in this dissertation I use the term *urban* in the manner in which it is

commonly used today as a means to describe locations in large cities, generally characterized by high-density population, high poverty rates, and a large percentage of residents who are people of color. *Urban education*, then, describes both the realities faced by schools and students in urban communities and an approach to teaching and learning that acknowledges those realities.

Current Emphases in Urban Education

Based on a review of the urban education literature, I highlight here five current approaches or areas of emphasis in the effort to improve the quality of urban schools. Although each may be reflected in specific school practices, these areas of emphasis are not specific strategies or methods. Instead, they refer to fundamental outlooks, or points of view, about urban education that influence the approach taken to urban schooling as well as decisions related to school practice. The five are: (a) historical and socio-cultural, (b) "no excuses," (c) multicultural, (d) critical, and (e) democratic. The goal, here, is to present an overview of each area of emphasis as a background to the conceptual framework for this research study.

Historical/Socio-Cultural Outlook

Many who are seeking to improve urban schools and work to increase student achievement among traditionally underserved populations emphasize the need to understand the origins of the current crisis as a foundation for current reform efforts. They rely on an understanding of history to provide the necessary context to contemporary reality and to inform efforts at improvement and innovation, thus avoiding the "ahistorical character" of many past educational reform efforts (Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 6).

Attention to the history of education refutes, first of all, the image of a golden age of education in which all children, including low income, immigrant, and ethnic minority students, received a quality education, succeeded in school, and were prepared to take hold of the

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American Dream. In reality, there have always been large numbers of failing students and these have been disproportionately students of color and low-income students (Deschenes, Cuban, & Tyack, 2001; Greer, 1972).

A historical viewpoint also focuses on the way past actions have influenced the current condition of urban schools and communities. It points to industrialization, racial discrimination, residential segregation, unequal access to education, unjust laws and policies, and economic instability that have created the depressed conditions that plague many urban communities and schools today (Anyon, 2005; Kozol, 1995, 2005; Mirel, 1999; Neckerman, 2007; Sugrue, 2005).

A focus on history also suggests a particular understanding of the achievement gap, a topic that dominates the current discourse about the difficulties facing urban schools. Ladson-Billings (2007), drawing on the lessons of history, denounced the deficit language that the achievement gap focus promotes and argued that any examination of gaps in student achievement must be accompanied by a thorough understanding of the gaps in educational funding, income, health, and wealth that have existed throughout our nation's history and continue to impact the lives and educational experiences of many children.. She argued that a proper understanding of our nation's "education debt" holds us all accountable and "reminds us that we have accumulated this problem as a result of centuries of neglect and denial of education to entire groups of students" (p. 321).

Those who draw on these historical lessons contribute to a socio-cultural frame of reference that emphasizes the need for fundamental changes in our society as essential to providing urban students with equitable opportunities in school. They argue that although there will always be a need to search out the best ways to teach all children, the reality is that unless our society seeks to remedy the problems caused by poverty, inadequate housing, poor health

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care, unemployment, and other societal ills, efforts at educational reform will fall short (Anyon, 2005; Noguera, 2003; Rothstein, 2004).

Table 2.1. Historical and Socio-Cultural Outlook

Key Ideas	Importance of considering historical and socio-cultural context of schooling in search for solutions to current educational challenges
Purpose of Schooling	Not addressed
View of Curriculum	Not addressed
Role of Teacher	Not addressed
Primary cause for student failure	Historical injustices and current societal inequities

"No Excuses" Viewpoint

In recent years, several schools have been recognized for their success in raising student achievement in schools located in high-poverty, urban communities. These schools champion a "no excuses" approach to the challenges confronted by their students. This point of view is characterized by rigorous academic standards for all students, a positive view toward standardization and accountability, and a focus on creating a school culture that promotes learning and prepares students for success in society. Descriptions of these schools have highlighted their "no excuses" approach to education, their success at raising student achievement and graduation rates, and what Whitman (2008) has described as their "paternalistic"[1] mindset dedicated to establishing an orderly school culture that prizes

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[1] Although many of these schools might object to the negative connotations associated with paternalism, David Whitman (2008), in his book *Sweating the Small Stuff: Inner-City Schools and the New Paternalism*, advanced a positive view of the paternalistic nature of these schools and argued that this approach is at the heart of their success in raising student achievement in urban schools.

achievement and traditional middle-class values (Carter, 2001; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003; Whitman, 2008). Charter schools associated with the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) or Achievement First are among the better-known of these schools, but "no excuses" schools exist around the country and include public, private, and charter schools.

The strong focus on academic skills is demonstrated by a rigorous, college-prep curriculum for all students. Students are not tracked; there are no vocational education or non-college-bound programs available to students. The emphasis is on the acquisition of skills and knowledge. Samuel Carter (2001), in his book celebrating the successes of 21 "high-performing, high-poverty" schools, noted that the principals of these schools "reject whole language, whole math, developmentally-appropriate education, and other teacher theories that deemphasize the acquisition of skills" (p. 5). The schools that share this emphasis make abundantly clear the expectations that students will work hard, pay attention at all times, complete their homework, and not waste time (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003). Frequent testing ensures that students are making progress toward their academic goals. The push for academic achievement is often supported by an increase in instructional time in many of the schools. School days are longer, and days are often added to the school year through an extended calendar, Saturday school, or summer school.

Advocates of the "no excuses" approach embrace the focus on standards and accountability (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003; Whitman, 2008). The use of standardized tests along with other forms of classroom or school-wide assessment is a central part of efforts to promote student achievement. Success is measured by performance on these tests, and students who do not pass the requisite examinations are not promoted to the next grade. This type of emphasis was demonstrated recently in *The New York Times* article reporting the success of

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Public School 172 in Brooklyn on recent state standardized tests. "'Teach, assess, teach, assess' was the way the principal described the school's approach, and a parent was quoted as saying, 'Here, they practice the test so much, it doesn't faze them anymore'" (Otterman, 2010).

These schools highlight their commitment to closing the existing achievement gap in standardized test scores. The Achievement First network of schools states clearly that closing the achievement gap is the mission of their school. The seriousness with which they take this challenge is evident in the following statement that appears on their website:

> "Closing the achievement gap is the civil rights issue of our time. Despite the promise of equal educational opportunity, the United States education system has largely failed to provide low-income and minority children access to the high-quality education they need to compete on a level playing field with their white, affluent peers" (Achievement First, 2012).

Schools that promote the "no excuses" approach also work to establish a culture that is inviting, disciplined, and promotes learning. Teachers work to foster positive relationships with their students and create an atmosphere in which students enjoy being in school. An Achievement First school describes its culture as "'warm demanding' . . . where respect, teamwork and hard work are the platinum standard" (Achievement First, 2012). The schools strive to instill values and dispositions which are considered essential for the future success of their students. "Teachers work hard to instill the desire, discipline, and dedication—the will to succeed—that will enable disadvantaged youth to climb the American ladder of opportunity" (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003, p. 4). The goal is to help students reject the culture of the street and instead embrace traditional, middle-class values, including a strong work ethic, diligence, politeness, and respect (Whitman, 2008). The schools demonstrate strong faith in the impact of diligence and effort on student achievement. Students receive the message that their

hard work, extra time at school, and laser-like focus on student achievement will reap rewards

through raised test scores, better grades, and access to higher education.

Clear behavioral expectations help instill these values and disposition in students. Many

"no excuses" schools have uniforms or a strict dress code. Students are taught to arrive at school

on time, speak politely to adults, and follow a clear code of conduct. An orderly learning

atmosphere is expected; rules for behavior are clear, and there is zero tolerance toward

infractions of school rules (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003). Whitman (2008) noted the highly

prescriptive nature of the schools, as they teach students how to think and act. He stated,

"Students are required to talk a certain way, sit a certain way, and dress a certain way" (p. 3).

Students also receive rewards for compliance and punishment for noncompliance.

Table 2.2. "No Excuses" Viewpoint

Key Ideas	Rigorous academic standards Positive view towards standards and accountability School culture that promotes learning
Purpose of Schooling	Prepare students for future academic and vocational success Raise student achievement
View of Curriculum	Rigorous academic standards for all Preparation for standardized tests
Role of Teacher	Establish learning climate Teach basic academic skills Prepare students for success on standardized tests
Primary cause for student failure	Knowledge deficits Lack of effort Culture of failure Ineffective teaching

In summary, the "no excuses" approach views urban education as a space where students

have many needs and significant obstacles. It does not explicitly address the causes of the

challenges facing urban schools but views the solutions as being situated in the hands of the

school and students. It exhibits great faith in the ability of teachers and students—with the right

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effort and support—to overcome the difficult circumstances students encounter. The school's responsibility is to provide students with the core knowledge, attitudes, and values needed to succeed in school and in life and to hold teachers and students accountable to clearly articulated standards. Students and teachers are expected to dedicate themselves, through effort and perseverance, to reach these high standards.

Multicultural Education

A focus on multicultural education in our country has emerged in response to the increased diversity in our schools and the persistent disparities that have existed in educational achievement between white students and students of color (Hollins & Torres Guzman, 2005). In urban schools, the culturally diverse student population and the growing number of English Language Learners has led to increased attention to the need for education that recognizes the multicultural nature of both school and society and works to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

At its core, multicultural education demands "the awareness, acceptance, and affirmation of cultural and ethnic differences" (Grant, 1995, p. 4). Grant (1978) argued that an appreciation of diversity and of the right of all individuals to reach their full potential is one of the backbones of American democracy; therefore multicultural education needs to be a part of public schooling in general, and is especially needed in urban schools. Schools should work, therefore, to teach students about a variety of cultures, to affirm and appreciate their beauty and strengths, to reduce stereotypes, and to create positive feelings among students while acknowledging and respecting individual differences (Sleeter & Grant, 2003).

Multicultural education, however, moves beyond an appreciation for diverse cultures to the goal of helping culturally and linguistically diverse students learn more and be better

prepared for life in American society. Teachers need to understand cultural and linguistic difference so that they can provide the support necessary to help all students reach high levels of achievement. Hollins and Spencer (1990) asserted that education should be characterized by cultural inclusion: the culture of each learner needs to be incorporated "into the academic and social context of schooling in ways that facilitate and support academic learning and cultural identity and promote personal, human, and social development" (p. 90). This involves creating an atmosphere that affirms and includes all groups, uses culturally appropriate pedagogical practices, and aligns the school curriculum to meet these goals.

Curriculum and instruction, therefore, should be culturally responsive (Gay, 2000) and culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Schools should use curricula and teaching materials that reflect the cultural diversity in our nation and that enable students to learn from a variety of perspectives. Students should be able to learn and succeed in school without having to sacrifice their cultural integrity. Cultural competence should be considered an essential component of academic success, and all students—including those who are culturally or linguistically different than the mainstream—should be a "part of a mutually supported group of high achievers . . ." (Gay, 2000, p. 31).

Advocates of multicultural education assert, therefore, that a multicultural emphasis is a part of the basics. It must pervade all of schooling and be valued as a part of the core knowledge that all students need to be successful in school and life. The essential nature of multicultural education affirms the contribution of all cultures to our knowledge and values and contrasts with the view that "the basics have in effect already been defined, and knowledge is inevitably European, male, and upper class in origin and conception" (Nieto, 2004, p. 351). For this reason, Grant (1978) feared that the term *multicultural education* portrayed multicultural as an add-on,

an adjective used to describe the external aspects of education without changing the basic nature

of school in our diverse society. He preferred, therefore, to talk about *education that is*

multicultural rather than *multicultural education*.

Sleeter and Grant (2003) have provided a summary of the five main goals of multicultural

education. They are to promote: (a) the strength and value of cultural diversity, (b) human rights

and the respect of differences, (c) alternative life choices, (d) social justice and equal

opportunity, and (e) equity in the distribution of power among groups. They also argued that

truly multicultural education will challenge the cultural deficiency orientation which is prevalent

in schools and allow students to maintain their own cultural identity (Sleeter & Grant, 1987). In

a similar vein, Nieto (2004) discussed multicultural education by highlighting seven

characteristics. These are: (a) antiracist/antidiscriminatory, (b) basic, (c) pervasive, (d) important

for all students, (e) education for social justice, (f) process, and (g) critical pedagogy.

References to equity, social justice, and critical pedagogy as essential aspects of

multicultural education (Nieto, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 2003) reflect an approach that has been

called *critical multiculturalism* (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004), which emphasizes the need to promote

social justice and work to bring change to society. Students, therefore, should not only learn to

recognize and understand societal inequity; they also must engage in a critique of the current

reality and become active in confronting issues of power and privilege and in seeking societal

transformation and social justice (Au, 2009; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 2004).

Sleeter and Grant (2003) described this approach as "education that is multicultural and social

reconstructionist." It begins with a critical view of conditions in contemporary society and of the

role of schools and other social institutions in reproducing inequity. Furthermore, this

perspective recognizes that altering beliefs and attitudes through education will not be sufficient;

it is necessary to transform society if we truly desire to confront injustice and change the beliefs and behaviors of individuals.

Those that advocate for multicultural education, then, acknowledge the significant challenges that face urban schools and their students. They point to the historical unwillingness of schools to adjust to the needs of culturally diverse students and to confront inequities in schools and society. Schools, they argue, have not affirmed diversity nor worked to provide all students with experiences that enable to them succeed while maintaining their identity and cultural integrity. This emphasis highlights the value and contributions of all students and cultures while acknowledging the need to address difficulties many students may have in attaining a high level of academic achievement and the duty to confront injustice in society.

Table 2.3. Multicultural Education

Key Ideas	Affirm and promote diversity Confront social inequity
Purpose of Schooling	Help all students succeed in school and life Promote diversity Affirm all cultures
View of Curriculum	Promote inclusion Use of culturally appropriate pedagogy
Role of Teacher	Promote appreciation for cultural diversity Meet the needs of diverse learners
Primary cause for student failure	Lack of culturally appropriate curriculum and instruction Failure to meet needs of diverse students

Critical Pedagogy

As noted above, critical multiculturalism reflects an emphasis on critical pedagogy, which in turn finds its roots in critical theory. Critical theorists begin with a critique of modern society and its institutions, values, and assumptions and argue that issues of power and privilege influence societal relationships, views of knowledge, and institutions in such a way that members of the dominant class are privileged while others are oppressed and denied the opportunity to

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reach their full potential. Schools, one of the most important social institutions, work to reproduce social inequality and preserve the status quo as their structures, curriculum, and practice serve to legitimate the knowledge and privilege of the dominant class (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Bourdieu, 1973, 1984; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Freire, 1970; McLaren, 2003).

Critical pedagogy seeks to confront these injustices in school and society. It asserts that school knowledge is socially constructed, ordered in particular ways, and "deeply rooted in a nexus of power relations" (McLaren, 2003, p. 72). It explores why and how knowledge gets constructed and why and how some forms of knowledge are legitimated by dominant culture and others are not. It views specific belief claims as parts of systems of beliefs and action that impact societal power structures (Burbules & Berk, 1999). It recognizes, therefore, the necessity of exploring the political, economic, and cultural significance of the meaning that schools produce (Giroux & Simon, 1989).

Critical pedagogy rejects the banking concept of education (Freire, 1970) in which the goal is to deposit into children the knowledge and skills that are privileged in society. Instead, it calls on schools and teachers to develop students who are able to understand and critique modern society and who are able to engage in social action aimed at the transformation of society (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teaching should not only be sensitive to the needs and culture of all students and validate their identity, it should also work to empower students to be better human beings and more successful learners, to transform students by confronting the hegemony inherent in traditional educational practices and equipping them to combat oppression, and to liberate them from the constraints of limited forms of knowledge and thinking (Ball, 2000; Gay, 2000)

There are several important characteristics of a truly critical pedagogy. First, it is critical. It exposes the injustices inherent in society and confronts instances of oppression. Freire (1970)

argued that the oppressed must become convinced of their need for liberation through their own *conscientizacao*, or critical consciousness, which is "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (p. 19). Students need to understand explicitly the way in which power relations impact life in school and society both to confront injustice and to be able to acquire power for themselves (Delpit, 1988).

Second, critical pedagogy is problem-posing. It takes as its starting point the real-life problems facing the students in the classroom and the broader society. It leads fifth graders in Chicago to make their concern with their own decaying school building the foundation of their curriculum (Schultz, 2008), high school students to use mathematics to understand issues like racial profiling and the impact of sweatshops on both the global economy and on the individuals who work in them (Gutstein & Peterson, 2006), and a secondary social studies class to use hip-hop to explore social inequality (Stovall, 2006).

Third, it embraces traditions, histories, and knowledge that are typically ignored in school (Giroux & McLaren, 1996). It recognizes the limiting nature of the canon of knowledge that is often associated with school curriculum. Students need to be exposed not only to academic content—literature, history, mathematics—from diverse cultures but also to alternative ways of thinking and understanding the world.

Fourth, critical pedagogy is built on dialogue. Teachers do not see their main role as to deliver knowledge or tell students how to think; rather, they engage with their students in learning. It is a pedagogy that is *with*, rather than *for*, the oppressed (Freire, 1970). This is the only way that the pedagogy can realize its final goal: the liberation and transformation of both the participants and society. Critical pedagogy calls teachers and students to action.

An understanding of the way language works in school and society is also a crucial

component of critical pedagogy. Giroux and McLaren (1996) explained that language functions

to position people in the world and is therefore implicated in power relations. For example,

many teachers view language diversity as a problem rather than an asset (Nieto, 2009) or believe

that the language spoken by many African-American students is evidence of a cognitive

deficiency (Delpit, 2002). When a child's home language is viewed as deficient, this impacts the

behavior of the teacher and also increases the likelihood the child will reject school and

everything it has offer. Critical pedagogy, therefore, emphasizes the need for teachers to

understand the strengths of their students and make school an inviting place for them to learn

(Delpit, 2002; Hilliard, 2002). To accomplish this, teachers need to understand the disparity

between the school setting and the cultural lives of many urban students (Delpit, 2002). There is

often little in school that connects to the cultural lives or personal interests of many students.

This disconnect contributes to the potentially negative attitudes urban students have toward

school and their chances for success (Carter, 2005; Ogbu & Simon, 1998).

Table 2.4. Critical Pedagogy

Key Ideas	Schools as sites of social reproduction Need to confront social injustice and inequity
Purpose of Schooling	Critique and confront existing social inequities
View of Curriculum	Knowledge as constructed Primacy of critical thinking and reflection
Role of Teacher	Equip students to recognize and confront social inequities Empower all students to be successful in school and society
Primary cause for student failure	Social inequities Hegemonic nature of school knowledge and practice

Critical pedagogy places the blame for high failure rates in urban schools at the feet of

society. It desires to hold students accountable for high standards of achievement but asserts that

educational inequality will continue unless societal injustices are confronted. Locating the problem outside of school, it challenges the perspective that there is core canon of knowledge and skills which must be mastered by all students and that low student achievement is primarily the result of lack of effort, bad parenting, and poor teaching. Critical pedagogy affirms the strengths and culture of all students and invites them to be co-constructors of knowledge and to join in the struggle against oppression and for equity and justice.

Democratic Education

Although the term *democratic* is commonly used to describe education's role in promoting democracy and teaching the democratic principles of our nation, the designation is used here to describe an approach to education that emphasizes the participation of all members of the school community; a school culture that focuses on trust, decency, and positive relationships; a curriculum that is student-centered and focuses on real-life problems and relevant learning experiences; the use of alternative assessments; and a focus on promoting equity and democracy in both schools and society. In the past 20 years accounts of schools and teachers that value and practice these characteristics have emerged with the goal of inspiring more teachers to implement these practices in order to combat the challenges confronting urban students today (see for example Apple & Beane, 2007; Benitez, Davidson & Flaxman, 2009; Levine, 2002; Meier, 1995; Schultz, 2008; Toch, 2003; Wood, 1992).

Democratic education is founded on the ideal that every human being is uniquely gifted, of immeasurable value, and worthy of dignity and respect. Furthermore, its basic proposition is that "the fullest development of all human beings is the necessary condition for the full development of each person" (Ayers, et al, 2010, p. 34). As articulated by Dewey (1916), democracy here functions as a mode of associated living rather than as a means of government.

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Democratic schools, then, reflect this emphasis on community, interaction, shared interests, equity, and justice (Beyer & Liston, 1996)

In schools, democratic education starts with a desire to build a learning environment that involves and depends on all members of the school community: teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and students. Parental involvement goes far beyond attending parent-teacher conferences and special events. Parents are included in the life of the school and are involved in decision-making from the very start. In some cases, regular home visits are used to strengthen the home-school connection and foster strong relationships. Students, as well, serve on school planning committees, are involved in establishing classroom and school norms of conduct, and take leadership in the classroom as they present work and facilitate group discussions.

The importance of community is reflected in the school culture as well. A "supportive, trusting, student-centered culture unifies community members' experience" (Benitez et al., 2009, p. 272). Schools work to establish a climate of trust and decency in which the value and contribution of all individuals is acknowledged and affirmed. Many schools incorporate advisories—small groups of students who meet regularly with the same teacher—as a way to build supportive relationships and as the primary vehicle for communication with the home. Problems in school are viewed as learning opportunities; the focus is on helping students learn from their mistakes. In place of traditional forms of discipline and punishment, democratic schools are likely to incorporate restorative justice practices in which students are challenged to grow through their mistakes and, at times, make amends to the school community. Students are often involved with establishing norms for behavior and may also be involved in responding to problems that arise. At Humanities Prep in New York City, individuals who violate a

community norm are taken to the Fairness Committee, comprised of students and teachers. The committee discusses the situation and decides what action should be taken in response. Not all democratic schools operate in this manner, but they do "view discipline not as a set of rules developed by adults and imposed on young people but rather as a community-developed set of expectations and norms that values individual students and works with them as they face their challenges" (Benitez et al., 2009, p. 286).

Teaching and learning at democratic schools are student-centered and focused on real-life issues that are important to students. Meier (1995) argued that the human mind is naturally generative and that it is the school's responsibility to help students recognize "the power of their ideas." The aim is to provide students with a powerful and interesting curriculum that will inspire them to know more and that takes advantage of their natural desire to understand the world (Benitez et al., 2009; Beyer & Liston, 1996). Levine (2002) described the academic program at the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center (the Met) in Providence, Rhode Island. At the Met, each student, along with his or her advisor, designs an individualized curriculum through which learning goals are met. The heart of the program is the internship, which is based on student interests and allows students to meet learning goals through "real world" experience. Toch (2003) shared the story of six small schools that have rejected traditional approaches to secondary education and seek to meet the needs of their students in a variety of innovative ways. These schools focus on creating small learning communities that emphasize personal relationships among students and staff members. In most cases, the classroom environment and instruction bear little resemblance to a traditional, comprehensive high school. Students spend many hours away from school participating in internships, take

classes with names like "Looking for an Argument?" and "Chemical Puzzles," and are expected to take charge of their own learning.

In spite of the "alternative" feel of some of these schools, advocates of democratic education insist that their desire is to build a culture that supports high achievement. The belief that all students can meet high standards of intellectual achievement is fundamental to their efforts. These schools engage students in serious intellectual work, however, not to prepare for standardized tests but in order to make a difference in the world (Apple & Beane, 2007).

A common theme in many democratic schools is their rejection of standardized testing. Au (2010) argued that the current focus on high-stakes testing is anti-democratic in that it prohibits diversity both in content and instruction and removes the individual student and local school context from consideration in curricular choices. In contrast, the democratic perspective advocates for the use performance-based assessments, graduation portfolios, and student exhibitions as the means of evaluating student work. The Coalition of Essential Schools, a network of hundreds of schools that strive to promote democratic and student-centered schooling, includes the following "Demonstration of Mastery" as one of its Common Principles:

> Teaching and learning should be documented and assessed with tools based on student performance of real tasks. Students not yet at appropriate levels of competence should be provided intensive support and resources to assist them quickly to meet those standards. Multiple forms of evidence, ranging from ongoing observation of the learner to completion of specific projects, should be used to better understand the learner's strengths and needs, and to plan for further assistance. Students should have opportunities to exhibit their expertise before family and community. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation - an "Exhibition." As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things (Coalition of Essential Schools, 2012).

Through the involvement of all members of the community, the establishment of a school culture based on relationships and trust, student- and problem-centered learning, and the use of alternative assessments, the fundamental desire to promote equity and democracy in and through schools emerges from the accounts of these schools. The desire to build a democratic community and promote egalitarian ideals, for example, drove Deborah Meier (1995) to start Central Park East Secondary School in Harlem. Its purpose was "putting all our young people in a position to explore and act upon the fundamental intellectual and social issues of their times" (p. 170). Ideals like these and a desire to make meaningful, relevant, and equitable education available to all of their students provide the foundation for schools that emphasize democratic education.

Table 2.5. Democratic Education

Key Ideas	Democracy Building community Right of all to full participation in democratic life
Purpose of Schooling	Promote equity and democracy in school and society
View of Curriculum	Student-centered Focus on real-life problems
Role of Teacher	Facilitate learning Promote positive relationships
Primary cause for student failure	Curriculum and instruction that are not student-centered Undemocratic school environment Lack of supportive relationships

Urban Education Outlooks in Teacher Preparation

This review of urban education literature has revealed a variety of viewpoints about urban education and the essential characteristics of effective urban teaching. Alongside of this work, many teacher education programs have asserted the need to provide programs specifically designed to prepare teachers for work in urban schools. These urban-focused teacher preparation

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programs explicitly state this as their mission and support this work through urban-focused

coursework, community involvement, and urban field placements. A review of the literature

regarding urban-focused teacher preparation programs gives an indication of which of the

approaches described above are evident in these programs. Although there is certainly a degree

of variability in the way these programs are structured and in the values and practice they

emphasize, the dominant picture that emerges from this review is of programs that affirm the

characteristics of democratic education, multicultural education, and critical pedagogy.

In the field of urban-focused teacher preparation programs, there is strong support for the

need to culturally immerse prospective teachers in the urban community (Ladson-Billings, 2000;

Sleeter, 2001). Teacher preparation is often viewed as being limited to the "artificial" domains

of the university and the field-based practicum (Solomon & Sekay, 2007), and pre-service

teachers who have only superficial contact with urban communities are likely to have negative

stereotypes of urban education environments (Solomon, Manoukian, & Clarke, 2007; Zygmunt-

Fillwalk & Leitze, 2006). Engagement with the urban community, therefore, has been advanced

as an essential part of the learning environment for teacher candidates. The Urban Diversity

Teacher Education program at York University in Ontario, for example, seeks to deepen their

teacher candidates' engagement in and promote collaboration with urban communities through

involvement in a community-based project that continues throughout their teacher education

program (Solomon, Manoukian, & Clark, 2007). The Buffalo Urban Teacher Corps at Houghton

College includes the study of a variety of community-based agencies in the program and service-

learning is incorporated into teacher education courses (Massey & Szente, 2007). A study of the

urban-focused teacher preparation program at Ball State demonstrated that opportunities to

interact personally with students and families in an urban setting brought about positive change

in the attitude of the participants toward issues of multiculturalism and "a beginning awareness of the extent to which a teacher's knowledge about, respect for, and appreciation of differences could facilitate their classroom competence" (Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Leitze, 2006, p. 285). These programs seek to move beyond a teaching practicum in an urban school to providing teacher candidates with the opportunity to live in, work in, and be part of an urban community.

Authentic community involvement and fieldwork in urban schools is also considered to be the foundation of helping teacher candidates understand and pay attention to the unique needs of urban students. Many urban-focused teacher preparation programs recognize the importance of helping their teacher candidates understand their students' cultural and linguistic background, their unique experiences, and the specific needs and strengths they bring to the classroom. Teachers can make a significant contribution to the academic achievement of their students if their preparation is grounded in multiculturalism and if they have been able to develop a framework for interpreting the realities of students' lives (Tidwell & Thompson, 2009; Zygmunt-Fillwalk & Leitze, 2006). Some scholars argue that this is necessary, in part, to confront the notion that students of color are inferior to or are incomplete copies of white students (Delpit, 2002; Hilliard, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2000).

Ladson-Billings (2000) focused specifically on the importance of preparing teachers for work with African-American students. She argued that the unique experience of slavery, the enduring ideology of White supremacy, and the repeated messages of inferiority to which African Americans are subjected necessitate that the schooling of African-American students be approached differently than the schooling of other students. Failure to do so ignores the unique values of African-American students and the reality that they begin school in a place different from their white classmates and will ultimately result in an increase in educational disparity.

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She also asserted that teacher preparation must take place in a holistic, integrated manner, rather than through an individual course or a specific field experience.

There is also a strong push in many circles for teacher education programs to promote social justice and equity while taking a critical stance of the current social reality. Critical theorists argue that urban-focused teacher preparation should prepare teachers to engage in the struggle to transform both the school and the wider social setting (Giroux, 2009; Giroux & McLaren, 1996; Kincheloe, 2004). Teachers need to understand the ways that schools, as well as other social institutions, support dominant ideology (Tozer, 1985) and therefore reproduce social inequality. Teacher candidates need to be educated, they assert, in the language of critique and possibility, and in turn be prepared to engage their students in a critique of existing inequities and the transformation of societies. Giroux and McLaren (1996) argued that in order for this to take place it is necessary that future teachers be prepared as independent thinkers and transformative intellectuals. Cultural studies should be at the heart of teacher education programs to provide teacher candidates with the tools necessary to examine school and classroom relations. Moreover, teacher candidates need to understand the way in which certain types of knowledge are regularly ignored and marginalized while the knowledge of the dominant class is privileged. It is necessary, therefore, for teachers to recognize that teaching and learning are rooted in environments shaped by politics and the social context in which they take place (Hilliard, 2002).

Urban Education Viewpoints in Educational Policy

While the practices and points of view at work in urban schooling reflect a substantial amount of diversity, educational policy has been moving steadily in one direction for the past thirty years and fits most clearly with the "no excuses" approach to education. The policy

discourse has been dominated by a focus on standards and accountability and by rules, laws, and incentives that reward such a focus in the schools and punish failure to comply or to meet established standards. This emphasis culminated in the passage of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) in 2002, which proclaimed its intent "to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice" (*No Child Left Behind*, 2002).

Although NCLB, passed during the administration of President George W. Bush, has received the most attention, the roots of this legislation go back to the release of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, a report which highlighted problems within our nation's educational system and called for new educational standards, and are evident in the *America 2000* (1991) plan of President George H. W. Bush and the *Goals 2000* (1994) initiative of the Clinton administration. Recent proposals and policy discussions, including those of recent presidential candidates and of the current administration, continue to focus on standards, accountability, sanctions and rewards, and choice (Kumashiro, 2009). The policies that have been enacted as a result of this perspective have impacted urban schools tremendously as they seek to comply with federal or state regulations and respond to growing criticism that they are not succeeding in raising student achievement.

It is difficult to determine if the "no excuses" approach is a reaction to federal policies or if these policies merely reflect a way of thinking that is also advanced by those who share this attitude toward school improvement. Nevertheless, it is clear that advocates of this approach have embraced the recent push for standards and accountability and the beliefs that motivate this movement.

Accountability and Equity: Two Perspectives in Urban Teacher Preparation

Exploring the various practices and approaches at work in the field of urban education in detail provides a deeper understanding of the different values and areas of emphasis that may impact urban-focused teacher preparation. This analysis also reveals both areas of overlap and conflict among these approaches. Therefore, as introduced in Chapter 1, I utilize a framework that synthesizes the above work into two broad perspectives so that we are able to better understand the complex world of urban schooling and more clearly investigate the potentially contradictory demands being placed on teacher candidates in their teacher preparation programs.

The accountability perspective and the equity perspective, therefore, emerge from the discussion of these various areas of emphasis in urban education. In this section I summarize areas of agreement and disagreement among these various approaches and explain in detail the basis for the utilization of these two perspectives in this study.

First, it is important to note that, of the areas of emphasis that emerge from the literature, a historical and socio-cultural focus plays a different role in the broader discussion of urban education than do the other areas of emphasis. This focus provides a context which aids our understanding of the issues faced in urban schools and works alongside of or in the background of the other approaches, which are more clearly evidenced in various school and classroom practices.

Second, there may be important areas of agreement among these viewpoints. For example, there may be general agreement that all students can reach high levels of academic achievement and that schools have the responsibility of meeting the needs of all students. Furthermore, most proponents of these various approaches recognize the importance of community and of fostering positive relationships among students and teachers. Therefore,

while there are schools that are closely aligned with one specific area of emphasis, it is probable that most schools will incorporate practices that draw on more than one of these points of view. For example, a school that affirms the importance of raising student achievement as measured by standardized tests—associated with a "no excuses" approach—may also affirm principles of democratic education in their efforts to create positive relationships between students and teachers and to incorporate a student-centered curriculum.

There are, however, significant differences among these approaches which influence their views of the purpose of school, the curriculum, the role of the teacher, and student failure. The starkest disagreements rest in the various views of the purpose of school and of the cause for student failure. The "No Excuses" approach focuses on preparing students for success in society through raising student achievement as measured by standardized tests. While affirming the importance of academic achievement, multicultural and democratic education focus more on promoting diversity and equity and affirming the strengths of all cultures. Critical pedagogy, in turn, argues that schools should focus on understanding and confronting existing social inequities. These approaches also differ significantly in their view of the cause of student failure. To combat failure, the "No Excuses" approach seeks to reduce knowledge deficits, increase student and teacher effort, improve instruction through a focus on the basics, and establish a culture that promotes learning and middle-class values. Advocates of multicultural education point to a lack of cultural diversity in curriculum and instruction and the failure to meet the needs of a diverse student population as the primary causes of student failure. Critical pedagogy points to existing social inequities and school practices which privilege certain types of knowledge as the roots of failure. Advocates of democratic education argue that curriculum

that is not student-centered and undemocratic and uncaring school environments lead to student failure.

The Equity Perspective

This review of the beliefs and values associated with each viewpoint suggests that multicultural education, democratic education, and critical pedagogy have a great deal in common. Although each of these approaches highlights a particular area of emphasis, there are important areas of agreement, and the values they share are much more significant than their distinct areas of emphasis. The beliefs and values of these approaches, therefore, provide the basis of the equity perspective. While promoting the importance of raising student achievement, advocates of the equity perspective argue that this requires a proper understanding of and focus on multicultural and democratic values along with a critical stance toward existing societal inequities. They point to the frequent lack of cultural diversity in curriculum and instruction, the failure to meet the needs of a diverse student population, and an uncritical acceptance of the status quo as reasons for the alarming rates of student failure in schools today (see Table 2.6). Furthermore, they question the use of standardized tests as the primary measure of student achievement and promote acceptance of diverse funds of knowledge in place of a standardized view that assumes consensus and privileges the canon of knowledge that is traditionally associated with school curriculum (Giroux & McLaren, 1996; Sleeter, 2005). Finally, advocates of the equity perspective recognize that equity is not the same as equality; rather, "it means that all students must be given the real possibility of an equality of outcomes" (Nieto & Bode, 2012, p. 9). Although the equity perspective generally takes a back seat to the accountability perspective in public and policy debates, it is reflected strongly in the values and practices of

many urban-focused teacher educators (Walcott, 2011) and in many schools throughout the

nation (Benitez, Davidson & Flaxman, 2009; Levine, 2002; Meier, 1995; Toch, 2003).

Table 2.6. Perspectives in Urban Education

	The Accountability Perspective	The Equity Perspective
Purpose of schooling	Raise student achievement and prepare students for success in society	Promote diversity, equity, and democracy in school and society
View of curriculum	Rigorous and common academic standards; preparation for standardized tests	Focus on culturally appropriate pedagogy, student-centered teaching and learning
Role of teacher	Establish learning climate, teach basic skills, raise student achievement as measured by standardized tests	Promote cultural diversity and positive relationships, equip students to confront social inequities
Primary cause for student failure	Knowledge deficits, lack of effort, culture of failure, ineffective teaching	Lack of cultural diversity in curriculum and instruction, failure to meet diverse needs of students, societal inequities

The equity perspective reflects the values of Schubert's (1996) *experientialist* and *critical*

reconstructionist curriculum traditions. It celebrates teaching and learning that emerge from the

experiences and interests of the students and argues that how we learn is often more important

than what we learn. In addition, it stresses the need for a critique of societal inequities and an

acknowledgement of the way social institutions, including school, work to reproduce existing

patterns of inequality. As such, this approach affirms the need for culturally relevant (Ladson-

Billings, 1995) or culturally responsive (Gay, 2000) teaching, with their emphasis on promoting

student achievement, meeting the needs of diverse learners, and encouraging students to critique

and confront societal inequities.

The Accountability Perspective

The accountability perspective aligns with the current policy focus on standards and

accountability and is reflected to a great extent by advocates of the "No Excuses" approach and

others who stress the importance of common standards for all students and accountability based on standardized tests. Although subject to some criticism by both practitioners and educational scholars, this perspective currently dominates both the public and policy discourse surrounding urban education in our nation.

While it is certain that advocates of this perspective strive to meet the needs of all children and desire to promote equality in our society, their use of standardized testing as the primary measure of student achievement separates them from those who hold as foundational the values of multicultural and democratic schooling. This perspective advances the belief that providing all students with quality teaching and curriculum and holding them to high standards will increase educational and vocational opportunities for all students and thereby reduce inequity in society. The accountability perspective points to the lack of basic skills, insufficient effort on the part of students or teachers, and ineffective curriculum and instruction as the causes for student failure and seeks to remedy these by establishing common curricular standards, focusing on the basics, promoting values that lead to success, and by holding all students, teachers, and schools accountable to these standards (see Table 2.6).

The accountability perspective favors what Schubert (1996) has described as an *intellectual traditionalist* view of curriculum, desiring to provide a liberal education for all based on conventional views of knowledge. Although desiring to meet the needs of all learners, the foundation of the curriculum is considered to rise above matters of student difference and the emphasis is on holding all students accountable to the established core standards.

Accountability and Equity in Urban-Focused Teacher Preparation

Urban-focused teacher preparation programs state their commitment to preparing teachers to be successful in urban schools. As noted above, the literature around such programs

aligns most clearly with the equity perspective as evident by the focus on community involvement, meeting the needs of diverse learners, and promoting social justice and critical pedagogy. It is not clear, however, to what extent and in what manner the equity perspective is promoted in such programs. The extent to which they prepare their teacher candidates for the current emphasis on standards and accountability as legislated by recent policy initiatives also remains uncertain. Furthermore, the ability of a teacher education program to successfully promote both equity and accountability is questionable.

This uncertainty about the relationship between accountability and equity in urban-focused teacher preparation is heightened by areas of tension between the two perspectives. Although they may jointly affirm the need to raise student achievement, meet the needs of all students, and reduce educational inequality, fundamental differences in their views on standardized testing, the purpose of school, curriculum, and school failure point to significant conflicts between the perspectives that are likely to show up in teacher preparation programs. It is this tension and uncertainty that leads to this study's focus on the manner in which teacher educators and teacher candidates in such programs perceive and treat issues of accountability and equity.

The way in which these perspectives are presented to and received by future teachers has important implications for the field of urban education. Are teacher candidates who have received a strong message related to educational equity adequately prepared to thrive in an environment dominated by a focus on accountability? Does an emphasis on the accountability perspective result in a watered-down understanding of equity that relegates it to the periphery? Are there alternate ways of conceptualizing accountability and equity such that both can be advanced in a way that envisions new possibilities for urban teaching and learning? Ultimately,

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as we seek to fully equip teachers to confront the challenges that await them, it is essential that we understand the goals of urban-focused teacher preparation programs with respect to these two perspectives.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated, therefore, in the world of urban-focused teacher preparation and considers the fact that these teacher education programs prepare teacher candidates to enter an environment filled with challenges, under attack for its history of failure, influenced by diverse perspectives about the characteristics of quality urban education, and subject to policy mandates that greatly influence practice. In particular, it focuses on potential tensions experienced by those who desire to promote an equity perspective while also recognizing the need to help teacher candidates thrive in a system that privileges the accountability perspective.

Rochelle Gutierrez (2008) has provided a useful way of considering these tensions. Gutierrez used the concept of *nepantla*, taken from the work of Gloria Anzaldúa (2002). As explained by Anzaldua, nepantla is a Nahuatl word, from the language of the Nahua people who lived primarily in Central Mexico, meaning "tierra entre medio," or "the land in between." Anzaldúa described nepantla as a space where multiple realities are considered, existing categories are disrupted, and new knowledge is fostered. Gutierrez applied this concept to discuss the intersection of the dominant and critical. Issues of access and achievement are framed along the dominant axis, while issues of identity and power are found on the critical axis. Nepantla, then, exists at the messy space where these two lines intersect (see Figure 2.1).

The implication for teachers is that they need to be able to see and understand these realities and "grapple with the tensions and dilemmas of preparing students to play the game while also supporting them to change the game" (Gutierrez, 2008, p. 25). If teacher preparation

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programs are going to be effective at promoting social justice and equity while also preparing

teachers to thrive in the contested landscape of urban schools, they are going to need to address

these tensions in meaningful ways. Figure 2.2 represents a way of using this concept to frame

the potential tensions experienced in teacher education programs that seek to prepare teacher

candidates to incorporate both the accountability and equity perspectives in their practice.

Figure 2.1. Nepantla (Gutierrez, 2008)

Dominant   Critical

Achievement   Identity

                                    Nepantla

Power   Access
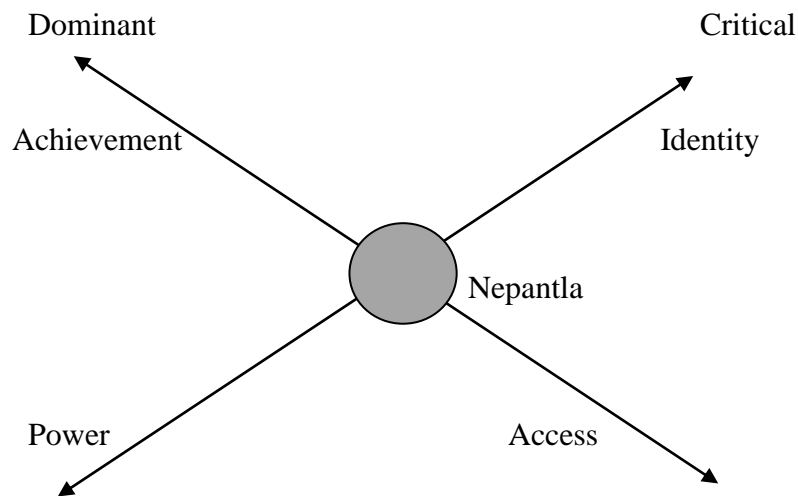
Figure 2.2. Accountability and Equity

Accountability   Equity

standards   equity

                          Neplantla

justice   accountability
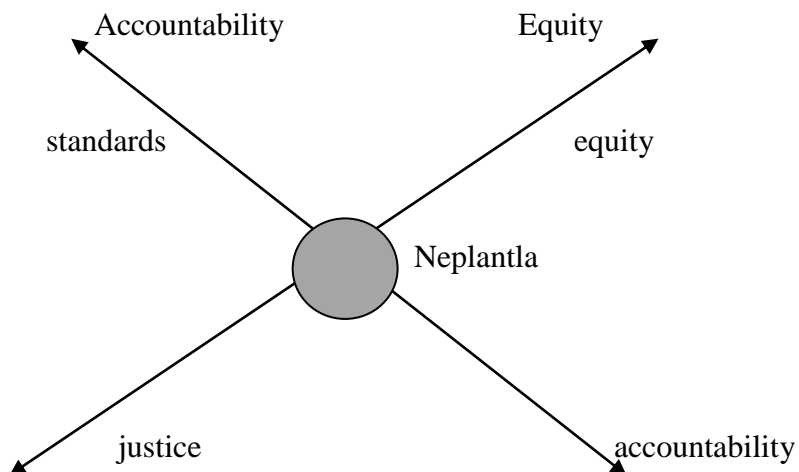
Applying the concept of nepantla to teacher preparation, like critical pedagogy, asserts the necessity of taking a critical stance toward societal injustice while also equipping students for academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995). In many cases, however, this is not happening (Ball, 2000). The questions addressed in this study, therefore, consider how teacher preparation programs can help teacher candidates cope with the potentially conflicting demands of accountability and equity. Giroux's (2009) discussion of empowerment further helps make visible this tension. He argued that empowerment moves beyond self-confirmation that students gain from an appreciation of their own culture to "the process by which students are able to interrogate and selectively appropriate those aspects of dominant culture that will provide them with the basis for defining and transforming, rather than merely serving, the wider social order" (p. 448). This supports Gutierrez' (2008, 2009) notion of changing the game while playing the game as well Delpit's (1988) affirmation that teachers need to teach students the codes of power in order for them to have the ability and opportunity to confront societal injustice.

Finally, this framework requires a clear understanding of the concepts of justice and equity in education. Although discussions of justice and equity pervade the current educational discourse around urban education, agreement about what these concepts mean and how they should be applied in educational settings cannot be assumed. A thorough analysis of these issues related to urban-focused teacher preparation will require, therefore, careful attention to the way justice and equity are perceived and communicated by both individuals and institutions.

Looking Forward

At this point, therefore, I have described two perspectives—accountability and equity— that are currently at work in urban education and therefore influence the world of urban-focused teacher preparation. In this study, I investigate the place of these two perspectives in teacher

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education and examine the relationship between the two and look for potential sites of intersection. These intersections may result in synergy or dissonance. This potentially messy space where accountability and equity meet emerges, then, as a possible site for new perspectives related to effective urban-focused teacher preparation.

In order to investigate the stated research questions and contribute to a deeper understanding of urban-focused teacher preparation, I designed a research study utilizing document analysis and interview data from urban-focused teacher preparation programs around the country. In Chapter 3 I describe my research methods before turning to the data analysis in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The world of urban education, including urban-focused teacher preparation, is full of challenges and complexity. As argued in Chapter 2, two perspectives of urban education emerge from the scholarly literature on urban schools and urban-focused teacher preparation, accounts of current practice, and the policy context. The accountability and equity perspectives play an influential role in urban school practice; consequently it is important to consider the place of these two perspectives in teacher education programs that focus on preparing teachers for work in urban schools. This leads directly to the research questions that guide this study:

- Do teacher candidates encounter both the accountability and equity perspectives in their teacher education program? If so, where and to what extent?

- What messages about these two perspectives do teacher educators intend to give to the teacher candidates with whom they work? Are these perspectives evident in the way teacher educators' talk about educational concepts and practices such as students, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and the purpose of schooling?

- What messages about these two perspectives are being received and understood by the teacher candidates?

As is the case in most university programs, urban teacher preparation programs have a stated mission along with a set of goals, objectives, and values which are often outlined in publically available program documents. These statements are a valuable source of data as they reflect the beliefs and values that lie at the foundation of each program and inform the public of

the intended curriculum[2] of the university's program. However, in addition to their stated

objectives, programs also have an enacted curriculum which at times emphasizes or favors only a

portion of the stated goals or even contradicts them. Therefore, to investigate the research

questions, I used a two-tiered approach. First, I conducted a content analysis of eight urban-

focused teacher preparation programs from around the United States. For this first tier, I

collected data from publically-available program documents in order to address the question of

whether or not and to what extent these programs claimed to address issues of accountability and

equity. From these eight programs, I then chose two programs for the second part of the study

and then employed a case study approach in order to investigate more thoroughly the place of

these two perspectives in the programs and how they were perceived by program participants.

First Tier Analysis

Sample Selection

The first stage of the research involved a content analysis of eight urban-focused teacher

preparation programs. Choosing the programs to be included in this study was a multi-layered

process. I incorporated a network sampling process (Glesne, 2006) to identify urban-focused

teacher preparation programs throughout the country. First, faculty members at my university

with experience in or an expressed focus on urban education were contacted and asked to

identify leading programs of urban-focused teacher preparation in the United States and also

asked to identify other scholars with expertise in this area who would also be able to provide

recommendations. Based on these initial recommendations, I began to formulate a list of such

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[2] In contrast to the common use of this term to refer to a list of courses or course materials, the word *curriculum* is used here to refer to the entire breadth of learning experiences and outcomes associated with a teacher education program.

programs while also reaching out to additional scholars, based on the input from the initial

contacts, to solicit their recommendations.

In total, I contacted 21 urban education scholars and received recommendations from 18

of the 21. This process yielded a list of 39 programs, and from this list I first chose 12 programs

to be part of the study. I included all of the programs, seven in total, that were recommended by

at least three scholars. I then completed the list by adding institutions that represented a variety

of geographic regions and program sizes.

Table 3.1. University Descriptions[3]

University	Location	Size	Carnegie Classification*
Stuart College	Western U.S.	~2000	Private, Master's M
Brightonsville University	Eastern U.S.	~10,000	Public, Master's L
Colona State University	Eastern U.S.	~20,000	Public, Master's L
Barkton University	Eastern U.S.	~40,000	Public, RU/H
Treston State University	Western U.S.	~40,000	Public, RU/VH
Elia University	Eastern U.S.	~25,000	Private, RU/VH
Peyton University	Midwest U.S.	~15,000	Public, RU/H
Allerton State University	Midwest U.S.	~30,000	Public, RU/H

Note: The Basic Carnegie Classification is defined as follows:

Master's M – a medium-size institution that awards at least 50 master's degrees and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees per year

Master's L – a large institution that awards at least 50 master's degree and fewer than 20 doctoral degrees per year

RU/H – a high research activity institution that awards at least 20 research doctoral degrees per year

RU/VH a very high research activity institution that awards at least 20 research doctoral degrees per year.

I narrowed the focus to eight programs in order allow for a more thorough analysis of

each program. Criteria for inclusion were: a clearly articulated urban focus throughout the

teacher preparation program, a sufficient quantity of program documents to supply data for

analysis, and at least ten program faculty members. Of the original twelve, one of the programs

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[3] Pseudonyms are used for all university names.

was excluded due to a lack of urban focus related to its secondary education program. Two programs did not provide sufficient information upon which to base the first level of analysis. A fourth program was excluded because it only listed six faculty members as part of its urban-focused teacher education department. The eight remaining programs—which vary in size, location, and institutional status (see Table 3.1)—were chosen as sites for this project (see Appendix A for additional information about each program).

Data Collection

Data for the first level of study were collected from publicly available documents, including web pages, program handbooks, mission and vision statements, and course descriptions. There were a variety of documents available from the different programs (see Appendix B for a complete list of documents), including College or School of Education overviews, program introductions, course descriptions, mission and vision statements, brochures, lists of core values, program handbooks, program standards, and lists of desired program outcomes. For the purposes of analysis, I grouped mission, vision, and core values statements into one category labeled *vision statements* and included program standards and desired program outcomes in the *program standards* category.

All data were coded to determine how often and in what context these specific programs reference the accountability and the equity perspectives in their work with teacher candidates. The literature and conceptual framework of the study provided a set of provisional codes (see Table 3.2) for use at the start of the project (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The initial goal was simply to highlight the existence of the two perspectives and provide a starting point for analyzing the meaning attributed to these perspectives. For the accountability perspective, I looked for references to standards, standardized assessment, student achievement, classroom

management, accountability, evaluation, academic rigor, and high expectations. For the equity

perspective, I coded for reference to diversity, multiculturalism, social justice, equity, inequality,

societal critique, critical pedagogy, and democratic education.   In addition, as views of

knowledge, curriculum, and school purposes are influenced by each of these perspectives, I also

coded for references to these concepts.

Upon completion of the initial coding, I prepared analytic memos for each program.

These memos included a table which organized the codes by document type and frequency. For

example, the table corresponding to Stuart College noted that the course descriptions contained

five references to the equity and two references to accountability. Each memo also contained a

narrative in which I recorded my initial interpretations of and questions about the data.

Table 3.2. Initial Coding Scheme

Perspective	Terms
Accountability	standards standardized assessments student achievement classroom management accountability evaluation academic rigor high expectations
Equity	diversity multicultural social justice equity inequality societal critique critical pedagogy democratic education
Other Terms	knowledge curriculum school purpose

After compiling and reviewing all of the data in this manner, two things became clear. First, the data were clearly useful in moving me towards an answer to the research questions. Second, however, the data also demonstrated sufficient ambiguity in the way in which certain terms were used that it was evident that a more thorough analysis was required in order to truly understand specific terms and their intended meaning. This was especially true given my goals of exploring the complex relationship between accountability and equity and seeking nepantla— new possibilities and understandings of the space where these two perspectives meet (Anzaldua, 2002; Gutierrez, 2008).

It was important, therefore, to explore more thoroughly the rhetoric related to urban education, accountability, and equity in order to understand the meanings being conveyed by the program documents. As teacher preparation programs disseminate their program mission and goals and as teacher educators explain their beliefs and practices, they employ words and phrases and engage in discussions that are subject to multiple interpretations and may be received in ways not originally intended. Wells, Slayton, and Scott (2002) provided an example of this when they noted the varied ways conceptions of "democracy" and "markets" are used in debates over school choice policies in education.

I returned, then, to the documents a second time in order to analyze the discourse based on work by Phillips (2004) in his study of educational testing. Based on the work of Foucault (1972) and Burke (1937, 1941), Phillips described three levels of analysis that are useful for exploring the rhetoric of education. First, a set of terms is identified based on the frequency and intensity of their use. Second, a pattern of usage, the discourse, is identified based on the setting or relationship in which these terms appear. Finally, a logic of the discourse is identified. This considers the way the discourse connects with the material world—in this case the practice of

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education. In this study, the initial set of terms corresponded to the initial coding scheme developed from the literature and conceptual framework of the study. Subsequent analyses of how the terms were used and their relationships to other terms provided a clearer understanding of the discourse of equity and accountability and its logic. This proved useful in highlighting some of the ambiguity in the way certain terms were used and in gaining an increased understanding of how issues of accountability and equity were being portrayed by the various programs. This is explored in more detail in Chapter 4.

Second Tier Analysis: Case Studies

The Case Study Approach

The choice to use case studies was driven by several aspects of this project. First, I brought to the project the belief that the socially-constructed nature of reality must be considered at all times. Qualitative research stresses this (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Glesne, 2006), and case studies are especially helpful in allowing the researcher to pay close attention to the influence of various contexts on the target issue (Stake, 2004). Second, the decision to use a case study approach was driven by the choice of what to study more than as a methodological decision (Stake, 2004). The focus here was to gain as much understanding and information as possible from specific teacher preparation programs, and the use of case studies supported this objective. Third, the research questions dictated a method that would optimize understanding of some of the complexities involved with urban-focused teacher preparation. The goal of the study was not to measure effectiveness or some sort of increase in achievement; rather, it was to answer questions about and increase understanding of specific aspects of urban teacher preparation. Answers to the research questions required the ability to listen carefully to actual program participants. A case study provided access to the experiential knowledge of the programs being

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studied and insight into the fundamental issues at play that were required to meet the research objectives (Stake, 2004). A case study, as is true with qualitative research in general, allows the researcher the opportunity to gain understanding from the perspective of those most involved with the target activity (Glesne, 2006). Fourth, this approach can incorporate several types of data. The use of multiple data sources provides rich and detailed information that increases opportunities for learning and intensive study (Glesne, 2006; Jones & McEwen, 2002; Stake, 2004). Furthermore, they provide the basis for triangulation and increased validity.

The use of more than one case provides the opportunity to increase the value of a study in several important ways. First, it results in increased access into and comprehension of the research questions along with added confidence in the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2004). Second, although there are certainly limits to the amount of generalization that should take place based on a small sample size, the use of multiple cases may afford the opportunity to theorize more generally about a broader collection of cases (Stake, 2004). Finally, use of multiple cases provides data through which the researcher is able to see what is common and what is particular about the various programs. Therefore, I began the project with the intention to choosing at least two universities to serve as sites for the case studies.

Case Study Selection

Based on the first level of analysis, I used purposeful (Jones & McEwen, 2002) or purposive (Stakes, 2004) sampling to target programs that would provide rich data and optimize learning. The first criterion for selection was that the first tier analysis had to provide evidence that both the accountability and equity perspectives were incorporated into the institution's stated goals for their urban teacher education program. Secondly, I wanted to include programs that differed from each other significantly in either size, research status, or path to teacher

certification in order to add a potential layer of analysis to the study and possibly highlight

beliefs or practices that may be unique to particular program types. Finally, having identified

potential sites, I needed to find at least two programs that allowed access to the necessary data, in

particular, interview participants (see Table 3.3 for details of the sampling criteria).

Based on the first tier analysis and the sampling criteria, I focused on Peyton,

Brightonsville, and Allerton State as sites for the case studies. After contacting each of the

programs to ask permission to conduct the research at their program, it became clear that it

would not be possible to gain access to the necessary data at Brightonsville in the required time

period. Although I initially received a favorable response from the Dean of the College of

Education at Brightonsville, subsequent efforts to finalize the research plans resulted in reports

of scheduling conflicts, delays, and additional obstacles that made it impossible to continue.

Fortunately, I was able to connect successfully with the leadership in the schools of education at

Peyton and Allerton State in order to gain the necessary permissions to proceed with the study

and to set up a suitable schedule of research activities.

Table 3.3. Sampling Criteria for Case Study Selection

Criteria	Program stance or characteristics related to sampling criteria
Place of two perspectives in teacher preparation program	Both programs express a desire to: • Acknowledge reality of both accountability and equity perspectives • Prepare teacher candidates to effectively incorporate both perspectives in their teaching
Institutional characteristics	There will be a clear difference among the programs in regard to at least one of the following characteristics: • Size • Research status • Path to teacher certification

Furthermore, Peyton and Allerton State offered different paths to certification in their

urban-focused teacher preparation programs, thus satisfying the second selection criterion.

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Allerton State offers a traditional four-year undergraduate program that results in a bachelor's degree and teacher certification. In contrast, the urban-focused program at Peyton University is a specific cohort of the broader teacher education department and is offered to students already in possession of a bachelor's degree as part of a 16-month program leading to a master's degree and teacher certification.

Case Study Data

The majority of the data for the case studies was collected through the use of interviews with program participants. At each university, I interviewed faculty members, current teacher candidates—university students—nearing the end of their studies, and program graduates currently at work as classroom teachers. In total, I interviewed 15 faculty members, 16 teacher candidates, and 8 graduates from the two programs (see Table 3.4). I conducted one interview with each participant. The interviews were semi-structured in that they begin with an established interview protocol (see Appendix C) but then also used the participants' responses as a basis for further discussion (Glesne, 2006). The length of the interviews ranged from 25 minutes to 90 minutes, with the majority lasting about 45 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded, and I prepared a transcription of each interview for the purpose of data analysis.

Table 3.4. Interview Participants by Program

	Peyton University	Allerton State University
Faculty	7	8
Teacher Candidates	5	11
Graduates	6	2

For the faculty members, at each university I interviewed at least one person in leadership in the program who was able to provide a clear explanation of the mission and vision of the program, a description of the values that guided the program practice, and an overall perspective

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of the program. I also interviewed instructors of introductory, foundations, curriculum, and methods courses in the secondary education program. The decision to limit the study to courses in secondary education was designed to narrow the focus of the study and to build on my prior knowledge as a person involved with secondary education. The faculty members' years of experience at their university ranged from 1 to 36 years (see Appendix D for a more detailed description of the faculty participants). The faculty interviews served to clarify the written documents and gave me the opportunity to learn about the beliefs, understandings, and practices related to accountability and equity of individual members of the faculty as well as their understanding of the place of these perspectives at their institution.

The interviews of the current teacher candidates and of the program graduates were conducted to provide information about how they perceived and understood the two perspectives and how they made sense of the experiences they were having or had while preparing to be teachers. At Peyton University, all of the student participants were in a secondary education program, and their majors included mathematics, English, social studies, and Spanish. Due to the nature of the program as a post-baccalaureate path to certification, the teacher candidates ranged in age from 25 to 40 years of age and all had post-graduate work experience in a field other than teaching. Some of the participants had attended urban public schools and others had lived in suburban environments. The Allerton State student participants ranged in age from 20 to 30 years of age, with the majority being traditional university students in their early 20s. All of the teacher candidates were in a secondary education program, and their majors included social studies, English, and mathematics (see Appendix E for more information about the student participants).

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All of the graduates except one had participated in a secondary education program and were teaching in a middle or high school at the time of the interview. One of the graduates from Allerton State studied in an educational policy program and did not have any classroom teaching experience. They ranged in age from approximately 25 to 60 years of age and had completed their teacher certification program from two to seventeen years ago (see Appendix E for more information about the graduate participants).

All interviews were transcribed and subjected to a two-pronged analysis process. First, because the purpose of the interviews focused on understanding the meaning assigned to each of the two perspectives and the way this meaning was presented or received by the program participants, many of the questions were explicitly directed at these two issues. Responses to these questions, therefore, were not subjected to a coding procedure designed to highlight the existence of the perspectives but, rather, were reviewed in order to note the meaning advanced by the respondent and then to note patterns of usage of particular words and phrases and the logic of the discourse surrounding the perspectives (Phillips, 2004).

Second, particular attention was paid to the context of the interview responses. Abell and Myers (2008) explained that in analyzing research interviews, it is necessary to explore the contexts of the interviews. They highlighted four types of contexts. First, the co-text refers to what comes just before and after a specific portion of the text. Second, intertextual links refer to other voices used in the response or dialogue. These voices may be quotes or familiar arguments that are brought to bear on the discussion. Third, the situational context refers to the conditions—such as time or place —that immediately surround the interview responses. Fourth, sociopolitical or historical contexts may also have an impact on answers provided by the participants. This focus on context proved valuable in the analysis of the interview data for this

project. For example, in discussing accountability, many respondents referred to specific documents that were very influential in their state or school district. Furthermore, current policy discussions relating to standardized testing also were mentioned frequently in the interviews. The intertextual and sociopolitical contexts of the interviews, therefore, emerged as elements of the analysis.

The interviews also involved questions related to specific classroom practices, such as assessment or learning activities, and general ideas about education, school improvement, and teachers. Responses to these questions were subjected to the same initial coding procedure used with the program documents. Again, these responses were reviewed a second time in order to explore emerging discourse patterns or logic.

Finally, after completing the analysis, an analytic memo was prepared for each interview. These memos included a summary of responses related to issues of accountability and equity and of how each participant perceived the manner in which the program treated these issues. The memos also included an analysis of the participant's view about the relationship between accountability and equity.

As noted by Glesne (2006), the strength of the interview process is "the opportunity to learn about what you cannot see and to explore alternative explanations of what you do see" (p. 81). For this study, the interview allowed me to gather perceptions and opinions from faculty members and students and hear reports of what the programs seek to offer and of what students take away from these programs. It also provided explanations or further understandings of data collected from program documents and course syllabi.

There are also, however, limitations in the use of interviews in research. As it is a time-consuming process, it is necessary to work with a manageable sample size. Therefore, it is

necessary to recognize that the interview participants represent only a portion of the total population of the teacher education programs. Nevertheless, targeting faculty members that represented a broad spectrum of program courses and disciplinary areas yielded a sample that was likely to be representative of the entire program.

Gaining access to interview participants and successfully recruiting volunteers is also a challenge inherent in the use of interviews as a primary source of data collection. For both universities, it was fairly easy to make contact with a representative sample of faculty members by means of publically available information about the programs and their faculty. Connecting with students and graduates was more difficult due to constraints mandated by acceptable research practices and policies. In keeping with privacy laws, I was not able to have access to lists of students or graduates. Fortunately, connecting with students was a rather straightforward process with the cooperation of the department chairpersons and program faculty who were able to forward an email message to students in the program explaining the research project and asking for volunteers. Interested students were then able to contact me directly to set up an interview appointment. At Allerton State I received notices from 20 students and randomly chose 12 of those students to be interview participants. Of that group, I was successful in scheduling an interview appointment with 11 of the 12.   At Peyton University, which organizes their program by cohort, the program chairperson sent notices to all of the students in one of the cohort. Of this group of 20 students, five of them volunteered to participate. While repeated attempts to recruit additional volunteers were unsuccessful, the sample of 25% of the program participants from a variety of content areas provided a representative sample.

Connecting with graduates was the most difficult. The specialized program at Peyton University was able to facilitate the recruitment of volunteers by sending an email announcement

to all program graduates from the past ten years. This effort, including the sending of two

reminders, yielded six volunteers. Allerton State, however, was not able to provide the same

level of support. The alumni office was able to facilitate the sending of an email announcement

to a small group of program graduates, but only two volunteers responded. The small number of

graduate participants, therefore, severely limited the usefulness of the data from program

graduates at Allerton State. In addition, in general the graduates from both programs provided

minimal insight into the manner in which the accountability and equity perspectives were

portrayed to them through their program experiences. Therefore, the analysis of this data did not

contribute significantly to the primary goals of the study. Because of these two factors, I have

not included the analysis of the interviews with program graduates in the discussion of the

findings for this study.

Course syllabi provided the final set of data for the case studies (see Appendix F for a list

of course syllabi included in the study). Course syllabi were coded following the same

procedure used for the other program documents. However, when possible, a specific syllabus

was also compared with interview responses from the course instructor to provide further

understanding of both the interview and the syllabus. Information from the analysis of the

syllabi was added to the interview memo when possible. For syllabi that were not accompanied

by an interview, a memo was created to summarize its analysis.

Research Issues and Limitations

All research involves people, practices, decisions, and obstacles that bring with them

certain strengths and weaknesses and point to limitations or concerns that must be addressed.

For example, as reviewed above, it is important to acknowledge issues that arise during the

research study related to challenges in gaining access to necessary data. It is also necessary to be

clear about concerns related to the position of the researcher, the subjective nature of research, and the interpretation of the data.

First, I bring to this study a strong base of knowledge about urban education and a limited amount of experience in urban-focused teacher preparation. As a teacher and administrator in an urban school for 13 years, I formed my own opinions about what worked and did not work in my school and about the challenges facing urban educators. During my doctoral studies my graduate assistantships involved teaching a seminar for interns in urban secondary schools and coordinating the Urban Educators Cohort Program at our university. These experiences gave me a front row seat to the challenges of preparing teachers for work in urban schools and influenced my thinking in important ways. As is generally the case in educational research, I entered this project not as an unbiased bystander but as someone with great interest in and ideas and opinions about urban education.

This reality, however, does not minimize the validity of the research project. As noted by Weber (1949) more than 50 years ago, there is no pure objectivity in the study of the social sciences. The researcher brings his personal experiences, understandings, and perspectives. However, this is not a blemish on the research. It simply requires, first of all, that the researcher places her "best intellect into the thick of what is going on" (Stake, 2004, p. 449). Secondly, it necessitates a clear and complete description of the study, the use of multiple forms of data, and a clear representation of decisions regarding methods and analysis. These disciplined research practices form the foundation of the researcher's ability to differentiate between the knowledge gained from the study and personal preference and opinion (Stake, 2004). For this project, then, I used data gathered from program documents, three types of interviews, and course syllabi as an aide in triangulating the data to increase validity and to deepen my understanding of each data

point (Glesne, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Throughout the process, I also received regular feedback from my dissertation committee regarding the data gathering process, the analysis, and my discussion of the findings. The use of two case study sites provided not only additional data but also a valuable point of comparison. Finally, as asserted by Miles and Huberman (1994), the project required "plenty of care and self-awareness on the part of the researcher" (p. 10). This was certainly my intention throughout the process.

During the interviews, I also occupied a position as an informed outsider. I shared with the interview participants information about my educational experience and my interest in urban education. It was clear to them, therefore, that I was well-informed about issues related to education in general and urban schooling in particular. This facilitated meaningful and efficient discussions of a variety of issues as they felt free to discuss their experiences and thoughts and to use language that might only be understand by someone with inside knowledge of teaching or teacher education. At the same time, it was clear that I was not involved with their specific institution. This supported the project's commitment to confidentiality and contributed to open and honest discussions about specific aspects of the respective programs.

Finally, an essential characteristic of a case study is the specific nature of the project; the object of study is an individual case. This has two implications for the interpretation of the data. First, for this project, the findings contribute primarily to our understanding of the two urban-focused teacher preparation programs that are the objects of the study. There is no claim that the results can be generalized to all such programs. Nevertheless, as the two programs are similar in terms of their stated mission and in their design to many other programs, the findings do contribute to our general understanding of urban-focused teacher education. Second, it must also be stressed that analytic, rather than statistical, generalization is the goal of the case study

approach (Yin, 2003). The aim of this study, therefore, was not to learn about all urban-focused

teacher preparation programs, but rather to increase our comprehension of how accountability

and equity are perceived in the case study programs and thereby contribute to a deeper

understanding of these perspectives, the role they might play in urban-focused teacher

preparation, and the implications this new knowledge might have for urban educators.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FIRST LOOK: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF URBAN-FOCUSED TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

The first step in understanding the role of the accountability and equity perspectives in urban-focused teacher preparation programs was to investigate the extent to which these two perspectives were evident in such programs and the manner in which they were portrayed. In this chapter, then, I summarize the data collected from program documents at eight universities in order to demonstrate the degree to which these two perspectives were reflected in these institutions. I then present an analysis of the data which focuses on the way in which certain attributes of accountability and equity were presented and how this contributed to their program message.

The Programs

This analysis of program documents indicates, first of all, that both accountability and equity are reflected in the urban-focused teacher preparation programs included in this study (see Table 4.1 for an overall summary of the data). While two of the programs, Treston State University and Elia University, were almost devoid of coded references to accountability (8.1% and 5.6% of total references, respectively), the other six institutions ranged from 19.5% to 47.2% of total references for accountability. However, while providing evidence of the existence of both perspectives, the analysis also points to a stronger affinity to the equity perspective than to accountability. Taken together, 71.9% of the coded references pointed to the equity perspective while only 28.1% referred to accountability. With the exception of Brightonsville University

(47.2% accountability, 52.8% equity), the difference in the relative percentages was significant

(ranging from 31% to 88.8%), clearly favoring equity over accountability.

Table 4.1. Frequency of Coded Items by University Program

Program	Accountability	Equity
Stuart	3 (25%)	9 (75%)
Brightonsville	17 (47.2%)	19 (52.8%)
Colona State	8 (19.5%)	33 (80.5%)
Barkton	18 (34%)	35 (66%)
Treston State	3 (8.1%)	34 (91.9%)
Elia	1 (5.6%)	17 (94.4%)
Peyton	10 (34.5%)	19 (65.5%)
Allerton State	16 (36.4%)	28 (63.6%)
Total	76 (28.1%)	194 (71.9%)

While this brief summary provides an overall picture of the frequency with which these

two perspectives were presented in these eight programs, it is necessary to look more closely at

the program documents of each university to understand more clearly the way in which these

perspectives were presented and their relative significance in each program.

Stuart College

Program documents and course descriptions at Stuart College reflect a clear emphasis on

the equity perspective (see Table 4.2). The brief introduction presents the program's intent to

prepare teachers who value diversity, exhibit cultural competence, meet the needs of all learners,

and are committed to equity. Similarly, course descriptions reflect this emphasis on

understanding the social and cultural context of on education, recognizing injustice, and teaching

for equity.

The accountability perspective, while not as prominent, is visible. It is reflected in an introductory reference to the importance of providing a strong academic preparation for its teacher candidates and the inclusion of classroom management strategies and state standards as included topics in a curriculum and instruction course.

Table 4.2. Stuart College: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
Program introduction	1	4
Course descriptions	2	5
Total	3 (25%)	9 (75%)

Brightonsville University

The objective that comes through most strongly in the program documents of Brightonsville University is that program graduates will be reflective practitioners equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be excellent teachers. Essential knowledge includes strong content knowledge, the ability to effectively present subject matter using a variety of teaching methods, appropriate use of assessment, understanding of child development and student motivation, and critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

In discussing this overarching goal, there are specific references to the accountability perspective (see Table 4.3). Academic rigor and student achievement are each mentioned on one occasion, and there are two references to student assessment—including standardized testing— and academic standards. There are also frequent references to content knowledge, skills, and standards in the course descriptions, demonstrating the high value placed on preparing teachers who will be able to equip their students to succeed academically.

The equity perspective is also evident in course descriptions (see Table 4.3). Several courses promote the importance of a critical perspective on the contexts of schooling and of preparing teachers for work in multicultural settings and with diverse students. The equity

perspective is also given a clearly privileged position in a foundational statement of program benchmarks. In this statement, the critical, democratic, and multicultural approaches come through strongly in benchmarks stressing issues related to power, equality, culture, race, class, family and community involvement, and respect for cultural difference.

Table 4.3. Brightonsville University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
School of education introduction	2	1
Program outcomes	6	12
Course descriptions	9	6
Total	17(47.2%)	19 (52.8%)

Colona State University

An emphasis on the equity perspective is evident throughout the program descriptions and documents of Colona State (see Table 4.4). The website's introductory materials highlight a focus on culturally responsive teaching and the preparing of students for democratic life. The program handbook further emphasizes the relationship between education and democracy and makes several references to diversity, being prepared to help all students learn, and valuing cultural differences. The summary of desired program outcomes highlights democratic education in almost half of its statements, stressing the importance of students' experiences, multiple forms of assessment, and community involvement. It also promotes cultural awareness, a critical perspective, and the promotion of social justice. Course descriptions also include specific references to democratic education, diversity, and a multicultural perspective.

The accountability perspective clearly takes a back seat to the emphasis on equity in the teacher preparation program (see Table 4.4). However, the program handbook includes two references that stress the importance of academic standards and also notes the importance of holding students accountable for their behavior. Also, teaching about classroom management is

a central course objective in two required courses, and there is a course offered that serves as an introduction to assessment and accountability.

Table 4.4. Colona State University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
Program introduction	0	4
Brochure	0	4
Program handbook	2	6
Program standards	2	10
Course descriptions	4	9
Total	8 (19.5%)	33 (80.5%)

Barkton University

While Barkton University's program documents speak clearly of both the accountability and equity perspectives of urban education, there is a much greater emphasis on equity than on accountability (see Table 4.5). In total, there were 18 statements coded for accountability, and 35 statements coded for equity. Reference to academic standards dominated the discussion of the accountability perspective. References to academic achievement and academic rigor express the program's emphasis on preparing students for academic success. Academic rigor and accountability are also highlighted as two of the six principles on which the university's teacher preparation program is founded. In the course descriptions, there were several references to accountability, but they were limited to courses focusing on teaching subject matter or on student evaluation.

Statements demonstrating a focus on diversity and democratic education were the most common among those reflecting the equity perspective (see Table 3.4). A critical stance also clearly emerges in the course descriptions. This emphasis on a critical approach, in particular, and equity in general appears in courses discussing the history of education, education in a diverse society, and socio-cultural foundations. Courses treating the topics of curriculum and

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teaching in content areas are almost completely devoid of references to equity, with the one

exception being a statement about "authentic educational experiences" in a curriculum and

instruction course.

Table 4.5. Barkton University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
College introduction	3	6
Program introduction	4	9
Vision statement	6	11
Course descriptions	5	9
Total	18 (34%)	35 (66%)

Treston State University

The introductory materials for Treston State's School of Education include a specific

reference to the university's emphasis on diversity, multicultural education, and equity. The

overview of the teacher preparation program goes into much greater detail and includes 20

statements reflecting their focus on the equity perspective, including descriptors and goals that

speak of a social justice agenda, a critical perspective, student-centered learning, inquiry-based

teaching, anti-racist education, and multiculturalism. Social justice is at the heart of the

program's mission, as it seeks to advance a "social justice agenda" and prepare "social justice

educators." The program also promotes a critical stance through efforts to engage in "critical

inquiry," attend to the political aspects of teaching, and work to recognize and confront injustice

in an effort to promote equity. In contrast to this clear focus on equity, the introductory

comments about the School of Education and the teacher preparation program each include only

one reference to the accountability perspective (see Table 4.6).

The course descriptions provide further evidence of the focus on equity and the lack of

attention paid to issues of the accountability perspective (see Table 4.6). The course descriptions

contain one explicit reference to the importance of academic content alongside multiple

references to issues of diversity, socio-cultural approaches to learning, identity, and equity.

Table 4.6. Treston State University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
School of education introduction	1	3
Program introduction	1	20
Course descriptions	1	11
Total	3 (8.1%)	34 (91.9%)

Elia University

Both the introduction to the School of Education at Elia University and the teacher

preparation program description highlight a focus on the equity perspective, visible in frequent

references to social justice, community involvement, student-centered learning, equity, and the

critical perspective (see Table 4.7). The terms *social justice* and *equity* are used together on

several occasions and are presented as part of the program's mission and core commitments. An

emphasis on democratic education is evidenced in a commitment to community involvement, an

inquiry focus to instruction, a concern to use students' lived experiences as the foundation for

teaching and learning, and the use of learner-centered instructional strategies. The program's

critical stance is clearly reflected in statements noting the importance of critically interpreting the

world through classroom decisions, the need to challenge racism, sexism, and classism, the

political nature of teaching, and the need to challenge prior assumptions.

Table 4.7. Elia University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
School of education introduction	0	7
Program introduction	0	6
Course descriptions	1	4
Total	1 (5.6%)	17 (94.4%)

The accountability perspective, however, is completely lacking from introductory statements, and the only explicit reference is found in a course description of an Advanced Methods course which notes a special focus on content and state and national standards.

Peyton University

While Peyton University's program documents reference characteristics of the equity perspective more frequently than the accountability perspective (see Table 4.8), both are clearly evident. The focus on accountability is demonstrated in statements about student achievement, evaluation, standards, and classroom management. The program introduction affirms the goal of promoting student learning and academic success. The handbook outlines a clear evaluation procedure for teacher candidates, the use of a standardized assessment as part of that evaluation, and the role of standards in lesson planning. References to behavioral standards for students and classroom management are found in the statement of core values and in a course description.

Table 4.8. Peyton University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
Program introduction	1	2
Program standards	3	10
Program handbook	5	1
Course descriptions	1	6
Total	10 (34.5%)	19 (65.5%)

The equity perspective is also reflected throughout the program documents. Diversity, the social context of learning, social justice, and student-centered and culturally relevant curriculum are highlighted in several places. For example, the introduction, the program outcomes statement, and course descriptions affirm the importance of understanding the impact of social structures and diversity on learning. Social justice is highlighted as one of the primary program outcomes, and issues of equity are the focus of one required class. Course descriptions

and the core values statement also reference student-centered teaching, learning, and instructional methods.

Allerton State University

Program documents from Allerton State's teacher preparation program reflect a clear focus on both the accountability and equity perspectives (see Table 4.9). The equity perspective is presented in introductory statements that express a commitment to diversity, equity, community involvement, and the need to meet the unique challenges of urban environments. The core values statements and a statement of program standards affirm this focus in multiple statements regarding diversity, social justice, the need for a critical stance, the impact of the social context of learning, equitable educational practices, and community interaction.

While there are fewer references to issues of accountability, this perspective is certainly reflected in the program documents. The description of the program's vision expresses a commitment to quality instruction, high expectations, attention to standards, and accountability. The program has also developed a set of teaching standards which serve as the basis for the evaluation of teacher candidates. Among other characteristics, teacher candidates are expected to possess strong content knowledge, hold high expectations for their students, and be accountable for student learning.

Table 4.9. Allerton State University: Frequency of Coded Items by Document Type

	Accountability	Equity
School of education introduction	1	7
Vision statement	7	8
Program standards	7	11
Course descriptions	1	1
Total	16 (26.4%)	28 (63.6%)

Discussion

This first tier analysis demonstrates, then, that the accountability and equity perspectives are represented in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs, but also that the equity perspective is clearly favored, at least in terms of the number of references it receives, at seven of the eight programs investigated for this stage of the project. The data also point to important issues related to the meanings assigned to certain terms associated with accountability and equity and to difference in university status and its relationship to the manner in which these perspectives are presented.

The Rhetoric of Accountability and Equity

In addition to providing evidence of the existence of the accountability and equity perspectives in these teacher preparation programs, the analysis of program documents reveals how certain elements of these perspectives are portrayed. By looking beyond the simple list of terms and concepts that are talked about by the institutions, certain discourse patterns emerge which lead to a deeper understanding of various aspects of these perspectives and suggest the need to explore these patterns more thoroughly in the case studies that follow.

The language of equity. These programs demonstrate their commitment to the equity perspective through frequent references to diversity, diverse learners, community involvement, equity, social justice, democracy, and critical pedagogy. From the limited information available in the program documents, however, it is not always possible to determine the meaning that is assigned to these terms. For example, although a commitment to equity appears frequently in these documents, the programs do not provide a clear definition of the term. In other cases, a deeper look at how some terms are used and the context in which they appear provides valuable information about the intended meaning and their importance in these teacher preparation

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programs. In particular, the manner in which issues of difference and social justice are discussed

point to the need for a more nuanced understanding of these terms, in particular as the case study

data is subjected to analysis in the following chapters.

     The language of difference. The concept of difference is raised frequently in the

program documents, indicated by the use of the terms *diversity, diverse, multicultural,* or

difference. Seven of the eight programs make frequent use of these terms, and the eighth, Elia

University, discusses its preparation of teachers to reach *all children* and the importance of

providing teacher candidates the opportunity to observe in school communities. In each case, the

concept of diversity—often expressed using the adjective *diverse*—is most often used to describe

the students in urban schools or the environments in which the schools are found. Interestingly,

only one program, Barkton University, contains a statement that specifically posits diversity as

an asset of urban communities.

     In some cases, however, these terms move beyond describing students, schools, or

communities to indicate a specific approach to education. Some programs assert the necessity of

adapting instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners. For example, Peyton University's

core values statement expresses the importance of recognizing the uniqueness of each student

and understanding how different characteristics impact teaching and learning.   A course on

instruction at Treston University expresses it focus on instructional models that are effective for

culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse students. Two programs, Colona State and

Barkton, use the language of culturally responsive or relevant to describe the type of teaching in

which they are preparing their candidates to engage. Implicit in these statements is the belief

that students come to school with different needs and that successful teaching requires an

understanding of these differences and the ability to adapt to them and choose appropriate

instructional models in order to facilitate student achievement. In this way, the programs move

beyond describing students and schools to promoting a specific approach to education.

These programs also emphasize the importance of affirming, valuing, and learning about

students' diverse cultures. Developing this awareness is presented as a core component of these

teacher preparation programs. Brightonsville University, for example, seeks to prepare its

teacher candidates to cultivate respect for cultural difference. Stuart College commits to

preparing its students to value cultural diversity, and demonstration of respect for individual and

cultural differences is included in a list of desired teacher qualities in Colona State's teacher

preparation handbook.

The phrase, "all children," also appears frequently in these program documents and is

often used as a substitute for diversity or diverse learners. As is the case with the use of diversity

and multicultural, the document analysis reveals the need for a more nuanced analysis of this

phrase. Frequently, programs assert the importance of preparing teachers to meet the needs of all

children; however, they are unclear about what this actually includes. An analysis of the context

of these declarations indicates an acknowledgement of the existing diversity in urban schools and

communities and a commitment to a multicultural approach which incorporates the

understanding of diversity into effective teaching practices. Teacher candidates, therefore, must

understand diverse students and be equipped to meet their needs. Barkton University, for

example, states that they prepare teachers to "reach all of our children."

A second use of this phrase, using similar language, calls attention to the need for equity

in education. For example, Elia University highlights its belief that access to a high-quality

education is the right of all children. This statement, in the context of explaining a social justice

emphasis, uses the language of inclusivity as a call for justice rather than as a statement of

diversity. This phrase also appears in the context of promoting academic success. Programs advance the belief that all children are capable of learning and meeting high expectations and therefore commit to providing all children with academically rigorous curriculum and working to ensure high levels of success and achievement. The multiple uses of the phrase "all children" demonstrate the need to closely examine how language is used in order to better understand the values and perspectives advanced by various urban-focused teacher preparation programs.

It is clear, then, that diversity and multiculturalism are heavily emphasized in all of these urban-focused teacher preparation programs. However, it is essential to understand how these terms are being used. When used to describe students, schools, or communities, these terms may reflect a positive view toward equity, but they also may serve merely to point to the existence of difference rather than to promote equity in education. In contrast, when these terms are used to advance an approach to teaching that builds on the diversity present in schools in a way that enables students to succeed and difference to be valued and respected, they are able to contribute to an educational environment that increases equity in school and, potentially, in society.

Social justice. Several important patterns related to the discussion of social justice are also evident in the program documents. First, social justice is explicitly mentioned by seven of the eight programs, and the remaining program, Brightonsville University, expresses a commitment to promoting the belief that schools ought to function as vehicles for liberation and equality. Social justice, then, is clearly a privileged component of the equity discourse in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs.

Second, while the theme of social justice is prevalent, varied portrayals of social justice emerge from the analysis. Several of the programs characterize it primarily in terms of dispositions and understandings. Colona State, for example, highlights its attention to teacher

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candidates' beliefs about social justice and seeks to develop teachers who see the potential of schools to stimulate social justice. Peyton University describes its commitment to social justice as an understanding and respect for student difference, a recognition of the impact of societal structures on learning, and the promotion of culturally relevant teaching.

Other programs couple their emphasis on social justice with a critical approach emphasizing the need for teachers to serve as change agents working to transform society and confront existing inequities. For example, Elia University uses action verbs to explain its social justice emphasis, declaring its intent to extend and enact social justice. It also lists the practice of social justice as one of its core commitments and defines this as helping teachers challenge inequality and promote justice. Treston State highlights its commitment to social justice throughout its program documents and declares its intention to prepare teachers to undermine social injustice and engage in social activism. Barkton University affirms education as a principal means for social justice and a commitment to preparing teachers to be change agents in the world.

In a similar fashion, there is variety in the way the program documents use the language of critical pedagogy. All but one of the programs, Stuart College, use the language of critical pedagogy to describe their program and its aims. However, Barkton, Elia, Colona State, and Treston State identify the preparation of teachers to be agents of change or the need to confront social injustice as core elements of their program. They promote a clearly activist view of critical pedagogy. In contrast, Brightonsville, Allerton State, and Peyton, while making frequent mention of the need to increase teacher candidates' understanding, to question assumptions and beliefs, and to be aware of the social context of learning, stop short of calling for teachers to be

actively involved in confronting injustice in education and society. This is a key distinction that needs to be considered in analyzing data from the case studies.

A second finding related to critical pedagogy emerges from the analysis of course descriptions. In each instance, the great majority of references to the critical perspective are found in program introductions or in statements of program vision or core values. Very few references are found in course descriptions. Furthermore, courses that do explicitly advance a critical perspective are introductory and foundations courses. Courses focusing on curriculum, instruction, and teaching methods do not include a critical perspective in their course description or list of objectives.

The language of accountability. While not referenced as frequently as the equity perspective, the accountability perspective is clearly evident in these teacher preparation programs. This perspective is evident in statements about standards, academic rigor, academic expectations, standardized testing, and accountability. These terms are often related to each other in their use. In particular, the rhetoric of standards, student achievement, and accountability in these documents includes some variability and points to the need to closely examine the meaning assigned to these terms.

Standards and student achievement. Content standards are the most frequently referenced component of this perspective. Programs discuss standards or subject-matter knowledge in a variety of ways, including the study of state or local standards, specific instructional methods or strategies designed to meet standards, and the use of standards in lesson planning.

Evidence of the accountability perspective also comes through in the language of student achievement and academic expectations. Brightonsville expresses its commitment to promoting

academic success and the belief that all learners are able to meet high expectations. Allerton State describes quality teachers as those committed to the success of their students and able to use assessments to motivate students and to improve the quality of their instruction. In addition to these typical statements regarding student achievement, Barkton also highlights its goal of using research to increase student achievement.

Accountability. Only three of the programs explicitly use the word *accountable* or *accountability* in their program documents. Colona State mentions the importance of holding students accountable for their behavior and includes one course in which an introduction to assessment and accountability is given as a course goal. Allerton State describes accountability as part of the culture of learning that they want their teacher candidates to promote in their classrooms. Barkton University highlights accountability as a program principle and posits that successful learning is evidence of effective teaching. It is important to note that they do not offer an explanation of what constitutes "successful learning" as part of this declaration.

An important pattern regarding the language of accountability that emerges from this analysis is the reality that in most cases programs advance statements promoting various aspects of accountability with little or no connection to the equity perspective. For example, a course at Colona State is designed with the distinct purpose of introducing students to accountability and assessment. Stuart College's course on curriculum and instruction similarly teaches about state and local standards but does not indicate any context for this desired understanding. Mention of accountability in the program documents of Elia University is similarly limited to a reference to standards in the description of a course on teaching methods.

There are a few instances, however, when programs advance an approach that seems to exist at the intersection of the two perspectives. Barkton University affirms the importance of

high academic standards while engaging and empowering students. They also place a special emphasis on helping all children reach those standards and advertise courses that connect high academic demands with diverse student experiences. Allerton State describes its commitment to social justice as existing within a framework of accountability and high expectations, and Brightonsville stresses that its expectations for academic achievement and success apply to all learners. This picture of an intersection between accountability and equity is important to consider as part of the case study analysis in order to increase understanding of how programs may or may not be equipping teacher candidates to promote both accountability and equity in their teaching.

The varied ways, then, that teacher preparation programs present their approach to accountability is an important consideration as we seek to understand its impact on the preparation of urban teachers and its potential influence on urban teaching. This analysis of program documents indicates that the discourse of accountability is clearly present in these programs; however, there may be important variations in the meaning assigned to this discourse and the understanding taken away by the teacher candidates.

Institutional Differences

As outlined in Chapter 3, the eight universities included in this study represent a variety of institutions. Three of the colleges and universities—Stuart, Brightonsville, and Colana State—are classified as Master's institutions according to The Carnegie Foundation's Basic Classification system (Carnegie, 2012). The other five are labeled Research Universities, with Treston State and Elia associated with Very High (RU/VH) research activity and the remaining three with High (RU/H) research activity.

Analyzing the relative frequency of the coded references according to university classification demonstrates a substantial difference in the way these perspectives are treated at the RU/VH universities (see Table 4.10). For these institutions, only 7.3% of the codes related to accountability while 92.7% are associated with equity. In contrast, the other two types of institutions are quite similar in the relative frequency of these perspectives in their program documents (Master's: 31.5% accountability, 68.5% equity; RU/H: 34.9% accountability, 65.1% equity).

This difference extends as well to the manner in which equity is presented. Although they are not alone in promoting an activist approach to social justice and the need for a critical stance toward educational and societal inequity, the frequency and clarity with which Elia and Treston State, the two RU/VH universities, communicate this emphasis in their programs sets them apart from most of the other programs. While affirming all characteristics of the equity perspective, it is clear that these two programs have a special focus on preparing teachers to be critically active in their role as change agents in schools and society.

Table 4.10. Institutional Differences Related to Accountability and Equity

Carnegie Classification	Accountability	Equity

Master's M or L
  Stuart
  Brightonsville
  Colona State
	28 (31.5%)	61 (68.5%)

RU/H
  Barkton
  Petyon
  Allerton State
	44 (34.9%)	82 (65.1%)

RU/VH
  Treston State
  Elia
	4 (7.3%)	51 (92.7%)

This disparity among the various types of institutions raises important questions and is deserving of further research. Does the research focus of these universities cause them, in some

way, to be more critical of current educational and societal practices? Do they pay more

attention to research which demonstrates that schools are sites of social reproduction and that

different social structures impact learning and result in inequitable experiences for many students

in our schools (Anyon, 1981; Bourdieu, 1973; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Lareau, 2000)? On the

other hand, is it possible that teacher educators who work at institutions less focused on research

may be more involved in the direct instruction of teacher candidates and thereby have a clearer

sense of the realities of K-12 public education? While this study does not provide the

opportunity to explore these questions, it does demonstrate the need for further study of the

impact of institutional differences on the type of preparation being received by teacher

candidates.

Moving Forward

This review of program documents has demonstrated the existence of the accountability

and equity perspectives in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs. Additionally, it

indicates that the equity perspective is more privileged of the two in terms of the level to which it

is highlighted and promoted by these programs.

Furthermore, a review of the rhetoric related to certain terms and concepts presented in

these program documents indicates a degree of complexity that must be taken into account when

seeking to understand the accountability and equity perspectives and the way they are presented

in teacher preparation programs. The multiple ways in which certain terms and ideas are

presented and the varied meanings assigned to them demonstrates the importance of a careful

analysis of the contexts in which words or phrases are used. For the purpose of this study, it is

especially important to consider the ways in which program documents and research participants

spoke of diversity, social justice, and accountability. In particular, a complete analysis must consider the following:

a) Do discussions of diversity serve primarily to describe schools or students or are they also used to advocate for specific educational practices?

b) Is an emphasis on social justice a push for understanding and awareness of issues that impact teaching and learning or does it include a call for critically confronting inequity and for being actively involved in change efforts in school and society?

c) Is accountability discussed as an end in itself or does it exist within the context of educational practices that jointly promote accountability and equity?

This first level of analysis gives evidence of the need to ask these questions and of possible answers. It also provides a foundation and increased clarity for a closer analysis of urban-focused teacher preparation programs. It does not, however, give sufficient information to move to this deeper level of analysis on its own. The more intense focus on two of the programs afforded by the case study allows us to move beyond statements of intent in order to see how the programs are actually enacted and how they are received by their intended audience, the teacher candidates. In Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, therefore, I report on the analysis of the case study data from Peyton University and Allerton State University in order to provide a more complete understanding of the place of accountability and equity at these two institutions.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ACCOUNTABILITY PERSPECTIVE IN URBAN TEACHER PREPARATION

The program documents from eight urban-focused teacher preparation programs demonstrate that both the accountability and equity perspective, albeit to varying degrees, are represented in these programs. This level of analysis, however, is limited in the information it is able to provide. The program documents reflect values, beliefs, and goals that have been established by those in leadership in the program and then used to provide a description of the program. However, they do not necessarily reflect actual program practice. Furthermore, although program and course descriptions give some indication of how and where these perspectives are included, for the most part the information remains quite general and may not give a clear picture of what is actually being presented and received in the program. The case study data—gathered from course syllabi and interviews with teacher educators and program students—provide a clearer understanding of the information gathered from the program documents and moves the study forward in investigating the specific messages about these two perspectives that the programs intend to present and the messages that are being received and understood by the teacher candidates in the programs. In the next two chapters, therefore, I present a detailed report of the case study data. In this chapter I begin with the accountability perspective. I first analyze separately the research data from each of the two case study universities before closing with a brief comparison of the two programs and a discussion of implications for our understanding of the accountability perspective and its place in urban-focused teacher preparation.

Overall, consistent with the findings from the program document analysis, the case study data demonstrate the presence of the accountability perspective in the two programs. However, although certain elements of this perspective are affirmed by almost all of the interview participants, there are also significant differences in the manner in which the perspective is presented and understood by the teacher educators and teacher candidates. Among the teacher educators at both institutions, the analysis and synthesis of the data suggest that there are three emerging typologies for how they incorporate the accountability perspective into their courses and work with students. These are a weak approach, a pragmatic affirmation, and a critically progressive approach to accountability. Among the teacher candidates, a wider range of approaches emerge from the data, resulting in different categories at each university.

The Accountability Perspective at Peyton University

As part of its College of Education, Peyton University, a mid-sized public institution located in a large Midwestern city, offers a cohort-based program that specializes in urban education as one its paths to teacher certification. This case study focuses on only this component of Peyton University's teacher education program. Peyton was chosen as a site for this case study because its program documents established the existence of both the accountability and equity perspectives and because its organizational structure—as a specialized program within a larger teacher education program—differed from the other case study institution, yet represents the reality at many other programs around the country.

At Peyton, the focus on urban education is offered as part of special 16-month program leading to a Master's degree and teacher certification. Each year a cohort of 20 to 30 students enters the program in the spring. They begin with an extensive orientation that introduces them to the goals of the program and includes several days observing in classrooms in various local

public schools. During the summer months, all of the teacher candidates take courses in technology, educational psychology, and literacy. In addition to studying these concepts, the candidates also begin to develop relationships with the other members of the cohort as they participate in these courses together.

Beginning in the fall, teacher candidates begin their year-long internship in a local public school. In addition to the fieldwork, the candidates continue taking courses in teaching in their content area, classroom management, and the social context of education. While some of these courses are exclusively designed for the urban education program, at times the cohort members take courses with other students from Peyton's College of Education. The urban-focused program terminates in the summer of the second year when the teacher candidates finish their course work and complete a final research project.

In the following sections, I examine how the accountability perspective is presented and received in the urban-focused teacher preparation program at Peyton University. I first report on the data gathered from teacher educators in order to determine the program's intended message about the accountability perspective. I then turn to data gathered from interviews with current students in order to ascertain the message about accountability that is being received by the teacher candidates in the program.

The Teacher Educators: An Inconsistent Message

In order to study the program message about the accountability perspective at Peyton University, I interviewed seven faculty members and analyzed course syllabi for six of the program courses. The syllabi corresponded to courses taught by the interview respondents (see Appendix F for a list of included courses). There was significant variation in the way the teacher educators at Peyton approached the accountability perspective. However, in general the case

study data supported the general finding of the document analysis that the accountability perspective is evident in a variety of ways in the teacher preparation work at Peyton University. It also provided additional understanding of how the accountability perspective was understood and reflected by individual teacher educators and throughout the program. While many faculty members at Peyton expressed overlapping views, there were also key differences in the way they represented the accountability perspective.

A weak approach to the accountability perspective. Interview responses from Albert, Christine, and David reflect what I term a weak affinity with the accountability perspective that is characterized by general affirmation of the importance of content knowledge and high expectations for all students, strong disagreement with current practices related to the standards and accountability movement, and a limited involvement of the perspective in their personal approach to education and in their work with teacher candidates. Generally, this group of teacher educators expressed awareness of the dominant public discourse of accountability, but dismissed most aspects of it due to strong personal convictions about the negative consequences of an over emphasis on accountability.

When describing successful teachers or discussing urban school improvement, these faculty members articulated the importance of content knowledge and high expectations. Albert argued that "one of the things they [future urban teachers] absolutely have to have is a very strong content knowledge." Christine, speaking of secondary math teachers, voiced her concern that many urban teachers "don't have strong enough content knowledge" or "a deep understanding of the mathematics they're teaching."

This group of faculty also expressed a consistently negative attitude toward current practices related to the standards and accountability movement. They were critical of the role of

standardized testing, current accountability policies, and the use of standards. In discussing these practices and their impact on teaching, Albert stated, "it's actually killing the field" and compared the focus on standardized testing as being "akin to the farmer bringing in the sheep to constantly weigh them and not putting them out in the field to actually pasture." David decried the negative impact that standardization is having on teaching, arguing that in many ways it works "to hamstring the teacher in what they're able to do" and requires teachers to deal with the "soul deadening practicalities" related to educational policy. He also stated that his biggest complaint with current testing practices is the high stakes aspect and the resulting pressure. Christine strongly argued that standardized tests do not provide useful information about student learning. She argued, "There's little resemblance in many cases, [between] a student's standardized test score and what they can actually produce in a classroom . . . with the guidance and support of a skilled teacher."

Beyond the general affirmation of the positive role of content knowledge and high expectations for students and the strong critique of many practices associated with standards and accountability, these three faculty members paid little attention to characteristics of the accountability perspective in their discussion of urban education and their work with teacher candidates. For example, Albert asserted that in his courses issues related to standardized testing are not discussed "other than my complaining about excessive testing and my harping that it's killing teaching." The course syllabus for his technology course supported this assertion. Issues related to accountability are not included among the course topics or the descriptions of the specific class sessions other than one instance in which students are taught how to search for "content based drill and practice sites." Christine expressed a begrudging obligation to at least mention standardized testing because her students will "have to produce and coach their students

on how to take those standardized tests." David explained his approach of raising issues related

to standards and accountability in his course as part of regular discussions of current educational

issues; however he indicated that he does not think it is appropriate for him to offer his opinion

related to these issues. The course syllabus for his Social Issues course indicated that the class

dedicates one class session to discussing "standards and accountability in education," and

another on issues related to charter schools and school choice. David reported that in these class

sessions he provided students with readings that represented all sides of the issues in order to

give them a broadened perspective.

This weak approach to the accountability perspective that is advanced by these faculty

members at Peyton is typically encountered by the teacher candidates in the early part of their

urban-focused teacher preparation program. Albert's course on using technology in teaching is

among the first that the teacher candidates take upon entering the program, and they participate

in this course with the entire cohort. David's course on social issues in education is typically

taken in the fall during the candidates' first internship semester and is open to all students in the

College of Education. Christine is unique among this group in that she works only with those

teachers preparing to be math teachers.

Pragmatic affirmation of accountability. Other faculty expressed a more pragmatic

and positive approach in dealing with the accountability perspective. This approach included a

critique of the standards and accountability movement, a strong affirmation of the need to hold

high expectations for teachers and students, and a commitment to prepare students for success on

standardized tests. Among the faculty at Peyton, Daniel and Mark reflected this pragmatic

affirmation of accountability in their discussion of urban education and of their work in

preparing teachers. All of the teacher candidates, then, encounter this approach to the

accountability perspective through their course on Teaching and Management in the Secondary School taught by Mark. In addition, this view is also advanced by Daniel in his work with the candidates preparing to teach social studies.

Daniel and Mark joined their colleagues in a critique of certain aspects of the standards and accountability movement. They based their criticism of many of the tenets of the standards and accountability movement on its political roots and the way it ignores the impact of societal structures on teaching and learning. Daniel described the standards and accountability movement as coming from unqualified politicians "trying to score political points." Furthermore, he passionately argued that this emphasis completely ignores issues of poverty, language difference, cultural background, and other factors that influence learning. Mark expressed a positive view towards "standards that are well-constructed, meaningful, and take into account the life experiences of individual learners" but went on to argue that "the current . . . system we have serves only to recreate . . . the social class system and reinforce stereotypical thinking in the minds of the public regarding the capacity of urban learners to learn and succeed."

While expressing some hesitation, then, about the accountability perspective, both Mark and Daniel also referenced ways that it promotes teacher quality and school improvement. Daniel asserted, "You have to establish a culture in urban areas of discipline in the schools, you've got to have teachers who care, which means they care enough to give kids failing grades if they deserve it; you need teachers who are going to teach the content, and you are going to hold the kids accountable to very high standards and won't tolerate foolishness." Mark emphasized the need for empirically based research-practices in order to raise student achievement, the importance of standards as benchmarks for measuring student growth, and the

need to equip teacher candidates with techniques of classroom management and instruction. He stated, "I think really preparing our teachers to go in with a core set of tools to deliver content and motivate and manage student behavior, those . . . should always be the foundations upon which we base our practice" as teacher educators.

Their pragmatic approach also focused on the need to prepare their students for the reality in today's urban schools. While holding some negative beliefs about aspects of the standards and accountability movement, Daniel and Mark reported that they emphasized to their students the importance of content standards and of preparing K-12 students for standardized tests. Daniel declared that in his courses they talk frequently about the state-mandated tests and that he stresses that teachers are responsible to teach the content necessary to help students pass the tests. He says to his students, "You better teach your kids about this because it's going to be on the [state test]."

Content standards and classroom management were central themes in Mark's course on teaching in the secondary classroom. The syllabus listed the national and state standards for his students' content areas as one of the required texts of the class and included the alignment of curriculum with local and state standards as one of the central objectives of the course. Helping teacher candidates implement effective classroom management practices was also included as a central course goal and was listed as the primary topic of discussion for four out of 17 class sessions. In the interview, Mark stated that his goal for the teacher candidates with whom he works is that they

> "leave my class thinking that standards-based testing is a fact of life in urban education that they will have to deal with, so being irritated and angry by standards-based testing may serve you in a political activist bent, but will not serve you overly well as an actual day to day educator, so you might as well take the tests, use them as your opportunity to do high quality instruction and then take

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the data from those tests and use that as a way to better understand the needs of students in order to best meet what they need."

A critically progressive view of accountability. Faculty who advance a critically progressive approach to the accountability perspective offer a critical view of many current practices but also seek to challenge their students to embrace a distinctive view of accountability. This approach affirms the importance of content knowledge and holding high expectations for all students, is critical of the current emphasis on standardized tests, and advances a progressive stance towards accountability.

Two of the professors, Carl and Marcia, joined their colleagues in affirming certain aspects of the accountability perspective while also being critical of many current practices related to standards and accountability. They affirmed the importance of a strong background in content knowledge among the necessary traits of a successful teacher and the need to hold high expectations for all students. Marcia stated, "We do have to offer a very strong education. I think the bar has to stay high in terms of what we expect . . .; I don't think there should be exceptions because they're just urban kids." They also joined the other faculty members in a critique of standardized tests and the way they are often used as the only measure of student achievement and as a means to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Carl argued that in the current assessment system "we're using the wrong stick." He also argued that that although there is a great deal of talk of proficiency, "my understanding of proficiency is that this is the bare minimum level of acceptability that you should be reaching; that shouldn't be the expectation for our kids." Marcia criticized the use of only one test for a high stakes evaluation of students and for use with teacher accountability. Furthermore, while acknowledging a role for content standards in education, she also argued that it is impossible to set a standard "for what any students should learn or must learn" and still honor the background and diversity of each student.

But unlike the others, as they spoke about issues related to accountability and urban education, both Carl and Marcia spoke of a view of accountability that went beyond much of the current rhetoric and practice related to this issue. Carl described his approach to accountability as "bigger than a test" and framed it in terms of a relationship with parents rather than a policy measure. He spoke of the importance of being accountable to parents and being able to demonstrate to them that their children have experienced growth during the school year. Communication, he argued, "has to be a big part of accountability." Schools should welcome the input of parents, who are "experts on their kids." Carl described true accountability as a classroom with glass walls, "so that anyone can come in and see what I'm doing and ask questions about what I'm doing." He reported that with the teacher candidates in his class, he stresses the importance of relationships in bringing accountability. "If I know that parents are watching me and they're aware of what I'm doing, how much more accountable can you get than that?" In a similar vein, Marcia stated that she pushes her students to go beyond narrow views of accountability that only consider test scores and student achievement. While acknowledging that teachers are accountable for helping their students pass the state test, she too stresses that accountability goes "beyond the test" and that "they have an accountability to each student and meeting that student's needs, and whether that's academic, social, emotional." During the interview she noted that she rarely addresses these issues with teacher candidates in terms of accountability because that immediately brings to mind issues related to state testing, merit pay, and political agendas. Accountability, asserted Marcia, "is one of those red flag terms." Instead, she points her students back to the core values of their program, reminding them of their responsibility to the local community, urban teaching, and social justice.

All of the teacher candidates are introduced to this critically progressive view of accountability through the work of Marcia and Carl, each of whom play a prominent role in the urban-focused program at Peyton. Marcia, in her role in program leadership, directs the orientation of the students and works with the students throughout their internship experience. She has multiple opportunities, therefore, to discuss issues related to accountability with the program participants and to advance her views of this topic. Carl also works with the entire cohort in his course in educational psychology during the first summer of the program.

Uniformity and variability in the program message. While the case study data affirms the existence of the accountability perspective that is evident in the program documents, it also points to both uniformity and variability in the message about accountability that is presented by program faculty at Peyton University. There was substantial agreement among the faculty members in their views toward content knowledge, academic expectations, and current standardized testing practices. They all affirmed that a strong foundation in content knowledge was an essential component of teacher preparation and that successful urban schools and teachers must hold high academic expectations for their students. They also uniformly criticized the current use of standardized tests as a measure of student achievement and as a principal means of holding schools and teachers accountable for student learning.

There was also considerable uniformity in regards to the message presented to the teacher candidates. Most of the respondents indicated that they did not push one particular stance over another in debates about standards and accountability practices in education today. The majority either paid little attention to these debates or chose to focus on presenting teacher candidates with as much information as possible so that they could formulate their own opinions and approaches. With a few exceptions, there was also similarity in the faculty members' affirmation

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of the need to at least minimally equip teacher candidates to prepare their students to take mandated tests.

The most significant differences emerge when comparing the faculty members' viewpoints about what it means to be accountable in education. Faculty with a weak affirmation of the accountability perspective paid little, if any, attention to this question. Their focus remained almost exclusively on the negative impact of accountability practices on teaching and learning. Daniel and Mark, who offered a practical affirmation of the accountability perspective, not only acknowledged the need for teachers to be cognizant of the demands placed on them by federal or state policies but strongly affirmed the need for accountability in our schools. They affirmed the goals represented by a focus on standards and accountability and stressed this in their work with the teacher candidates. Finally, Marcia and Carl expressed dissatisfaction with the current rhetoric and practices related to accountability and sought to equip their students with an alternate understanding of accountability that included a focus on communication with parents, community involvement, and social justice.

In general, then, Peyton's urban-focused teacher preparation program offers a message characterized by uniformity at some points and significant variation in others. The program seems to provide its teacher candidates with a foundational understanding of the current situation in K-12 schooling and a sense of what their obligations are in light of these realities. However, although various faculty members advance a strong stance related to one component or another of accountability, the neutral stance advocated by several of the faculty members coupled with the disparate notions of what it means to hold educators accountable results in an inconsistent and uncertain program message related to the accountability perspective. It is likely, therefore,

that the teacher candidates would not encounter in their teacher education experiences a strong rationale to alter the views about accountability with which they entered the program.

Teacher Candidates at Peyton University: Variation and Confusion

Common sense tells us that the message we intend to give is not always the message that is received by others. In the field of curriculum studies, this is discussed in terms of the relationship between the enacted, the delivered, and the received curriculum (Jackson, 1992). Jackson described this as the difference between "what appears in the teacher's guide or textbook," "what is actually taught in class," and "what the students grasp or understand" (1992, p. 9). This difference, coupled with the disconnect that at times exists between what teacher education programs desire to teach and what their students learn or value (Britzman, 2003; Labaree, 1996; Lortie, 1975), makes it necessary to investigate how the students interpret and relate to the messages that they receive in order to truly understand the place of the accountability perspective in an urban-focused teacher preparation program. In this section, then, I report on the data collected through interviews with students at Peyton University currently preparing to be urban teachers. I begin with a brief description of the teacher candidates who were interviewed for the study in order to provide background for the consideration of their interview responses. This is followed by an analysis of what the students reported about the way in which the accountability perspective was presented to them through their program experiences. I then examine the personal opinions about accountability that were evident in the students' interview responses.

The teacher candidates. The five student participants in this study reflected the diversity that is often sought after in non-traditional teacher preparation programs (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Sleeter, 2001; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). Three of the

participants were African American and the remaining two were White. Although they all embraced the urban focus of Peyton's program, all of the teacher candidates pointed to the location of the school or the structure of the program as their primary reason for choosing Peyton University's urban-focused teacher certification program. One of the candidates, Kristy, reported that she did not have any urban experience prior to coming to Peyton University, and only Lara mentioned explicitly that she had attended urban schools and could relate to many of the experiences of the students in her internship classroom. The candidates varied in age from the mid to late-twenties to the mid to late-thirties and came to the program with a variety of post-baccalaureate experiences, including working in "corporate America" (Andrea), being involved in an after-school program (James), and doing a variety of "crazy things" including "being a ski bum," working as a waiter, and living in Italy (Eric).

The received curriculum. The students' discussion of how the accountability perspective was presented in their program and what they had learned about it highlighted four things. First, the teacher candidates reported that the professors sought to present a balanced discussion of controversial issues. Second, the students emerged with an understanding that corrected some of their negative assumptions about accountability and pointed them toward the realities of current practice in K-12 schools. Third, some students took away from their experiences an uncertain and confused understanding of these issues. Finally, only one student communicated that she gained a broadened view of accountability from her coursework.

Four of the five interview participants indicated that their professors presented a neutral view of debated issues related to accountability. Kristy and Lara both articulated that in their classes the professors were slow to offer opinions, presented the pros and cons of various aspects of accountability, and provided information to increase the teacher candidates' understanding

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and to ensure that they considered all sides of the issues. Andrea stated that the professors wanted the teacher candidates to raise questions, be curious, and be thoughtful about these issues. Eric agreed and added that in particular one of his professors wanted students to answer their own questions and formulate their own opinions about these matters.

The interview respondents indicated, however, that the professors presented a message that contradicted some of the negative assumptions held by the teacher candidates about standards and accountability and prepared them for the realities of current school practices. Kristy noted that it was stressed in one class that teaching the standards "doesn't take as much as you think" and that teachers should not use standards "as a crutch to say I can't do something that I want to that may take a little more time because of standards." Lara reported that her professors had "enlightened" the teacher candidates about standardized testing. She felt that in her coursework she had been led to understand that it is not necessary to think negatively about teaching to the test; rather, they should understand that the standards on which the tests are based are those that should be taught in class anyway. James communicated that he had encountered teaching about standards in an educational psychology class, and he had also reviewed the content standards with his cooperating teacher. He had come to understand that he will be held to certain standards and accountability practices no matter how he felt about it and that his teaching of content standards should not be limited to a focus on standardized assessments. He gave examples of their discussion about the use of portfolios and group presentations as alternate ways to teach and measure student proficiency.

Two of the participants, James and Andrea, communicated that in spite of the efforts of the program they remained confused about issues related to standards and accountability. Andrea noted while professors worked to remain neutral in their discussion of contested aspects

of the accountability perspectives, she had picked up on differences of opinion among the teacher educators and that there was considerable disagreement about these issues among the students in her cohort. She lamented, "I think it's a big jumbled mess at this point." She described her current understanding as "chaos inside of my head about what to do with these standards and accountability." James expressed similar frustration. While acknowledging that standards were addressed in Peyton's teacher preparation program, he described his understanding of them as "still a bit cloudy to me."

Finally, Lara was alone in describing her professors as "big on accountability." The message that she gained concerning accountability, however, did not concern issues of student assessment or teacher evaluation. Instead, she explained that the professors spoke of accountability in terms of teachers being responsible for their students at all times. This responsibility was not limited to academic matters, but also included, for example, providing a safe learning environment for students.

The students' views of accountability. The students communicated, therefore, a fairly uniform, although limited, message about what they had received from the teacher preparation program about the accountability perspective. Their responses, however, demonstrated significant variation among the students in their personal approach to accountability. The data indicate that the students held opinions that were critically uncertain, strongly aligned, or critically progressive towards the accountability perspective.

A critically uncertain understanding of accountability. Andrea referenced the accountability perspective in a way that valued some of its characteristics but that also included significant areas of concern. She spoke of successful teachers as those with a strong knowledge base, a positive attitude, and the ability to "go in there and get it." She was critical, however, of

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current practices related to standards, accountability, and standardized tests. She based her uncertainty about the role of standards in school on the inconsistency in how they are defined from state to state and even school to school. She affirmed the need for teacher accountability but also argued that it should not "go against them because there are circumstances that are beyond your control." She gave an example of a family suffering economically and the impact that might have on a student's work in school. Finally, she argued that standardized tests do not "represent truly what a student can do." She described students who are poor test takers or suffer from test anxiety and worried that these students might miss out on opportunities simply because of a low test score.

  A strong alignment with accountability. Both Kristy and Eric expressed a strong alignment with the accountability perspective. They affirmed the importance of strong content knowledge as the basis of effective classroom instruction. Moreover, while acknowledging the negative attitudes of many of their colleagues, they chose to advance a positive stance toward standards and accountability. Eric highlighted the role of standards as vital in raising expectations for students. He argued, "I think if we don't have expectations of them to know certain things, they're not going to." He also communicated the belief that the state has a good reason for establishing certain standards, stating, "They believe that having this knowledge is going to help students in the future, and I believe that's true." Kristy also affirmed the role of clearly defined standards and a system of accountability in order to evaluate student learning and teacher effectiveness. She emphasized the need for "some test you can pass in order to graduate high school." She described standardized assessments as useful tools to measure student achievement and to make comparisons among other students across the nation. Eric also affirmed the role of standardized assessment in communicating expectations and suggested that it

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could be "a source of national pride" as well as personal satisfaction. Kristy acknowledged that the presence of test anxiety could negatively impact the usefulness of the tests, but she expressed confidence that the testing procedures included appropriate accommodations in order to meet all students' needs.

A critically progressive approach to accountability. The interview responses of both James and Lara pointed to a critically progressive approach to accountability; however, there were significant differences in the way they discussed their viewpoints. James' interview responses demonstrated some affinity for qualities of the accountability perspective but also key areas of concern. In contrast, characteristics of this perspective were completely absent in any of the dialogue with Lara about urban school improvement, quality teaching, and other educational issues.

James emphasized classroom management and structure as key components of successful teaching. He stated that many students may come from homes that lack structure and therefore it is essential to provide them with a structured learning environment. He also expressed the need for standards but felt that less emphasis should be placed on standardized tests. He noted the fear that teachers may "begin teaching more for the test than for the student" rather than working to get to know their students and relating the curriculum to them. Lara shared this critical stance, stressing that teachers need to make sure that their instructional practices give students "the tools they need to succeed, instead of the tools they need to pass the [state test]." At that point she laughed and added, "I'm not a big fan of standardized testing." She based her criticism on the high-stakes aspect of the testing, arguing "that they weigh so much and . . . they make and break these kids." She also decried accountability practices that, in her view, "equate a failing test with a failing teacher."

In addition to their critical stance towards many current practices, James and Lara both demonstrated an affinity with a more progressive and expansive view of accountability. James agreed that teachers should be held accountable for their students, but although he referenced performance on standardized tests, he went beyond discussing this solely in terms of measurable academic achievement. James argued, "Teachers are accountable for the results of their students. Teachers should be aware of, as we would say, the *with-it-ness* of how their students are doing, and students' strengths and weaknesses." Similarly, in talking about what she had learned from her time at Peyton University, Lara affirmed the professors' stance that accountability involves being responsible for students at all times and in ways that went beyond academic matters to include, for example, providing them a safe learning environment.

Variation and confusion among the teacher candidates. The teacher candidate interviews reflect areas of agreement and disagreement in their discussion of the program's message and a great deal of variation in their personal viewpoints toward the accountability perspective. In terms of the program's message, the teacher candidates agreed that the program emphasized the need to be prepared for current practices related to standards and testing and offered a primarily neutral discussion of debates related to accountability practices. The teacher candidates, however, expressed a variety of opinions about other aspects of the accountability perspective that had been advanced in the program, and two of the students explicitly mentioned feeling confused and uncertain about many of the issues related to accountability. Their personal approaches to accountability also varied greatly, as responses pointed to examples of a critically uncertain understanding, a strong affirmation, and a critically progressive approach to accountability. There were no areas of agreement that extended across the three categories, and

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they varied significantly in their stance toward standardized testing and in their understanding of the meaning of educational accountability.

The Intended and Received Curriculum of Accountability at Peyton University

A comparison of the intentions of the program faculty, the teacher candidates' perception of that message, and the personal opinions of the teacher candidates points to significant variability towards the accountability perspective in the urban-focused teacher preparation program at Peyton University (see Table 5.1). As noted above, there is a substantial amount of inconsistency in the way accountability was presented by the teacher educators and this is reflected in the way this perspective is understood by the students in the program. The teacher candidates agreed that the program sought to introduce them to the practical realities related to standardized testing and to present them an unbiased or neutral understanding of current debates about standards and accountability. However, they also expressed confusion and uncertainty about this perspective, a variety of understandings of the meaning of educational accountability, and substantial differences in their personal views about the accountability perspective.

As noted previously, the teacher candidates at Peyton would be expected to encounter all three of the approaches to accountability advanced by the program faculty. Representatives of each approach had the responsibility to teach core program courses required of all cohort members. Given the diverse viewpoints expressed by the program faculty, it is not surprising that a certain amount of confusion and uncertainty was reflected in the interview responses of the teacher candidates. The lack of consistency in the way the accountability perspective was portrayed by the teacher educators translated into disparate and confused understandings on the part of the program students. Given the lack of a clear message about the accountability perspective, then, the variation in the students' perception of accountability may be as much the

result of their prior beliefs and experiences than an outcome of their program experiences. For example, Andrea mentioned that much of her confusion stemmed from the diverse opinions that were advanced by the various cohort members during class discussions. The teacher candidates at Peyton, older than traditional university students and often with a variety of life and work experiences outside of the school setting, had considered these issues in other settings and were often, as reported by several of the teacher candidates, quite vocal in their opinions. In other cases, the personality of the teacher candidates seemed to contribute greatly to their approach to the concept of accountability in education. Eric, for example, presented himself as a thoroughly confident individual and as a leader. In discussing his approach to helping students who might have difficulty in learning, he recounted his experience waiting on an "outrageous" amount of tables as evidence that he would be able to "individually reach these students while helping keep other students on task." He concluded this discussion by stating, "I have no worries, and it's not that I don't have worries—I know things are going to come up—but I have the utmost confidence that I can do anything." He later noted that he was not really concerned with the high stakes testing in his state. He stated, "I can teach the [state test] and plus; I can teach the [state test] plus and it's not going to interrupt me." He argued that "if you learn how to read people and talk to them, you can trick them into learning almost anything." Given the prior experiences and beliefs of the teacher candidates and the lack of consistency in the program message, it is unlikely that the treatment of the accountability perspective in this urban-focused teacher preparation program had a significant impact on these teacher candidates.

Table 5.1. Accountability at Peyton University

	Program faculty	Received curriculum	Personal beliefs of teacher candidates
Typology	weak approach pragmatic affirmation critically progressive		critically uncertain strong alignment critically progressive
Agreement	importance of content knowledge emphasis on high expectations critique of standardized testing neutral approach to current debates	neutral approach to current debates practical approach to standardized testing	
Variation	meaning of accountability need to prepare teachers for current practices	degree of uncertainty meaning of accountability	view of standardized testing meaning of accountability

The Accountability Perspective at Allerton State University

Allerton State University was selected as the second case study site. This university is located in a large city in the Midwest and boasts a strong urban-focused teacher preparation program. Its program documents point to a clear focus on both the accountability and equity perspectives. Furthermore, the urban focus is a part of the entire teacher education program, which is a traditional undergraduate program leading to a bachelor's degree and teacher certification. The difference in organization of this program when compared with Peyton University qualified Allerton State as a site for the case study research.

As part of their four-year teacher education program, teacher candidates at Allerton State typically take introductory courses during their first two years at the university. During these courses, the candidates are introduced to the core values of the program, spend time in the local community, and engage in some school-based fieldwork. During the last two years of their undergraduate studies, the secondary education majors take courses in the teaching of reading in

the content area, cooperative teaching strategies, classroom management, and subject-specific teaching methods. In addition, they have two significant field placements—one in a middle school setting and one in a high school. The goal of the university is to place all of their students in the local public school district; however, due to logistical constraints, this is not always possible.

The Program Message: A Unified Vision of Accountability

Data related to teacher educators and their involvement with the teacher preparation program was collected through interviews with eight faculty members and through an analysis of 11 course syllabi. The syllabi were for courses taught by the interview respondents (see Appendix F for a list of included courses). Program documents from Allerton State indicate several points of alignment with the accountability perspective. A commitment to quality instruction, high expectations, attention to standards, and accountability are included in the core values of the program and reflected in course and program descriptions. The case study data presented here support these findings and provide a clearer picture of how the accountability perspective is understood and reflected by individual teacher educators and throughout the program. The analysis suggests that there is significant agreement throughout the program regarding the accountability perspective, but there are also instances of disparate beliefs and approaches. Consistent with the analysis of the data from Peyton University, I use three categories to discuss the findings related to the accountability perspective as presented by the teacher educators at Allerton State.

A weak approach to the accountability perspective. Two of the faculty participants at Allerton State, Neal and Stefan, presented a weak affinity for the tenets of the accountability perspective. This approach was characterized by a highly critical view of current practices and

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little regard for issues of accountability in their work with teacher candidates. As both Neal and Stefan teach content-specific courses, in social studies and second language acquisition, respectively, their approach to the accountability perspective would be received by only a portion of the teacher candidates at Allerton State.

Stefan's interview responses and course syllabi were completely devoid of positive references to characteristics of the accountability perspective, and he was highly critical of current conceptions of standards, accountability, and standardized assessment and the underlying assumptions behind these practices. He argued that current practices reflect "very narrow visions of what it means to know something" and "rob students' and teachers' creativity." He reported that he discusses accountability in his coursework with teacher candidates, but that the focus is on equipping students to critically examine the assumptions at work in current accountability practices. They discuss, he stated, questions about how educational issues are framed and who it is that has the opportunity to frame these issues. Stefan framed his criticism of standards by stating, "In terms of standards, my question is: whose standards? Who gets to decide?" He also rejected the belief that there should be an accepted canon of school knowledge that all students should know. He argued, "It really is caught up in values. Whose values?" Stefan was also critical of how decisions are made related to standards and school curriculum.

While discussing schools that he believes are doing excellent work in urban education, Stefan pushed for a different view of accountability. He spoke highly of schools that use portfolio defenses as a way to assess student learning. He stated that these schools used these alternative assessments in addition to the state-mandated tests. In this way, Stefan's views about accountability share some common elements with those who promoted a critically progressive view of accountability; however, his failure to affirm any positive characteristics of the

accountability perspective, even while discussing this alternate view, presented a clearly negative stance toward accountability and separated him from many of his colleagues.

Although in a different way, Neal also presented a weak approach to accountability. Although recognizing the need for teachers to have a basic level of content knowledge and pedagogical skill, he rejected what he described as the typical tendency for teacher educators to focus first on content knowledge and teaching skills in the preparation of classroom teachers. He argued, "I really kind of don't care about content; there's minimums that we use, but I don't think you know your content until you start teaching." Similarly, he asserted that teachers can have a firm grasp of teaching methodologies and skills "and just be horrible in the classroom." For Neal, the most important quality of a successful teacher is care for and commitment to the students.

Neal agreed that teachers, teacher unions, and schools need to be more accountable; however, he was not really sure what that meant. He stated that in talking about accountability, "I hear a code word for things like teacher pay and treating the classroom with a business model." Furthermore, he noted that the complexity of teaching and uncertainty about its goals makes the notion of teacher accountability difficult. Neal argued, "This kind of trying to ram it down our throats . . ., I get some of it. Sure we should be held accountable. Sure we should be able to stand up and say this is what I did. But it's not that easy. I don't make widgets. I help kids grow up." For Neal, to be accountable as a teacher means to "show up; be on time; play by the rules, and go teach your kids." Those responsible for holding a teacher accountable should "know what I'm doing, kind of help me do my job, and if I'm going off somewhere they put me back in line."

Neal reported that he does not pay much attention to issues related to the accountability perspective in his teaching. However, he does address questions about standardized testing, accountability, and teacher evaluation that are raised by students in response to increased discussion about these issues in the media and personal experiences with state-mandated assessments during fieldwork. He also stated that he focuses on content standards. Developing standards-based objectives and familiarity with state and district social studies standards are identified as key course objectives in the syllabus for Neal's course on teaching social studies. Students are also required to examine concepts and generalizations from the state and local standards.

Pragmatic affirmation of the accountability perspective. Peter teaches courses in the preparation of secondary math teachers and also supervises teacher candidates in their fieldwork. Peter presented a strong view of accountability in terms of his focus on content standards, highly qualified teachers, classroom management, and preparing teacher candidates for the realities of standardized testing and teacher accountability. Like the majority of his colleagues, he also expressed a negative view of current policies related to standardization and accountability.

According to Peter, strong school leadership and teachers with strong subject-matter knowledge and understanding of the best way to teach content are the two most important things needed to bring improvement to urban schools. Peter reported that in his preparation of math teachers he spends a lot of time reviewing and teaching about the state standards and how best to teach them to middle and high school students. He also said that when he visits his teacher candidates in their field placements, a discussion of the objective and standards of the lesson is always part of the conversation. The syllabus for the student teaching seminar that Peter leads states that the primary objectives are related to curriculum, classroom management, and

standards-based lesson preparation. His secondary methods class highlights these same objectives and also includes a focus on methods of instruction and meeting the needs of diverse learners.   In the methods class, 11 of the 14 class sessions are focused on content standards.

Issues related to standardized testing and teacher accountability are not emphasized in Peter's courses. In the interview, he lamented the impact of standardized tests on the math curriculum. While discussing the new tests that will inevitably accompany the common core standards, Peter said, "I hate to say it, but when that test comes out, it's going to drive what we do." He indicated that he does not talk much with his students about these tests and the way they are sometimes related to teacher accountability other than to ensure that his teacher candidates are familiar with the process before they run into it in their fieldwork and to make them aware of what their students will be going through.

A critically progressive approach to the accountability perspective. The majority of the faculty members interviewed at Allerton State—Tara, Victoria, Teresa, Nancy, and Paul— presented a critically progressive view of the accountability perspective. These teacher educators are involved with the teacher candidates at Allerton State through positions of leadership, in the teaching of introductory and foundations courses, and in work with English, social studies, and special education majors. Tara, Teresa, and Nancy have played important roles in the development of the program and continue to be involved directly or indirectly with many of the teacher candidates at Allerton. Victoria and Paul work exclusively with students in their subject areas. In their discussion of their views of issues related to accountability and the way they presented this perspective to their students, these teacher educators advanced an approach that for the most part shares the following characteristics: a) affirmation of the importance of teacher's content and pedagogical knowledge, b) a highly critical stance toward

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current practices related to standards and accountability, c) a view of standardized testing that acknowledges its place in our educational system while also criticizing its current uses, and d) a reconceptualized approach to accountability.

Focus on content knowledge and effective pedagogy. The faculty members advocating a critically progressive approach to the accountability perspective were clear in their emphasis on the need for teachers with strong subject-matter knowledge and the ability to teach the content. Speaking from a program leadership perspective, Tara and Nancy affirmed the central role of teaching and content standards in their program and explained in detail how these standards are addressed in various parts of their program. Furthermore, Tara began her description of a successful teacher by asserting that "content matters." She gave an example of her concerns about teachers who are not knowledgeable in the content areas. She said, "You know, I have students who say to me, 'Well, I just can't do math.' Well, you'd better figure out how to do it because, you know, I think about my own child sitting in your classroom, and I want to know that you know how to do math so that they can learn how to do it." Nancy described the program efforts by saying, "I think what we've done is to look at what do those standards mean in an urban context and how do we hold high expectations for our children to be able to meet those standards, and what does it mean in terms of instruction and what might that mean in terms of support."

The other faculty members sharing this view affirmed the central role of content knowledge in effective teaching and learning. Victoria contended that standards serve as guidelines for teachers and stressed that the teaching of content standards is a central part of her work with secondary English teachers. She stated, "For me, I think my job is to get them comfortable with standards and . . . to see them not as in opposition to what they do." Teresa, in

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discussing characteristics of successful urban teachers, asserted the need for a strong knowledge base and a firm understanding of the curriculum. She also spoke of accountability in terms of holding high expectations for students. Paul also spoke of content as a key to effective teaching. He lamented the fact that the teacher education generally does not teach content to teacher candidates. He argued that it is necessary to hold teachers to a standard and that teacher educators "have to make sure that your students understand content because if they understand content they're able to do more creative things pedagogically."

Course syllabi affirm this commitment to teaching and content standards. For example, in both Linda's and Tara's urban teaching class, developing expertise in the state's teaching standards is listed as one of four central themes in the course. In Nancy's course, students are required to complete a portfolio in order to demonstrate their understanding of the state teaching standards. Furthermore, the syllabus highlights "Strong Content Knowledge" as one of the standards that is emphasized in the course.

A critical stance toward current accountability practices. Along with the other interview participants, these five faculty members were united in their criticism of current practices related to standards and accountability. Their criticism was founded in part on disagreement with some of the underlying assumptions related to standards and accountability and in part on specific practices currently being implemented in public schools.

Several of the respondents addressed concerns with the beliefs and assumptions at the heart of the standards and accountability movement. Four of the five raised important questions related to the use of standards. Tara expressed her discomfort with standards, noting "that there's always the conflict of who set them, why they set them, how they set them, and who wasn't involved in the discussion." Victoria asserted that standards are often used to marginalize

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certain students. Nancy voiced concern that current practices may be less about "helping all kids reach high expectations" and more about "going back to that sameness, where we say all kids learn in the same way at the same pace." While discussing curriculum selection, Paul highlighted the privileged status of Western civilization in the social studies curriculum and was concerned with the absence of multiple perspectives.

Several of the faculty members expressed a negative impression of how accountability is being conceptualized in their state. Tara began to talk about accountability by saying, "My visceral reaction to accountability is, it's a capitalist effort." She went on to acknowledge that there is need for some sort of accountability in education, but she condemned what she sees as current efforts to treat education as a business endeavor and apply notions of accountability from the business sector to public schools. Victoria agreed that accountability is essential in schools; however, she also argued that current conceptions of how to measure accountability were invalid and had a negative impact on schools. Nancy asserted her strong support for the idea that teachers are accountable for student learning. However, for her, "the devil is in the details." She stated that the controversy surrounding accountability is a result of our inability to answer the fundamental question of how we measure it. Her discussion of these issues demonstrated clearly that she does not agree with current practices.

Criticism of standardized testing coupled with affirmation of its necessity. In addition to questions about the assumptions underlying the use of standards and current accountability practices, these faculty members also condemned the current use of standardized assessments. Teresa criticized the excessive amount of testing that is going on in schools and argued that it isn't producing any positive change and is having a negative effect on teachers and students. She stated, "It is unfortunate that the idea that we should be accountable for what's not happening

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with some kids has turned into this testing mania that . . . defies good practice and common sense." Victoria decried the way teachers are being forced to spend time helping students prepare for standardized assessments. She also shared how she worked with her students to understand the difference between scoring well on a standardized test and doing good writing. She said, "We've talked about the difference between good writing and getting a five out of five on the test, and having those conversations with the kids." Nancy noted that she finds herself regularly listening to the concerns of her student teachers who see what is going on in schools and conclude that the tests are not fair. She agrees with their concerns and works to help her students understand the implications. In talking about these discussions, she indicated that she asks students, "How do you think some of your kids feel when the [state test] scores are used to determine their destiny." Later she said, "We've got a serious problem because I think teaching and learning involve much more than [standardized tests]." Paul was critical of the amount of weight given to standardized test scores in the evaluation of teachers and students. He argued that standardized tests should be one component of an assessment system that includes a variety of measures.

While being highly critical of many of the ways in which standardized tests are presently being used, these faculty members reported that they incorporated teaching about standardized assessments into their work with teacher candidates and acknowledged the need for such measures. Nancy stated that she sees experiences with and discussions about standardized testing as an important part of the learning of teacher candidates. Paul noted that standardized tests have always been used in K-12 schools and that they are also used at the university level. He also argued that these tests should be one part of a complete plan for assessment. Teresa indicated that in her work with teacher candidates, she wants them to learn that standardized tests

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can be a source of useful information; she does not want her students to "dismiss them outright" or make them seem irrelevant to students or parents. She also emphasizes the importance of using the data provided by these assessments to improve teaching and learning. Finally, Teresa indicated that she works with her students to help them understand the limitations of the tests, "that it's only one part of the picture," but that they have a responsibility to look for other measures "that are more powerful and more meaningful to add to that picture." Victoria also stressed the importance of helping teacher candidates critically examine the use of standardized tests in order to understand why they are necessary, what their goals are, and who benefits from their use. She noted that in her methods course she has extended her focus on assessment in order to more adequately deal with these issues.

A reconceptualized approach to accountability. The critically progressive view of the accountability perspective is advanced at Allerton State by those faculty members who affirm the need for accountability in education but also push to redefine the conversation around this issue. Their discussion of accountability, then, moves beyond much of the current rhetoric and suggests a different stance that in many ways expects even more of schools and teachers. This includes, first of all, a broadening of the standards to include references to issues of social justice, equity, and urban education. Furthermore, the focus on standards includes a strong emphasis on their implications for instruction and student support so that the goal of promoting academic achievement of all students can become a reality. Teresa stressed, for example, the teachers' responsibility to move beyond the use of standardized assessments and to create "other measures that are more powerful and more meaningful" in order to provide a complete picture of student learning. In a course on urban teaching often taught by Tara, the ability to use multiple sources

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of evidence in student assessment is listed among the criteria by which teacher candidates will be evaluated in their fieldwork.

This approach also incorporates a more nuanced and challenging view of accountability. Tara spoke of the central role of teachers in the classroom and of the need for highly qualified teachers. She stressed, however, that those qualifications needed to extend beyond strong content and pedagogical knowledge to include "the ability to connect with students, with their funds of knowledge, with the communities from which they come." Teresa also focused on the need for teachers to appreciate the diversity in their classrooms and to connect with the school community. Likewise Paul, who unreservedly affirmed the importance of holding teachers accountable for student learning and looking for ways to evaluate their performance, moved beyond the focus on test scores and suggested that teachers receive regular feedback and constructive criticism from other teachers or school leaders. He also suggested that teachers need to find ways to regularly reflect on their work and to receive feedback from their students. Paul stated, "Imagine if at the end of every class a teacher would say to the students, 'So, what could I have done better today?' Imagine giving the power away and empowering your students by saying what worked well today, what didn't work well . . . ."

Finally, the broadened view includes getting involved with efforts to create and find new systems of teacher evaluation. Nancy described in detail work that she and other faculty members were involved in at the local school district and state level to create, pilot, and implement a new system of pre-service teacher evaluation and in-service teacher performance assessment. She stated, "I think we talk about accountability; we're really taking it to a new place." Although many details are still to be worked out, she described a system that would be "much more intense and involved and performance based." She also noted that it would require

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many more resources than currently allocated to teacher evaluation and assessment, and therefore would need the support of the state legislature.

A unified vision of accountability. Although there is variability in the manner in which the accountability perspective is perceived and presented at Allerton State, the case study data reflect a fairly unified vision of accountability. While two of the faculty participants, Neal and Stefan, focused almost exclusively on the negative in their portrayal of the accountability perspective, all of the faculty members except Stefan explicitly affirmed the importance of strong subject-matter knowledge, teaching and content standards, and some form of accountability. The case study data, then, align with statements about this perspective found in program documents.

A degree of variability emerges when looking beyond these initial areas of affirmation to consider the manner in which the accountability perspective was portrayed by the individual faculty members. Stefan's treatment of accountability focused almost entirely on presenting a critical stance toward this perspective and the way it works to perpetuate inequality and injustice in schools and society. Neal also presented a predominantly negative focus, but his work with teacher candidates around social studies content standards presented a positive opinion of at least this aspect of the accountability perspective and equipped his teacher candidates to interact with and use content standards in their teaching. Peter shared this focus on standards and portrayed alignment with the accountability perspective as a necessary reality of contemporary teaching. The remaining five interview respondents presented a critically progressive view of accountability which included a critique of certain accountability practices but also included strong affirmation of teaching and content standards and sought to present teacher candidates with a reconceptualized view of accountability that prepared them to be critically aware of the way standards and accountability function in schools and challenged them to a view of

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accountability that included attention to social justice and equity. This approach, which is also reflected in the teaching standards highlighted in the program documents, points to an approach to accountability that intersects with the program's emphasis on equity. Furthermore, the fact that a majority of the teacher candidates reflected this view suggests that teacher candidates are likely to receive a mostly consistent message about the accountability perspective through their program experience, and that this message will challenge them with an approach to accountability that includes a focus on social justice and equity.

The Teacher Candidates' Understanding of Accountability

Although the teacher candidates at Allerton State presented a rather uniform message regarding the accountability perspective, it is also necessary, as noted above, to explore the manner in which this message was received by the students in the program. The data gathered through interviews with the teacher candidates at Allerton reflect the uniform message portrayed by the teacher educators while also giving evidence of important differences in the personal approach of the teacher candidates toward the accountability perspective.

The teacher candidates. The 11 interview participants represented a fairly traditional group of university students. While several of the teacher candidates reported that they had switched majors or changed schools during the course of their undergraduate studies, all of them except one transitioned immediately from high school to the university and were on track to finish their program in four or five years. Trent, an English major, was the only teacher candidate who reported that he was an older than average student, in his late 20s. He noted that he had dropped out of college for a time to pursue some other interests, but then returned once he decided to become a teacher.

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None of the teacher candidates referred to prior experience in urban settings as a motivation for entering the field of urban education. On the contrary, several alluded to the fact that their background was very different than that of the students they were teaching in their field placements or that they could not relate to living in poverty or facing the obstacles generally associated with living in high-poverty communities. All of the teacher candidates who participated in the interviews at Allerton State were White.

The received curriculum. During the interviews, the current teacher candidates at Allerton State presented a rather consistent view of the message about the accountability perspective that they were receiving from their urban teacher preparation program. This message was characterized by a strong emphasis on content and teaching standards and a critical yet pragmatic approach to standardized testing. However, interview responses also demonstrated some variation in the way the teacher candidates understood the meaning and practice of accountability in education.

All of the respondents asserted that content standards were a primary focus in their course work and field experiences at Allerton State. They reported that they reviewed and analyzed state and national content standards in their courses and were expected to incorporate these standards into their lesson and unit plans. For example, Trent stated, "We definitely talk about how to incorporate the different standards we should be meeting with our students and we've had classes that deal with assessment and how to focus and create fair assessments for students based on the standards." Ted also reported that in his course work they "constantly" talked about the common core standards and that "every lesson plan is supposed to be aligned to common core standards." Maria described class discussions about state standards and projects that were assigned in which she had to connect artifacts to the standards and indicate how she

demonstrated them in her teaching. She also articulated that she found great benefit in a project that required them to analyze the state standards in order to more clearly understand the learning goals associated with them. She demonstrated her enthusiasm when she declared, "I'm anxious to do that with the common core standards." Tisha also emphasized the focus on content standards that she encountered in her math methods class. She stated, "We get [the math] standards, and we read through them. We discuss them, and we do problems that are related to them, and we talk very in depth about all of the standards."

The teacher candidates reported that teaching standards also occupied a central place in their teacher preparation program. Several students reported that teaching standards were included in each course syllabus and were incorporated into their portfolio—a requirement for successful completion of the program and teacher certification. Valerie explained that for her exit portfolio she was required "to write like a two-page essay on each teaching standard and how we satisfy those." She went on to state that the standards "are very in our face." Ted also spoke of the central place of the teaching standards in his program and expressed his opinion that the teaching standings "guide our professors' decisions about what they're going to be teaching in the courses."

Several respondents mentioned that the professors made attempts to avoid presenting a biased view of some issues related to accountability. Melissa reported, for example, that in discussions about the use of standardized tests as an accountability measure her professors "just teach us the facts and leave it up to us to make up our own minds." Trent stated that his professors presented both pros and cons of standardized testing, and Tracy also noted that professors were good at getting the teacher candidates to ask questions about issues related to standards and accountability.

The majority of respondents, however, focused on the critical stance toward certain aspects of the accountability perspective, especially standardized testing, that they picked up from their professors. Trent noted that his professors presented "a little bit more of a critical tone" in discussions of policies related to No Child Left Behind and the unrealistic expectations behind some state or federal standards. He stated that the professors "tend to avoid political bias or anything like that, but they're very candid" in their critique. Valerie reported that "we constantly talk about how standardized testing's not the best way to gauge either student knowledge or quality of teaching." She indicated that much of the concern about testing was related to current plans in the state legislature to incorporate student testing results into a plan for teacher accountability. This led, she reported, to discussions about the dangers of teaching to the test. Richard also noted the relationship of discussions about standardized testing to the current political climate in the state. He reported that the general idea he picked up in his classes was that standardized tests were fundamentally flawed and not appropriate to serve as a measure of teacher effectiveness. Maria asserted that in her courses they had talked about standardized testing and its use as a teacher accountability measure. In these discussions, she reported, professors encouraged critical discussions about the tests, how they are scored, and the ultimate meaning assigned to the results.

Several students also highlighted their professors' emphasis on preparing students for success on the standardized assessments. Nathan, a math major, reported that there had been a great deal of discussion about various forms of standardized tests and their relationship to content standards and that the emphasis was on how to prepare students to be successful on the tests. Similarly, Maria reported that in her courses standardized tests were viewed as a requirement that teachers were going to have to deal with and incorporate into their curriculum

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in order to "set up our students to be successful." Maria also noted a pragmatic message in regards to the place of standards in teaching. She reported that the professors present an approach that focuses on the reality of standards in education and the need for teachers "to make them work." In a similar manner, Tracy reported that "the message is to know the test because you're not going to get away from the test."

There was more variability in the way the different teacher candidates spoke about the message they received about educational accountability. The majority of the discussion focused on teacher accountability practices and the use of standardized assessments to evaluate teachers. Trent, however, spoke of discussions in his classes about personal accountability and the need to hold students accountable for rules and expectations. Trent described this sort of accountability as including a teachers' responsibility to have clear personal standards and also to be responsible to students, families, the school, and the administration. Similarly, Ted stated that in his coursework professors held him accountable to standards which reflected his responsibility, as a teacher, to meet the needs of diverse learners and to teach the common core content standards. Nathan and Tisha, both math majors, also reported a focus on responsibility in course discussions of accountability. Nathan specifically related his experience in an introductory education class in which the professor stressed the teacher's responsibility to ensure that students understood course material and were able to perform at grade level. The professor also stated, according to Nathan, that it was the teacher's responsibility to provide the necessary resources and support that students would need in order to succeed academically.

The students' views of accountability. Although the teacher candidates at Allerton State described the message that they received from their program experiences in a rather uniform manner, the interview data point to significant variability in their personal viewpoints

about the accountability perspective. Also, they spoke about accountability in a way that differed in important ways from the message presented by the teacher candidates at Peyton University. Therefore, different categories emerge from the interview data from Allerton State than from the data from Peyton. At Allerton State, the interview responses reflect four different viewpoints of the accountability perspective: a weak alignment coupled with a strong critique, a moderate alignment, a strong affirmation, and a strong affirmation coupled with a strong critique.

Weak alignment, strongly critical. Trent, Melissa, and Patricia presented a view that included minimal agreement coupled with a strongly critical stance of the accountability perspective. This approach was characterized by a limited affirmation of the place of standards in education and a clear critique of standardized testing and federal or state accountability policies.

These three teacher candidates acknowledged the role of standards in promoting student achievement, but their affirmation included uncertainty about the appropriate way to incorporate standards into teaching or a concern that the push for standards could be detrimental to quality teaching. Patricia noted the emphasis on content standards that was present in her teacher preparation program but expressed her personal struggle in using them effectively in her lesson planning. Melissa expressed agreement with the idea of common core standards "because I feel that all teachers should have a set of goals that they try to reach with their students." She rejected, however, what she termed a "micro-managed approach" of how to reach these standards. Trent also asserted the need for clear standards in his classroom and commonly accepted benchmarks which could serve as a guide to determine what students should be studying each year. However, he expressed a clearly negative attitude toward "the standards that are forced upon you by your school district, your state's department of education, and the federal

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[government]." He also stated that "the further you get from the standards of the individual classrooms, the more unrealistic [they] become." He then argued that we cannot expect all students to fit under one "umbrella of standards."

Melissa, Trent, and Patricia were united in their critique of standardized testing practices and educational policy mandates. Melissa first asserted that standardized assessments did not serve any appropriate purpose in education. She backed away from this assertion by acknowledging that the testing could be beneficial, but she condemned the way that many schools encourage teaching to the test and the high stakes nature of the assessments. She stated, "These tests are weighed so heavily on these students' future and education that . . . it has the chance to really screw their future educationally and professionally." She also argued that use of standardized assessments for the purpose of teacher evaluation was "ludicrous." She confidently explained, "Obviously it's insane because the first thing they teach you when you are to be an educator is you always want to make sure your assessments match your objectives. The objective of the [state test] is to measure 8th graders' readiness and skill for high school, not teacher performance. That's insane; so just deductively you can see how idiotic the whole thing is."

Although not with the same passion, Trent also expressed concern that giving undue importance to the test results worked to turn teachers' attention away from an emphasis on providing students with quality learning experiences. Speaking from his vantage point as a future English teacher, he noted that the reading and writing skills required to do well on standardized tests ignore important literary qualities such as creativity, voice, and critical thinking. He argued, "If I'm trying to teach the students how to be good readers, I can't focus on that if I'm trying to teach them, or almost train them, condition them, to pass a standardized

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test." Patricia shared the concern that the focus on testing was adding stress to the learning environment and took teachers' attention away from the realization "that these are kids with brains that need nurturing, and they're not machines that need to pop out all the right answers."

A moderate alignment. Four of the teacher candidates—Ted, Richard, Tisha, and Valerie—reflected a moderate alignment with the accountability perspective in their interview responses. This approach was characterized by a general affirmation of the importance of holding high academic expectations, the need for strong classroom management practices, and the role of content standards in teaching. This view also contained a limited critique of certain practices related to the standards and accountability movement.

These teacher candidates affirmed the need for high expectations in urban classrooms. Valerie and Richard both stressed the need for high academic expectations in efforts to improve student performance in urban schools. Tisha stated that in her teaching she provides her students with clear academic expectations as a way to promote accountability to learning in her classroom, and Ted emphasized the need for strong content knowledge as an essential characteristic of successful urban teachers. They each emphasized the place of strong classroom management skills in effective schools. Richard gave an example of a successful urban middle school that pushed its students to attend good high schools and did not tolerate many behaviors that would be "par for the course" at other urban schools. When asked about a book that she would recommend to any future teacher, Valerie highlighted a book on classroom management that she had used in one of her university courses.

Valerie, Ted, Tisha, and Richard were also united in their commitment to content standards as an essential foundation to their teaching. Valerie discussed the important role of standards in giving students clear expectations; she also argued that common standards are

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essential to confront the high student mobility rate that often characterizes urban school districts. In discussing school curriculum, Ted articulated his appreciation for the common core standards as a "go-to guide" and a "guiding higher authority." He also noted that in his classroom assessments he liked to use rubrics that were aligned with the common core standards. Tisha noted her appreciation for content standards and pacing guides as the foundation to good lesson planning. Richard offered a less clear affirmation of the importance of content standards, but he acknowledged their usefulness in serving as a "decent guide to periodically check in and see how you're doing."

These teacher candidates were less clear about their approach to accountability. Ted noted that there are problems with using test scores to hold teachers accountable and pointed instead to the need for teachers to be sure to fulfill their requirements and "cover their bases." Richard acknowledged the need for increased accountability among teachers but also stated that the current reliance on test scores "scares me a little bit from the standpoint that I can see it being taken too far." Valerie also seemed uncertain of her thoughts about accountability in schools. She stated that "maybe the teacher should be held accountable [for test scores] because their teaching should have prepared [students] for the test." She suggested that students might also be held accountable. Tisha advanced the most positive view of accountability among this group. She stated that there should be multiple levels of accountability in education that included teachers, students, parents, and school leaders. She was uncertain, however, how her approach to accountability might be implemented.

Although they did not express strong opinions, their interview responses reflected an acknowledgement of the place of standardized testing in schools coupled with a mildly critical stance toward certain testing practices. Valerie stated that standardized tests could be useful in

measuring student progress, but she was concerned with the heavy emphasis placed on the test results in many schools. Richard stated that test scores were not "ideal," but also argued that they "almost are the only realistic option" to measure student achievement. Ted's approach to testing focused on preparing students to do well, even if he was not convinced of the tests' validity. He stated, "You don't want the students to do poorly on it because the standardized tests are very high stakes and they very much matter." He stressed, however, that he hoped his teaching would go beyond the test to provide students with needed competencies that are not able to be measured on a test. While being aware of some concerns about validity and cultural appropriateness, Tisha also seemed for the most part to be quite uncertain about the role of standardized tests and how they functioned in schools.

Strong affirmation. Two of the teacher candidates expressed a strong affirmation of the accountability perspective. This viewpoint was marked by an emphasis on content knowledge and classroom management, a clear declaration of the importance of standards, and a pragmatic approach to testing and accountability.

Both Nathan and Maria asserted the central role of content knowledge in teaching and learning. Nathan described school's purpose as providing students with the knowledge they would need to succeed in life, and Maria listed strong content knowledge as an essential characteristic of quality teaching. Nathan and Maria also agreed that effective classroom management was important in urban teaching.

Nathan and Maria placed special emphasis on the role of standards in quality urban education. Nathan described one function of standards as ensuring that students received the information they would need to be prepared for life after school. He also described in detail the curriculum standards and pacing guide that positively impacted his fieldwork in a middle school

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math classroom. Maria affirmed, "Common core standards have come out, and I think it's good that as a nation we have some definitive goals." She also explained the multiple levels of standards—including the subject matter department, local school, school district, and common core—that should be a part of school curriculum.

Nathan and Maria expressed reservations about standardized assessment along with a commitment to prepare students for success on the tests. Nathan lamented the amount of classroom time that needed to be dedicated to preparing students for standardized assessments. However, he spoke positively of the connection between the tests and the common core content standards. He reported that he did not want to "teach straight to the test," but he went on to describe in detail strategies for preparing students to do well on the tests. Maria stated that she felt there was a need to improve current testing practices. She stated, "It's not that I'm against it; it's more that I think we're going about it in the wrong way and we haven't quite found how to test and make sure we're really testing what they're learning." She affirmed, however, the need for teachers to incorporate test preparation into the curriculum in order for students to be successful.

These teacher candidates spoke of accountability in a similar fashion. They each expressed reservations about certain aspects of accountability practices but also recounted ways they tried to affirm the spirit of accountability in their teaching. Maria spoke of multiple levels of accountability that should exist in schools. These spoke specifically about the ways that students, teachers, and administrators should be held accountable for certain aspects of schooling. Nathan described accountability as an "iffy" topic that led to a lot of "finger-pointing." For him, accountability had to do with the responsibility he felt for his students'

performance. He stated, "I really take a lot of my students' grades and performances to heart; I try to go way above and beyond."

Strong affirmation, strong critique. Tracy, an English major, presented a unique approach to the accountability perspective in that she strongly affirmed certain qualities while advancing a strong critique of other parts of the perspective. First, when discussing important qualities of urban teachers, Tracy stressed the need for teachers to provide students with a rigorous curriculum, hold high expectations, and maintain a sincere belief in the ability of their students to succeed. She also discussed the role of standards as the foundation of lesson and unit planning and stated that the standards allowed sufficient room for teachers to flexible in their instruction.

Tracy expressed a clear and strong critique of current standardized testing and accountability practices. She stated that an appropriate use of standardized tests would be to provide teachers information about what concepts they should target in their teaching. She strongly condemned, however, the negative consequences that are often associated with poor performance on tests. She was especially critical of policies that applied negative consequences to underperforming schools. She argued that students who are not performing well need additional resources and that "it doesn't make sense to me to disinvest as a result of poor performance on a standardized test." Tracy was also highly critical of what she called "extreme" ideas surrounding accountability and of the use of standardized tests as the basis for teacher evaluations. She stated, "I think people are upset that this is the case, not that teachers are being held accountable, but that the assessments of our work are not really appropriate measures of our work, or even really of our students' abilities."

Uniform message, disparate outcomes. The teacher candidates at Allerton State demonstrated a high level of agreement regarding the message they were receiving about the accountability perspective. Although interview responses indicated some lack of consistency in regards to the way accountability was talked about by the program faculty, for the most part they pointed to a general agreement among the students that their program emphasized the importance of teaching and content standards and presented a critical stance toward current standardized testing and accountability practices.

This uniformity, however, did not extend to their personal beliefs about the role of accountability in education. The teacher candidates were united in their support of standards to improve teaching and learning and the need to hold high academic expectations. They also joined in expressing some degree of hesitation about the use of standardized tests and related accountability measures. However, there was a significant degree of variation in the type and strength of the critique that was offered. The candidates advancing a moderate or strong alignment to accountability offered a rather mild critique of current testing practices. In contrast, the other teacher candidates were strongly critical of the current use of standardized assessments and their use in making important decisions about school funding and teacher quality. In addition, in their discussion of a variety of issues related to urban education, the teacher candidates at Allerton State varied in their support of important aspects of the accountability perspective. They expressed opinions ranging from a very limited acknowledgement of some characteristics of accountability to strong affirmation of the majority of principles and practices advocated by this perspective.

The Intended and Received Curriculum of Accountability at Allerton State

A comparison of the intended program message, the teacher candidates' reports of this message, and the personal opinions of the teacher candidates points to elements of both consistency and variation (see Table 5.2). As discussed previously, the data gathered from program faculty indicate a rather uniform message advancing a critically progressive approach to the accountability perspective. Of the teacher educators who participated in this study, only three who taught subject-specific teaching methods courses presented a weak or pragmatic affirmation of the accountability perspective, suggesting that it is quite likely that the critically progressive approach advanced by the majority of the interview respondents would be more characteristic of the general experience of the teacher candidates. This measure of uniformity aligns with the consistent manner in which the teacher candidates discussed the way in which the accountability perspective was portrayed through their program experiences. This consistency included the candidates' affirmation of the role of standards in education and their critique of standardized assessment and accountability practices. However, it is significant to note that the teacher candidates did not report having encountered the progressive view of accountability that was emphasized by the majority of the teacher candidates. This may reflect the tendency of the teacher candidates to center their discussion of accountability primarily on the standards and accountability discourse which is reflected in much of current education policy.

The teacher candidates' discussions of their personal beliefs about the accountability perspective demonstrate that the mostly unified character of the program message did not translate into agreement among the student participants. There were important differences in their level of affirmation of certain aspects of this perspective and in their understanding of educational accountability. Also, although all of the candidates expressed some level of concern

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about current standardized assessment practices, they varied significantly in the type of critique that they offered.

Table 5.2. Accountability at Allerton State University

	Program faculty	Received curriculum	Personal beliefs of teacher candidates
Typology	weak approach pragmatic affirmation critically progressive		weak and critical moderate alignment strong affirmation strong affirmation, strong critique
Agreement	strong subject-matter knowledge teaching and content standards some form of accountability critically progressive stance of majority	emphasis on content and teaching standards pragmatic approach to standardized testing critical stance	affirmation of role of standards critical element in view of standardized testing
Variation	meaning of accountability	meaning and practice of accountability	degree of critique toward standardized assessment practices meaning of accountability

Emerging Patterns: Two Approaches to Accountability

The case study data point to important areas of agreement both within and between the two programs as well as significant differences in the way the accountability perspective is portrayed at these two urban-focused teacher preparation programs. In addition, key issues emerge from the analysis that have important implications for our understanding of the accountability perspective and the way it functions in urban-focused teacher preparation programs.

A Comparison of the Two Programs

There are important similarities and differences in the way the accountability perspective was presented and received in the two programs (see Table 5.3). First, at both case study sites

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there was substantial agreement among the faculty members in their views toward content knowledge, academic expectations, and current standardized testing practices. Almost all of the teacher educators affirmed that a strong foundation in content knowledge was an essential component of teacher preparation and that successful urban schools and teachers must hold high academic expectations for their students. They also uniformly criticized the current use of standardized tests as a measure of student achievement and as a principle means of holding schools and teachers accountable for student learning. In addition, at both universities there was variation in the way this perspective was portrayed by the teacher educators.

Table 5.3. The Accountability Perspective: A Program Comparison

	Peyton	Allerton State
Program Message	focus on content knowledge emphasis on high expectations critique of standardized testing disparate understandings of accountability *neutral approach to current debates* *significant differences of opinion among program faculty*	strong subject-matter knowledge emphasis on high expectations critique of standardized testing disparate understandings of accountability *role of teaching and content standards* *predominance of critically progressive stance*
Teacher Candidates' Reports	practical approach to standardized testing disparate understandings of accountability *neutral approach to current debates* *level of uncertainty and confusion*	pragmatic approach to standardized testing variation in understanding of accountability *program emphasis on content and teaching standards* *critical stance toward standards and accountability* *personal affirmation of role of standards*

Data collected from teacher candidates also reflected important similarities. Students at both universities reported that their program sought to prepare teacher candidates for the current

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focus on standards, testing, and accountability that exists in K-12 education. They also reported that the programs emphasized the importance of being familiar with the demands placed on them by current state or federal education policies and of preparing their students to take the mandated assessments.

Along with these basic similarities between the two programs, there are significant ways in which they differed in their approach to the accountability perspective. First, a stress on the importance of standards in teaching and learning was much more evident at Allerton State than at Peyton University. While only one faculty member (Mark) at Peyton explicitly promoted content or teaching standards in his work with teacher candidates or in the discussion of issues related to urban teaching and learning, all of the interview participants at Allerton State, with the exception of Stefan, articulated a positive view toward content and teaching standards and described how they incorporated these standards into their preparation of teachers.

Second, most of the teacher educators at Peyton reported that they did not push one particular stance over another when it came to debates about standards and accountability practices in education today. The majority either paid little attention to these debates or chose to focus on presenting teacher candidates with as much information as possible so that they could formulate their own opinions and approaches. In contrast, the teacher educators at Allerton State emphasized the need to equip teacher candidates to understand the issues and to take a critical stance toward the current emphasis on standards and accountability.

Furthermore, the strong commitment to a critically progressive approach to accountability communicated by the majority of teacher educators at Allerton State stands in contrast to the limited number of faculty members (two out of seven) at Peyton who articulated this stance. Furthermore, the critically progressive viewpoint at Allerton State was generally

presented in a more complete fashion, including specific references to social justice and equity. In their discussion of accountability, these teacher educators pointed to an approach that included key points of intersection with their programs' emphasis on equity.

The student data also pointed to important differences in the two programs. According to the students, the program message at Peyton University was characterized by a mostly neutral discussion of issues related to standards and accountability and a considerable amount of confusion with regards to the role of accountability in education. In contrast, while the students at Allerton State also expressed some variation in their understanding of educational accountability, they characterized the program's message as highly focused on standards and consistently critical of standardized testing and current accountability practices.

Emerging Issues and Implications

In addition to noting the similarities and differences between the two case study programs, the data also point to several key issues that contribute to our understanding of the place of the accountability perspective in urban-focused teacher preparation and are worthy of further consideration. These issues include the level of program coherence, the intertextual nature of the discourse of accountability, and the potential impact of a broader and reconceptualized vision of the accountability perspective.

Program coherence. The presence of a coherent vision and clearly stated goals has been related to effective teacher education and the ability to develop new understandings (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). The data from Peyton University point to a lack of coherence with respect to their approach to the accountability perspective. Although there are important areas of agreement among the program faculty, it is also clear teacher candidates encounter a variety of outlooks and beliefs about the

accountability perspective during their program experience. This undoubtedly contributes to the high level of variation in the way the teacher candidates approach the accountability perspective and makes it very unlikely that new understandings or visions related to accountability would have a chance to be thoroughly understood.

The program at Allerton State, in contrast, exhibits a significant level of coherence in its approach to preparing teachers in general and in regard to its message regarding the accountability perspective. The strong emphasis on content and teaching standards and the way this emphasis is incorporated into course work and program requirements provides a clear message to the teacher candidates. In addition, the relatively high level of agreement among the program faculty in their presentation of a critically progressive view of accountability also gives their students the opportunity to interact at a deep level with these ideas. This increased level of coherence is reflected in the consistent reports of the teacher candidates about the message they received from the program faculty. However, in spite of this increased level of consistency, the teacher candidates varied significantly in their approach to the accountability perspective and their understandings related to accountability. Furthermore, in spite of the rather uniform message from the program about the need for a critically progressive view of accountability, references to this sort of approach to accountability were largely absent from the responses of the teacher candidates. Again, the discrepancy between the program message and the manner in which it is understood by the student participants, even in a program with a significant degree of coherence, highlights the need for teacher preparation programs to provide their teacher candidates with a clearly organized framework and to incorporate central themes throughout the program experience in order to promote deep understanding (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005).

The intertextual nature of the accountability discourse. An understanding of the context of the interview data and the relationships that often exist among discourses is essential to a thorough analysis of the manner in which the accountability perspective was presented and understood in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs. In her introductory discussion of discourse studies, Wodak (2008) noted that analysis of qualitative data must consider the ways in which "texts are related to other texts" (p. 3), which she called intertextuality. In the same volume, Abell and Myers (2008) described the intertextual links that exist in interview data as study participants bring in other voices to their responses. At times these voices come from texts that rely on the sociopolitical or historical context of the interview setting.

The intertextual nature of the case study interviews was certainly evident in the manner in which the language and understanding of accountability was heavily influenced by the public rhetoric surrounding this topic. As reference to *standards* or *accountability* emerged during the interview sessions, the responses almost always turned to discussions of school practices, state legislation, or federal policy that incorporate this language into mandates that influence teaching, assessment, and teacher evaluation.

At both universities, several teacher candidates referenced a specific state law concerning teacher accountability and the current political context as the basis for their discussion about the meaning of accountability in education. Eric, for example, expressed his belief that the tension that some see between accountability and equity was due to a new state proposal that linked teacher pay to student performance. Valerie described the influence of her state's new governor on the negative attitude of many teachers toward teacher accountability practices. She explained the stance of her professors by stating that they were all "anti the [governor's name] business and everything it stands for." At both universities, opinions about the place of standards in education

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was heavily influenced by educational policies mandating the use of high stakes tests to measure student achievement. James represented the views of several of the students as he argued that "there's too much emphasis put on the test" in their state. Trent described the standards "that are forced upon you by your school district, the standards that are forced upon you for your state department of education, and then your federal standards."

Marcia, a teacher educator at Peyton, noted that accountability was a "red flag term" associated with a range of issues dealing with standardized testing, teacher evaluation, merit pay, and tenure. She avoided, therefore, the use of this term in her work with the teacher candidates. Likewise, Tara, part of the program faculty at Allerton State, shared that talk of standards or accountability immediately drew her attention to the political discourse surrounding these issues. She stated, "My visceral reaction to accountability is it's a capitalist effort; I mean I have this sense of politicians sitting in a room thinking, 'Well, this works for business; this must work for teaching.'" She went on to explain that when she examines these issues from an academic perspective she is then able to consider their appropriate place in their teacher preparation program.

During the interviews, therefore, it was clear that the policy discourse dominated the thinking of those involved in the teacher education programs and therefore served as the starting point for any discussion of accountability in the university classroom as well as in an interview setting. While the critical stance advanced by many of the interview participants could naturally lead to conversations about current practices and policies, I find that the focus on this aspect of the discourse seemed to impede the ability of many of the respondents to move past this discourse to consider other ways of understanding or conceptualizing the accountability perspective. This was true of many of the teacher educators and almost all of the teacher

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candidates. Therefore, just as it is necessary to understand the context of an interview in order to analyze the data (Abell & Myers, 2008), it is also necessary to recognize the way in which the social and political contexts related to educational accountability influence the way both teacher educators and teacher candidates enter into this issue and make sense of it in their professional lives. It also has the potential to impact the ability of urban educators to consider a new reality related to accountability in education.

  A new approach of accountability? While the current policy discourse related to accountability clearly impacts and at times limits the way this perspective is presented and understood in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs, the data also point to the potential for an alternate educational discourse related to accountability. At each university, there were faculty members who intentionally chose to move beyond the dominant policy discourse to challenge their students to embrace an alternate view of accountability. At Peyton University this was presented in terms of moving beyond the test, challenging teachers to open up their classrooms to parents and the community, being accountable for the academic, social, and emotional growth of students, and being responsible to promote social justice. At Allerton State, teacher educators advanced a view of accountability that included standards of social justice and equity and the search for meaningful measures that provide a more complete picture of student learning. In each case, those who pushed for an alternate understanding of accountability introduced the possibility of an interdiscursive relationship (Wodak, 2008) between the accountability and equity perspectives. Therefore, while the interviews reflected variation in the way accountability is understood both by teacher educators and teacher candidates, the critically progressive approach to accountability offered by some teacher

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educators gives at least a glimpse of what might be possible in terms of a new vision of accountability.

Moving Forward: From Accountability to Equity

The case study data affirm the place of the accountability perspective in the urban-focused teacher preparation programs at Peyton University and Allerton State University but also point to both complexity and variability in the way this perspective is portrayed and understood in these two programs. The analysis points to significant differences between the two programs in their approach to accountability and also important differences between the way this perspective is presented by the programs and the way it is understood by the teacher candidates. The data, however, also highlight common understandings of the accountability perspective that are present in these two programs and point to key issues which must be understood and considered as part of an increased understanding of the place of this perspective in urban-focused teacher preparation.

A final issue related to the place of the accountability perspective in urban-focused teacher preparation has to do with its relationship to the equity perspective. While the program documents provided a limited understanding of the relationship between these two perspectives in the case study institutions, the case study data provide a more complete picture of how these two perspectives relate. This chapter's discussion of the accountability perspective has demonstrated that for many of the research participants, their understanding of and approach to accountability was heavily influenced by their understanding of the policy discourse related to standards and accountability and therefore did not provide many openings for a consideration of how equity and accountability might relate. However, a group of teacher educators at each university advanced a critically perspective view of accountability that offers a glimpse of how

these two perspectives might interact in a meaningful way. In the following chapter, therefore, I offer a thorough analysis of the data concerning the equity perspective as a foundation for the final chapter's discussion of the relationship between these two perspectives in urban-focused teacher preparation.

EQUITY IN URBAN-FOCUSED TEACHER PREPARATION

As noted in Chapter 4, the program documents from Peyton University and Allerton State University indicate that the equity perspective is strongly emphasized in their urban-focused teacher preparation programs. As was true in examining the way these programs treat the accountability perspective, however, it is necessary to go beyond the intended curriculum to investigate both the manner in which this perspective was delivered and the way in which it was received by the teacher candidates. In this chapter, then, I present a detailed analysis of the case study data related to the equity perspective. I close this chapter with a brief comparison of the two programs and a discussion of key findings related to the equity perspective.

The Equity Perspective at Peyton University

The equity perspective is clearly evident in Peyton University's program documents through multiple references to diversity, the social context of learning, social justice, and student-centered and culturally relevant curriculum. To understand more deeply how this emphasis is presented and understood in their urban-focused teacher preparation program, I gathered data directly from the program participants. In the following sections, I report first on the data gathered from teacher educators and then turn to the data gathered through interviews with teacher candidates.

The Teacher Educators: Agreement and Ambiguity

The case study data confirm the prominent place of the equity perspective that was highlighted in the various program documents and offer a more complete picture of how this perspective was portrayed by program faculty. In addition, as was true with the accountability

perspective, the data indicate multiple approaches and viewpoints related to the equity

perspective. A synthesis of the data gathered from interviews with teacher educators and course

syllabi reflect three stances toward this perspective: a weak alignment, limited advocacy, an an

activist approach.

A weak alignment with the equity perspective. Albert, Daniel, and Christine presented

a weak alignment with the equity perspective. This approach was categorized by an awareness

of the impact of socio-cultural factors on education coupled with a weak or negative view of

social justice and the values of multicultural education. Furthermore, it was evident that issues

of equity played a limited role in their view of education and in their work with teacher

candidates.

These teacher educators reflected a strong awareness of the impact of social issues on

teaching and learning and of the importance of this understanding on the part of teacher

candidates. For example, Albert discussed discrepancies in school funding among school

districts and differences in the types of issues and problems confronted by urban schools. In a

similar fashion, Daniel's strong critique of the standards and accountability movement focused

on current practices that ignore the impact of poverty, language, and culture. He also shared that

in his course they discuss the impact of racism, poverty, and "all kind of issues that could impact

the achievement gap." The syllabus for his social studies methods course listed 12 knowledge

objectives. These included helping students understand the role of global issues such as

migration, hunger, human rights and ethnicity and understanding "the critical role that race,

ethnicity, religion, and culture play" in society. Christine similarly shared that in her methods

class they regularly discussed issues of poverty and lack of resources and how these impact

classroom teaching.

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In discussion of a variety of educational issues, however, these faculty members demonstrated little or no alignment with the equity perspective. For example, other than a brief mention of the need to critically examine assumptions associated with standardized testing, Albert's interview responses reflected a weak, and for the most part, absent stance toward the equity perspective. He expressed the opinion that issues of social justice played in important part in Peyton's teacher preparation program, but it was not something that was important to him. His focus was on teaching instructional methods, and while speaking of social justice he shared that "it's one of those times where I feel—well, let me focus on the things that I believe are important." This stance was clearly reflected in his course syllabus, which focused entirely on the technical and methodological aspects of using technology in the classroom.

Daniel's discussion of school curriculum portrayed a viewpoint that incorporated aspects of the equity perspective while challenging other of its values. Daniel held to a cultural transmission view of the purpose of education; however, he also affirmed the need to critically examine school curriculum, and his syllabus affirmed the importance of respect for diverse viewpoints and a recognition of the crucial place of dialogue and dissent in a democratic society. He also stated that the purpose of education in our country "is to transmit the cultural heritage of the society, our cultural values, our political values, our economic values." At the same time, he highlighted the power issues inherent in decisions regarding school curriculum, describing curriculum as "a weapon, and it can be used by different groups for different purposes." However, he went on to express a negative view of those who desire to use curriculum to "challenge the dominant, elites in society, to challenge capitalism, ..."

In addition, Daniel's discussion of the impact of race and class on education reflected a position that in many ways denies the existence of racial and economic inequity in our society.

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He stated that in his course on diversity he highlighted our nation's negative legacies of racism, segregation, and poverty and that the impact of poverty must be taken into account when considering teacher accountability practices. However, his discussion of urban school improvement and social justice demonstrated an unwillingness to thoroughly address how issues of race and class contribute to current educational inequities. He argued that teachers "simply need to have incredibly high expectations and hold Blacks and Latinos to the same standards that they'd hold middle-class White students for example, where there can be no bigotry in terms of reverse bigotry." He also downplayed the current impact of racism in our nation. He pointed to the many African Americans who are in the middle class and have done well academically as proof that "racism is not the insurmountable barrier that it used to be in this country." He also argued that "believing that any inequality among groups is proof of racism is patently false and dangerous."

Daniel was also highly critical of educators who stress the importance of social justice. He described social justice as a "buzz word" and a "loaded term" that is often "just code for criticizing the capitalist system, blaming group A because group B is poverty stricken, for example." Daniel advocated a view of social justice that focused on "our moral and constitutional mandates . . . to provide equal opportunities." He rejected, however, any notion that promoted equality of results or a belief that "inequality among groups is proof" of injustice.

Similarly, Christine presented an uncertain view of equity in education. She was clearly uncomfortable discussing social justice, stating, "I don't really know what it means actually." She went on to propose that social justice in mathematics could be accomplished through the use of problems relating to social justice issues; however, it was clear that this was not something she regularly promoted in her teaching. Christine stated that she regularly raises issues of

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diversity and student needs in her courses and challenges the urban teacher candidates to think about how they will handle such issues. She gave an example of specific discussions related to students who cannot afford calculators or teachers who do not have adequate classroom resources. Christine described an equitable classroom as a place where all students have the opportunity to learn and "to display their knowledge in a way that's reasonable for them." This requires, she explained, accommodations for students' needs and curriculum, teaching, and assessment that enable each individual to reach their full potential.

It would be expected that the place in the program of the three professors advancing this weak alignment with the equity perspective would influence the manner in which this viewpoint would be experienced by the teacher candidates going through the urban-focused teacher preparation program at Peyton University. The influence of Christine and Daniel would be limited to the math and social studies majors who participate in their methods courses. All cohort members would interact with Albert in his technology course. However, given his expressed desire to avoid discussions related to equity, the students in his class would not be encouraged to view equity as something that is necessarily integrated into classroom teaching and practice. This might further contribute to a weak understanding of the role of the equity perspective in urban education.

A limited advocacy approach to equity. Other faculty expressed a more positive stance toward the equity perspective. What I term the *limited advocacy approach* includes an emphasis on the social context of learning, a clear understanding of the impact of race and class on education, and a concern for social justice and equity in its practice. The view of social justice, however, is somewhat limited and focuses primarily on meeting the needs of individual students and providing all students with a quality education.

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Carl, Mark, and David reflected this understanding of the equity perspective in their interview responses. They affirmed the importance of understanding the social context of teaching and learning and pushing their teacher candidates to get to know their students, be familiar with the communities in which they work, and understand the impact of race and class on school and society. Carl, for example, described urban centers as places "where relationships are going to be very, very important in preparing teachers." He also stressed the necessity of being aware of the strengths and challenges present in urban schools and of "what we are doing, who we're going out to teach, what strategies there are." To accomplish this, the urban-focused program at Peyton, asserted Carl, works to make their teacher candidates part of the community as the first step in their teacher preparation. Mark also stressed the importance of understanding the life experiences of urban students and "the role of class and race in a school setting." He argued that in order to be successful in urban schools, teachers need to "have some commitment to broader social improvement."

These teacher educators affirmed other aspects of the equity perspective as well. Mark reported that he wants the teacher candidates to understand the importance of incorporating students' life histories as well as community values into lesson plans. His syllabus stated that teachers should be able to design culturally responsive lessons and teaching strategies, use information about their students and their communities as a foundation for their teaching, and learn to create a classroom atmosphere in which all students can learn. One of the core assignments in his course was the creation of a community map, on video, based on the teacher candidates' exploration of the urban community in which they would be teaching. He summarized his, and the university program's, focus as trying "to take the community in which

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children live and put it into their classrooms to the greatest degree possible, so as to increase the amount of validity the students see in the content."

This group also advanced a critical perspective of important issues in education. This was reflected, for example, in Carl's discussion of school curriculum. Carl described himself as a traditionalist, believing that "there is a body of knowledge that everyone should have." At the same time, he highlighted the hegemony issue related to who is controlling the knowledge that is taught in schools that is inherent in any such discussion. In addition, the syllabus for Carl's psychology of education class referenced the limitations of theories of growth and development in diverse classroom settings, the role of language and culture in education, and the need to understand diversity in teaching. Understanding cultural, ethnic, gender, and class difference also was listed as a central topic in the course.

David similarly described his goal of introducing his teacher candidates to the social issues, local politics, and other "external influences that are going to be affecting them." He also noted that teachers need to be aware of how these social issues affect equity. This emphasis was evident in his syllabus which included "understanding of the social, political and economic factors that influence education" and the incorporation of diversity into teaching as central course goals. David gave an example of a class discussion about school choice, which he described as a social issue impacting equity. His approach was to use readings that presented both a positive and a negative stance regarding school choice. His goal was not to present one viewpoint, but rather to allow students to "see the human face of both sides" of the issue. Personally, he shared that he recognizes the negative impact that school choice can have on educational equity, but does not see eliminating school choice as an option. Rather, he asserted that it "makes it even more incumbent upon us to raise the quality of education offered

everybody, again hitting that lowest social standard acceptable in order to produce quality education."

While these teacher educators expressed a strong belief in promoting equity and social justice in teaching, elements of their discussion of these issues reflected uncertainty about their place in teacher preparation and advanced an understanding of social justice and equity that was limited to concern for meeting the needs of all students. For example, while expressing his belief in promoting equity and social justice in the preparation of teachers, Carl also voiced the concern that teacher candidates may not gain a strong understanding of what this means while participating in a teacher education program. Part of the difficulty, according to Carl, was that "an issue like equity is a lot more difficult to measure." He stated that he tried to demonstrate to his students that social justice is "a moving target," and that it requires flexibility to meet the diverse needs of students. Mark's view of social justice also was limited to a focus on meeting the needs of all students. He asserted that social justice was a foundational aspect of what he teaches in his teacher education courses and defined it by stating, "In education social justice should mean that every student is afforded the same opportunity to succeed in the educational arena, regardless of their markers of difference."

David also indicated that he incorporates a heavy emphasis on social issues in his approach to teaching and learning. On a personal level, David articulated a strong affinity for issues of social justice based on his strong religious background and his experience running a shelter for homeless men. He associated social justice with equity, which he defined as "almost a baseline of quality to which everybody is entitled." He saw providing this standard of education as the responsibility of public education; however, he was quick to point out that he

does not equate equity with fairness, which he asserted is not "a fight we can win." David's focus, then, was on providing all students with a certain standard of education.

David's explanation of why he considered Paulo Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to be one of his favorite books and one that he would highly recommend to new teachers also clarified his approach to the equity perspective. He noted that many object to this book because, they argue, Freire's situation is not applicable to their teaching. David responded, however, by noting that for him *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* "goes deeper than that." He stated, "It has to do a lot with personal philosophy of teaching and how you see yourself performing in the classroom." David's discussion of Freire fit well with his overall view of social justice. He advanced a predisposition toward issues of equity and justice, but his application of this view focused on a personal approach to teaching and working to provide everyone with a certain standard of education or opportunity. He ignored Freire's call for liberation and opposition to oppression and did not reflect an activist or critical bent in his articulation of social justice in education.

The three faculty members advancing a limited advocacy of the equity perspective work with all of the urban education cohort members in their courses in educational psychology, classroom management, secondary teaching, and social issues in education. This approach to the equity perspective, therefore, is one that is likely to permeate the program message offered to the teacher candidates.

An activist approach to the equity perspective. While having much in common with other faculty members at Peyton University, Marcia Radsty's approach to educational equity was clearly more comprehensive, integrated, and activist in orientation than that of her colleagues. She clearly demonstrated that social justice was the fundamental lens through which she, with

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her urban pre-service teachers, approaches teaching and learning. She asserted that a commitment to social justice is a requirement for successful urban teachers. She defined social justice in terms of equity, stating, "it's equity; it's looking for equity in education; it's looking for equal access for students." She went on to explain that it also involves addressing issues of "age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and making sure that all of those do not prevent a child from their education." Marcia also emphasized that a push for equity is not a desire to make everyone the same. Rather, it includes an appreciation for diversity and its richness along with efforts to ensure that all students have "the same opportunities for success and growth."

Not only did Marcia's discussion of these issues demonstrate a more comprehensive view of equity, she also advanced an activist approach to social justice—a stance that moves beyond promoting justice to include actively engaging in the fight for justice and equity in schools and society. For example, her discussion of difference did not stop at promoting awareness; rather, she asserted that social justice involved "removing those barriers of gender, race, sexual orientation, language, whatever they may be, that exist and that are most evident in our urban schools." For Marcia, being critical of current accountability practices was not sufficient; rather, she challenged her teacher candidates to go beyond helping students to pass a test to also be responsible for promoting social justice in their classrooms.

Marcia gave several examples of how issues of equity and social justice were presented in her classes and in the teacher education program in general. She cited the commitment of the program faculty to social justice as essential to the message they sought to present to their teacher candidates. She indicated that in coursework students talked about issues of poverty, violence, and broken families and how they impact the educational experience of K-12 students. They also talk about specific questions related to classroom practices, such as how to group

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students and how to respond to students who share troubling information in a writing journal. She also recounted discussions about the importance of building relationships and looking for ways to support the diverse needs of students. Marcia indicated that preparing to deal with issues such as these is crucial to the preparation of successful urban teachers.

Although Marcia was unique among the faculty interview participants in advancing an activist approach to the equity perspective in her interview, her central role in the program, both via her leadership position and her involvement with all of the teacher candidates throughout the program, suggest that the teacher candidates would encounter this approach in meaningful ways throughout their program.

Ambiguity in the program message. The general affirmation of the equity perspective evident in the faculty interviews and course syllabi coincides with the message advanced by the program documents. The case study data demonstrate general agreement that an understanding of the influence of societal structures on teaching and learning is essential preparation for teacher candidates and should be the foundation of the way various teaching practices are evaluated. The data also point to a commitment to meeting the needs of diverse learners.

However, the teacher educators presented a variety of approaches to equity and social justice both in degree of emphasis and in the meanings assigned to these terms. Several faculty members presented a rather weak view of equity which included a misunderstanding, disregard, or negative attitude toward social justice education. Others portrayed a much more positive stance toward the equity perspective that included an emphasis on student difference and the need for teaching that is culturally aware and relevant. Finally, Marcia articulated a stance toward equity which promoted the active engagement of teachers in confronting injustice in schools and society.

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Peyton's urban-focused teacher preparation program, therefore, contains a significant degree of ambiguity in regards to essential aspects of the equity perspective. Although the limited advocacy approach and the activist stance toward the equity perspective may be presented more strongly than the weak alignment due to the more comprehensive and prominent role of the faculty educators advocating these positions, the data still point to significant variation in the message being presented to the teacher candidates. Furthermore, while the program and its faculty affirmed certain parts of this perspective, teacher educators presented mixed messages about the meaning of social justice and its implications for classroom teaching.

Teacher Candidates at Peyton University

As discussed in Chapter 5, a certain amount of variation between the message advanced by the program faculty and the way this message is received and understood by the teacher candidates is expected. In the following sections, I report on the students' perceptions of the curriculum they received and then on their own personal beliefs about the equity perspective. Overall, the data indicate that the ambiguity in the message of the teacher educators is present to a great extent in the reports of the teacher candidates. While they agreed about certain aspects of the message they had received, they differed greatly in their personal outlook and understanding of the equity perspective.

The received curriculum. The teacher candidates' reports of how the equity perspective was presented to them in the teacher preparation program at Peyton University reflected strong acknowledgment of the central place of social justice in their program experience, significant variation in their description of what they had been taught about social justice, and agreement about the program's emphasis on building relationships, being aware of the social context of learning, and working to meet the needs of diverse learners.

The teacher candidates were unanimous in their assertion that the topic of social justice was a key component of their program experience at Peyton. Nevertheless, the emphasis on social justice was described in different ways by the teacher candidates. Both Kristy and Eric recognized the program's emphasis on social justice but did not describe it as being central to their course work. Eric recalled an introductory activity in their first cohort meeting in which each student was asked to share his or her perspective of social justice, but he was not able to describe any other examples of how social justice or equity were portrayed in the program. Similarly, Kristy spoke of the program's emphasis on social justice but also stated that she did not feel it was a main focus in her courses. She later stated that she had learned that social justice should be an underlying theme in her classroom, but her description of what this would look like—that she should "be a good example" to her students of being fair and good— demonstrated a rather limited view of social justice.

The other interview respondents presented a stronger interaction with social justice in their program experience. Andrea, while expressing personal uncertainty of a school's ability to promote social justice, summarized the program's message about social justice as including awareness of the community, social responsibility, community involvement, understanding of students' backgrounds, knowing the students, and working to prepare lessons that meet their needs. Both James and Lara described social justice as a major focus of the program. James reported that social justice was the first thing that he encountered in the program through an activity in which each teacher candidate shared an artifact related to social justice. He also recounted discussions about social justice in his content literacy course. He shared an example of how teaching students, especially African Americans, the history of how many people were at one time denied the opportunity to learn to read and that many fought and died for that right

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might motivate students to read and pay more attention to their education. Lara agreed that social justice was a major issue in the teacher preparation program. She stated that it was frequently discussed and professors were "constantly pointing out that we just discussed a social justice issue." She described their focus as helping them be sensitive to social justice issues and to "promote equality for all of our students."

While discussing social justice and also in other contexts, the teacher candidates also highlighted the program's emphasis on building relationships with students, being aware of their situations, and working to meet their needs. Kristy reported that her literacy course stressed the importance of "catering to multiculturalism," which she described as being aware of the linguistic needs of the students in order to avoid using vocabulary or activities to which students could not relate. Andrea's discussion of social justice focused on the message that teachers need to know their students in order to teach effectively. She expressed her appreciation for the emphasis on knowing students and compared this approach with her school experiences by saying, "I think that's different because when I was growing up they didn't care where you came from; you were just going to learn this, ... 'We don't care if you can relate it to yourself or not.'" Lara also pointed to the professors' focus on promoting equality for all students.

The teacher candidates' views of equity. The teacher candidates' descriptions of how they felt the equity perspective was presented in their urban teacher preparation program focused, then, on two key concepts: social justice and knowing students well. In contrast, their discussions of a range of educational topics in the interview gave evidence of a variety of personal viewpoints related to the equity perspective. I describe here three different stances that emerged from the interview data: a limited and uncertain affirmation, a strong but incomplete affirmation, and a strong affirmation and commitment to the equity perspective.

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A limited and uncertain affirmation. Kristy and Andrea portrayed a viewpoint of equity that included limited involvement with this perspective in their approach to teaching and a limited or uncertain understanding of the place of equity in education. Other than in response to specific questions about equity or social justice, Kristy's only references to characteristics of the equity perspective were her emphasis on community involvement in bringing improvement to urban schools and her discussion of disparities in financial resources between urban and suburban schools. Kristy also presented a rather narrow understanding of equity, describing it as providing all students with "a fair shake" and "the same opportunities." She also stated that urban teachers understand that, due to challenges in urban communities, they need to "put in a little more effort just so everybody gets that fair deal."

Andrea expressed a good deal of uncertainty and pessimism about equity. In speaking about social justice in education, she stated, "I don't think there is any real social justice inside of teaching." She explained this statement by arguing that no matter how much we strive for justice there will always "be some type of duplicity involved." Furthermore, she reported that although the program presented the message that a big part of social justice was being involved in the community, she did not believe that would be sufficient to "bring about social justice."

A strong but incomplete affirmation of equity. Eric discussed equity in a way that strongly affirmed its place in education but included an incomplete understanding of the equity perspective. In his responses to interview questions, he emphasized on several occasions the importance of knowing his students, making connections with them, helping students learn about their interests and identity, and fitting curriculum to the needs of the student. He also expressed a clear commitment to social justice in education. This was based on his view of the importance of education in our society and the existence of large gaps in the availability of quality education.

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Eric passionately declared, "What people need is an education; that's the only way to go from point A to point B." When asked to explain the meaning of social justice in education, he simply described is as "walking into an area where there is a need for education and helping kids desire it." His commitment to social justice was limited, therefore, to a desire to motivate all students to learn.

A strong and integrated affirmation of equity. In comparison to the other members of their cohort, James and Lara articulated a strong and integrated stance toward the equity perspective. Their approach included a strong concern for the needs of individual students and an approach to social justice focused on providing an equal opportunity for all learners and on affirming each student's place in society.

In discussing the foundations of urban school improvement, James argued that effective urban education requires a strong concern for each individual student. He criticized approaches that consider groups of students while ignoring the social context of an individual child's education. He described the importance of considering how the lack of a father in the home or the reality of having "to take ten buses to school" might affect a student's attendance and school performance. Lara brought up similar issues through her emphasis on multicultural education. She described successful teachers as those that "make their classroom multicultural." She explained that this included understanding students' backgrounds and funds of knowledge and being able to adapt classroom practices accordingly. She hoped to be able to incorporate multiculturalism into her teaching as a way of developing in her students an understanding and appreciation of difference.

Both James and Lara also expressed a strong commitment to pursuing social justice in education. James defined social justice as "being able to give everybody an equal opportunity

and understand that they have a place in society and [that] education is key." Lara defined social justice as "making my classroom a place where no matter where you come from, no matter what your linguistic differences are, your sexual orientation, your backgrounds, making you feel comfortable in my classroom and . . . getting my students to learn and to appreciate the uniqueness in others."

The teacher candidates: a wide variety of approaches to equity. Data gathered from the teacher candidates demonstrate a wide variety of understandings and approaches to the equity perspective. In discussing the program message, the teacher candidates agreed that social justice was a foundational component of their program and that their coursework also emphasized the importance of understanding the social context of education, the need to build relationships with students, and the obligation to meet the needs of all learners. However, the teacher candidates' descriptions of the specific message they had received about social justice education varied greatly.

Significant disparity also emerged as the teacher candidates discussed their personal viewpoint of the equity perspective. They varied greatly in the way they talked about social justice and equity and in the level of commitment they expressed for these issues. In general, the approach to the equity perspective in general and social justice in particular demonstrated by the students did not match the program's commitment to this perspective presented in the program documents, advanced by some faculty members, and reported by the students themselves.

The Intended and Received Curriculum of Equity at Peyton University

The analysis of the message presented by the program faculty, the teacher candidates' perception of that message, and the personal beliefs of the teacher candidates reflect an overall approach characterized by a uniform affirmation of certain components of the equity perspective

coupled with a wide range of opinions and a considerable amount of uncertainty and disagreement about other significant issues related to the equity perspective (see Table 6.1).

There was general agreement among the teacher educators of the influence of socio-cultural factors on teaching and learning and of the need for a commitment to meeting the needs of diverse learners. However, they presented a variety of understandings of the role of social justice in education and the manner in which it should be emphasized in their work with teacher candidates. The teacher candidates reported that the program included a clear focus on social justice and emphasized the need for teachers to build positive relationships with students, be aware of the social context of schooling, and commit to meeting the needs of all learners. They disagreed, however, about the meaning of social justice that was presented to them through their program experiences.

Table 6.1. Equity at Peyton University

	Program faculty	Received curriculum	Personal beliefs of teacher candidates
Typology	weak alignment limited advocacy activist approach		limited and uncertain strong but incomplete strong and integrated

Agreement	influence of societal
	  structures on education
	commitment to meeting
	  needs of diverse
	  learners
		program focus on
		  social justice
		building positive
		  relationships
		social context of
		  learning
		meeting needs of
		  diverse learners
			community
			  involvement
			concern for needs of
			  all students

Variation	approaches to equity and
	  social justice
		meaning of social
		  justice education
			meaning of equity and
			  social justice
			level of commitment
			  to educational equity

Significant variation was evident in the personal approaches to the equity perspective portrayed by the teacher candidates. They expressed general agreement that teachers should seek

to be involved in the school community and work to meet the needs of all students. They varied greatly, however, in their level of commitment to educational equity and in their understanding of social justice in education.

Therefore, the data indicate that the consistent commitment of the teacher educators to certain components of the equity perspective is reflected in the message received and understood by the teacher candidates. However, the variation in the level of commitment to the equity perspective and in the meanings of social justice in education presented by the program faculty corresponds to the varied and, in some cases, uncertain understanding of the equity perspective that is present in the responses of the teacher candidates at Peyton University.

The Equity Perspective at Allerton State University

The program documents from Allerton State express a strong commitment to the equity perspective through introductory statement, program standards, and core values statements that highlight diversity, equity, community involvement, social justice, and critical pedagogy. In the sections that follow, I investigate the manner to which this commitment is realized in the work of the program faculty and how it is understood by the teacher candidates.

Teacher Educators at Allerton State: A Uniform Commitment to Equity

The commitment to the equity perspective reflected in the program documents is also evident in the data gathered from the teacher educators at Allerton State. The interview participants advocated a fairly uniform and positive stance toward the equity perspective, yet there was some variability in the way this perspective was understood and presented in the program. Of the eight participants, Peter demonstrated a weak view of the equity perspective; his alignment with this perspective was limited to his advocacy for equal access for all students to quality curriculum and the resources necessary to support that curriculum. Neal expressed a

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stronger view of equity, but one that was still limited in its scope. The remaining six faculty

members were united in advancing an activist approach to educational equity.

A weak approach to educational equity. Data from his course syllabi and the interview

with Peter, who teaches secondary math courses and supervises student teachers at Allerton

State, demonstrated a weak alignment with the equity perspective. His discussions of urban

school improvement and characteristics of successful teachers were devoid of references to

tenets of the equity perspective, and when talking about social justice he stated, "I can't speak

much about social justice because that's not in my background." The only reference to equity in

the two course syllabi available for Peter was the statement in his grading rubric for his student

teaching seminar that the ability to adapt teaching to individual learning styles and needs was a

requirement for earning the top grade in the class.

In the interview, Peter did affirm the importance of educational equity, but his conception

of equity was limited to the idea of access to quality curriculum and the necessary resources for

the learning of mathematics. Peter noted that the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

(NCTM) includes equity as one of its core professional standards. Peter explained that, first, this

means that "we don't want three different curriculums for children." Rather, all children should

have access to a quality mathematics curriculum. Secondly, Peter spoke of technology as an

example of the importance of providing necessary resources for all children. An example of

inequity, asserted Peter, is when some children do not have access to the technology necessary to

support a deeper learning of mathematics while other children have more than enough.

Peter assessed, then, the level of equity present in a school by the quality of the

curriculum and the availability of teaching resources. In his program teaching, therefore, issues

of equity were not part of his coursework. He stated, "I'm choosing schools where equity is not

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an issue." His primary concern was that his teacher candidates "see really good teaching of mathematics rather than have to worry about all of the other classroom issues."

A limited affirmation of educational equity. Neal presented a more complete, but still limited, approach to the equity perspective. This was characterized by a commitment to meet the needs of all students, a critical stance toward standardized testing, and a narrowly defined understanding of social justice.

The course syllabi for Neal's courses lacked any reference to characteristics of the equity perspective, but during the interview he presented a limited agreement with various tenets of this perspective. He affirmed the need for successful teachers, in all schools, to be committed to their students, and he voiced clear criticism of current standardized assessment practices and their failures in improving schools. Neal also expressed his belief that schools should be places where students learn about themselves and their interests.

For Neal, social justice was primarily an issue of content. As he started to talk about social justice, he stated, "I don't need to worry too much about it because content I teach, in terms of social studies, . . . everywhere you look are issues of social justice." He noted that the primary message he would like his students to gain about social justice is to "be a good role model in terms of how we treat each other and don't shy away from content." He went on to discuss how they talk about the appropriate way to incorporate issues of justice and equity in the course content.

Neal asserted, however, that there is an additional layer of school issues related to social justice and equity. He pointed to the political nature of school knowledge and the disparate viewpoints impacting many decisions about school curriculum. He noted that he emphasizes with his students the role that they have in making decisions that will lead to the inclusion of

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certain content and the exclusion of other topics. He stated that he teaches the pre-service social studies teachers that they need to help their students understand the subjective nature of school curriculum. In addition, Neal alluded to the inequities that exist in schools related to funding, resources, and school climate. He argued, "It's hard to be fair. I think we should move in that direction, but I've got 44 kids in a classroom and 10 of them are Special Ed. What's fair about that?" He did not, however, offer any hope that he or classroom teachers could do anything to address these issues.

An activist approach to educational equity. The course syllabi and interview responses of the remaining faculty members reflected a comprehensive and activist approach to the equity perspective. This approach places social justice and equity at the heart of urban education, advances an activist view of social justice, includes a critical approach to teaching and learning that clearly examines issues of race and class, and affirms the need to make positive connections with students and communities.

First, these faculty members saw social justice and equity as essential components of urban education and of quality urban teachers. They did not simply talk about issues of equity, they viewed this perspective as being at the core of urban education. They described it as the foundation of the teacher preparation program at Allerton State. From her perspective as a leader in the department, Tara stated that "social justice and equity is how we define what it is that makes us different" and "the lens that all else goes through." This commitment was also demonstrated in Tara's course on urban education which promotes teaching for social justice as one of the central themes of the course.

The approach to educational equity advanced by these faculty members went beyond an awareness of injustice and how it impacts learning to an activist stance that promotes teacher and

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student involvement in pursuing changes in individual and societal circumstances. Tara argued that promoting social justice includes "challenging wherever there are inequities in ways that will create contexts, or openings, or co-create contexts and openings for the elimination of inequity." She asserted her view that teaching children is the act of developing "a critical citizenry that sees themselves as active participants." In order to accomplish this, she argued, teachers have to be active in the community in addition to in the field of education. In a similar vein, Victoria described social justice as "providing equity and access for all students" and helping them understand their role as citizens in the world and ways they can both be successful and be "agents and proponents for changing the things that they believe are not right . . . ." Nancy described the program's focus by declaring that "social justice goes beyond just talking about issues; it's developing plans to help kids take action on issues" and to become self-advocates. Paul, throughout his interview, emphasized the importance of empowering students and engaging them in the educational process. He described social justice, among other things, as "making sure that your students have voice in a classroom." Stefan described social justice as "naming" the frameworks and social conditions that privilege some while oppressing others and "then advocating for changing those often negative conditions." He communicated that a goal of his courses in second language education is to teach his students what it means "to advocate for the language rights" of others and how they might challenge others, including those in political power, about these issues. In his linguistics class syllabus, Stefan included among the course goals that his students would understand their role as change agents in both school and community.

These faculty members also incorporated a critical approach to educational issues in their views about urban education and in their program teaching. Tara spoke about the need to

confront the challenges of racism, classism, and ethnocentrism and the way they are "deeply embedded in the process of education." She noted that in the program at Allerton State teacher candidates are engaged in thinking about historical, political, and economic structures that have existed and continue to exist in our country and that influence students' educational experiences. Victoria highlighted her course discussions centered around issues of equity, access, institutional racism, sexism and other societal structures. She indicated her desire to help her students think beyond matters of individual bias to "actually looking at this as a societal, institutional, replicating force." Nancy also asserted the goal of having teacher candidates understand injustice in society "in a way that allows them to look at assets rather than liabilities . . . and get away from that deficit model that has been so prevalent I think in urban education particularly." Her course syllabus included the identification of issues of equity—including race, class, and power—as one of four central course goals. Paul gave an example of how he encourages a critical perspective in his coursework. He described his philosophy statement which he gives to students on the first day of class. In it, he states that everyone comes to class with biases and baggage and that as teachers, "you need to maybe unload some of those kinds of biases before you socialize, no coerce usually, your future students."

Stefan set himself apart from his colleagues by expressing the most radically critical stance in his discussion of social and educational inequality. He decried "the very reductionist trap of blaming everything on the schools." He pointed instead to the political economy and a capitalist system "that inherently places value, a misplaced value, on inequity." He argued, "So from where I stand, until we revamp or dismantle the current political economy, schools are going to continue to not do well." He also criticized what he described as the prevailing belief that schools' primary purpose is to equip students to enter the workforce. He described this as

preparing "children to become cogs in a wheel, and to make somebody else rich while our children are being exploited." He described his view as Freirean, arguing that liberation should be viewed as the primary purpose of schooling. The syllabi from Stefan's second language and linguistics courses also demonstrated the critical manner in which he approached education and the stance he promoted with his university students. His course descriptions and statements of goals included multiple references to the need for teachers to interpret policies and practices with a critical lens and to confront issues of colonialism, hegemony, and the sociopolitical nature of schooling.

The importance of understanding the community and connecting with students and parents also emerged regularly in the interviews and course syllabi of these faculty members. Tara argued that teachers need to recognize the strengths that students bring to the classroom. She explained—and it was also clearly described in her course syllabus—various components of the program in which teacher candidates are required to learn about the city's assets, prepare a community map, engage in service learning, and then integrate their understanding into their teaching. Her syllabus also listed the candidates' development "as a teacher who understands and respects the communities and cultures of all students" as one of the criteria for evaluation of growth as a teachers. Nancy's course on urban teaching included the same focus on community and building strong relationships with students. Her course objectives included helping teacher candidates identify community resources in order to support students and their families. Her syllabus also outlined one of the key assignments which required students to visit specific places in the community in order to gain an understanding of the community's assets and how they are connected to urban schools. Teresa also, while discussing qualities of effective teachers, highlighted the importance of building strong connections with students and the community and

incorporating cultural responsiveness and an appreciation of diversity. Similarly, Stefan described successful teachers as those desire to learn from their students and families and who understand the strengths of urban communities, and his course syllabi highlighted the importance of community involvement and family partnerships.

The program message: A consistent commitment to promoting equity. As with their approach to the accountability perspective, the faculty at Allerton State presented a primarily unified vision of the equity perspective. Although Neal and Peter presented a less complete view of equity, all of the faculty participants incorporated issues of equity in their interview responses and affirmed the importance of this perspective in their work with their teacher candidates. Furthermore, six of the eight joined in presenting a clearly defined understanding of the equity perspective that affirmed the central role of social justice in their approach to teaching and learning, an activist approach to social justice, a critical approach to educational issues, and a commitment to building strong connections with students and the community.

The Teacher Candidates' Approach to the Equity Perspective

Therefore, although there was a certain amount of variation in the manner in which the equity perspective was presented to the teacher candidates at Allerton State, the majority would be expected to encounter a fairly uniform message. Data gathered from the teacher candidates reflect this consistency in terms of the message they report having received from their program experiences. At the same time, the teacher candidates demonstrated a variety of personal understandings of the equity perspective and how it might impact their work as urban teachers.

The received curriculum. The data collected from interviews highlight features that the teacher candidates at Allerton State reported about the message they had received about the equity perspective from their urban-focused teacher preparation program. First, the teacher

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candidates communicated that there was a clear focus on social justice in their program. Second, there was significant variation in the message about social justice that was presented. Third, many of the teacher candidates highlighted the program's emphasis on preparing them to successfully teach diverse learners. Fourth, several of the candidates brought up specific strategies to promote educational equity while discussing general educational issues. Fifth, interview responses demonstrated the significant impact that an individual faculty member was able to have on the students' understanding of the program message.

In the eyes of the teacher candidates, the teacher preparation program at Allerton State presented a clear focus on social justice and equity. All but one of the interview respondents spoke of the way social justice or equity were emphasized or discussed throughout the program or in particular classes within the program. For example, Tracy stated, "I think that almost all of my classes contribute to this understanding that I have, . . . this knowledge and idea that I have about social justice." Ted also reported that social justice was a dominant theme in one particular course but was reflected in his other courses as well. Trent, who was preparing to be a secondary English teacher, discussed the way social justice emerged as an important theme in his courses on the teaching of reading and the teaching of writing. Richard, a social studies student, and Nathan, a math student, were the only two to express a more limited role of social justice in their program experience. Richard acknowledged that some issues related to social justice were brought up in coursework but also stated that it was not a theme emphasized in his classes, and Nathan was unique in stating that social justice was never discussed in his courses.

Although the teacher candidates spoke in a mostly uniform manner about the existence of the program's emphasis on social justice and equity, they articulated a variety of approaches to this topic. For Richard, issues of social justice were discussed primarily in terms of the need to

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be aware of inequalities that exist in education. He recalled discussions about "the issue that the suburbs seem to have so many more resources available to them." Other students described the program's emphasis on social justice and equity in terms of the teacher's responsibility to students. Ted described the program's "underlying assumption" that teachers will treat students equitably and not "favor some over others." Nathan expressed appreciation for the way in which the program pushed him to "learn different ways to deal with various types of students." Maria recounted how in her coursework she learned that social justice teaching involved working to make connections with students and their communities in order to make school meaningful for all students. Valerie and Tracy focused on the foundational understandings of equity and social justice that they had picked up through their program experiences. Valerie described in detail class discussions comparing equality and equity. She recounted the professors' push for equal educational opportunity for all students as opposed to a focus on giving all students the same resources or material. Tracy stressed that the program message was that social justice was "a philosophy and it needs to be a part of everything you do." She then described how the professors supported this idea in her methods classes and in a course on urban education.

The teacher candidates also communicated that the program had emphasized the importance of meeting the needs of diverse learners. As noted above, several teacher candidates discussed the focus on social justice in terms of taking steps to ensure that all students were taught in ways that were meaningful and would provide them with an opportunity for success. In addition, Trent discussed the need to take into account the variety of challenges that students may face due to cultural or language differences, and Tisha spoke of the need to bring in students' culture and interests into her planning in order encouragement engagement and understanding with course material.

Several of the students shared specific teaching strategies or curricular materials that were part of the message about the equity perspective that they had received as part of their teacher preparation. Trent related the impact that *Critical Encounters in High School English: Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents* by Deborah Appleman (2009) had on his view of teaching. He was introduced to this book in a methods course. He reported how this book equipped him to engage in critical pedagogy and encourage this stance in his students, even when he felt constrained by requirements about which books he must teach or topics he must cover. Two students referenced the use of what they called "Where I'm From" poems in their work with students. They indicated that they had learned about these poems in their teaching methods course and described using them as a way to affirm the value of their students' experiences and to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy into their teaching. Tracy reported that she had been introduced by *Spectacular Things Along the Way* by Brian Schulz (2008) in her course on urban education and that it had taught her a great deal about student-centered classrooms, student-directed learning, and problem-based instruction.

Finally, a story of "one of our professors" also emerged from the interview data. Many students referenced a particular professor who was "big on social justice" or was "pretty passionate about social justice" and included it as a dominant theme in her course. Valerie told of one professor who had written extensively about social justice in teaching and emphasized it in her teaching. Several other students, while discussing some of the work they were doing in a local middle school, gave examples of readings and activities they had used in order to draw on their students' experiences or to incorporate social justice themes into their teaching. When asked where they had received the inspiration for these ideas, they all pointed to a methods class with the same professor. For many of the students, their most memorable encounters with the

equity perspective were the result of the work of one particular professor rather than the culmination of their entire program experiences.

The teacher candidates' view of equity. While agreeing that the program message contained a clear emphasis on social justice and equity, the students at Allerton expressed a variety of viewpoints about the message they had received related to that emphasis. This disparity extended as well to their expressions of their personal views about the equity perspective. The data present, therefore, three different categories of approaches: a weak approach, a moderate affirmation, and a strong affirmation of the equity perspective.

A weak approach to equity. Three students, Richard, Tisha, and Nathan, presented an approach that included an awareness of the social context of teaching and learning and a limited or unclear understanding of social justice and equity. These teacher candidates affirmed the importance of making connections with students and relating the curriculum to students' lives and interests. For example, Richard highlighted the need to understand students' experiences as a foundation for building relationships with them. Tisha reflected on the influence that students should have on curricular and instructional decisions by saying, "As a teacher I need to be aware of their situations because if I can skew the curriculum so that it's related to their lives . . . and interests, something to get them engaged in the material because they latch on to it so much easier than if we're just doing a random algebraic equation on the board."

In discussing issues related to social justice and equity, however, these teacher candidates demonstrated a weak understanding and uncertainty about the relationship of these concepts to teaching and learning. They all raised concerns about a lack of resources in urban schools, but were unclear about how social justice and equity fit into the discussion. When asked about his thoughts about equity and social justice as they related to education, Richard responded by

saying that he was not very familiar with those terms. He then stated, "When I think of them I guess I think more along the lines of the city compared to the suburbs, the issue that the suburbs seem to have so many more resources available to them, where city schools are really struggling." He went on to express doubt that these sorts of differences could adequately be addressed due to the nature of our capitalistic society. Tisha also was uncertain about the meaning of social justice. She attempted to discuss it in terms of student rights or as part of the debate about standardized testing, but she was clearly uncertain about its meaning and its relationship to educational issues. Nathan mentioned social justice in relation to a conversation he had had with a friend about charter schools and their impact on public education. Noting the ability of some charter schools to be selective in their enrollment, he argued that this left public schools with many struggling students and often inadequate resources.

A moderate affirmation of the equity perspective. Three of the teacher candidates— Valerie, Melissa, and Maria—discussed a variety of issues related to urban education in a way that reflected a moderate affirmation with the equity perspective. This approach was characterized by a focus on establishing relationships with and meeting the needs of students, a critical stance, and affirmation of a limited approach to social justice and equity.

Valerie considered forming relationships with students as one of the most important characteristics of a successful urban teacher. She also centered her understanding of social justice on understanding and meeting the needs of her students. Melissa also stressed that urban teachers "need to get to know their students; they need to know their strengths and weaknesses and . . . what skills they bring into the classroom." When speaking of equity, she stated that every student "deserves a specific and individualized instruction." Maria also advocated for culturally relevant curriculum as a necessary component of urban school improvement.

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This moderate affirmation of the equity perspective also included reference to the need to approach certain educational issues from a critical stance. Maria stressed the need to reconsider the current approach to standardized testing based on the values and needs of the local community. Melissa noted that in her teaching she stresses that "every idea that they have is most likely a construct handed down to them by somebody else" and that her students need to learn how to challenge assumptions and form their own opinions.

These teacher candidates affirmed the importance of social justice and equity in education, but their discussion reflected a limited understanding of these concepts. In speaking about social justice, Valerie focused on the need to be aware that urban students are often treated differently and the importance of "teaching them things that apply to their communities in ways that they can better their situation" and make them aware of the challenges they face. Melissa spoke of social justice as using real-life scenarios in her teaching. She also cited "writing letters to the community and all that stuff" as excellent ideas, but stressed that her students needed to be students first rather than "trying to be young adults under the pretext of a student." Maria's concept of social justice focused on helping students be accountable for their actions and the actions of their community. She also spoke in an uncertain fashion of having students investigate problems and make changes, but she was not able to articulate what this might look like or involve. It was clear that these three students had encountered social justice teaching in their program and wanted to affirm it; however, their understanding of what in involved was uncertain, and they spoke about it primarily through general or vague examples.

A strong affirmation of the equity perspective. Five of the interview respondents— Tracy, Trent, Patricia, Rianna, and Ted—presented a strong affirmation of the equity perspective. Their discussion of the equity perspective was more complete than that of their

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fellow students and incorporated a strong awareness of sociocultural influences on learning, the promotion of a critical stance, an affirmation of multicultural education, and the integration of an activist approach to social justice in their educational practice.

These teacher candidates stressed the need to know their students well and understand the impact of their sociocultural context on learning. Trent acknowledged the disconnect that existed between his experiences and those of his students and stressed the need for successful teachers to get to know their students and understand their community, culture, and values. Ted similarly spoke of the need to understand the challenges that students face and the difficulties many of them have to overcome in order to be successful in school. He specifically pointed to "a very high correlation between poverty and how well children perform in school" and the need for society to meet the basic needs of students in order to promote educational improvement. In her discussion of challenges facing many urban schools, Tracy stated, "I think what's lacking is an understanding of what a systemic issue this is" and the need to consider all of the factors that contribute to the challenges faced by many urban students. Patricia shared this emphasis on the importance of knowing her students, but she also stressed the need to see them as being valuable contributors to the learning environment.

Their interview responses also reflected a critical approach to schooling. Trent discussed in detail his concern with standards that are forced on teachers by state and federal mandates. He stated, "I think that the further you get from the standards of the individual classroom, the more unrealistic they become." He also described the purpose of school as getting students to think critically about issues that are relevant to them and their community. Ted also highlighted the importance of exploring injustices and working to promote justice in society. Patricia expressed

on several occasions during the interviews the need to think about why certain decisions about standards and curriculum are being made and who is involved in making these decisions.

A third area of focus for these three candidates was multicultural education. In speaking about urban school improvement, Ted stressed the need to use lessons that were culturally sensitive and reflected the diversity of the classroom. While talking about social justice, he also articulated the importance of making sure "that everything that we're doing is aimed at maintaining and upholding the dignity of each student and making sure that each student, regardless of background, has the same opportunities to learn." Rianna also stressed the need for culturally relevant curriculum and an attitude of respect towards students "in every aspect of what we do" as a part of urban school improvement. Tracy stated that students needed to have the opportunity to incorporate their own experiences and literacies into their learning. Similarly, Ted described social justice as going "hand in hand with culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy," and Patricia emphasized the need to be aware of cultural and linguistic differences in her instructional planning and to view a student's home language as valuable.

These students also articulated a clear desire to integrate social justice into their approach to teaching and learning. They spoke of social justice as an approach to teaching and as the motivation for specific practices. For example, Tracy stated, "To me the biggest thing is that urban education should have a social justice orientation." She later explained that social justice teaching affirms who students are and provides students with resources necessary to succeed. Ted spoke of social justice pedagogy, which he described as exploring and confronting injustice and incorporating culturally responsive pedagogy. He also argued that even while preparing students for standardized tests he would seek to develop the necessary skills while exploring social justice themes. Trent described how his focus on social justice would influence his lesson

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planning, the type of literature he would choose to introduce to his students, and his efforts at providing equitable learning opportunities for all of his students.

The view of social justice advanced by these teacher candidates also exemplified an activist bent. Patricia and Tracy both highlighted the need to teach students to be advocates for themselves. Patricia focused on engaging students as change agents in society as she described social justice as "just getting students to know that they have a voice and they can use it to make change happen." Rianna similarly described social justice education as "education that inculcates the structural inequalities which exist and that tries to activate students and engage students in learning through the lens of inequalities." She went on to describe her desire to actively engage students in issues important to their community. Trent also focused on getting his students to critically engage in issues relevant to their community and culture and to constantly question what they had been taught, the meaning of authority, and the "role that society wants to place on them."

The teacher candidates: a strong foundation but disparate understandings. The teacher candidates at Allerton State expressed an almost uniform acknowledgment of the central place of social justice in their urban-focused teacher preparation program. They also reported that they had received clear messages about socio-cultural influences on education, the importance of forming relationships with students and building on their experiences in the teaching and learning process, and the need to be prepared to teach diverse learners.

The interviews also indicate, however, a range of understandings and commitment to educational equity and social justice. The teacher candidates described the program message about social justice in different ways, and discussion of issues related to urban education pointed to a variety of beliefs and approaches to social justice. Therefore, as was the case in relation to

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the accountability perspective at Allerton State, a mostly uniform message had resulted in

disparate outcomes. However, in contrast to the manner in which the teacher candidates at

Allerton State discussed the accountability perspective, their interview responses—although

containing a noticeable degree of difference—indicate that the teacher candidates received a

fairly uniform and consistent foundation of understanding of the equity perspective. They also

expressed general agreement about important aspects of the equity perspective, and nine of the

eleven candidates advanced at least a moderate affirmation of the equity perspective.

The Intended and Received Curriculum of Equity and Allerton State

Although there are differences between the message that is presented by the teacher

educators at Allerton State and the way that message is understood and received by their

students, there also exists a substantial degree of uniformity that in many ways outweighs the

discrepancies (see Table 6.2).   According to the teacher educators, the program presents a

primarily unified commitment to equity and social justice and promotes the importance of

involvement in the school community, awareness of the social context of schooling, and a

critically activist view of social justice. The teacher candidates discussed these same

characteristics in their description of the message they were receiving through their program

experience. Furthermore, although there were significant differences in the way the teacher

candidates understood the program's message concerning social justice and in their personal

approach to educational equity, they did express general agreement with many of the same

values of the equity perspective and demonstrated at least a beginning understanding of the

program's emphasis on equity and social justice.

The analysis also suggests that the difference in the way the message concerning the

equity perspective was received by the teacher candidates may be tied, at least in part, directly to

the professors with whom they had the most contact. The three teacher candidates who

portrayed a weak approach to the equity perspective were Richard, a social studies major, and

Nathan and Tisha, both math majors. The only faculty member who exhibited a weak approach

to the equity perspective was Peter, who taught the secondary math courses. In addition, Neal,

who worked primarily with social studies educators, offered a limited affirmation of the equity

perspective. Meanwhile, all of the English majors presented at least a moderate affirmation of

the equity perspective, and five of this group advanced a strong affirmation. In their interviews

they frequently pointed to a specific professor, whose focus was English education, as a

champion of social justice education. Therefore, while the commitment to an activist approach

to the equity perspective was evident in faculty members who taught a variety of classes, it is

most clearly reflected among the teacher candidates who had the most contact with a professor

who demonstrated a strongly integrated approach to equity and social justice in her work with

teacher candidates.

Table 6.2. Equity at Allerton State University

	Program faculty	Received curriculum	Personal beliefs of teacher candidates
Typology	weak approach limited affirmation activist approach		weak approach moderate affirmation strong affirmation

Agreement	essential place of
	    equity in education
	activist stance
	community and
	    student connections
		clear focus on social
		    justice
		meeting needs of all
		    learners
		impact of individual
		    faculty members
			social context of
			    schooling
			building relationships

Variation	small group of faculty
	    members with weak
	    or limited approach
		specific message
		    about social justice
		strategies to promote
		    equity
			understanding of
			    social justice

Emerging Patterns: Two Approaches to Equity

As was the case in the analysis related to the accountability perspective, the case study data indicate similarities and differences between the institutions and also deepen our understanding of the manner in which the equity perspective is presented and understood in urban-focused teacher preparation. The analysis also raises important questions about the equity perspective and key themes usually associated with it. Finally, the research findings contribute to an emerging picture of a potential relationship between these two perspectives in urban education.

A Comparison of the Two Programs

There are many similarities between the two programs which emerge from the case study data (see Table 6.3). According to the reports of the teacher educators, both programs emphasize the influence of societal structures and the socio-cultural context on learning, the importance of community involvement and building relationships with students, and the preparation of teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners. In each case, the teacher candidates' reports about the message they were receiving reflected to a great extent the characteristics emphasized by the teacher educators. The teacher candidates in both universities also articulated that social justice and equity were central themes in their program experience. In addition, a variety of understandings of and approaches toward social justice and equity were present among the students in both programs.

Important differences, however, also emerge from the data. First, the data gathered from the teacher educators at Peyton University give evidence of a great deal of ambiguity in their discussion of the equity perspective and the manner in which they portrayed it to the teacher candidates. Moreover, the interviews point to significant differences of opinion among the

faculty about the role and meaning of equity and social justice in education. Furthermore, only one professor advanced an approach to social justice that moved beyond an emphasis on awareness of injustice and meeting the needs of all learners to also involve active engagement with efforts to confront injustice and transform society. In contrast, Allerton State University presented a mostly unified vision of the equity perspective that included a critically activist approach to social justice.

Table 6.3. The Equity Perspective: A Program Comparison

	Peyton	Allerton State
Program Message	Socio-cultural context of schooling Community involvement Building relationships Meeting needs of diverse learners Focus on social justice and equity Variety of approaches *Significant differences of opinion among program faculty*	Socio-cultural context of schooling Community involvement Building relationships Meeting needs of diverse learners Focus on social justice and equity Variety of approaches *Mostly unified approach of program faculty* *Emphasis on critically activist approach*
Teacher Candidates' Reports	Program focus on social justice Building relationships Community involvement Meeting needs of diverse learners Disparate understanding of social justice *Significant variability in understanding of and commitment to social justice*	Program focus on social justice Building relationships Meeting needs of diverse learners Disparate understandings of social justice *More uniform commitment to social justice and equity* *Beginning understanding of social justice and equity*

*Note: Key differences between the two programs are noted in italics.

The interviews with the teacher candidates also highlight important differences between the two programs. While there was significant variability in the personal beliefs of the teacher

candidates at both institutions, there was a noticeably stronger and more uniform commitment to social justice and equity among the teacher candidates at Allerton State. The teacher candidates at Allerton State expressed a general agreement with many important aspects of the equity perspective and almost all of them articulated at least a beginning understanding of the program's emphasis on social justice and equity.

Emerging Themes and Implications

In addition to highlighting points of comparison between the two programs, the case study data also provide a more complete understanding of how several concepts associated with the equity perspective are conceptualized and portrayed at the two research sites. As discussed in Chapter 4, an analysis of the logic and pattern of the discourse about diversity and social justice reveals variable understandings of these terms. The case study data reflect this same variation and further contribute to a deeper understanding of the equity perspective.

The language of diversity. The analysis of the program documents demonstrated that *diversity* and related terms were often used by the various universities simply as a description of students in urban schools or of the urban community. In some cases, however, programs spoke of diversity as they highlighted their desire to prepare teachers for an approach to education designed to meet the needs of diverse learners. In these instances, the teacher preparation programs referred to culturally relevant instruction, an understanding of the diverse needs of students, and the importance of affirming, valuing, and learning from students' diverse cultures. These same two ideas emerge from the interviews with faculty members and teacher candidates from the two case study institutions; however, the concept of diversity most often reflected a specific approach to education that values diversity and incorporates that value into its work with students.

The concept of diversity as a description of students or communities came up primarily in discussions about the meaning of urban education. Urban education was described repeatedly as involving a racially or ethnically diverse student population or as pertaining to schools located in diverse communities. In a few instances, this concept was also used in a merely descriptive manner in general statements advancing the importance of meeting the needs of diverse learners.

Most frequently, however, interview respondents who highlighted diversity in their discussions referenced the importance of being aware of students' diverse backgrounds as a foundation to building positive relationships, providing all students with meaningful and culturally relevant learning experiences, and affirming and respecting cultural and linguistic difference. Furthermore, this view of diversity was clearly affirmed by the majority of teacher educators and teacher candidates in both institutions and emerged from the data as a key element of the equity perspective as it was represented in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs.

Disparate approaches to social justice. The dominant theme in terms of the language and meaning of equity that emerges from the case study data is the variety of ways that social justice was presented by teacher educators and understood by teacher candidates. The various typologies related to the equity perspective that emerge from the data depend in great measure on the understanding of social justice that was advanced by the faculty members or teacher candidates. Although there was more consistency at Allerton State, there were important differences in the understanding of social justice that were advanced by the program participants at each university.

Part of this variation may be due to the multiple ways in which social justice is understood in society in general. Stefan Aragon, one of the faculty participants from Allerton

State, referred to this during his interview. He said, "I think social justice unfortunately has become like a buzzword, and when you say something enough often times, its meaning is lost, or at least you might come across a thousand definitions." Ayers et al. (2010) expressed a similar concern, arguing that "'social justice teaching' has been used so often in so many situations to reference such a wide range of adaptations and bearing and practices . . . that the phrase itself has overrun its banks and risks being reduced to a slogan without substance, a weak trickle where there should be a raging river" (p. 61).

Nieto and Bode (2012) have provided a definition of social justice that is useful in considering the multiple ways this term is often used generally and was specifically used by the teacher educators and teacher candidates in this study. They outlined four components of social justice education:

(1) "It challenges, confronts, and disrupts misconceptions, untruths, and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination based on race, social class, gender, and other social and human differences."
(2) It "means providing all students with the resources necessary to learn to their full potential."
(3) It draws on "the talents and strengths that students bring to their education."
(4) It "promotes critical thinking and supports agency for social change" (p. 12).

As noted in Chapter 4, the program documents from the eight programs included a variety of ways of looking at social justice. Some programs focused on an understanding of and respect for student difference and the need to meet the needs of all learners. Other programs included an emphasis on the need to challenge inequality and to engage in efforts to transform society. The case study data also point to different approaches to social justice. As they discussed urban education issues in general and social justice in particular, many of the study participants incorporated only one or two of the components outlined by Nieto and Bode (2012). Almost all of the interview respondents, both faculty members and teacher candidates, affirmed

the importance of providing students with the necessary resources for learning. Many others spoke clearly about the importance of knowing their students and understanding the particular learning obstacles they faced, but they often focused their attention on the challenges and deficits rather than the talents and strengths their students might have. Others raised concerns about societal injustice that contribute to educational inequality.

The teacher educators who reflected an understanding of social justice that incorporated all four of the components advanced by Nieto and Bode (2012) were those who advanced what I termed an activist approach to the equity perspective. They were more explicit about the need to critically challenge many of the misconceptions that contribute to inequality and also expressed the necessity of challenging injustice and seeking social change. This activist stance toward social justice was less common among the teacher candidates than among the program faculty; however, it was reflected in the responses of several students from Allerton-State University.

Race and class in urban-focused teacher preparation. A third important theme related to the equity perspective that emerges from the case study data is the way race and social class are dealt with in these teacher preparation programs. Urban education is often viewed as being synonymous with schools in high-poverty areas and attended by a large percentage of students of color. Urban-focused teacher preparation programs must deal with this reality as they confront the demographics of urban schools and the growing cultural divide between students and teachers (Sleeter, 2001; Zeichner, 2003). As argued by Pollock, Deckman, Mira, and Shalaby (2010), while diversity among students is increasing, teachers remain predominantly white and "students of color are routinely underserved and disserved by schools" (p. 212). Furthermore, as argued by proponents of the equity perspective, teachers need to be aware of and confront the racial and socio-economic inequities that exist in our society and engage in teaching that is

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culturally responsive, affirming, and sustaining (Au, 2009; Sleeter & Grant, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 2004: Gay, 2000, Paris, 2012). In addition, urban educators must recognize the significant role that race continues to play in determining inequity in our country (Ladson-Billings, 2009) along with the manner in which social class is related to success in school and the way schools reproduce social inequality (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Bourdieu, 1973, 1984; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Freire, 1970; McLaren, 2003).

The case study data point to three findings about how issues of race and class are treated in these two urban-focused teacher preparation programs. First, a great deal of the discussion about race and class in the interviews was limited to a description of urban schools, their students, or of the challenges they face. Second, there was significant variation in the extent to which issues of race and class were voiced by the teacher educators. Third, the teacher candidates, for the most part, did not articulate a critical and comprehensive stance toward issues of race and class. Their discussion of these issues centered on instructional strategies but did not critically examine structural issues or seek to address race and class-based societal inequities.

First, a significant amount of the discussion about race and class in the interviews was of a descriptive nature. Almost all of the teacher candidates referenced either issues of poverty or racial demographics in explaining their understanding of the meaning of urban education. In talking about urban school improvement, Ted, a teacher candidate from Allerton State, listed the "characteristics of urban students: minority, low-income, high-density housing, urban living, you know, all the things that come with urban living." Eric, from Peyton University, described the educational barriers present in many urban schools as being the result of students who do not have two parents, come from homes where English is not the dominant language, or do not have money. Teacher educators also regularly referenced socio-economic status and racial

demographics in their description of urban schools and students and in their discussion of the realities of urban education. For example, Mark, an instructor at Peyton University, described urban education as "the study and practice of meeting the needs of those students who are non-white and non-middle class." Similarly, Stefan, a professor at Allerton State, noted that urban is often a term used for people of color who live in poverty. In many cases, references to issues of race and social class were limited to these descriptions of students and communities and did not extend to a critical examination of how these social structures operate in schools and society.

Second, the disparate approaches to equity exhibited by the teacher educators included variation in the extent to which issues of race and class were incorporated into their thinking about urban education and their work in preparing urban teachers. Some teacher educators—like Albert and Christine at Peyton and Neal and Peter at Allerton State—paid minimal attention to the impact of race and class. Meanwhile, Daniel, a faculty member at Peyton, openly challenged those who stress the current impact of racism on educational opportunity. Other teacher educators, however, emphasized the need to understand and confront the impact of race and class on school and society. They expressed a clear emphasis on the challenges of racism and the role of social class in shaping the lived experiences of contemporary students and reported that they placed these issues at the center of their approach to urban education and sought to present this message to the teacher candidates with whom they work. For example, Mark noted that his course included readings on critical race theory and race and class-oriented pedagogy. He also stated that "social justice should mean that every student is afforded the same opportunity to succeed in the educational arena, regardless of their markers of difference," which include "race, class, gender, sexual orientation, handicap status, etc." Tara argued that an essential component of urban school improvement was noting the challenges of poverty and racism and the

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institutional nature of both "racism and classism, how deeply it's embedded in the process of education." In general, there was significant variation in the way the teacher educators portrayed issues of race and class in their work with teacher candidates; however, the majority of faculty members—primarily those who reflected a limited advocacy or activist approach to the equity perspective—presented a critical understanding of the impact of race and social class on urban education.

Third, the interview data from the teacher candidates reveal an approach to issues of race and class that focused on the need to incorporate curricular and instructional practices that would be meaningful for and effective with urban students but that generally stopped short of critically examining issues of power, racism, and privilege in our society. Almost all of the teacher candidates reflected on the need for teachers to be aware of racial, ethnic, and class differences in their lesson planning. For example, Ted stressed that teachers need to be aware of the community and culture of their students in order to be effective and that he had encountered in the program "a lot of talk about stereotypes and making sure that you treat students fairly." Nathan pointed positively to the way in which his program experiences had helped him learn different ways to deal with a diverse student population. Maria and Rianna stressed the importance of making curriculum relevant and meaningful for students. Kristy noted that in her work at Peyton University she had encountered a focus on being aware of diversity in her teaching and of the need to eliminate "limiting phrases" that might interfere with students' academic success. In both programs, the teacher candidates reported a focus on teaching practices that were informed by an understanding student difference.

Few of the teacher candidates, however, went beyond a focus on practice in their discussion of race and class. At Allerton State, only two of the 11 interview participants

discussed specifically the impact that societal structures have on education and on life's opportunities. Ted spoke of his understanding of the impact of poverty on student achievement. He said, "I'm aware . . . that there is a very high correlation between poverty and how well children perform in school." He referred to students who did not have their basic needs met to explain this relationship and noted that many of his students had "additional hurdles that . . . I never had to worry about, because I came from a middle-class neighborhood." He also discussed social justice in terms of recognizing that in our society some groups receive more justice than others and that the role of social justice pedagogy is to explore these injustices and "how we can work to be a more just society in the future." Rianna, also an English major, also discussed social justice teaching in terms of the way it makes clear existing structural inequalities "and that tries to activate students and engage students in learning through the lens of inequalities that exist . . . ." However, even though it was clear through her interview that she placed a high value on combating inequality and respecting all students' cultures, she did not explicitly reference race or class.

There were more references to race and class in the interviews with the teacher candidates at Peyton University than at Allerton State. Four of the five participants referenced race or class in ways that went beyond a description of students or schools or as a basis for culturally relevant teaching. Their responses, however, included a degree of uncertainty and ambiguity. Kristi referenced class differences as she described social justice as fighting against wealth disparities. The three African American teacher candidates—James, Andrea, and Lara—introduced race into their responses on several occasions. James referenced race or ethnicity as he discussed urban education in general and teaching in particular. He gave the example of an African American student without a father as an example of the need to understand each

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student's circumstances when considering how to hold students and teachers accountable. He also asserted that in teaching reading it would be good to share with students, especially African American students, the struggle that many African Americans had to endure in order to learn to read and to receive the right to attend schools. He hoped that this would serve as motivation for African American students to learn to read. Although clearly attuned to the role that racial identity plays in the experiences of students, he also articulated that schools should focus on individuals and not try to group students together by race or ethnicity as they seek ways to truly understand a student's background as the basis for meaningful school improvement.

Andrea also expressed concern that urban educators focus too much on the race and ethnicity of their students. She stated that while urban education is a term often used to signify Black or Hispanic kids, "they're just children wanting to learn." However, in contrast to this statement indicating a desire to remove race from her thinking about teaching, she also shared that when asked by her professor to bring an artifact to represent social justice, she brought a copy of a Norman Rockwell painting depicting a young African American girl walking to school with armed guards. She stated that this reminded her of white flight leaving "pockets of just African American neighborhoods." She clearly had internalized an awareness of the way race has influenced the life experiences of many students of color in our society.

Lara also introduced issues of race into her discussion of urban education in a variety of ways. Her main focus was on the importance of understanding all students' background and experience in order to be able to teach them effectively. In discussing Delpit's (2006) *Other People's Children*, however, she criticized the need to focus on the ethnicity of students by responding, "It was interesting to me that one of the things throughout the book was teaching to Black students, and as an African American I didn't understand why we have to teach to them;

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they're just students after all." She then changed course, however, and discussed the importance of understanding students' needs in the teaching of literacy by asserting, "Black students have no problem with fluency. They express it all the time in rap songs and verbal games that they play and the way that they speak with each other and their storytelling methods. They have no problem with fluency; they have no problem with expression. They need skills."

The responses of these teacher candidates suggest that the majority of them have not internalized a critical stance toward issues of race and class that challenges existing power relations in schools while also considering how best to meet the needs of all students. Some of the teacher candidates spoke of societal inequities associated with race or social class, and others incorporated discussions about race into their conversations about urban education. However, even these teacher candidates presented inconsistent and, at times, contradictory views about how race impacts students' educational experiences.

These findings related to the manner in which race and class were reflected in these teacher preparation programs point to three important issues. First, these findings demonstrate the difficulty in engaging teacher candidates, the vast majority of whom are female, white, and middle class to examine and change their attitudes and beliefs (Cochrane-Smith, 2000; Hollins, 2011; Pollack et al, 2010; Sleeter, 2001). In this case study, of the 16 teacher candidates who were interviewed, 13 (81.25%) were White. This is consistent with data demonstrating that the vast majority of students in teacher education programs are White (Pollack et al, 2010; Sleeter, 2001; Zeichner, 2003). The challenges facing urban-focused teacher preparation programs, then, are significant as they seek to prepare teachers for work in schools populated by a large percentage of students of color.

These findings may also reflect the mistaken belief held by many that we currently live in a post-racial society (Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Although these teacher candidates clearly are aware of the demographics of urban schools, their knowledge of this fact stops at the recognition that they must be aware of student difference in order to teach students effectively. They do not seem inclined to critically examine the impact of race on society. This stands in contrast to the message given by the majority of faculty participants in this study who presented a strong understanding of the manner in which issues of race and class continue to contribute to societal inequalities and injustice.

Finally, although the background of the teacher candidates does not explain all of the difference, it is worth considering. Interview data indicate that the teacher candidates at Allerton State were much more likely to have encountered a clear and consistent message about race and class in their teacher preparation program than were the students at Peyton University. However, although the participants at Peyton presented a varied and inconsistent approach to these issues, they were much more likely to reference race in their discussion of urban teaching and learning. Although the sample size at each university is small, the fact that three of the five teacher candidates at Peyton were African American is likely to have played in a role in their focus on race in their discussions of urban education. Furthermore, although these three candidates discussed race in an inconsistent fashion and at times advanced ideas that seemed to discount the impact of race on education, they also clearly raised issues related to race and ethnicity to a much greater degree than did the majority of the other teacher candidates. This suggests, therefore, that the racial identity of the teacher candidates may have had more to do with their ability to consider issues of race than did the message they received from their teacher preparation program. This supports Sleeter's (2001) review of research that noted the importance of looking

for ways to recruit teachers of color "who bring experiences and attributes that good urban teachers share" (p. 102).

Moving Forward: Accountability, Equity, and Nepantla

The case study data affirm the existence of the equity perspective in the urban-focused teacher preparation programs at Peyton University and Allerton State University. As was true with the accountability perspective, there was a great deal of variation in the way the equity perspective was portrayed and understood in the two programs. However, the data also reveal that there were important differences between the two programs. Peyton's treatment of the equity perspective was characterized by ambiguity, and this was reflected in the way this message was received by the teacher candidates. In contrast, Allerton State presented a fairly uniform and strong view of the equity perspective, and while the teacher candidates varied substantially in their approach to the equity perspective, they also presented a rather consistent affirmation of many aspects of this perspective and a beginning understanding of educational equity and social justice.

The data also point to the need to more completely understand the view of social justice that is at work in urban-focused teacher preparation programs. The manner in which these programs advance social justice may have implications for the extent to which they are able to truly advance the cause of equity through their work with teacher candidates. This in turn may impact the relationship that exists between the accountability and equity perspectives in urban-focused teacher preparation programs.

In the final chapter, therefore, I review the implications of this study for our understanding of these two perspectives. In addition, I synthesize the findings in order to make clear the relationship between accountability and equity that emerges from the data and to

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consider the necessary conditions for considering new ways of thinking about accountability and equity in urban-focused teacher preparation and the extent to which new possibilities may already exist at Peyton University or Allerton State University.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LOOKING FOR NEPANTLA

In this research study, I have investigated the manner in which two perspectives—one focused on accountability and the other on equity—are presented and understood in a sample of urban-focused teacher preparation programs. Furthermore, the analysis has made visible the nature of the relationship that exists between these often competing perspectives in order to contribute to an understanding of how teacher preparation programs can incorporate both accountability and equity in their approach to urban education in the hopes of introducing new understandings that increase our knowledge of existing perspectives of urban education and open new spaces for the preparation of teachers and for teaching and learning in urban schools.

As a foundation for this study, I have argued that the accountability and equity perspectives play central roles in current efforts to improve the quality of education in urban schools. The accountability perspective is reflected in the current focus on standards and accountability, the use of standardized assessments as the key measure of student achievement and teacher or school quality, and an emphasis on holding high expectations for all students. The equity perspective highlights the need for multicultural education, democratic equality, and social justice as key components of the pursuit of educational and societal equity. While these two perspectives may impact educators' views of teaching and learning throughout the nation, they play an especially critical role in urban schools. Federal and state educational policies have privileged the accountability perspective through their focus on standards, accountability, and the mandated use of standardized testing as the basis for student, teacher, and school evaluation. This reality, coupled with the current focus on the achievement gap and the ubiquitous reports of

failing schools in urban centers, have highlighted the challenges faced by urban schools and increased the demands for both equity and accountability in urban education. Understanding these two perspectives and their influence on urban teaching has emerged, therefore, as a salient issue in urban-focused teacher preparation.

Accountability and Equity in Urban-Focused Teacher Preparation

The document analysis of the eight urban-focused teacher preparation programs and the case study data from two of these programs demonstrates, first of all, that both the accountability and equity perspectives are evident and affirmed in these programs. Programs vary in the extent to which these perspectives are represented, but it is clear that characteristics of these perspectives are key components of the preparation that is offered to the teacher candidates in these programs. The document analysis also indicates that while both perspectives are affirmed, the equity perspective is more frequently emphasized than the accountability perspective. This is supported by the case study data as faculty members more regularly pointed to social justice and equity as core values of their program.

Furthermore, although the accountability and equity perspectives clearly played a role in the two case study programs, there was significant disparity among and between the programs in how these two perspectives were presented and received. Although certain practices and ideas were represented throughout the programs, there was also substantial difference in the way the perspectives were presented at each university and significant variation in the way the messages were received by the teacher candidates. However, as discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, the data point to a more consistent message at Allerton State University than at Peyton University. The teacher educators at Allerton State presented a generally unified focus on a critically progressive approach to the accountability perspective and an activist approach to the equity

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perspective. This consistency was paralleled to some degree among the teacher candidates at Allerton State. Although they differed in their personal beliefs, they also expressed at least a beginning understanding of the program message related to these perspectives. In contrast, the lack of coherence evident in the Peyton University program was also reflected in the discrepancies noted in the teacher educators' understandings related to the two perspectives.

In addition to displaying the manner in which these two perspectives were portrayed and received in these urban-focused teacher preparation programs, the study has also highlighted important issues and patterns that have emerged from the data concerning these two perspectives and the way they are represented and understood. The analysis has underscored the various ways in which equity, accountability, social justice, and diversity are considered in these programs and established the necessity of a thorough understanding of the rhetoric related to these issues, the disparate meanings that are often assigned to these terms, the influence of related discourses to the way in which these concepts are discussed and understood, and the potential implications of these discrepancies for urban-focused teacher preparation and urban school practice.

Finally, the analysis has demonstrated the complexity and tension that exist between the accountability and equity perspectives in urban-focused teacher preparation. The analysis has pointed to many examples in which an affirmation of one perspective has been coupled with a negative or critical stance toward the other. In other cases, the two perspectives are viewed as competing or disconnected approaches to urban schooling. Nevertheless, possibilities for new understandings of the relationship between these perspectives do emerge from the data and offer important implications for urban education in general and the preparation of teachers for work in urban schools in particular.

Looking for Nepantla in Urban-Focused Teacher Preparation

Nepantla, as conceptualized for the purpose of this study, is the complex and messy space where the accountability and equity perspectives meet and where new realities are considered. Referring to her work in encouraging teacher candidates to see multiple realities in their teaching in urban high schools, Gutierrez (2008) stated, "In Nepantla, new forbidden knowledges develop that disrupt previous practices. In essence, Nepantla fosters transformation" (p. 24). Nepantla is not a space of compromise, but rather a place of new possibilities. Anzaldua (2002) explained that she used the word "to talk about those who facilitate passages between worlds" and "with states of mind that question old ideas and beliefs, acquire new perspectives, change worldviews, and shift from one world to another" (p. 1). The distinction between compromise, or mere intersection, and nepantla is crucial because a focus on compromise is likely to lead to an approach to accountability that lacks the strength and integrity to be meaningful or a view of equity that has little or no chance of realizing its goals. Therefore, while considering the relationship between the accountability and equity perspectives and the tension that often exists between the two, it is absolutely essential, I argue, that the emphasis remain on the search for nepantla rather than on futile efforts at compromise. My focus turns, then, to the pursuit of alternative views, new realities, of the relationship between accountability and equity that emerge from this research project and an articulation of a vision for promoting the space, nepantla, in which these realities can be imagined and practiced in urban-focused teacher preparation and, by extension, in urban education in general. In the following sections, therefore, I first highlight a new approach to accountability and equity that affirms the complexity of the relationship between the two and seeks new understandings of how they can positively impact urban education. I then describe a picture, based on the data gathered from the

two case study sites, of how nepantla—a space for considering new possibilities—can be promoted in urban-focused teacher preparation.

New Possibilities for Accountability and Equity

Although I do not frame nepantla as the intersection of the two perspectives, the places where both perspectives are affirmed is a good place to start looking for examples of a new understanding of accountability and equity in urban-focused teacher preparation. It is unlikely that new realities can be found among those who present a negative or weak view of one or both of the perspectives. For example, Albert, a teacher educator at Peyton University, portrayed a weak affirmation of both accountability and equity in his interview responses. His emphasis on accountability as something that is "killing" teaching and his description of issues of equity as not important and best left to others do not provide fertile soil for exploring a positive relationship between these two perspectives.

Table 7.1 demonstrates that eight of the faculty members—five at Allerton State and three at Peyton—promote to some degree both the equity and accountability perspectives. Although a simple affirmation of both accountability and equity does not point to a new understanding of these perspectives, analysis of the data gathered from the eight teacher educators who engage with both accountability and equity in their work with teacher candidates points to new possibilities for the role of accountability and equity in urban education. The data suggest an approach to accountability and equity that includes a critical stance toward education that opens the door to new understandings, seeks and supports a reconceptualized view of standards and accountability, emphasizes a student-centered approach to teaching, rests on principles of social justice, and is supported by a clearly articulated vision.

Table 7.1. The Teacher Educators' Views of Accountability and Equity

		Equity		
		weak	*limited affirmation*	*activist*
Accountability	*weak*	Albert (P) Christine (P)	David (P) Neal (AS)	Stefan (AS)
	pragmatic	Daniel (P) Peter (AS)	Mark (P)	
	critically progressive		Carl (P)	Marcia (P) Tara (AS) Victoria (AS) Teresa (AS) Nancy (AS) Paul (AS)

Note: The university affiliation for each teacher educator is denoted by a P, for Peyton University, or an A, for Allerton State, in parenthesis.

A critical stance that seeks new understandings. First, this framework includes a critical approach to education that does not accept the status quo but rather seeks new understandings and practices that are able to serve as the foundation of urban school improvement. Therefore, while affirming the importance of accountability and equity, several of the teacher educators engaged in a thoughtful critique of accepted educational practices and assumptions and sought to equip future teachers to embrace this same critical stance. In addition, this critique was not limited to a denunciation of faulty practices or misinformed assumptions but included a genuine search for alternate possibilities that might contribute to meaningful improvement in urban schools and communities.

Teresa, for example, joined her colleagues in challenging many of the assumptions and practices reflected in the current focus on standards and accountability. She noted that she challenges teacher candidates to be aware of the institutional structures that promote inequity while also working to "find a way to make a difference under these conditions and be part of a group that affects change." Similarly, while stressing the importance of challenging many of the assumptions and practices related to standards, Nancy described her efforts to help teacher

candidates "look at what do those standards mean in an urban context and how do we hold high expectations for our children to be able to meet those standards, and what does that mean in terms of instruction and what might that mean in terms of support."

These responses, and others like it, reflected the critique of Gutierrez (2009) who argued that often discussions of achievement rely exclusively on "a dominant perspective with little concern for issues of identity and power or broadened notions of learning from a critical perspective" (p. 9). She also noted that an exclusive focus on the achievement gap leads to "gaze that gives authority to a particular discourse about equity" (p. 10) that focuses on test scores and seeks to judge all students in comparison to a narrow vision—equated to white, middle-class society—of what it means to be capable of high levels of academic achievement. At the same time, these teacher educators did not allow their critical stance to create what Kumashiro (2009) has described as "a false division between social-justice education and standards-based reform" (p. xxiv).

A reconceptualized view of accountability. Second, several teacher educators advanced a point of view that, while highly critical of many current practices, seeks and supports an alternative vision of the place of standards and accountability in urban education that includes a push for equity and social justice.

While all of the teacher educators advanced a critical stance toward certain aspects of the accountability perspective, some faculty members also discussed new practices and understandings related to accountability. For example, Teresa expressed the views of many of her colleagues when she argued that the current testing mania "defies good practice and common sense." Her discussion of testing practices was not, however, limited to a harsh critique. She also added that that in her view testing was "one one part of a picture and we're responsible for

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creating the other part." Victoria also cautioned that standards can often be used to marginalize certain groups of students, but she emphasized as well the importance of moving beyond the critique with her teacher candidates so that they would be comfortable with the standards, understand their limitations, and yet not consider them as being in opposition to a focus on justice and equity. She stated that in her courses she and her students had "the conversation that says that standards and multicultural, social justice education are not mutually exclusive."

Similarly, Marcia advocated an approach to accountability that challenged her teacher candidates to move beyond commonly accepted understandings. She argued that accountability was not limited to a test and that teachers were responsible for meeting all of the needs—social, emotional, and academic—of their students. She also asserted that accountability must be conceived in terms of social justice, urban communities, and urban teaching. Similarly, Tara indicated that in the program at Allerton State they spent a significant amount of time discussing and examining teaching standards, but they also challenged their students to standards that had been rewritten to include an urban focus and an emphasis on social justice and equity. These teacher educators presented a picture of accountability that moved beyond the focus on test scores and that incorporated a vision of equity and social justice.

In addition to highlighting the need to hold educators to standards of equity and social justice, a new vision of the relationship between accountability and equity includes recognition of the need for a focus on certain elements of the accountability perspective as foundations for social justice education. Nancy explained this when she asserted that strong content knowledge and pedagogy are "so critical as a base to begin to think about how we can look at curriculum, the standards, and infuse learning about those standards and reaching those standards [with] curriculum that also brings in social justice."

These teacher educators pointed to a vision of accountability that stretches beyond the current focus on testing and measurement in an effort to promote both equity and accountability. Moreover, this approach builds on a solid scholarly foundation that for the most part has been lost in the current rhetoric of educational policy. This broader understanding begins with the belief that teachers are indeed responsible for the learning of their students. Corbett, Wilson, and Williams (2002), in a report on their research, asserted that the commonly expressed belief that all children can learn in school requires a commitment on the part of teachers to this responsibility. They highlighted an "it's my job" attitude—"a belief that educators must do anything and everything to see to it that every last child achieves at a high level" (p. 132)—that they saw practiced by successful teachers in urban schools. This attitude, which aligns in many ways with a "no excuses" approach to education that is characteristic of the accountability perspective, was promoted by several of the teacher educators as they spoke of the importance of holding high expectations for their students and of their commitment to help all students learn.

This approach, however, while beginning with a sincere recognition of the educators' responsibility for student learning, also seeks to frame any discussion of accountability in terms of that responsibility rather than by focusing on narrow measures of student achievement. Noddings (2007) argued, "Responsibility is the fundamental concept on which any reasonable concept of accountability must be built" (p. 38). She clarified this by stating that teachers are certainly responsible for student learning but not for lists of what must be learned or uniform standards that have been established far from the classroom. This stance related to educational responsibility was reflected in the interview response of Marcia, who stressed teachers' responsibility for the social, emotional, and academic growth of their students. Noddings also promoted a view of responsibility that turns the expected hierarchy on its head, pointing

downward toward the student rather than up toward district, state, and federal mandates that have the potential to negatively impact student learning in the name of accountability. Responsibility for student achievement, therefore, does not end with the teachers, but also extends to schools and the way they are structured (Deschenes, Tyack & Cuban, 2001).

These faculty members also expressed caution about views of accountability that ignore socio-cultural influences on education. They echoed the voices of the many scholars (Anyon, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Noguera, 2003; Rothstein, 2004) who have argued that the belief that all children can attain high academic standards must be accompanied by a recognition of the impact of social, political, economic, and cultural factors on education. Ladson-Billings (2007) articulated this critical aspect of a broadened view of accountability in her discussion of the education debt that our nation has accumulated. She argued that our focus on the achievement gap leads us to think that the only problem schools face is one related to student achievement. She argued, "We hear nothing of the other 'gaps' that plague the lives of poor children of color" (p. 317). These are the gaps in health, income, wealth, and school funding that also influence the achievement, broadly considered, of students in urban communities.

A student-centered approach to teaching and learning. Third, this approach to accountability and equity stresses the importance of keeping the focus in urban education on the students. This involves making connections with students and communities, getting to know the students in urban classrooms, and constantly focusing on student progress.

Tara communicated that her teacher candidates often expressed a lack of confidence that they would be able to engage in social justice teaching while also meeting the demands placed on them by the focus on standards and accountability. She tells her students, she said, that they need to start by getting "to know their students first of all and learn their funds of knowledge and

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assets that they bring to the table and the assets that their community has to offer." Teresa also shared that she emphasizes to her teacher candidates the importance of remaining focused on what is happening with their students in the classroom. She stated that she tells her teacher candidates to "keep anchoring themselves in what you are seeing in terms of kids' progress." Mark expressed this focus on students as the foundation of classroom teaching when he stated that in the teacher preparation program at Peyton University the goal "is to take the community in which the children live and put it into their classrooms to the greatest degree possible, so as to increase the amount of validity the students see in the content."

These teacher educators have articulated the importance of student-centered teaching and learning in the promotion of both equity and accountability in urban education. Keeping the focus on the students allows teachers to organize educational experiences that are relevant and meaningful to their students, to be aware of the needs and interests of all learners, and to constantly evaluate the progress of their students. This promotes equitable learning experiences for all students and keeps teachers from focusing inappropriately on a test instead of the learner. This approach reflects Dewey's (1964) emphasis on education as the interaction of the child and the curriculum. Dewey argued that separating the student from the subject matter led to an ineffective and dualistic approach to teaching. Similarly, the views of these teacher educators recognize the need for teachers to know their students and their communities as a basis for decisions about what students should learn, how they should learn, and how their learning should be evaluated. At the same time, as Dewey rejected an exclusive emphasis on the child, these teacher educators recognized the need to establish academic expectations for their students and evaluate their progress as the basis for planning and instruction.

A social justice foundation. This approach uses social justice as the lens through which it views all aspects of teaching and learning. This foundation was clearly reflected in the comments of those who articulated a critically progressive approach to the accountability perspective. Several professors at Allerton State, for example, highlighted the focus on social justice that their program added to the state teaching standards. Marcia also stressed that in her work with teacher candidates at Peyton University the focus on accountability always emphasized the responsibility to promote social justice.

For these faculty members, social justice was an essential component of conversations about standards, curriculum, accountability, and other educational issues. Tara noted how she promoted an approach towards standards that equipped teacher candidates to use standards as a means of addressing existing inequities in school and society. She also stressed with her students that the focus on social justice needed to influence their choice of curricular materials for use in their classrooms. She also encouraged them to seek out opportunities for involvement with groups that advocate for social justice.

Nancy also indicated that her approach to social justice included helping the teacher candidates, and they in turn working with their students, to develop plans "to help kids take action on issues . . . that are important to them in their lives and important to society as well." Paul also noted that his views about accountability depended on the social justice orientation he brought to his work with teacher candidates. He discussed the importance of regular assessment and reflective practice as essential components of social justice teaching.

A clearly articulated vision. A final characteristic of a new approach to accountability and equity that emerges from the analysis is the need for a clearly articulated plan to implement this approach into urban-focused teacher preparation in particular and urban education in

general. As noted above, the interview respondents based most of their discussion related to the accountability perspective on the current policy discourse that is defining how standards and accountability are perceived and practice in education today. Whether the faculty members and teacher candidates agreed with the policy discourse or not, it clearly framed their discussion of accountability. Any attempt to promote new possibilities for accountability and equity in urban education, therefore, must also be able to provide a clear vision of both how these approaches are defined and how they can be implemented.

In comparing the two case study institutions, it was clear that, although variation existed within both programs, Allerton State presented a more unified and clear understanding of both the accountability and equity perspectives than did Peyton. As a result, the teacher candidates at Allerton State reported a more consistent understanding of these perspectives than did their counterparts at Peyton. At Peyton University, for example, the inconsistency with which the equity perspective was portrayed by the program faculty led to the mixed messages received by the teacher candidates and their reported uncertainty about how to incorporate this perspective into their teaching. Furthermore, although the program's focus on social justice was clearly articulated in the program documents and affirmed in the interviews with faculty members, the disparate beliefs about social justice and the way this concept was portrayed by the teacher educators raises the question of to what extent, in reality, the urban-focused teacher preparation program at Peyton University really sought to incorporate social justice as a foundational value of its program. In important ways, then, social justice functioned at Peyton University as a slogan, lacking the necessary substance to powerfully impact its teacher candidates (Ayers, et al., 2010).

In contrast, the program at Allerton State held its students accountable to clearly defined standards that incorporated a focus on equity and social justice. According to the reports of both the faculty members and the teacher candidates, this emphasis permeated the program, was evident in almost every class, and was the basis for the evaluation of teacher candidates. Although the interviews demonstrated that there were areas of the program in which this emphasis was not so clearly presented, the clear majority of teacher educators understood and advanced this program vision. Likewise, almost all of the teacher candidates developed a clear understanding of the program's approach to both accountability and equity.

This same sort of clarity is required of those who desire to promote new possibilities in their approach to accountability and equity in urban education. While the interviews with some of the teacher educators, in particular the group of five at Allerton State who shared a critically progressive approach to accountability and an activist approach to equity, give a picture of new possibilities for the relationship between the accountability and equity perspectives in urban education, it is also clear that there is need for further clarity among the program participants about what this really encompasses in terms of urban-focused teacher preparation and how this message can be more clearly and effectively communicated to their students preparing to serve in urban schools.

The Teacher Candidates: Emerging Possibilities

The data gathered from the teacher educators provide a framework for considering new possibilities related to the accountability and equity perspectives in urban-focused teacher preparation. While the analysis of the interviews with the teacher candidates reveals fewer examples of new ways of thinking about these two perspectives, there are instances in which the teacher candidates reflect a beginning understanding of a new vision of accountability and

equity. However, the data also demonstrate that these pre-service teachers have at best a limited sense of what a new approach might involve and rarely exhibit an understanding of how equity and accountability might co-exist in a meaningful way.

The teacher candidates rarely succeeded in articulating an approach to teaching that could positively incorporate both the accountability and equity perspectives. Even as they affirmed aspects of each of the perspectives, they focused more on the tensions between the two than on possibilities for promoting both perspectives at the same time. For example, when discussing ways to engage in social justice teaching, James immediately referred to constraints associated with reaching mandated benchmarks or preparing students for state assessments. He expressed a desire to promote social justice in his teaching, but also expressed fear of losing his job if he did not fulfill the requirements of his position. He described his attempts at seeking to find balance between equity and accountability as "walking a tight line." Valerie, while declaring that a focus on equity and accountability was possible, focused first on the very different nature of the two perspectives. Maria also initially described the relationship between accountability and equity in antagonistic terms, noting that a focus on social justice would enable students to understand the negative consequences of the focus on standards and accountability.

Although the teacher candidates had difficulty discussing the two perspectives in a way that suggested a mutually positive approach, some of their responses did suggest a beginning understanding of a new approach to accountability and equity. First, an emphasis on the student-centered nature of effective urban teaching was evident in the interview responses of several teacher candidates. James, for example, discussed his approach to accountability by describing the teachers' responsibility to be aware of their students' strengths and weaknesses and the degree of each student's "with-it-ness." Maria emphasized the importance of making curricular

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content meaningful for students. She stated, "You have to find a way to make connections to their community and their world. Take that literature, whatever it is, and make those connections." Eric also stressed the importance of understanding his students as a key to his success as a future classroom teacher.

The teacher candidates had difficulty embracing a broader vision of standards and accountability, but there were instances in which such a stance was discussed. For example, Valerie asserted that she did not view district or state mandates as constraints on what she was able to teach; rather, her goal was to incorporate test preparation into a social justice focused curriculum. James and Lara expressed agreement with at least a partially progressive view of accountability. James stressed the teacher's need to be aware of her students' strengths and weaknesses as a central component of accountability, and Lara affirmed the message that she had received from one of her professors that teachers needed to be accountable for all aspects of teaching and learning and needed to embrace a sense of responsibility for their students.

The place of social justice as the foundation of effective urban teaching also was evident in the responses of some of the teacher candidates. Although pessimistic about the ability to promote accountability and equity together, James stressed that a teacher should "always [be] thinking about social justice." Tracy asserted that a social justice orientation should be an essential characteristic of urban education, and Lara described social justice as the basis for her classroom teaching. Valerie also described social justice as a philosophy that should be present in all of her teaching. Ted gave several examples of how he tried to promote social justice and equity into his teaching of literature. He asserted that he should be able to provide his students with the skills they would need to pass state-mandated tests while "exploring social justice literature or while writing 'Where I'm From' poems or using other culturally relevant topics."

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One aspect that was missing from the teacher candidates' approach to accountability and equity was a critical stance that moved beyond pointing out the negative to include a desire for new understandings. Their criticism of current practices and assumptions focused on the negative and did not contribute to an understanding of alternate conceptions of standards or accountability. In other cases, the lack of a critical stance limited possibilities for new approaches to accountability and equity. Eric, for example, articulated a positive attitude toward both the equity and accountability perspectives. However, in so doing he accepted assumptions often associated with the accountability perspective that work to limit equity. In explaining his commitment to holding students and teachers accountable for the state standards, he argued, "The state has their reason for it, and I don't think they're just being arbitrary with their reasoning. They believe that having this knowledge is going to help students in the future, and I believe that's true." He also expressed his confidence that because of his enthusiasm and level of commitment he would be able to motivate his students to learn whatever he wanted them to learn. In the midst of his enthusiasm and commitment to helping his students learn the state-mandated curriculum, however, he failed to consider ways in which certain forms of knowledge were being privileged while others were being excluded.

Pictures of Nepantla

In spite of the inherent tension that often exists between accountability and equity, glimpses of new understandings related to these two perspectives clearly emerge from the case study data. The ability to consider and embrace these new understandings requires the willingness to enter in to nepantla, the space where the accountability and equity perspectives are examined, interrogated, challenged, and transformed in the hopes of encountering new possibilities and understandings that can serve as the foundation of effective and equitable urban

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teaching and learning. A picture of that space emerges from the accounts of some of the teacher educators in this study. Although elements of this picture are evident in the practice of several of the teacher educators interviewed for this study, I highlight in this section Tara Brandt and Nancy Backton—professors at Allerton State University—as examples of teacher educators who give evidence of entering the complex world of nepantla in their efforts to prepare teachers for work in urban schools. As they described their approach to urban education, their work with teacher candidates, and their views related to a variety of current education issues, they present a picture of urban-focused teacher preparation that embraces the complexity inherent in promoting both accountability and equity, actively engages the tensions often evident between these perspectives, advances a critical stance toward key issues that seeks new knowledge rather than narrowing the conversation, and brings a thoughtful and planned approach to this complex space. In addition, at each step they invite the teacher candidates with whom they work to encounter this space as they prepare for their work in urban schools.

By embracing the complexity inherent in promoting both accountability and equity, these teacher educators open doors to new understandings of these perspectives. In discussing characteristics of successful urban teachers, Tara stressed the importance of content knowledge and a strong belief in the ability of children to reach high expectations while simultaneously stressing the need for teachers to have "the ability to connect with students, with their funds of knowledge, with the communities from which they come." She also noted that she spends a lot of time focusing on classroom management as a key to "creating communities in which students can learn and feel affirmed." She explained in detail the program's focus on social justice and equity, how this was reflected in the teaching standards established by the department, and the manner in which the program held teacher candidates accountable for reaching those standards.

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Nancy similarly integrated an emphasis on high expectations for students and a discussion of the role of teaching standards into her teaching about social justice. She described content knowledge and strong pedagogy as a critical "base to begin to think about how can we look at the curriculum, the standards, and infuse in learning about those standards and reaching those standards, curriculum that also brings in social justice." Throughout the interview, both Tara and Nancy made clear the manner in which accountability and equity worked together and were integrated into the program's approach to preparing teachers.

While affirming this integrated approach, they also acknowledged the inherent tensions in promoting both accountability and equity and explained the ways in which they, along with their students, engage in the pursuit of new understandings related to these perspectives. Tara explained that she had previously avoided debates about standards, testing, and accountability because of her strong disagreement with new state and federal educational mandates. At one point, however, she realized that she needed to be involved in the conversation. She stated, "I've got to start playing the game at least so I can say, 'Timeout, this is how I feel about this.'" She explained then how she was getting more involved in both research activities and conversations related to these issues. Nancy also noted the controversy about "how the standards are being interpreted and implemented in classrooms" in the local public schools. However, she also explained the way that she and others in her department were engaging at the local and state level in developing content standards and designing new approaches to pre-service and teacher evaluation. Tara and Nancy did not back away from the difficult issues facing educators today, but rather chose to engage those issues in meaningful ways.

They asserted, as well, that they pushed their teacher candidates to engage these issues. Speaking about standards and accountability, Tara stated, "I would love for them to leave with a

critical stance towards [standards and accountability]; that they understand what they are, where they came from, and to what extent they can use them to support their professional choices, and how they can use them to address the achievement gap, the inequities." Tara also asserted that teachers need to understand the political nature and inherent power in teaching. Teachers need to examine critically, she argued, "the power in the classroom in the sense of who has it, who doesn't have it, and how you're going to share it." Nancy shared her desire to equip her students to help all students learn by critically examining societal issues like racism, sexism, and social class in a way that allows them to see assets instead of liabilities and "to get away from the deficit model that has been so prevalent in urban education." Tara and Nancy invited their teacher candidates to interact with these difficult issues as a foundation for equitable teaching.

Finally, although acknowledging the complexity of engaging these issues and pursuing new understandings of accountability and equity, the commitment of Tara and Nancy to nepantla in their work preparing urban teachers was demonstrated in a clearly articulated approach to teacher education. Tara and Nancy each described how the program at Allerton State incorporated state-mandated teaching standards that had been rewritten to reflect the program's urban focus and emphasis on social justice and equity. In addition, they explained course assignments which required the teacher candidates to immerse themselves in the urban community in order to gain a deeper understanding of the community, its strengths, and the way societal structures promote inequity. As they described the program's approach to teacher preparation, they articulated a coherent and thoughtful vision for engaging teacher candidates in the complex world of urban education.

Obstacles to Nepantla

Along with giving some clear pictures of new ways of conceptualizing the relationship between accountability and equity, the interview data also point to certain beliefs or practices that limit teachers and teacher educators from incorporating these ideas into their thinking and practice. The limiting practices that emerge from the data are the tendency to give in to the status quo, relegating social justice education to the periphery of teaching, and an unwillingness to engage in the complexity of an authentic search for new possibilities in urban-focused teacher preparation.

Several of the teacher educators who affirmed in some way both the accountability and equity perspectives also reflected a resignation that the current policy discourse defines the reality of urban schooling and simply cannot be avoided. Marcia, for example, highlighted the difficulty of promoting both social justice and accountability in teaching because of the realities of having to prepare students for the state-mandated assessments. She stated, "You have to get out that practice test that the students could care less about . . .; they have no choice but to do the review sheet one more time." Later she added, "They're some things that as lofty as our goals may be, we live in the real world." Mark also seemed tied to the status quo in his discussion of the importance of building relationships with students in the K-12 environment. He argued that the urban school improvement required a greater emphasis on "research-based practices that are empirically supported and much less emphasis placed on the intangible qualities of education." He explained this further by arguing that although building relationships with students is important, and even research based, "it is very difficult to teach people how to build relationships." Therefore he articulated a focus on fundamental classroom practices and techniques. Carl also seemed tied to current measurement practices even as he discussed his

goals for promoting educational equity. He critiqued many current practices related to accountability but also acknowledged that "an issue like equity is a lot more difficult to measure."

The responses of these faculty members highlight an inability to broaden the conversation and push beyond current conceptions of success, accountability, and achievement in efforts to improve urban education. These teacher educators, like the majority of those interviewed, were articulate in challenging many of the assumptions behind current accountability practices; however, they were not able to move past this critique to envision alternate views of accountability or conceive of different ways to measure or evaluate educational effectiveness.

A second stance that limits a new understanding of equity and accountability is the tendency to divide the two perspectives and thereby push one of the perspectives to the sidelines. For example, while discussing the constraints put on teachers by an excessive focus on standardized practice, Marcia stated her hope that teachers would not "let go of the social justice" but would find time after helping students get through the test to focus on social justice teaching. Christine stated her belief that accountability and equity "work against each other," although she acknowledged that there are some teachers who somehow are able to work around that and be successful. Stefan, who expressed a strongly activist approach to equity and a highly critical view of the accountability perspective, was not able to see how the two perspectives could co-exist. He stated, "So there is going to be a huge contradiction between what we're talking about here in this space and what happens in many schools." He reported, then, that he advised his teacher candidates to stay away from schools that did not honor their vision of what teaching and learning should be.

This division of the two perspectives was also evident in the ideas expressed by the teacher candidates. Melissa, for example, was not able to see how she could incorporate social justice into her classroom during her student teaching experience due to the constraints put on her by the cooperating teacher. For her, social justice pedagogy was limited to the content of the curriculum; therefore, she felt unable to engage in this type of teaching without having the power to choose the topics she would teach to her students. Eric described his goal to prepare his students for state-mandated tests and his desire to teach for social justice as two separate, but equally valid, components of his job. He reported that he was certain that he could fulfill his duty to prepare students for high-stakes test and then use the extra time to promote social justice. For many of the other teacher candidates, a narrowly defined view of accountability prohibited them from considering how equity and accountability could be brought together in their teaching.

A third obstacle to nepantla is the unwillingness to engage in the complexity of an authentic search for new possibilities in urban-focused teacher preparation. Throughout this project, many of the interview respondents have highlighted the need to challenge many of the assumptions of the current focus on standards and accountability that privilege certain forms of knowledge, ignore the socio-cultural aspects of education, and reproduce inequity. In so doing, they reflect the views of many leading educators and scholars who have offered thoughtful critiques of these same assumptions (Ayu, 2010; Kumashiro, 2009; Lipman, 2004; Noddings, 2007; Ravitch, 2010). In many cases, however, the critical stance of the research participants served as a barrier that served to reject all elements of the accountability perspective without considering how it might be used to promote educational equity. Kumashiro (2009) cautioned against this tendency when he stated that "a common mistake by many on the Left is to create a false division between social-justice education and standards-based reform" (p. xxiv). He further

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argued that in the current educational climate a rejection of curriculum standards was really not

an option and also "limits our ability to engage in social justice education" (p. xxv). Sincere

efforts to explore new visions of accountability and equity necessitate, therefore, consideration of

the demands and viewpoints of those who are frustrated with current realities and are looking for

ways to hold educators accountable (Dimitriadis & Hill, 2012; Lipman, 2011).

Potential benefits of engaging in this complex space have been reported on several fronts.

For example, Schmerler (2012) noted that often-criticized attempts to create frameworks for

teacher evaluation have led to efforts to identify "enlightened components of teaching" that

"emphasize learner engagement, inquiry, and independent thought, broaden the categories of

analysis to reduce the possibilities of facile quantification, and place the primary focus on self-

assessment" (p. 31). He also noted that, while many educators are critical of any attempt to

standardize curriculum or teaching, there have been positive discussions related to the Common

Core which promote crucial elements of student-centered teaching and learning. Similarly,

Noguera (2012) noted expanded conversations about educational improvement that are taking

place in communities throughout the country. He described local groups that "have organized to

demand that their interests be taken into account . . . and that schools become accountable and

responsive to the communities they serve. They are challenging policies that have tolerated

gross inequities between schools, and they are calling for an end to policies that may result in

their children being suspended and pushed out of schools, feeding the school to prison pipeline"

(p. 35). These reports provide examples of new approaches to accountability and a desire to

promote equitable teaching practices; however, they also demonstrate the need to engage in

tough conversations about the proper role of standards, accountability, and equity in education.

Nepantla in Urban-Focused Teacher Preparation

The data gathered for this research project has provided some pictures of nepantla in the work of specific teacher educators and of some obstacles that work to limit the consideration of new possibilities for accountability and equity in urban education. These findings also point to ways that this understanding of nepantla can be applied not only to individuals but also to teacher education programs dedicated to preparing teachers for work in urban schools. In comparing the two case study institutions of this study, Allerton State University was more successful than Peyton University in promoting a space that allowed for new and deeper understandings of accountability and equity. However, there are elements of each program that point to essential ingredients of urban-focused teacher preparation programs that seek to guide their teacher candidates into the complex space where accountability and equity meet in urban education.

First, it is necessary to clearly integrate a focus on accountability and equity throughout the program experience. As noted previously, the analysis of program documents from eight different urban-focused programs showed little or no connection between the two perspectives. Allerton State was one of the few programs that expressed its commitment to equity within a framework that also valued accountability. The case study data also gave evidence of the integration of the two perspectives throughout the program through clearly written standards of teaching and learning that promoted both accountability and equity and through the commitment and values expressed by a strong majority of the program faculty. This integration was not evident at Peyton University, where the message regarding the accountability perspective was highly inconsistent and where the commitment to equity, while clearly stated in program documents and strong in some faculty members, was lacking in important areas and did not emerge from the case study as a clearly foundational value of the program.

Second, to prepare teacher candidates to engage and embrace the complexity inherent in promoting both accountability and equity, teacher preparation programs need to provide teacher candidates with multiple opportunities to learn, explore, critique, reflect, and apply their understandings of these issues and the way they impact students' lives. It is absolutely essential that teacher candidates be prepared as "transformative intellectuals" (Giroux & McLaren, 1996, p. 303) able to comprehend the foundational and political issues related to current practices and understandings of accountability and equity, the historical forces that have shaped our schools, the current social context of education, and the importance of engaging in a transformative and culturally-relevant pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lipman, 2011) as a basis for exploring new possibilities related to these perspectives. At Allerton State, the program sought to provide these opportunities through coursework, significant involvement in the community, multiple school-based experiences, and assessment tools that required students to repeatedly reflect on the values of the program and how they might be implemented in their teaching. While Peyton shared many of the goals advanced at Allerton State, their program did not provide the breadth and depth of opportunities available at Allerton State. This may have been partially the result of the brevity of the program and may suggest that traditional four or five-year teacher education programs may be more equipped to supply teacher candidates with the appropriate space to adequately explore and engage in these difficult issues than programs offering a more rapid path to certification.

Finally, urban-focused teacher preparation programs need to take into account the characteristics and life experiences of their teacher candidates. Allerton State is an example of a program that certainly needs to recognize the "overwhelming presence of Whiteness in teacher education" (Sleeter, 2001, p. 102) and be diligent in providing its students with experiences that

enable them to critically examine their own beliefs and attitudes and develop into the culturally responsive and transformative teachers needed in all schools. Indeed, the case study data give evidence of Allerton State's commitment to providing their students with these opportunities. However, the data also indicate that the teacher candidates at Allerton State did not readily incorporate issues of race into their approach to urban education. This suggests that while Allerton State's program incorporates many values and practices that encourage their teacher candidates to embrace the complexity of seeking both accountability and equity in urban education, it may be necessary for them to take additional steps to equip their candidates to deeply understand the manner in which societal structures such as race and class continue to impact the opportunities available to many urban students.

The fact that several of the students at Peyton were quicker to introduce matters of race into their discussion of educational issues indicates the need to reflect, also, on the comparison between the structure of Allerton's traditional teacher education program and Peyton's alternative 16-month program. Researchers have suggested that alternative programs are often more successful in recruiting teacher candidates from diverse racial backgrounds (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007). The limited data from this project support this notion. Programs like Peyton, however, need also to be mindful of the characteristics of their students, who generally come in to the program with post-baccalaureate work experience and at a more advanced age. While these characteristics may contribute to their ability to engage more thoughtfully in difficult issues of race and social class, it also means that they may be more likely to arrive with firmly entrenched attitudes about how these issues intersect with education. This was evident among the teacher candidates at Peyton who, although more likely to reference race in their discussion of urban education, did not portray as strong a commitment to social justice and equity as did the

students at Allerton State. These findings suggest, therefore, that alternative programs also need to be cognizant of the experiences, beliefs, and experiences that teacher candidates bring with them to the program and plan learning experiences—in the university, the community, and the schools—that allow them to engage critically and fruitfully with the wide array of complex issues that affect educational accountability and equity.

In addition, the comparison of these two case study institutions contributes to the recent discussion about teacher education programs and, in particular, much of the criticism that has been received by university-based programs. Such programs have been criticized due to a lack of consistency and coherence, the inadequacy of teachers' subject matter knowledge, the poor teaching practices in teacher education courses, low standards, disparities in institutional quality, and a disconnect between the theory of the university and the practice of the classroom (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Levine, 2006; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). In this study, Allerton State University emerges as a program that does not appear to be subject to these sorts of concerns as it is a characterized by strong program coherence, strong and clearly articulated standards, a commitment to providing pre-service teachers with a solid content knowledge foundation, and multiple opportunities for the integration of theory and practice.

Searching for Nepantla: Implications for Urban Education

Throughout this project, the research data has pointed to the significant role that the accountability and equity perspectives play in current thinking about urban education and the preparation of teachers for work in urban schools. Whether in response to strongly-held personal beliefs about effective teaching or because of current practices and policies related to testing, achievement, and teacher evaluation, teacher educators and teacher candidates in urban-focused teacher preparation programs reflect an approach to the accountability perspective in their work.

Likewise, their beliefs and practices related to the equity perspective emerge from their discussions about teaching and learning in urban schools. A variety of beliefs, outlooks, and practices related to these perspectives have emerged from the data. Furthermore, there has been a clear sense of the tension that often exists between these two perspectives and the resulting difficulty in trying to incorporate both perspectives in a meaningful approach to urban education.

There has also emerged from the data, however, a picture of what it might look like to actively seek a new understanding of how equity and accountability might be incorporated into urban education. Using the concept of nepantla—the complex space in which assumptions are questioned, new realities are explored, and new challenges are embraced—this project contributes to a better understanding of both accountability and equity and pushes us to consider new possibilities for urban education. Furthermore, in terms of urban-focused teacher preparation, the analysis points to the potential of a new approach to accountability and equity characterized by a critical stance that actively seeks new understandings, a broader vision of standards and accountability, a student-centered approach to teaching and learning, a social justice foundation, and clearly defined goals.

In addition to these findings, it is also necessary to highlight two final implications. First, the language of nepantla must always be carefully considered and interrogated. Throughout the data analysis, it is has been clear that the manner in which certain concepts or practices are described, defined, and discussed has had a critical impact on the way in which they have been understood and has worked to constrain or enable new possibilities in urban education. The current policy discourse related to accountability, for example, has influenced our understanding of this perspective and has also, in many cases, limited our ability to look beyond this discourse to new understandings of accountability. Similarly, social justice education has been talked

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about in such a variety of ways that for many it has lost its meaning and ability to move beyond the abstract in order to function as a powerful tool in the lives of urban students and communities.

Second, the essential character of nepantla indicates that it is an ever-changing space. Therefore, it is impossible to provide a standardized prescription of the path to nepantla that is applicable in all situations and times. The very nature of nepantla requires that it be constantly interrogated and that its assumptions always be challenged so that it does not become a static and useless concept. Its foundation in social justice and in the lives of its students demands that it be an ever-changing space, responding always to the needs of its participants and the challenges that it confronts.

The challenges facing urban schools and communities are real, and as noted by Freire (1970), "just as objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance" (p. 36). Therefore, confronting these challenges requires the commitment and action of *nepantleros* and *nepantleras* (Anzaldua, 2002), those individuals who embrace the complexity of nepantla and are willing to engage in the difficult work of seeking and participating in new perspectives of urban education that promote both accountability and equity for the benefit of urban schools and students.

APPENDICES

Program Information[4]

  Stuart College. Stuart College is a small, independent, liberal arts college located in a large city in the Western United States. It offers undergraduate and graduate degrees and is consistently ranked as one of the top colleges or universities in the nation. Its education department offers a variety of programs related to teacher preparation and educational leadership. Consistent with its location in a large metropolitan area, it focuses on preparing educators to work effectively in urban environments and to meet the needs of diverse learners.

  Brightonsville University. Brightonsville University is a medium-sized public university located just outside of a major metropolitan area on the East Coast of the United States. This liberal arts university offers bachelors and masters degrees to its student body of just less than 10,000 students. Brightonville's highly acclaimed College of Education has several departments offering a variety of programs leading to teacher certification and/or graduate degrees. The College advances a clearly defined urban mission and desire to prepare teachers for work in urban, multicultural settings.

  Colona State University. Colona State University is a medium-sized public university located in a suburb of a large East coast city. The university offers a full range of degrees to its 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Its College of Education has seven departments housing a variety of programs. While the college's mission expresses a general commitment to qualities that are often associated with urban schools—a commitment to social justice, and respect for cultural and social class difference—it offers an explicit focus on urban education as part of a specific program within its teacher education program.

  Barkton University. Barkton University is a large, Research 1 university located in a major metropolitan area in the Eastern United States. Its College of Education offers a full range of undergraduate and graduate degrees and promotes close collaboration with the urban, public schools in its neighborhood. The university expresses a clear commitment to serving the needs of its community and preparing teachers and educational leaders for work in urban schools.

  Treston State University. Treston State University is a large, Research 1, public university situated in a large metropolitan area in the Western United States. Treston State has 40,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Its School of Education boasts a wide variety of highly ranked programs leading to various degrees in teaching, research, leadership, and educational studies. Although students are able to choose Urban Education study programs, the

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[4] Introductory information about each program is taken from the institution's website. In keeping with the promise of confidentiality given to all research participants, specific citations are not provided for this information.

entire School of Education is committed to preparing educators for work in urban schools and environments.

Elia University. Elia University is a large, private, Research 1 institution located in a major city in the Eastern United States. It offers a full range of undergraduate and graduate degrees and programs to its approximately 25,000 students. Its School of Education celebrates its status as a leading research institution and promotes its commitment to excellence in teaching, the pursuit of social justice, and community involvement.

Peyton University. Peyton University is a mid-sized public university with a downtown campus in a large Midwestern city. Peyton has approximately 15,000 students enrolled in their undergraduate and graduate programs pursuing bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees. The College of Education at Peyton offers several paths leading to teacher licensure. While the entire department is influenced by the university's urban location, the College of Education offers one program that specializes in preparing teachers for work in urban schools. Using a cohort model, this intensive program accepts teacher candidates committed to working in urban schools and seeks to prepare them to be successful in that endeavor.

Allerton State University. Allerton State University is a large, public university located in a major metropolitan area in the Midwestern United States. The university boasts a growing and diverse student population and offers a complete range of degrees to its approximately 30,000 students. The school of education places almost all of its student teachers in local urban public schools as a part of its clearly expressed commitment to urban education.

Program Documents

Table B.1. List of Program Documents

University	Available Documents
Stuart College	Program Introduction Course Descriptions
Brightonsville University	School of Education Introduction Program Outcomes Course Descriptions
Colona State University	Program Introduction Brochure Program Handbook Program Outcomes Course Descriptions
Barkton University	College of Education Introduction Program Introduction Vision Statement Course Descriptions
Treston State University	School of Education Introduction Program Introduction Course Descriptions
Elia University	School of Education Introduction Program Introduction Course Descriptions
Peyton University	Program Introduction Program Outcomes Program Handbook Course Descriptions
Allerton State University	School of Education Introduction Core Values Document Program Standards Course Descriptions

Note: In the tables found in Chapter 4, all mission statements, vision statements, and lists of core values have been placed in one category labeled *Vision Statements*. Also, the *Program Standards* category includes both program standards and program outcomes.

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocols

Faculty Interview

1. What is your position at this university?
   a. Probe for what courses they generally teach and what other involvements they are engaged in for the university?

2. How long have you been working at this university?
   a. Probe for other experiences they had in education before coming to this university

3. Today we hear a lot about the challenges of teaching in urban schools and the crises in urban education. I have a couple of questions related to this. First, how would you define urban education?

4. Next, what do you think are the most important things we need to keep in mind as we discuss urban education and look for ways to help urban students and schools succeed?

5. Also, what are the most important things – knowledge, skills, or dispositions – that a teacher needs to be successful in working in an urban school today?
   a. Probe for challenges that will meet the teacher candidates studying here when they begin their teaching.

6. What purposes should school curriculum serve?

7. How should the knowledge that is taught in school be selected?

8. How should the students who are in the classroom influence the way learning experiences are chosen and organized?

9. There is a lot of talk today about standards and accountability in education. Could you define educational accountability? What place or importance do accountability have in urban education?
   a. Probe for what benefits or dangers they see in this movement

10. In the courses you teach, do you talk about accountability in education?
    a. Probe for the context and for specific activities or readings that are used

11. What is the message you hope your students walk away with in terms of accountability?

12. There is also a lot of talk in the field of urban education about equity, social justice, and diversity. Could you give a definition of educational equity? What place or importance do these issues have in urban education?
    a. Probe for benefits or dangers of an emphasis on these issues.

13. In the courses you teach, do you talk about issues related to social justice, equity, or diversity?
    a. Probe for the context and for specific activities or readings that are used.

14. What is the message you hope your students walk away with in terms of these issues?

15. As they enter the teaching profession, the teacher candidates that you are working with will undoubtedly have students who face obstacles to their learning, for example: English language learners, students with learning disabilities, students who are below grade level in reading or math, etc.. What are some of the ways you try to prepare teachers to work with these students?
    a. Probe for specific activities, assignments, readings, etc. that are used

16. For the courses that you teach here in the teacher preparation program, can you list the primary goals of the course?

17. What are key themes or concepts that are discussed in the course?

18. I will also include specific questions about course descriptions and course syllabi when talking to the appropriate faculty member. These will include questions such as:
    a. Can you explain what is meant by this phrase . . . in the course description?
    b. Can you tell me more about what you are teaching during this class session? Or by way of this particular reading or activity?
    c. What sorts of activities do you use to teach these concepts?
    d. You list the following course objectives . . . Can you elaborate on what you mean by this particular objective/goal? What are some the things you do, or have your students do, in the course to help your students reach this objective?
    e. Or, what are the goals that you have for your students in this course? What are some of the things you do, or have your students do, in the course to help them reach these goals?

19. How do you think learning should be evaluated?
    a. Probe for how respondents assess their students' learning
    b. Probe for specific projects, assignments, activities, or tests that are used to assess their learning? Ask for copies of these assignments or assessment tools

20. Do you talk about assessment practices with the teacher candidates in your courses?
    a. Probe for what is taught about the purpose of assessment
    b. Probe for the kinds of assessments that are taught and modeled with teacher candidates

21. Thinking now about K-12 education, what do you think about standardized tests and their appropriate use in our schools today?
    a. Probe for their perception of how they can be useful to teachers, schools, students, and parents
    b. Probe for their perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses, benefits or dangers

22. Do you talk with your teacher candidates about standardized testing? If so, what is the message you seek to convey to them about this?

23. Is it possible for a teacher to promote social justice and equity while working in an environment that focuses on standardized tests and accountability?
    a. Probe for explanation of how teachers can accomplish this

24. If so, how can you as a teacher educator help prepare students to succeed in doing this? Can you give examples of how this is done here at this university (and/or in the courses you teach)?
    a. Probe for explanation of examples or for reason why this is not done at this university

25. If you were to recommend one or two books or readings to a prospective teacher, what would they be? Why this choice?

Teacher Candidate Interview

1. What led you to decide to become a teacher?
    a. Probe for past experiences, family influence, certain dispositions, etc.

2. Why did you decide to come to this particular university for your studies?

3. Today we hear a lot about the challenges of teaching in urban schools and the crises in urban education. I have a couple of questions related to this. First, how would you define urban education?

4. Next, what do you think are the most important things we need to keep in mind as we discuss urban education and look for ways to help urban students and schools succeed?

5. Also, what are the most important things – knowledge, skills, or dispositions – that a teacher needs to be successful in working in an urban school today?

6. What purposes should school curriculum serve?

7. How should the knowledge that is taught in school be selected?

8. How should the students who are in the classroom influence the way learning experiences are chosen and organized?

9. There is a lot of talk today about standards and accountability in education. How would you define these terms? What come to your mind when accountability is brought up in terms of education?

10. What did you learn about accountability in your teacher preparation program?
    a. Probe for what they were taught; ask for examples
    b. Probe for whether they agree with the stance taken by their instructors or the university in regards to accountability
    c. Probe for dangers or benefits they see in this movement.

11. There is a lot of talk about equity, social justice, and diversity in education today. How would you define educational equity? What is your understanding of this these words and how they fit into education?

12. What did you learn about these issues in your teacher preparation program?
    a. Probe for what they were taught; ask for examples
    b. Probe for whether they agree or disagree with the stance taken by their instructors or the university in regards to these issues?
    c. Probe for dangers or benefits they see in this emphasis.

13. In your teaching, you will undoubtedly have students who face obstacles to their learning, for example: English language learners, students with learning disabilities, students who are below grade level in reading or math, etc.. What are some strategies you might use to help these students?
    a. Probe for what sort of responsibility they feel in terms of trying to help these students master the course objectives

14. Thinking of your teacher education program, what have you learned about how to meet these challenges? Do you think what you have learned has been useful to you in your teaching? Explain
    a. Probe for learning experiences (classes, assignments, readings, etc.) that were most helpful

15. What was the message you received from your instructors and coursework in regards to your responsibility in helping students with special learning needs?
    a. Probe for how this message was conveyed

16. Part of your job as a teacher will be to assess your students learning. In addition to assessment that takes place in your classroom, student learning is assessed in other ways. I would like to ask you a few questions about assessment. First, what do you think about standardized tests and their appropriate use in schools?
    a. Probe for their perception of how they can be useful to teachers, schools, students, parents

    b.   Probe for their perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses, benefits and dangers

17. Second, will you assess the learning of your students in the classroom?
    a.   Probe for examples of each type of assessment mentioned

18. What have you learned about standardized testing at the university?
    a.   Probe for whether they agree with the stance of the university or their instructors about this

19. What did you learn about assessment in general?
    a.   Probe for what the instructors taught as the purpose of assessment
    b.   Probe for what types of assessments were modeled and taught

20. The program description here at (name of university) lists the following as its mission (vision, core values, as appropriate):
    a.   Do you feel that the teacher education program here is fulfilling this mission?
    b.   Probe for ways in which it is fulfilling its mission; ask for examples
    c.   Probe for where and how it is falling short of meeting these goals

21. Do you think it is possible for a teacher to promote social justice and equity while working in an environment that focuses on standardized tests and accountability?
    a.   Probe for their explanation of how teachers accomplish this or for why they do not think teachers can accomplish this

22. From your time here at the university, is there a book or reading that has had a lot of influence on the way you view teaching? Explain

23. In your role as a teacher, which is more important: Helping prepare your students for the challenges they will face academically or helping your students understand who they are and the goals they have for their future? Explain.

Graduate Interview

1. Could you tell me about your background in teaching and how long you have been teaching at this school?
    a.   Probe for other teaching positions, how long they taught in other positions

2. Please describe your current teaching assignment.
    a.   Probe for subject areas and grade levels taught, as well as other responsibilities

3. In general, how would you describe your teaching experience so far?
    a.   Probe for their perceptions of a) the most positive or rewarding aspects of their teaching, and b) the most challenging or difficult aspects of their teaching?

4. Also, what are the most important things – knowledge, skills, or disposition – that a teacher needs to be successful in working in an urban school today?

5. In general, how well do you think the university prepared you for what you have faced as a teacher?
    a. Probe for examples
    b. Probe for whether they felt coursework, student teaching, other aspects of preparation were valuable

6. What purposes should school curriculum serve?

7. How should the knowledge that is taught in school be selected?

8. How should the students who are in the classroom influence the way learning experiences are chosen and organized?

9. In your classes, you undoubtedly have students who face obstacles to their learning, for example: English language learners, students with learning disabilities, students who are below grade level in reading or math, or students who consistently struggle to master the objectives, etc.. What are some strategies you might use to help these students?
    a. Probe for what sort of responsibility they feel in terms of trying to help these students master the course objectives?

10. Thinking back to your teacher education program, what did you learn about how to meet these challenges? Do you think what you learned has been useful to you in your teaching? Explain.
    a. Probe for learning experiences (classes, assignments, readings, etc.) that were most helpful in terms of this issue?

11. Again, thinking back to your teacher education program, what was the message you received from your instructors and coursework in regards to your responsibility in helping students with special learning needs?
    a. Probe for how was this message was conveyed

12. There is a lot of talk today about standards and accountability in education. How would you define these terms? What come to your mind when accountability is brought up in terms of education?

13. What did you learn about accountability in your teacher preparation program?
    a. Probe for what they were taught; ask for examples
    b. Probe for whether they agree with the stance taken by their instructors or the university in regards to accountability
    c. Probe for benefits or dangers they see in this movement.

14. In what ways do you promote accountability in your classroom and in your teaching?

15. Has the push for accountability in our schools affected your teaching?
    a. Probe for whether they see this as a positive thing for their teaching and why they do or do not see it as being positive

16. There is a lot of talk about equity, social justice, and diversity in education today. How would you define educational equity? What is your understanding of this these words and how they fit into education?

17. Do you think promoting equity and social justice needs to be a part of your role as a teacher?
    a. Probe how they address equity and social justice in their teaching or why they do not

18. What did you learn about these issues in your teacher preparation program?
    a. Probe for what they were taught; ask for examples
    b. Probe for whether they agree or disagree with the stance taken by their instructors or the university in regards to these issues?
    c. Probe for dangers or benefits they see in such a focus.

19. Part of your job as a teacher is to assess your students learning. In addition to assessment that takes place in your classroom, student learning is assessed in other ways. I would like to ask you a few questions about assessment. First, what do you think about standardized tests and their use as a means to assess student learning?
    a. Probe for their perception of how they can be useful to teachers, schools, students, parents
    b. Probe for their perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses

20. Second, how do you assess the learning of your students in the classroom?
    a. Probe for examples of each type of assessment mentioned

21. Thinking back to your teacher education program, what did you learn about standardized testing at the university?
    a. Probe for whether they agree with the stance of the university or their instructors about this

22. What did you learn about assessment in general?
    a. Probe for what the instructors taught as the purpose of assessment
    b. Probe for what types of assessments were modeled and taught

APPENDIX D

Faculty Participants[5]

Table D.1. Faculty interview participants from Peyton University

Name	Position	Years in program
Mark Johnson	Instructor, Curriculum Foundations	3
Albert Lancaster	Associate Professor, Curriculum Foundations	24
Carl Parkton	Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology	8
Marcia Radsty	Associate Professor, Curriculum and Foundations, Program Director	25
Christine Sampson	Associate Professor, Mathematics Education	13
Daniel Smith	Associate Professor, Social Studies Education	7
David Watkins	Instructor, Social Foundations	8

Table D.2. Faculty interview participants from Allerton State University

Name	Position	Years in program
Stefan Aragon	Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, Second Language	10
Nancy Backton	Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction	36
Tara Brandt	Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, Department Chair	9
Neal Farmer	Instructor, Social Studies Education	20
Victoria Gibson	Associate Professor, Urban Education, English Education	9
Peter Jackson	Instructor, Mathematics Education	4
Teresa Sack	Professor, Curriculum and Instruction	22
Paul Whitaker	Associate Professor, Social Studies Education	1

[5]Pseudonyms are used for all faculty members

Student and Graduate Participants[6]

Table E.1. Student interview participants from Peyton University

Name	Major	Age
Kristy Bartlett	Mathematics	25-30
Andrea Case	Spanish	35-40
James Castle	Social studies	25-30
Eric Roberts	Language Arts	30-35
Lara Start	Language Arts	25-30

Table E.2. Graduate interview participants from Peyton University

Name	Position	Graduation Date
Hannah Cooke	high school language arts teacher	2008
Charles Dawkins	high school math teacher	2009
Julia Frauning	middle school language arts teacher	2009
Bradley Hansen	high school social studies teacher	2010
Abigail Jones	middle school language arts teacher	2007
Cheryl Larson	middle school social studies teacher	2007

Table E.3. Student interview participants from Allerton State University

Name	Major	Age
Tisha Beals	Mathematics	20-25
Maria Caruso	Language Arts	20-25
Ted Conklin	Language Arts	20-25
Rianna Craft	Language Arts	20-25
Trent Johnson	Language Arts	25-30
Melissa Kramer	Language Arts	20-25
Nathan Morello	Mathematics	20-25
Tracy Spears	Language Arts	20-25
Valerie Stevens	Language Arts	20-25
Richard Strodtman	Social Studies	20-25
Patricia Walker	Language Arts	20-25

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[6] Pseudonyms are used for the names of all students and graduates

Table E.4. Graduate interview participants from Allerton State University

Name	Position	Graduation Date
Sarah Masterton	graduate student	2004
Winona Sampson	middle school science	1995

Course syllabi

Peyton University

       Psychological Foundations of Education
       Social Issues and Education
       Technology in the Classroom
       Teaching and Management in the Secondary School
       Social Studies Methods
       Mathematics Methods

Allerton State University

       Professional Urban Teaching Linking Seminar
       Professional Urban Teaching Linking Seminar
       Teaching Reading and Adolescent Literature
       Introduction to Teaching
       The Teaching of English
       Educational Applied Linguistics
       History and Politics of Second Language Education
       Student Teaching in Mathematics
       Teaching of Secondary Mathematics
       Introduction to the Teaching of Social Studies
       Social Studies Methods

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