

An Exploration of Self-Efficacy in a Teacher-Educator's Practice

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An Exploration of Self-Efficacy in a Teacher-Educator's Practice

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to the late:

### **Dr. Mike Riley**

A national leader and outspoken educator, Dr. Riley saw the need to make public high schools challenging for all students, not just the A students.

He was my high school principal.

Dr. Riley filled out those first college applications with me, always made time for me, and believed.

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Finally, to my family - I want to thank my parents for the many hours of baby-sitting and the endless encouragement! To my boys, Liam and Aidan, I owe lots of playtime. Thanks for the patience, and, I promise, Mommy is done. Finally, to my husband, Steven, no one would have put up with this crazy life, except you.

## **Abstract of Dissertation**

### **An Exploration of Self-Efficacy in a Teacher-Educator's Practice**

Designed in response to an expressed need for assessment measures of teacher preparation programs, this exploratory study presents one method to assess and improve teacher-educator practices (Crowe, 2010; Gardiner, 2007). Teacher-educators have discovered that conducting a personal assessment or a self-study of one's practice is a way to improve learning on a personal, professional, and program level (Kosnik, C., Freese, A., Samaras, A., & Beck, C., 2006). Bandura (1971, 1974, & 1977) defined the concept of teacher self-efficacy and its influence in a teacher's practices.

Drawing from Whitehead's living education theory (LET) (1989, 2008), Ashton's principles of teacher self-efficacy (1984) and Huitt's dimensions (2000) of teacher self-efficacy, the researcher developed a LET incorporating each component expected by most Universities of faculty members; teaching, service, professional development, and research.

The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) Standards (2007) offered a framework to support the four-phase recursive process, as the researcher developed her LET concerning her self-efficacy as a teacher-educator. Working with a Critical Friends Network (CFN), the researcher provided 4 vignettes, a draft belief statement and 23 artifacts for review. The CFN provided 40 responses that assisted the researcher's 8 reflections and 4 reframings of her self-efficacy belief statement.

Teacher preparation programs may wish to consider adopting self-study procedures for faculty assessment that encourage reflection on practices.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

I am a teacher-educator. I educate prospective and current teachers in methods and strategies for teaching students receiving special-education services. I have worked to achieve this position all of my professional life. I love what I do. Yet, I find myself plagued by this question: Do I know that I hold the self-efficacy to be a successful teacher-educator? How can I explore this question?

Jamey Nystrom, Researcher, July 2008

### **Overview of the Problem**

According to the National Academy for Academic Leadership (Gardiner, NAAL, 2007), college teaching is increasingly viewed as a true profession in its own right, underpinned by a solid base of knowledge derived from empirical studies on learning and student development, college effects on students, and the management of learning in complex organizations. Other views of higher education cite a lack of accountability in teacher preparation programs (Crowe, 2010). Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) traditionally employ, as a means of evaluating faculty, student course evaluations; and the faculty member's portfolio highlighting the areas of teaching, service, and professional development.

The system of incentives provided for college and university teachers will substantially change. In those institutions where available rewards currently are perceived as undermining educational quality by focusing on activities only weakly related to learning and student development, a wider array of professional work will be recognized as essential to improving institutional quality and effectiveness (Gardiner, 2007).

In an effort to create a more rigorous and consistent assessment of teacher preparation programs, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), the two national organizations responsible for the accreditation of IHE teacher education programs, have

merged their efforts into a single organization called The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), (October, 2010). Identifying the purpose, NCATE's President indicated that:

Our goal is not simply to bring together two organizations to do the same thing, we really ought to have as our goal to raise the bar for quality educator preparation and to speak with one voice about what that standard looks like, and how it should be implemented (Cibulka, 2010).

Currently, university faculty must present their scholarship for consideration for tenure and promotion. Therefore, it is in the faculty member's best interest to present only the positive aspects of performance rather than constructive and critical analysis of teaching in order to improve performance.

Empirically based performance and feedback indicators directly related to teaching and learning outcomes that affect students, teachers, and schools should undergird a new accountability system for teacher education. Many teacher-educators and program leaders understand that the current system is failing because it focuses on irrelevant inputs and insulates weak programs from pressures to change or close down (Gardiner, 2007). The system now in place also undermines respect for the teaching profession and for teacher education as a form of professional education. A more powerful accountability system will provide alternative measures about program quality to professional educators, policymakers, schools, and parents (Crowe, 2010). The ability of the teacher-educator to self-assess instructional practice and determine strengths and areas for growth empowers teacher-educators in this era of accountability.

In 1992, the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) created a task force charged with the development of Teacher-Educator Standards; the first set of standards was approved in 1996 (ATE, 2008). Originally, seven standards, two more areas of teacher-

educator work, along with indicators and artifacts used to provide evidence of accomplishment, are now included in the standard (ATE, 2007). ATE recognized a need for a more systematic, orchestrated approach to the selection, preparation, and renewal of teacher-educators (ATE, 2008). The standards, along with the development of a professional portfolio, provide teacher-educators a means of professional development.

One way to continue professional development for teacher-educators and improve the quality of IHE faculty is to empower teacher-educators with the tools of self-study research methodology to encourage these individuals to examine their own practice. Research supports using best practices; therefore, it is reasonable to assert that teacher-educators who develop and reflect on their own practice are modeling for their clientele, teachers, an important skill set in teaching; that of reframing one's own thoughts about their practice and making changes, accordingly. Through the reframing of thoughts about ones' own practice, a teacher-educator validates and provides reasons for changing or adapting beliefs. Through the exploration of her teacher-educator practices, the researcher was able to reframe her teacher-educator self-efficacy beliefs.

As it is increasingly difficult to find people interested in careers in higher education (Smithers & Robinson, 2005), research is warranted on how teacher-educators perceive their own teaching self-efficacy. Defined by ATE (2008),

Teacher-educators are those educators who provide formal instruction or conduct research and development to educate prospective and practicing teachers. Teacher-educators provide the professional-education component of preservice programs and the staff-development component of in-service programs.

With increased scrutiny (Crowe, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2009), emphasis is placed on the relationship between student achievement in preK–12 public education and teacher preparation programs. Teacher-educators must become aware of

their own impact on the learning and performance of preservice and in-service teachers. A self-study of the researcher's teacher-educator practice, promotes professional development in a meaningful way for teacher-educators, interested in knowing if what they are doing in their IHE, work is successful.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Bandura suggested that "a person's future behavior is a function of three interrelated forces: environmental influences, their own behavior, and internal personal factors such as cognitive, affective, and biological processes (1977)." That is, what we come to believe about ourselves affects the choices we make and actions we take. We are not products of our environment. We are not merely products of our biology. Instead, we are products of the dynamic interplay between the external, the internal, and our current and past behavior (Henson, Kogan, & Vacha-Haase, 2001). Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as "belief in one's own capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments." Self-efficacy beliefs are characterized as the major mediators for our behavior, and importantly, behavioral change. Pajares (2004) stated that belief statements help to bring to the conscious, often, unspoken tacit knowledge. If a sense of self-efficacy is the powerful predictive construct thought to be, then, research examining the processes such self-efficacy is strengthened is critical. The self-study methodology provides for this kind of scrutiny.

Research on self-efficacy contributes to the knowledge base concerning teacher-educator professional development. However, a major weakness with most of this research is that it is limited to surveys and, data collected in the aggregate (Hackett, 1995; Schunk, 1996). Rarely did teachers or teacher-educators themselves complete or

comment on the research and its findings. One way to support teacher-educators training future teachers is to study perceptions of teacher-educator self-efficacy. However, studying another teacher-educator's self-efficacy will not necessarily improve the researcher's teacher-educator practice. In an era of accountability that looks at the quality of the teacher-educator, and with the declining interest of preK–12 and IHE teaching as a career, it is imperative that current research focuses on ways to improve both the interest in and quality of teacher education.

The researcher holds licensure in the State of Maryland for teaching special education birth to 21 years. The researcher holds a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in special education, and a Master of Liberal Arts degree with a focus on creative processes. The researcher has an Administrator I license. None of these credentials describes the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. Student evaluations and a faculty-reviewed notebook are the only feedback the researcher receives of satisfactory performance. Neither of these devices can inform the researcher of self-perceptions of her teacher-educator self-efficacy, as both of these have many external factors that influence decisions as to the rating of an instructor, opportunities for pay advancement, and tenure. How does the researcher *know* that she knows she is a teacher-educator with a strong sense of self-efficacy? What are the factors that influence the researcher's beliefs about her teaching?

*In Measuring What Matters: A Strong Accountability Model for Teacher Education* (2010), Crowe suggested that teacher education programs must be held accountable for the performance of the graduates of these programs.

A new accountability system should also communicate clear signals to those who need to know whether a preparation program is doing a good job. This is relevant

because few people have confidence in current state program accountability practices. In fact, the muddled current system undermines the legitimacy of accountability itself. Meeting these principles requires empirical measures to be the building blocks of an effective accountability system, and these measures have to meet standards of quality and rigor to inspire confidence. Data collection, indicator calculations, and reporting practices must be transparent (p. 12).

The self-study methodology has been used to discover critical concepts related to effective teaching practices. Self-study, used as an integral part of one's professional practice, shifts the terrain of teacher preparation from a direct-instruction approach to modeling an intentional systematic-inquiry methodology (Dinkleman, 2003). The willingness to review existing frames of reference is a criterion for quality in self-study (Loughran & Northfield, 1996). The need to hold up the practice to be critiqued by colleagues, by one's self, and by one's students is an important hallmark of self-study work (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998). Public scrutiny in the form of a critical friend network (CFN) is an integral requirement of self-study research (LaBoskey, 2004; McNiff & Whitehead, 2005b; Pinnegar & Russell, 1995; Samaras, 2010).

This work can both inform the practices of the teacher-educator who conducts it and contribute to the knowledge base and understanding of teacher education for the larger education community.

An extension of reflective practice with aspirations that go beyond professional development, self-study is the generation and communication of new knowledge and understanding that moves to a wider communication and consideration of ideas (Samaras, 2010, p.15).

One working definitional frame for the self-study research is known as the *Five Foci* (Samaras, 2010), which Sell (2009) synthesized noting that self-study is a personal, systematic inquiry situated in one's own context that requires critical and collaborative reflection in order to generate knowledge, as well as, inform the broader educational field. This reflection, in turn, contributes to the knowledge base of education and to the

work and professional development of the practitioner. The body of teacher-educator self-study research is growing, however, to date; little of the self-study research is linked to the study of teacher-educator self-efficacy. Standerford (2006) found that by exploring her own teaching self-efficacy she was able to understand her professional work as a teacher-educator. Samaras (2002) supported self-exploration, stating,

The fact that I am continuously engaged in the construction and reconstruction of my own knowledge as I attempt to improve teacher education is more important to me than which theories I integrate into my own work (p. xv). Self-exploration is further supported by Whitehead's Living Education Theory or

LET (1993), which states that we are able to construct meaning by analyzing our own daily practice for its alignment to our teach philosophy.

### **Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. This exploration led to the development of new insights into the researcher's teacher-educator practices. Whitehead (1998) stated that reflective practice grounds the epistemology in the experience of "I," as a living contradiction in the question:

How do I improve my practice? Living educational theories are for me the descriptions and explanations, which individuals offer for their own professional learning as they ask, answer and research questions of the kind, "how do I improve what I am doing?" (p. 1)

The understanding about her own practice led the researcher to descriptions and explanations of her educational practice generating a *living educational theory* (Whitehead, 1989, 1993). These new understandings facilitated the researcher's reframing of assumptions and beliefs regarding the researcher's teacher-educator self-

efficacy. The researcher was able to establish her own theories concerning her experience as a teacher-educator.

### **Research Question**

The single overarching question (*What are my beliefs about my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?*) directed this study in an attempt to move from a tacit understanding of the teacher-educator's practice to an explicit and authentic way of knowing. To assess the teacher-educator's self-efficacy beliefs, three subquestions guided the inquiry:

1. How do the vignettes, reflections, reframed belief statements, artifacts, and CFN responses help me assess my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
2. What artifacts concerning each phase contribute to my understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
3. Based on this phase of the research, how do I perceive my teacher-educator self-efficacy?

These questions, in conjunction with the ATE Standards (2007), including the indicators and artifacts, were used to reframe the teacher-educator's beliefs concerning her current teacher-educator practices.

A critical friend is a trusted person(s) who asks provocative questions, provides information to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

A critical perspective offered by the CFN facilitated the researcher's reframing and analyzing of her teacher-educator self-efficacy throughout four phases of the exploration: teaching, service, professional development, and research. During each phase of the research, CFN members, using the ATE standards (2007) as a guide,



responded to each vignette (teaching, service, professional development, and research) considering the research questions.

### **Statement of Potential Significance**

This exploration of a teacher-educator's self-efficacy contributes to the education community by providing research about how a teacher-educator understands her self-efficacy. It contributes to the body of work on self-study methodology, including a systematic method for exploring, analyzing, and reporting perceptions of individual teacher-educator self-efficacy. Throughout the literature, the link that holds teachers' beliefs to teaching practices is the construct of a teacher's perception of self-efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Dembo & Gibson, 1985). Currently, many states have abandoned IHE teacher-preparation programs, for alternative certification programs. Improving teacher-educator self-efficacy could increase interest in teacher education preparation, teacher education retention, career satisfaction, and student achievement pre-K through graduate school. It could also provide an alternative form of faculty evaluation in addition to traditional methods. Research on the perceptions of teacher-educator self-efficacy helps to validate the use of self-study methodologies, providing all teacher-educators with a venue to use an inquiry method for studying their own personal practices and teaching beliefs. An exploration of teacher-educator self-efficacy using this self-study methodology provided the researcher with insight to strengthen instruction and impact student learning.

### **Conceptual Framework**

**Bandura and Self-Efficacy.** Bandura (1971, 1974, and 1977) introduced the concept of teacher self-efficacy and its influence over one's own practice, thus, the era of

reflective practice was born. This exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy used the components of IHE faculty evaluations: teaching, service, and professional development, and included research as an integral piece to define teacher-educator self-efficacy. An exploration of the teacher-educator's beliefs about self-efficacy allowed the researcher to look inward at her practice.

A teacher's sense of self-efficacy is a key component in effective teaching practices and the value teachers place on their own teacher beliefs (Ashton, Webb, & Doda, 1983; Bandura, 1977, 1989, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Pajares, 1992, 1996; Ross, 1994; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) found that a teacher's sense of self-efficacy is a key determinant in the decisions the teacher makes in the classroom. Among the areas of teaching that a teacher's sense of self-efficacy affects are student achievement and motivation (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Ross, 1994), willingness to try new approaches to teaching (Guskey & Passaro, 1994), increased lesson planning and organization (Allinder, 1995), and reduced rates of referrals to special education (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Teachers' beliefs in their own ability to instruct students, as well as their ability to affect student learning and influence achievement correlate to teacher's sense of self-efficacy (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988; Bandura, 1986, 1997; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2004; Pajares, 1992, Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1990). If self-efficacy is, the powerful predictive construct it has been thought to be, then, research examining the processes by which it is built is critical to fostering a teacher's practice.

There is literature concerning teacher-educator self-efficacy beliefs (Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). However, of the studies available, self-efficacy is often attached to a second variable such as technology or distance-education classrooms; that is, extrinsic rather than intrinsic variables are the focus of these studies (Lucas, 2005). The researcher focused on her IHE faculty position including teaching, service, professional development, and research.

**Practitioner Research.** There has been a transition in research on teaching from a teacher as researched by others to an introspective reflective approach of the teacher as researcher to improve one's own practice. Traditionally, practitioner research framed in the position of teacher-educator/researcher still studied the teaching of others. Teacher education research in the areas of teachers' beliefs and professional knowledge embrace qualitative approaches as a legitimate way to conduct research on teacher beliefs and the impact of teacher knowledge and practice (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Teacher-educators often research the teachers they trained or the students that received instruction from those same teachers. However, this is still studying other people's teaching and not necessarily looking at a specific teacher-educator's practice. Munby and Russell (1996) described an underlying tension that occurs between traditional approaches to teacher-education research when theory precedes practice in a three-pronged argument based on historical, epistemological, and the empirical approaches. Much like the field of psychology, the researcher cannot validate findings as trustworthy until the researcher understands her own beliefs.

**Self-Study Methodology.** The self-study methodology ties the individual concepts of teacher beliefs and teacher practices together as a formal and valid method of

studying one's own teaching. There has been a growing research community of teacher-educators conducting studies concerning their own practice (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). Zeichner and Noffke (2001) noted changes in the North American teacher-research movement to include the growing acceptance of qualitative research. The methodology for this kind of study is often associated with action research, defined as research occurring in the classroom. The self-study method of personal history looks at how the life experiences connect to practice (Coles & Knowles, 1996; Zeichner, 1995). A tenet of self-study is making the findings public (Lomax, 1999). This notion of public accountability is the origin of participatory research (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). The purpose of practitioner research includes improving one's practice, understanding a particular aspect of the teaching practice, understanding one's practice in general, promoting greater equity, and influencing the social conditions of practice (Zeichner, 1995). It was the researcher's expectation that looking at her own teacher-educator practice would improve her own teacher-educator practice; better serving her students and IHE, thus, accomplishing a goal of practitioner research.

The reflective-practitioner movement, inspired by the work of Schön (1983), sought to reclaim teachers' knowledge as valid. Henson et al. (2001) found that experimental or quasiexperimental designs for studying teachers is near absent in the literature. Pajares (1996) recognized this methodological weakness in a study of students and described two strategies for strengthening this weakness in research methodology. The first is for researchers to assess both the sources and the effects of self-efficacy through direct observation; the second is to increase the use of experimental techniques to manipulate sources and effects. Pajares defined a belief statement as that which is tacit,

often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material taught (1996). Pajares found that those individuals who were aware of their self-efficacy beliefs were more resilient when faced with adversity (1996). The researcher believes the procedures for this exploration were an innovative yet practical method for teacher-educators to complete their own inquiries concerning their practice and teacher-educator self-efficacy.

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999, p. 249) defined teacher research in broad terms as the “systematic intentional inquiry by teachers about their own school and classroom work,” adding that this research can be conceptual: theoretical, philosophical, as well as empirical involving the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data gathered from teachers, classrooms, and schools.

Practitioner research is personal as it seeks to improve one’s daily work. This heightened awareness enables the practitioner to seek clarification between assumptions about education and recognize contradictions between ideas and actual practice (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). Self-study is one form of practitioner research, often-using narrative, life history, and autobiographical research methodologies (Cole & Knowles, 1996; Elijah, 2004). Self-study fosters the reexamination of tacit views. In addition to the emphasis of knowledge production, practitioner research provides for professional development. This exploration was an opportunity to both acquire and build unique pedagogical innovations for dynamic instruction.

Schön (1983) described reflective practice as knowledge in action, providing an epistemological basis for understanding the importance of not only knowing theory but also the ability to analyze theory through active use. Schön’s work in reflective practice

is a foundation to create systems for team building, collaboration, and evaluation (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Covey, 1990; Freidus, 1997). Building on the work of Schön, Pugalee (1997) wrote that reflection provides an opportunity to look at individual teaching practices to determine how these experiences affect perceptions about appropriate teaching methodologies.

However, there is criticism of Schön and others as to the validity and reliability of their work in reflective practice. When studying the work of early-childhood educators, Welch (1996), looking at developmentally appropriate practice, found a discrepancy between self-reported and actual classroom practices of teachers. Teachers reported high appropriate beliefs, but when observed, these same teachers appeared to be practicing less appropriate techniques of instruction.

Use of the self-study methodology has become of burgeoning interest for teacher-educators researching their own teaching (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, 2004; Loughran et al., 2004; McNiff, 1993, 2000, 2002; Russell & Korthegan, 1995; Samaras, 2010; Whitehead, 1993, 2004, 2005). Zeichner (1999) described the development of self-study research as “probably the single most significant development ever in the field of teacher education research” (p. 8). Zeichner (1999) concluded,

While it is not necessary or even desirable for all who do research about teacher education to be actively involved as practitioners of teacher education, all research in teacher education needs to be sensitive to the personal and social complexities of the work (p. 41).

Zeichner used the term *self-study* to refer to the study of teacher education by practitioners themselves, emphasizing feedback from students, and viewed self-study as a serious attempt to understand one’s teaching with a view to improving it (p. 41). As stated by Samaras, Hicks, and Garvey-Berger (2004),

Teacher-educators and researchers have been trained to preach, but not necessarily practice, professional habits such as reflection and self-study. Teacher-educators talk about the need for teachers to critically analyze theoretical connections to their teaching, to write about critical incidents and people who have influenced their decision to become a teacher, or to keep a journal on their meta-conversations of teaching as related to personal experiences, which might have impacted their teaching today. (p. 943)

Yet many teacher-educators, when asked, admit that the complexities of the negotiation between the academy and the practicum site, the ongoing pressure to publish (or perish), and the higher number of students and classes that typify a teacher-educator's schedule, leave little time for personal reflection (Elijah, 2004; Olson, 1996).

Samaras and Freese (2006) noted, "there is no one true way of conducting self-study research" (p. 37). "Self-study often considers a question, issue, or concern that evokes the use of the most appropriate method(s) for uncovering the evidence in accord with the purpose of the study" (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell, 2004, p. 17).

A tenet of self-study methodology is public accountability using critical friend(s). A critical friend(s) is a person or set of trusted persons who ask provocative questions, provide information examined through another lens, and offer critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time understanding fully the context of the work presented and the goals of the person or group. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

This exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy used a CFN.

The researcher believes that in order to reach her maximum teacher-educator self-efficacy, she must be willing, analyzing explicitly, her teacher-educator experiences.

LaBoskey (2004) wrote of the methodological requirements and dispositions of self-study practice:

1. Self-study is improvement-aimed, looks for and requires evidence of reframed thinking and transformed practice of the researcher.
2. Self-study is interactive and involves collaboration and interaction with colleagues, students, and the literature.
3. Self-study employs multiple, primarily qualitative methods.

4. Self-study requires we formalize our work and make it available to our professional community for deliberation, further testing, and judgments. (pp.1170–1171)

These requirements were integral to the researcher's organization of the procedures for this research and discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

### **Defining *Self* in the Research.**

The term *self* has been examined in the self-study literature to have multiple meaning to researchers. Baird (2004) offered a concise review of the leading definitions and uses of self in current self-study research, presenting five interpretations:

1. *Self in teaching.* (The phenomenon is *my teaching*.) Studying of myself acting as a teacher or teacher educator: my description is of *what I do* as I teach.
2. *Self as a teacher.* (The phenomenon is *me as teacher*.) Studying myself in the role of a teacher or teacher educator: my description is of *what it is for me to be* a teacher or teacher educator.
3. *Self as researcher of my teaching or of me as a teacher.* (The phenomenon is *me doing self-study*). Study myself practicing self-study: my description may be either of *what I do as a self-study researcher* or *what it is for me to be a self-study researcher*.
4. *Self as researcher of teaching, teacher education, or of educational research but not expressly of me doing these practices.* (The phenomenon is of *teaching, teacher education, or educational research*). Here self means that I am the one who *does the research* on the nature of these practices as done by others.
5. *Self as researcher of self-study (not expressly of my own self-study).* (The phenomenon is *self-study*). Here self means that I am the one who *does the research* on the nature and practice of self-study as done by others. (p. 1445)

Three of Baird's interpretations of self were used for this exploration: (a) self in teaching; (b) self as teacher and; (c) self as researcher of my teaching or of me as a teacher (p. 1445). In the exploration her teacher-educator self-efficacy, the researcher was willing to hear and tried to answer questions raised by the CFN and/or the researcher, keeping in mind the constructs of "T" presented by Baird (2004).



## **Methodology**

Self-study, as the methodology for researching the teacher-educator's practice, provided the opportunity to explore beliefs about teacher-educator self-efficacy. The tools for collecting data and analyzing strengths and areas for growth as a teacher-educator were based on the requirements for IHE faculty and ATE standards (2007).

**Rationale for the research.** By connecting teacher-educator self-efficacy to the self-study methodology, the trustworthiness was strengthened for the research methodology and teacher-educator self-efficacy as a valid measure of quality instruction. The value of this exploration depends on the researcher-as-teacher-educator providing convincing evidence that she knows what she claims to know (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998). This required transparency of systematic procedures including data sources, data collection, and data analysis.

**Data sources for research.** Twenty-three artifacts were identified for this exploration including course evaluations; the researcher's faculty notebook; teaching materials; photographs; reflective journals; discussion-board responses; presentations; published papers; syllabi; curriculum vita; and correspondence with students, teacher-educators, and professional colleagues prior to the start of the research (see Appendix E). The researcher used the ATE standards (2007) to identify artifacts that supported her teacher-educator practice. The researcher collected these artifacts and placed them on [www.box.net](http://www.box.net). This allowed all members of the CFN to access the objects throughout the four phases of the exploration. Additionally, the 40 CFN responses, 8 reflections by the researcher, 4 vignettes, and 4 reframed belief statements served as data sources analyzed through the lens of the ATE standards (2007).

**Procedures used for data collection.** Data gathered about the teacher-educator's practices and beliefs were shared in a public forum using the self-study tool of a CFN. Prior to the start of the self-study the initial belief statement, the artifacts gathered, and the ATE Standards (2007) posted in the online storage and each CFN member's wiki-page, served as a guidepost for the CFN members and the researcher in analysis phase of the self-study. Over the course of 14 weeks, the research cycled through a series of four recursive phases with the researcher writing four vignettes concerning her experiences as a teacher-educator. Three were based on the categories for evaluation of IHE faculty (service, teaching, and professional development). A fourth vignette concerning the actual research in this study was completed in the culminating phase. During each of the four phases, the researcher wrote two reflections; one prior to posting the belief statement and vignette, and, one after the CFN responded.

Phase 1 of the research included the initial belief statement posted with the first vignette, *Teaching*. The CFN read and responded via their individual wiki page to each vignette and belief statement. The researcher compared these CFN responses to ATE Standards (2007) and the researcher's first reflection to reframe the belief statement. This process repeated three more times (Phase 2: vignette on service and reframed belief statement, Phase 3: vignette on professional development and reframed belief statement, and Phase 4: vignette on research and reframed belief statement). This exploratory research culminated with a final belief statement of the teacher-educator's self-efficacy.

**Critical friend network selection.** Fifteen participants from three areas of the researcher's professional life were invited to take part in this research as a member of the CFN (former graduate students, colleagues from the public schools, and IHE faculty).

Ten accepted the invitation and individual wiki pages were prepared by the researcher for each member.

**Description of the data-analysis procedures.** The researcher used a recursive process to analyze and interpret data and identify themes between the researcher's reflections and CFN responses. This process, in turn, guided the reframing of the teacher-educator belief statement. As this was exploratory research, a manual-context coding system (Silverman, 2004) of successive approximations identifying similar meanings by the CFN was used to describe and interpret CFN responses. Using the ATE Standards (2007) as a guidepost, coding categories were interpreted from the data: "patterns of thinking," "word phrases," and "appear noteworthy" to the researcher. The researcher determined that a minimum of 5 of 10 CFN members needed to respond to a specific standard in order for it to be documented, except for those categories that were tagged as "appears noteworthy." Data tables were created to analyze the CFN's consideration of ATE Standards (2007) when responding to the research question and three subquestions. The researcher for confirmability of events and/or viewpoints analyzed responses by the CFN in order to strengthen the trustworthiness of the exploration. Central to the qualitative research design is triangulation to demonstrate confirmability (Denzin, 1978). Using multiple sources of data collection and sharing the findings in the public forum of the CFN enhanced the external reliability.

**Self-assessment of procedures.** Essential to the trustworthiness of this exploration was Samaras' (2010) system for evaluating self-study through the *Five Foci*.

Does the researcher practice personal-situated inquiry? Does the researcher share in a critical collaboration inquiry? Does the researcher improve learning? Does the researcher include transparent and systematic research process? Does the researcher generate knowledge and dissemination of that research?

These questions were used to ensure that the self-study procedures throughout the exploration were observed and were used in Chapter 5 to self-assess the degree to which the researcher attended to the methodological components of self-study.

### **Delimitations**

This exploration delimited to a single study of a teacher-educator's practice to explore her teacher-educator self-efficacy. The CFN included former graduate students, colleagues from the public schools, and IHE faculty. Participation was voluntary and anonymous through acceptance to an invitation letter. Researchers will be able to use this exploration's self-study procedures; however, the findings will be unique to each successive teacher-educator/researcher's self-study.

### **Limitations**

This exploration was limited to a specific teacher-educator's self-efficacy and may not be valuable to others' perceptions of their own self-efficacy. However, the methods used in this exploration will be significant to future explorations of teacher-educators interested in self-efficacy, and, the body of research in the area of self-study. The use of former graduate students, faculty, and public school colleagues for the CFN could have posed interesting dilemmas. The researcher was willing to hear both complimentary information and constructive criticism. The researcher is confident, based on the responses that the members of the CFN were honest and not swayed by the relationship they had with the researcher. The responses were a mixture of supporting statements, questions for the teacher-educator to consider, and constructive criticism.

This exploratory research relied on ATE Standards (2007) as a tool for discovery of the teacher-educator's beliefs concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy. There are

other standards that the researcher could have chosen for a framework, such as the National Council for Teacher Education or content-specific standards from the National Science Teacher Association but none of these standards would have met the needs of this exploration as well as the ATE Standards (2007). This study was limited to one researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy, and the ATE Standards (2007) were the best fit for this study as the framework for guiding the researcher in the analysis portion of the procedures. ATE Standards (2007) offered the only teacher-educator standards.

The timeline for completion relied on a group of people posting responses and this lent itself to human dilemmas. Even those with the best intentions may not complete given activities on schedule. There were two late responses during the course of the research. However, the researcher had not completed her review of the CFN responses and there was no effect on the research. There was 100% participation during the four phases of data collection for this research.

It has been reported that Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) have had issue with documents intended for one purpose being used for another (Mitchell, 2004). That is, work samples from students or communication between teacher and student intended for teaching should not be used for research that does not intend to improve instruction (Mitchell, 2004, p. 1422). This was not an issue in this particular research as the researcher's intent was to improve her teacher-educator practice.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

*Action research:* Participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, bringing together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical

solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally to the flourishing of individual persons and their communities (Bradbury & Reason, 2001).

*Critical friend network (CFN)*: Trusted persons, who ask provocative questions, provide information examined through another lens, and offer critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to understand fully the context of the work presented and the goals of the person or group. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

*Living education theory (LET)*: The testing the validity of one's claim to understand one's own educational development or way of answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' LET provides the researcher the opportunity to be in the lived experience (Whitehead, 1989, 1993).

*Reflective practice*: Means by which practitioners can develop a greater self-awareness about the nature and impact of their performance, an awareness that creates opportunities for professional growth and development by reframing of one's thoughts (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993).

*Self-efficacy*: A belief in one's own capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments (Bandura, 1977).

*Self-study*: The self-examination of one's own pedagogical beliefs as evidenced in one's own teaching and scholarship (Kaplan, 2006). Born out of concerns of teacher educators for the learning of preserves teachers and their students, it challenges status quo conceptions of both knowledge and research (Cole & Knowles, 1996). Self will be defined as *self as researcher of my teaching or me as the teacher* (Baird, 2004).

*Teacher belief statement:* Tacit, often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material taught (Pajares, 1992).

*Teacher-educator:* Provides formal instruction or conducts research and development for educating prospective and practicing teachers. Teacher-educators provide the professional-education component of preservice programs and the staff-development component of in-service programs (ATE, 2008).

*Teacher participatory research:* Collaborative process by which teachers themselves critically examine their classrooms, develop and implement educational interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions (Knight & Boudah, 1998).

*Teacher self-efficacy:* Teachers' belief in their capacity to organize and execute a course of action required to successfully accomplish a specific task in a particular context (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

*Validation group:* Used to ensure trustworthiness, consisting of 4 to 10 people. Critical friend(s) may be part of this group. The validation group is drawn from the self-study researcher's professional circle, and agrees to meet periodically to listen to progress reports and to scrutinize data (McNiff, 2002; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006).

Additional terms are defined in Appendix A.

## **Summary**

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. A discussion on the need for research in the area of teacher-educator self-efficacy has been presented. The researcher discovered a lack of

teacher-educator self-study literature in the area of teacher-educator self-efficacy that looks at the teacher educator's IHE faculty practices, and, in particular, aligns those findings with professional standards for assessing teacher-educator practices related to teaching, service, professional development, and research. The conceptual framework guiding the study was presented, including the study's delimitations and limitations.

A brief description of the procedures for this exploration was given in this chapter. Chapter 3 gives a detailed description of the systematic procedures for the exploration of the teacher-educator's self-efficacy using a triadic approach to writing an overall belief statement composed of four vignettes: (a) teaching, (b) service, (c) professional development, and (d) research, using a CFN and ATE Standards (2007). Prior to posting the vignettes, the researcher wrote an initial belief statement concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy. During each of the four phases of this exploration, the belief statement was reframed. The researcher wrote an initial reflection using ATE Standards (2007). This first reflection for each phase was used to identify patterns and themes. The facts in the vignette were confirmed through the CFN, which served as the member check (validation group) for trustworthiness. The teacher-educator's living education theory (LET) concerning the teacher-educator's self-efficacy, using the reflections and each of the reframed belief statements from the four phases, was written at the conclusion of this self-study.

The next chapter expands on the current literature for the conceptual framework of this self-study research including self-study methodology, living-education theory, and self-efficacy.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of the Literature**

#### **Introduction**

The literature review for this research has been narrowed to three specific schema concerning teacher-educator self-efficacy. In Kantian philosophy (1781/2000), schema is the method that allows for the understanding of the mind to apply concepts that evidence the senses. The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. New schema or understanding was developed concerning the researcher's teacher-educator practice in order to develop and reframe beliefs the researcher had about her teacher-educator self-efficacy. The self-study methodology provided the researcher the opportunity to self-assess beliefs about her teacher-educator practice, and, ultimately, to reframe her thinking about her teacher-educator self-efficacy.

#### **Description of Scholarly Literature**

During the review of the literature, three themes emerged as central to understanding the dissertation question: (a) self-study as a method of teacher education research; (b) works dedicated to the practice of living education theory (LET); and (c) previous research that described and analyzed the construct of a teacher and teacher-educator self-efficacy, including belief statements. There were three sub-sections of research examined in this final section of the literature review:

1. theoretical framework and research theories related to a teacher's sense of self-efficacy, including differences between a teacher's sense of self-efficacy, collective efficacy, and other related constructs
2. large scale studies concerning teachers' sense of self-efficacy
3. teacher and teacher-educator self-efficacy

These bodies of literature provided the scaffolding for this exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy as an instructor in an IHE. Though each section is titled, the concepts are so closely related that integral terms may be used in each of the sections of this literature review. It is important to understand the groundwork for teacher-educator research, starting with research on teaching.

**Historical foundation of teaching research.** The *Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Gage, 1963, as cited in Munby & Russell, 1992) was one of the earliest resources on teacher education research. It was limited in its use and effectiveness because it only acknowledged logical positivism theory or *scientifically* measured studies. Ten years later the *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching* (Travers, 1973) reflected the continued theoretical base of logical positivism. However, three specific chapters recognizing alternative approaches in the study of teaching were outside this quantitative model. These chapters were case-study analyses of qualitative data (Light, 1973), school and workplace issues (Dreeben, 1973), and research on teaching as work (Lortie, 1973).

Educational research no longer espoused merely quantitative methodologies as the only approach to teacher education research. There are epistemological approaches beyond logical positivism such as constructivist theory and subjectivism. Each additional

*Handbook of Research on Teaching* over the next 30 years encouraged the use of qualitative methods in education research (Doyle, 1992; Richardson, 2001; Travers, 1973; Wittrock, 1986). Richardson (2001), in the fourth edition of the handbook included methods of self-study.

Behaviorally oriented research, always quantitative, on teaching, initially looked at the technical skills needed in teacher preparation and renewal, as well as how prior knowledge affected the learner's interpretation of knowledge (Munby & Russell, 1996). However, Munby and Russell (1996) and later, Munby, Russell, and Martin (2001), using qualitative methodologies, found that, in fact, we are influenced by our own schooling as children and bring that learning into the classroom as teachers; that is, our prior experiences as learners.

Proctor (1984) studied the teaching and learning process that stresses the importance of teacher expectations for student learning. This research found that in the early years of schooling, the teacher had no basis for expectations and it appeared that variations in teacher expectations could produce achievement variations among students (*a posteriori* or inductive rather than *a priori* or deductive reasoning). Lanier and Little (1996) looked at the social constructs that influence teacher interactions, finding that preservice teachers come into teacher education having had previous teaching or other work experience and/or experience in parenting that influence their practice.

**The historical foundation in teacher-education research.** For some time teachers have been involved in the professional inquiry of action research. Teachers looked at data, chose a specific area of interest, and conducted small studies in an effort to improve student achievement. Action research has been part of social-science-research

literature as far back as 1946 with the work of Lewin. Corey (1953) identified that action research could be a means by which teachers in schools could improve practice. At that time action research was still a process that was externally initiated and often externally undertaken. In this respect, action-research of the past is different from the self-initiated action research more common today. It was not until the work of Elliott and Adelman (1973) and Elliott (1991) that teachers began researching their own practice. Bradbury and Reason (2001) defined action research as a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally to the flourishing of individual persons and their communities (p. 1). Action research is noted for its reformatory purpose and power.

Teacher Participatory Research (TPR) has been suggested as one means of fostering meaningful professional development for teachers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, 1999; Noffke, 1997). TPR is a collaborative process where teachers themselves critically examine their classrooms, develop and implement educational interventions, and evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions (Knight & Boudah, 1998). These activities allow teachers to actively participate in the development of practical knowledge about teaching. Teacher research models capitalize on critical thought and data based action. Similarly, Wadsworth (1998) described participatory-action research as research that involves all relevant parties in actively examining together current action in order to change and improve it. Furthermore, participatory action research has, as its primary

participants, service providers who work in small circles, examining their practice and trying out alternative ways of working.

The self-study of the teacher-education-practices movement has the potential for substantive and systemic reform of teacher education. Whitehead (1993) suggested that through self-study, teacher-educators could help transform what counts as educational knowledge and educational theory. Individual and local change efforts often have a greater impact than systemic overview measures. McNiff (1993), McNiff, Lomax, and Whitehead (1996), Whitehead and Lomax (1987), and Whitehead (1997) stated that research that is both personal and practical in its orientation not only endangers the reputation of the research community, but also, by virtue of its very nature, challenges traditional concepts of what counts as knowledge and research. An essential component of self-study, with roots in the TPR movement is the critical friend network (CFN) (LaBoskey, 2004; Loughran & Northfield, 1996; Russell & Schunk 2004; Samaras, 2010 Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). A critical friend acts as a sounding board, offers opportunities to reflect, serves as a co-learner, and asks challenging questions. A CFN helps to bridge the problematic area of assessing one's own practice and reframing it (Russell & Schunk, 2004).

**Self-study in teacher-educator research.** Over the past decade, the use of the self-study methodology to research teacher-education practices has acquired a scholarly and organizational presence in the teacher-education research community, most notably as a special interest group called the Self-Study of Teacher-Education Practices (S-STEP) in the American Education Research Association (AERA). Starting in 1996, the S-STEP has held an international summit, The Castle Conference at Herstmonceux, to gather,

discuss, and disseminate self-study research culminating in the first International Handbook on Self-Study (Loughran et al., 2004). Samaras and Freese (2006) stated that self-study is the key to building teacher efficacy (p. 3). Self-study supports growth and understanding, and validates beliefs concerning the self-efficacy of teachers, including teacher-educators.

Self-study research is considered a genre of qualitative research (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009). In order to fully understand its tenets, one must look to the qualitative-research methodologies that preceded it, including action research and case-study research. Like self-study research, both these qualitative methodologies draw on the use of narrative, the significance of which has been addressed by Clandinin and Connelly (1991) and Connelly and Clandinin (1999).

**Influence of narrative research on the writing of vignettes.** Narrative research attempts to capture the complex context of teachers' work. "We see it as storied. Narrative is a way to enter a professional knowledge landscape or a place of story" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 1). Stories hold the potential for contributing to both social and cultural change. Hoogland (2003), writing about the importance of story within an educational environment, stated,

Stories conjoin emotions and intellect. Facts are presented in the context of feelings. The act of organizing stories necessitates reflection; students need to consider what happens and how they feel about events. To tell a story is to create connections. Stories embody lived experience—they are meant to move us. Descriptive language – facts and information—can achieve certain educational goals. Facts can move people emotionally, but often they do not. However, when facts are presented in the context of feelings—as stories—they engage people aesthetically. They appeal to people's emotions and imaginations as well as to their intellect. Facts alone (disembodied knowledge) separate students from the educational goal of creating a caring relationship between people and nature. Stories (embodied facts) can help to achieve such a relationship. (p. 216)

O'Dea (2002) suggested that “the fact that we are speaking here of ‘research’ stories does tell us something. They tell us that the incidences described, actually, occurred” (p. 96). The telling of stories is not solely for the purpose of entertainment but rather, as O'Dea (2002) described,

Stories are a way to encourage practitioners to reflect deeply and discerningly on their teaching practice. That is, to see it from a variety of perspectives, to uncover and bring to conscious awareness of the multiple levels of thinking that informs their perceptions and determines (often unconsciously) their interpretation of particular situations (p. 96).

Hamilton and Pinnegar (1998) found that a narrative framework provides the opportunity to reconceptualize the teacher-education process (p. 43).

**Formative guidelines for self-study.** Loughran and Northfield (1996) discerned that self-study had achieved a presence in the teacher education community:

1. Self-study defines the focus of the study, not the process for studying the situation.
2. Effective self-study requires commitment to checking data and interpretations with others.
3. It is very difficult for a person to change their interpretations (frame of reference) when their own experience is examined.
4. Colleagues are likely to frame the experience in ways not thought of by the person carrying out the self-study.
5. Self-study demands immediate action so that the focus of the study is constantly changing.
6. There are differences between self-study and reflection on practice.

7. Collaboration in self-study is based on a relationship in which withholding judgment is crucial to learning.

Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) redefined these guidelines specifically for autobiographical and personal history self-study researchers to consider for greater quality to the research:

1. Autobiographical self-studies should ring true and enable connections.
2. Self-studies should promote insight and interpretation.
3. Autobiographical self-study research must engage history forthrightly and the author must take an honest stand.
4. Biographical and autobiographical self-studies in teacher education are about problems and issues that make someone an educator.
5. Authentic voice is a necessary but insufficient condition for the scholarly standing of a biographical self-study.
6. The autobiographical self-study researcher has an ineluctable obligation to seek to improve the learning situation not only for the self but also for others.
7. Powerful autobiographical self-studies portray character development and include dramatic action: Something genuine is at stake in the story.
8. Quality autobiographical self-studies attend carefully to persons in contexts or settings.
9. Quality autobiographical self-studies offer fresh perspectives on established truths.



10. Self-studies that rely on correspondence should provide the reader with an inside look at participants' thinking and feeling.
11. To be scholarship, edited conversation or correspondence must not only have coherence and structure, but that coherence and structure should provide argumentation and convincing evidence.
12. Self-studies that rely on correspondence bring it the necessity to select, frame, arrange, and footnote the correspondence in ways that demonstrate wholeness.
13. Interpretations made of self-study data should not only reveal but also interrogate the relationships, contradictions, and limits of the views presented.

LaBoskey (2004) defined the methodological requirements and the dispositions a researcher needs for the self-study methodology:

1. Self-study is improvement-aimed, looks for and requires evidence of reframed thinking and transformed practice of the researcher.
2. Self-study is interactive and involves collaboration and interaction with colleagues, students, and the literature.
3. Self-study employs multiple, primarily qualitative methods. Self-study requires we formalize our work and make it available to our professional community for deliberation, further testing, and judgments.

Samaras (2010) developed the *Five Foci* in order for researchers to evaluate their own self-studies and the procedures followed:

1. Personal Situated Inquiry—Self-study teachers initiate their own inquiries and study them in their teaching context.
2. Critical Collaborative Community—Self-study teachers work in an intellectually safe, collaborative, and supportive professional learning community to improve their practice by making it explicit to themselves and to others.
3. Improve Learning—Self-study teachers question the status quo of their own teaching in order to improve and impact learning for themselves and their students.
4. Transparent and Systematic Research Process—Self-study requires a transparent research process which clearly and accurately documents the research process through dialogue and critique.
5. Knowledge, Generation, & Dissemination—Self-study research generates knowledge, which is made through presentation and publication.

The *Five Foci* by Samaras (2010) made it possible for the researcher to self-assess the procedures used for completing this exploration against a framework for validity. In the era of accountability, and with increasing scrutiny concerning the quality of teacher preparation, a measure for assessing the individual teacher-educator's practice is needed.

Self-study has both evolved and stands on its own as a research method with a social-justice construct. The next section describes this professional-inquiry evolution of action research and teacher participatory research to reflective practice, and, finally, the first use of self-study of teacher-educators. This kind of research has consistently been

tied to the social constructs of its time, influencing the current policies and practices in teacher education.

**The influence of self-study on policy.** LaBoskey (2004) stated that often policymakers, community members, and educators want to know more about the knowledge base for teaching.

An assumption is made that we have the foundation for successful programs of teacher education and professional development. A central challenge in this thinking is that there are differences in what people mean when they talk about knowledge. A distinction between producing knowledge and becoming knowledgeable is the difference between research and practice. (LaBoskey, 2004, p. 821)

Teacher knowledge develops through a better understanding of personal experience (Loughran & Northfield, 1996). Nearly all of the prominent voices on self-study have engaged in self-study of their own teacher-educator practice (Allender, 1991; Bullough & Pinnegar, 2004; Loughran et al., 2004; McNiff, 2006; Samaras, 2002; Whitehead, 1993). Allender (1991) used narrative tools in self-study of the author's teaching practices as a teacher-educator stating that "stories provided an opportunity to connect with dilemmas in clarifying and changing paradigms of practice when considering the issues of preparation, improvisation (teachable moments), and student and teacher relationships." Similarly, Samaras (2002, p. xv) drew from Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development, indicating how it influenced the author's views of instruction. Mueller (2003) described self-study work as a beginning teacher-educator trying to craft a self-mode for professional development. Mueller observed that it is possible that the study findings will help other teacher-educators in examining their teaching practices and initiate discussions about what it means to become a teacher-educator (p. 69). Naidoo (2005) said as the researcher acts as a third person, objectively

trying to avoid research bias. “But I know, in my heart that does not make sense. How can I ever be objective and unbiased? I have a passion for what I am doing and I want people to experience my passion” (p. 1).

Nearly 30 years ago, Schön (1983) suggested that only practitioners could truly analyze their own practice. To ensure a self-study is not subjective with biases, the test is to put forth the work to public scrutiny (Habermas, 1962, 1984; Polanyi, 1964, 1967). This situated the development of the CFN as supported by Bullough and Pinnegar (2001, 2004), Feldman (2003), McNiff (2002), and Whitehead (1993, 2004, & 2005).

A critical friend is a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person’s work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

A validation group (McNiff, 2002; Whitehead & McNiff, 2006) ensured trustworthiness. This group usually consists of four to 10 people. Critical friends may or may not be part of this group. The validation group draws from the self-study researcher’s professional circle, and agrees to meet periodically to listen to progress reports and to scrutinize data. Although they might not be entirely familiar with the research, they are able to make professional judgments about the validity of the self-study report, and offer critical feedback. The researcher listens carefully to their advice, though is not compelled to act on it. Established as the Arizona Group: Guilfoyle, Hamilton, Pinnegar, and Placier (1995) observed,

We study our own practices. ... Whatever we want our students to do in their own practices—study and reflect, use innovative pedagogy, be as a change agent—we ask of ourselves. ... Our practices as teacher-educators re-create and redefine teacher education. ... They have the most potential to help us understand what it means to teach, to teach teachers, and to gradually re-create education practices. (p. 53)

**Self-study as a stand-alone methodology.** Russell and Korthagen (1995),

Pinnegar and Russell (1995), and Cole and Knowles, (1996) looked at the similarities and differences in self-study and reflective practice in the research of teacher educators. Cole and Knowles stated

Teacher-educators, many of whom were classroom teachers prior to entering the academy as university-based educators, engage in self-study as their choice of methodology, both for purposes of their own personal–professional development and for broader purposes of enhanced understanding of teacher education practices, processes, programs, and the context for learning and teaching. Sometimes both of these purposes are made explicit in self-study work; sometimes one is implicit in the other. The purposes are not mutually exclusive. The former purpose typically has a largely practical (often pedagogical) focus and is usually self-oriented as the general aim relates to the ongoing improvement of one’s own (pedagogical) practice. The latter purpose has a broader aim more generally relating to the production and advancement of knowledge about teacher-education practices and the programs and contexts in which they are situated. Both purposes have to do with refining, reforming, and rearticulating teacher education (1996).

Cole and Knowles (1996) also stated that, as a form of research (that is, a process aimed at the production and advancement of knowledge), “self-study has met with opposition and teacher-educators who engage in self-study of teacher education practices all too readily are made aware of their vulnerable and marginal status in research communities.”

**Living educational theory.** Whitehead (1993) stated the epistemology of LET as “the understanding of the importance of testing the validity of one’s claim to understand one’s own educational development or way of answering questions like, How do I improve my practice?” In response to Schön’s (1995) call to reflective practitioners for the development of an epistemology of practice, Whitehead (1998) stated that reflective practice grounds the epistemology in the experience of “I” as a living contradiction in the question:

How do I improve my practice? First, the inclusion of “I” as a living contradiction in educational inquiries can lead to the creation of research methodologies, which are distinctively “educational” and cannot be reduced to social science methodologies. Second, the inclusion of “I” in explanations of an individual’s professional learning can lead to the creation of “living” educational theories, which, can be related directly to an individual teacher’s educative influence with his or her students. Third, values can be used as the educational standards, which create our disciplines of education. Living educational theories are, for me, the descriptions and explanations, which individuals offer for their own professional learning as they ask, answer and research questions of the kind, “how do I improve what I am doing?” (p. 1)

Whitehead’s (1993) work placed emphasis on the lived practice of the researcher, unlike in the previous tradition of educational research in which social scientists come into the classroom to do research on teachers and pupils. This kind of research is based on psychology and sociology with its results traditionally presented in a propositional form. Whitehead (1993, p. 42) claimed that representing research in the propositional form “masks the living form.” The knowledge generated by the researcher about their own practice generates valid descriptions and explanations of educational practice and development and can then become a “living educational theory” (Whitehead, 1989, 1993).

Using the work of Polanyi (1964, 1967) and Habermas (1962, 1984) the epistemological argument that LET is a valid and reliable structure when studying one’s own teaching practice can easily be made. Polanyi (1964) developed the theory of tacit knowledge or personal knowledge. This was knowledge that came through the process of learning. Polanyi believed that tacit knowledge came from habits and cultural beliefs we often do not recognize in ourselves. Polanyi’s “we often know more than we can tell” helps to shape an understanding of individual and group core values, assumptions, and beliefs. It is difficult to transfer knowledge that is tacit knowledge because the holder of the information is often unaware (Polanyi, 1964). Using LET, the researcher is making

an effort to be self-aware of tacit knowledge. She wants to know how it has guided her understanding, including prior learning experiences, and current level of knowledge.

In Habermas' most recognized work, *In the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962), in order to validate tacit knowledge, when recognized, it must be shared. In this way, interacting with others, a network for communicating information provides for multiple points of view, thus, transforming knowledge from the subjective interpretation to the objective discourse. Using dialectic discourse, Habermas argued that an exchange of propositions would occur resulting in a synthesis of opposing assertions. Thus, critical theory, or the critiquing of presuppositions (background prior knowledge of the world) could change society. In *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1984), Habermas stated that this kind of public critical-discourse analysis could transcend the rules on which speakers could agree and provide validation as part of an orientation toward practice and away from theory. Rather than philosophy's traditional fixation on theoretical truth and the representational functions of language, Habermas recognized the moral and expressive functions of language. LET gives the researcher an opportunity to collect data and analyze it in the public view. This public discourse of the researcher's findings supports both Polanyi's tacit knowledge and Habermas' critical theory.

This led the researcher to consider her own teacher-educator self-efficacy. Rather than studying other teacher-educators, the researcher wanted to learn about her own practice to frame her own beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy.

### **Self-efficacy in teacher and teacher-educator research.**

***Theoretical framework of self-efficacy.*** Rotter (1966) described the concept of locus of control or the extent individuals perceive events in their environment as being contingent on their own behavior. Locus-of-control theory is an individual's actions based solely on external/internal forces rather than an individual's ability to choose an action or response. Building on Rotter's theory, Bandura's social learning theory (1971) emphasizes that the mind is an active force that constructs reality, selectively encodes information, performs behavior based on values and expectations, and imposes structure on its own actions. Thus, stimulus and response determine the likelihood of learning (Bandura, 1977). Unlike Rotter's locus of control theory, social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977) espouses that the environment influences us; however, it does not require that all actions are, in fact, reactions. Social cognitive theory (1974) states that people make decisions based on reciprocal causation.

Bandura (1977) suggested that a person's future behavior is a function of three interrelated forces: environmental influences, their own behavior, and internal personal factors such as cognitive, affective, and biological processes. That is, what we come to believe about ourselves affects the choices we make and actions we take. We are not products of our environment. We are not products of our biology. Instead, we are products of the dynamic interplay between the external, the internal, and our current and past behavior (Henson et al., 2001).

Bandura first used the term *self-efficacy* in 1974, in his work on social-cognitive theory. In his 1977 article "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change," Bandura defined self-efficacy as belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. Self-efficacy beliefs



are characterized as the major mediators for our behavior, and importantly, behavioral change.

In a review of the literature, Henson et al. (2001) noted that over the last quarter century, Bandura's work continued to develop and defend the idea that our beliefs in our abilities powerfully affect our behavior, motivation, and ultimately our success or failure. Bandura (1986) proposed that because self-efficacy beliefs were explicitly self-referent in nature and directed toward perceived abilities given specific tasks, they were powerful predictors of behavior. Bandura (1986) observed that people regulate their level and distribution of effort in accordance with the effects they expect their actions to have. As a result, behavior is better predicted from beliefs than from the actual consequences of actions (Bandura, 1974, 1977, 1986, 1994; Schön, 1983, 1987; Whitehead, 1993, 2004, 2005; Whitehead & Lomax, 1987; Woolfolk Hoy, 1998, 2001; Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1990).

The first study using Bandura's theory of teacher self-efficacy began with an evaluation of whether teachers believed they could control the reinforcement of their actions (Armor et al., 1976). However, it was assumed that student learning and motivation were the relevant reinforcers of teaching action. Bandura (1986) argued, "Perceived self-efficacy resulted from diverse sources of information conveyed vicariously and through social evaluation, as well as through direct experience." Furthermore, these sources of information "must be processed and weighed through self-referent thought" (p. 18) Bandura (1986, 1997) hypothesized four sources of efficacy-building information: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological or emotional arousal.

Mastery experiences are considered the most powerful influence on efficacy as they provide direct feedback regarding capabilities. However, the feedback must be processed and weighed through self-referent thought, thus not all success leads to bolstered efficacy. Attribution analysis and causal assumptions concerning outcomes influence the interpretation of mastery experiences. Furthermore, some outcomes may be valued more than others may. For example, a teacher may succeed at altering an assignment to the appropriate level of a student, but experience no increase in confidence because no special value was vested in the outcome. Social-cognitive theory emphasizes that vicarious experiences can affect learning and efficacy. Social persuasion and the emotional state that one experiences during social interactions can also bolster, or weaken, self-efficacy beliefs.

***Large-scale studies of teacher efficacy.*** Ashton (1984) described two kinds of teacher's sense of self-efficacy in his research: personal teacher efficacy (PTE) and educational efficacy or general teacher efficacy (GTE). PTE referred to a teacher's sense of effectiveness in having an impact on student achievement. GTE refers to the teacher's belief about the ability of education in general to have a positive impact on student performance. At the birth of teacher efficacy survey instruments, Rand Corporation researchers (Armor et al., 1976) developed two items based on Rotter's locus-of-control orientation:

- Item 1: "When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment."

- Item 2: “If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students.”

Items intended to assess whether a teacher believed that student learning and motivation were under the teacher’s control. These items and this orientation guided most teacher efficacy research during the late 1970s and early 1980s (Henson et al., 2001).

Amid concerns about construct definition and reliability of measurement with only two items, Gibson and Dembo (1984) sought to develop, through empirical evidence, a teacher efficacy measure. They argued that the two items used by the Rand researchers (Armor et al., 1976) actually corresponded to Bandura’s (1977) self-efficacy dimensions of social-cognitive theory. Rand Item 1 was thought to assess an outcome expectancy regarding a teacher’s belief about whether teaching can impact student learning despite external constraints. This construct was labeled teaching efficacy, later to be designated GTE (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Rand Item 2 was thought to assess self-efficacy, or a teacher’s perceived ability to positively impact student learning. This construct was dubbed PTE (Ashton & Webb, 1986). In their study, Gibson and Dembo (1984) developed additional items modeled after the original Rand items. The PTE and GTE factors were essentially uncorrelated, a result consistent with Bandura’s conceptualization of outcome expectancy and self-efficacy dimensions. A multi trait, multi method construct-validity study was conducted and the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) was born. Gibson and Dembo (1984) interpreted the items as reflecting self-efficacy theory. The TES subsequently became the instrument of measure in the study of teacher efficacy, leading Ross (1994) to label it a “standard” instrument in the field. The TES has also served as a launching point for the development of other similar

instruments, such as the subject-matter specific Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument (Enochs & Riggs, 1990).

With this new research on teacher self-efficacy, questions about the TES arose. Specifically, Coladarci and Fink (1995) found weak evidence among scores from the major instruments of teacher self-efficacy and related constructs of validity of PTE and GTE scores. Furthermore, Guskey and Passaro (1994) reported that the PTE and GTE factors correspond, not to self-efficacy and outcome-expectancy dimensions, but to an internal versus external orientation, respectively. This dichotomy resembled locus-of-control and attributional-theory orientations more than self-efficacy theory. Importantly, the Coladarci and Fink (1995) and Guskey and Passaro (1994) studies pointed out potential theoretical confounds in the TES. Henson et al. (2001) stated, “As might be expected from an instrument that serves two theoretical masters, the study of teacher efficacy has suffered an adolescent identity crisis as researchers have struggled to clarify the construct.” Teacher self-efficacy is the individual teacher’s perception of the self as a competent deliverer of instruction (Yero, 2002).

Huitt (2000) developed the dimensions of teacher efficacy based on Ashton’s (1984) work on the eight principles of teacher efficacy (see Table 1). Ashton’s principles of teacher efficacy (1984) and Huitt’s (2000) dimensions of teacher efficacy were used as a check system for the researcher’s findings concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy. The researcher looked back at her teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statements and determined if her beliefs fit with the principles and dimensions. This analysis resented in Chapter 5 became her LET.

Table 1

*Ashton's and Huitt's Teacher Efficacy*

Ashton's eight principles of teacher efficacy	Huitt's dimensions of teacher efficacy
A sense of personal accomplishment	The teacher views the work as meaningful and important
Positive expectations for student behavior and achievement	The teacher expects students to progress
Personal responsibility for student learning	The teacher accepts accountability and shows a willingness to examine performance
Strategies for achieving objectives	The teacher plans for student learning, sets goals for themselves, and identifies strategies to achieve them
Positive affect	The teacher feels good about teaching, about self, and about students
Sense of control	The teacher believes (s)he can influence student learning
Sense of common teacher/student goals	The teacher develops a joint venture with students to accomplish goals
Democratic decision making	The teacher involves students in making decisions regarding goals and strategies

As noted, social-cognitive theory provides the theoretical foundation for a teacher's sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Teachers' self-beliefs or sense of self-efficacy as identified in the research literature, serves as determinants of teaching behavior. Skills that are influenced by teacher self-efficacy include maintaining a classroom climate conducive to learning and choosing the most appropriate strategies to teach various subjects, such as teaching styles, and rates of learning (Chase, Germundsen, Brownstein, & Distad, 2001). Allinder (1995) found that a teacher's sense of self-efficacy makes the greatest difference in the learning of low-achieving students.

***Self-efficacy and belief statements in education.*** Self-efficacy beliefs relate to academic performance and self-regulated learning (Hackett, 1995; Pajares, 1996; Schunk, 1991; Zimmerman, 1995). Efficacy beliefs help dictate motivation (Maehr & Pintrich, 1997; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). From the social-cognitive-theory perspective and

because human agency is mediated by our efficaciousness, self-efficacy beliefs influence our choices, our effort, our persistence when facing adversity, and our emotions (Pajares, 1997). Pajares (1992) defined a belief statement as that which is tacit, an often unconsciously held assumption about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught. Pajares (1996) found that those individuals aware of their self-efficacy beliefs are more resilient when faced with adversity.

Self-efficacy theory is a common theme in current views of motivation (Graham & Weiner, 1996), primarily because of its predictive power and application for practically any behavioral task. Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) employed these aforementioned sources of efficacy in building the theoretical model of a teacher's sense of self-efficacy. Researchers continue to scrutinize how to accurately assess and analyze teacher self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). This dialogue has centered on two issues. First, based on the theoretical nature of the self-efficacy construct defined by Bandura (1977, 1997), researchers have argued that self-efficacy is most appropriately measured in the context of specific behaviors (Pajares, 1996; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Second, the construct validity of scores from the primary instruments purporting to measure teacher efficacy has been questioned (Coladarci & Fink, 1995; Guskey & Passaro, 1994; Henson et al., 2001). Accordingly, teacher efficacy is presently on the precipice of inquiry; it is ready to either move forward or fall to the wayside as a good idea that ultimately had little substance (Henson et al., 2001).

Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) stated,

A teachers' beliefs about their own capacities as teachers somehow mattered, enjoyed a celebrated childhood, producing compelling findings in almost every study, but it has also struggled through the difficult, if inevitable, identity crisis of

adolescence. ... Teacher self-efficacy [now] stands on the verge of maturity.  
(p. 240)

Although Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) included Bandura's self-efficacy elements in their research model, there is little research examining the validity and potential impact of the sources of information on a teacher's sense of self-efficacy. In an effort to bring some coherence to the meaning and measure of teacher self-efficacy, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) developed a model that "weaves together both conceptual strands" in teacher self-efficacy. The model attempts to take a broader, more comprehensive look at self-efficacy as it relates to teachers and explicates a cyclical feedback loop for efficacy judgments. If a teacher's sense of self-efficacy is the powerful predictive construct it has been thought to be, then research examining the processes by which such efficacy is built is critical to fostering a teacher's sense of self-efficacy, and, ultimately, changing behavior. Self-study methodology provides for this kind of scrutiny.

Consistent with the general formulation of self-efficacy, Tschannen-Moran (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) defined teacher self-efficacy as teachers' judgment of their capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated. Teacher self-efficacy has emerged as a variable in educational research. Hoy and Woolfolk-Hoy (1990) found few consistent relationships between characteristics of teachers and the behavior or learning of students. Teachers' sense of self-efficacy was the exception.

Numerous studies have been able to prove the link between a teacher's sense of self-efficacy and student achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross, 1992). In addition, research on school effectiveness

designated efficacy as one of five school conditions related to improved student learning (Fullan, 1982). Rosenholtz (1989) also found that teacher self-efficacy influenced students' basic skills and mastery. In research on school effectiveness, Berman and McLaughlin (1977) found that a teacher's sense of self-efficacy was the single most consistent variable related to school success.

Research supports the theory that teachers' beliefs about their ability to instruct students, as well, as their ability to affect student learning and achievement may be related to individual differences in teaching self-efficacy (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Pajares, 1992). Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy tend to experiment with methods of instruction, seek improved teaching methods, experiment with instructional materials, and have a strong sense of professional commitment (Allinder, 1994; Coladarcj, 1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986; Guskey, 1988; Stein & Wang, 1988).

***Teacher-educator self-efficacy.*** There is little research in the area of teacher-educator self-efficacy. The literature available represents traditionally-based examinations of the professoriate. While there are obvious similarities between teacher research and teacher-educator research there is a major contextual distinction. The success of teacher research as bona fide research is conditional based on the influence of teacher-educator research. The traditional hierarchical relationship between schools as sites of practice and universities as sites of theory must continue to be challenged. Though the teacher-research movement has been successful in influencing educational research and theory development, especially as it pertains to the improvement of classroom practice, for those of us sanctioned as academic experts, the hierarchy of status



still applies. Therefore, it is no surprise that there is very little research on teacher-educator self-efficacy. Whitehead (2005) asked the question,

What would happen, then, if researchers in IHEs were sanctioned by their institutions and the broader academic community to throw off their “expert” mantles and act like ordinary, curious people with practically oriented questions, including questions that might challenge “the system?” How then could universities hold onto their status as elite societal institutions?

The Association of Teacher Educators (2007) has identified qualities of a master teacher-educator. These standards, along with indicators and artifacts, are tools in identifying themes in a teacher-educator’s experience:

**Description of ATE Standards of 2007.**

***Standard I—Teaching.*** Model teaching that demonstrates content knowledge, skills, and dispositions reflecting research, proficiency with technology and assessment, and accepted best practices in teacher education. In order for teacher-educators to impact the profession, they must successfully model appropriate behaviors in order for those behaviors to be observed, adjusted, replicated, internalized, and applied appropriately to learners of all levels and styles.

***Standard II—Cultural competence.*** Apply cultural competence and promote social justice in teacher education. One of the charges to teacher education is to prepare teachers to connect and communicate with diverse learners (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). To develop capacity among culturally, socially, and linguistically diverse students, teachers first need to know their own cultures. They need to hold high expectations for all students, understand developmental levels and what is common and unique among different groups. They must reach out to families and communities to learn about their cultures, select curriculum materials that are inclusive, use a range of

assessment methods, and are proficient in a variety of pedagogical methods that facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge for all learners.

***Standard III—Scholarship.*** Engage in inquiry and contribute to scholarship that expands the knowledge base of teacher education. Accomplished teacher-educators continually ask questions to deepen existing knowledge and to create new knowledge in teaching and teacher education. This is achieved through systematic inquiry and the subsequent sharing and/or dissemination of the results. Teacher-educators engage in discourse in a community about the quest for new knowledge. This community, for example, can be broadly defined as a community of academics whose discourse takes place in publications or a community of inquirers who dialogue around their “reflection on action” (Schön, 1983).

***Standard IV—Professional development.*** Inquire systematically into, reflect on, and improve their own practice and demonstrate commitment to continuous professional development. Accomplished teacher-educators help preserves and in-service teachers with professional development and reflection, and model examples from their personal development, making transparent the goals, information, and changes for improvements in their own teaching.

Teacher-educators examine their own beliefs and contributions of life experiences. There is a vital link established between belief and action (Vygotsky, 1978). Reflective practice of teachers can occur in several forms and at different times during and after an event, and should be proactive in nature to guide any future action (Farrell, 2004).

***Standard V—Program development.*** Provide leadership in developing, implementing, and evaluating teacher education programs that are rigorous, relevant, and grounded in theory, research, and best practice. The foundation of the professional work of teacher-educators lies in development and maintenance of quality programs that prepare beginning teachers and provide for teachers' ongoing professional development during and after induction into the profession.

***Standard VI—Collaboration.*** Collaborate regularly and in significant ways with relevant stakeholders to improve teaching, research, and student learning. Accomplished teacher-educators adopt a collaborative approach to teacher education that involves a variety of stakeholders (e.g., universities, schools, families, communities, foundations, businesses, and museums) in teaching and learning. Collaboration to design and implement teacher education promotes the collective practice that increases efficacy and knowledge of teacher education.

***Standard VII—Public advocacy.*** Serve as informed, constructive advocates for high quality education for all students. Teacher-educators advocate both in and outside of the profession for high-quality education for all students at all levels. Influencing decision makers and promoting changes to laws and other government policies to advance the mission of a high quality education for all is paramount to the profession.

***Standard VIII—Teacher-education profession.*** Contribute to improving the teacher education profession. Through a visionary and collaborative approach, accomplished teacher-educators accept responsibility for improving their profession. They make a difference by attending to the complexities and vulnerabilities of the profession (Covey, 1989, p. 299).

**Standard IX—Vision.** Contribute to creating visions for teaching, learning, and teacher education that takes into account such issues as technology, systematic thinking, and world views. Accomplished teacher-educators develop essential insights into the vast changes occurring today. They embrace them, visualize their potential for education, and interpret them to preserves and in-service teachers in order to facilitate understanding and integration into professional practice.

These standards were used for the researcher's belief statements, researcher's reflections, and the responses of the CFN to explore the researcher's teacher-educator practices, described in the four vignettes: teaching, service, professional development, and research. This process led to the reframing of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement.

### **Methodologies Used to Study Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Typically, research on a teacher's sense of self-efficacy has involved quantitative methodology (Schunk, 1991; Tracz & Gibson, 1986; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998; Westat, 2002). However, Munby (1984) suggested that qualitative methodology is especially appropriate in the study of perceptions and beliefs. Throughout the literature, the link that holds teachers' beliefs to teaching practices is the construct of the teacher's self-efficacy (Ashton, 1985; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Dembo & Gibson, 1985; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). This exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator practice to reframe her beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy adds to the body of research currently available looking both at self-study methodology and teacher-educator self-efficacy. In the next section, implications of this exploration using self-study are discussed.

## **Implications for This Exploration**

Burnard (1994) rhetorically asked “Who is, if not ‘I’ writing these words.” The ability of the teacher researcher to write in a style appropriate to the demands of the exercise and to integrate relevant and current literature is the hallmark of a truly reflective practitioner. Therefore, the researcher will use the first person, I, in the data portions of this research. Munby and Russell (1996) described an underlying tension that occurs between traditional approaches to teacher education research when theory precedes practice. They presented a three-pronged argument based on historical, epistemological, and empirical approaches. Teacher education research in the areas of teachers’ beliefs and professional knowledge embrace qualitative approaches as a legitimate way to conduct research on teacher beliefs and the impact of teacher knowledge and practice.

Henson et al. (2001) documented the potential educational value of researching the teacher’s sense-of-self-efficacy construct. Research efforts influencing changes in a teacher’s sense of self-efficacy would be valuable in moving the research beyond the realm of correlational designs, stating little experimental research has been conducted in this area. As Ross (1992, b) noted, “In the absence of interventions it is difficult to tell whether teacher self-efficacy is a cause or a consequence of the adoption of more powerful teaching techniques” (p. 51). It is the responsibility of teacher-educators to model the best practices of successful teaching. Teacher-educators who model a self-study methodology to explore their teacher-educator self-efficacy are modeling best practices for other teacher-educators, as well, as preservice and in-service teachers.

Studies in the area of a teacher’s sense of self-efficacy provide insights into the improvement of schools with significantly challenging populations of students. These

insights could provide the basis for more meaningful staff development, mentoring, and evaluation processes, improving the pedagogical practices of teacher-educators working in teacher preparation programs.

Teachers spend significant (McKenzie, 1998) amounts of time being in-serviced, professionally developed, trained, staff developed, and met with to review and be told what the data means. However, none of this work offers any guarantee that a teacher will be successful in improving student achievement. Teachers (Renyi, 1996), like all scholars, need to practice and reflect on their learning. The work of Bernard-Powers et al. (2000) purported that it is not only the responsibility of teachers to instill the skills for lifelong learning, but to engage in the practice themselves. Teacher-educators who engage in the methods of self-study are modeling best practices in teaching and lifelong learning.

Though limited in the number of studies, the research does suggest that a teacher's sense of self-efficacy is impacted by meaningful, active interventions (Henson et al., 2001; Ross, 1994). Bandura (1997) cautioned that positive changes in self-efficacy only come through "compelling feedback that forcefully disrupts the preexisting disbelief in one's capabilities" (p. 3). The work of Habermas (1962) supported this by using public discourse to analyze those preexisting beliefs. Whitehead (1993), using Polanyi's (1967) tacit-knowledge theory, supported LET.

Learning to teach is a career-long endeavor (ATE, 2008). The researcher submitted beliefs concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy for public discourse to analyze her tacit knowledge of her teacher-educator self-efficacy. This exploration contributes to the relatively new body of research on teacher-educators, desiring to

explore both their personal teacher-educator self-efficacy, and, increase the knowledge base of the teacher-educator by asking the question, What are my beliefs about my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?

### **Conceptual Framework**

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. Self-study provides an opportunity for the researcher to explore her own teacher-educator self-efficacy with rigor, including the collection of artifacts, writing of vignettes, reflection, consulting with a CFN, and reframing her beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy using the frame of the ATE Standards (2007). Teacher-educator self-efficacy is an essential but often-overlooked component of the student-performance equation (Chase et al., 2001).

The researcher believes she does not teach the way she was taught; she teaches the way she learns. Munby (1984) and Munby and Russell (1992, 1996) support this view stating that teacher development begins long before a candidate enters a teacher preparation program. Teachers begin as students and progress to professional maturity via many pathways. Therefore, the researcher considered how she teaches, provides service, engages in professional development activities, and conducts research. This exploration began with an initial belief statement and a vignette concerning her current teaching practices.

Russell (1998) explained self-study as a fresh and challenging new field of research in which, like teachers, teacher-educators must learn to learn from experience (p. 6). Most self-efficacy research has been conducted through self-report or survey.

Henson et al. (2001) stated that “experimental or quasi-experimental and/or long term designs are near absent in the literature.” Regarding self-efficacy, Pajares (1997) recognized this methodological weakness and called for researchers to assess both the sources and the effects of self-efficacy through direct observation rather than relying on self-reports, and to increase the use of experimental techniques so as to manipulate sources and effects.

Lacking in the research are descriptions of how teacher-educators discover their own beliefs about their own personal teaching self-efficacy: What are my beliefs concerning my teacher-educator self-efficacy? How can I self-assess my work as a teacher-educator? The researcher looked for insights concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy. As teacher-educators are living and diverse beings, so too, are their teaching experiences. In order for this research to have meaningful and reliable outcomes, the researcher established validation through trustworthiness using a CFN. The CFN served as a resource in the analysis of the data collected and as the member check, responsible for reviewing the vignettes and belief statements; and cross-checking documents submitted as artifacts supporting the ATE Standards (2007).

A body of research suggests that teachers themselves are their best resource for ascertaining and implementing knowledge (Cochran & Lytle, 1990, 1999; Laidlaw, 2004, McNiff, 1993; McNiff et al., 1996; McNiff & Whitehead 2005a; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy 2001; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teacher-educators have beliefs or perceptions about their self-efficacy. We know which students are learning and which students are not. What we do not know is how we, always, are affecting our students’ learning by our own tacit knowledge. Some students are not achieving even with all the



professional-development opportunities the teacher undertakes and all the interventions a student has received. That is, teachers are often unaware of how their own teaching practice is influencing the learning process of students, and, how their own personal belief systems about their teaching practice influences learning. This conscious understanding of one's own beliefs and values contributes to a deeper consideration of one's own disposition as a teacher. It is the responsibility of the teacher-educator to model this constant introspection into understanding one's own teacher-educator self-efficacy.

The viewpoint of the practitioner versus the researcher is important to the study of a teacher's sense of self-efficacy. This is because a practitioner will analyze data differently than a researcher. Morris and Cohn (1993) found that researchers tend to base their findings on scientifically generated evidence, whereas practitioners rely on intuition, instinct, direct experience, and interpersonal sensitivity (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001). This difference can affect the planning of a study because a researcher will design the study to look at the ways a particular factor will affect an outcome. Practitioners may not be interested in studying a factor because they feel they have seen, first-hand, the outcome. As Myers-Walls (2000) pointed out, "it is easy to understand how researchers and practitioners may have difficulty communicating when one group is concerned with facts and figures and the other with relationship issues." Though research concerning teaching practice can be completed using numerous methods, in order for learning to take place and for teachers to change their practice, they must learn through their own experiential process (Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993; Schön, 1983).

Self-study is a form of practitioner inquiry focused inward (Pinnegar & Russell, 1995). It uses the characteristic qualitative research tools of observation, interview, and artifact collection, although clearly with different kinds of goals and emphases. In addition, it adheres to the same standards of rigor as other forms of research. The critically-grounded teacher-as-researcher movement is designed to provide teachers with the analytical tools to overcome conservative and liberal blindness (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2004). Researching teachers challenges the culture of positivism, exposing the origins of many of the constraints that obstruct one's ability to implement educational strategies that respond to the experiences and lived worlds of students from all backgrounds (Kincheloe, 1991). Some teacher-educators have stated that the doctorate degree, itself, is definitive in professional development, whereas others believe this terminal degree discourages future professional development (ATE, 2008). Teacher-educators who use the self-study methodology to examine their practices are modeling the characteristics and skills of continuous learners.

Richardson (2000) offered that data gathering and validity is enriched in the self-study methodology through crystallization; overlaying the concept of triangulation with the metaphor of a crystal enriches the concept and honors the complexity of teaching and learning (Kalmbach, Phillips, & Carr, 2006). Samaras (2010) took this concept of crystallization a step further and refined it to the concept of the prism effect, that is, multiple data sources viewed through the lens of the critical friend. Critical friends function as the prism, allowing the researcher to alter views through a different angle by presenting alternative sides from merely the researcher's perspective.

## **Summary**

Historically, education research represented in the dominant epistemology of logical positivism often has criteria described in objectivity, measurement and quantification, predictability, generalizability, and, presented in relatively detached, impersonal ways (McNiff, 1993). Self-study research is antithetical to all of these principles. Although multiple means of representation are possible and used, in general, self-study research is personal, subjective, practically oriented, qualitative in nature, and usually creatively communicated. The ideas presented in this chapter support the notion that it is possible for the teacher-educator/researcher to create a LET about her teacher-educator self-efficacy. This exploration enabled the researcher to explore and reframe her own beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy.

Table 2 identifies the tenets for this research. Each of the concepts—self-study, self-efficacy, and LET—provide the necessary components for the exploration of self-efficacy as a teacher-educator.

Table 2

*Framework for Research*

Denzin & Lincoln's criteria for qualitative research (1994)	Baird's definition of self (2004)	Whitehead's LET (1989, 2008)	Nystrom's exploration of self-efficacy (2010)
This is exploratory research.	Self-study employs multiple, primarily qualitative methods.	Generated and tested from a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in educational contexts in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) educational practices, (b) understanding of these practices, (c) the situations in which these practices are carried out.	Through multiple sources of data, CFN, and a process for reframing my beliefs, I use a self-study methodology to explore my perceptions of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator.
There has been little or no previous research on this topic.	Self in teaching. The phenomenon is <i>my teaching</i> .	Methodological inventiveness.	This is the first time I will have studied myself as a teacher - educator. To the best of my knowledge, no one has ever studied me prior to this research.
The individual experiences of the sample subjects are at least partly the product of individual interpretation.	Self-study is aimed at improvement, looks for and requires evidence of reframed thinking and transformed practice of the researcher. Self in teaching. The phenomenon is my teaching.	The creation and legitimating of valid forms of educational theory that can explain the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others, and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work.	My experiences are my own and though they may be similar to others, they are not identical. I will write my teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement, four vignettes, and my own reflections. I will reframe my thinking as evidenced through my evolving belief statement.
A given phenomenon, situation, or response may be functional for one person but not for another.	Self-study requires we formalize our work and make it available to our professional community for deliberation, further testing, and judgments. Self as teacher. The phenomenon is me as the teacher.	The use of action-reflection cycles. The use of dialectical perspective in a living-theory methodology. Personal validation. Social validation.	Using the CFN, I will be able to view responses through multiple lenses concerning my actions and reactions in the categories of teaching, professional development, service, and this research. I will employ peer review through the CFN for interpretation of my statements.

Denzin & Lincoln's criteria for qualitative research (1994)	Baird's definition of self (2004)	Whitehead's LET (1989, 2008)	Nystrom's exploration of self-efficacy (2010)
The context of an experience is a major element of its nature; the task is to identify the condition under which a certain relationship, condition or response holds true.	Self as a researcher of my teaching or of me as a teacher. The phenomenon is me doing the self-study.	Includes "I" as a living contradiction.	By writing vignettes, I will articulate a given experience and the specific contexts surrounding the conditions and my response. By reframing the teacher-educator self-efficacy statement, I own my practice; am responsible for my strengths and areas of growth.
There are other identifiable reasons why the phenomenon is not suited to quantitative methods.	Self-study is interactive and involves collaboration and interaction with colleagues, students, and the literature.	The inclusion of values as explanatory principles of educational influence.	By embracing a constructivist paradigm (learning through discovery), I will create my own meaning from analysis of multiple data sources. I will use data as evidenced in my teaching, professional development, and service as per university requirements, along with the perspectives of the CFN to the vignettes and belief statements to analyze my teacher-educator self-efficacy.

In Chapter 3, these concepts presented in the literature review are woven together to create a systematic framework for gathering and analyzing data about the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. This exploration used the components of IHE faculty life: teaching, service, professional development, and research to write four vignettes concerning the researcher's teacher-educator practices. Then, through a recursive, systematic process the CFN and the researcher responded and reflected on the vignettes and belief statements using ATE Standards (2007) as a guidepost (serve as an example). The researcher analyzed these responses and reflections to reframe her teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. A form of practitioner inquiry focused inward (Pinnegar & Russell, 1995), this exploratory research aimed to develop new insights concerning the teacher-educator's practices in order to understand and reframe beliefs regarding the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. In an attempt to reach her maximum teacher-educator performance, the researcher explicitly analyzed her experiences as a teacher-educator. Following Whitehead's living education theory (LET) (1989, 2008), the researcher engaged in a validation process that engaged a critical friend network (CFN). Altogether, through a four-phase recursive process, the construction of the researcher's own living theory about her self-efficacy of her teacher-educator practices emerged.

The ability of the researcher to write in a style appropriate to the demands of the writing exercise, integrating relevant and current literature is the hallmark of a truly reflective practitioner (Hamill, 1999). The researcher wrote in first person, where appropriate, throughout the data collection and analysis, which is unusual in research, however, the best fit for self-study. The procedures used in this exploration were discovered in the available literature concerning the concepts of self-study, self-efficacy, and LET.

## **Conceptual Framework for Research**

The conceptual framework for this research was situated among the criteria presented by Baird (2004), Bandura (1986), Denzin and Lincoln (1994), LaBoskey (2004), Samaras (2010), and Whitehead (1989), described in Chapter 2. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offered tenets that guide qualitative exploratory research. To complete an exploration of a teacher-educator's self-efficacy, the researcher began by considering the word "self." Baird's (2004) definition of "self as a teacher" and "self in teaching" informed this self-study research as "I" am exploring my "self" as a teacher-educator. Whitehead's LET (1989) is the theoretical foundation influencing the researcher's thought process about her own practice. This exploration sought to find valid explanations that are the researcher's "living educational theory" (Whitehead, 1989, 1993). Bandura (1986) described self-efficacy as resulting from diverse sources of information conveyed vicariously and through social evaluation, as well as through direct experience. Each concept (self-study, self-efficacy, and LET) as a methodology, a theory, and a belief system, provide the framework for this exploration of a teacher-educator's practice to reframe beliefs about the teacher-educator's self-efficacy.

## **Research Questions**

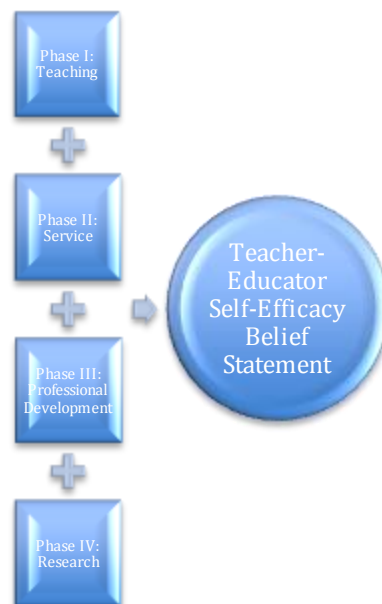
In order to explore beliefs about the teacher-educator's self-efficacy, a single overarching question (*What are my beliefs about my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?*), directed this study as the researcher attempted to move from a tacit understanding of her practice to an explicit and authentic way of knowing.

To assess the teacher-educator's self-efficacy beliefs, three sub-questions guided the researcher and the CFN in the inquiry:

1. How do the vignettes, reflections, reframed belief statements, artifacts, and CFN responses help me assess my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
2. What artifacts concerning this phase contribute to my understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
3. Based on this phase of the research, how do I perceive my teacher-educator self-efficacy?

These questions restated for the CFN throughout the research were used to guide the writing of the reflections, and the writing and reframing of the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement. The procedures for this exploration include a description of how these questions were distributed and used throughout the research.

### **Procedures for this Self-Study**



*Figure 1.* Recursive teacher-educator self-efficacy statement.



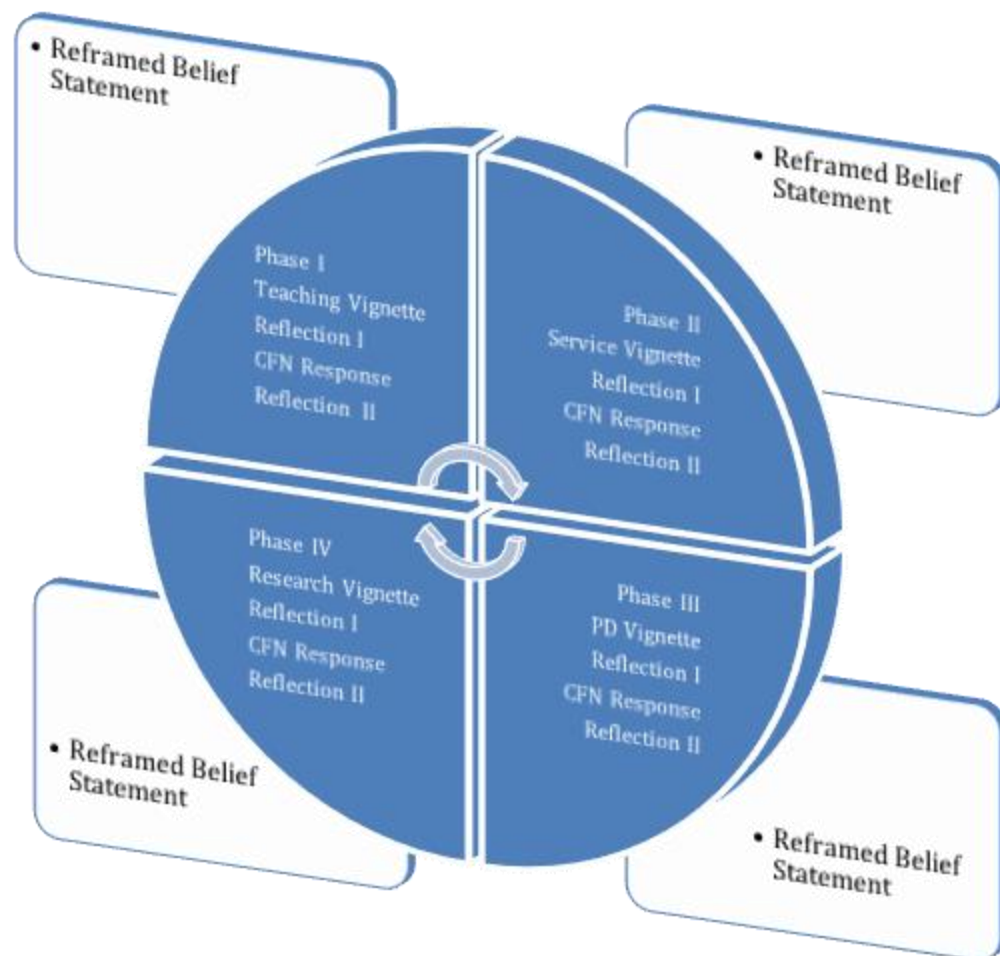
Figure 1 illustrates the “big picture” process the researcher used to move through each of the four phases of the exploration. Each phase contributed to the development of the researcher’s teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement.

**Data sources.** There were 23 artifacts included in the online storage box for the members of the CFN to review and identify to support the vignettes and belief statements. Artifacts include the following as suggested in the ATE Standards (2007): student correspondence, faculty correspondence, professional-colleague correspondence, reflective journals, discussion-board responses, presentations, published papers, syllabi, and curriculum vita via an electronic portfolio. The researcher gathered all the artifacts prior to the start of this research. Data sources were developed throughout the course of the research that included vignettes, researcher reflections, and CFN responses.

**Vignettes and belief statements as data sources.** The researcher wrote 4 vignettes; one in each phase of the research. In the first phase, the researcher developed the *Teaching* vignette that provides an overview of how the researcher as a teacher-educator instructs an introductory graduate-level special-education course. The second phase included the *Service* vignette. This vignette described the researcher’s experience in providing staff development for an elementary school. The third phase incorporated the *Professional-Development* vignette, which described the process of collaborating with graduate students to write, submit, and publish an article for a national peer-reviewed journal. The fourth phase included the vignette, *Research*, describing the experience of this study.

The researcher wrote 5 belief statements concerning the teacher-educator’s self-efficacy including the initial free-write belief statement that started the research and the

four successive reframings of this belief statement. Each of the 10 CFN members responded four times, once to each of the four vignettes and belief statements for a total of 40 responses during the 14 weeks of the study. Over the four phases of the research, the researcher wrote pre- and post-reflections for a total of eight reflections. The pre-reflections were written while the CFN was reviewing the vignettes and belief statements. The post reflections were written after the researcher had received the CFN responses. The researcher analyzed the 40 responses through the recursive four-phase processes demonstrated in Figure 2.



*Figure 2.* Recursive process of this exploratory research.

**Participant selection.** Self-study research makes public the investigatory process. In this exploration, the CFN provided feedback and identified the use of additional artifacts in support of the vignettes and belief statements. As much as the researcher must be open to “critique,” the participants of the CFN must be willing to take the time needed to respond. The researcher must have a relationship with the individuals invited to participate.

In this research, the selection of the CFN was an integral element strengthening the validity through trustworthiness (Costa & Kallick, 1993). The CFN was engaged members’ check to ensure validation of findings and techniques used in those findings (McNiff et al., 1996). Costa and Kallick suggested several features that must be considered in establishing a CFN.

A critical friend is to be a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person’s work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to understand the context of the work presented. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

The choice of the CFN members was not random in a traditional sense. Fifteen individuals were invited to be part of the CFN. A minimum of nine participants with three members from each designated category (former graduate students, public school colleagues, and IHE faculty) were accepted to participate. Although the researcher knew who was invited to participate as a critical friend, acceptance was anonymous. Ten invitees accepted the invitation establishing the three categorical groups (4 former graduate students, 3 public school colleagues, 3 IHE faculty members from institutions of higher education). Table 3 describes the selection criteria.

Table 3

*Critical Friend Network Selection*

Former graduate students	IHE faculty	Public school colleagues
—have taken a minimum of 2 courses with me as an instructor and graduated by August 2008	—IHE faculty who have known my work in the last 5 years	—colleagues from 2 public schoolsystems
—5 students invited	—5 IHE faculty invited	—the teacher-educator cotaught a class and/or presented at a conference or workshop
—3 former student fulfilled minimum	—3 IHE faculty fulfilled minimum	—5 colleagues invited
		—3 colleague fulfilled minimum

A research assistant established contact with CFN members, serving as the liaison between the CFN and the researcher. The researcher assistant maintained all direct communication with the CFN in order to keep the anonymous exchange of information required by the study design. The research assistant assured anonymity of the CFN and their responses. The research assistant sent, received, and tracked participant invitations, keeping record of the three categories of participants. The research assistant kept a date of receipt of the participants' confirmation, as self-addressed stamped envelopes were returned, the research assistant sorted the responses in two categories (agree to participate and decline). The research assistant provided the researcher with the information regarding the CFN membership so the researcher could include the data in the study. At no point during the self-study was it necessary to disclose the identity of any of the CFN.

Technology made it possible to make the research documents public in the organization and dissemination of the artifacts, belief statements, and vignettes. Wiki allows users to freely create and edit ([www.wiki.org](http://www.wiki.org), 2002). The researcher built individual wiki pages for each member of the CFN to view and respond to vignettes using the questions. Once the CFN was established and all participants accessed their

wiki page the research moved into the recursive action-reflective process that repeated four times.

**Nine recursive steps for the completion of the exploration.** There were nine steps used to complete this exploration of the teacher-educator's beliefs concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy. Steps 2 through 9 repeated three additional times throughout the course of this exploration in 3-week intervals for a total of 14 weeks from start to finish of the data collection.

The first step used ATE Standards (2007) in a process of a free-write, producing several drafts of a belief statement concerning the researcher's teacher-educator practices. This step took approximately 2 months of writing and thinking time prior to the official start of the research with the CFN. From this process emerged an initial belief statement. It was reframed four times throughout the course of the research.

The second step was to post the belief statement, the first vignette, *Teaching*, and all artifacts used in the research on the individuals' wiki pages for each member of the CFN. Four vignettes were written to highlight a specific event in each category that the researcher felt typified her teacher-educator practice: (a) teaching, (b) service, (c) professional development, and (d) research. Vignettes are contextually rich accounts of specific incidents that the researcher believes represent relevant data (Mitchell, 2004). The vignettes served as the conduit for responses from the CFN and reflection from the researcher concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy.

In the third step of the procedures, the CFN responded to the vignette and belief statement using the research questions and ATE Standards (2007) as a guide to discover themes and artifacts concerning the researcher's teacher-educator practices. CFN

members were invited to ask questions as part of their responses, which, also “served as guidance” for the researcher in analyzing her reflections.

The fourth step was the writing of the first reflection concerning the first vignette and belief statement, prior to reading the responses from the CFN. The researcher’s initial reflection for each phase of the research was compared to the responses from the CFN. This reflection, as with all the reflections, was not shared with the CFN. This was done, purposefully, so that there would be no bias on the part of the CFN. The researcher wanted to illicit the CFN’s original thoughts and did not want to be persuasive with her own ideas.

The researcher analyzed CFN responses to the vignette and belief statement in the fifth step of the procedures, looking for emerging themes between the researcher’s reflection and the CFN responses using the nine ATE Standards (2007) as the guide. Keywords and phrases from the ATE Standards (2007), including indicators and a suggested list of artifacts (see Appendix B) were used to describe the teacher-educator by the CFN. These accounts supported the description, analysis, and reflection of the teacher-educator. During the four phases of the exploration, each of the nine ATE Standards (2007) (definition, indicators, and artifacts) was compared to each of the 10 CFN responses, examining for exact word or phrase matches. These became the themes the researcher used for comparison with the pre- and post-reflections. CFN responses were read in the aggregate, and disaggregated into subgroups (former students, public school colleagues, and faculty). Keywords and phrases helped to form emerging themes identified in this initial phase, and revisited with each successive phase of the research to reconsider themes.

Themes in artifacts indicated by the CFN and the researcher were identified in the sixth step of the procedure. Again, the researcher reviewed the responses looking for themes in artifacts identified by the CFN in the aggregate and disaggregated into the three subgroups. The researcher was interested in determining if the difference between the three subgroups' (former students, public school colleagues, IHE faculty) relationship with the researcher would have any effect on the responses.

In the seventh step, the researcher wrote a second reflection based on the CFN responses, comparing the researcher's first reflection and the CFN responses, and the artifacts identified as supporting the work. The second reflection format was the same as the first reflection, using the overarching question and three subquestions.

The eighth step in the procedures was the reframing of the belief statement concerning the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. The researcher used the responses from the CFN and her own reflections to examine her beliefs, identifying parts of the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement that needed clarification.

Step 9 started the next round (phase 2) of the research. Phase 2 and each successive phase began with Step 2. The researcher posted the next vignette and the reframed belief statement on individuals' wiki pages. The CFN responded to the reframed belief statement and vignette within 7 days of the researcher posting on each wiki page.

Once the CFN responses were in, the researcher reviewed the CFN responses concerning the vignette and belief statement, analyzing for patterns and connections between the researcher's first reflection and CFN responses. The researcher reviewed CFN responses for patterns in artifacts identified concerning belief statements and

vignettes. Using these new understandings concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy, the researcher wrote the next reframed belief statement.

**Management of data.** The researcher used an electronic format to manage the data. Artifacts were stored on wiki pages and in an online storage box using a widget that links to <http://www.box.net>. All artifacts were catalogued as documentation for integrity of the research. CFN data was managed on the website <http://www.deweysstudent.wetpaint.com>. Wiki pages were constructed on this site, one for each member of the CFN. The ATE Standards (2007), the questions for the CFN, directions concerning the process for responding to the documents, four vignettes, the reframed belief statement, and responses from the CFN were posted and archived on the wiki pages. The wiki pages assured anonymity for CFN participants.

**Data-analysis procedures.** The data analysis included studying the CFN responses, the artifacts identified by the CFN in support of each phase of the research, the researcher's reflections, and the reframing of the belief statements. As this was exploratory research, a manual-context coding system of successive approximations (Silverman, 1994), identifying similar meanings by the CFN, was used to describe and interpret CFN responses. Using ATE Standards (2007) as a guidepost, three coding categories emerged from the data: patterns of thinking, word phrases, and appear noteworthy to the researcher. Patterns were identified when more than 50% of the members of the CFN said the same thing. Word phrases were identified as those times when 50% of the CFN offered similar phrasing. Appears noteworthy was when, perhaps, only 1 CFN member made a statement, but it was meaningful to the researcher and influenced her reflection and/or belief statement. This method of manual coding reduced



the CFN member responses to a sampling that illustrated the overall perceptions of the CFN members, and disaggregated into the three subgroups: former students, public school colleagues, and IHE faculty. The data tables in Chapter 4 present CFN responses to ATE Standards (2007) displaying the number of times a keyword/phrase was used by the CFN. Numerical data was used where appropriate; however, it is not a requisite for this self-study research. The data tables in Chapter 4 represent these keywords or phrases from which themes were determined and that the researcher perceived influence the teacher-educator's self-efficacy beliefs.

Analysis continued with the researcher's interpretation of the meaning of the various CFN responses. The analysis was descriptive in nature using the responses from the CFN and first reflection of the researcher. The internal reliability relied on comparing multiple perspectives (the researcher's reflection and the CFN's responses). The researcher strengthened the external reliability by providing the constructs for consistent research procedures so that all members of the CFN were able to participate in all facets of the research. The researcher used the analysis of the CFN members' responses to guide the second reflections, which influenced the reframing of the teacher-educator belief statement.

Each additional phase of the research started with the reframed teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement. The final teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement stands alone as a final product. Throughout Chapter 4 the word *researcher* was used to identify the author. The only exceptions were the belief statement, reflections, and vignettes where the researcher wrote in first person using "I."

A description of the process of data collection and analysis were kept. The researcher, for confirmability of events and/or viewpoints, analyzed responses by the CFN in order to strengthen the validity of the self-study. Self-study provided the opportunity to engage in scrutiny beyond triangulation using multiple sources of data collection and the sharing of findings in the public forum of the CFN, improving the delimitations and external reliability. Samaras' Five Foci for self-study (2010) were used to self-assess the procedures used in this exploration. Table 4 demonstrates how the researcher interpreted the Five Foci and implemented each tenet for this self-study.

Table 4

*Comparison of Samaras' Five Foci and this Exploration*

Samaras (2010)	Exploration
1. Personal situated inquiry	This is an exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy
2. Critical collaborative inquiry	The CFN was comprised of former students, public school colleagues, and faculty
3. Improved learning	The exploration of teacher-educator self-efficacy led to new learnings by the teacher-educator and CFN members (discussed in Chapters 4 & 5)
4. Transparent and systematic research process	Detailed description of changes made to the belief statement All data was stored on wiki pages and storage unit
5. Knowledge generation and dissemination	Vignettes, reflections, and reframings of the belief statement were made public to the CFN

Chapter 4 discusses the results found. The reframed belief statement about the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy presented in Chapter 4, as well as, the data analysis: vignettes, CFN responses, reflections, and teacher-educator self-efficacy statement, aligned with the procedures presented in this chapter.

## **Human Participant Selection for CFN**

A minimum of 3 participants from each of the study categories—former graduate students, public school colleagues, and IHE faculty members—would be accepted into the CFN for a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 15 CFN participants. The research required all participants to be available for the duration of the inquiry because substitutions were not possible. It was necessary for each participant to be involved from the beginning stage of the inquiry until its completion in order for each to understand the patterns and content of the vignettes, their relationship to one another, and the recursive process involved in the reframing of the belief statement. If the minimum participation were not met, a second round of invitations would have been sent to new group of potential CFN participants. This was not necessary.

Participants who agreed to the requirements for the study were agreeing to take part in a CFN, follow the projected timeline, meeting in a timely fashion to the response dates, use the website wiki page, and access the related information. There was no compensation for time or effort.

## **Ethics Precautions**

The use of the self-study methodology to explore self-efficacy in a teacher-educator's practice provided for minimal risk as the research subject was the researcher. In order to provide for reliability and validity of the findings, the researcher used a CFN comprised of former students, public school colleagues, and IHE faculty.

The integrity of the work as a teacher-educator was in “play” during this research. The researcher perceives herself to be passionate, ethical, and concerned with the welfare of students. The researcher equates her value as a teacher-educator with the success of

student learning and professional growth. The researcher felt she models these kinds of values and was hopeful for this kind of a relationship in return from the members of the CFN. The researcher was open to review and criticism that influenced her thinking about her teacher-educator self-efficacy. The strength of practitioner research is that the data can be obtained in ways that cause minimal disturbance to the environment (Mitchell, 2004). In this research, the self-study methodology allowed exploration of teacher-educator self-efficacy using existing artifacts as the support for the belief statement, vignettes, and responses from the CFN members.

The researcher completed the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative pertaining to the use of human subjects for the Office of Human Research at George Washington University (February 19, 2007). Approval was received from the IRB review on July 31, 2008, as this dissertation fell under the exempted requirements for IRB.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 describes the transparent and systematic procedures (Samaras, 2010) for the exploration of self-efficacy in a teacher-educator's practice using the self-study methodology. The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The exploration employed self-study methodology. An initial belief statement was written about the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy using the ATE Standards (2007) as a guide. The four phases of the exploration used the three specific categories of evaluation in an IHE (teaching, service, and professional development), and included a fourth vignette on this research. Phase 1 began with the initial belief statement and the *Teaching* vignette submitted to the CFN for response using a wiki page for each

individual member of the CFN. The CFN members, using the subquestions and ATE Standards (2007), reviewed each successive belief statement and vignette. The researcher wrote the first reflection prior to reading CFN responses. The researcher compared the CFN responses and her own reflections with ATE Standards (2007) looking for themes between the researcher's reflections and the CFN responses that emerged. The researcher and the CFN members identified artifacts that supported statements the CFN members and the researcher made concerning the vignettes and the belief statement. The researcher wrote the second reflection after reading the CFN members responses. The researcher reframed the belief statement. This was the catalyst for the next phase of the exploration to begin. The next vignette and reframed belief statement were posted on the 10 individual wiki pages. These procedures were repeated three times. The culmination of Chapter 4 is the final reframed belief statement concerning the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy.

## Chapter 4

### Results

#### Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as belief in one's own capabilities to organize and execute a course of action required to produce given attainments. The methodology of self-study challenges status quo conceptions of traditional research about what teacher-educators do and the value of their practices in preparing future teachers (Cole & Knowles, 1996; LaBoskey, 2004; Samaras, 2010) with a focus on the self and immediacy of practice. Rather than looking for a specific answer, the researcher compared the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) Standards (2007) with the critical friend network (CFN) responses and teacher-educator reflections to form her own belief statement or living education theory (LET) (Whitehead, 1997). There were four phases to the study; each with a vignette describing teaching, service, professional development, and research as a tool for comparison of the teacher-educator's practice to CFN responses in order to reframe the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement.

As a postmodern movement, self-study is not deductive in nature or *a priori* using rationalism and reason alone, rather it is *a posteriori*, referencing experience and the researcher's empirical knowledge. It is possible for the theory to be modified or reformulated. This exploration, therefore, allowed the researcher to develop new insights

into her teacher-educator practice in order to facilitate the understanding and reframing of her beliefs regarding her self-efficacy as a teacher-educator. Whitehead (1998) stated,

LET is the descriptors and explanations that individuals offer for their own professional learning as they ask, answer, and research questions of the kind; How do I improve what I am doing?

Through a four-phase recursive process of exploring her teacher-educator practice via writing 4 vignettes, sharing these vignettes with a CFN, receiving and analyzing feedback from the CFN members, and writing reflections pre/post-CFN response the researcher developed and reframed her belief statement concerning her self-efficacy as a teacher-educator. The single overarching research question (*What are my beliefs about my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?*) directed this study in an attempt to move from a tacit understanding of the teacher-educator's practice to an explicit and authentic way of knowing. To assess the teacher-educator's self-efficacy beliefs, three subquestions guided the inquiry:

1. How do the vignettes, reflections, belief statements, artifacts, and CFN responses help me assess my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
2. What artifacts concerning this phase of the research contribute to my understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
3. Based on this phase, how do I perceive my teacher-educator self-efficacy?

## **Participants**

Fifteen invitations were sent to members of three specific subgroups: former graduate students the teacher-educator instructed, public school colleagues from the teacher-educator's public school teaching experience, and IHE faculty with whom the researcher had previous and current relationships. Ten participants (7 female, 3 male) agreed to be part of the CFN: 4 former graduate students (2 female, 2 male), 3 public

school colleagues (all female), and 3 higher-education faculty members (2 female, 1 male).

In forming the subgroup membership, five former graduate students, three females and two males ranging in age from 25 to 35 were invited. Each of the invitees had completed the requirements for a master's degree in special education from the university where the researcher currently teaches. Four invitees teach in public schools (two elementary and two high schools) and one teaches in a nonpublic special education high school.

Also invited to participate, were five public school colleagues (all female ranging in age from 35 to 50). All teach in the public-school system where the researcher had previously been a special-education teacher. The invitees included: a special-education assistant, a speech pathologist, a general-education teacher who had co taught with the researcher, a special-education teacher who had been instructed as a graduate student and mentored by the researcher at an elementary school, and a staff developer with whom the researcher had collaborated in presentations at the local and national level, and partnered with in professional-development school (PDS) work.

The five higher-education faculty (two females, three males ranging in age from 35 to 70) who were invited came from two different IHEs. Two came from a college the researcher formerly worked at as a PDS coordinator and adjunct faculty. One invitee had formerly been the researcher's undergraduate advisor and professor, mentoring the researcher throughout her career as a special-education teacher and teacher educator. The second was the researcher's direct supervisor when the researcher worked as a PDS coordinator. The remaining three IHE invitees come from the researcher's current



university; one the program coordinator for the university's special-education master's degree program and the other two are colleagues in the university's Department of Education.

Anonymity was necessary as the research required participants to critique the teacher-educator; therefore, the research assistant only identified to the researcher the pseudonym email of each CFN member. Initially, the researcher contacted each participant through pseudonym email. The researcher assigned a code name (Dewey's student abbreviated to DS followed by nominal numbers 2-11) that connected to their individual wiki-page. All communication, vignettes and belief statements was completed through the online wiki-page. At no point was anonymity breached. An online storage unit attached to the wiki stored all artifacts for the CFN to view. The next section of Chapter 4 begins the discussion of vignettes.

### **Vignettes**

The four vignettes were used as a tool in identifying themes between the CFN responses and the researcher's reflections concerning the teacher-educator's practice based on ATE Standards (2007). Each year as a faculty member in a university, the researcher is required to demonstrate competencies in the following areas: teaching, service, and professional development. For this exploratory research, the researcher wrote a vignette for each of these topics that described her typical performance in each area and added a fourth vignette on the current research study (see Appendix C). Each vignette was written in a 2-week window prior to posting on individuals' wiki pages for each CFN member to read and respond to within a 1-week period.

**Teaching vignette.** The *Teaching* vignette (see Appendix C) describes an introduction to special-education course the researcher as a teacher-educator has taught for 5 years during the fall semester, with enrollment between 12 and 20 graduate students. This course covers history, laws, and policy regulating special-education services, as well as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). As the researcher wrote each vignette, starting with *Teaching*, the ATE Standards (2007) were continuously reviewed to find a focus for the writing. In *Teaching*, the researcher believed the following standards were demonstrated in the vignette: Standard 1—Teaching; Standard 2—Cultural Competence; Standard 4—Professional Development; Standard 6—Collaboration; Standard 7—Public Advocacy; and Standard 9—Vision.

The *Teaching* vignette described the teacher-educator's practice throughout a semester. In this course, the teacher-educator used four nonfiction texts spanning the last 41 years from 1967 to 2008 on social justice, the history of special-education law, classrooms from the perspective of teachers and students, and disability categories. The teacher-educator presented information concerning topics covered in the text using technology demonstrations, multimedia, and cooperative-learning opportunities (Standards 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7). The teacher-educator modeled best practice instruction for the graduate students, to help them acquire new teaching skills for their own practice (Standard 1). During the course, students complete a research project on a specific disability category including an internet search of related teaching resources and strategies. In support of Standards 1 and 4, students were given 2 weeks to read and write a summary concerning each book with questions provided by the teacher-educator.

The development of a philosophy statement included a pre- and postsurvey of each student's individual special-education knowledge (Standards 1, 2, 4, 7, and 9). The teacher-educator created a rubric for specific requirements to be addressed in the philosophy statement. The course also included fieldtrips to hear speakers discuss disability categories, teaching strategies, and public policy (Standards 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9). All of these activities were discussed in the first vignette.

**Service vignette.** The *Service* vignette (see Appendix C) described how the researcher interacted in the education community by providing in-service training to a local elementary-school staff. ATE Standards (2007) facilitated the writing of the service vignette with the following focus: Standard 1—Teaching; Standard 2—Cultural Competence; Standard 4—Professional Development; Standard 6—Collaboration; Standard 7—Public Advocacy; and Standard 9—Vision.

The *Service* vignette describes the experience of the teacher-educator collaborating with an elementary-school staff member, working together to improve student achievement in a holistic manner. This vignette presenting the teacher-educator's role in the community, specifically, providing staff development in a PDS partnered with the researcher's university. The teacher-educator provided staff development for 15 teachers and 5 teaching interns with a focus on creating a vision for all students to learn grade-level content required for successful passage of a state assessment (Standards 4, 6, 7, and 9). The teacher-educator presented on the area of mentoring, universal-design lesson planning, and the concept of resiliency in learners in order for the teachers to implement a school-wide strategy for mentoring students who were identified as at-risk (Standards 1 and 2). The teacher-educator met with the staff once a month for 5 months.

All staff-development sessions were planned and cotaught with the school's special-education teacher (Standard 6).

**Professional-development vignette.** The *Professional Development* vignette (see Appendix C) described the process the teacher-educator undertook when submitting an article for publication. ATE Standards (2007) facilitated the writing of the *Professional Development* vignette with a focus on the following: Standard 3—Scholarship; Standard 4—Professional Development; Standard 5—Program Development; Standard 6—Collaboration; Standard 7—Public Advocacy; Standard 8—Teacher Education Profession; and Standard 9—Vision.

As part of a tenure-track IHE faculty load, it is a teacher-educator's responsibility to contribute to the education community through research, presentations, and publications (Standard 3). This project involved 14 graduate students developing mentor skills based on PDS national standards (Standards 3 and 4). At the end of the semester, the teacher-educator and 2 of the 14 graduate students wrote and had accepted an article for a peer-reviewed national publication (Standards 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9). The *Professional Development* vignette chronicles the lengthy process from draft, submission, and revision that the teacher-educator and two graduate students experienced in their first attempt at publication.

**Research vignette.** The *Research* vignette (see Appendix C) described this exploratory research of the teacher educator's beliefs concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy. ATE standards (2007) facilitated the writing of the research vignette with the following focus: Standard 3—Scholarship; Standard 5—Program Development;

Standard 6—Collaboration; Standard 8—Teacher Education Profession; and Standard 9—Vision.

The process of planning and implementing the exploratory study was discussed in this vignette (Standard 3). The researcher presented how to implement the procedures as part of an education program between teacher-educators and students (Standards 5 and 6). In this vignette, the teacher-educator discussed reflective practice as part of a teacher-educator's practice. The notion that all teacher-educators use reflective practice to strengthen teacher education programs and teaching practices supports Standards 8 and 9.

Aligned with the protocol for this research, the CFN responded to each vignette and each reframed belief statement within 7 days of the researcher posting on individuals' wiki pages. The next section of this chapter addresses the findings from each phase with the CFN responses in order of the posting: Teaching, Service, Professional Development, and Research.

### **CFN Responses**

CFN responses to each vignette and reframed belief statement were examined using ATE Standards (2007) for keywords. The examination of the teacher-educator's practice based on the ATE Standards (2007) served to better develop and articulate aspects of practice that forms part of a knowledge base that can be tested, modified, and revised when appropriate (LaBoskey, 1994; Loughran & Northfield, 1996). Each of the ATE Standards' (2007) description cites research supporting the intent and includes indicators and a suggested list of artifacts (see Appendix B) that would support the reflection of the teacher-educator and responses by the CFN. During the four phases of the exploration, each of the nine standards including the definition, indicators, and

artifacts was compared to each of the 10 CFN responses. The researcher examined the responses for exact word(s) or phrase(s) and noteworthy comments that aligned with the ATE Standards (2007). These became the possible themes the researcher used for comparison with the pre- and postreflections.

The researcher's reflections identify the difference between the teacher-educator's perceptions and CFN responses. The description, analysis, and evaluation inherent in the reflective process form the basis for professional understanding and improvement. The reflective process has been recognized as being important in sustaining one's professional health and competence, and the ability to exercise professional judgment, in fact, is informed through reflection on practice (Day, 1999; Loughran, 2002; Schön, 1983, 1987, 1991). The findings for this section address research subquestions:

1. How did the vignettes, reflections, belief statement, and CFN responses including artifacts identified help me assess my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?
2. What artifacts concerning this vignette contribute to my understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?

The data were reviewed in the aggregate, and, then, disaggregated by CFN subgroup. When reading the CFN responses, the researcher looked for keywords from or similar phrases to the ATE Standards (2007) representing the teacher-educator's practice identified and confirmed by the CFN (see Table 5). Initially, the researcher read CFN responses looking for consensus and/or areas not in alignment. Then, content analysis was employed looking for word meanings. Numerical tallies were kept to determine the number of CFN members that concurred on a given theme.

Eight members of the CFN cited the research questions in their responses, while 2 members did not use the questions at all, rather, responding with discussion about the vignettes and belief statements. It should be noted that though the first vignette was about teaching, the topic of other vignettes were evident in each phase of the CFN responses, and the topic of teaching was discussed in CFN responses to the other three vignettes.

### **Teaching**

**CFN aggregated data.** There was a range of standards the CFN perceived as evidenced in this phase of the research. In the aggregate, the researcher identified that 8 of the 10 CFN members responded with keywords or phrasing, aligned to Standards 1, 2, 7, and 9. Standards 4, 5, and 8 were noted by fewer than 5 of the members. Standards 3 and 6 were not noted by any of the CFN. The researcher perceived that Standard 6: Collaboration was evident in the vignette but this was not concurred by the CFN. The researcher agreed with the CFN that Standard 3 was not evident. Table 5 displays which standards and keywords were identified by the CFN. The keywords and phrases identified match the vocabulary found in each of the standards. If a number is found beside a keyword or phrase this indicates that more than one member of the CFN identified this keyword or phrase.

Table 5

*Teaching and ATE Standards*

ATE standard (2007)	Keywords or phrases identified by CFN*
Standard 1—Teaching	Assessment; passion (3); dialogue; strategies; modeling; instructional techniques
Standard 2—Cultural Competence	Teaching and learning styles; life experiences
Standard 4—Professional Development	Lifelong learner; reflective
Standard 5—Program Development	Resources
Standard 7—Public Advocacy	Knowledge of laws; policy & procedures; social justice
Standard 8—Teacher Education Profession	Challenging expectations
Standard 9—Vision	Promoting growth and change; reflection; believe you can make a difference

\*Figures in Keyword/Phrase column indicate the number of CFN members using word

Table 6 supports subquestion 2: What artifacts concerning this vignette contribute to my understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator? In this first CFN response, artifacts identified ranged from objects in the online storage unit cited in the *Teaching* vignette to items in the online storage but not identified by the researcher in the vignette. For example, the artifact of the article written by the researcher was cited by 3 of the CFN members was not identified by the researcher for this phase of the research but was available through the online storage unit for viewing by the CFN at any time. All artifacts were selected by the researcher prior to the start of the study and placed in the online storage.



Table 6

*Artifacts Identified for Teaching*

Artifacts identified	Number of times identified by CFN members
Article	3
Picture of presentation	1
Pre- and postsurveys	1
Belief statement	1
Classroom conversations	1
Instructional notes	1
Nonfiction text	3
Certificates	1
Letters	1

**Disaggregated CFN subgroup findings for Phase 1: Teaching**

**Former graduate students.** The former graduate students' responses in Phase 1 used the words *commitment*, *devoted*, and *passion* supporting Standards 1 and 9. All four former graduate students thought the teacher-educator displayed "self-confidence in teaching". They perceived the teacher-educator as having "knowledge" and believed that the teacher-educator provided students with opportunity for self-discovery, which they credited to the teacher-educator's willingness to learn. All four spoke of the teacher-educator's commitment to ideals and "passion and devotion" to teacher education. DS4 is quoted as saying, "she desperately wants her students to catch her passion." "Jamey pushes her students to reach inside themselves and dig deep to see what you really can do as a teacher to make the future for students with special needs as beneficial for them as we can" (DS9)." DS 11 stated,

The philosopher Socrates is quoted as saying that the unexamined life is not worth living, perhaps a variation of this theme is echoed in Jamey's work: the teacher who does not examine his or her practices should not be teaching.

***Public School Colleagues.*** The three public school colleagues (DS3, DS7, and DS10) spoke of teaching methods and strategies used during instruction (Standard 1) that promote learning. Included in their reflection were the terms *modeling, real world experiences, collaboration, open dialogue, use of technology in instruction, and storytelling*. One of the public school colleagues spent considerable time in response to the philosophy-statement activity the teacher-educator has students complete (DS9). The concern that students' own actions/words could not define the teacher-educator, as the researcher had stated in the belief statement. DS7 and DS10 both mentioned the teacher-educator's use of nonfiction as the catalyst for discussing the sexual identities of students' with disabilities, and the need to teach appropriate behavior(s). This was viewed as progressive teaching and a topic the colleagues viewed as relevant and in need of further discussion in schools (Standards 2, 7, and 9). The public school colleagues addressed the teacher-educator's knowledge of special-education law and policy (Standards 1 and 7). DS7 stated that the belief statement needed concrete examples (Standard 9). DS10 referenced how each standard, both in indicator and artifact, was met.

***IHE faculty.*** The three IHE faculty CFN members also wrote about instruction (Standard 1). Two of the 3 respondents discussed the teacher-educator's capacity as a mentor, and the influence in promoting learning for all (Standards 1 and 7). DS8 responded by saying, "You are a reflective teacher as demonstrated by your efforts to be a more effective teacher (online teacher training, professional reading, attending professional lectures of special educators and authors)." This was similar with the responses of the public school colleagues. DS2 felt "it was the modeling of instructional

practice that was powerful.” DS8 posted that though the researcher mentioned in the *Teaching* vignette the assessment tools used, a discussion of the outcomes of those assessments or analysis of the pre- and post-philosophies was not included in the vignette, itself.

## **Service**

**CFN aggregated data.** A more robust response came in Phase 2 with the introduction of the second vignette, *Service*, and reframed belief statement. Themes that emerged in the CFN response included *teaching methods, best instructional practice, collaboration, advocacy, and risk-taking*. The CFN, in this second response, as indicated in Table 7, often identified the standards in describing the researcher’s teacher-educator practice and then supported a statement with documentation from their own experience with the researcher or from the vignette itself. The researcher again placed a numerical value by keywords/phrases that received more than one member of the CFN response.

Table 8 describes the artifacts the CFN identified as important in understanding the *Service* vignette. There was a considerable increase by the CFN in the quantity, both in amount of artifacts identified and the number of times a specific artifact was identified by multiple members of the CFN. Eight of the 10 members of the CFN cited teacher evaluations of staff development as supportive of the vignette. Four cited the reframed belief statement and the vignette itself as an artifact. Artifacts identified in this phase of the research were more specific rather than the broad range identified by the CFN in the first response to the belief statement and vignette, *Teaching*.

Table 7

*Service & ATE Standards*

ATE standards (2007)	Keyword & phrases identified by CFN*
Standard 1—Teaching	Collaboration (3 ); teaching methods; promote mentoring
Standard 2—Cultural Competence	Truths; relationship builder; open to new ideas; emotional support & trust; community
Standard 3—Scholarship	Knowledge; follow-up; PDS; valuable contribution; appreciates feedback
Standard 4—Professional Development	Service connects with PD; lifelong learner; reflective; revising her own beliefs; willing to work with others to help build her own knowledge
Standard 5—Program Development	Best instructional practice (5); grounded; research to teaching (3)
Standard 6—Collaboration	Collaboration (8); willing to take her knowledge and share; connection of institutes of higher education and local education agencies
Standard 7—Public Advocacy	Public advocacy (4); risk-taker (3); not afraid; reduce prejudice; making something happen
Standard 8—Teacher Education Profession	Helps teachers/administrators step out of their comfort zone; current & relevant
Standard 9—Vision	Enthusiasm (3); risk-taker (3); always going outside the box; has something important to say

\*Figures in Keyword/Phrase column indicate the number of CFN members using word

Table 8

*Artifacts for Service*

Artifacts identified	Number of times cited
Belief Statement	4
Faculty Notebook	2
Journals	2
Survey	1
Vignette	4
Teacher Contract	1
Book	2
Class Notes	1
Teacher Logs	3
Evaluations	8

**Disaggregated CFN subgroup findings for Phase II: Service**

***Former graduate students.*** The former graduate students offered similar responses with the themes of risk-taker (Standard 7) and enthusiasm (Standard 1). DS4: “She obviously cares about helping adults learn as much as she cares about helping kids learn.” DS5: “Jamey helped other teachers and administrators in the county step outside their comfort zone.” DS9:

With Jamey’s guidance, the collaboration of teachers willingly contributed more of their time and effort to the implementation of a mentoring program—another example of Jamey’s unique and desirable teaching methods that continue to strengthen educators and make them feel they can and are capable of anything they put their mine to, they just have to go beyond their comfort zone and strive to do what is best for everyone!

DS11: “Not only do you bring your students current and relevant truths (standards 1 and 7), but you put those truths into practice.” DS11 did state a weakness in the vignette writing, suggesting, “The acronyms seemed unwieldy.” This criticism in the writing was similar to the response of respondent DS7 offered in the first phase. The researcher began to consider if this was a weakness in writing or her teacher-educator practice or,

both. Did she teach using “unwieldy acronyms” and did she explain what terminology meant? The same thought came to the researcher about assessment. Did she discuss assessment results thoroughly with her class?

***Public school colleagues.*** Two of the three public school colleagues commented on mentoring (Standard 1). All three mentioned that collaboration (Standard 6) and community (Standard 2) are integral to the researcher’s teacher-educator practice. DS7: “I personally know that Jamey strives to make all parties comfortable in their role without judgment and is always willing to discuss/regroup when the situation calls for it.” DS10: “Jamey actively participated in a learning community that was focused on educational change as a school identified the need and Jamey worked closely with the staff to create the change.” DS3: “She reflected on her own practices and beliefs about taking risks in the learning environment” (Standards 4 and 7).

***IHE Faculty.*** The IHE members of the CFN used the keyword *advocate* (Standard 7). DS2: “This vignette helps me assess your self-efficacy as a teacher-educator because it gives me a broader perspective of what you understand as an advocate for best practice and current, relevant truths.” DS6:

Jamey, in your statement of your beliefs “about my teacher education self-efficacy” you indicated that as a teacher-educator you were an advocate for best instructional practices for all learners you sought to bring your students current and relevant information regarding education. Vignette II reveals an individual who is actively working within these stated beliefs.

DS8: “The teacher-educator recognizes the importance of being a child advocate.” “She has analyzed the Service component purpose of her IHE and produced a quality contribution.”

## Professional Development

**CFN aggregated data.** Phase 3, which included the *Professional-Development* vignette, generated the most response of all the vignettes. The researcher does not know why this is. It could be the topic of publishing an article appealed to the CFN. The researcher suspects it was the inclusion of her graduate students in the writing process that appealed to the CFN, as all 10 commented on this area (Standard 6). Themes included disposition and persistence from Standard 1; knowledgeable from Standard 3; reflective from Standard 4; and, included the keywords from Standard 6. All 10 members, stating the teacher-educator includes others in her teaching experiences and collaboration is core to her teaching repertoire, discussed standard 6. Five CFN members commented on Standard 8 and the notion of impacting a broader audience supported Standard 9. The CFN commented on the process of this research, the emotion in teaching, and transparency of the teacher-educator's actions. The CFN described the teacher-educator as modest and that emotion is evident in the teacher-educator's practice. Table 9 describes ATE standards (2007) and the keywords/phrases the CFN identified as part of the teacher-educator's practice.

The CFN became more nuanced in what they were looking for as supports for the vignette and reframed belief statement. Table 10 shows the artifacts the CFN found to be in support of the *Professional-Development* vignette. The CFN cited the researcher's published journal article as the artifact supporting the work.

Table 9

*Professional Development & ATE Standards*

Standards	Keywords & phrases identified by CFN*
Standard 1—Teaching	Care; collaboration (4); models; multiple strategies; disposition (10); passion (4); love, commitment, persistence (5); modest (4); cheer-leader
Standard 2—Cultural Competence	Equitable (4); students as stakeholders (3)
Standard 3—Scholarship	Process (3); knowledgeable (7)
Standard 4—Professional Development	Reflective (6); engage others; self-development; always trying to better herself
Standard 5—Program Development	Increase knowledge base; transparent goals
Standard 6—Collaboration	Collaboration (4), include others (10); rely on knowledge of others
Standard 7—Public Advocacy	Models; practice what she preaches; wants others to succeed; risk-taker
Standard 8—Teacher Education Profession	Systematic; improving instruction; commitment to advancing the profession; broader audience (5)
Standard 9—Vision	The process of getting there (5); determination; emotion (5); passion; transparent (4); believe in yourself & others

\*Figures in Keyword/Phrase column indicate the number of CFN members using word

Table 10

*Artifacts Identified by CFN*

Artifacts	Number of times cited
Belief Statement	2
Vignette	5
Article	8
Workshop presentation	3
Pictures	3
Conference Proceedings	1

**Disaggregated CFN subgroup findings for Phase III: Professional development**

***Former graduate students.*** The former graduate students spoke to the teacher-educator's self-efficacy. DS4:



It is very clear that Jamey has a high sense of self-efficacy. She believes in herself, her students, and her work. I especially like the fact that you could tell she was not boastful about her accomplishments, but glad about their accomplishments and excited about the opportunities. (Standards 1 and 4)

DS5: “She trusted their (students) input and never gave up when it took months. Even when she thought that the article might never get published she continued to work toward achieving the goal” (Standards 1 and 4). DS9: “You believe in yourself and others around you.” “Accepting your graduate students as stakeholder in your journal article project is a reflection of how collaboration from all walks of life is beneficial and needed to keep educators grounded.” “You have placed yourself on equitable ground with your students and that has contributed to how your students learn in your classroom” (Standard 6). DS11: “You are truly not afraid to have your students question you or your practices” (Standard 7). “A crucial part of your goal for being a life-long learner is to incorporate others in the process.” “It shows that you make an important part of your learning process to include others, to bounce ideas off them, and to gain insight from their ideas” (Standard 6).

***Public school colleagues.*** The public school colleagues in the CFN were able to support the former student responses, as well as add insight into the belief statement (Standards 1, 4, 6, and 7). DS3: “During her publication she was a risk-taker, mentor, facilitator, developer, collaborator, and cheer-leader.” DS10: “Jamey, you are so modest. I remember you mentioned that you had submitted a journal article but until this process, I was unaware the article had been published.” “I believe that every indicator in the standards was touched upon through the process of creating and publishing the article.” In response to the reframed belief statement DS10 stated, “I feel as though I have gotten into Jamey’s head and understand her perspective in a much clearer fashion.” However,

DS7 disagreed with the researcher's notion that the teacher educator can provide expertise; "You can have your own expertise, you can model expertise, you can provide your students with the background needed to develop expertise, but unfortunately, the students MUST develop their own expertise."

***IHE faculty.*** The IHE CFN supported the collaboration (Standard 6) theme and the comments of both the former students and the public school colleagues. Standards 1, 5, and 8 were also addressed by the IHE CFN. DS2: "By working with two of your students and sharing edits and accomplishments (publication and dinner) you demonstrate how you collaborate with others and model for your students how to further their successes." DS6: "By inviting your graduate students to co-author with you for the NAPDS you afforded them the rare opportunity to collect and review data, explore literature, and write for a scholarly journal." "By working with them you were able to coach and model for them the necessary steps for them to be successful in the publishing arena." "This was an authentic learning experience for your students thanks to your willingness to "think outside the box", and commitment to advancing the profession by improving our teachers and prospective teachers." DS8: "The publication and the mental pictures of meeting the students outside the typical classroom setting discussed in this vignette are contributing artifacts to the discussion." "The narrative of the publication process also meets the teacher-educator's self-standards of being a risk-taker and equipping students with skills to handle life's challenges." "In the case of the article, the challenges were in the form of emotions ranging from anxiety to jubilation and from self-doubt to self-confidence." "This vignette was very helpful in rating the teacher high on the efficacy scale."

## Research

**CFN aggregated data.** There was 100% participation by all CFN members.

Table 11 identifies the ATE Standards (2007) and the keywords/phrases the CFN wrote about in response to the *Research* vignette. Standards 2, 3, and 7 had the most response to keywords from the CFN members. The CFN members indicated Standards 1, 6, and 9 with over 50% of the CFN providing keywords or phrases for each.

Table 11

### *Research and ATE Standards (2007)*

ATE standards (2007)	Keyword & phrases identified by CFN*
Standard 1—Teaching	Technology; model (2); disposition (authentic, humble, enthusiasm(2), commitment, perseverance, passion, devoted ); style/strategies (5)
Standard 2—Cultural Competence	Natural part of you; transfer ownership from the student's ethnicity or poverty level to the teacher as the significant force; not worried about having the label that goes along with getting the doctorate, more excited about growing and becoming a better teacher; different points of view
Standard 3—Scholarship	Knowledge (2); research (7); the way she wrote this as a story helps the reader be able to understand her better; why she does what she does
Standard 4—Professional Development	Reflective (8); process (3); analysis
Standard 5—Program Development	Questioning assessment is a gutsy move; LET Why you do what you do (3); relevance; technology; this research displays systematic procedures other educators could use
Standard 6—Collaboration	Collaboration(5); CFN; us/ we (7)
Standard 7—Public Advocacy	Influential (3); a model for others; never settle; encouragement to us all; go above and beyond; significant force; gives a much different perspective
Standard 8—Teacher Education Profession	Knowledge (4); PDS work must continue
Standard 9—Vision	Essence of your teacher psyche; a leader (5)

\*Figures in Keyword/Phrase column indicate the number of CFN members using word

Table 12 identifies the artifacts identified by the CFN members to support the *Research* vignette. The CFN noted only two artifacts: the reframed belief statement and

the *Research* vignette as supporting this phase of the research. Nine of the 10 participants referenced the belief statement and the vignette as the support for this phase.

Table 12

*Artifacts as Identified by CFN*

Artifacts	Number of times cited
Belief statement	9
Vignette	9

**Disaggregated CFN subgroup findings for Phase IV: Research.**

***Former graduate students.*** Speaking about the research, DS4 said, “It is a great model that other teachers could use to find out more about themselves.” “She is an encouragement to us all by stepping out and showing us that we can always do better and always give more.” This statement supports Standards 1, 5, and 7. DS5: “She is very humble about her work as a teacher-educator and I think that is what makes her a great teacher-educator.” “I feel that Jamey has taught many of us to work hard to accomplish our goals and to never give up.” “The most important statement that stood out to me was that Jamey feels this is not only her research, but the CFN’s research as well.” Standards 1 and 4 were supported by DS9 who said “I know that this whole dissertation experience has not only demonstrated how essential you are to the teaching force, but has helped everyone involved take a step back to reflect.” DS11: “I think, what you have outlined in your research is the direction that educators should focus more on.” “You strive not only to teach but be taught.”

***Public school colleagues.*** The public school colleague responses were primarily reflections in their own right (Standards 1, 4, 5, and 9). DS3: “I feel that Jamey truly is a

teacher-educator.” DS7: “Questioning assessment as the primary source evaluation is a gutsy move. Your vignettes have been very beneficial for me to step back and take a fresh look at my own methodology.” DS10 responded “Reading this vignette made me question my responses. Was I provocative enough? Thoughtful enough?” The public school colleague responses validated, again, that this research was collaborative and not only the researcher’s but also the CFNs. The CFN’s questioning of their own practice changed the course of the responses. Rather than responding solely to the questions the researcher posed for the framework of this research, the CFN colleagues moved to a more critical analysis, reflecting on their own practice and juxtaposing the teacher-educator’s thoughts to their own ideas concerning teaching and self-efficacy.

*IHE faculty.* Findings from the IHE CFN were similar to those from former graduate students and public school colleagues. The IHE CFN, too, were reflecting on their practice. The researcher’s ability to be a productive member of the teacher-educator community as IHE faculty meets the Standards 3, 4, 8, and 9. DS2: “This vignette chronicles your progress from conception to analysis of your CFN.” DS6: “Jamey, my sense is that you are getting to the essence of your teacher-educator psyche.” “You have a true sense of who you are as a person and educator. It is my feeling that arriving at this point in one’s professional life is not one’s final destination, but rather just part of the journey.” DS8: “I have learned a great deal by participating in this research. This research has been clearly organized and implemented to achieve a goal. The artifacts strongly support this effort and embody the ATE standards (2007), very impressive.”

## **Finding from Researcher's Reflections**

The researcher wrote a reflection prior to and after the CFN responses to the four vignettes (2 reflections per vignette for a total of 8 reflections). The significant concepts in the CFN responses were compared to the researcher's first reflection using the ATE Standards (2007) indicators for keywords, and the second reflection was written concerning these new findings. This section includes specific quotes from the researcher's reflection, which are written in first person as the researcher was the teacher-educator and the subject of the reflections.

**Research Subquestion 1.** How did the vignettes, reflections, belief statement, and CFN responses including artifacts identified help me assess my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?

***Reflection I for Phase 1: Teaching.*** In the first reflection for Phase 1, *Teaching*, the researcher was concerned that not all of the ATE Standards (2007) would be addressed throughout the research. "I have reread the ATE Standards (2007) and one of my concerns is that the four vignettes based around the category requirements for a faculty notebook do not encompass the standards." For example, the researcher did not feel after writing the first vignette, *Teaching*, that Standard 1—teaching—and Standard 2—cultural competency—was as thoroughly discussed in the vignette as the researcher actually teaches in practice. The researcher felt there was a disconnect between her actual practice and what she wrote. The researcher believes these two standards are core to her practice. She teaches specific courses concerning culture and diversity. An advocate for social-justice issues, the researcher as a teacher-educator exposes her students to societal issues including domestic violence, homelessness, hunger, and

sexual-identity. Yet, only one of these topics (sexual identity) was included as part of the vignette. The researcher did not know how to perceive her teacher-educator self-efficacy at this point in the research. It was too simplistic to say it was high or low; rather, the researcher felt she knew she was a good teacher but unsure of how she knew she was a good teacher-educator.

***Reflection II for Phase I: Teaching.*** In the second reflection, the researcher wrote about the finding that the CFN was considering the ATE Standards (2007). One member of the CFN addressed each of the standards. The researcher stated,

I felt validated by the student responses. I care very much what the students are learning from me and I believe the best way to teach is through modeling the behaviors that make for effective teaching. Therefore, if what the students are learning from my teacher-educator practice is to be a risk-taker, to collaborate with others, to be persistent, and to trust in the process, well, I am thrilled. I am still considering DS7's comment about expertise but the fact that I keep thinking about it means there is something to it. This is the value of reflection.

The researcher believes if her students as classroom teachers do not practice the information she is trying to instill in her students, then, the teacher-educator's claim to be efficacious is moot. In the second reflection, the researcher discovered that reflective writing was often an extension of the vignette. The research questions were a necessity to help the researcher write to a specific focus, but the researcher wrote she was concerned with the clarity of the subquestions in this second reflection for *Teaching*. In retrospect, the subquestions needed to be further divided into additional questions. The subquestions were meant to be guides for the CFN and the researcher when writing responses and reflections. The researcher was also concerned that Standard 6: collaboration was not evident to the CFN in the vignette. Was this true about her teacher-educator practice or a weakness in the writing?

***Reflection I for Phase 2: Service.*** In the second phase of the research, *Service*, the researcher wrote in the first reflection “true service is an act of selfishness.” The researcher as a teacher-educator believes she tries to impress this point to her students. The teacher-educator believes service has totally given her an opportunity to contribute to the community, and this feels good. Teacher-educators get an opportunity to learn in service. “It legitimizes my teaching to have learners know that I am not only theoretical, but, I model those practices that reflect knowledge of human development with my educational community. In this sense, I practice what I preach.” In the *Service* vignette, the researcher wrote she was able to model strategies that successfully address learning needs of students in today’s classrooms. Standard 1—teaching—Standard 7—public advocacy—and Standard 9—vision were addressed. The researcher was concerned that Standard 5—program development—and Standard 8—the teacher education profession—might be overlooked as these two standards seemed more administrative in nature than specific to a class or in-service training.

***Reflection II for Phase 2: Service.*** In the second reflection for the *Service* vignette, the researcher wrote about specific keywords from the ATE Standards (2007): advocate, collaborate, and risk-taker. These keywords were noted by the researcher and the CFN in the *Service* vignette as themes in the second phase. This led the researcher to consider how clearly the writing was about self-efficacy. The researcher defined self-efficacy as the extent to which teachers believe in their own capability to impact student learning, even with those who may have behavioral, emotional, or motivational problems (Guskey & Passaro, 1994; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). These beliefs influence how long a teacher will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with



failures, and how much stress they experience in coping with demanding situations

(Bandura, 1997). Thinking about this, the researcher wrote,

Teaching is the one thing a teacher is in control of and that everything a teacher-educator does is teaching. Every interaction is an opportunity in teaching. In my classroom, I state that I am a proponent for inclusion and democracy.

Opportunities for service in the community allow the teacher-educator real-life practice of her beliefs. As written about in this vignette, the researcher was able to model how a school community can implement inclusionary practice.

***Reflection I for Phase 3: Professional development.*** In Phase 3 of the research, *Professional Development*, the researcher wrote in the first reflection,

The vignette meant a lot to me, personally and professionally, because it was my first published journal article. The article, itself, was completed using aspects that I believe are core to me: risk-taking and collaboration. It was “risky” to decide to write for publication, and, even more concerning was the teacher-educator’s decision to ask students to participate in the process. As demonstrated in the vignette, being published was a defining moment in my self-efficacy because I, now, know that I can write, a key skill set for IHE faculty.

Not only did the risk-taking behavior increase the teacher-educator’s self-efficacy, the risk of collaborating with the students in the process demonstrate the teacher-educator modeling for her students the benefit of taking that risk. Again, the researcher expressed concerns surrounding her ability to address all of the ATE Standards (2007). Standard 5—program development—and Standard 8—the teacher education profession—was still a concern.

***Reflection II for Phase 3: Professional development.*** The researcher wrote in the second reflection for *Professional Development* about the impact the CFN made with their responses to the vignette and the reframed belief statement. Individual members of the CFN were challenging the researcher’s belief that it is her responsibility to educate teachers and teaching interns the skills required to be successful educators. DS7 believes

it is a student's responsibility and the teacher-educator cannot ensure that best practices will be implemented by others. The researcher agrees that it is not possible to force a teacher or teaching intern to do as the teacher-educator does, but it is the teacher-educator's responsibility to model the ideals of solid teaching: character, content knowledge, and strategies to engage all learners. This idea from DS7 about *who* is responsible for learning has the researcher wondering if there is a difference between expertise and the role of a teacher. This issue is, quite possibly on a smaller scale, the tension American education is struggling to resolve. If teacher preparation programs are held accountable for student achievement in public schools then teacher-educators must assess the effectiveness of their own practice. This research began as a personal inquiry, but in fact has much greater ramifications for teacher preparation programs. This knowledge has led the researcher to perceive that Standards 5 (program development) and 8 (the teacher-education profession) are being addressed indirectly through the vignettes, and directly through this self-study research.

***Reflection I for Phase 4: Research.*** The *Research* vignette was designed and organized to provide the CFN with the researcher's preparation and experience during this exploratory study. The researcher found this vignette to be the most difficult to write, partly because the time constraints and the events written about concerned this research. The researcher wrote in the first reflection that perhaps the CFN should have been asked to consider the teacher-educator's work in the aggregate rather than dissected into parts. In previous responses, the researcher began to perceive that the CFN was making an argument that teacher-educators must be competent as teacher-educators because they are the primary source of information for teachers. Several members of the

CFN (DS3, DS5, DS7, and DS11) responded that the teacher-educator couldn't enforce expertise for teaching; rather, teacher-educators can only provide the tools in the form of modeling how to implement strategies for teaching and technology, as well as, other manipulative and teaching materials. Self-efficacy is the belief that one has the skills and ability to implement successfully a given charge. Maybe DS7 has been correct in stating that the teacher-educator cannot enforce a practice. The researcher felt Standard 3—scholarship—was best met in this phase, whereas other standards were not significantly demonstrated, such as Standard 1—teaching. The *Research* vignette's intent was to describe the process of this self-study. Other standards referenced indirectly in the discussion of how the implementation of the procedures and the analysis were completed, but were not the focus of the vignette.

***Reflection II for Phase 4: Research.*** The second reflection of Phase 4 has given the researcher a deeper understanding of the teacher-educator's own reflective practice, which is vital to understanding self-efficacy. Reflection is part of this teacher-educator's psyche. In reading the CFN responses, the researcher believes that Standard 9—vision—from the ATE standards (2007) is a key element of her teacher-educator practice. For example DS9 stated, "You are extremely influential in your teaching methods and how to present information." The CFN continued to respond that their participation in this research influenced their teaching practice. DS7 said, "Reading this vignette made me question my responses. Was I provocative enough or thoughtful enough?" The researcher did not anticipate that an exploration of her own teacher-educator practice would result in influencing others. The researcher became cognizant in this process that everything she does has the potential to influence those around her; even more reason to

be a reflective practitioner. In order for the researcher to have a strong sense of self-efficacy as a teacher-educator, awareness of the fact that the researcher is a teacher-educator all the time in all facets of her life will optimize learning for everyone. Standard 1—teaching—was met through the best practice of modeling strategies. The researcher was able to model reflection and the CFN then began practicing it in their responses.

When the researcher wrote of a concern, the CFN was able to verify or counter with examples, creating a prism effect (Samaras, 2010). That is, on any given issue the CFN gave multiple perspectives so that the researcher could see different ways to interpret a concern. The researcher is still considering the notion of presenting one's best work rather than presenting areas of a teacher-educator's practice that are in need of improvement. When the researcher addressed this concern in the *Research* vignette, the CFN responded by citing instances where each knew the researcher had, in fact, fulfilled this particular standard. This is a benefit of the CFN.

The self-study methodology required the use of the CFN. The researcher wrote that she was skeptical about the IHE participation as she is new to higher education and there is limited opportunity to interact. The IHE CFN gave a perspective that the researcher would not have had with only the former graduate students and public school colleagues participating in the CFN. The researcher believes her concerns in using member of the IHE were an apprehension that the IHE members of the CFN would be far more critical than the public school colleagues and former graduate students. The IHE members, in their individual responses, supported what the other CFN members said and this led the researcher to realize that she is no longer the student or the public-school-

teacher; she, is also part of the IHE community. Often, the researcher identified most with the IHE members' responses.

**Research Subquestion 2.** What artifacts concerning this vignette contribute to my understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?

**Phase I: Teaching.** The researcher questioned whether the artifacts were contributing to the research in a meaningful way or simply serving as proof of the activities cited in the vignettes. For example, the researcher identified artifacts such as the ticket stubs to the two fieldtrips cited in the *Teaching* vignette. The researcher wrote in the second reflection,

The online storage of artifacts was a helpful because I was forced to review again what I thought was a valid artifact. I wonder if I had just provided artifacts and asked the CFN to respond only to the artifacts what the responses might have said about my teaching.

**Phase II: Service.** Artifacts identified by the CFN in the second phase of the research were the *Service* vignette and the belief statement. The researcher realized during reflection that an identified artifact in the vignette (activity rings) was not in the storage unit. The book cited in the vignette was noted by 7 members of the CFN but this was not actually available for their viewing. Eight members of the CFN cited the written feedback from the school where the service took place as an important artifact supporting the vignette.

**Phase III: Professional development.** In the third phase, the published article, itself, was cited by the researcher and 8 of the CFN as supporting the *Professional-Development* vignette. Other artifacts cited were the belief statement (2), the vignette (5), the workshop PowerPoint presentation (3) and pictures (3).

**Phase IV: Research.** In this final phase, the researcher and the CFN were in agreement concerning the artifacts. The CFN, again, stated that the vignette and the belief statement supported the work. The researcher agreed with this finding. The faculty notebook, specifically the teacher-educator's curriculum vita was influential in the writing of the research vignette. In the faculty notebook are self-statements and student evaluations. These were valuable to review prior to the writing of the vignettes.

**Research Subquestion 3.** Based on this vignette how do I perceive my teacher-educator self-efficacy?

**Phase I: Teaching.** The first phase of this research, including the *Teaching* vignette, CFN response, and the researcher's reflection facilitated a focus on specific issues to be addressed in the belief statement. The researcher felt secure in her ability to convey information regarding her methods of teaching but unsure whether the standards she was attempting to verify that she used in her practice would be recognized by the CFN. This fear was not validated by the CFN; rather, the CFN stated that the standards were demonstrated in the vignettes. DS8 stated that "the artifacts strongly support this effort and embody the ATE standards (2007)."

**Phase II: Service.** In the second phase of this research, *Service*, the researcher, in her reflection, considered that self-efficacy is fragile and can be influenced. There are often external factors for which the teacher-educator may not be able to control. The researcher stated in this reflection,

If self-efficacy is the willingness to give it everything, to rebound from mistakes, and to persist even when it is difficult, then I have it. The experience described in this vignette was a definite test of my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator.

**Phase III: Professional development.** The third phase of this research, *Professional Development*, was a distinct shift in the researcher's reflections and the CFN

responses. The CFN were thinking about self-efficacy and commenting specifically on the reframed belief statement. The CFN was asking questions for specific revisions to the belief statement. DS10 wanted specific concrete examples of the teacher-educator's practice included in the belief statement. DS7 had argued "the teacher-educator is not responsible for providing expertise and knowledge." These statements made by the CFN were some of the most powerful for the researcher as she reflected on her self-efficacy as a teacher-educator. A former graduate student CFN responded,

It is very clear that Jamey has a high sense of self-efficacy. She believes in herself, her students, and her work. I especially like the fact that you could tell she was not boastful about her accomplishments, but glad about their accomplishments and excited about the opportunities (DS4).

DS5 and DS10 used the words modest and humble in writing their response. A concern the researcher had was that the vignettes and reflections would be prideful and the fact that 3 of the CFN in this phase commented on the researcher's humble nature was validating that the research itself was not an undertaking of the vain, but a meaningful process of self-discovery. The CFN stated that the researcher has a strong sense of self-efficacy without the researcher ever using those words in any document that was shared with the CFN. The teacher-educator's reflections were not shared with the CFN. Seven of the 10 CFN wrote about the teacher-educator's strong sense of self-efficacy. The researcher wrote in reflection, "The belief statement must transform in this third reframing because the CFN and the researcher are in a transformation. There is a synergy with the group."

***Phase IV: Research.*** The final phase of the research started with the teacher-educator stating

I do believe I know what best practice is for many situations in education. I do believe I can influence change for the better in many of the dilemmas I see in

education. I believe I am like a general and my students are the frontline soldiers. It is my job to prepare teachers with the knowledge and training to be effective. I see special education as a battle and the students and teacher who are caught in the middle as my responsibility.

### **Teacher-Educator Self-Efficacy Belief Statement**

**Initial belief statement.** The overarching research question (*What are my beliefs about my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?*) was used to develop and reframe a belief statement concerning the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy using the four vignette topics as headings to separate the researcher's thoughts concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy in each area (see Appendix D). An initial belief statement written using the process of a free-write in an attempt to answer the question "Why do I teach?" (Goodyear & Allchin, 1998, p.103) The ATE Standards (2007) along with research Subquestion 2, (*How did the vignettes, reflections, belief statement, and CFN responses including artifacts identified, help me assess my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?*), provided the researcher with the reference points for the reframing of the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statements. The researcher attempted to address all facets of her teaching in broad statements by considering the factors that influence the researcher's beliefs about her teaching.

**Reframing I: Belief statement.** The *Teaching* vignette demonstrated the researcher's competence in the area of Standard 2—cultural diversity—as it described the teacher-educator's use of nonfiction texts as a catalyst for understanding of different life experiences, yet the first belief statement did not reflect this area in the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. From the first to the second draft of the belief statement, the researcher was focused on conveying that she was listening to the CFN. For example, feedback from the CFN requested more concrete examples to support statements was



made. In response to DS7 and DS10, the second draft was an attempt at more specifically describing the teacher-educator's actions. In reframing the belief statement, the researcher changed the beginning phrasing from "I am a teacher-educator" to "I love being a teacher-educator." This expressed that the researcher understood it is a privilege to be a teacher-educator. The word "strive" was added to the "authentically embody" sentence in an attempt to convey that through the process of reflection the teacher-educator is always changing. Again, in response to DS7 and DS10, the researcher added the phrase "I am optimistic that I" rather than stating definitively "I lead my students." In the fourth section, the sentence "I attempt to bring to my students current and relevant truths regarding education" was moved forward in the writing in an effort to more forcefully demonstrate that the teacher-educator provides students with information regarding policy as it affects them and the students in their classroom.

**Reframing II: Belief statement.** The reframing of the belief statement during the *Service* vignette led to a change in the format. This time it was written in paragraph form. The researcher deleted the opening sentence of "I love being a teacher-educator". The following was added:

At my core, I believe all students are entitled to be able to grow into adults and enjoy life. I know that this means learning how to get along in the world; learning how to take care of oneself; physically, emotionally, and spiritually. My willingness to be a risk-taker is at the heart of my teacher-educator practices. I look outside my own beliefs for better ways of teaching. I find security in taking risks as a learner because I know this will make me a better educator. I am not afraid to make a mistake or to have my students question my beliefs or methods because this inquiry helps me reflect and grow. In that way, I know that I practice what I teach and I am a life-long learner.

The researcher also added at the end of the paragraph the sentence, "Every time I teach, it is with the expectation that my students leave the classroom better off than when they came in."

These changes were made following the CFN request (DS7 and DS10) for more concrete examples of how the researcher knew that she was a risk taker and, in fact, doing the things stated in the belief statement.

**Reframing III: Belief statement.** The researcher was aware in Phase 1 of the research that the CFN members were also reflecting on their own practice. However, by the third reframing the belief statement in Phase 3 of the research, *Professional Development*, the CFN was commenting less on the researcher's practice and more on their own teaching performance. This turning point in the research created a synergy between the CFN members and the researcher providing a shift in the way the researcher approached the belief statement. The CFN continued to ask for concrete ways of knowing. In an effort to discern what the CFN members meant by "concrete" the researcher used pictures as the proof of the researcher's statements. A photograph of the teacher-educator, students, and the guest speaker from the AERA Brown Lecture Series (2008), a picture of the teacher-educator holding the journal with the published article, and a photo of an award ceremony where the teacher-educator was honoring new teachers were framed with the words,

I believe I authentically embody the teacher-educator profession. I encourage my students to question my beliefs and methods. I practice what I teach and I am a life-long learner. I am current in my knowledge of policy and practice.

Each of these sentences was to support why the researcher thought each picture supported the belief statement and give more specific examples of her teacher-educator practice.

**Reframing IV: Belief statement.** Nine CFN cited the belief statement as an artifact during the final vignette, *Research* (see Figure 4). The researcher believed this was due to the addition of the photographs. Therefore, in this final reframing, the pictures were kept and sentences added,

I have a constructive sense of self-efficacy as a teacher-educator. I know this to be true from the successes I have witnessed in my students' classrooms with their students. I know this to be true from the insights my students share in class. I know this to be true because I believe I can teach anyone anything because I am willing to be a lifelong learner.

The wording was changed from "it helps me reflect" to "facilitates reflection" in the second text box. The third text box was kept the same with the exception of the word "continue" added. The final text box was changed to "My expectation for my students is to leave my classroom with the essential knowledge and positive sense of self-efficacy to teach in today's schools. As a teacher-educator this is my purpose."

This nuance of words in the final text box was a direct result of the responses from the CFN concerning who was responsible for learning. The researcher knew that she believed it was her responsibility for student learning but became cognizant that this is the dilemma of self-efficacy theory. Teaching and learning are intertwined. If someone is learning then the researcher believes this is a result of effective teaching. The converse could be said; a lack of learning is the result of a deficiency in teaching. There is a cognitive disconnect for an educator to have a strong sense of self-efficacy, yet have students not learning. The last text box of the teacher-educator belief statement showcased that the researcher believes all students can learn and should be included in learning opportunities. The teacher-educator believes that learning is the purpose and one cannot have a positive sense of self-efficacy yet find that what they are doing in the classroom is not working. If teacher-educators demonstrate this belief through best-practice instruction, modeling capacity building for teacher/student self-efficacy, then education as an organization will have no choice but to believe it is ultimately a teacher's purpose to ensure all students in their classrooms have essential curricular knowledge. The researcher believes self-efficacy beliefs would improve in a dynamic authentic

manner that would lead to increased student achievement if education used teaching self-efficacy as a measure for student achievement success.

The researcher will continue to reframe the belief statement after this research is complete as that is part of the researcher's reflective practice. The changes made may appear to be minor to the outside reader; however, the belief statement serves as a compass for the teacher-educator. This focus on phrasing and individual words provided the teacher-educator with a deeper understanding of her teacher-educator self-efficacy.



*NAPDS  
Article*

I have a constructive sense of self-efficacy as a teacher-educator. I know this to be true from the successes I have witnessed in my students' classrooms with their students. I know this to be true from the insights my students share in class. I know this to be true because I believe I can teach anyone anything because I am willing to be a lifelong learner.

I encourage my students to question my thinking and methods. This inquiry leads students to form their own beliefs and it facilitates reflection of my teaching practice.

*AERA Brown  
Lecture Series*



*PDS Teaching  
Intern Celebration*



I am current in my knowledge of education policy and practice. I model advocacy through my actions in service to the community. I continue to expand my pedagogy using multimedia, technology, collaboration, consultation, and field trips. I employ the works of those that came before me to strengthen my own learning and teaching. I am contributing to the content knowledge of teacher education through my own reflection and research.

My expectation for my students is to leave my classroom with the essential knowledge and positive sense of self-efficacy to teach in today's schools. As a teacher-educator this is my purpose.

Figure 3. Teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement.

## **Summary**

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. Presented in this chapter, the data findings of this exploratory study of the researcher's beliefs concerning her teacher-educator's self-efficacy. The data sources used in this exploration were the primary resources in the teacher-educator's practice as an IHE faculty. The recursive process using vignettes, CFN responses, and researcher reflections were effective tools for the exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy and the development and reframing of the belief statement. Prior to this exploration, the researcher had vague ideas about her teacher-educator self-efficacy. The ATE Standards (2007) provided a frame to support the expression and analysis, in a public forum (CFN), of the teacher-educator's self-efficacy beliefs.

The researcher found that her teacher-educator self-efficacy is fluid and changes by the experience and reflection during this exploratory research. Another finding was that the research had an impact on the CFNs' own teaching practice. Chapter 5 further discusses these two findings and the process of completing this research.

## Chapter 5

### Interpretations, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Introduction

You should therefore cease from practice based on intellectual understanding, pursuing words, and following speech, and learn that backward step that turns your light inwardly to illuminate yourself.

—Eihei Dogen (1200-1253)

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. This chapter presents the interpretations and conclusions drawn from the self-study, and makes recommendations for future self-study of teacher-educator self-efficacy. Through the recursive process of data examination, new understandings concerning the teacher-educator's practice emerged. The researcher shared her professional beliefs and values as a teacher-educator with a Critical Friend Network (CFN) of former graduate students, public school colleagues, and higher education faculty. The CFN provided feedback in response to the researcher's posting of vignettes and belief statements that was reviewed, rewritten and offered as documentation four times during the course of the self-study. Based on the recursive feedback cycle involving the CFN members, the researcher refined the structure and each of the components of her Living Education Theory (LET), an outcome in this self-study.

#### Major Findings

**Finding One: The Living Education Theory of the Researcher as a Teacher-Educator.** LET is the description, explanation, and personal theory making produced from practitioners' accounts of their learning and practice, and, an exploration of living their values (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 2003; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The

researcher found that during the process of the exploration with the CFN, Ashton's principles of teacher self-efficacy (1984) and Huitt's dimensions (2000) of teacher self-efficacy became integral to the development of her LET. The LET that follows is not a philosophy of education; instead, the findings offer a synthesis of the researcher's understanding of her self-efficacy.

At the start of this research, I identified myself as an effective teacher-educator. However, I could not fully account for the situations and experiences across my teaching career that explained this identification of effectiveness. Drawing from Huitt (2000) who states that "a component of teacher efficacy is the notion of accepting accountability and showing a willingness to examine one's teaching performance", this was undertaken. Through the self-study, I have been able to assume the responsibility for such accountability, evaluating and analyzing my teacher-educator practice to determine areas in my teaching practice that are strong and areas where I continue to grow. Drawing upon each area of University faculty work to organize the LET, the researcher addressed her understandings of her teaching, service, professional development, and research practices.

***Teaching.*** I believe that being a teacher-educator is a conduit to great learning opportunities. I embrace continuous learning opportunities; this strengthens my teaching. I seek out the resources and opportunities that will help my students gain an authentic understanding of the issues in teaching. Huitt (2000) states that "A truly effective teacher believes she is capable of influencing student learning." I believe I effectively present all sides of a learning situation, that is, the many reasons for a learner's behavior or the various motives for a decision in teaching. Ashton (1984) supports this stating "The



teacher considers personal responsibility for student learning.” I have an opportunity to influence the classes I teach about their own personal and professional growth. Described by Ashton (1984) as “a position on positive effect”, I have the commitment needed to reach even the most difficult of student personalities. Teaching integrates content knowledge and coming to know and understand students’ interests in order to motivate them. The curriculum I teach is a mix of content and skills. Huitt (2000) states “There must be a plan for student learning, teachers must set goals for themselves, and identify strategies to achieve those goals.” As a student, I received a quality education in my teacher preparation and I know my content. I know that in order to be effective, it is really about my ability to connect and foster relationships with my students in order to influence them of the importance of learning a given content. Ashton (1984) and Huitt (2000) state, “The teacher believes she can influence the learner, the classroom is a democracy, and the teacher involves students in making decisions regarding goals and strategies support this ideal.” I employ the principles of democracy in my teaching, giving students the opportunity to guide instruction. I find that the best way to teach is to provide experiences for students to learn for themselves. I usually have a triad for instruction: authentic storytelling, discussion, and community involvement (service).

I tell authentic, lived stories to get my students engaged and interested in the content. Why are we learning about discrepancy models in special education assessment? Let me tell you a story. How can the right technology affect access to learning for a student with disabilities? Let me tell you a story. How does poverty affect the learning of all students? Let me tell you a story. I use these stories to express the importance of a topic, to weave my understanding of the topic, and to create a desire to

know more from my students. I try to have a story for every occasion. I find that when I do not have a story I tend to lecture; a less effective teaching method. When I am reflecting after a class, I think about the times I lecture, and wonder if I was passionate about the issue or if I did not know enough about the topic.

After a story, I open the class for discussion. Huitt's (2000) eighth dimension states, "Involve students in making decisions regarding goals and strategies." In classes where there are multiple viewpoints to examine concerning a topic/content or a related issue, I will solicit the viewpoints from the students and often engage them in debate. Sometimes, I pose differing views to get an exchange underway. When teaching my online class, I strategically wait two or three weeks, and, then, I send an email to the class that I expect debate on the discussion board. I find that through discussion, students answer their own questions. Through this use of Socratic method, students are using constructivist theory connecting their own prior knowledge and building their own learning theory about the subject at hand. I believe in modeling, building prior knowledge, and engaging students in reflective practice.

Ashton (1984) found that "Teachers with efficacy feel personal responsibility for student learning." I interpret one way of demonstrating my accountability is always telling the truth. If I do not know something, I tell students. If I make a mistake, I publicly admit it. This is a huge issue to me concerning teacher-educator self-efficacy. I believe that once someone is perceived as dishonest they are perceived as lacking integrity, and ignored. Therefore, if students do not trust and believe that I am the expert in the room, I cannot teach. If I make a mistake and cover it up, tell an untruth even through omission, I would have planted the seeds of distrust with my students. It will

grow like a weed with dogged roots that will corrupt any knowledge I try to implant. I believe some teacher-educators worry that admitting a mistake reflects weakness. I believe nothing could be further from the truth. Admitting an error opens the door to new learning and teaching.

I think my students are unaware that I plan the class discussion. What seems like a spontaneous discussion to the class has been well rehearsed in my mind. It also means I prepare to discuss the unanticipated topic raised by a student. I do not get frustrated with a change of plans rather; I try to embrace these moments. I didn't predict, for example, when I decided to show a video of a student with Down Syndrome that the kind of discussion on behavior management that was stimulated included, a student's sharing the class' meaningfulness as she has just been told her first grandchild would be born with Down Syndrome. Such sharing opened to an important discussion on the role of teacher and parent communication and ultimately, family engagement. Those moments remind me how important the work of a teacher-educator is and what an impact I make with every action and word that I say. A teacher-educator must always be prepared for these moments.

*Service.* Coming to the world of higher education, I was surprised to learn that teaching would not be my only responsibility. I found that I was expected to provide service to the community of higher education. I view service as work completed in the schools and neighborhoods where my students, as teachers, taught. Service is a responsibility of all citizens, and, I know that when I commit to true service experiences, it is an act of selfishness, as I am the one that actually receives the benefits. Huitt (2000) states that "Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy feel good about teaching, about

themselves, and about their students.” Community involvement is integral to my work as a teacher-educator and provides me with opportunities I could never have imagined. As often as I can, I try to get my students into a real authentic setting for learning. Sometimes this is classrooms or schools. Sometimes this is attending a board of education meeting or committee meeting for a particular issue. Sometimes we visit local agencies that provide services to families. Always, we provide “labor” for schools and agencies. This is a critical component to these visits. It is one thing to hear that an agency provides clothes for school-age children participating in the free and reduced lunch program. There is added significance when you know that you just sorted through donations and hung 200 pair of pants, one pair that will be on a child you teach within the week. Ashton (1984) states “The teacher will not only have a sense of personal responsibility for student learning but will also have a sense of personal accomplishment.” This is true. I feel such responsibility for my students and I am so satisfied and proud when they come back to tell me about how something they learned from me influenced their teaching. Recently, I learned that a student, who was in the class when we visited a children’s service agency, started a clothing drive in her school. She decided to teach about “service” in her own fourth grade class based on her experience with me. I do feel personal accomplishment, as I know that her experience with me led to the teaching she is doing with her own students. I know community involvement is fundamental to quality teaching, providing the opportunity for students to build on prior knowledge, create new connections for learning, and to have an experience that may shape their own learning and teaching. At my core, I believe all students deserve an education that will give them the knowledge and skills for gainful employment in a

satisfying career. In order to demonstrate the needs of a community, service experiences are essential. Huitt (2000) says, “The teacher must view the work as meaningful and important.” I see the work of a teacher-educator as a calling.

***Professional Development.*** Higher education requires the continual acquisition of professional development opportunities. I employ the works of those that came before me to strengthen my own learning and instruction. The understandings that move me as a learner are the scholarship I try to incorporate in my own classes now. Ashton (1984) calls this “a sense of common teacher/student goals.” As a teacher-educator, I am engaged in professional development with this exploration as just one example of my work to investigate theoretical and practical problems in teaching, learning, and/or teacher education. However, I did not complete the self-study in isolation; rather, I have had a group throughout my research providing response to and validation of the self-study. The CFN began reflecting on their practice.

In addition to this self-study, during the past five years I have taught at an IHE, I have presented at national conferences and published in a peer-reviewed journal, contributing to the learning of others. I demonstrate a consistent pattern of achieving in professional development.

***Research.*** To be a full member of the higher education community and call myself a teacher-educator, I must be actively engaged in research. I ground my practice as a teacher-educator in current policy and research related to teacher education. I believe my effectiveness as a researcher is demonstrated through my understanding of policies affecting education, revealing to my students a depth and breadth of knowledge. Studying my own teacher-educator self-efficacy was the pursuit of new knowledge in

relation to teacher education, connecting this new knowledge to existing contexts and perspectives. I believe using self-study methodology builds accountability as Crowe suggests higher education needs (2010). Ashton (1984) states that teacher self-efficacy includes “strategies are in place to achieve an objective.” This exploratory research was an example of systematically assessing learning goals and outcomes. Keeping data concerning learning is necessary to know if my teaching methods are effective.

As a teacher-educator, I have a knowledge base of research methodologies and procedures, successfully implementing this self-study of my teacher-educator self-efficacy. In the completion of this exploration of a teacher-educator’s self-efficacy, I focused on the Association of Teacher Educator (ATE) Standards (2007) to develop a different way of assessing teacher-educators. This self-study contributes to the body research on the use of self-study to efficiently measure self-efficacy of the teacher-educator. I am contributing to the content knowledge concerning learning and teaching. My LET continues to evolve and change, as this is the nature of reflective practice. The next section discusses the findings concerning the researcher’s teacher self-efficacy during the self-study.

**Finding Two: Self-Efficacy.** The single overarching question (*What are my beliefs about my self-efficacy as a teacher-educator?*) directed this self-study in an attempt to move from a tacit understanding of practice to an explicit and authentic way of knowing. By completing this exploration, the teacher-educator became cognizant of strengths and areas of professional growth, with the immediate ability to address finding in her practice. The identification of ATE Standards (2007) was the frame for discovery. Among the areas in which the researcher demonstrated competency as determined by the

CFN, were Standards 1 (Teaching), 2 (Cultural Competency), 4 (Professional Development), 6 (Collaboration), 7 (Public Advocacy), and 9 (Vision). The CFN and the researcher in responses and reflections consistently cited each ATE Standard (2007). Using the indicators from ATE Standards (2007), the researcher describes her perceptions.

***Researcher's Perceptions.*** The researcher perceives herself as self-efficacious as a teacher-educator. The teacher-educator demonstrates and promotes critical thinking and problem solving among teacher-educators, teachers, and prospective teachers. She revises courses to incorporate current research and/or best practices. She models reflective practice to foster student reflection. She demonstrates appropriate subject-matter content. These concepts were noted by the CFN in the Phase 1: Teaching vignette. The teacher-educator demonstrates appropriate and accurate professional content in the teaching field including the use of a variety of instructional and assessment methods and technology. An example of this was in the area of technology, referenced in Standard 1—teaching; Standard 3—scholarship; Standard 6—collaboration; and Standard 9—vision. The CFN made a major commitment by participating for 14 weeks, reading vignettes, reframing belief statements, reviewing artifacts, and then responding to the researcher. Technology created the optimum environment for participation. Without technology to facilitate the researcher's documents for review, it could have been difficult for the CFN to make the time commitment to the exploration. By employing technology, the CFN had the ability to respond on a more flexible schedule and the research yielded 100% participation.

The researcher increased her technology knowledge in order to implement the procedures of this research (Standard 1—teaching; Standard 8—the teacher-education profession). The researcher used several technology tools to support this research. The use of individual wiki pages created for each member of the CFN supported the researcher's effort for the following: (a) anonymity of CFN members, (b) a medium for sharing vignettes, belief statements, and responses, and (c) storage of data sources. The formation of 10 individual wiki pages was time consuming but did fulfill the intended purpose. The second technology instrument was the use of an online storage box for artifacts and the creation of a widget linking these stored artifacts.

The researcher as a teacher-educator is culturally competent. The teacher-educator exhibits practices that enhance both an understanding of diversity and instruction that meets the needs of society. She engages in culturally responsive pedagogy. The teacher-educator participates in diverse communities, modeling ways to reduce prejudice for pre-service and in-service teachers and/or other educational professionals. The teacher-educator engages in activities that promote social justice, connecting instruction to students' families, cultures, and communities. The teacher-educator models how to identify and design instruction appropriate to students' stages of development, learning styles, and linguistic skills. She fosters a positive regard for individual students and their families regardless of differences such as culture, religion, gender, native language, sexual orientation, and varying abilities. The teacher-educator models for her students the need for knowledge of their own culture and aspects common to all cultures in order to foster such knowledge in others. She promotes inquiry into cultures and differences and teaches a variety of assessment tools that meet the needs of



diverse learners. DS2 stated after Phase 1: Teaching of the exploration, “You support values of social justice to promote equity of all learners not by telling but by showing and illustrating the life of many types of learners.”

The researcher as a teacher-educator engages in professional development. This exploration is just one example of her work to investigate theoretical and practical problems in teaching, learning, and/or teacher education. Studying her own teacher-educator self-efficacy in the pursuit of new knowledge in relation to teaching, learning, and/or teacher education the researcher has connected this new knowledge to existing contexts and perspectives. As demonstrated in Phase 3: Professional-Development of this research, and through the *Professional-Development* vignette, the teacher-educator engages in research and development projects and applies this research to teaching practice and/or program or curriculum development. The article published by the researcher, cited in Phase 3: Professional-Development, was a disseminated research finding to the broader teacher education community, as well it was an example of the researcher as a teacher-educator engaging in action research through the teacher participatory research. This self-study was an example of systematically assessing learning goals and outcomes. The researcher grounds her practice as a teacher-educator in current policy and research related to education and teacher education. The CFN confirmed for the researcher her strength in these areas through their responses. Areas where the researcher, as a teacher-educator, will continue to improve her practice are conducting program evaluations and acquiring research-based and service-based grants.

The researcher perceives herself as developing in the areas of collaboration. As demonstrated in Phase 1: Teaching and Phase 2: Service, the teacher-educator supports

teacher education in the PreK–12 school environment and participates in joint decision making about teacher education. She engages in reciprocal relationships in teacher education. The teacher-educator has initiated collaborative projects that contribute to improved teacher education. The teacher-educator needs to continue to find opportunities to foster cross-disciplinary endeavors. The teacher-educator has not demonstrated the acquiring of financial support for teacher education innovation to support collaboration. The researcher must continue to look for opportunities to engage in cross-institutional and cross-college partnerships.

The researcher, as demonstrated in Phase 2: Service and Phase 3: Professional Development of this exploration perceives herself as a teacher-educator who promotes quality education for all learners through community forums, activities with other professionals, and work with local policymakers. She informs and educates those involved in making governmental policies and regulations at local, state, and national levels to support and improve teaching and learning. This self-study attempted to address policy issues that affect the education profession.

The researcher as a teacher-educator perceives herself as having a vision she is trying to share with others. She feels she is very successful at communicating her vision to her students and professional colleagues. An area the teacher-educator continues to work on is her understanding of the political parameters of higher education so that she can effectively communicate her vision to the higher-education community. As demonstrated in Phases 3: Professional-Development and 4: Research, and through the artifacts included in this exploration, the teacher-educator participates in professional organizations at the local, state, national, and international level. She has edited/reviewed

manuscripts for publication or presentation for teacher education organizations, including the review of resources designed to advance the profession. As demonstrated in Phase 2: Service and Phase 3: Professional-Development, the teacher-educator has mentored colleagues toward professional excellence. The researcher, as a teacher-educator, has designed and implemented pre-service and induction programs for teachers, but she did not evidence this in this exploration. In addition, the researcher as a teacher-educator has served on recruitment committees for hiring new teacher-educators, entrance interviews for pre-service teaching candidates, and served as a reference for doctoral candidates aspiring to be teacher-educators and graduates of the teacher-preparation program.

The areas the researcher determined needed more emphasis in her practice are Standards 3 (Scholarship), 5 (Program Development) and 8 (Teacher Education Profession). These three standards are more advanced in application. However, this research is supported by these three standards. The researcher believes as a teacher-educator, she has made improvements in the area of scholarship. This self-study was an application of scholarship as it was an exploration to investigate the theoretical and practical problems in teaching, learning, and teacher education. The researcher chose to study teacher-educator self-efficacy in a pursuit of new knowledge on teaching, learning, and/or teacher education. She connected new knowledge to existing contexts and perspectives with the constructs of teacher-educator self-efficacy and the self-study methodology. In Phase 3: Professional Development and Phase 4: Research—the researcher believes she demonstrated as a teacher-educator her engagement in research and the development of projects.

The researcher, as a teacher-educator, increased her knowledge base of research methodologies and procedures implementing a successful inquiry into her teacher-educator self-efficacy. On the small scale of this exploration, and as demonstrated in Phase 3: professional development—the teacher-educator does design, develop, and modify her teacher education programs based on theory, research, and best practice. However, this standard is directed at a broader sense of program development, and, not an individual teacher-educator's practice.

Again, the teacher-educator, in the completion of this exploration of her teacher-educator self-efficacy, focused on the ATE standards (2007) for teacher education programs that could impact the development of a different way of assessing, approving, and accrediting teacher education programs at the local, state, national, and international level. This exploration was an attempt by the teacher-educator to contribute to research that focuses on effective teacher education programs. The teacher-educator has not provided leadership in obtaining approval or accreditation for new or modified teacher education programs. She has not led or actively contributed to the ongoing assessment of teacher education courses or programs. This is an area of professional growth for the teacher-educator.

**Finding Three: Reflection within the CFN.** A surprise finding the researcher discovered during the course of this exploration was that the CFN began reflecting on their own individual teaching practice, rather than simply responding to the research questions. Throughout the exploration, the researcher reflections indicated that this connection to the CFN was a catalyst for new thinking for the research. Without the CFN, reflections would be limited to an individual musing by the teacher-educator, rather than

verified as accurate and/or in need of further reflection. The CFN benefitted as well. As the teacher-educator stated in the belief statement concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy, by modeling the best practice of reflection, students themselves will then engage in the strategy of reflection. This finding validated the researcher's beliefs concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy.

### **Interpretation of Significant Findings**

The three major findings (the researcher's LET, the researcher's perceptions concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy; and the reflection within the CFN) led the researcher to consider how the vignettes, artifacts, the CFN responses, the researcher's reflections, and the reframing of the belief statement impacted the findings of this self-study.

**Use of vignettes.** The researcher used the vignettes as a means of illuminating the teacher-educator's practice in the areas of teaching, service, professional development, and research. The researcher intended for each vignette to give the CFN an insider's view of the researcher's typical teacher-educator practices. The researcher did not consciously set out to demonstrate only her best practice. The vignettes were meant to describe how the teacher-educator tried to meet the ATE Standards (2007) identified as demonstrating a master teacher-educator.

The vignettes were written in "real time" during the course of the research. This kind of writing proved to be far more difficult than the researcher had envisioned. Both, the time constraints of the research, and the narrowing of which lived experience the researcher would write about posed difficulties. In the same way, there was a free-write to create the first teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement, each vignette began with

the researcher reading the IHE description for each vignette topic and then writing about her teacher-educator practice.

It was difficult for the researcher to assess if both the content and the format of the vignettes were optimal for presenting the teacher-educator's practice. There was confirmation that the researcher's writing was meeting the needs of the CFN. DS2 said, "This vignette helps me assess your self-efficacy as a teacher by giving me the background understanding as to what your idea of self-efficacy is, where it came from, and how it relates to your teaching style." DS4 shared,

This vignette helped me to understand why Jamey does what she does. It was very telling about what she thought was important and how she acted upon her beliefs. The way she wrote this as a story helps the reader be able to understand her better.

DS10 responded, "I feel as though I have gotten in Jamey's head and understand her perspective in a much clearer fashion."

**Artifacts.** Each phase of the research had artifacts identified by both the researcher and the CFN. In the first phase of the research, the CFN was perhaps exploring the wiki page and online storage unit; artifacts cited in the response had little or no relationship to the vignette. By the second phase, the artifacts identified by the researcher and the CFN were alike, and this led the researcher to consider that her self-efficacy may have been based on "proof" rather than beliefs. During phases 3 and 4, the CFN identified the vignettes and belief statements as the artifacts.

The artifacts were essential for choosing which events would be described for the vignettes. The artifacts were also vital when the researcher decided to include photographs in the belief statement. Rather than include visuals that had not otherwise been presented to the CFN, the researcher incorporated artifacts into the belief statement.

**Critical friend network.** A critical collaborative community (Samaras, 2010) was established with the use of the CFN consisting of former graduate students, public school colleagues, and higher-education faculty. The researcher stated in the reflection that she believed the use of the CFN would provide an opportunity for authentic and candid analysis of her teacher-educator self-efficacy, and this was borne out. Mueller (2003) felt her work might help other teacher-educators. The individual members of the CFN shared in responses that by participating in this research, each was making their own professional growth. The researcher had not anticipated the benefits for the CFN of participating in this research. The CFN cited in their responses that they were considering their own teacher practices based on the vignettes and belief statements. DS7 wrote, "I know that at times I am guilty of taking the easy way out (I can't reach a student because...) instead of spending the time reflecting on my own shortcomings and revising my approach to technique and approach with the student's best interest at heart." This exploration gave the opportunity for participants to increase their own awareness concerning their own self-efficacy as teachers and teacher-educators.

The CFN responses were integral to the researcher's understanding of her self-efficacy beliefs. The discrepancies or challenges to the teacher-educator's statements often led to solidifying the teacher-educator's self-efficacy beliefs. For example, DS7 said, "Certainly the way you present information and help your students to gain knowledge experiences are a reflection of you as an educator, but I do not feel it defines you." The researcher reflected on this response, and ultimately, the belief statement was reframed to include the sentence, "My expectation for my students is to leave my classroom with the essential knowledge and positive sense of self-efficacy to teach in

today's schools.” It was the interactions with the CFN that led the researcher to the belief that she had a strong, yet, fluid sense of self-efficacy concerning her teacher-educator practices.

The CFN did not just answer in positive affirmations of the researcher's work. There were also criticisms. DS11 found the acronyms in one of the vignettes “unwieldy.” DS6 felt the data from the assessment the researcher mentioned in the *Teaching* vignette should have been shared. DS7 and DS10 disagreed with the researcher's assertion that she was responsible for instilling learning in her students. The researcher spent the rest of the research thinking about who is responsible for learning.

These criticisms strengthened the overall exploration and the use of the CFN for trustworthiness. This research was not a solicitation for praise; rather it was an honest attempt to explore the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. The researcher found she was excited when challenged, as this opportunity clarified and confirmed her beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy.

Naidoo (2005) stated that when completing a personal self-study, the author tried to be a third-party person in an attempt to stay objective. The researcher tried to do the same and, at times, this was the struggle. When the CFN said something that seemed particularly pertinent, the researcher was unable to think about anything else for days. This was particularly evident on two occasions. The first time was when the members of the CFN started responding that the researcher was humble and modest. DS10 said, “I was impressed reading this vignette. Jamey, you are so modest!” As the “research” was about the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy, the researcher found she was emotionally moved. The second time was when the CFN began describing how this



exploration was in fact influencing and affecting the members' own practice. The CFN members themselves spoke of the impact the research was having on their own practice. DS9 wrote, "I know that this whole dissertation experience has not only demonstrated how essential you are to the teaching force, but has helped everyone involved take a step back to 'reflect' also." DS10 said, "Reading this vignette made me question my responses. Was I provocative enough? Thoughtful enough?" As Naidoo (2005) described, it is impossible not take these responses for the emotional quality that is evoked. The researcher found in these statements from the CFN, she was more confident in her beliefs concerning her teacher-educator practice.

DS3 asked, "What are the core values you wish to instill?" DS10 found that "even the core values are changing and developing over time that could be part of the belief statement." These thoughts from the CFN prompted reflection by the teacher-educator; this was a shift in response by the CFN. The researcher felt this was a deeper questioning of the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement. An example of a core value of this teacher-educator is the expectation that students leave her classroom with the essential knowledge and positive sense of self-efficacy to teach in today's schools. In the final teacher-educator belief statement, the researcher states she can teach anyone because she is a lifelong learner, she encourages her students to question her thinking, she facilitates reflection, and she models advocacy. The researcher believes that self-efficacy is not necessarily high or low, but fluid and changing with each new experience. This has become critical to the researcher's understanding of self-efficacy. What may be an area of high self-efficacy in one situation could change with new circumstances. The

researcher believes this means the belief statement is a good descriptor during a particular time and space but with each experience, the self-efficacy will change.

The CFN also challenged the researcher's formatting of the belief statement asking for concrete examples. This was accomplished with the incorporation of photographs from the artifacts the CFN had viewed into the teacher-educator belief statement and stating specific methods of practice. For example, the researcher included a picture taken after she published the article written about in the *Professional-Development* vignette. The researcher did not believe the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement should indicate specific activities; rather it should be her vision, but she did try to acknowledge this need for concrete wording of specific teaching practices. Including a photograph of the fieldtrip with graduate students to hear a prominent teacher-educator demonstrated in a tangible way for the reader that the teacher-educator did, in fact, engage in field trips and seek out the expertise of others in the teacher education profession.

**Reflections.** Reflection alone, without public scrutiny would have value, but the researcher would not have been able to substantiate her beliefs without the CFN. Thus, the research gained trustworthiness through the public discourse of the belief statements and vignettes. The researcher was able to compare reflections to the responses of the CFN. For example the researcher wrote in Reflection 1 for Phase 2 of the research, *Service*, of a perceived disconnect between the public-education system and higher education. The researcher wrote,

One of my professional beliefs is that curriculum in the public schools is moving at a pace that only covers topics in the periphery and gives students little depth of content or skills. Public education seems to have forgotten the theories of child

development in our curriculum development. Teachers are aware of this disconnect.

DS7 wrote,

The one thought I would like to leave you with is that your ideals have great merit, but are still outside the norm and that not all school administration may embrace the concepts. Teachers are still caught in the “politically correct” struggles so you need to continue to provide guidance in those areas. Classroom teaching is not as current as research and higher education.

The researcher does not know if DS7 believes the teacher-educator is too idealistic, however, DS7 did state that the teacher-educator should continue to provide guidance to schools, including teachers and administrators. This statement confirmed the researcher’s reflection that she is communicating the information teachers need to reflect on their own practice.

These kinds of compatible thoughts between the CFN and the researcher happened often, confirming for the researcher that the reflections resonated with CFN responses. As the CFN did not view the researcher’s reflections, the researcher, through the comparison of CFN responses to researcher’s reflections, perceived that the CFN was interpreting the vignettes in the same way as the researcher intended.

First reflections for each phase were often the teacher-educator questioning the writing of the vignette and wondering what the CFN might respond was important and in need of further reflection. For example during Phase 3, *Professional Development*, the researcher’s reflection said, “Currently, I do not like the format of the belief statement. I believe what I wrote but I think the CFN is influencing me that somehow there needs to be a more concrete example attached to the statement.” In the second reflection, the researcher wrote that a member of the CFN confirmed this need for concrete examples. “DS10 is still asking for specific concrete examples in my belief statement on how I

know I am doing certain activities” (Reflection 2 for Phase 3 of the exploration). The researcher was able to confirm teacher-educator self-efficacy beliefs in post-CFN response reflections.

The CFN is getting nuanced at what they are looking for in the vignettes and the belief statement. In the beginning of this research, the CFN focused on the vignette and now there is a shift, and, they are commenting specifically to the belief statement. I hope this is due to the reframing, and, I am optimistic this means we (the CFN and me) are in agreement as to the content of the belief statement, (Reflection 2 for Phase 3 of research: Professional Development).

**Belief statement.** The belief statement was an opportunity to announce publicly the researcher’s beliefs as a teacher-educator. Each belief statement brought out a different aspect of the teacher-educator’s self-efficacy. The teacher-educator found that her self-efficacy beliefs were constructive and the continual reframing made her focus on nuanced parts of her teacher-educator practice. From the initial teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement to the final version for this research, the researcher has discovered she is secure in what she says she knows and what she says she does in practice. The teacher-educator is knowledgeable in public policy, reflective practice, and current teaching practices and strategies including collaboration and technology. The teacher-educator will continue to refine the areas of scholarship, program development, and the teacher-education profession. As a tool for knowing, the belief statement has given the researcher a clear understanding of her strengths as a teacher-educator and the areas she will continue to work on for mastery. The researcher wishes to acknowledge that in order for any of the self-efficacy belief claims to hold true; the teacher-educator must continue to learn new pedagogy and stay current of present policy.

The researcher believes that the belief statement is an accurate assessment of her self-efficacy as a teacher-educator but as her experiences change, so too, the belief

statement concerning the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy will evolve. DS6 said "Jamey, my sense is that you are getting to the essence of your teacher-educator psyche."

## **Conclusions**

Utilizing a critical friend network (CFN) that offered multiple responses through a defined process that was time-bound offered the researcher an opportunity to intensively focus on areas of clinical practice that when examined by the CFN could be questioned for consistency and integrity. The CFN'S responses aided the researcher's thinking and encouraged a deeper examination of data. The researcher sought a methodology to support the interest of her inquiry. Self-study methodology supported the investigation of her clinical practice. The standards of the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE, 2007), offered through defined areas of expertise a framework for analysis of the researcher's work. Both the researcher, and the CFN, who reviewed and responded to the researcher's belief statements, self-reflections, and analysis of practice and supporting documents, thoughtfully used the ATE standards (2007). The procedures used in this study align with the recommendations set forth in the 2010 NCATE report that urged NCATE to define the areas of expertise to be evaluated. Among the areas to be considered are content knowledge and the skills for teaching specific content areas, and clinical skills of practice such as pedagogical expertise.

At minimum, clinical faculty must be experienced and highly competent teachers, and also have the skills and knowledge to help others learn to be effective teachers. As a crucial first step, the Panel recommends that a Task Force on Clinical Faculty be funded and include the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) together with the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), the teachers unions and NCATE to develop rigorous selection criteria to identify

the specific skills and attributes required for working with candidates and new teachers (NCATE, 2010).

It is reasonable to assert that teacher-educators who develop and reflect on their own practice are modeling for their clientele (teachers) an important skill set in teaching, reframing one's own thoughts about their practice and making changes accordingly. Based on the findings from the data, eight conclusions and implications have been drawn from this exploratory self-study.

First, the researcher was able to fulfill the purpose of this research; to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy using the self-study methodology. At the heart of this investigation was the work of Bandura (1977, 1984). The process of self-study is not linear with a definitive answer but a change journey that follows a spiraling of questions, challenges, framing, and reframing of thoughts (Samaras, 2010). This has been true of this self-study. As the researcher became clear on one particular aspect of her teacher-educator self-efficacy, new questions often emerged. The process of completing a self-study does not have a definitive end of the research, rather, an answer for now. With each new experience and reflection, the researcher found new insights into her teacher-educator practice.

Second, the researcher concluded that she could create her own LET (Whitehead, 1997). ATE Standards (2007) provided a framework for the researcher to explore her teacher-educator practices; developing and reframing the belief statement concerning the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. Self-study research entails a reframing and deeper understanding of professional practice. Noted in the literature is the difficult prospect for self-study researchers to suspend judgment and change interpretations (Loughran & Northfield, 1996). Schön (1983) stated that only the practitioner could

truly analyze her own practice. Whitehead (1998) states that LET are the descriptors and explanations that individuals offer for their own professional learning as they ask, answer, and research questions of the kind, How do I improve what I am doing? The public scrutiny of the CFN proved to be a critical component in the intricate procedures for the analysis of the researcher's teacher-educator practices. The researcher believes this exploration demonstrates the progression in her own teacher-educator practice. By the fourth phase of this exploration, *Research*, the researcher felt confident that she understood her beliefs concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy and that she had created an environment in the research procedures to share learnings with the CFN. Knowledge generated through the reframing of the teacher-educator belief statement was shared and refined as the CFN responded. Sharing the exploration with the CFN moved the study beyond merely the study of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy to a larger community.

Third, the researcher concluded that teacher-educators who explore their beliefs about their own self-efficacy would not only have greater insight into their own work, they would also be supporting higher education in evaluating the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs. This exploratory study has important implications for program and university-wide accreditation, as it serves and extends the notion of self-study beyond unit/institutional reviews. There have been many studies prior to this exploration that looked at self-efficacy for students, teachers, and other professions (Armor et al., 1976; Ashton, 1984, 1985; Bembenuddy, 2007; Coladarci & Fink, 1995; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Guskey & Passaro, 1994; Henson, Kogan, & Vacha-Haase, 2001; Woolfolk-Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). There have been large-scale studies that have

attempted to validate Bandura's self-efficacy survey instruments (Armor et al., 1976). However, none of these works included teacher-educators studying their own self-efficacy.

As well, it was concluded that the research procedures, in particular the use of the data sources through artifacts, vignettes, belief statements, and the use of technology were effective tools. The role of technology as a tool in the completion of this exploration cannot be understated. Without it, the researcher believes there would have been difficulties in participation by the CFN. The researcher was able to learn several new technology skills during the development and completion of this research, thus continuing to expand her teacher-educator skills. Prior to this exploration, the researcher had never created a wiki page or used a widget; this knowledge benefits the researcher in her teacher-educator practices.

Fifth, the ATE Standards (2007) provided a framework for the researcher to explore her own practice while including the education community to validate the trustworthiness of the process. Teacher-educators can use other professional organizational standards, such as the ATE Standards (2007), to study and assess their own professional practice. Accordingly, this research serves as an exemplar of that practice.

Sixth, the researcher learned that both creative and technical writing was far more difficult than she originally perceived, and one of her greatest challenges in the completion of this research. The researcher will continue to improve in this area as she advances in higher education and teacher preparation. The recursive phases of this exploration supported the researcher in learning to write in an explicit manner. The



CFN's was invaluable supporting the researcher as she worked to get to the essence of what she meant in her writing.

Seventh, the researcher's beliefs concerning her teacher-educator practice were strengthened through this exploration. This self-study demonstrated for the researcher that the teaching methods she uses in her classes are effective and the progress she is making in the areas of service, professional development, and research are in line with the expectations stated in the ATE Standards (2007). The researcher was able to suspend judgment concerning her teacher-educator self-efficacy and change interpretations based on the recursive alignment and comparison of the researcher's reflections to CFN responses. This alignment was demonstrated in the reframing of the teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement.

Last, the researcher agrees with current literature that argues there are effective alternatives to traditional models for assessing teacher preparation programs. Pinnegar and Erickson (2009) remind us that, although current teacher education program go through institutional accreditation review, much of what is learned is not included in the final accreditation report. In addition, institutions have long called the process of accreditation/reaccreditation a "self-study". These institutional self-studies are not exemplars of the methodology "self-study" of teaching practices research (2004). Institutional self-studies are driven by political consideration while self-study research makes the private knowledge public (Pinnegar & Erickson, 2009). In *Measuring What Matters: A Strong Accountability Model for Teacher Education* (2010), Crowe suggested that teacher education programs must be held accountable for the performance of the graduates of these programs.

A new accountability system should also communicate clear signals to those who need to know whether a preparation program is doing a good job. (p. 12).

In November 2010, NCATE issued the self-funded report *Transforming Teacher Education through Clinical Practice: A National Strategy to Prepare Effective Teachers*.

The report states,

The education of teachers in the United States needs to be turned upside down. To prepare effective teachers for 21st century classrooms, teacher education must shift away from a norm, which emphasizes academic preparation and course work loosely linked to school-based experiences. Rather, it must move to programs that are fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses (2010).

The researcher believes that she has demonstrated in this self-study research that there is an alternative to a traditional review of a teacher-educator's performance. Instead the research proposes that through the self-study methodology, the authenticity of practice can be determined in a way that is both public and transparent, offering the field knowledge and the teacher-educator opportunities and areas for professional growth. The researcher believes those teacher-educators and the related teacher preparation programs that use the tenets of self-study methodology, including reporting on the weaknesses of a teacher-educator and/or program, ultimately strengthen accountability through the public forum. This transparency would strengthen public perception of teacher education programs.

### **Self-Study Self-Assessment Using the Five Foci**

As stated in Chapter 3, Samaras' Five Foci (2010) were used to complete a self-assessment to determine if this research met the criterion for the self-study methodology.

1. Does the researcher practice personal situated inquiry?

As this was an exploration of the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy, this research met the requirement of personally situated inquiry. All facets of the research

procedures related to the researcher. The draft of a final teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement, the reflections, and the vignettes were based on the researcher's own practice. All artifacts were from the researcher's own teacher-educator practice.

2. Does the researcher share in a critical collaborative inquiry?

Four vignettes and the reframed belief statements were shared through a professional learning community using the wiki page participation of the 10 members (former students, public school colleagues, and IHE faculty) of the CFN. The CFN responses to vignettes and belief statements gave the researcher a needed prism effect to view her notions of her teacher-educator practices and self-efficacy belief statement through multiple lenses. The researcher is so grateful for this aspect of the exploration. It was not always an easy process when reading the responses but it facilitated the researcher as a teacher-educator in her ability to consider her word choices and meaning when expressing her teacher-educator self-efficacy beliefs.

3. Does the researcher improve learning?

Improved learning was established for the researcher and this, in turn, improved the learning of those in the teacher-educator's practice. That is essential as Ham and Kane (2004) emphasize, "self-study is not research because it is by me, for me; it is research because it is self-consciously by me, for us." (p. 117). As acknowledged by the CFN, the research did improve learning as it had an effect on learning. "It is a unique study, a concept that has been new to me. I have learned a great deal by participating in this research" (DS8).

I know that at times I am guilty of taking the easy way out (I can't reach this student because ...), instead of spending the time reflecting on my own shortcomings and revising my own techniques and approach with the student's

best interest at heart. Your reflections have been very beneficial for me to step back and take a fresh look at my own methodology. (DS7)

4. Does the researcher include transparent and systematic research process?

The vignettes, pre- and post-reflections, and reframing of the belief statements were completed according to the procedures identified in Chapter 3. The researcher kept a detailed description of how and why changes were made to the belief statement. A caveat of the self-study methodology is that findings be made public with procedures shared in detail, giving transparency to the process. The researcher accomplished this through the writing of Chapters 4 and 5, cataloguing all of the data collected, and saving all artifacts in the online storage and wiki pages.

5. Does the researcher generate knowledge and dissemination of that research?

The knowledge generated was discovered in a prism effect (Samaras, 2010). Each time the data was viewed through a different lens or perspective, by the researcher and the CFN. The researcher's learning was shared with the CFN. The CFN responded back to the researcher. The researcher analyzed the data through the frame of ATE standards (2007), looking for keywords and phrases correlating the researcher's first reflection and CFN responses. The researcher reflected again and reframed the belief statement. The researcher then shared this scholarship with the CFN again, in the form of the reframed belief statement and the next vignette. The recursive process of sharing data with the CFN four times, the 40 CFN responses, 8 researcher reflections, and 4 reframings of the teacher-educator self-efficacy statement created an environment for multiple lenses for analyzing the data.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions and implications of this exploratory study, seven recommendations are provided:

1. It is recommended that individuals interested in teacher-educator self-efficacy replicate this exploration's procedures. However, the researcher suggests several modifications including that the vignettes be written in advance of posting for the CFN rather than in "real time". This would give the researcher more time for reflections, editing, and rewriting. There may be other topics for vignette writing other than the categories of a faculty notebook. For example, Phase 1, *Teaching*, could have several categories such as vignettes on instructional strategies, technology, and cultural competence. Vignettes based on each of the ATE standards (2007) could also be written. A separate panel of readers could also be useful in reviewing the quality of the vignettes.
2. It is recommended that a third-party analysis could be completed of CFN responses and the researcher's reflections that could offer a process for both, verification of themes identified by the researcher, and validation of the interpretation and connections the researcher claims to have found.
3. It is recommended that the role of anonymity of the CFN be reconsidered. Establishing an open dialogue with the CFN members whose shared experiences and opinions could advance the thinking of other CFN members, as well as the primary researcher, would benefit an exploration. In this study, the researcher refrained from correspondence with the

individual members of the CFN in order to follow the established research procedures. If the researcher had dialogued with 1 CFN member and the other members could not see this communication it would have created a trustworthiness issue in the research procedures. Anonymity had a place in this exploration, however, dialectical discourse could be fully realized if the researcher was able to use wiki pages to dialogue with the CFN rather than only receive feedback. Researchers may wish to consider varied technology options for engagement and dialogue with the CFN members.

4. It is recommended that the use of technology in examining teacher education practices be continued. As technology continues to evolve, better tools than wiki pages may come available. Technology facilitated the successful implementation of this research; therefore, the further development and use of technology in similar studies, such as how to use the wiki pages differently from their use in this study is warranted.
5. It is recommended that teacher preparation programs consider adopting self-study procedures for faculty that include the use of the ATE Standards (2007). The researcher believes this self-study research, could be drawn upon by states, school systems, and higher education to establish new practices for assessing teaching and learning that supports and advances student achievement the processes for teacher education accreditation. As Pinnegar and Erickson (2009), state, “when self-study methodology is used for the process of accreditation reviews, self-study research can simplify, and make transparent the findings in a credible format”.

6. The research findings support the recommendations of Crowe, 2010, Gardiner, 2007, the NCATE panel (2010), and the U.S. Department of Education, 2009) that suggest the need for a consistent and rigorous accountability system for teacher preparation programs. The researcher believes the procedures used to complete this self-study could assist other teacher-educators and teacher education programs in considering the effectiveness of their own practice annually in the process of faculty review and consideration for promotion and tenure and in the accreditation process.
7. Recognizing that the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) utilizes a self-study process that relies heavily on the capacity of the teacher-candidate to be reflective, the procedures used in this study could inform NBPTS as it considers a certification for advanced education professionals as per the NCATE recommendation (2010). The procedures used in this self-study could be replicated and assist those teacher-educators and teachers as they ready for the advanced certification process offered by NBPTS.

### **Summary**

The purpose of this research was to explore a teacher-educator's beliefs about her teacher-educator self-efficacy examined in her teacher-educator practice. The study employed self-study methodology. The literature concerning teacher self-efficacy has been available since the 1970s (Bandura, 1977). However, there has been little research concerning teacher-educator self-efficacy and no studies have been discovered by the

researcher concerning the use of the self-study methodology in the exploration of teacher-educator self-efficacy.

This exploratory research was designed in response to a need voiced in the higher-education community for better assessment measures (Crowe, 2010; Gardiner, 2007) and the lack of interest in careers in teacher education (Smithers & Robinson, 2005). While investigating the literature, the researcher discovered the connection between self-efficacy, teacher-educator research, and the self-study methodology. The researcher's reframing of her teacher-educator self-efficacy belief statement using ATE standards (2007) as a guidepost, demonstrated a method of assessing her teacher-educator's practice.

The federal *Race to the Top* Program (2010) competitively provides funds through the U.S. Department of Education to states willing to establish processes for the use of student-achievement data for the evaluation and retention of teachers. This federal effort aligns with policymakers (Crowe, 2010) who advance the notion that teacher preparation programs should be ranked based on preK–12 student achievement

This exploratory research presents one way to assess and improve teacher-educator practices. By completing a four-phase recursive process of reframing the teacher-educator's self-efficacy belief statement with each phase of the exploration, the researcher was able to identify and reflect on specific aspects of the teacher-educator's practice, which in turn, authenticated the statements made in the teacher-educator belief statement. For example, through the sharing of the *Teaching* vignette with the CFN, and, comparing the CFN responses to the researcher's reflections, the researcher found she was competent in the area of cultural diversity; yet the first belief statement did not



reflect this area in the researcher's teacher-educator self-efficacy. This constant-comparative model allowed the teacher-educator belief statement to be reframed, demonstrating this area of her teacher-educator's practice. In the second phase of the research, *Service*, the researcher stated she knew that she was a risk-taker and, in fact, doing the specifics stated in the belief statement, but it was important to the CFN to understand the specifics, known by the researcher, as concrete examples. In this reframing of the belief statement the researcher incorporated pictures from the artifacts as proof of her words, and, the CFN responses confirmed that this made the belief statement tangible. Phase 3 of the research, *Professional Development*, was a turning point in the research. The discovery that the CFN was also reflecting on their own practice during this research provided a shift in the way the researcher viewed the self-study process and the belief statement. In Phase 4 of this exploration, the researcher referred to her growth in technology in the *Research* vignette and this directly related to the learning and implementation of it during this research.

The research met the requirements of the *Five Foci* (Samaras, 2010) for this self-study. This research was a personally situated inquiry based on the researcher's own teacher-educator practice. The critical collaborative inquiry was established using the CFN and was fully realized as the CFN responded with reflection about their teaching practices. Improved learning was established for the researcher and this, in turn, improved the learning of those in the teacher-educator's practice. The researcher followed a transparent and systematic research process that was open, honest, and reflective throughout the research process (Wolcott, 2001) and provided evidence that the researcher knew what she claimed to know (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998).

Throughout the documented history of education, there has often been a disconnect (theory versus practice) between academe and public education (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Lortie, 1973). The researcher, herself, has felt this tension in her own work. This exploration not only gave the researcher insight into her teacher-educator self-efficacy; it improved learning for the participants (CFN) and the researcher, herself, as she augmented her own teacher-educator strategies. The immediacy of improvement in her teacher-educator practice demonstrates that the self-study methodology was effective.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Glossary**

Action research: teacher initiated research of practices, noted for its reformative purpose and power

A posteriori: reference to experience, empirical knowledge

A priori: rationalism, reason alone

Belief statement: tacit, often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught (Pajares, 1992)

Critical friend network: a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993)

Critical theory: (Frankfurt School) study of society and that which takes action in the interest of changing that, which exploits, dominates, or harms people; social theory orientated towards critiquing and changing society as a whole

Dialectical critique: an exchange of propositions and counter propositions resulting in a synthesis of opposing assertions; linguistic contradictions to effect change

Discourse analysis: conversations, arguments, speeches, language form and function spoken and interacting with texts

Effectiveness: efficiency ratings of teachers and measured student performance or gains

Efficacy: the extent to which a teacher believes that he or she has the capacity to affect student performance

Efficacious: having the critical knowledge to deal with a teachable moment, effectively applying it in the process of designing and implementing instruction

Empiricism: human experience with scientific method

Epistemology: nature, origin, and scope of knowledge

Idealism: what we refer to and perceive as the external world is in some way an artifice for the mind

Knowing: having adequate critical understanding to make reasoned choices between

alternative perspectives without assuming a certainty of knowledge for which we are willing to kill (Lyotard, 1984)

Living Educational Theory: a present practice in terms of an evaluation of the past and in terms of an intention to create something better in the future in one's own practice (Whitehead, 1989, 1993)

Metanarrative: a story about a story using critical theory in the postmodern tradition; a global or totalizing cultural narrative schema, which orders and explains knowledge and experience (Stephens, 1998)

Metatheory: helps to decide what makes sense, within the limits of our knowledge, and what does not make sense (Stephens, 1998)

Ontology: fundamental branch of metaphysics—being or existing

Phenomenology: perception itself is all that really exists

Positivism: observable and attains to the claims rather than the facts; emphasis on ideas about reality rather than experience

Postmodern tradition: facts are fluid and elusive, focus only on the observable claims; a shift from a world we encompass with our minds to one that holds us at bay with a need to tolerate ambiguity

Presupposition: background belief or assumptions about the world

Rationalism: a method or a theory in which the criterion of truth is not sensory but intellectual and deductive

Realism: the facts are out there waiting to be discovered

Reflective practice: characterized by looking back on the events of what has happened to explain what needs to change in order to improve results (Schön, 1995)

Relativism: all things true are in a state of flux

Quality: worth or value

Self-study: borne out of concerns of teacher educators for the learning of preserves teachers and their students (LaBoskey, 2004) challenges status quo conceptions of both knowledge and research (Cole & Knowles, 1996) focuses on the self and immediacy of practice.

Tacit knowledge: “personal knowledge”; objective knowledge in the knower's act of knowing; all our knowledge is grounded in tacit knowledge; the active principle

which shapes all forms of knowing and ties perception, action, and meaning (Polanyi, 1967).

Validity Group: those who will serve the researcher to guide in the validation of findings and techniques used in those findings

## Appendix B

### Standards For Teacher Educators

#### THE ASSOCIATION OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

(2007)

To help all teacher candidates and other school personnel impact student learning, accomplished teacher educators demonstrate the following nine standards:

Accomplished Teacher Educators...

##### **STANDARD 1 Teaching**

**Model teaching that demonstrates content and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions reflecting research, proficiency with technology and assessment, and accepted best practices in teacher education.**

In order for teacher educators to impact the profession, they must successfully model appropriate behaviors in order for those behaviors to be observed, adjusted, replicated, internalized, and applied appropriately to learners of all levels and styles. "Modeling means exhibiting behavior that is observed and imitated by others" (Kauchak & Eggen, 2005, p. 396). Effective modeling of desired practices is at the heart of successful teacher-education programs at preservice and in-service levels. Teachers are powerful and meaningful role models for students at all levels, and the way they act influences both learning and motivation (Bandura, 1989). Modeling of behavior relates to teaching, service, and scholarly productivity. Teacher educators must use research-based, proven best practices in order for those behaviors to be appropriately applied.

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##### **Indicators**

- Model effective instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners
- Demonstrate and promote critical thinking and problem solving among teacher educators, teachers, and/or prospective teachers
- Revise courses to incorporate current research and/or best practices
- Model reflective practice to foster student reflection
- Demonstrate appropriate subject-matter content
- Demonstrate appropriate and accurate professional content in the teaching field
- Demonstrate a variety of instructional and assessment methods including use of technology
- Mentor novice teachers and/or teacher educators
- Facilitate professional-development experiences related to effective teaching practices

- Ground practice in current policy and research related to education and teacher education

#### **Artifacts**

- Evaluations from supervisors, colleagues, students, or others
- Course syllabi
- Video and/or audiotapes of teaching
- Developed instructional materials (e.g., lessons, units, courses of study, presentations)
- Testimonials
- Teaching awards and/or other forms of recognition
- Logs or other documentation of classroom activities
- Journals of reflective practice
- Philosophical statement that reflects underlying knowledge and values of teacher education
- Relevant credentials (e.g., certificates, licenses)
- Evidence of technology-based teaching and learning

### **STANDARD 2 Cultural Competence**

#### **Apply cultural competence and promote social justice in teacher education.**

One of the charges to teacher education is to prepare teachers to connect and communicate with diverse learners (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). To develop capacity among culturally, socially, and linguistically diverse students, teachers first need to know their own cultures. They also need to hold high expectations for all students, understand developmental levels and what is common and unique among different groups, reach out to families and communities to learn about their cultures, select curriculum materials that are inclusive, use a range of assessment methods, and be proficient in a variety of pedagogical methods that facilitate the acquisition of content knowledge for all learners. Establishing a closer fit between pedagogy and culturally different learning styles positively impacts students both socially and academically (Gay, 2005). Culturally relevant pedagogy “not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 469).

Teacher educators share the responsibility of helping pre-service and in-service teachers to understand these concepts and to apply them successfully in their classrooms. They do not merely understand the concepts underlying the definitions of cultural competency but clearly demonstrate how those concepts are applied in their own teaching and in that of their students.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J.(2005). *Preparing teachers for a changing world:*

*What teachers should learn and be able to do.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gay, G.(2005). *A synthesis of scholarship in multicultural education.* Naperville, IL:

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

Ladson-Billings, G.(1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32, 465–491.

### **Indicators**

- Exhibit practices that enhance both an understanding of diversity and instruction that meets the needs of society
- Engage in culturally responsive pedagogy
- Professionally participate in diverse communities
- Model ways to reduce prejudice for preservice and in-service teachers and/or other educational professionals
- Engage in activities that promote social justice
- Demonstrate connecting instruction to students' families, cultures, and communities
- Model how to identify and design instruction appropriate to students' stages of development, learning styles, linguistic skills, strengths and needs
- Foster a positive regard for individual students and their families regardless of differences such as culture, religion, gender, native language, sexual orientation, and varying abilities
- Demonstrate knowledge of their own culture and aspects common to all cultures and foster such knowledge in others
- Promote inquiry into cultures and differences
- Teach a variety of assessment tools that meet the needs of diverse learners
- Recruit diverse teachers and teacher educators

### **Artifacts**

- Course syllabi
- Instructional materials
- Evidence of involvement in schools and other organizations with diverse populations
- Video and/or audio tapes of teaching
- Course assignments
- Student work samples
- Evidence of involvement in school based projects and/or service learning
- Evidence of providing professional development to others at all levels
- Philosophical statement that reflects underlying that reflects attention to diversity
- Assessment tools appropriate for use with diverse learners

### **STANDARD 3 Scholarship**

**Engage in inquiry and contribute to scholarship that expands the knowledge base related to teacher education.**

The scholarship of an accomplished teacher educator is conceptualized through Boyer's model of scholarship (1997) which includes four foci: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Accomplished teacher educators continually ask questions to deepen existing knowledge and to create new knowledge in teaching and teacher education. This is achieved through systematic inquiry and the subsequent sharing and/or dissemination of the results. Teacher educators engage in discourse in a community about the quest for new knowledge. This community, for example, can be broadly defined as a community



of academics whose discourse takes place in publications or a community of inquirers who dialogue around their “reflection on action” (Schön, 1983). In addition to discourse around new knowledge, teacher educators integrate their learning about practice in the field of teacher education together with their knowledge across disciplines and contexts in order to elucidate connections between their own work and the broader educational landscape. Teacher educators bridge their theoretical and practical knowledge to create new understandings and interpretations in theory and practice of teaching and teacher education. Finally, accomplished teacher educators strive to teach others and to foster learning about teaching and teacher education.

Boyer, E. L. (1997). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

### **Indicators**

- Investigate theoretical and practical problems in teaching, learning, and/or teacher education
- Pursue new knowledge in relation to teaching, learning, and/or teacher education
- Connect new knowledge to existing contexts and perspectives
- Engage in research and development projects
- Apply research to teaching practice and/or program or curriculum development
- Conduct program evaluation
- Acquire research-based and service-based grants
- Disseminate research findings to the broader teacher education community
- Engage in action research
- Systematically assess learning goals and outcomes

### **Artifacts**

- Publications
- Presentations at meetings of learned societies or specialized professional associations
- Citations by other scholars
- Professional development workshops and/or seminars
- Speaking engagements that focus on issues of teacher education
- Evidence of improved teaching practice
- Evidence of increased student learning
- Research-based program development
- Funded grant proposals
- Research awards or recognitions
- National Board Certification

## **STANDARD 4 Professional Development**

**Inquire systematically into, reflect on, and improve their own practice and demonstrate commitment to continuous professional development.**

Accomplished teacher educators help preserves and in-service teachers with professional development and reflection, and model examples from their personal development, making transparent the goals, information, and changes for improvements in their own teaching. Teacher educators examine their own beliefs and contributions of life experiences. There is a vital link established between belief and action (Vygotsky, 1978). Reflective practice of teachers can occur in several forms and at different times during and after an event, and should be proactive in nature to guide any future action (Farrell, 2004). Reflection can affect professional growth and bring individuals to greater self-actualization (Pedro, 2006) through collaboration with others to apply knowledge and experiences into practice (Schön, 1996). Experience is key to developing thinking (Dewey, 1916) and helping educators to form knowledge, collects data, reflect on that data, and make changes to their practices.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*. New York, NY: Macmillan.

Farrell, T. S. C. (2004). *Reflective practice in action: 80 reflection breaks for busy teachers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Pedro, J. (2006). Taking reflection into the real world of teaching. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 42, 129–133.

Schön, D. A. (1996). *Educating the reflective practitioner: Toward a new design for teaching and learning in the professions*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

**Indicators**

- Systematically reflect on own practice and learning
- Engage in purposeful professional development focused on professional-learning goals
- Develop and maintain a philosophy of teaching and learning that is continuously reviewed based on a deepening understanding of research and practice
- Participate in and reflect on learning activities in professional associations and learned societies
- Apply life experiences to teaching and learning

**Artifacts**

- Statement of philosophy of teaching and learning
- Evidence of professional development goals and activities
- Self-assessment

- Evidence of documented professional growth
- Evidence of participation in professional development experiences
- Letter of support
- Reflective journals

## **STANDARD 5 Program Development**

**Provide leadership in developing, implementing, and evaluating teacher education programs that are rigorous, relevant, and grounded in theory, research, and best practice.**

The foundation of the professional work of teacher educators lies in the development and maintenance of quality programs that prepare beginning teachers and provide for teachers' ongoing professional development during and after induction into the profession. Accomplished teacher educators are regular contributors to and often leaders in the development, refinement, and revision of programs and portions of programs focused on initial teacher preparation and ongoing teacher professional development. The development of quality teacher-education programs that serve teachers at all stages in their career is at the heart of the ATE's mission (Selke & Alouf, 2004). It is through these programs that teachers learn and further develop the content and pedagogical knowledge, understandings, and skills they need. Research and program evaluation must be gathered and applied to make data-driven decisions to benefit individual programs and the overall profession.

Selke, M., & Alouf, J. (2004). *Position framework: ATE*. Retrieved from [http://www.ate1.org/pubs/ATE\\_Position\\_Frame.cfm](http://www.ate1.org/pubs/ATE_Position_Frame.cfm)

### **Indicators**

- Design, develop, or modify teacher education programs based on theory, research, and best practice
- Provide leadership in obtaining approval or accreditation for new or modified teacher-education programs
- Lead or actively contribute to the ongoing assessment of teacher-education courses or programs
- Provide leadership that focuses on establishing standards for teacher-education programs or on developing, approving, and accrediting teacher-education programs at the local, state, national, or international level
- Contribute to research that focuses on effective teacher education programs

### **Artifacts**

- Course or program proposal
- Revision to course or program
- New materials developed to meet course or program requirements
- Evidence of participation in program development, revision, or evaluation
- Document of leadership in program accreditation process (state or national)
- Program recognition or award

- Evidence of participation in research on or evaluation study of a teacher education program
- Publications, handouts, or other documentation of conference presentations on program development

## **STANDARD 6 Collaboration**

### **Collaborate regularly and in significant ways with relevant stakeholders to improve teaching, research, and student learning.**

Accomplished teacher educators adopt a collaborative approach to teacher education that involves a variety of stakeholders (e.g., universities, schools, families, communities, foundations, businesses, and museums) in teaching and learning. Collaboration to design and implement teacher education promotes the collective practice that increases efficacy and knowledge of teacher education. This facilitates a sense of trust and draws on the expertise of different stakeholders in the collaboration (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). Professional relationships foster a community of collaboration in which teacher educators make explicit their work and increase self-learning and knowledge. Collaboration is often formalized in partnerships that join individuals and institutions to work together on a long-term basis. In the education of teachers, collaboration and partnerships exist in preserves teacher education as well as the continuing education of induction and in-service teachers.

Fullan M., & Hargreaves, A. (Eds.). (1992). *Teacher development and educational change*. New York, NY: The Falmer Press.

### **Indicators**

- Engage in cross-institutional and cross-college partnerships
- Support teacher education in the preK–12 school environment
- Participate in joint decision making about teacher education
- Foster cross-disciplinary endeavors
- Engage in reciprocal relationships in teacher education
- Initiate collaborative projects that contribute to improved teacher education
- Acquire financial support for teacher education innovation to support collaboration

### **Artifacts**

- Evidence of collaborative activities (e.g., minutes and agenda of meetings)
- Testimonials
- Records of awards, recognition, and financial support for research resulting from collaboration
- Course syllabi that demonstrate collaboration
- Joint publications resulting from collaboration

## **STANDARD 7 Public Advocacy**

### **Serve as informed, constructive advocates for high quality education for all students**

Teacher educators advocate both in and outside of the profession for high-quality education for all students at all levels. Influencing decision makers and promoting

changes to laws and other government policies to advance the mission of a high quality education for all is paramount to the profession. Such advocacy requires being informed of social and political perceptions, policies, challenges, and systems that affect education (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Acquiring research-based background information should be the basis for advocacy at all levels. As Laitsch et al. (2002) pointed out, research has long been supported as the basis for decision-making in educational forums. Accomplished teacher educators engage in active advocacy for quality education, which clearly articulates appropriate responses to address educational concerns and visions for contemporary and future stakeholders. This advocacy promotes quality education for all students in local, state, regional, national, and international venues. Through reflection and revision of information and efforts, teacher educators actively assess their personal impact on educational reform.

Cochran-Smith, M. (2004). Taking stock in 2004: Teacher education in dangerous times.

*Journal Of Teacher Education*, 55(1), 3–7.

Laitsch, D., Heilman, E., & Shaker, P. (2002). Teacher education, pro-market policy and advocacy research. *Teaching Education*, 13, 251–271.

### **Indicators**

- Promote quality education for all learners through community forums, activities with other professionals, and work with local policymakers
- Inform and educate those involved in making governmental policies and regulations at local, state, and/or national levels to support and improve teaching and learning
- Actively address policy issues, which affect the education profession

### **Artifacts**

- Evidence of advocacy for high quality teaching and learning in local, state, national, and/or international settings
- Evidence of contributions to educational policy or regulations at local, state, national, and/or international levels
- Papers, presentations, and/or media events designed to enhance the public's understanding of teaching and learning
- Evidence of service to school accreditation committees
- Scholarship and/or grant activity promoting education

## **STANDARD 8 Teacher Education Profession**

### **Contribute to improving the teacher education profession.**

Through a visionary and collaborative approach, accomplished teacher educators accept responsibility for improving their profession. They make a difference by attending to the complexities and vulnerabilities of the profession (Covey, 1989, p. 299). Teacher educators share a responsibility for active service as members of local, state, and national professional organizations. These affiliations offer a venue for professional identification and support to improve the teacher-education profession. Collective membership in

professional organizations contributes to the strength of teacher education. Teacher educators are vested with authority in teacher education and their technical expertise qualifies the profession for determination of the public good (Bellah, 1985, p. 195)

Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1985). *Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Covey, S. R. (1989). *The seven habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons for personal change*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

### **Indicators**

- Actively participate in professional organizations at the local, state, national, or international level
- Edit/review manuscripts for publication or presentation for teacher-education organizations
- Review resources designed to advance the profession
- Develop textbook or multimedia resource for use in teacher education
- Recruit promising preservice teachers
- Recruit future teacher educators
- Mentor colleagues toward professional excellence
- Design and/or implement preservice and induction programs for teachers
- Support student organizations to advance teacher education
- Advocate for high-quality teacher-education standards

### **Artifacts**

- Evidence of active participation in professional organizations
- Conference programs and proceedings
- Books/monographs/periodicals edited or reviewed
- Textbook/multimedia reviews
- Textbooks and multimedia resources developed
- Testimonials
- Evidence of support of student organizations
- Grant proposals
- Reports and evaluations of projects/advancement programs
- Records of awards/recognition for excellence in teacher education

### **STANDARD 9 Vision**

**Contribute to creating visions for teaching, learning, and teacher education that take into account such issues as technology, systemic thinking, and world views.** Accomplished teacher educators develop essential insights into the vast changes occurring today. They embrace them, visualize their potential for education, and interpret them to preservice and in-service teachers to facilitate understanding and

integration into professional practice. Technology and miniaturization affect all aspects of society. The debate over the relative importance of content for future generations needs to be focused by knowledgeable teacher educators who understand history, teaching, research, and technology. A critical factor is the increasing impact of globalization on education (Friedman, 2005). Education has traditionally followed rather than led changes in society. Accomplished teacher educators embrace their role as change agents, understand the impact teacher education has on classroom practices, and are early adopters of new configurations of learning (Rogers, 2003). Accomplished teacher educators are firmly in the forefront of educational change.

Friedman, T. L. (2005). *The world is flat*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations* (5th ed.). New York, NY: The Free Press.

### **Indicators**

- Actively participate in learning communities that focus on educational change
- Demonstrate innovation in the field of teacher education
- Demonstrate qualities of an early adopter of technology and new configurations of learning
- Actively pursue new knowledge of global issues
- Support innovation adoption with research
- Relate new knowledge about global issues to own practice and K–12 classroom teaching

### **Artifacts**

- Grant writing activity
- Evidence of participation in learning communities
- Reflection journals
- Course syllabi
- Course assignments
- Student work samples
- Evidence of self-directed learning in innovative methodologies
- Evidence of using new and evolving technologies or content in teaching and learning

## **Appendix C**

### **Teaching Vignette**

Introduction to the Education of Exceptional Learners is a graduate course I teach in the fall of each academic year. It is for all special-education majors and can be used as an elective for the other graduate education programs; usually there are between 12 and 20 graduate students in this class. This course provides information concerning special education including policies, regulations, services, and disability categories. Among the course requirements, students research a specific disability category of their choice and include an Internet search on possible strategies and technologies that may help to facilitate learning for students with this disability. Students begin considering their own philosophy of special education. On the first night of class, the students write a one-page statement describing their beliefs about special education. They also take a pre-survey of their own understanding of special-education issues. These two activities will be revisited throughout the semester. I use a variety media to present information in this course including PowerPoints, videos, podcasts, and a university-supported online classroom when we are not meeting face to face. I use cooperative learning to support the instruction of new topics.

However, what makes this course distinctive is the use of nonfiction texts to engage the class and provide prior knowledge to facilitate understanding of the complex issues surrounding special education. I give the students 2 weeks to read each book and write a short summary addressing specific questions I provide. I use these questions to help students build some prior knowledge and to facilitate both my instruction and the discussions we have in class. During this reading time, I present information on the



topics addressed in the text. During the third week, we use time to discuss the text and its connection to the learning and teaching world.

This past fall we read *P.S. Your Not Listening* by Craig, *Life in Classrooms* by Jackson, *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation* by Kozol, and *Born on a Blue Day: A Memoir* by Tammet. I chose these four books for very specific reasons to support my teaching of content in this course. The reading provides the anticipatory set for the instruction throughout the semester.

I start each semester with *P.S. Your Not Listening*. The title of this book came from a letter a student wrote to Craig, thus, the error in grammar. Through the use of this book, I am able to share the history of special-education law in the United States, as well as the disability categories emotional disturbance, learning disabilities, mental retardation, and speech and language. This book is always a group favorite and a great start to the school year because my students, who are teachers themselves, often identify with Craig's reflections on her first year as a special-education teacher. Many of the graduate students in this course are either new to special education, new to teaching, or both. When Craig wrote the book, there were no special-education laws, and the author had no special-education expertise as a teacher. Craig was selected by the school principal to teach *those* kids. Even though this book was written in 1971, the special-education students in today's public-school classrooms are very similar in characteristics to the students in Craig's classroom. I am able to use the text to weave together, for my graduate students, the similarities and differences in today's special education. Students begin to research a disability that interests them, knowing more about it at the end of Craig's book.

The second book is Kozol's *Amazing Grace*. Kozol wove together compelling stories of how poverty disenfranchises many students to the point that schools only exacerbate the terrible living conditions of many children and their families. I use this book to discuss the effects of poverty in American society, specifically the effects of poverty on the education of American children. We delve into the issues that may cause a student to have academic difficulties, but not necessarily qualify for special education. We spend time discussing American society, government policies, and the concept of social justice. During the discussion of the book, a few of my students get emotional and find they are angry at the education system, the families of these children, or both. I use this energy to promote ways teachers can provide support for students in their classrooms.

Kozol's book works well when discussing response to intervention services and the referral process for special education. We talk about the kinds of tutoring and afterschool programs that are successful. I bring in statistics concerning reading and mathematics rates for students in our area of the country. I have my students collect data from their own classes. We do some disaggregating of data to discover for ourselves trends in our own classrooms and schools. Using *Amazing Grace*, my graduate students make connections concerning their own philosophy of education and their own classroom practices.

This brings us to the third book, Jackson's *Life in Classrooms*. Written over 40 years ago, Jackson described the daily aspects of school as seen by children. In chapters like The Daily Grind, issues of classroom size, one-size-fits-all lesson planning, and teachers, who at times are apathetic to individual student's needs, are discussed. My

students forget that this book was written before most of them were born because the issues are so relevant to their own classrooms.

Now that we have thought about the teachers and students in a special-education classroom, and, after considering the effects of poverty and society, we consider what we can be responsible for: ourselves. We may not be able to perfect the special-education system. We may not be able to eradicate poverty. We may not know enough about the students with disabilities in our classroom. The one thing we can control as teachers is our own teaching. Therefore, I ask my students to question themselves and what they do each day in classrooms. I also pose the idea of self-efficacy as teachers and students: How do we view ourselves as learners and teachers?

Jackson's book has been particularly valuable to my graduate students working in schools with children who have emotional disturbance or behavior disorders. I use this text to help each of us question our own attitudes regarding our responsibilities as teachers in classrooms. Besides the summary for this book, students are working on their Internet search for strategies regarding their disability report. I also have the students take the survey again so that I can gauge if students in my class have learned my intended objectives.

The final text is Tammet's *Born on a Blue Day: a Memoir*. This is a true story about Tammet's life with autism and abilities in mathematics and languages. Tammet has Asperger's syndrome, epilepsy, and synesthesia. The author described life as an inconsolable baby and years in school, speaking about growing up in a household with loving parents who had no idea what to do and the effects of having many siblings, several of whom also have autism. Tammet described the isolation he felt without

friends, and feeling much more comfortable to be left alone than forced to be social. The author imparting the lack of understanding about Asperger's at his school.

Tammet is also gay. This is an important discussion in class. The gay, lesbian, and transgender population has some of the highest rates for risk of suicide in high school-age students (Rutter & Soucar, 2002). I feel this is particularly important because I believe society looks at people with disabilities as asexual, and then is offended when a student may inappropriately act out sexually, when in fact we have not taught the mores of our society concerning sex. It is just one more way people with disabilities are lessened as humans. By using the Tammet's story, I am able to provide a conversation on a delicate topic that centers around how best to support our students.

Last year we were fortunate to go hear Tammet speak at another university. This was the highlight of the semester. There was a "meet and greet" after the presentation. Many of my students got to talk with Tammet and get their book signed. I was able to provide this fieldtrip for free through the use of student services and the director of programs. When Tammet spoke, it was obvious that this speaker differed from other professional speakers. Using no eye contact with the audience, Tammet moved in a very disjointed, robotic way, and had little ticks. The speaker told us about idiosyncrasies in the book, but until we saw the speaker in person, we could overlook them. The presentation was a verbatim description of the major events in the book. We didn't care! We were so enthralled!

The book summary for *Born on a Blue Day* was not due until the week after we saw Tammet's presentation. The stereotypes that Tammet pointed out about his own teachers were, at times, the same labels my students came to see in themselves. Speaking

of stereotypical characteristics; Tammet broke the rules of autism. People with autism have difficulty with communication. Tammet spoke six foreign languages and has created two new languages. People with disabilities will be dependent on others their entire lives. Tammet runs an e-learning company and travels the world. This author has had the same partner for almost 10 years. Tammet is a productive member of society and has accomplished more in 30 years than most of us do in a lifetime, shattering the stereotypes. My graduate students come away from this book and speech believing that the students in their classroom, in fact, might be able to do more.

If they did not believe it before, through this course, my students see it as their responsibility to help students and parents find the resources and hold the bar high in achievement. By modeling various learning strategies and ways of presenting information, students end this course with actual examples of multisensory instruction, multiple-format presentation, and a variety of ways to assess for mastery learning.

The final activity in this class is the philosophy statement. I use a rubric identifying topics to be included in philosophy statement. Throughout the semester students have completed a pre- and postsurvey of their special-education knowledge. There are discussions, videos, and presentations in class concerning special-education law, policy and procedures, service delivery, and the basics on disability categories. The philosophy statement is the culmination of this introductory course. We revisit these statements throughout the special-education graduate program. I look at each student's philosophy statement as defining my teaching.

## References

- Craig, E. (1973). *P.S. Your not listening*. New York, NY: Signet.
- Jackson, P. (1990). *Life in classrooms*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Kozol, J. (1995). *Amazing grace: The lives of children and the conscience of a nation*. New York, NY: Crown.
- Rutter, P., & Soucar, E. (2002). Youth suicide risk and sexual orientation—Statistical data included. *Adolescence*. San Diego, CA: Libra.
- Tammet, D. (2006). *Born on a blue day: A memoir*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

### **Service Vignette**

I am excited about the service component of my IHE faculty position. The minimum requirements for service include regular attendance and participation in department meetings, committee assignments, and regular departmental activities. In the description of service is

making a substantive contribution to the community in a manner that clearly impacts positively on the community, in a role that requires a high level of involvement and time, and in a manner that is clearly related to the faculty member's professional role.

I believe I am making a significant impact for both, the university, and, larger education community as I participate in the work of PDSs.

About 8 years ago a new state initiative called "the redesign of teacher education" revised the delivery of teacher preparation in my state. Its signature amendment from previous models of initial certification teacher-preparation programs was the development of relationships initiated by IHE with local education agencies, and in doing so, moved teacher education out of the theory-first experience to experiential learning throughout the entire teacher training provided by an IHE.

PDS has provided a conduit connecting both my public-school-teaching career and my teaching in an IHE. I believe I help PDSs and PDSs helps me. I can help influence policy and teaching with what is current in the research. I provide professional development for teacher candidates, teachers, and administrators. By being out in the schools, I do not become merely a theorist; rather I am grounded in the public-school culture. The following account is of a particular professional development I provided to a PDS.

Starting in October of the school year I met with the principal, the speech pathologist, and the special-education teacher to begin planning a series of staff-development activities that would encourage three objectives:

1. Relationship building between staff and special-education/at-risk students
2. Knowledge building/refresher of the learning theory
3. Proper implementation of accommodations during high-stakes testing

We set a schedule of five meetings over the remainder of the school year. As a PDS, we would create a mission statement that would guide the improvement of accommodation delivery for students with disabilities. During all sessions we worked on team building, the mission statement, and understanding barriers to cognitive development. I found an excellent Administration, Supervision, and Curriculum Development book called *Getting to Got it!* Each staff member was given a copy of the book. We completed individual and group activities focusing on differentiated instruction and multisensory learning.

A key component of this professional development was a mentor/student model in which every teacher candidate and staff member paired with a special-education or at-risk student. This project required that the mentor see this student every day. Mentors built a relationship with the student. I believe, and the research supports, that in order to learn, we need to be risk takers, but it is near impossible to take risks if you do not feel safe (Fraser & Terzian, 2009). As learners, we all need to feel safe to make mistakes. As *Getting to Got it!* points out, attachment and resiliency are key to risk taking and learning (p. 5).



The special-education teacher at the PDS checked with teachers each week to provide support as the faculty and staff built relationships with these students. This teacher would then share with me concerns of the staff. My job was to come out each month to 6 weeks and provide staff development on special education, specifically on the implementation of accommodations and modifications. I used the feedback from the special-education teacher and other staff to plan the next cycle of professional development at the PDS.

Using our book study as the medium to provide information on learning theory, we had vigorous discussions about what could be possible learning barriers for the students we were targeting and how we might be able to tear down some of those walls by providing mentoring. As a homework assignment after this first staff development, we sent each staff member and teaching intern to identify a student they would be willing to mentor for the remainder of year. Each staff member and teaching intern would chose a special-education or identified at-risk student to receive extra mentoring support from an adult. We set up a rubric for what this mentoring would look like:

- \* see the student once a day during the school week
- \* talk with the student about schoolwork and issues the student might be having socially, behaviorally, and/or academically
- \* if the student receives special-education services like a reader or scribe, work with that student during class work and assessments by providing those services
- \* keep a log of times with the student and what you as the mentor did with the student

Each session we completed another chapter of the book study along with activities from each chapter of the book. During each session (1, 2, and 3) I provided everyone with an “activity ring” to help each mentor remember the strategies we learned for that session. The homework after each subsequent professional-development meeting was to come back and report on one strategy used with their student. Mentors also reported on the individual progress made with students as we moved closer to assessment.

The fourth session we focused on the upcoming state assessments, and, in a joint effort, the reading specialist in charge of testing, the special-education teacher, and me presented a refresher on the *dos and don'ts* of assessment accommodations. The faculty was given an opportunity to speak about concerns with upcoming assessments. We discussed possible issues with the delivery of accommodations and refusal of accommodations by the student. We talked, as a group, about the importance of the student feeling supported and having a “cheerleader” who truly believed in the student.

The final session (held after the assessments) was our celebration. We debriefed on what was successful and what our concerns were as we waited for testing results over the summer. During this session the principal and two teachers told inspirational stories about their individual work while mentoring a student. We also completed a survey during this session. Feedback from the survey found that teachers wanted to continue mentoring.

The service category of my IHE position is subject to interpretation and faculty has complete discretion in what to do in order to fulfill this obligation. There is not a minimum amount of time required or level of commitment, merely demonstration of effort. In reviewing my calendar, I estimate that I spent approximately 80 hours in

planning and implementing the professional development with this PDS. The time is significant but means nothing if it was not valuable to the PDS: faculty and students.

Test results are in and the good news is that all of the students we targeted passed the test and met the state goal for progress. We still have work to do, and, I hope to be back at this school to do some work in the area of mathematics. I believe this was a successful venture for the PDS and me. I know I learned a considerable amount of information from delivering this professional development that I am using now in the classes I teach. I believe my university's relationship with this school is stronger from the experience, and, I believe I am advancing the category of service.

### **Professional-Development Vignette**

As part of tenure-track faculty, one of my responsibilities is to contribute to the education community through research, presentations, and publications. Publication is one of the more difficult venues as there is finite set of education journals and publication in journals requires time for writing that includes literature review, research, analysis, and interpretation. So, when the opportunity arose to attempt to publish my first article I was very excited and very nervous.

As an instructor who focuses on reflective practice and professional development in schools, it made complete sense to try to write for the National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) University and School Partnership, a blind peer-reviewed journal. I believe that my successes come from my students, so it seemed to me to be completely responsible to ask two of my graduate students to be part of the writing process with me. I explained that most articles were rejected but that it would be a good experience for us all. Our article would focus on how we incorporate the professional-development-school standards in our own reflective practice.

#### **Description of Data-Collection Procedures**

We began collecting data in January of 2006 as part of a graduate course I was teaching. We asked the 12 graduate students involved in this course if they would be interested in being part of our research study. We had total agreement. The syllabus I created reflected both PDS standards and the components of reflective practice that we would be discussing in the class. This course was considered blended and used both face-to-face instruction and the online Blackboard classroom™ over a standard semester of 15 weeks. Students were required to keep a reflective practice journal during the

course. Class was held on Bb for 3 weeks and then we met at a local restaurant on the fourth week of each month to discuss the previous weeks and what was happening in our respective classrooms. This broke down as 9 weeks online using Bb and five face-to-face meetings. The first class was held face to face at the university to hold an orientation and review requirements and the calendar.

#### Description of Procedures in Writing the Article

The course ended at the beginning of May. We completed our first draft of the article at the end of May. We began the editing process of the first draft via e-mail to each other and, after four revisions, submitted to the NAPDS journal at the end of August. Then we waited.

In October, I called the two students and let them know that I had not heard anything. In November I e-mailed them to say the timeline had passed to be notified if accepted. The article was on the backburner of my mind. I was sad that we had not even heard a response and even more disappointed that I had nothing to tell the graduate students.

On December 6, 2006, I received an e-mail that we had been conditionally accepted into the journal. The conditions were to add to the article as the journal editors wished to extend our piece and resubmit by the deadline of December 12. I called both coauthors and we got to work. When we wrote the article, the submission category required a maximum length of three pages. From my own dissertation work, I have learned to save everything, even cuts, so when we wrote this piece, I had saved about five pages of cuts. We went back to those pages and found that we had the additional information the journal editors requested. We submitted again and waited.

In May of 2007, a year and half after we had started, the journal edition with our article entitled, “We Are All Teachers: Creating Reflective Practice for PreK–16 and Graduate Studies through Professional Development Schools,” *School-University Partnerships*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 2007, was published. I cannot really describe how awesome it was to see my name in print; as part of the table of contents, the back cover, and the article header. I walked around the office for days saying, “I’m an author.” Partly, because I am still in the dissertation process, and mostly, because it has been a lifelong dream to be an author, this article has been a professional highlight in my career. It would not have been nearly as sweet if I had been the lone author. It was students in the process with me that gave me the most satisfaction. I have been privileged to have several mentors in my professional life, and now I see this as one of my responsibilities: to support my students in their professional growth. It was so exhilarating to tell each of my students that they would be adding publications to their resumes. My two teacher colleagues (they each had graduated by the time the article was published) and I went for a marvelous celebration dinner that summer.

Since the publication of the article, I have attended the NAPDS conference, and, at the request of the editors, served as a panelist for a new authors’ discussion about the *ins and outs* of writing journal articles. After this presentation, I was asked to write a second article for the NAPDS Newsletter, which will come out this spring. For this article I enlisted the help of my PDS partners. All of these opportunities came from the one journal article. I believe the professional development I gained from this journal article was important to my career. I felt more confident about my abilities as a writer. It helped me believe I was capable to complete the writing needed for this dissertation. In

addition, I believe my professional development contributed to my university in profound ways by putting its name in print for the world to see; and the article demonstrated my growth as an educator and the significance to teacher education I bring to my university.

## **The Research Vignette**

If there is one word I would want people to professionally associate with me it is reflection. I am not sure if most people would describe me as philosophical, and, certainly, there are times when I am quite spontaneous in what I do and say. I would declare that a major learning I have had in my professional life is to think before I speak. This has come out of many trial and error situations. I definitely know I learn through doing and I am a tactile, experiential learner. As a special-education teacher, and as teacher educator, I instruct this way too. What may seem as very spontaneous and fluid to students has been thought out and practiced countless times in my mind. There are certain topics I feel must discuss in the research vignette. How I came to find self-study, the influence it has had on my professional life, and the actual completion of this research are all themes that have emerged in preparing to write this final vignette.

I have learned a tremendous amount about what makes for a valid and reliable research methodology during my studies at The George Washington University and as I wrote the proposal for this dissertation. Coursework at The George Washington University included a preparatory course in quantitative mathematics, introductory courses in both quantitative and qualitative methodology, and a course in case-study methodology. As a former special-education teacher, I am interested in the individual performance of students; the case studies I read concerning students in diverse situations and with disabilities made the most sense to me. I believe my interest in qualitative methods comes from my background as a special-education teacher where I was charged with improving education for students with disabilities, using individualized education plans. In today's public schools, assessment is the primary source of evaluating student



progress and determining the value of the education that student received. I believe there are many gaps in this system. There are so many variables when working with people, influencing the outcomes on an assessment. One is the self-efficacy of the teacher. Bandura suggested (1977) that a person's future behavior is a function of three interrelated forces: environmental influences, own behavior, and internal personal factors such as cognitive, affective, and biological processes. That is, what we come to believe about ourselves affects the choices we make and actions we take. We are not products of our environment. We are not products of our biology. Instead, we are products of the dynamic interplay between the external, the internal, and our current and past behavior (Henson, Kogan, & Vacha-Haase, 2002). Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as belief in one's own capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. Self-efficacy beliefs are characterized as the major mediators for our behavior, and importantly, behavioral change. Studying other teachers' self-efficacy is appealing but it seemed to me before I could ask other teachers to delve into their own self-efficacy issue, I had to be sure about my own teacher-educator self-efficacy.

I fell into self-study methodology. I knew I was interested in a qualitative study because I was asking why and how kinds of questions about teacher-educator self-efficacy. I explored the option of using a case study as my methodology, and through that investigation, I began reading the work of Whitehead (1997). Whitehead spoke directly to the idea that I, as a teacher-researcher, could define my own understanding of my teaching practices and compare my thoughts to my actions in what Whitehead coined

as the living contradiction. Do my thoughts and beliefs about my teacher-educator practice reflect in my actual practice? This is the basic definition of an LET.

In 2006, I traveled to San Francisco, California to the AERA conference to meet Whitehead and the other leaders (Allender, Manke, McNiff, and Pinnegar) of self-study. It was at this time I met Samaras (who serves on my dissertation committee). I found my research colleagues in this methodology. Self-study is a form of qualitative research defined as the self-examination of one's own pedagogical beliefs as evidenced in one's own teaching and scholarship (Kaplan, 2006). Here was a group of teacher educators whose thinking was akin to mine. I had felt so isolated prior to finding Whitehead's work. Now, there was an alliance available to mentor and assist me as I worked through the self-study of my teacher-educator practices in order to understand my teacher-educator self-efficacy. This was a huge turning point for me in my work. I am an optimistic person by nature and I have always believed that I would complete my dissertation, but at that stage of the work I was terribly concerned that I had gone down the wrong path and would not find my way back to the road for completion.

I am not really a good joiner of established groups. I stand in the corner at parties. The outgoing nature of my teaching is a performance and I have terrible stage fright. I am aware of this insecurity. It is part of my living contradiction. So, it was a big deal for me to go, by myself, across the United States, and walk into a meeting of people I truly saw as perhaps my last hope at nailing down a methodology. The first session, I sat in the back of the room and didn't utter a word, but near the end of this presentation the facilitators (Jerry and Mary) announced we would break into groups and have table discussions. Jerry came up and introduced himself and moved a chair for me

to sit by him. He introduced me to the group and there it was. I was in my first professional dialogue about self-study. I was there explaining my dissertation and talking about my theoretical position and my life experience. It was in that moment I think I made the shift from teacher to teacher educator. Jerry modeled in that gesture of introduction and a chair, the disposition of caring that I believe is the core of great teaching. I felt worthy and included and relevant to the work. I strive for all my students to feel the way I felt in that moment.

Teacher educators are required as faculty for institutes of higher education to function in three capacities: teaching, service, and professional development. Teacher educators produce portfolios or faculty notebooks to demonstrate to fellow faculty their expertise. So, in effect, teacher educators complete data analysis of themselves; however there are variables with this notebook. It is used for tenure, promotion, and often has monetary value attached. So it is quite possible to create a review of one's work that only displays the best of one's actions, and limits the amount of authentic analysis and growth I wanted to achievement. This was stimulus for taking the sections of the faculty notebook and comparing it to ATE standards (2007), using reflections as the conduit from the documents to my beliefs as I created my LET.

One of the tests of validity of a theory is that it has the capacity to produce an adequate explanation for the behavior of an individual case (Whitehead, 2004). A tenet of self-study is that the research must be made public to support reliability and validity of data and interpretations. This self-study used a CFN as the audience for the researcher to ascertain if findings were valid and reliable. A CFN is trusted persons who ask provocative questions, provide information to be examined through another lens, and

offer critique of a person's work as a friend. A critical friend takes the time to fully understand the context of the work presented and the outcomes that the person or group is working toward. The critical friend is an advocate for the success of that work (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

There were 15 invitations to participate as a member of the CFN, spanning three specific categories of critical friend: former students, colleagues from the public schools where I have taught, and IHE faculty. As a requirement of this research, it was a requisite that the CFN be anonymous to me after the initial invitation to participate. Therefore, in the invitation to participate directions were given for each CFN member to create a pseudonym and e-mail account that I would not recognize. I created individual wiki pages for the each member of the CFN to read four vignettes concerning my teaching, service, professional development, and research, along with my teacher educator self-efficacy belief statements. I also included artifacts for the CFN to review that I believed supported my statements in the vignettes and the belief statement. Everything would be placed on individual wiki pages and each CFN member and I would communicate using these wiki websites. The research would last approximately 3 months.

Eleven invitees agreed to the invitation to participate in the research. One IHE responded yes to participating but asked to be released due conflicts in schedule (Ansonia66). One of the colleagues was also qualified to be IHE so they were moved to meet the requirement of 3 CFN per category. This left 3 people in the IHE category (jdissertation, lexbran, and yeah.jamey). There were 3 participants in the Colleague

category (jupiterkira, twilik2009, and gotnoclue). There were four in the Former Student category (Pseudonym1313, Borofan1996, Rocket3, and Blackshadow1100).

Pseudonym1313 was late sending in the acceptance to participate, however posted within the timeline. Borofan1996 had technical difficulty getting on the assigned wiki page and did not post to the initial teaching vignette until March 25, 2009, 7 days after the due date indicated on the schedule. Borofan1996 sent e-mail to the research assistant that all e-mail had gone to SPAM. I was analyzing data and had not posted a revised self-efficacy statement, so I allowed participation. I think it would have said something about my teaching to ask people to participate, and then when they have technical difficulties, to cut them out of the research. I know Borofan1996 is a student (as I know the categories for all participants) and that may have influenced my decision to let them stay in the study. Four people did not respond to the mailed invitation. Two were IHE; one was a former student; one was a colleague. I saw one of the IHE invitees who had not responded at a meeting; the person asked if it was still possible to participate, but at that point I had already completed three of the four vignettes with the CFN and I had to decline.

The research was completed using the procedures stated in Chapter 3 of the dissertation proposal: vignette posted, draft belief statement regarding my teacher-educator self-efficacy with ATE standards (2007) was posted, I write reflection one on vignette, CFN responds, I read responses and write the second reflection on vignette, write my revised belief statement regarding my teacher-educator self-efficacy and post along with next vignette. This process was repeated three times.

I read the CFN responses three ways: through the lens of the ATE standards, through the lens of the CFN in the aggregate, and disaggregated as the three CFN subgroups. When I read the responses the first time through, it became apparent that the CFN read and interpreted everything from the directions to the vignette and the artifacts with different meaning(s). One CFN member thought they were supposed to read the Teaching Vignette and respond to all four vignette topics (teaching, service, professional development, and research). One CFN posted to each of the ATE standards and tried to make the Teaching Vignette fit into each category. This variation did not affect the quality of the responses, played no negative bearing on the research, and all responses were used to help me reflect.

I asked the CFN to consider the following three questions for each vignette:

1. How does this teaching (professional development, service, and research to be inserted in place of teaching for each phase) vignette, reflections, belief statement, artifacts, and CFN responses help you assess my self-efficacy as a teacher educator?
2. What artifacts concerning this teaching (professional development, service, and research) vignette contribute to your understanding of my self-efficacy as a teacher educator?
3. Based on this teaching (professional development, service, and research) vignette, how do you perceive my teacher-educator self-efficacy?

I analyzed the CFN responses for themes and similarities as well as differences, questions, and suggestions. After I had completed this analysis, I wrote a second reflection about what I still believed from my first reflection and what has changed

because of the CFN responses and my interpretations of what was said. A major learning for me working on these vignettes and reflecting all the time was about the notion of slow processors and slow learners. When I was a special-education teacher, we would have children that were casually labeled slow processors. It was a nicer way of saying a kid was behind and not keeping up with their peers. I want to state for the record, I think I might qualify as a slow processor. This degree has taken me 8 years. I have colleagues that were done in 4. I have heard the stories about great dissertation writers who didn't have a single edit coming out of their defense. Me, it is rewrite after rewrite. I have become solid in the belief that my advisor is the quintessential special-education teacher because she has kept in it with me the whole way. She has tried getting me mentors and having me participate in seminars, and meeting with me one on one. Now here is the irony. I am studying my teacher-educator self-efficacy. Why is this ironic? Well, being a slow processor it has been a little tough on the ego: to be slow at getting the dissertation done. One of my better characteristics is optimism. I am a glass-half-full kind of person. So, here I am 8 years later. If I had somehow finished the dissertation earlier what would it have been about? Who would have been my CFN? I wouldn't have known about self-study or met Jack and Anastasia.

And now, here I am trying to write the last vignette about the research. It took so long to write the first three chapters of the dissertation. I was surprised to find out that it was really difficult to write a good first draft of the belief statement. The vignettes were not nearly as easy as I thought they were going to be. It is one thing to have an idea in your head and a completely different experience to get it on paper with the significance that you meant. Then, there was the technology and trying to set up the wiki pages. So,

by the time I got to do the research, I have been terribly afraid. I have been afraid that something would go wrong, and probably more accurately, that I would do something wrong.

I think the vignettes have served their purpose. They gave a glimpse inside my teacher-educator world. Like all of the writing, I was unprepared for how difficult it would be to get my story on paper. I now know why people get ghost writers. The biggest issue with each vignette was picking a singular event to use as the representation of my body of work in that category. I like the word vignette because it means a brief scene. That is what I have tried to create, a slice of my life in each category. With each vignette and with the CFN responses, I found myself thinking about other examples I could have used to convey my work.

The CFN has exceeded my expectations. They are so loyal and committed. This is their research too! I have shared, in the vignettes and the reflections, that I gain the most satisfaction when I am collaborating with students and colleagues. This has been the ultimate experience in collaboration. My professional life depends on this dissertation. I have never said this to my CFN and yet I know by their commitment, they understand this is not about me being able to say doctor in front of my name. This isn't a whim. It is everything. My ability to continue to be a teacher educator is dependent on the completion of the dissertation. And this is huge. More important than the completion of the dissertation is the knowledge I am gaining that I am worthy of the title "teacher educator" because I am competent in the work. This has been the reason for studying my self-efficacy as a teacher educator.



I was so excited and so nervous before I read the first CFN responses. Initially, I would read the first few words of a response and then I would have to turn the computer off because I could hardly take it. It was that exciting. There have been comments from each of the CFN members that just blew me away. One member wrote, "I feel like I am in Jamey's head." This comment provided great relief. It gave me insight that the process was successful. I was writing in a way that was clear. Themes have become very apparent. The CFN recognizes my commitment and perseverance to my students and the work at hand. Collaboration came up as a defining characteristic. I believe I still have work to do in the areas of cultural competency and public advocacy. I am still reflecting on the possibility that I did not write a vignette that fit these two categories well but I need to acknowledge that I chose the topics for vignettes and perhaps subconsciously I did not give these two areas enough consideration.

This will be the last vignette the CFN responds to and I am hopeful, they too have had as a rewarding experience as I have in this process. I know that I have grown tremendously by this experience. I think I will be a little sad to see this part of the research end and I believe that I will continue to do this kind of reflective practice with my students, colleagues, and faculty peers. After all, I am a teacher educator.

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## Appendix D

### Teacher Educator Self-Efficacy Belief Statement (Original Draft)

#### *What are my beliefs about my teacher-educator self-efficacy?*

I am a teacher educator. I authentically embody teaching as a profession.

#### *Teaching*

I am a teacher educator. I lead my students down the path to learning the necessary skills so they are able to teach their students how to learn.

I am a teacher educator. I instill in my students that core values of social justice to promote equity for all learners.

#### *Service*

I am a teacher educator. I advocate best instructional practices for all learners.

I am a teacher educator. I bring to my students current and relevant information regarding education.

#### *Professional Development*

I am a teacher educator. I continuously reflect on my teaching practices to improve my instruction.

I am a teacher educator. I collaborate with others, modeling for my students how to look outside one's own beliefs to a better way of teaching.

#### *Research*

I am a teacher educator. I employ the works of those that came before me to strengthen my own learning and instruction.

I am a teacher educator. I am contributing to the content knowledge concerning learning and teaching.

***What are my beliefs about my teacher educator self-efficacy? (Reframing I)***

I love being a teacher educator. I strive to authentically embody teaching as a profession.

*Teaching*

I love being a teacher educator. I am optimistic that guiding my students down the path of learning provides them the necessary skills, enabling each to teach their own students how to learn. I endeavor to instill in my students that core values of social justice promoting equity for all learners through my actions in my own classroom.

*Service*

I love being a teacher educator. I advocate best instructional practices for all learners. I attempt to bring to my students current and relevant truths regarding education.

*Professional Development*

I love being a teacher educator. I continuously reflect on my teacher educator practices to improve my instruction. I collaborate with others, modeling for my students how to look outside one's own beliefs to a better way of teaching.

*Research*

I love being a teacher educator. I employ the works of those that came before me to strengthen my own learning and instruction. I am contributing to the content knowledge concerning learning and teaching.

### ***Teacher Educator Self-Efficacy Belief Statement (Reframing II)***

I strive to authentically embody the teacher educator profession. I lead my life as a teacher educator.

At my core, I believe all students are entitled to be able to grow into adults and enjoy life. I know that this means learning how to get along in this world; learning how to take care of oneself, physically, cognitively, emotionally, and spiritually.

My willingness to be a risk taker is at the heart of my teacher educator practices. I look outside my own beliefs for better ways of teaching. I find security in taking risks as a learner because I know this will make me a better teacher educator. I am not afraid to make a mistake or to have my students question my beliefs or methods because this inquiry helps me reflect and grow. In that way I know that I practice what I teach and I am a life-long learner.

I provide my students with the expertise to teach their own pupils how to learn.

I am current in my knowledge of education policy and practice. I model advocacy by pointing to the possibilities in education. I practice teaching methodology by using multiple strategies in any given lesson: multimedia, technology, collaboration, consultation, and skill sets. I employ the works of those that came before me to strengthen my own learning and teaching. I am contributing to the content knowledge of teacher education through my own reflection and research.

Every time I teach, it is with the expectation that my students leave the classroom better off than when they came in.

## Teacher Educator Self-Efficacy Belief Statement (Reframing III)



*NAPDS  
Article*

I have a constructive sense of self-efficacy as a teacher educator. I know this to be true from the successes I have witnessed in my students' classrooms with their students. I know this to be true from the insights my students share in class. I know this to be true because I believe I can teach anyone anything because I am willing to be a lifelong learner.

I encourage my students to question my thinking and methods. This inquiry leads students to form their own beliefs and it facilitates reflection of my teaching practice.

*AERA Brown  
Lecture  
Series:  
My students  
and I met  
Linda  
Darling-*



*PDS Teaching  
Intern Celebration*



I am current in my knowledge of education policy and practice. I model advocacy through my actions in service to the community. I continue to expand my pedagogy using multimedia, technology, collaboration, consultation, and field trips. I employ the works of those that came before me to strengthen my own learning and teaching. I am contributing to the content knowledge of teacher education through my own reflection and research.

My expectation for my students is to leave my classroom with the essential knowledge and positive sense of self-efficacy to teach in today's schools. As a teacher educator this is my purpose.

## Teacher Educator Self-Efficacy Belief Statement (Reframing IV)



*NAPDS  
Article*

I believe I authentically  
embody the teacher  
educator profession.

I encourage my students  
to question my beliefs  
and methods. This  
inquiry leads students to  
form their own beliefs  
and it helps me reflect  
on my own teaching  
practice. I practice  
what I teach and I am a  
life-long learner.



*AERA Brown  
Lecture  
Series,  
Linda  
Darling-  
Hammond,  
my students,  
and me*



*PDS Teaching Intern Celebration*

I am current in my knowledge of education policy  
and practice. I model advocacy through my actions  
in service to the community. I expand my pedagogy  
by using many teaching strategies: multimedia,  
technology, collaboration, consultation, and field  
trips. I employ the works of those that came before  
me to strengthen my own learning and teaching. I  
am contributing to the content knowledge of teacher  
education through my own reflection and research.

Every time I teach, it is with the expectation that my students leave my classroom  
with the expertise to educate the students in today's schools.

## Appendix E

### Artifacts Found in Online Storage and Wiki-Pages

1. Researcher's curriculum vita
2. Syllabi from course discussed in *Teaching* vignette
3. Faculty evaluations of teacher-educator
4. Student course evaluations of teacher-educator
5. Picture from AERA Browne Lecture Series
6. Picture of teacher-educator holding journal with the published article cited in *Professional Development* vignette
7. Picture of teacher-educator from ceremony honoring new teachers
8. Pictures from community activity with students (Service)
9. Copy of the teacher-educator's licensure and certificates
10. Copy of the journal article written by teacher-educator
11. Copy of evaluation/feedback forms completed by teachers and interns cited in the *Service* vignette
12. Copy of researcher's faculty notebook
13. PowerPoint from presentation by teacher-educator
14. Teacher-educator made pre /post surveys and tests
15. Teacher-educator made questions for book summary
16. Discussion-board questions and responses from online teaching
17. Teacher-educator made lessons and agenda for summer seminar
18. Teacher-educator field trip planning for diversity experience
19. Teacher-educator's reflective journal



20. Email letter correspondence between teacher-educator and students
21. Email letter correspondence between teacher-educator and colleagues (IHE and Public School)
22. Researcher written vignettes (*Teaching, Service, Professional Development, and Research*)
23. Teacher-educator belief statements