

The Role of Legitimacy in Student Teaching: Learning to “Feel” Like a Teacher

By Alexander Cuenca

The preparation of preservice teachers through a student teaching experience is a widely accepted practice in teacher education. Many claim the experience gained from doing the work of teaching is invaluable in the preparation of future educators and has a significant impact on the beliefs of prospective teachers (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). Grounded in an understanding that teaching is “to a great extent, an uncertain and spontaneous craft situated and constructed in response to the particularities of every day life” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999, p. 262), student teaching provides prospective teachers with an opportunity to develop

“personal practical knowledge” about the work of teaching (Fenstermacher, 1994). Although the common position of student teaching at the end of formal preparation suggests that the experience serves as an occasion to test and enact the theories advocated by the academy, learning as simply applying and refining theories ignores the interactive and social nature of learning from experience.

Ultimately, the student teaching experience is considered beneficial because, as Hammerness and Darling-Hammond (2005) note, “modern learning theory makes clear that expertise is developed within specific domains and learning is situated within specific

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contexts where it needs to be developed” (p. 403). With the knowledge of teaching emerging directly from the activity of teaching, student teaching provides prospective teachers with an opportunity to construct their own understandings of teaching based on the practical dilemmas they encounter in the field (Cuenca, 2010). In acquiring experiential knowledge, learning to teach becomes contextualized and embedded in the practice “from which it arose” (Borko & Putnam, 1996, p. 677). In other words, how student teachers learn about the knowledge and skills needed to teach and the situation in which they learn to teach are inextricably linked, shaping how student teachers ultimately understand the work of teaching.

A key factor in learning to teach during student teaching is the cooperating teacher, who supports and mentors prospective teachers. In the apprenticeship that is student teaching, the cooperating teacher serves as a gatekeeper to the experiential learning of pre-service teachers. Although several studies indicate the significant influence cooperating teachers have on student teachers’ beliefs about the teaching profession (Stanulis, 1994), professional norms (Koerner, Rust, & Baumgartner, 2002), or what student teachers decide to teach (McIntyre & Byrd, 1998), the focus of many of these studies equate mentorship with the direct transmission of teacher knowledge to student teachers. Often missing in the student teaching literature is the crucial role of the cooperating teacher in sanctioning the entrance of the student teacher into the community of teaching and providing access to the settings that contain the tools, artifacts, and message systems student teachers need to learn to teach from the activity of student teaching.

Seeking to address this gap in the research literature, this study explores the following research question: how is access to the practice of teaching granted by cooperating teachers during the student teaching experience? In particular, I will examine how two student teachers saw their cooperating teachers conferring legitimacy on them during student teaching. Drawing on the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), who suggest that the social structure of any community of practice, such as teaching, defines the possibilities for learning, this study attempts to identify dimensions of legitimacy and access that can provide favorable conditions for learning during the student teaching experience. By providing a sociocultural perspective on the work of learning to teach during student teaching, this study builds on work that frames the role of the cooperating teacher as a socializing agent (Zeichner & Gore, 1990), and contributes another perspective on the social structures that constitute an effective student teaching experience (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Learning as Participation

Drawing on the theory of situated learning articulated by Lave and Wenger (1991), this study is framed by an understanding that learning to teach during the student teaching experience is guided by the acquisition of the discourse and practices of teaching. As situative theorists posit, knowing and doing are

reciprocal, as knowledge derives from the physical and social contexts in which an activity takes place (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Because of the social nature of knowledge, learning becomes a socially situated activity mediated within the context of a community of practice. Lave and Wenger describe learning as an aspect of social practice, which involves a relationship with a community and note that:

activities, tasks, functions, and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning. These systems of relations arise out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which are part of systems of relations among persons. (p. 53)

Therefore, a community of practice serves as the intrinsic condition for learning, since new knowledge is created in the social exchange of practice and experience. For student teachers engaged in a teaching apprenticeship, the placement site serves as the community where learning about the craft of teaching occurs (Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992).

Central to Lave and Wenger's understanding of situated learning is legitimate peripheral participation, which they define as the process where "the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practice of a community" (p. 29). As apprentices during the student teaching experience, learning as legitimate peripheral participation suggests that student teachers enter a field placement located at the periphery of a community of teaching and as they gradually engage in the practices of the community, they begin a learning trajectory toward full participation in the practice of teaching. However, for this trajectory to begin, the cooperating teacher must grant the student teacher legitimacy in order to have access to the activity of teaching and the cultural tools of teaching, or the information, artifacts, technologies, symbol systems, and rituals associated with teaching. In this study, I investigate how student teachers perceive legitimacy conferred by their cooperating teachers.

Context

The participants in this study—Melissa and Nicole—are at the end of an elementary teacher preparation program at Southern College, a small private college in the Southeast. Melissa is European-American, in her mid 30s, student teaching in a fourth-grade class at Russell Elementary School. She is paired with Mrs. Snider, a European-American teacher in her mid 50s with 12 years of experience and previous experience with three other student teachers. Nicole is African-American, in her mid 20s, student teaching in a fourth-grade class at Chase Elementary. Nicole's cooperating teacher is Mrs. Belle, an African-American in her mid 50s with 20 years of experience, and experience with two other student teachers in the past. Both student teachers spent 15 weeks in the field and returned to campus for a weekly student teaching seminar, which served as a space to reflect on the student

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teaching experience. I served as both university supervisor and seminar instructor for Melissa and Nicole in fall 2008.

The student teaching program at Southern College, like many other teacher education programs, provides cooperating teachers minimal institutional support (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Beyond an introduction packet that briefly outlines responsibilities (see Appendix), cooperating teachers are essentially left to their own devices to figure out ways to support teacher learning. As the university supervisor, I was instructed to be cordial with cooperating teachers and provide them with the introduction packet. However, beyond answering questions about the introduction packet, the relationship between supervisor and cooperating teacher is not defined institutionally.

Methods

In order to examine legitimacy during the student teaching experience, I employed a qualitative case study methodology (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995). A variety of data were collected. The first data source was my field notes taken during my four observations of Melissa and Nicole. The field notes included descriptive and reflective material (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) tied directly to my observations. The second source was a series of four semi-structured field interviews (Patton, 2002) conducted directly after each classroom observation. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. My interview questions were guided by two sources. First, there were questions directly related to the research question (e.g., “Can you talk to me about your experience with your cooperating teacher?”). Additional questions were constructed in response to the observation I just conducted (e.g., “Can you describe to me what you thought about when Mrs. Belle corrected you in front of the class today?”). In this sense, I asked many of my questions from what emerged from my dialogue with the student (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

To analyze my data I took an inductive approach to each of my data sources, which Patton (2002) describes as an “immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover important patterns, themes, and interrelationships” (p. 41). This approach allowed me to extrapolate patterns from each of my data sources and form them into conceptual categories that could be used as instances of general notions or concepts (Charmaz, 2006). I treated the data from Melissa’s and Nicole’s interviews, observations, and each of their individual statements during our seminar conversations as two separate cases in order to analyze the data within and across cases (Patton, 2002). I then began the process of open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), where I tried to see the action in each segment of the data. Once I identified and categorized my data from each of my sources, I compared themes across each of the sources and refined my categories. This comparison led me to “both descriptive and explanatory” categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 341) that helped me arrive at a conceptual understanding of access and legitimacy during student teaching.

Outcomes

If we consider the function of the cooperating teacher as a gatekeeper into the community of teaching, then how is legitimacy into a teaching community granted? My data suggest that Melissa and Nicole experienced three forms of legitimacy during the student teaching experience: gradual access to (1) the tools of the trade, (2) the rituals of teaching, and (3) tethered learning. In the following section I will describe the ways in which the cooperating teacher provided access to each of these learning spaces.

Tools of the Trade: The “Things” of Teaching

Sociocultural theory suggests that the tools of a practice are quite important in learning about a practice (Walshaw, 2004). For Melissa and Nicole, one of the most important elements of the student teaching experience was their cooperating teacher’s willingness to give them what they termed the “things” of teaching, which my data suggest took many forms. For example, one of the things Nicole and Melissa recalled throughout the student teaching experience was the way their cooperating teacher would make efforts to give them copies of handouts and lesson plans to place in their own folders for their future classrooms. These copies signaled for Melissa that her cooperating teacher “valued me as a fellow teacher” (Interview, 9.15.08). Because these artifacts and tools of teaching, the overture of making extra copies for future practice helped these student teachers align themselves with the practice of teaching, thus legitimizing their place in the classroom community and the larger community of teachers.

Another important aspect of legitimacy was the use of the “teacher’s edition” of a text. For both participants, access to the teacher’s edition was an essential element of the student teaching experience. Nicole recounts her jubilation when her cooperating teacher set aside a teacher’s edition of the school agenda:

I’m so excited; the agendas came in last week, and they have an actual teacher’s edition. She comes up to me and gave me one and I looked and her and said, thank you! And then I was like, this one can’t be mine, we only had one teacher’s edition and we had one student edition left over, but then I looked and she had one of her own, and I was so excited cause it has the record chart. I kinda don’t want to write in it now; I’ll probably wait and use it later when I’ve got my own classroom. It was just so great. (Interview, 9.3.08)

As this response suggests, the sharing of the teacher’s edition served as a connection between the student teacher and the cooperating teacher as teachers, and this form of legitimacy began to break some of the hierarchical barriers that might exist between their positions in the classroom community. In contrast, when a cooperating teacher blocks access to items that the student teacher believes are associated with the work and practice of teaching, the inaccessibility proves to be an obstacle to legitimacy. In one interview, Melissa recalled her inability to gain access to the

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cooperating teacher's computer because of password restrictions when trying to download a lesson for her students. When she requested the password, Melissa was told that she wasn't allowed access to the computer and that every time she needed to use the computer, she had to go through the cooperating teacher. Melissa mentioned that this episode "crushed" her because "I was trying to do something really exciting for our kids, but I really felt like she didn't trust me the password" (Interview, 10.15.08).

Providing student teachers with access to the tools to enact the practice of teaching were crucial in the ways in which Melissa and Nicole each experienced legitimacy during their field placement. As both participants noted repeatedly in their interviews, the things of teaching whether handouts, teacher's editions, or computer passwords were extremely important in helping them feel like a teacher.

Rituals of Teaching

In one of my final field visits, Melissa revealed what she believed was one of the most important things she learned during student teaching: i.e., "routines are important" (Interview 12.2.08). In both cases, not only learning routines but, more importantly, taking ownership of routines was an important dimension of learning to teach. Melissa and Nicole each spent a few weeks observing their respective classrooms and had an opportunity to observe the everyday routines. They recalled trying to pick up as much as they could, from where the homework bin was to what pattern the cooperating teacher used in walking around the desks when students were doing group work.

Although both student teachers noted that these observations were useful in helping them orient themselves to the routines of the classroom, ultimately, access to these routines and rituals helped them the most in learning to teach. In other words, when they were able to "take the place" of the cooperating teacher, feelings of legitimacy emerged. After observing Nicole's cooperating teacher teach a sentence-correction lesson, in my next observation I watched Nicole teach the same lesson. Nicole recalls her experience in taking over this routine for Mrs. Belle and reveals some lessons she observed from watching her cooperating teacher teach the lesson:

It was great to be able to see Ms. Belle do this lesson for awhile; this is an everyday thing for us, but in preparing for it, I know why she's got to prepare for this lesson so much. When she first gave it to me, I looked and I was only able to find 18 of the 19 corrections I needed to get all of them for my kids. Finally, after looking at it for a while, I figured out it was the p and m thing. I've seen our kids ask her why this and why that so many times that I knew that they were going to ask me, and I couldn't be like, I don't know where the 19th thing is, or I don't know why you capitalize pm. (Interview, 9.19.08)

Similarly, Melissa noted that in the beginning of her experience she felt "safe" when she first took over a task that her students did every day with her cooperating teacher. Melissa notes, "it was always encouraging when my cooperating teacher

would pass the baton to me and I was able to replicate something that she did every day or something she did the other day” (Interview, 9.15.08). In allowing their student teachers to take their place in a clearly established classroom ritual, Melissa’s and Nicole’s cooperating teachers legitimized their student teachers in the classroom community and gave them a sense of solidarity about the work of teaching. In recalling the first time she took over for a lesson, Melissa indicated that she felt like she was “actually doing the work of the teacher.” She remembers, “I felt like the students saw me in a new light, like I was really the teacher, not just the lady sitting over there in the corner taking notes” (Interview, 9.15.08).

Another important ritual of teaching that facilitated learning to teach was grading. In Melissa’s classroom, her students kept a homework binder, which Mrs. Snider would check at the beginning of every day for completion. After a few weeks of watching this ritual, Melissa recalls that it was finally her turn to take over for Mrs. Snider. Although Melissa noted that she was fully aware that she would be taking over the day before, when she actually had the grade book in her hand, she was beset in that moment by a “barrage of questions about what I was looking at and how I was going to go about doing this” (Interview 10.15.08). She mentioned to me that after watching Mrs. Snider walk around for so long, it just “looked easy” and that she didn’t realize all of the problems associated with grading a homework binder. Melissa recalls:

It was great to finally be doing this in the mornings, but it was a lot harder than I thought. It wasn’t just about looking over a kid’s shoulder for completion and writing a check down, but I also had to think about what I knew about each kid. It ran through my head that maybe child x didn’t have the help and that’s probably why the homework looks this way or is incomplete, or not done at all. I wasn’t sure what to do when a kid told me that he didn’t have his homework; sure I saw Mrs. Snider just tell students in the past that they would get a check minus and go on to the next child, but I felt like I just couldn’t do that, just gloss them over. (Interview 10.15.08)

Ultimately, access to this routine not only provided feeling of legitimacy for Melissa, but also provided a particularly important educative moment where she began to think like a teacher. In allowing student teachers to take control of classroom routines, Mrs. Snider and Mrs. Belle in subtle ways legitimized their student teachers into the classroom community, a sentiment understood and appreciated by both Melissa and Nicole.

Tethered Learning

Once Melissa and Nicole began to take over most of the responsibilities from their cooperating teacher, many of our conversations turned to their interactions with their cooperating teacher as they were teaching. The presence of the cooperating teacher was important for Melissa and Nicole as they learned how to teach by engaging in the activity of teaching. Nicole recounts, “I need Mrs. Belle to be there

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with me as I taught these kids about math; just in case I mess up, I don't want to like ruin their lives" (Interview, 9.19.08). Similarly, Melissa as she taught would often invoke the name of her cooperating teacher, Mrs. Snider, by announcing an activity she was going to do with the students later or telling them "this is the terminology Mrs. Snider wants us to use" (Fieldnotes, 10.15.08). For both student teachers, as they learned to teach, the presence of their cooperating teacher was important.

What I believe Melissa and Nicole were both searching for was tethered learning, learning to teach while still under the guise of supervised learning, allowing them to experience the potential failures of teaching, while still having a "safety net" to learn. The security of knowing the cooperating teacher was there "just in case I mess up" provided a reassuring environment for the development of Melissa and Nicole and legitimized their actions as prospective teachers. As Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest, learning about a community's practice entails being allowed to make mistakes and have imperfect practices. In the teaching apprenticeship, tethering teaching experiences provides immediate access to the information that would enable a student teacher to match her practice with those that are expected within the community (Davies, 2005).

For Melissa and Nicole, their cooperating teachers showed stark differences in the way they tethered the learning of their student teachers. In all of my observations of Nicole, Mrs. Belle was always present; and when Nicole would stumble in front of the classroom, a reassuring look from Mrs. Belle would always get Nicole back on track. For example, when going through multiple-choice questions on a reading assignment, Nicole mistakenly looked at the wrong answer and called that answer to the class. Mrs. Belle looked up from grading papers at her desk and made eye contact with Nicole, and she quickly realized that she was looking at the wrong answer. She then called the right answer to the class; Mrs. Belle nodded, Nicole smiled, and Mrs. Belle returned to grading papers and Nicole to calling answers to the class (Fieldnotes, 9.19.08). When asked about this exchange, Nicole stated that she liked the fact that Mrs. Belle "gives me enough space to make mistakes but is still able to respect the fact that I'm still learning how to be a teacher. I feel like, you know...I like that she sees me almost like a peer, someone she trusts with her kids" (Interview, 9.19.08).

In another instance of tethered learning, Nicole mentioned that her cooperating teacher would always "step in" and fill in gaps when she felt that there wasn't enough information being provided. Although Nicole admitted that these interruptions at times derailed her thinking, she remembered learning a lot from those moments; and ultimately she didn't take those moments when Mrs. Belle would step in as a threat, but as a nod of support, modeling moments when there needed to be a more careful explanation of how an activity would be conducted or a certain content topic. Essentially, with the assurance that Mrs. Belle was still there, Nicole was able to maximize the educative impact of her time in the field.

On the contrary, Melissa often expressed frustration with the lack of attention

her cooperating teacher paid to her when she taught a lesson. Melissa would often express to me in interviews that she felt like she was walking on a tight rope” and her cooperating teacher was “just off somewhere else, grading papers or doing something else not minding what I’m doing. Sometimes I feel like I could be cursing up a storm and she wouldn’t even bother to notice my existence” (Interview, 10.31.08). Such frustrations with the inattention of the cooperating teacher during a time when Melissa was very vulnerable in front of her class indicated the “distance” that Melissa would often note in her interviews (8.26.08; 9.15.08; 10.31.08). Furthermore, this distance most likely led to the feelings of inadequacy she expressed in her final interview. When asked about her feelings towards teaching, she said:

I just don’t know if I’m cut out for this teaching thing. I mean I can’t get into my teacher’s head. She seems like she’s got it all in there; I’ve never seen her check a book. Which is good for her, but bad for me. And I told her, I need to get inside your head; I’ve been following you, I’ve tried to track you. She’s said, “I’m not helping you much, am I?” I told her no. I mean, I just don’t know if I can do it like that, you know, teach like that. (Interview, 10.31.08)

The inability of the cooperating teacher to tether the learning of Melissa caused a disconnect between the knowledge of teaching the cooperating teacher had amassed through experience, the knowledge “inside of her head,” and the experiences of Melissa trying to learn from the act of teaching. As a result, the cooperating teacher, by ignoring the public act of student teaching, caused a rift in the classroom community and the novice/expert divide became insurmountable. While Melissa ultimately decided to enter the classroom after graduation, the inattention on the part of the cooperating teacher caused her to feel like an outsider in the classroom community. This rift stifled Melissa’s ability to learn to teach by redeploying her focus as she tried to figure out how to get inside of the head of her cooperating teacher, instead of working on developing her own skills from the activity of teaching.

Discussion

The role of the cooperating teacher has traditionally been defined as a mentor who is knowledgeable about the work of teaching and is able to transfer that knowledge (Koerner, Rust, & Baumgartner, 2002; McIntyre & Byrd, 1998). However, if the broader goal of student teaching is to encourage prospective teachers to view teaching as a craft, then the role of the cooperating teacher must be further explored beyond transmissive functions. As Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest, successful apprenticeships allow the trainees to gradually increase their participation in the practices of the community and provide a safe environment in which trainees can make mistakes. During the teaching apprenticeship, legitimacy and acceptance into the community of teaching is central to student teachers if they are to effectively learn to teach.

The goal of this study was not just to detail practices that can be enacted by

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cooperating teachers, but to also bring attention to the relationship between the subtle and not-so subtle ways cooperating teachers confer legitimacy on their student teachers and support preservice teacher learning by helping student teachers “feel like a teacher” (Feiman-Nemser, 2008). Throughout Melissa’s and Nicole’s student teaching experience, legitimacy played a significant role in tapping into the professional identity forming that is characteristic of this experience. The legitimacy granted (or denied in some cases) by teachers played a significant role in tapping into the affective and personal dimensions that are crucial when learning to teach (Cole & Knowles, 1993). While I have no doubt that many cooperating teachers already engage in many or all of the legitimizing practices I detail above, I would like to emphasize that access and legitimacy matters, and that field-based teacher education requires more than simply telling preservice teachers how or what to teach.

As this study illustrates, the ways in which cooperating teachers provide access to the lived experience of teaching are consequential. Being more than just a conduit for conveying the knowledge of teaching during the student teaching experience, cooperating teachers must be conscious of the moves they make and the access they provide (or deny) student teachers to the work of teaching and teachers. As a key attribute in learning to teach from the socially situated activity of student teaching, legitimacy from the cooperating teacher is necessary and important commodity. Unfortunately, many teacher education programs fail to prepare cooperating teachers for the difficult and complex work of field-based teacher education (Orland, 2005). Certainly, colleges of education should make a more concerted effort to develop cooperating teachers’ skills and strategies in supporting preservice teacher learning. Given the complexities of learning to teach, preparing cooperating teachers, not merely using them, seems like a worthwhile strategy to advance the quality of teacher education and the overall student teaching experience.

Future Research Directions

In the case of Melissa and Nicole, their cooperating teachers provided legitimacy in the form of access to the tools of teaching, the rituals of teaching, and tethered experiences. While these findings are an important step in understanding the role legitimacy plays during the student teaching experience, this study also raises important issues to explore in further research. First, if we consider the student teaching experience as a teaching apprenticeship, an immediate concern emerges over the pull of the traditional school culture. During student teaching, the practices and activities legitimized by the cooperating teacher may run counter to those advocated by teacher preparation programs. This situation creates a conflict between learning from the work of teaching and reforming the work of teaching during the student teaching experience (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Sykes & Byrd, 1992). Parks (2009) suggests that the collaborative cohesiveness displayed in a community of practice can be somewhat detrimental because it makes it easier to ignore the voices of outsiders.

Another concern raised by the teaching apprenticeship is the disregard often found in teacher education programs for selecting cooperating teachers who are trained to sanction and legitimize the work of student teachers (Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2002; LaBoskey & Richert, 2002). As Davies (2005) suggests, the individual who holds the power to sanction another's access and admission into a community must be considered toward the apex of the community. Therefore, by placing student teachers with certain cooperating teachers, teacher preparation programs are signaling the status of the cooperating teacher as experts in community practices. Some teacher educators argue that in order to establish program coherence, cooperating teachers' visions of good teaching must be consistent with those advocated by teacher preparation programs, otherwise learning to teach can be disrupted (Hammerness, 2006). Considering the importance of the cooperating teacher in legitimizing practices and socializing student teachers to the work of teaching, it would seem that the selection of cooperating teachers would involve more than just awarding the title of teacher educator (Dinkelman, Margolis, Sikkegna, 2006) without regard to the consequences of the selection. Future studies must examine more closely the selection, training, and retention of classroom teachers who serve as cooperating teachers.

A final consideration for further exploration is the notion of tethered learning during the student teaching experience. As Nicole noted, the proximity of the cooperating teacher was key in legitimizing her work. However, a situation could be imagined where micromanaging the actions of a student teacher can become counterproductive to legitimizing the work of the student teacher. Therefore, tethering as a construct must be further examined to understand what leads to an understanding of effective proximity and distance as it relates to legitimizing the work of teaching.

Despite the numerous questions that abound about the teaching apprenticeship, viewing learning to teach during the student teaching experience as a socially situated activity provides an additional perspective to explore ways to maximize the efficacy of the experience. As this study illustrates, the constructs of legitimacy and access to community practices illustrate one way to understand how setting affects learning to teach. However, more research is required to broaden our understanding of the sociocultural influences on student teacher learning. With student teaching such a prevalent component of the professional preparation of teachers, gaining more perspective on the situated sociocultural realities of field experiences seems like a worthwhile goal for teacher education research.

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Appendix

Southern College's Guide for Cooperating Teachers

Cooperating teachers enhance the student teaching experience by:

1. aiding student teachers in developing professional dispositions.
2. acquainting the student teacher with the community and providing opportunities for participation in community activities, if appropriate.
3. guiding student teachers in the solution to problems.
4. assuming the responsibility for GRADUALLY inducting student teachers into the teaching process and giving close, day-to-day guidance and direction in the teaching experience.
5. providing opportunities for student teachers to observe, when appropriate, situations other than those directed by the supervising teacher.
6. inviting student teachers to attend meetings of professional organizations.
7. including student teachers in faculty meetings, grade-level meetings, and departmental meetings as an observant and a participant.
8. including student teachers in parent conferences when appropriate.
9. helping student teachers develop long-range and short-range plans.
10. planning for and conducting conferences with the student teachers.
11. assisting the student teacher in recognizing and overcoming any undesirable traits or behaviors.

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12. giving instructional assistance and constructive criticism when needed.
13. assisting student teachers in evaluating their own student teaching experience.
14. helping student teachers with professional, personal, or other concerns.
15. guiding student teachers in developing maintaining a desirable learning environment.
16. acknowledging the student teacher's ideas and encouraging the use of initiative.
17. sharing instructional resources.
18. evaluating professional portfolio.