A Literacy Tutoring Experience to Better Enhance Teacher Preparation Programs

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Essential Question

How can a supervised literacy tutoring experience benefit teacher candidates?

Features of Effective Practice Embedded in the Field Experience

Spaced Learning-tutoring sessions are spaced out across six weeks for the purpose of candidates' growth and development

Modeling- performed by course instructor to the class and individually

Explicit Coaching and Feedback- provided by course instructor during observations of tutoring sessions and after class

Scaffolding-candidates become increasingly independent over time

Analyzing and Reflecting- candidates must address the following areas in a written reflection after each tutoring session: pacing of lesson, child's engagement, most/least successful activities, objectives met/not met, and specific improvements for next time

Benefits

Candidates have the chance to immediately apply course content in teaching

Teacher candidate is able to develop important teaching strategies

Candidate receives immediate assistance if need be

SED 435: Pedagogical Content Instruction

In the first 7-8 weeks of this course, teacher candidates in the collaborative and comprehensive special education programs receive pedagogical content knowledge about assessment, structure of language, and literacy. Assessment content includes various types of literacy assessments (e.g. Core Phonics Survey), as well as ethical considerations in testing. Literacy content includes linguistic and phonics terminology, syllable types, irregular words, sentence structure and common text structures. In class assessment practice is done with a peer prior to the first field session.

Examples of High-Leverage Practices Developed in SED 435

Teacher candidates practice explaining and modeling literacy content and strategies, as well as eliciting and interpreting children's thinking. Teacher candidates learn to adjust instruction during a lesson, build respectful relationships with students, set long-term and short-term goals/objectives, design single lessons and sequences of lessons, and check student understanding. Teacher candidates become familiar with interpreting results of student work, providing oral feedback to students, and analyzing instruction for the purpose of improving it.

Tutoring Sessions 1-2
Teacher candidates administer formative assessments to individual student (in Grade 1 or 2) to determine weaknesses in reading and spelling skills. Teacher candidates then write a diagnostic report specifying the student's literacy difficulties and what s/he needs to be taught.

Tutoring Sessions 3-6
Teacher candidates create individualized lesson plans to implement with the individual student based on results from the formative assessments. Lesson plans address areas such as phonics, fluency and comprehension.

Tutoring Sessions 7-8
Teacher candidates re-administer a smaller portion of formative assessments to determine student growth within reading intervention. Teacher candidates then write a brief final summary of skills addressed in tutoring sessions and progress made.

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SED 435: Tutoring Experience

Candidates start their supervised fieldwork experience after 8 weeks of content-focused course instruction. There are 8 field sessions in total - 1 to 2 formative assessments sessions and 6 to 7 tutoring sessions. During lesson plans, candidates address sounds for single letters and common letter patterns, phonics concepts, reading and spelling phonetically regular words in isolation, reading and spelling phonetically irregular words in isolation, fluency, reading in context and listening comprehension. Course assignments include 3 exams, writing a diagnostic report, lesson plans,goals and objectives, reflections, brief final summary report, and a comprehensive portfolio.

SCSU-Special Education/Collaborative Courses with Field Experiences

EDU 200/SED 225 -Intro to Exceptionalities
SED 365 - Academic Assessment and Remediation
SED 435 - Language Arts for Exceptional Individuals
SED 449 - School Based Experience in Special Education
EDU 450/451 -Student Teaching

Challenges

Candidate faces challenges lying within receiving enough review time from supervising professor

Having to learn a lot of content in a relatively short amount of time