INSTITUTE
FOR TEACHING

Teaching teachers
The bets of American teacher educators

Matthew Hood and **Harry Fletcher-Wood.**

Contents

Introduction

'I think there is a widespread lack of understanding, clarity, alignment, and explicitness about how to train and develop expert teachers. The design choices or 'bets' teacher educators make are often implicit, unclear or even simply unconsidered.'

Steven Farr, Teach for America

This paper was born out of this provocation from our friend and colleague Steven Farr at Teach for All. Put another way, Steven argued that the decisions all teacher educators, us included, make about who we train and develop; what should be in the curriculum; how each aspect of that curriculum should be taught and assessed; and where and when training and development should take place are rarely intentional and consistent. Put simply, as teacher educators we don't make clear bets.

Steven also argued that this lack of intentionality and consistency, exacerbated by the limits of research into teacher education, makes us less effective, which has real consequences for the expertise of our teachers and the outcomes of pupils. By not making clear bets we often do a little bit of everything half well instead of making a choice and accepting the opportunity cost of the options foregone. By not being consistent (at least within an organisation) teachers on courses often don't experience a coherent theory of learning - one teacher educator tells them one thing and another teacher educator contradicts them.

Great schools are intentional about what is in their curriculum and how it is taught and assessed. 'Schools for teachers' need to catch up.

This resonated so much with us that it begged the question - what if we tried to make the implicit, explicit? With help from an international network of teacher educators we have created a (much debated) structured interview and tested it with a pilot group of teacher educators in the USA.

The interview focuses on understanding the bets each provider is making to enable them to design a programme that meets the goals they have set out for participants. It includes a range of questions, the bulk of which invite interviewees to expose their bets. In many cases this is achieved through a process of prioritising preferences.

What follows in this paper are the presentations of those interviews - largely left for you to interrogate, with a small amount of commentary and concluding reflections from us. We hope you find this snapshot of the current design choices being made by this group of US teacher educators interesting, and we look forward to hearing your comments.

Matt Hood and **Harry Fletcher-Wood.**

To get in contact with with Matt and Harry you can find their details on the back page, or email the IfT at info@ift.education

How did we conduct the research?

Research focus

We sought to understand the choices (or bets) programmes were making and why they were making them. We asked a nmber of questions to understand:

■   **What** the programme does: its goals, locations and numbers of participants.

■   The **bets** the programme had made about what worked in teacher education, for example, asking how subject-specific the programme's sessions were.

■   **What** the programme teaches and **how** it is taught, for example, asking what bodies of knowledge participants learn as part of the programme, and what methods are used to teach them.

■   **Influencing factors:** which pressures have affected programme design, for example the supply of teachers, government policies or funding.

■   **When** and **where** teachers were trained.

Method

We conducted semi-structured interviews with senior figures from eight US-based teacher education organisations. Interviews took around an hour and were conducted face to face, in most cases at the organisation's headquarters.

We asked a series of structured questions, for example:

"On a scale of 1-10, how subject/phase-specific is your programme, with 1 being entirely generic and 10 being entirely subject-specific?"

Initially, we encouraged interviewees to answer the questions without comment. Having asked these questions, we invited interviewees to discuss:

■   Questions which had been particularly important for the organisation

■   Questions to which the organisation's answer had changed/was changing

■   Any important aspects of their programme not captured by the interview.

Many interviewees chose to explain some of their answers immediately, to discuss the dilemmas they had faced and to contest the premises of the question. In every case we sought to gain a direct answer to the structured question which the interviewee was happy with, while capturing the underlying thinking as well.

Questions

During the interviews we asked over 30 questions which covered a wide range of choices that every programme needs to make. For the purpose of this paper we have focused on seven of these questions, which we feel address the most important aspects of course design. These questions are:

1) *Agency: To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?* Some teacher education organisations have designed highly structured programmes, others afford teachers a range of choices about the content, method and pace of their learning, for both pragmatic and philosophical reasons.

2) *Subject-specificity: How subject-specific is the programme?* Some teacher educators have designed programmes which focus on generic skills such as classroom management; others look at skills such as assessment as being specific to the subject: for example assessing for high school science differs from assessment in primary writing.

3) *Socio-political factors: How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?* Some programmes leave socio-political factors implicit in their training; others explicitly teach participants about the social, political and economic environment and the impact that has on students.

4) *Metacognition: How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?* Some programmes explicitly share their bets about learning with their participants, others leave these bets in the background.

5) *What is success? How much of the programme focuses on participants' achievements (as opposed to their progress)?* For some programmes, success means reaching a given bar - an achievement - for others, success means improving beyond the level at which they enter the programme.

6) *Retention: What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?* Some programmes seek to ensure everyone they work with becomes a teacher; others have concluded that not every entrant to teaching will succeed.

7) *What do participants learn? We asked programmes:*
a) To state what percentage of their programme focuses on teachers' knowledge, skills, beliefs and behaviour.
b) The main subcategories under each of these four headings, e.g. a focus on content knowledge, child development, cognitive science etc.
c) How these priorities are achieved, e.g. through selection before a programme starts; through observation and coaching; through explicit training etc.

Analysis

Listening to audio recordings of the interviews allowed us to record the answers interviewees gave on each of the scales.

Oliver Caviglioli designed a template to summarise interview answers as a series of choices: we selected the answers which had proved most revealing (for example, all programmes conducted their training at similar times, so this question provided little revealing information).

We then selected three or four quotations which seemed to reflect each programme's priorities.

Finally, we sent all the answers to the interviewees for verification.

For further questions on method, please contact Harry Fletcher-Wood.

HOW DO TEACHER EDUCATORS THINK?

We have interviewed a number of leading US teacher educators in order to better understand the bets that have made about how best to develop teachers. Their bets affect the programmes they design, the experience of teachers and the learning of students. Understanding their choices and the impact they have helps us to understand and improve teacher education.

Megan Carey, Senior Programme Director at Blue Engine. Blue Engine trains and supports teams of teachers of Blue Engine Teaching Apprentices (BETAs) and Blue Engine Team Leads (Teachers of Record) to reimagine the classroom experience for all students. In Blue Engine classrooms, students demonstrate academic growth at nearly two times the rate of students district-wide.

START

4 Q
Metacognition

How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3 Q
Socio-political factors

How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2 Q
Subject-Specificity

How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1 Q
Agency

To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Q1 Teaming and team development is the primary learning and support vehicle for Blue Engine's model. Teams require intentionality as they navigate the team stages of development (Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing), and a strong team is not necessarily an instant byproduct of strong individuals. A high performing team, however, can achieve outcomes and learning far greater than a group of individuals, so our support model prioritises designing experiences for team formation and development.
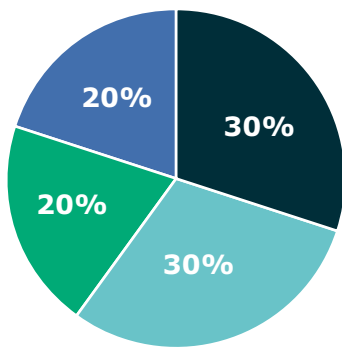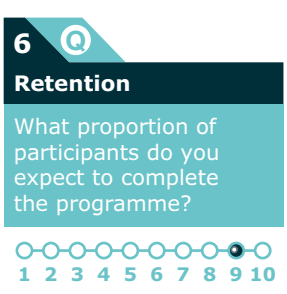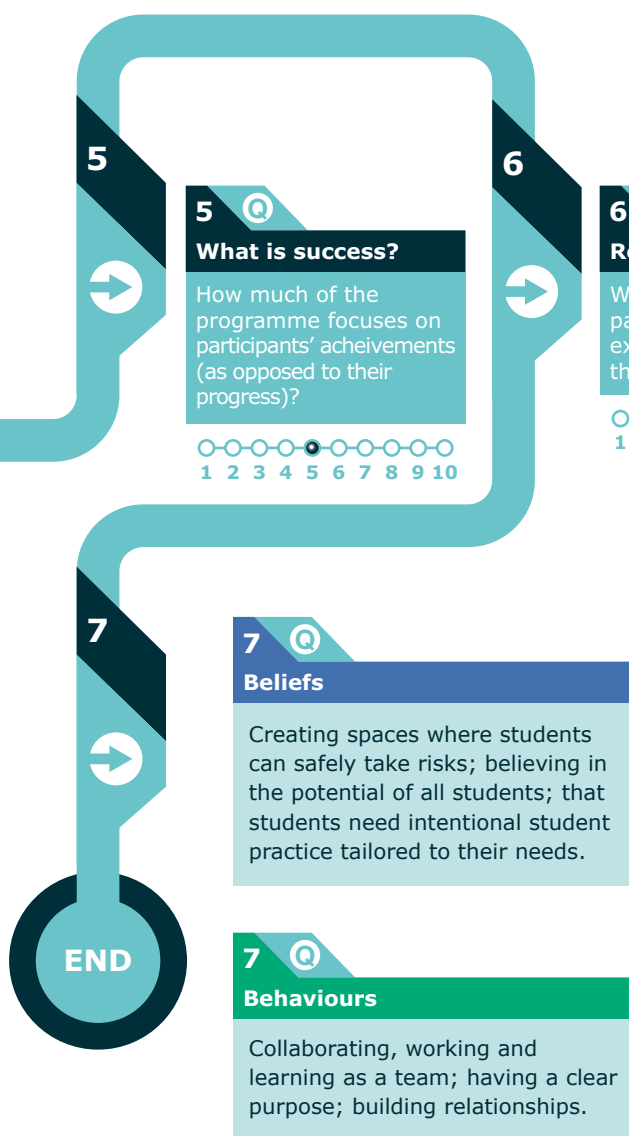
A

> **O3** The prevalence of historic and current systems of oppression in our society fundamentally impact the lives of the students we serve. Only by assembling diverse, inclusive, and actively anti-racist teams will Blue Engine build alliances that disrupt and dismantle these systems at their root. Therefore, we spend significant time supporting teams of teachers to build a foundation of the historical context of education as well as of historical systems of oppression and support teams in understanding and evolving their identity and personal why in order to be able to understand and engage with differences. We want all of the actions that our teams of teachers take to be grounded in actively disrupting inequities and affirming students in the classroom.

A

> **Q2** Since our teams are charged with making dramatic classroom gains in high school algebra and English Language Arts in one year, we provide contextualized support and training to teams that focus on their content area. This means that teams practice relevant pedagogical skills within the context of their teaching content. Additionally, since BETAs are apprentice teachers they learn actively over a full-year, working alongside a math or ELA content teacher.

A

> **Reflection Cycles:** Reflection is a key to growth and development in the Blue Engine Model. Reflection cycles are designed to produce a full and accurate picture of what occurred, which may require considering multiple perspectives and using data that can be owned by the team and individual. Reflection cycles are designed to get to the root of the difference between the actual and intended result or implementation, and include expectations for "productive struggle" which promotes the idea that errors and conflict will occur, and are normal, and important for quality reflection. Ultimately, reflection allows for both reactive (short term system maintenance & execution) changes and fundamental (full system & mindsets) changes.

5

5 Q
What is success?
How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

○─○─○─○─●─○─○─○─○─○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 Q
Retention
What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?

○─○─○─○─○─○─○─○─●─○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

7 Q
Beliefs
Creating spaces where students can safely take risks; believing in the potential of all students; that students need intentional student practice tailored to their needs.

7 Q
Knowledge
Knowledge of specific grade level content, knowledge of the students and team members, knowledge of Blue Engine key drivers.

END

7 Q
Behaviours
Collaborating, working and learning as a team; having a clear purpose; building relationships.

7 Q
Skills
Use data to assess students' needs; creating and adapting materials; providing tailored support, execution of in class teaching moves.

Pie chart: 30%, 30%, 20%, 20%

MTR
MEMPHIS TEACHER RESIDENCY

David Montague is the Executive Director of Memphis Teacher Residency - a faith-based, non-profit organisation founded in 2008 to recruit, train, and support effective teachers in a Christian context. MTR accomplishes this goal through two programmes: a teacher residency training programme and a summer academic enrichment camp.

START

1 Q
Agency
To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1

2 Q
Subject-Specificity
How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2

3 Q
Socio-political factors
How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3

4 Q
Metacognition
How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4

A

" **Q3** The very first course our students take is a cultural foundations course which gets very deeply into the factors that drive injustices in poverty and race. We also have a variety of structured conversations throughout the year that come back to this course. We layer on top the fact they are in high poverty schools every Monday to Thursday and that this is a explicit design choice. This is front and centre.
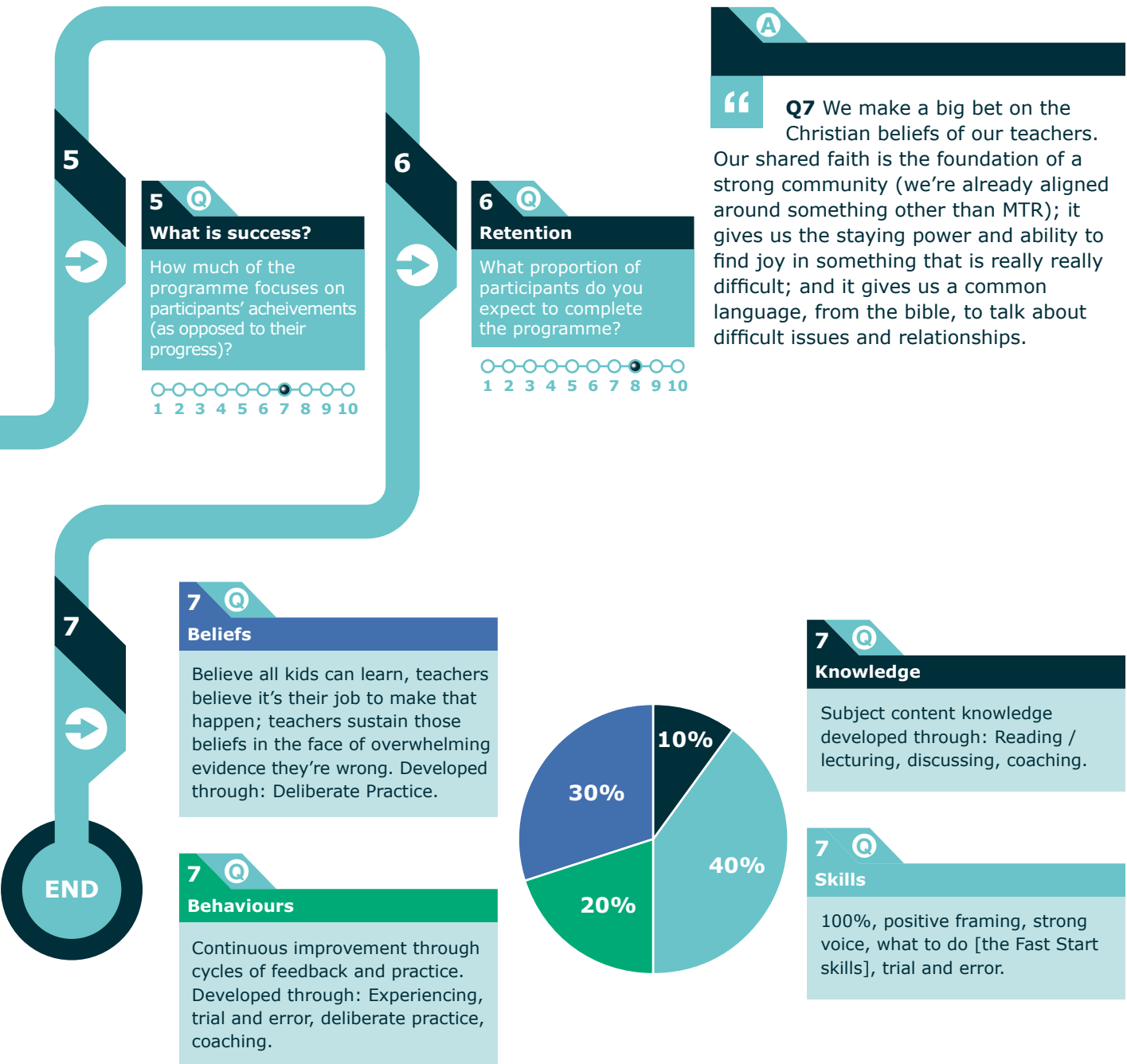
A

Q4 Our teacher educators are models of instruction. They will stop mid-session to talk through the design choices they are making - live in a session - and explain why they are making these choices. It's really important that they teach the content and model how to teach the content at the same time.

A

Q6 To keep retention really high we're making a big bet on depth within a very specific area so that we can build a community around the MTR participants. Over 230 teachers (that's 95% of those who we have worked with since 2009) are working in 36 schools which are within the same community - you can drive between these schools within ten minutes or so. Two schools have over 50 MTR teachers.

5

5 Q
What is success?
How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

○─○─○─○─○─○─●─○─○─○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 Q
Retention
What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?

○─○─○─○─○─○─○─●─○─○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A

Q7 We make a big bet on the Christian beliefs of our teachers. Our shared faith is the foundation of a strong community (we're already aligned around something other than MTR); it gives us the staying power and ability to find joy in something that is really really difficult; and it gives us a common language, from the bible, to talk about difficult issues and relationships.

7

7 Q
Beliefs
Believe all kids can learn, teachers believe it's their job to make that happen; teachers sustain those beliefs in the face of overwhelming evidence they're wrong. Developed through: Deliberate Practice.

7 Q
Knowledge
Subject content knowledge developed through: Reading / lecturing, discussing, coaching.

END

7 Q
Behaviours
Continuous improvement through cycles of feedback and practice. Developed through: Experiencing, trial and error, deliberate practice, coaching.

10%
30%
40%
20%

7 Q
Skills
100%, positive framing, strong voice, what to do [the Fast Start skills], trial and error.

NASHVILLE
TEACHER RESIDENCY

Randall Lahann is the Director at The Nashville Teacher Residency which is a one year teacher licensure program partnered with schools serving low-income students across Nashville. Its mission is to develop diverse cohorts of effective new teachers, to improve outcomes for all students in Nashville.

START

4 Q
Metacognition
How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4

3 Q
Socio-political factors
How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3

2 Q
Subject-Specificity
How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2

1 Q
Agency
To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1

A

Q1 We have a core, practice-driven curriculum that is designed to work hand in hand with what residents learn and experience in their schools. Within these skills and competencies, our mentor teachers pick the skills that residents need to focus on, with input from NTR staff and the residents, based on data and their observations.

5

5 Q

What is success?

How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 Q

Retention

What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?
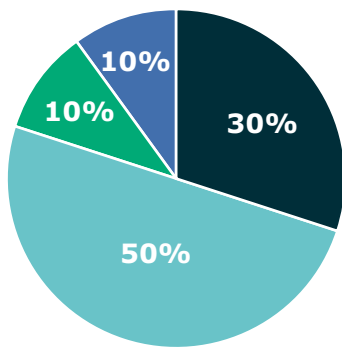
○—○—○—○—●—○—○—○—○—○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

7 Q

Beliefs

Every student is capable of success, there are no bad kids, and teaching, like any other skill, must be learned and practiced.

7 Q

Knowledge

Subject specific pedagogy, knowledge of community and student culture, content knowledge.

END

7 Q

Behaviours

Embrace practice, know your community, value relationships, and exceed expectations.

10%
10%
30%
50%

7 Q

Skills

Creating culture of achievement, planning practice-rich lessons, building authentic, relationships with kids.

RELAY/GSE

Brent Maddin is the former Provost at Relay Graduate School of Education whose purpose is to teach teachers and school leaders to develop in all students the academic skills and strength of character needed to succeed in college and life.

START

1

1 Q
Agency
To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4 Q
Metacognition
How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4

3 Q
Socio-political factors
How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3

2 Q
Subject-Specificity
How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2

A

Q1 We have shifted over time: there used to be no choice in our programme and you moved through it in lockstep; over the last three years, we've introduced more choice in the form of electives. [Also,] it's a proficiency based programme: if you can demonstrate proficiency on the set of criteria that we've set out, and submit all the assessments, you would have a whole tonne of autonomy over not the path, but the speed.
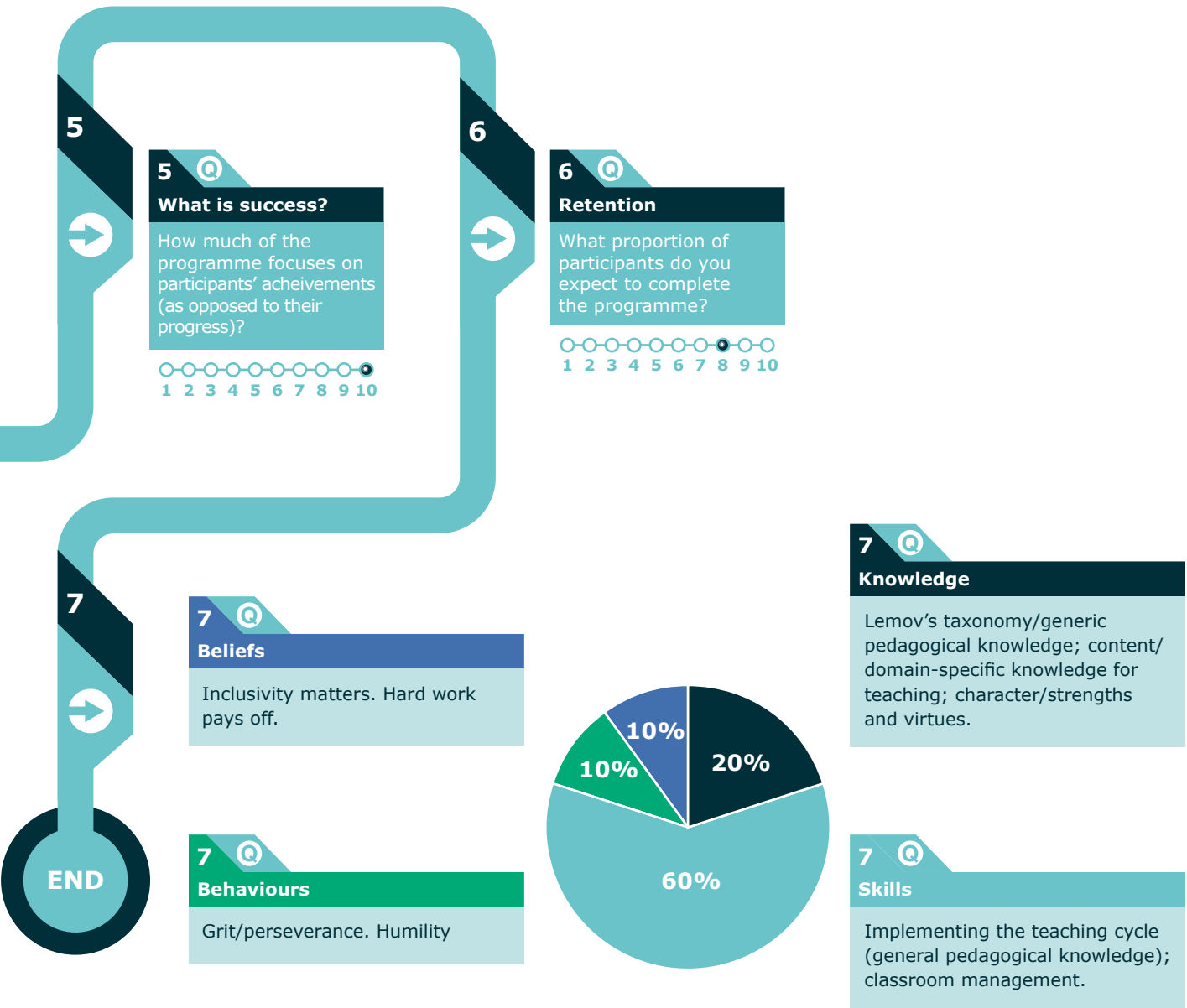
A

> **Q2** Half of our programme is general pedagogy that is equally applicable to a kindergarten teacher as it is to a high school teacher; the other fifty percent is specialised by content area. Within that, there is further differentiation where scale allows. Whenever possible we try to get as specific as we can in terms of group, but often scale, or lack thereof, prevents us from getting to the level of granularity which I think is most ideal.

A

> **Q5** We have a set of competencies; if you're not proficient in these, you do not graduate, you do not move forward. I do believe that there are some things that you should master before others.

A

> **Q4** Learning theory for us boils down to: learn, practice, perform.

5

5 Q

What is success?

How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 Q

Retention

What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●—○—○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

7 Q

Beliefs

Inclusivity matters. Hard work pays off.

7 Q

Knowledge

Lemov's taxonomy/generic pedagogical knowledge; content/domain-specific knowledge for teaching; character/strengths and virtues.

END

7 Q

Behaviours

Grit/perseverance. Humility

7 Q

Skills

Implementing the teaching cycle (general pedagogical knowledge); classroom management.

Pie chart: 20%, 60%, 10%, 10%

Sposato | Graduate School *of* Education

Scott McCue is the Dean of The Sposato Graduate School of Education (SGSE) whose purpose is to prepare unusually effective novice teachers for schools serving low income populations. At the same time, SGSE develops, validates, and disseminates innovative approaches to teacher preparation.

START

4 Q
Metacognition
How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3 Q
Socio-political factors
How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2 Q
Subject-Specificity
How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1 Q
Agency
To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4

3

2

1

A

"   **Q1** A move to Common Core and increasingly rigorous standards have driven us to value the benefits from the kind of contextualisation which is allowed when people are with subject-specialists. Once upon a time we developed more generic trainings… I think we've got enough pushback on that, so even if the person who's specialised in training high school teachers is delivering a very similar message to people, we get easier buy-in.
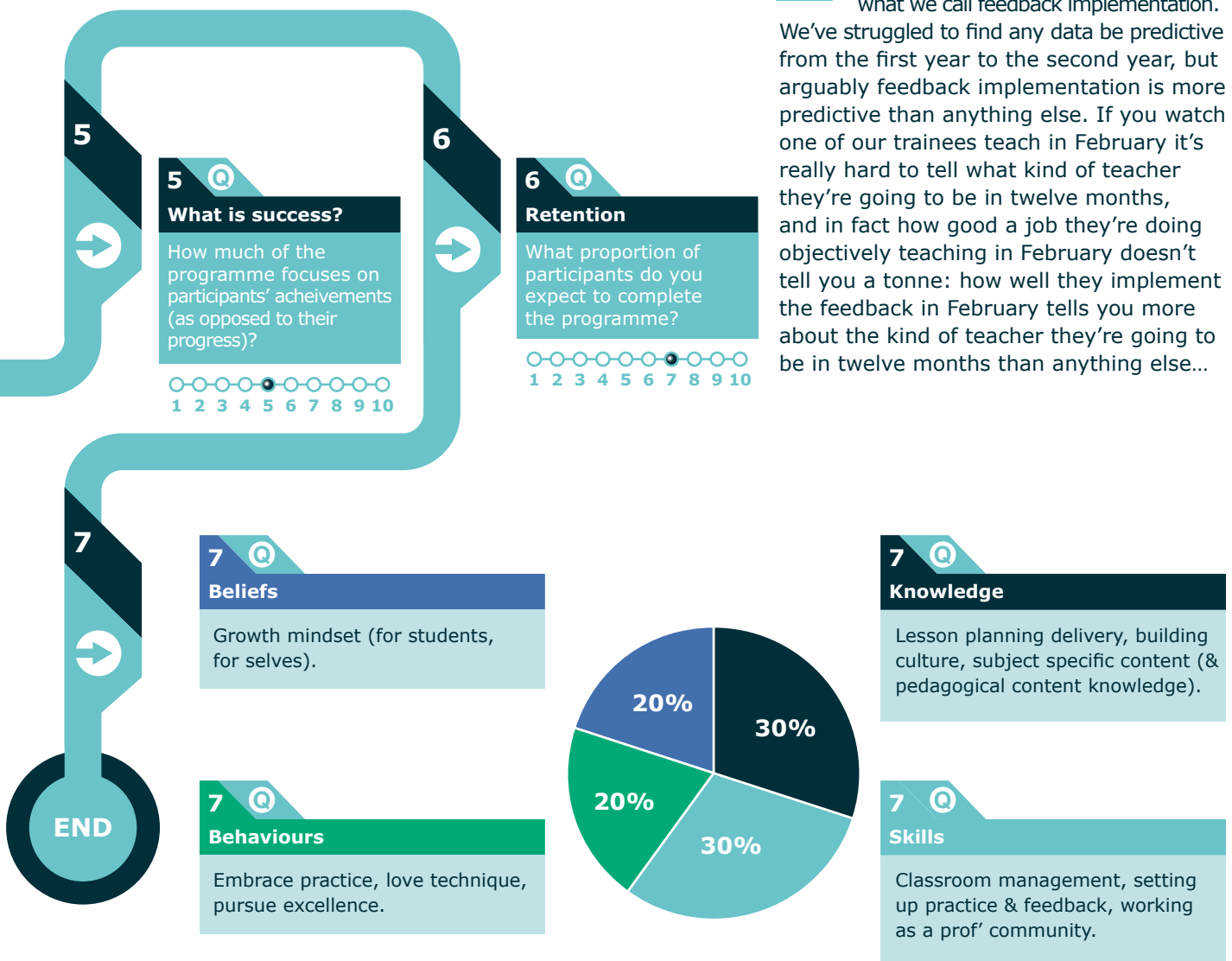
> **Q3** There's been a huge evolution with that over the last couple of years. We used to say, we're in the business of changing children's lives: the best way we can do justice for the students is spending every minute we have training you to be more effective in the classroom. I think, partly given the cultural context we're operating in, as well as our maturity as an organisation, we've recognised that there need to be some times when we have conversations about race and class that don't have easy answers.

A

> **Q6** There are so many thresholds, it's remarkable the number of ways you can get kicked out of the programme, I don't think there's anything like it in the States, in terms of the insistence you hit these benchmarks. We're still kind of an outlier in terms of our insistence that people perform at a certain level, it's an unsentimentality, we cut some people who we love, some wonderful people.

A

> **Q5** We actually assign a score for what we call feedback implementation. We've struggled to find any data be predictive from the first year to the second year, but arguably feedback implementation is more predictive than anything else. If you watch one of our trainees teach in February it's really hard to tell what kind of teacher they're going to be in twelve months, and in fact how good a job they're doing objectively teaching in February doesn't tell you a tonne: how well they implement the feedback in February tells you more about the kind of teacher they're going to be in twelve months than anything else...

5

5 **Q**
What is success?
How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 **Q**
Retention
What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

7 **Q**
Beliefs
Growth mindset (for students, for selves).

7 **Q**
Behaviours
Embrace practice, love technique, pursue excellence.

7 **Q**
Knowledge
Lesson planning delivery, building culture, subject specific content (& pedagogical content knowledge).

7 **Q**
Skills
Classroom management, setting up practice & feedback, working as a prof' community.

END

20% 30% 20% 30%

teaching excellence

4 Q
Metacognition

How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3 Q
Socio-political factors

How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2 Q
Subject-Specificity

How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Daya Cozzolino Fulton is the Director of Professional Learning at Teaching Excellence (part of Yes Prep Public Schools), whose purpose is to provide transformational support for new teachers through proven coaching strategies, impactful professional learning, and a streamlined Alternative Certification Pathway.

START

1 Q
Agency

To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A

" **Q1** Part of how we drive the outcomes we want is through the significant relationships we build, and therefore influence we have, with the campus-based teacher educators across the networks we support - these are high-quality and experienced Deans who work alongside us to support our novice teachers. We have also developed a system for capturing, analysing, and implementing improvements across the program on 34 'Effectiveness Descriptors' that we believe are the foundational instructional practices of a novice teacher to become proficient at before the end of their first year of teaching. This is how we accelerate teacher effectiveness.
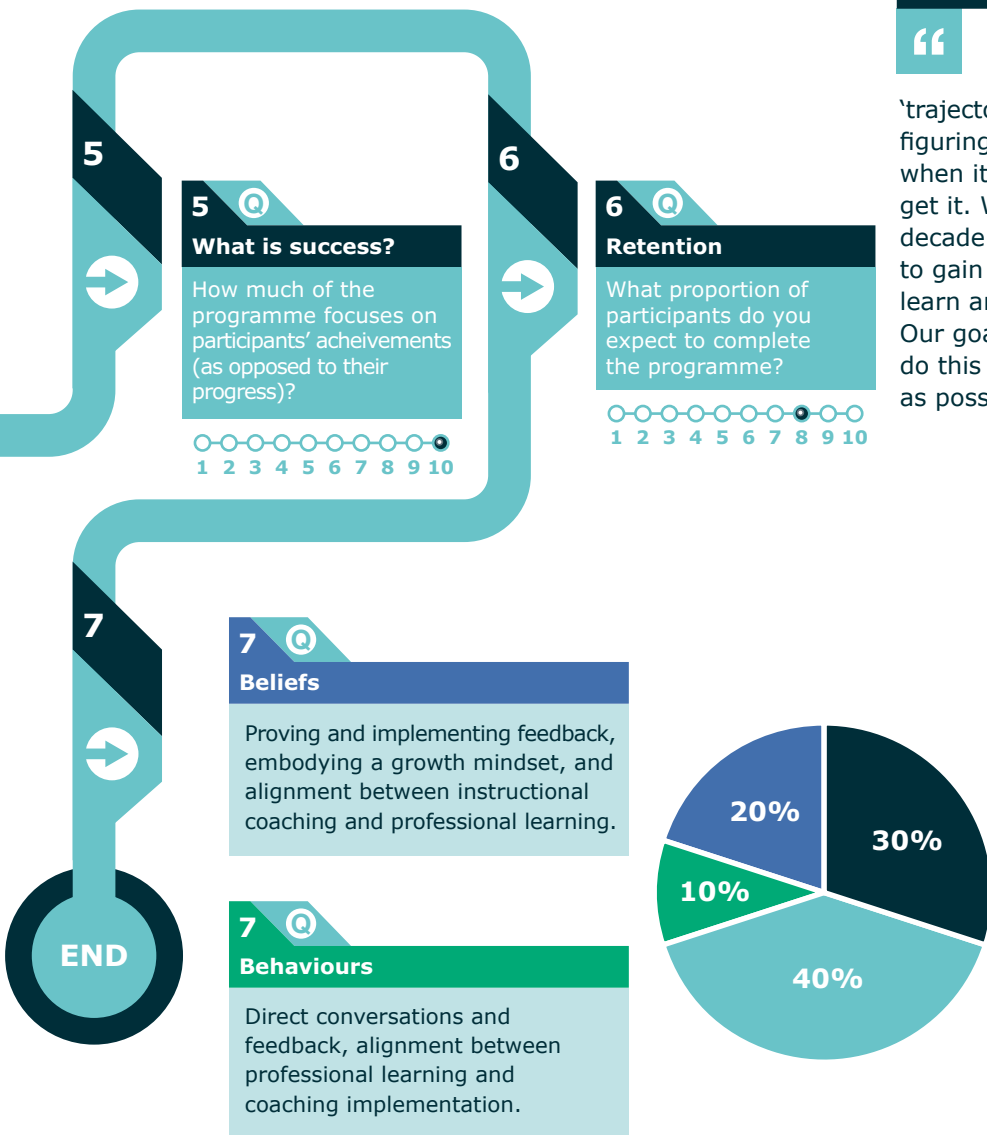
A

> **Q4** The developmental appropriateness of teacher development is critical. You wont find us talking about rigour in week one. At that point we don't believe that our teachers have the capacity or foundational aptitudes to truly leverage those skills. It's not that we don't believe that more complex instructional skills aren't important for novice teachers to develop proficiency in - we do. It's just that we know that teachers only have so much capacity, and must learn certain elements of the practice of quality instruction before others. So we have developed a 'trajectory of a novice teacher', tiering and aligning the instructional skills and clearing the path to ensure the most development.

A

> **Q6** We are continuously thinking about how we can improve our programme, and its implementation, to make everyone successful. That said, the amount of time, energy and effort that we have just doesn't match the need. We've developed some creative systems and initiatives to streamline and save time where we can. Admittedly, it's not always enough for every teacher and we are feverishly trying to figure it out to improve persistence in the profession.

A

> **Q7** We have spent a considerable amount of time building a 'trajectory of a novice teacher'. That means figuring out what a teacher needs, and when it will be most impactful for them to get it. We have spent the better part of a decade figuring out what a teacher needs to gain proficiency in before they can learn and develop something else. Our goal has been to figure out how to do this most effectively, and as quickly as possible, within a teacher's first year.

5

5 **Q**
What is success?
How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 **Q**
Retention
What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●—○—○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

7 **Q**
Beliefs
Proving and implementing feedback, embodying a growth mindset, and alignment between instructional coaching and professional learning.

7 **Q**
Behaviours
Direct conversations and feedback, alignment between professional learning and coaching implementation.

END

7 **Q**
Knowledge
Classroom Culture, Routines and Procedures, Lesson Alignment, Lesson Facilitation, Professionalism, Content alignment to Pedagogy learned, and Using Data.

7 **Q**
Skills
Execution of foundational elements of an effective classroom (e.g. Classroom culture, Routines and Procedures, Lesson Alignment, Lesson Facilitation, collecting and analysing data, etc.).

Pie chart: 20% · 30% · 40% · 10%

TNTP
reimagine teaching

Dan Weisberg is the Chief Executive Officer of TNTP, a national organisation that works at every level of the US public education system to attract and train talented teachers and school leaders, ensure rigorous and engaging classrooms, and create environments that prioritize great teaching and accelerate student learning.

START

1 Q
Agency
To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2 Q
Subject-Specificity
How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3 Q
Socio-political factors
How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4 Q
Metacognition
How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A

Q2 We have incorporated more content modules into our curriculum and are testing content knowledge screens in selection – this is a live issue. Higher state standards are leading to massive drops in student proficiency and schools realise they need teachers with higher levels of content knowledge and teachers who can teach students concepts and how to apply them. Passing the certification exam no longer guarantees teachers have the knowledge needed, and can set up an environment in which students are not really learning: this relies on pedagogical content knowledge.

Q6 This is a big deal for us. It represents an evolution in our thinking. We used to rely much more heavily on selection as the quality lever but we've seen that selection screening is a relatively weak predictor of classroom effectiveness so we bet more heavily on performance management – evaluating candidate performance in the classroom in ways that predict future effectiveness and cutting people both pre-service and during their first year of teaching who are at high risk of being ineffective." We found that those who struggle to master foundational skills are unlikely to ever be effective, and this shift has freed TNTP to devote fewer resources to selection. This shift means we have to recruit people comfortable with having to hit a high bar.

Q7 There's the very unsexy but critical piece around gathering and analysing outcome data, and letting that drive design. In our field, we all-to-often rely on conventional wisdom and anecdotal experience. We have fallen prey to that, but are far more disciplined about data driven decision-making these days." While some subjective calls remain, TNTP seeks to follow the evidence where it exists: for example, despite questions over online learning, having tested it and found it equally effective as in-person learning, TNTP has used it.
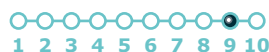
Q7 Examining results, TNTP realised that we were not producing reliably better-than-average teachers in terms of student outcomes. The organisation chose to prioritise a handful of skills and the important thing was that we made a bet and that we didn't try to provide an inch-deep-mile-wide curriculum to teachers. It was based on a theory of preparation that there are core skills you must master as you get into the classroom. Trying to master those while you're also learning to do the higher order skills would be self-defeating. This wasn't rocket science, definitely not. But we did make a bet, and we designed the entire programme around that bet.

5

5 Q
What is success?
How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●—○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 Q
Retention
What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?

○—○—○—○—○—○—○—●—○—○
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

7 Q
Beliefs
Believe all kids can learn, teachers believe it's their job to make that happen; teachers sustain those beliefs in the face of overwhelming evidence they're wrong.

7 Q
Behaviours
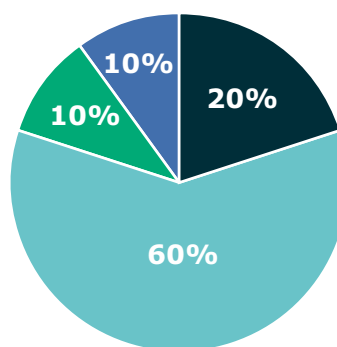Continuous improvement through cycles of feedback and deliberate practice.

END

10% 10% 20% 60%

7 Q
Knowledge
Subject content knowledge developed through reading, lecturing, discussing and coaching.

7 Q
Skills
100%, positive framing, strong voice, and the Fast Start skills (what to do) developed through deliberate practice and trial and error.

4 Q

Metacognition

How aware are participants of the organisation's learning theory?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4

Jennifer Green is the CEO of Urban Teachers, whose purpose is to prepare effective, culturally competent teachers who significantly accelerate student learning and remain teaching in the nation's highest-need schools. They accomplish this by providing graduates with state-of-the-art preparation, and linking their certification to their demonstration of effective teaching practices and student performance outcomes.

3 Q

Socio-political factors

How explicitly do you address socio-political factors?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3

2 Q

Subject-Specificity

How subject-specific is the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2

START

A

Q2 It's fully-contextualised, that was the decision we made… when we set up the curriculum initially. We said there's no separate 'assessment' class, there's no separate 'planning' class, we think planning is a disciplinary function largely, literacy assessments are very different from how you assess in math. We don't have any methods classes, because the whole thing is methods.

1 Q

Agency

To what extent does the organisation shape the programme?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1

A

> Selection matters to us in three big ways: first our participants have to be academically competent in their subject area – that's essential; the second is that they have to have a deep commitment to working with children and part of the reason that that's essential is that it's going to speak to their ability to be resilient when they're working hard – it speaks to a reason for perseverance there has to be a mission part of why they are with you. Lastly dispositionally we're looking for somebody who's relentlessly driven to improve and open to feedback. Without that engine they won't ever become great teachers.

A

> **Q7** We're constructivist, so we're going to lead with the skill work, then the knowledge is going to wrap around it. Not a month later, but it's going to be, 'Trial this piece of instructional practice, then let's build the theory… So there's this constant interplay between the two.
>
> I think it's hard to separate behaviour from mindset: we have the mindset and the action of the behaviour… Take something like family engagement: you hold a belief until your practice unravels – the behaviour actually comes right back to your skill: do you interact constructively?

A

> **Q7** Dividing how much of the programme is allocated to different aspects is hard. A skill or behaviour is explicitly worked on when it surfaces as a challenge. But then it moves into the background. It's not that it doesn't get treated. It's like classroom management: we work explicitly on classroom management at different points in the year. Think about a teacher – you walk in and she's not doing any management at all, but her class is brilliant. It's not because she's not doing management work, it's because it's in the foreground the first two weeks of school and then it's in the background.

5

5 Q
What is success?
How much of the programme focuses on participants' acheivements (as opposed to their progress)?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6

6 Q
Retention
What proportion of participants do you expect to complete the programme?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7

END

7 Q
Beliefs
That our students can achieve at high levels regardless of their learning needs; that I need to teach how they learn; it's effort rather than ability - feedback; a reliance on data.

7 Q
Behaviours
Relentless drive to improve, reliance on data, making practice public.

7 Q
Knowledge
Content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge; an understanding of students' culture; an understanding of how children learn in their subject.

7 Q
Skills
Build a classroom structure; foster academic discourse; diagnosing needs; planning and enacting to standards.

10%
10%
40%
40%

Observations

A handful of points stood out to us from this work.

We noticed the extent to which many of the organisations were prioritising large amounts of content, often early in the course, related to the socio-political context in which participants would work. Most were explicitly teaching their participants about the political, social and economic causes of inequality which their programmes sought to address. Even programmes which were not doing so were conscious of the need to consider this question more closely. Perhaps it was particularly pertinent for interviewees as we conducted interviews in 2016 as the Black Lives Matter campaign rose to prominence, but most interviewees suggested that this had been a focus of their thinking for a number of years. This was an interesting contrast to that of many English teacher education organisations, which, in our experience discuss these issues less explicitly.

The willingness of many organisations to arrange 'happy exits' (a process by which participants leave the programme by agreement before completion) for their participants was also noticeable. Many organisations were explicitly seeking to hold participants to a higher standard than was required to become a teacher in their district. They preferred to ensure that people they thought would not thrive, or could not serve their students, did not become teachers. This is in marked contrast to the English approach, in which teacher education providers are judged by Ofsted on their success partly on what proportion of their participants pass their courses and gain Qualified Teacher Status. As a result, English teacher educators are unable to adopt a similar approach without being penalised.

Our interviews provide the perspective of organisational leaders. However, these questions could be used to identify how aligned each organisation is. In the United States, we interviewed one person from each organisation, or, occasionally, two. In an earlier trial of these questions in Europe, we interviewed four, more junior, teacher educators. The interview became a debate as the team tried to identify the organisation's answer; they often told us: "Our leaders would say something different, but we think…" Conversely, in Singapore, our questions were answered with rapidity and clarity, clustering at 10 or 1 out of 10. It would be interesting to contrast leaders' responses with those of their colleagues (or indeed participants) across an organisation. In an aligned organisation, they would give similar answers to these questions. It would also help us to investigate whether the bets organisations are making are important, or whether it is the alignment of organisations – irrespective of their bets – which influences the effect they have.

Conclusions

We are struck by how arguably similar organisations (most are part of what is described as the education reform movement) with similar goals can seek to achieve them in such a variety of ways. The majority of our interviewees prioritised serving students in low-income communities and recruited similar participants, yet the bets they made varied wildly.

We do not believe that these questions are perfect, but we do believe they can allow teacher education programmes to do three things:

■ Make explicit their priorities and assumptions

■ Identify other organisations with similar and different priorities from which to learn

■ Identify how aligned colleagues within an organisation are

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and comments.

Introducing the authors

Matt Hood
Founder and Director

Matt is the Director of the Institute for Teaching. He is a former economics teacher, school leader, government policy advisor and director at Teach First and Achievement for All. Matt is also a trustee at The Brilliant Club, an alumnus of Teach First and a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellow. @matthewhood

Harry Fletcher-Wood
Associate Dean

Harry leads our Fellows programme. He has worked in schools in England and abroad, as a history teacher, head of professional development, and a teacher educator. @HFletcherWood

Acknowledgements

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