

## **College of Menominee Nation's Teacher Education Program**

### **Early Childhood/Elementary Education**

## **Evidence-Based Decision-Making:**

### **Data Retreat to Assess Teacher Education Preparation**

To assess the effectiveness of the College of Menominee Nation's (CMN) Teacher Education (TE) program in Early Childhood/Elementary Education, three sources of data were instrumental in creating evidence for the faculty to consider in making needed improvements. They are: the Title II Institutional Program Report Card (IPRC), the Follow-Up Survey for Graduates and Employers of Graduates, and CMN's program assessment embodied in student portfolios.

#### **TITLE II—INSTITUTIONAL REPORT CARD**

The Title II IPRC for the US Department of Education was reviewed regarding CMN's admission requirements, enrollment, supervised clinical experience, teacher preparedness, program completers, annual goals, assurances, pass rates for both PPST (Pre-professional Skills Test) and PRAXIS II (which measures content knowledge), use of technology, and teacher training. The main topic of discussion centered on CMN's pass rate on the PRAXIS II. The IPRC reported that students (the next graduates of 2012-2013) who have completed all but the clinical (Student Teaching) passed their PRAXIS II. For the PPST, an Instructional Support Coordinator was hired in the Spring of 2012 to provide tutoring specific to PPST testing. This commitment by CMN to improve PPST pass rates has proven to be successful. In addition, lab time has been included in the gateway course, EDU 250-Introduction to Teacher Education and has proven to be highly effective. During the Spring 2013 semester six of eleven students have taken the tests and passed. We will continue to see a stream of ongoing test results as students continue to study for and take tests this summer.

Discussion of PPST test scores has been a monthly topic among faculty throughout the academic year and the appearance of the IPRC proved the importance of TE adhering to a strict interpretation of its admission policy by not accepting conditional admittance based on passing the PPST. As a result we have made changes in admission policies (TE 200, TE 201, and TE 202). All Teacher Education applicants must pass the PPST prior to admission. This change was unanimous given the recent hire in Institutional Support Services for the second semester of 2012. TE students needing assistance with registration, test anxiety counseling, scheduling test practice sessions, and professional tutoring now have an outstanding resource in our Instructional Support Coordinator. Institutional Support Services now includes improved scheduling for services; recruitment for services; counseling for Test Anxiety; assistance for students who opt to take one test at a time; access/use of PLATO (a course specific software program); tutorials; and an Ace Reader for speed-reading. In addition, there have been upgrades in procedures and placement for mathematics tutoring, and a newly established Writing Center will open soon. The new Wisconsin Reading Foundations Test, effective Fall 2013, and the new Ed TPA requirements for Student Teaching will go in effect Fall 2015.

The IPRC showed the importance of adhering to a strict policy regarding the PPST, those scores that shows one's proficiency in basic skills of mathematics, reading, and writing. On the other hand, just passing the PPST and PRAXIS II is not the only concern for CMN's Teacher Education program: the scaled scores indicate that content knowledge is also a concern. CMN's average scale scores rest below those of the state. The place for attending to content knowledge is more so in methods courses that

precede Student Teaching. The practice tests should not be left to Institutional Support alone. Every discipline for methods needs to encourage students to use the practice tests for the PRAXIS II and to make sure those concepts are incorporated in the appropriate course.

**FOLLOW-UP SURVEY FOR GRADUATES AND EMPLOYERS OF GRADUATES**

Survey: Employers and Graduates

DPI Teacher Standards		Employers					Graduates				
Standards	Response	VW	FW	PP	NP	NA	VW	FW	PP	NP	NA
Standard 1		2	1			1	1	2			
Standard 2		2	1			1	2	1			
Standard 3			3			1	2	1			
Standard 4		1	2	1		1	2	1			
Standard 5		2		1		1	2	1			
Standard 6		2	1			1	2	1			
Standard 7		1	2			1	2	1			
Standard 8			2	1		1	2	1			
Standard 9		1	2			1	2	1			
Standard 10		2	1			1	2	1			

We discussed the survey results from our graduates. Overall, our students felt that they were fairly well-prepared or very well-prepared. An emphasis needs to be made on encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning. As instructors, our goal is to expand our student's worldview but as adults our students may make decisions to not take advantage of ALL the opportunities that are offered to them. There has been a focused effort on building relationships and establishing credibility with our local schools. It is evident in the survey results that our schools feel in full partnership with us. The strength of our program is that as more of our local schools become more diverse our students have the ability to work with at-risk students. Students have gone through coursework with diverse classmates (native/non-native, age, background).

We have looked over the test scores for students and gains are being made for passing the PPSTs. With the replacement of PPSTs with CORE tests, we feel that we need to have students declare those wanting to earn a BS in education to take the CORE tests as soon as they complete Algebra and English. We are planning and preparing to have students have all Praxis2 tests completed prior to the August deadline. The struggle is having transfer students who have either a bachelors in another program or an early childhood associate degree and have not taken any of these tests. That will always be there. The other factor in getting all tests completed is that a large number of our students are part-time

## **PORTFOLIO – PROGRESSIVE AND CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENTS**

The College of the Menominee Nation's Mission Statement proclaims what teacher dispositions are needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

The College of Menominee Nation's Teacher Education program prepares teachers as decision makers who are reflective, collaborative, educational leaders committed to equity and social justice for families and community and dedicated to maximizing the potential of all children, especially American Indian children.

To validate the preparation of teachers in CMN's Teacher Education program, CMN's portfolio progression provides physical evidence of learning earned and owned by students. The portfolio shows that teachers possess knowledge, skills, and dispositions (NAEYC and InTasc Standards, CMN Program Outcomes) necessary to plan developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive curriculum; to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging environments for all children; to situate critical thinking/problem solving in inquiry based settings and plan assessments for teacher's questions and measure children's thinking; to collaborate to establish positive relationships with peers, students, and families; and to monitor caring ways to promote social justice. Within the conceptual framework of CMN's Teacher Education program, the teacher is positioned as a decision-maker making minute by minute decisions as well as daily, weekly, monthly, and annual decisions to plan lessons, manage a classroom, promote critical thinking and problem solving, collaborate with others, and monitor their own sense of social justice. The dispositions of upcoming graduates are evident in reflections in their final portfolio and are articulated in their final presentation showing pictures of lesson plans, video clips of interactions between student and teacher describing the classroom environment, pictures and clips of lessons taught using technology, of school events they've participated in, and artifacts showcasing their experience at CMN. It's the competencies they've gained; it's their interpretation of how they've grown in not just knowledge and skills but also how they've grown in caring, reflective, respectful, risk-taking, and collaborative ways. The final portfolio is posted on the CMN website to provide evidence of the upcoming graduate's potential.

To become in compliance with the new DPI requirements for licensing new teachers the Teacher Education program has begun the process of infusing the edTPA into our methods courses to prepare students for their student teaching semester. The edTPA will be introduced in the foundations courses so that students become familiar what the edTPA actually is. The preparing of students for the new Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test has been infused within the reading methods course and the language arts methods. Students take a practice test for the reading test and then the reading and language arts instructors determine if the student is ready for the reading test.

The progression of portfolio development for students by the faculty begins with work in EDU250 assembling the Admissions portfolio according to NAEYC Standards; next, in all methods courses, artifacts from methods courses include Wisconsin's InTasc Standards which become part of the Application to Student Teaching portfolio, and in EDU402 Student Teaching Seminar, constructing the final CMN portfolio, reflections of the Student Teaching experience are written in terms of CMN's TE dispositions as well as InTasc Standards. More formatively, evaluations from cooperating teachers during field experiences have been reviewed by each faculty from methods and Student Teaching courses as well as by the field coordinator. Progress in completing/assessing portfolios is discussed in monthly department meetings (linked to minutes), and recorded monthly reports sent to the Dean of Letters and Science. This is information that faculty brought to the table for the data retreat to discuss the next steps.

Portfolio progressions represents the Teacher Education experience in evaluating portfolios and with the faculty's knowledge of various standards – lower division coursework (NAEYC and InTasc

standards) in the Admissions portfolio formally evaluated by a principal and other TE faculty; in the portfolio of artifacts evaluated in methods classes according to Wisconsin InTasc Standards; in the practicums by the Field Coordinator and practicum teacher; and finally the post Student Teaching portfolio evaluated by all faculty in concert with dispositions stated in CMN's TE mission statement. Currently, we are working on infusing the edTPA into our portfolio system. We have purchased Teachscape and portfolio platform that supports the edTPA and will be an asset to our teacher education students. In our department meetings we have discussed the edTPA and our timeline of incorporating into our program. We have also met with our Advisory Board, CMN faculty, and our Dean to disseminate information.

By holding a Data Retreat to assess the effectiveness of the College of Menominee Nation's Teacher Education Program in Early Childhood/Elementary Education, the three sources of data were instrumental in creating evidence for the faculty to consider in making needed improvements. What CMN Teacher Education learned from selected documents – Title II's Institutional Report Card; Follow-Up Survey analysis, and the portfolio assessment system is that multiple, continuous, and accumulative data is important, useful, and critical to knowing what is needed, where it's needed, and how to process needed changes. The IPRC informed CMN of what to change and where change needed to be addressed for improvement; who will make the change, and watching for next year's report showing evidence of improved pass rates and scaled scores competitive with the State of Wisconsin's. The Follow-Up Surveys showed us the necessity of listening to/learning from our major stakeholders; to focus on ways to improve CMN TE program individually, as a department, institution, or within each faculty members own professional arena, showing stakeholders we are accountable at all levels and appreciative of their candor. The Portfolios represent student learning with multiple assessments (Admission, Application to Student Teaching, post Student Teaching). Just having completed the second run of final portfolios, the next step is to review processes, products, and rubrics for evaluations in some overall assessment of assessments system for both an individual look at students (case study) and for future institutional program review.

What is most useful is the ease of which faculty agrees knowing that the information from CMN's most important stakeholders is evidence based and affects CMN's status on a national report. Also it is important to show how graduates and employers are a veritable part of teacher preparation, reporting to graduates and employers of graduates, knowing TE takes their input seriously and works to make appropriate change.