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Center for American Progress

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

**“THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSITY”
INNOVATION IN ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

MODERATED BY:

**ROBIN CHAIT, SENIOR EDUCATION POLICY ANALYST,
CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS**

FEATURED PANELISTS:

**STEVEN FARR, VICE PRESIDENT, KNOWLEDGE
DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT,
TEACH FOR AMERICA**

**DAVIDA GATLIN, 2ND/3RD GRADE TEACHER, HERITAGE
SCHOOL AT CAP CANA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**SHARON ROBINSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO, AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION**

**JESSE SOLOMON, DIRECTOR, BOSTON TEACHER
RESIDENCY PROGRAM**

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MS. ROBIN CHAIT: Good afternoon. I'm Robin Chait, a senior education policy analyst here at the Center for American Progress. And I'd like to welcome all of you here today to this exciting discussion about innovative, alternative certification programs. I'd also like to thank all of you for coming out on this dreary, rainy Monday.

We at CAP understand that highly effective teachers are the foundation of all other public school improvement efforts, particularly those that help disadvantaged students. While there's a strong consensus among researchers and policy makers about the importance of teacher quality, there's much less of a consensus about how to improve it.

At CAP, we've done a significant amount of work on reforming teacher compensation, one key strategy for improving teacher recruitment, retention and addressing the equitable distribution of teachers among schools. We are now beginning to expand into other areas of human capital reform, because we understand that there are a number of policies that must work in concert to improve teacher quality.

Today, our discussion will focus on alternative preparation programs. And although they're called preparation programs, they also frequently recruit new teachers to the profession. What are the benefits of alternative preparation programs? One of the greatest benefits is their ability to tailor their preparation to the needs of a specific district or school, for instance, by preparing teachers to teach in high poverty schools, in rural schools, or in schools with large numbers of English-language learners.

They're a means of attracting non-traditional teaching candidates to the profession, and preparing them in ways that meet the needs of a more diverse pool of teaching candidates. They attract teachers with different academic and professional backgrounds into teaching. Some programs are very selective and attract academically talented candidates into teaching.

They're one method for filling subject shortage areas like math, science, special education and foreign languages. They also increase the diversity of the teaching pool. They tend to have a greater proportion of minority teachers. Yet a number of studies have determined that many alternative preparation programs are no longer very alternative. They're only as selective, or even less selective, than traditional programs. They're not flexible enough to support non-traditional applicants, and many provide inadequate training and support for teacher candidates.

Moreover, about 50 percent of alternative programs are operated by colleges and universities, and they often closely resemble traditional preparation programs in terms of their required coursework. There's no research that finds that many of these courses are needed.

So what CAP is advocating in this paper that we're releasing today by Davida Gatlin entitled "Thinking Outside of the University: Innovation in Alternative Teacher Certification," is a return to the true roots of alternative preparation programs by highlighting some truly innovative and promising models. Our discussion today will address a number of questions. What should alternative preparation programs look like? How can they be more effective? What are some promising innovations that meet the needs of specific types of schools? How can state and federal policy support the growth of truly innovative alternative preparation programs?

We are lucky enough today to hear from top experts in the area of teacher preparation, and to benefit from an on-the-ground perspective from two innovative and important alternative preparation programs. We will start with a presentation of the paper by Davida Gatlin. Davida was a fellow with the Fordham Foundation and worked here at the Center last fall when she wrote this paper. And we'd like to thank the Fordham Foundation for sending us the best of the group. She's also a Teach for America alumna and is now teaching in the Dominican Republic.

We will then hear comments from our panelists, followed by a brief discussion among the panelists, and then provide an opportunity for you to ask questions. You have the complete bios of the panelists in front of you, so I'll just give you some highlights.

First we have Dr. Sharon Robinson. She's the president and CEO of American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. She was formerly president of the Educational Testing Services Educational Policy Leadership Institute, and held a number of other high-level positions at ETS. Before joining ETS, Robinson was assistant secretary of education with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Steven Farr is the vice president for knowledge development and public engagement for Teach for America, and has held a variety of other senior positions within the organization. Steven has also served as a law clerk and taught civil rights and disabilities law at the Georgetown University Law Center's Institute for Public Representation.

And finally, Jesse Solomon is the co-founder and director of the Boston Teacher Residency Program. Mr. Solomon taught middle and high school math for 10 years and has been a founding teacher, lead teacher for curriculum and instruction, and a member of the board of directors.

So let's get started.

MS. DAVIDA GATLIN: Thank you, Robin. It's a pleasure to be here. The paper that I'm presenting here today discusses some promising innovations in teacher preparation, and provides policy recommendations that will create a supportive environment for the creation and development of other innovative alternative certification

programs, like those represented on the panel here today, and those profiled in my paper across the United States.

Currently, about 20 percent of new hires in schools nationwide did not receive a bachelor's degree in education. However, this does not mean that they're unqualified or uncertified. In fact, under NCLB, all teachers must already have, or be working towards, certification in the grade level and subject area in which they teach.

Instead, these teachers are prepared through a field-based program designed specifically for people like themselves with a desire to teach, a bachelor's degree, and often, another career in another field. Just like traditionally certified teachers, alternatively certified teachers must meet all state standards for certification, including completing pedagogical training through coursework or equivalent professional experience, and passing required general subject area and pedagogical examinations.

Since the early '80s, when the first alternate routes to certification were established, the number of alternative certification programs has climbed to nearly 500 different programs. Today, 47 states offer at least one alternative certification pathway, in addition to the traditional routes, and in some states, such as Texas, as many as 50 percent of new teachers are alternatively certified. Well, alternative routes to certification, and the programs that exist within them, differ from state to state.

Successful programs typically share certain characteristics. Among the characteristics that researchers have noted are a strong partnership with the school or school district in which the certification candidates will be working; a rigorous, but flexible selection process, using traditional and non-traditional criteria; pedagogical training that meets the need of non-traditional candidates; and a strong support system during and after the certification process.

In addition, successful alternative certification programs offer pre-service clinical experience, typically in the form of practice teaching over the summer, mentoring, induction, ongoing professional development, and high standards for completion of the program.

New research is showing that these competency-based strategies are providing higher returns in student achievement and reduce teacher turnover. Until recently, evidence supporting alternative certification has been slim, particularly evidence which points to increased academic achievement of the students taught by alternatively certified teachers. However, as more states collect the sort of long-term data that is needed to make such assessments, researchers have been able to demonstrate that alternatively certified teachers perform as well as, or better than, their traditionally certified colleagues in terms of student achievement.

In New York City, researchers partially attributed the more equitable distribution of qualified teachers and the narrowing of the achievement gap in schools across different income levels to the creation of alternate routes to certification in 2000. Using value-

added student achievement data, researchers from the Louisiana State University found that teachers in southern Louisiana prepared through alternate routes performed as well as, or better than, traditionally certified teachers.

A recent study by the Urban Institute found that in North Carolina, TFA teachers are more effective in math and science high school classrooms than traditionally certified teachers. Other studies have found that a teacher's pathway makes little difference in students' academic achievement. And finally, alternative routes to certification increase diversity in the teaching pool, attracting more men, minorities and older certification candidates than the traditional route.

However, not all recent research on alternative certification has been positive. A case in point, a recent paper by the Fordham Foundation found that most alternative certification programs are not truly alternative. One of the main problems that was identified is the excessive coursework requirement in many alternative certification programs. In 27 states, alternative certification programs require candidates to obtain a master's degree or complete practically the equivalent in coursework. Typically, the certification candidates are working as full-time teachers of record while completing these requirements.

Notably, the researchers at the Fordham Foundation found that the majority of programs requiring 30 or more credit hours are actually operated by university schools of education. In 31 states, state level policy actually requires that alternative certification programs be administered by or in partnership with universities schools of education, despite the fact that there is no evidence that four-year universities do a better job of preparing teachers or that the professional education coursework offered by them positively affects student achievement.

These policies explain why since 2000, university schools of education have started more new alternative certification programs than any other entity. As you can see on this graph from the National Center for Alternative Certification, in 2005, approximately half of alternative certification programs were operated by colleges or universities. The other 50 percent of the programs were operated by other entities, some working in partnership with colleges and universities. State policy has allowed, and even encouraged, university schools of education to circumvent the competition provided by these other entities by operating the majority of alternative certification programs themselves.

However, in Texas, Florida and a few other states, a diversity of providers, such as school districts, charter management organizations, nonprofits like Teach for America and the New Teacher Project, and community colleges, among others, are offering innovative alternative certification programs that prepare teachers to meet local needs and address local challenges. These states are serving as incubators for the next generation of alternative teacher certification programs.

My paper profiles 14 different innovative alternative certification programs which fall into five different categories, demonstrating the range of programs that could be offered in an environment in which state policy supports innovation and alternative certification. I'm going to tell you a little bit about each of these five categories of programs.

While providing well-balanced pedagogical training, teacher intern programs prepare teachers for a specific educational environment through an internship carried out at the school, district or type of school in which they will continue to teach after receiving certification. The most common non-university providers of alternative certification programs are school districts, administering 20 percent of programs. In Florida, each school district is required to offer an alternative certification program approved by the state or to offer the state-designed version.

Regional service centers administer another 6 percent of alternative certification programs. In Texas, 20 regional service centers prepare teachers in the districts that they serve for state certification. And in California, High Tech High became the first charter management organization in the state to be authorized to prepare its own teachers for certification, paving the way for other charter schools to house their own teacher intern programs.

Nationally recognized non-profit organizations, like Teach for America and the New Teacher Project, are authorized in some states to prepare the teachers they recruit for state certification. These organizations address the issue of inequitable distribution of teachers to low-income schools and the achievement gap by placing the teachers they recruit and train in high-need schools.

Typically, TFA corps members and TNTF teachers are certified through an established alternate route to certification in the district or state in which they're placed. However, with their proven track record for recruiting top quality teaching candidates, and their extensive program infrastructure, preparing their own teacher candidates for certification seems to be the next logical step.

Some states also allow their teachers to prepare for certification online, an increasingly popular option which offers the benefits of low cost and convenience for career changes and other non-traditional certification candidates, as well as people who live in rural or remote areas. Non-university providers of online alternative certification programs include non-profits, such as the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, and private companies, such as the Web Center for Alternative Certification Program in Texas.

Typically, participants must demonstrate subject area competency prior to beginning the program, receive their pedagogical training through a combination of online courses or modules, and work remotely with a mentor or other support staff. Most districts also require that the certification candidates who are completing an online program also complete the district mentoring and/or induction program for new teachers.

Community colleges currently administer only 2 percent of alternative certification programs nationwide. However, community colleges, with their history of preparing non-traditional students for careers, are uniquely qualified to offer certification to non-traditional teaching candidates, while some community colleges, particularly those in rural areas like the Great Basin College in Oakland, Nevada, have opted to offer a bachelor's degree in education.

Others are offering alternative certification programs for teachers with a bachelor's degree in another subject. In Florida, all 25 community colleges have created educator preparation institutes, and most of them have collaborated to create common competency-based courses. Florida's community college programs are addressing the state's severe teaching shortage in an innovative way, and attract future teachers from other states who are attracted to the convenience, fast pace and low cost of the programs.

And finally, teacher residency programs, modeled after training in the medical profession, allow novice teachers, like novice doctors, to work alongside a mentor teacher for an entire school year as they complete their pedagogical training. While teacher residency programs make up a very small percentage of alternative certification programs, their unique model is generating considerable attention.

Urban residency programs, like the Academy for Urban School Leadership in Chicago and the Boston Teacher Residency, and other teacher residency programs, such as the charter school-affiliated New Teachers Collaborative, and the private school-affiliated Stanley Teacher Preparation program, may work with four-year universities to provide some pedagogical training. However, their unique model for preparation interweaves pedagogy and practice in a very supportive environment designed to build teaching competencies and prepare teachers for a long-term commitment in the school district in which they're trained.

But before innovative alternative certification programs such as these can develop and grow to scale across the United States, policy changes will need to be made. The policy recommendations presented in my paper will create an environment in which innovative alternative certification programs could flourish, and improve the evaluation and accountability of teacher preparation programs, both traditional and alternative.

My first recommendation is for states to revise their licensure requirements to reflect teaching competencies. In most states, licensure requirements were developed with the traditional route to certification in mind, and require excessive amounts of coursework, particularly if certification candidates are already working as full-time teachers of record. And as numerous studies have found, there's no evidence that this type of professional education coursework increases student achievement.

Secondly, states should revise policies to allow a diversity of providers to operate alternative certification programs. Successful programs such as High Tech High, Teacher Intern Program, and Teach for America, Connecticut, are proving that entities

other than universities and schools of education can recruit and prepare teachers as well as, or better than, university schools of education. Of course, teacher preparation programs, both alternative and traditional, should be held to the same high standard of quality as measured by their ability to prepare teachers to meet state standards, and by the achievement of their graduate students.

And finally, funding must be made available for the development and growth of innovative alternative certification programs. Consider the human capital needs in schools across the United States; a lack of diversity in the teaching pool; a shortage of teachers in critical subject areas such as math and science; high turnover in our nation's poorest schools; and the inequitable distribution of highly qualified, experienced teachers across income levels. Innovative alternative certification programs have the potential to help solve these problems.

Programs with strong ties to the school or school district in which the teachers will be teaching will be able to target their training to local needs. Programs that do not require excessive university coursework, and instead, offer courses online, through their community colleges or through a school or district, can reduce costs and attract a diverse population to the teaching profession. Programs geared toward mid-career professionals will bring in new teachers with expertise in high-need subject areas.

And as research has shown, alternatively certified teachers perform as well as, or better than, traditionally certified teachers. A market-based approach to alternative certification, instead of the near-monopoly that exists in most states, will create competition within and between alternative and traditional programs to prepare teachers that will improve student achievement. Thank you.

MS. CHAIT: Thank you, Davida. Dr. Robinson.

MS. SHARON ROBINSON: Thank you. I want to begin by commending the Center and Davida for presenting a presentation on a very important topic. It's a very timely one and it really gets to the point of providing a quality educator for all students. The paper also provides some helpful updates on some of the state efforts that are underway. Further, it correctly argues for entrepreneurial efforts to help address some of the problems in teacher quality and quantity.

I think the report correctly calls for equal standards and requirements for both traditional and non-traditional providers of professional educators. It identifies the very important urgency of more competency testing, or testing for teaching skills, as an issue associated with licensing at the state level. And it argues that state policy should change to support the higher cost of accountability in teacher education, including accountability for entrepreneurial, as well as traditional efforts.

And to reinforce that, I really mean those comments of commendation. As I was reviewing the report, my marginal comments on the page where the recommendations are summarized have a lot of exclamation points recognizing the work of Western Governors

University, recognizing the need to put all providers of professional educators on a level playing field as it relates to the regulations that they have to abide by and live with and fund the program with, and certainly, recognizing the need to move licensing from a review of courses completed, or even experiences completed, to one that can consider some documentation of the skills the person brings to the process, because we want to know as well of the capacity to do the work along with the intellectual experiences that may produce the ability to pass competency and subject matter tests.

And it's actually with some great hope that I look forward to support from the Center for American Progress as we try to increase the funding and protect the funding for Title Two of the Higher Education Act to, in fact, support more partnership activities to develop the relationships necessary to produce the clinical experiences that this paper recognizes are essential to teacher competency, regardless of the program.

Further, we need to support the development of the performance assessments that have been identified, and I would say finally, we have urgent need for support from all who care about equity for the development of state databases that will permit further analysis of the impact of the production of traditional and non-traditional programs on student achievement.

Now, there is some stuff that's missing, and what is missing, you will find in a handout that has been provided to you. I find that this report has a bias, and there were some studies that were overlooked that might have led to a tempering of a bias that comes through loud and clear. The bias is that if it's within the university -- it can't be entrepreneurial, it cannot be productive, and it cannot be innovative. And I find that to be an unfortunate conclusion that one can hardly miss from both the missing data and the tone of the paper.

I'm not going to take the time to go into what I've provided in the handout, but I did cross-check some of the references, and I think as we have this very able young professional about to go on to further studies, it will be important, Davida, to make sure you look at the breadth of the body of work by a number of these researchers, because sometimes, having their work referenced by other researchers who already have a bias might lead you to the wrong conclusion about these studies.

The work of Pam Grossman and Goldhaber and several of those come to mind immediately as researchers who have a pretty significant body of work looking in great depth at the efficacy and the impact of traditional and non-traditional programs, I would say without bias, and providing some really important guidance to the providers in both communities.

With that observation noted, I now want to say that many of the program designs that have been identified as promising, you do find replicated in the traditional community supported largely by universities. That's really because these universities saw an opportunity represented in the market place, and I really think that they would find it somewhat shocking to be accused of circumventing the competition, when in fact,

they met the opportunity, and seized the opportunity to try and serve these non-traditional students. Further, the examples of innovation, I think, represented in the handout of research is further explicated by a handout I hope you found at the table coming in.

On June 19th, we will be featuring some alternative programs, some innovators who are taking their program into the community to make sure their candidates are being developed in some of the most challenging settings, so that they understand how to apply their work, their orientation to their work; not just to implement best practice at a high level of competence, but to address their work toward problems that need to be solved, and toward issues that might interfere with their ability to implement good practice, and to know that your job includes an obligation to change those conditions and make them more amenable to good practice on behalf of service to the students.

These schools represent urban and rural programs that have come off campus, out of the ivory tower into the community to address the problems of the community as good citizens and good professionals. That is the ethic that must be inspired and supported and nurtured in all programs that develop potential educators.

And the final observation I'm going to make about this paper also relates to this bias that was kind of unavoidable. You see, if we're going to solve this issue of teacher quality and quantity, of education leadership quality and quantity going forward, we're going to have to find a way to fix the capability, the operation, the system that can deliver continually and in a sustained and reliable way. It is not probable that boutique efforts, such as ones referenced in the paper, will grow to the point of being able to provide a sustained quantity for the education workforce needs.

So it is my hope that we will begin to look upon these efforts as important test beds of innovation that may be replicated within the more traditional community, because that's where you've got the capacity to hit the numbers. It would be truly unfortunate for us to face a critical policy question, almost a moral question for this country, and have it become viewed as a competition between the innovators and the traditional providers. That would be truly unfortunate. I think that would be – well, I said it. That would be unfortunate.

So let's learn from one another. Let's keep it so that somebody can go to the edge of the frontier with an obligation to document candidly your experience, so that we can learn from your successes and your mistakes, so that we can accept and embrace, in all humility and in all sincerity, the most important, urgent and persistent educational problems facing our country.

MS. CHAIT: Thank you, Dr. Robinson. Steven?

MR. STEVEN FARR: Hi, everybody. My name is Steven Farr. I'm vice president for knowledge development at Teach for America and have been there for seven or eight years. I taught high school English and ESL in the Rio Grande Valley back in the early '90s and the early days of Teach for America. And my role has been to

think about our organization's effectiveness and it's through that lens that I appreciate the invitation to come and share some reactions to this paper.

What I'd like to do in just the eight or ten minutes that I have here is three things: One, I want to talk a little bit about Teach for America and its theory of change, because my opinions and my experiences are going to come through that filter. The second thing I want to do is just talk about the implications of that theory of change for this discussion, and then the third thing I want to do is talk about elements of our work that might have some bearing, some relevance, to the conversation around alternative routes to certification.

So very briefly, I want to talk about what Teach for America is, just because I think, again, that that's the lens through which I'm viewing this. I would imagine that this is preaching to the choir in this room, but the achievement gap is our nation's greatest domestic travesty. You can tell me a zip code and I can bet you with 90 percent accuracy who's going to college. Maybe 50 percent of the students in D.C. are going to graduate from high school. Those that do are probably reading somewhere in the eighth or ninth grade level compared to what students might be doing in wealthier communities in the suburbs. This is endemic to our system. It is across the country.

And Teach for America exists to address the achievement gap. That is our purpose, and all of our decisions go through that mission. We think of that mission in a couple of ways. First, we define this problem by recognizing that students with the greatest needs, students growing up in communities with a lack of social services, a lack of health services, are walking into school doors where the schools have the least resources to address those needs, and this a perfect storm. It's a disaster. That broad definition of the problem paints a picture of a systemic problem in our country.

What Teach for America is doing is in the short term, we are recruiting high achieving, highly effective teachers to go into classrooms where the achievement gap is a problem right now, today, to catch students up. We want to close the achievement gap for our students today, this year, with my students in my classroom.

In the long term, what we're doing is bringing this nation's future leaders into classrooms, so that after their two-year commitment, many of them stay in the classroom. Two-thirds or so of the alumni of the Teach for America corps members that we've ever placed in classrooms are still in education, but those that stay in education and those that leave, that go into other sectors, they're always obsessed with this problem, and that is our long-term strategy for closing the achievement gap.

So there are two parts. One in the immediate term, we need to get more teachers in the classrooms that are closing the achievement gap for our students, and in the long term, we need greater leaders that see this as a problem that has to be solved, and who are working with the insights that these teachers are gaining when they've being successful with their students in the classrooms in low-income rural and urban communities.

So, where we are with this movement is that we have 4,500 or 5,000 teachers in classrooms right now. We're headed toward 20,000 alumni who are taking leadership positions both inside and outside of education. And we are looking forward to growing, to have a greater impact on the achievement gap. It's with that frame in mind, as I read this paper – I did have a few reactions, many of which I agree so much with Dr. Robinson about the opportunities for us to learn from each other, and we have a common problem that we need to solve.

I also think there are a few things -- qualities of our program -- that I want to add to the table. One is that we are very rarely, actually, an alternative certification program ourselves. This is, of course, in the paper. Connecticut is the exception right now, but we are consumers of alternative certification programs and work very closely with both the universities and ACPs because our teachers need to be certified to teach. So that's a big part of our energies.

The last point here on the slide, I myself have questions about to what degree, just as Dr. Robinson was saying, to what degree are the lessons that we're learning in our experience applicable on a broad scale to address other problems like the teacher shortage? And I think those are important and fascinating questions that I don't pretend to have the answer to, but I don't believe, or I'm not standing here to say Teach for America is the answer. I think that we are doing our best to address a particular problem, and it may be that along the way, we are learning some lessons that could inform this conversation. That's what I'd like to talk about right now.

So the first, most overwhelming reaction I had as I read the paper, the places where I had exclamation points in my notes in the margin, was about the notion of using student achievement, measuring outcomes to drive our decisions. Because as an organization, we are there to close the achievement gap, we have to ask ourselves, so what is success? What does that mean?

Well, that means that our kids are actually catching up, that when I taught my sophomores in the Rio Grand Valley, many of them were reading at the fifth, sixth, seventh grade level. If I'm just doing my job, I can't get them to the next year. I've got to close that gap.

So as an organization, we at Teach for America put considerable energy into trying to figure out how can we measure student achievement. And I know that everyone in here knows that this is a very messy, very difficult world. The premise that I'm putting forth is that it is worth chasing that messy world. Standardized tests are not perfect. There's no particular assessment that's ever been perfect, but we have to know that we are closing the achievement gap with our students and we have to make decisions based on that progress.

You see in the second half of the slide in terms of how this manifests in our work, we create internal definitions of what we call significant academic gains, and we don't give ourselves credit for success with the corps member experience in the classroom

unless the students on average in that room meet those ambitious definitions. These are very ambitious definitions and are very hard to reach. As an example, as an elementary school teacher, if you went into southeast D.C. and talked to an elementary teacher about what their goals are, they are on the hook to move their students forward at least a year and a half in reading, writing and math. Anyone who's been anywhere near education knows that this is, again, very difficult.

We have this patchwork of assessments out there. There are all of these different systems, but we have made the decision to invest in trying to find those answers. And I'll tell you, having been at Teach for America long enough to see the transition as we've moved to this singular focus on student achievement, it has changed our effectiveness incredibly. We're more efficient, we're more focused, we have a greater sense of urgency about why we're there.

There are three ways that we think about student achievement. Again, the details of these are books and books, but first, when we can get data at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year, and we can calibrate student growth, that's fantastic, and we go after that. In our secondary classrooms, often if you're teaching high school chemistry, the diagnostic may be a little bit different.

When we're in a mastery setting, we use rigorous standards for mastery to set our goals of significant gains. And then the third way that we define significant gains is we call it a pace-setter method. We go and look at how students are doing on average in the suburbs where a school is well resourced and kids are on grade level, and we set our goals by what percentage of progress are we going to make to catch our kids up.

Again, I will not get us into all the difficulties there, but you can imagine them, and they take a lot of our energy. And one of my reactions to the paper was I believe that all of us, alternative certification programs, university programs, all of us need to continue to think how are we going to be measuring student achievement?

The reason for that – and I'll skip down to this notion of program design – is ultimately, what matters is those training and support mechanisms, those selection mechanisms, that increase student achievement for our students. That's the ultimate measure of teacher effectiveness in our view. And by focusing on that notion of success, it helps us improve our program. You see here some of the questions that manifest for us.

You imagine we have all these teachers across the country and we know which teachers are making significant gains and which teachers are not. We can now study what distinguishes those wildly successful teachers. This is one of the reasons I have a wonderful job, because I get to hear, oh, my gosh, in North Carolina, we have a teacher whose kids grew three and a half years in reading and math last year.

I swoop in and study what distinguishes one teacher from another, what's going on in that classroom from our teachers that are only making a year's worth of growth.

What we're finding is actually there's these six principles of leadership that we see over and over and over. These teachers set big goals. They invest their students in working really hard to the big goals. There's a lot of motivational theory, sort of the Dweck-Stipeck type thinking about malleable intelligence.

They were able to identify what teacher actions are most contributing to that student growth, and that shapes all of our decisions as a program. So we have a rubric now that we are constantly trying to calibrate to say, if you get to advanced proficiency on this rubric, if we see these indicators in your classroom, that is correlated with the student achievement that we need to close the achievement gap. That's the centerpiece of our program. It goes to selection too because we can now – we know who is in this rarefied air of significant gains. We can say, how do we select more teachers that have those qualities? And that data-driven cycle is driving who we choose.

So the 25,000 college seniors and others that applied to Teach for America this year, only – I don't know – one of six or one of seven are going to make it into our program. It's because we're putting them through a filter that comes from those teachers that are wildly successful. We are going to accept you to this program if we believe you can move your students forward enough to close the gap for them, and that's not everybody in our context and we understand that.

The final bullet there about what training and support structures have the most impact, I think a lot of us internally, a lot of corps members, we get frustrated with the fact that we keep changing our program, but that's because we have to keep asking what's working and what's not. The university's alternative certification programs have nailed that answer, but the pursuit of that question continues to improve our program. So the pursuit of that question now shapes the now seven courses that our corps members go through in their training.

It's the pursuit of that question that shapes the fact that we have a supervised teaching model in the summer, instead of a student teaching model in the time that we have. It's what shapes our summer institute, which many of you have probably heard about. That's five intense weeks of scheduled 14-hour days. We have to do that to get our teachers to the point that on day one, they can be effective closing the achievement gap. I'm about out of time.

The last key element that comes from this, again, defining teacher effectiveness in terms of student achievement is a general dependence on investment on the front end, getting the right people in the door for our program. We are not claiming to be a solution to the teacher shortage generally, but we also know that to be successful at the level we're talking about in a context where there's often not very much support, not everyone is up for that. And that is why there's this – I think people would be very surprised to see the level of investment we put on recruitment. We're on 500 campuses. This is not posters. This is head-hunting. We're talking to deans, we're talking to professors to say, who are the student leaders who, when they're in the most difficult context that you can

imagine, that they'll keep pushing? Who are the people who set goals and get to those goals? Those are the people we want.

And this is working. Like I said, we've got almost 10 percent of many of the colleges and universities in the country applying to Teach for America at this point, and we're able to be selective and bring in people that we do believe can be successful. I want to be clear that this is not to diminish the importance of training and support at all. What this is about is saying that in our context, it's very, very important that we get people in the door on the front end that can handle the immensely difficult experience that we're going to put them through. Thank you. I think I'm beyond my time.

MS. CHAIT: Thank you, Steven. Jesse.

MR. JESSE SOLOMON: Good afternoon. Is that working? No? It is? Okay. Good afternoon. Good afternoon. Come on, now. I know I'm the last one, but you've got to have a little energy here. I will do a brief overview of our program, just kind of tell you how it works and try to talk a little bit about the paper in doing that and with a few comments.

I'll say first that just in terms of the title of the paper and our program, as I was thinking about it, I think probably, we're neither – we don't claim to be either innovative or alternative. So in some ways, we don't fit here as was talked about briefly before, in that I think for us, what's been considered innovative, we hope is just sort of good, and comes from common sense and comes from things that have been tried by lots of other people. And so we don't claim to be doing something radically different than has been sort of proven, but rather sort of taking ideas.

And I think we're not alternative in that the way the previously cited paper sort of spewed out here are all these programs that are claiming to be alternative that aren't alternative. Our folks do a lot of coursework, and so they're not alternative in the way that it's been defined. So I'll talk about that as we go.

We basically are the Boston public schools' own school of education, and we started about five years ago, when the superintendent at that time, Tom Payzant, made the simple decision that he wanted to be able to recruit and prepare his own teachers. As you might imagine, sitting in the middle of Boston with a number of institutions already preparing teachers within 10 or 15 miles of where he was sitting, that decision surprised a lot of people and upset a lot of people and that's played a kind of key role in our development.

We were responding to some of the issues that you've already heard about today as a district, despite the fact that we had all these places preparing teachers. And Boston, unlike some places, never actually had a pure shortage. So we always had more applicants, at least on paper, than we did positions. But we had a shortage in the key areas. We had a shortage in math and science, we had a shortage in terms of teachers of color, special education, ESL.

Too many teachers that were entering Boston schools were not prepared both for Boston's work and for the kind of realities and expectations of an urban school. And we were losing about half of our new teachers in the first three years. Now, the number at the bottom is – I wouldn't stand behind because the methodology was not perfect, but we tried to sort of quantify how much does it cost us to lose a teacher? And we came out that just by sort of adding up how much it costs to recruit them, and get them on board, and orientation, et cetera, it was costing us about \$17,000 a teacher to have a teacher walk out that revolving door in the first three years.

So of course, this doesn't get into student achievement gains, and as you've all seen the research, most likely, the worst thing you can do to a kid is give them a first-year teacher, and giving them a bunch of first-year teachers in a row was even worse than giving them one. And obviously, that's different by teacher, but on average, that's what we see. So this doesn't even get into the kind of student achievement issues.

So our objectives really were not purely recruitment or preparation or induction and development. We run a four-year program that involves all three components, and our goals are to recruit, prepare and sustain highly effective teachers in and for the Boston public schools. We will, in two years, be preparing about 30 percent of the teachers Boston hires each year who are very focused on high-needs hiring areas.

We are trying to develop a model that other cities will take, and there's been some interest and there are some other cities that are starting their own programs to be a catalyst for collaborative reflective students in our practice in schools. We can talk more about it, but there's this larger question of how teacher recruitment and preparation development is related to school development and that's a huge question for a district, as you might imagine.

This year, we have about 84 teachers coming from about 450 applications. That's about a six-to-one ratio. We have about 130 grads teaching and we'll go up to about 120 a year. The program is based, as was mentioned, on the medical residency model. Our folks do a full year with a mentor teacher, teaching at the elbow of an experienced veteran, excellent teacher. They're clustered in schools. We put at least six folks in a school with a site director whom we hire half-time who's a school-based person as well.

Our folks do get a master's degree. We offer the whole program, all the coursework ourselves, so we design the courses; we hire the instructors. We basically run the whole program. What that lets us do is design courses and hire the people in a way that's tailored to Boston's work. So that both looks at a variety of factors. So for example, if you're going to be a teacher in Boston, you need to understand something about the history of Boston. If you're a teacher in Roxbury now, and you don't know about busing, you're missing a large part of the history that led to why the schools are the way they are.

And where a district that has the benefit, I think, of the fact that we had 11 years of a superintendent. That was Tom Payzant. Before that we had 10 superintendents in 18 years. So it used to be that to be a good teacher or principal in Boston, you used to ignore everything that the central office was telling you to do, and that's how you were good. So we now had a coherent and structural agenda, so we were able to prepare people for that agenda, so that in their first day in the classroom, they know the curriculum, they know the work of the district and they're prepared to enact that curriculum, rather than spending their first year learning all that stuff anew.

Our folks get a teaching license, and one of the critical pieces of our program was that the State of Massachusetts, as mentioned in the report, deregulated the pathways to teacher licensure about eight years ago. So the Boston public schools, through the Boston Teacher Residency, is the licensing agent in our program's case, and so we apply to the state to be a licensing agent. We show that we meet all the competencies and at the end of the year, we stamp them and submit their materials for licensure.

That allows us the freedom to run the programs we do. We have a partnership with UMASS, so they get a master's degree, although, right now, the partnership is largely paying some money for a transcript. They take one course in common, but most of the coursework is actually fairly separate.

We require all our folks to get a dual license in special education. And the theory there is right now, one out of five students in Boston is identified officially with a disability. That means there's another one out of five students who has an unidentified disability. So basically, the theory is if you're going to be a teacher in Boston, you're going to be teaching students with disabilities, and you should know how to do that. We're in the process actually of adding an ESL track for the same reason. One out of five students doesn't speak English at home. If you're going to be a teacher in Boston, you've got to be able to teach kids who don't speak English at home.

Our folks get a little bit of money. They get a small stipend. They also get health insurance. They get an educational award at the end. We charge them tuition for the program, and then forgive a third for each year that they teach in Boston. So they don't get rich going through our program, but they can come through it earning a license and a master's degree and getting a job in Boston, basically without paying anything.

As we said, it's a four-year program. We try to be very clear that even with our fairly intensive 13-month program of being in a classroom four days a week, full-time, all year long, taking a full master's degree worth of courses, they're by no means ready when they start, and we try not to tell them that they're ready – in fact, quite the contrary. We believe that it takes them many years, but at least four years to really get up and running. And being a teacher, obviously, we're trying to get them to be as effective as we can. So we really outline for them a program that goes across their four years.

We're very early, and so I'm hesitant to report any results, but to date, over half of our residents and our graduates have been teachers of color. In Boston, for those of

you familiar with Boston's history, you'll know that that is a significant number in a city where 86 percent of the kids in the school system are kids of color and 30-something percent are teachers of color. Over half of our middle and high school teachers are in math and science; over 90 percent of our grads are still in their BPS teaching jobs. And principals rate the grads as more effective than the competition, so to speak.

We are in the process of beginning a value-added student achievement study with Tom Kane who's at Harvard. He now has the database that he needs to look at the student achievement of grads, but he can actually do this for all programs sending teachers into Boston and for all teachers in Boston. So there's a set of questions that a district can answer with that kind of work.

What does my time look like? Five more minutes? Oh, sweet. Okay. (Laughs.)

So one of the nice things about our work and being a district is that it allows us to have a role in the work of the district, and I'll just give you a couple of examples. When we began our program, we said, okay, you want us to start a district-based teacher preparation program? What's your vision of what it means to be a good teacher? What should we be preparing these teachers to be able to do? And sort of nobody could tell us. So the first thing we did is we said, we need to be able to develop that kind of clear vision and then map our entire program backwards from that vision.

So being able to do things like that in Boston now has led to Boston adopting those competencies, which they now call dimensions, as the basis for their professional development work and for their teacher evaluation system. So there are places like that where we're able to start a conversation that similarly has been with the induction program.

When we started, when I was a first-year teacher in Boston, my sort of induction program in Boston was I had a mentor whom would pass in the hallway and we'd kind of make a little check mark in the air showing like we'd made contact for the day, and that was my induction. Luckily, I didn't know any better. I didn't know that I was supposed to want anymore than that, but that was what I got.

We now have put enough pressure on the district and had enough conversations where we say, whoever comes into the district, you need to support these folks much more intensely than you have been, if you don't expect to lose half of them over the first three years.

There are some other things that we've listed here. We invest heavily in folks in the district, so we're hiring excellent teachers to be the mentors. We hire these half-time site directors at each of our host schools. You lied. (Laughs.) Five minutes just became two, just in case you guys are trying to follow along at home. That's okay. I can adjust. That's all right.

So I'm just going to skip ahead then to the last few comments. I guess I wanted to say, as I said at the beginning, that I think we're not worried so much about innovation as we are about trying to develop something that's good for kids. And a lot of what we do, I think, is built on common sense, the idea that we're putting people in schools for a full year, that we're combining theory and practice, that we care a lot about recruitment and selection. There's a precedent for each of those things. I think one of the innovations is really basing it in the district and giving the district the kind of leverage that it has, which has been pretty critical.

A couple of lessons, the first, and I say this about ourselves, programs like ours by themselves are not enough. And I don't know how many of you feel this way, but I don't feel like going to work everyday and sort of being part of a tinkering approach. And just the recruitment of teachers, or just the preparation, or just the fact that it's tinkering compared to the big problem.

And so we're not that interested as a district in, I think, in what you described in terms as a country, in just having an innovation that gets us a little bit better and moves us five percentage points on this standardized test— that's not going to change dramatically the life outcomes for the kids that we're talking about.

And I think that what we're trying to think about, and what I would hope comes out of a paper like this and a conversation like this, is a much broader conversation about a larger kind of human capital approach, which is to say, we're talking about recruiting, preparing, developing, compensating, rewarding, evaluating great people all along the system.

And what our work has done, I think, has said, well, you can concentrate a lot on doing that at the front end, but all that does is push questions three years later. So now you have really great third-year teachers. They run into the same walls, right, so how are they developing, how are they being rewarded, how are they being compensated? So if we're really going to make change, you don't want all those people running off after three years saying, well, I did great teaching for three years and now I'm not getting rewarded and so I'm leaving. So it raises a much larger set of questions, I think, about how we operate as a system.

The second thing I'd say is, as all of you know who work in programs like this, the devil is absolutely in the details, and it's way too easy to game the system. I'll give you one example. In Massachusetts, you have to have 80 percent or better of your candidates pass the teacher test. Well, all you do, and all any of the programs do, is you define your practicum saying you can't enter the practicum until you've passed the teacher test.

So I could have all my candidates come into the program, but I only let the ones who've already passed the teacher test enter the practicum, so I have a 100 percent pass rate. So there's this accountability mechanism which everybody on the ground knows how to get around. So there's an attention to detail which may not make it to reports like

this, because it's self-reported data, and we can all have 100 percent pass rates, but if we don't pay attention to those details, we won't actually be able to fix the systems that are underlying them.

And the last thing I'd say, which I think echoes something that has been said, is it would be really helpful to us, and I think to this larger question, if there was a national effort to get really, really good at measuring teacher effectiveness. And that has a lot to do with student achievement, but it has to do with a combination of things. It has to do with teacher characteristics and what you observe in a classroom, and when you interview the three or four people who know the person's teaching well. And you've got to think about a combination of things and if you just focus on one test, it's probably not enough.

But we also can't let the perfect be the enemy of the good and we have to develop the system. And if it's left to each program and each institution to do it themselves, there's going to be sniping and everyone's going to discredit everyone, but if there's one clear way to do that, and we just say we're going with this, then we can finally start to get to the conversation where we can have some kind of comparative analysis, and so that instead of just programs being good because they're new, they're good because they're actually good. And I think that's where I leave it.

MS. CHAIT: So you are all hesitant to take credit for being able to move systems, yet. I thought Dr. Robinson said something pretty interesting. She referred to the innovative programs as test beds. How do you think your programs can leverage change among both traditional and alternative certification programs, Steven and Jesse?

MR. FARR: I don't want to repeat what I just said. I think if you talk to anyone at Teach for America, whether they're in the classroom or on the staff, what we're going to talk about is how much we don't know. And what we're trying to do is very, very difficult. That said, I think our vision of how we can leverage change is by our actions. If we have a system that demonstrates student achievement, then that needs to be the path toward leadership.

And I feel like that principle can apply to all of these. I don't disagree with this notion of these sort of test beds and what can we learn from. I'm hesitant to say that we have answers to learn from, but I am proud of the progress that we've made in the student achievement that is happening in our classrooms, and the ideas that are being generated there.

I would keep coming back to saying, like Jesse just said, innovation that is not purposeful towards student achievement doesn't mean very much, and there's just a surprising lack of confidence among all of us in the correlation between process and outputs in this whole endeavor of education. And I think focusing on that issue would be what I would like to influence people to do.

MR. SOLOMON: I'm sorry. You were just asking how can we influence – yes. So I'd just say, in Boston, when we started, many of the higher institutions were so angry at Tom, at our superintendent and us, for sort of daring to do this without consulting them and for sort of going around their back and just sort of doing it. It took us about three years to rebuild some relationships which we'd all spent many years building.

But I think we're at a point now where they've realized we're not going to go away, which is an important factor. But I think there's much more of a common conversation now about what it means to actually prepare folks for Boston.

And then conversations about – it's everybody's responsibility to support your grads. There are 145 schools in Boston, and so every institution can realistically say, well, I can't support my grads. They're spread out over 145 schools, but if you get them together and say, well, let's sort of barter, and I'll support all the grads in 10 schools, including yours, and you support all the grads in 10 schools, including mine, then you can have different conversations about how a place as rich as Boston with all those institutions could actually work together.

And I think the last thing – and I hate to say this because I wouldn't say it's about universities more than any other institution – giving the district the leverage to call some of the shots has been huge, and the fact that the district just said they were going to do this has changed the conversation between the district and the local institutions of higher education. And the next step in that – I don't speak for the district in this, so if you quote me to them, just say I was going off AWOL.

The next step is that the district is going to make little report cards for each institution, and say, here are the graduates we got from your institution. Here's how many stayed, here are the subject areas, here's how principals rate them. And we're going to start to see that you know what? Certain institutions – because we already know this anecdotally, because all the principals will tell you, oh, BC prepares amazing teachers and we love to hire a BC grad. So we're going to get some data behind that, which is going to change the relationships with institutions, and is going to lead, I think, to a kind of preferred partner status where the places that are doing good work for Boston are the ones that Boston is going to work with most closely.

MS. ROBINSON: I think this is so important to recognize that the relationship between the institutions and the districts is getting to be one of greater parity as it relates to the interests of the students. And we have to acknowledge that accountability is coming late to the higher education world, but it came first to the teacher education program, and in fact, is serving as a kind of leading wedge, if you will, within higher education about how to think about accountability for something that's important.

And so I think the relationship you're describing in the Boston community was related to me by another dean who said, the accreditation system has to understand that I certainly want to be accredited, but my president cares about whether I have a good relationship with the local school district. And the school district feels that we are

sending them teachers that really can do the work in the schools as they are as a reality. So I think that that relationship has now been embraced within teacher education across the industry.

Now, what you do about it depends on whether the school of education is going to get support within the university community to implement the changes necessary to be on site and increase the number of residency models, increase the number of professional development schools, so that you have a site for clinical development that is really worthy of that task and really designed to meet those demands, and that you have a capacity to follow your candidates.

Certainly, to get to this accountability issue, but also to get to information that really can inform program change and right now, we are at the very early stages of those efforts. The State of Ohio through the Ohio partnership has a very comprehensive research agenda involving all of the institutions in the state to design a protocol that they can manage and that they can manage with integrity, because it will provide data that really responds to real questions.

So I think we're seeing some very good developments that will, frankly, be undermined and compromised if the efforts within the university are viewed as simply gestures that are designed to circumvent the competition, or that are persistent actions in pursuit of the tradition which frankly, means nothing as we try to get ready for the demands of this 21st century.

MR. GATLIN: I just want to clarify something. I think Robin's question got at the point that I was trying to make there: It's not so much that universities can't be innovative, can't be entrepreneurial. There certainly are programs within universities that are innovative and entrepreneurial. It wasn't the focus of this paper, but that from these boutique efforts, we can learn things, we can borrow things. And since these types of programs that are operated by other entities aren't even allowed in many states, I was asking that perhaps we should change the policies, allow these sorts of boutique efforts to pop up in other places where there's a demand in the market for them, and then use that experience to learn from each other, to borrow from each other.

Maybe circumvent wasn't the right word and I apologize for that, because certainly, if the state policy doesn't allow other entities, it's not the university's fault that they're the only ones. But I just simply think that we should allow the sort of innovation, encourage the sort of innovation, and it's going to benefit universities, it's going to benefit other entities, and most importantly, if we can have programs that prepare high quality teachers, it's going to be benefit students, and that is the end goal.

MS. CHAIT: Thank you. We'd like to open this to the floor for questions. If there are any press here, we'd like to take your questions first. Steve.

Q: Hi, I'm Steve Sawchuk with *Education Daily*. And my question is I was really interested in the funding component, which we didn't get so much into in the

discussion. And I think my question is that when you look at some of the really innovative alternative programs, they tend to be very heavily supported by grants, often federal grants. My understanding is TFA is also very heavily grant supported. And I'm sort of interested in the question of how you start to make some of these innovative models self-sustaining and scale them up over time.

Sharon said something earlier which I thought was interesting about maybe some of the reasons some of these are being done within the schools of education is because there's a sustainability there that's a little more certain than when you're just off on a 10 million dollar federal grant, and you don't know if that's going to be renewed or continued. So I don't know, Davida, if you found anything out about funding and how to support these beyond the fact that we know that we want to make them as sustainable as we can make them.

MS. GATLIN: It's an excellent question. And I think that there is definitely a call for more funding to be made available to make these programs more sustainable. I'm afraid I can't really give you the details on 'we need this and we need that' specifically, but that is an issue, because when you're working off of a grant, you don't know if it's going to be there again the next year. And maybe somebody who is working on these programs has a better idea of how they can be made sustainable, because of course, they're not profit-making ventures, so it's a very good question. Perhaps you guys have a response.

MR. SOLOMON: Well, I'd just say in Boston actually, the district is committed to pay 51 percent of the costs, which is critical both because that actually allows us to go out and raise the other 49 percent, but it's a change in a district saying that this is now becoming part of district work as opposed to it being someone else's work. But I think it goes to the premise of your question. I think our nation supports the training of doctors, and it's not a year-by-year thing whether they're going to do that. And I think if we're going to do this seriously, there's going to be a federal stream of money that's not year-by-year that supports the training at least of teachers in our highest need areas, both in terms of content and in place.

MS. ROBINSON: Well, I do want to point to another residency model that is about to come online through the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. I happen to serve on its board of trustees, and will be working through a state kind of authorizing or state support model that will support these fellows going through a residency model that is designed to help them be really ready for day one of practice in math and science, and focused on bringing in more diversity to the teaching force in the State of Ohio.

Now, these models are through the university which requires that they develop the relationships necessary to, in fact, have a sustainable and really authentic residency program, bringing the content and the experiential aspects of the training together, so that students become much more explicitly aware of the conceptual framework that support their practice. And they become much more aware of the competencies that they are developing, because folks can help them make the connection between what they did and

what happened with the students and what they need to change if they want a different result with the students.

So it's an effort to bring a process of development that really is focused on student achievement because that is affirming that leads to a greater likelihood that these fellows will become teachers and really stay.

MS. CHAIT: Thank you. Other questions?

Q: Peggy Orchowksi (ph) with the *Hispanic Outlook* magazine. Someone was talking about gaming the system and I think there's been a big problem in terms of the standards of achievement because of our decentralized school system and our local school system. And how do you – I'm wondering, especially, Ms. Robinson, if you favor some kind of national achievement standards or how do you decide on an achievement standard when every local district can determine their own?

MS. ROBINSON: Well, actually I favor rigorous professional standards that we can recommend to the states as necessary requirements for competence or high competence selections in licensing decisions and in hiring, but that's different than saying, I favor a national standard. I think the professional community has to be supported and there needs to be much more aggressive development of assessments that can help people know not just what the candidate knows, but can document some reflection of what the candidate can do relative to student learning. And that work is underway, but I think it needs support from the federal government and from a coalition of states to really speed up the development of more states that take on a performance assessment that truly is authentic.

Boston is a good example with this residency program, but the State of Massachusetts has a requirement that all the programs have performance assessments. They use teacher work samples, and then I said, well, what is the interrelated reliability exercise like? There is none. So you see, that means the state has put something out there that sounds good, but really doesn't make much difference on behalf of the students. But that's because we don't really invest in this work. We must invest in stronger tools for assessment at the candidate level, stronger data that informs the state, and we have to invest in stronger work sites to support good practitioners in practice.

MS. GATLIN: This makes me think also of how some states are now tying their certification requirements or – I'm sorry – tying the standards to licensure systems, the tiered licensure systems, for example, in New Mexico, where you're not going to make it to the second tier without that performance assessment. And so I feel like as states revive their licensure requirements, that's something that I think other states could look at to consider, instead of 'you've completed the requirements and you're done.'

MR. SOLOMON: I would just say, I hope we don't spend the next 15 or 20 years getting it so that all the states have a system like this. I hope we just go right to student achievement. I just think the amount of time it's going to take one state or 50 states to

build the system, given what you've said about how far we've come, let's just skip to what matters, student achievement. Let's figure out a good way to measure it and then we can work backwards from that and think about teacher behaviors.

Q: Hi. Cindy Brown here at the Center. I want to ask Sharon a question about selection, because we heard from these other two programs that they have very clear ways of determining who is most likely to be successful both in their training programs, preparation programs, and then in teaching kids. The McKinsey report that was done recently on Finland and Singapore showed that teachers in those two countries, they're very high performing on all the international tests. There are much tougher selection requirements to get into schools of education in those countries.

And you're absolutely right that there are a lot of innovative teacher preparation programs in universities going on. But what do those do about selection, and do we have a general problem in this country about who we allow into teacher preparation programs? And of course, there are a lot of charges that I'm sure aren't new for you to hear that schools of education are, in effect, cash cows that are underwriting other parts of the university. Where are we going on that issue, since you interact with all those preparation programs?

MS. ROBINSON: It's important to remember that getting into the teacher preparation program builds on the fact that you, A, qualified for admission to the university. So at least coming in the door, you're equal to everybody else coming in the door. Then you apply at some point to the teacher education program, which in many instances, requires an academic major in something other than education. So that means that anybody who's in teacher education can get an academic major equivalent to the academic major. They can't get it in the school of education. They have to get it wherever it's being taught to everybody else.

So these candidates have to be equal to all the other students in that major, in that university. So the rigor of the selection begins with the rigor of the selection of the institution. That's the first filter. Then to get into the teacher education program there are typically interviews, letters of recommendation, and so forth, and that is the usual route at the graduate and at the undergraduate level.

The charges of cash cow come primarily at the graduate level because we have the school of education now tied to the teacher compensation system. So I think we've got to sit down with a blank piece of paper and design a human resource development system, including compensation, that really makes sense related to the work of the enterprise, which is student learning, not just related to convenient tools of management that we borrow from other enterprises that probably no longer really work.

So we have now people who can amass courses and credits, and benefit themselves economically, though modestly, and they learn stuff that may or may not have any bearing on being able to do a better job in what they do. So there's a disconnect there. There is not confidence that you can leverage what they are learning in the

master's program with what we need to see in the industry, which is improved student learning.

So I think we ought to be able to be confident, and that's one of the reasons I'm really excited about some of these models that are based in the district or in the school, because it really means that you're focusing learning on the realities of work in those settings, so that students can learn conceptual skills and the application of real tools and skills at the same time. And that seems to be a very satisfying model.

It is more expensive than teaching a bunch of courses on campus and paying for electricity and an instructor. You have to pay to develop those relationships. You have to pay to get these to incent the faculty actually to get off campus and into those schools where they tend to have very satisfying experiences. So it's not so much that it's so hard to sustain after you get it going. But it's a real breakthrough model for the university in terms of financing.

MR. SOLOMON: I would just say also that selection for us is an ongoing process. You try to do really a great job at your initial selection, but after we've seen someone in our program for six months, we have a lot better idea than we did on the day they came to the school, and so part of it is our responsibility to get rid of people if we find out they shouldn't be in a classroom six months in or two years in.

MS. ROBINSON: That's really an important point. What you don't often see is you don't see the washout factor, because it's done in a way to keep you from seeing it typically, but that is a big factor in schools of education as well.

MS. CHAIT: Thank you. Back on this side.

Q: Dave Arkster (ph), with Research Institute for Independent Living and graduate of the Education School of Boston University. There was a piece in the *Washington Post* a while back that indicated that with low-income students in Richmond, the gains were superior to those low-income students in Fairfax County, which is a wealthy community here in Northern Virginia. And it kind of turns the conventional wisdom on its head, where you have the low-income communities in Richmond doing a lot better than wealthy communities where the teachers are supposed to be better. Can somebody comment on that scenario?

MS. CHAIT: I thought that that actually was attributed to the Reading First Program.

MS. ROBINSON: Certainly it was, but it certainly takes more than that – it takes a competent teacher, a very, very skilled administrator, reliable resources for practice, but I'm not sure that I can comment on that particular incident.

MS. CHAIT: It's my understanding that those teachers received intensive professional development in how to teach reading as part of the Reading First Program and that that's what people attributed the difference to.

Q: My name is Fred Evans. I have been very interested in what all of you had to say, but I think one of the things that's missing is about school leadership. I was a high school principal for eight years and a middle school principal for four years, and worked for 30 years in public education just north of here in Montgomery County. And one of the elements that's totally missing as far as your presentation was what role the overall leadership in a school has to build and sustain and maintain whatever the teaching core is.

I have a real problem with that disconnect. And it's my – maybe my prejudice since I was a school leader. But I also taught for eight years, too, and I still teach at George Mason. And I'd like you to comment on that, because I truly believe from my experience that the sustaining of teachers, no matter from whence they come, has to do with school leadership. It's inextricable as far as I'm concerned, and just if you could comment on that.

MR. SOLOMON: I can just say quickly that we should have said more about this. Our whole program is based in specific kinds of host schools, where the notion is that the school as a whole takes on the responsibility for preparing a group of residents. So that's highly dependent on not only the principal, but also on a larger leadership structure at the school. So that's true, both for the places that we prepare our folks, but also then where we place them and we work to place them in cohorts. And the biggest thing we look for is the leader of the school, and if this is a school where this person is building a team and will come with them? So we didn't talk about it a lot, but it is a huge part of it.

MS. GATLIN: And many of the programs profiled in my paper also worked very closely with a particular school or with a school district. And when an alternative certification program is working closely with the school, or with the school district, whoever is having the responsibility for the mentoring program and the professional development program and the induction program, you have the opportunity to build those sort of streamlined systems where, like in the Boston Teacher Residency, it's becoming a four-year process instead of a disjointed process where you've now received your teacher certification, and now you go somewhere and teach. And so that's something that I think a lot of these programs have in common, and I think it's a very positive thing.

MS. CHAIT: Okay.

Q: First of all, I'd like to thank all of you. Teaching is the hardest job imaginable. And I'm a science teacher for 20 years, and I'm here on fellowship this year and I'm from Tucson, Arizona. And a lot of the things were not touched upon, like you had said, where we have a teacher corps that is 20th century-trained and we are teaching 21st century kids. And there's the disconnect. Many of our teachers don't know how to connect with these new kids.

And the other thing also is until we realize that and get our teachers trained so they can talk to these kids one-on-one, it's really going to be a problem. And also a couple of other things that you had said were the teacher shortage. I guess in some of the country's areas, there are teacher shortages, but it's not the teacher shortage. We're putting out teachers. We're just not keeping them. And that's the key -- you've got to get teachers supported through the first year, not two years and three years.

And the other thing with the Teach for America -- I have a lot of things. The Teach for America to me, and I don't mean to berate you, but it's a cult. And that's how I feel like; it is a cult. (Laughs.) And to tell me that somebody who's in the classroom for two years knows as much as somebody who's been in the classroom for five years, you can be the most motivated, idealistic person, but when you turn around after two years and then leave, and I know two-thirds of your people stay in education, but they stay in different ways. The classroom is the place. That's where it takes part. So if you could just comment on that.

MR. FARR: I'd love to. I mean, I won't comment on the cult part. I'm not sure exactly what that means. But I will say I am not here to tell you that someone who's been in the classroom two years knows as much as someone who's been there five years. That is not my position. I am here to tell you that I see a lot of our first-year teachers making significant academic gains with their students in wildly difficult circumstances; and that the degree to which we can spread that impact and have that happen on a larger scale, that's the question, and that's hard. And I think the most rigorous of the studies of our teachers are showing that we are having positive impacts on students' experiences. And like I said, to me, this is not a question because I'm in these classrooms all the time.

In terms of the two years, you're right. About half of the two-thirds of our alumni who are still in education are outside the classroom. They're principals, they're superintendents, they are in schools of education all over the place. But half of them are still in the classroom. And I do want to just remind everyone that these are people who are not headed to education on the front end, for the vast, vast majority. And so we're proud of the people that we're bringing into the education field and are staying there. And we celebrate when teachers stay there. There is no doubt. I'm speaking to you as the son of a professor in a school of education, and I have these conversations a lot.

At the same time, we don't believe that teachers alone can solve this problem either. There are systemic pressures on schools that make it unsustainable. And we don't think it's right that our teachers are successful, because they're there at 6:00 a.m. and because they're leaving at midnight. That is not a sustainable system. But the way we're going to get to that sustainable system is to have more people in leadership positions all over every sector.

We're talking business, medicine, law, journalism and in education, politicians -- politicians who have been there, who have had the experience, who can then say, you know what? These kids aren't dumb; this is not a question of potential. This is a

question of undermining students' potential. And when we have that leadership, it's from the outside, I think, that ultimately changes are necessary in the system, so that we can make this change without people working 18 hours a day.

One last point just on the two years, as a very practical matter, I have been in these rooms with college seniors of all academic majors, high achievers. And they're 21, they're 22, and two years feels like the rest of their lives. That's where they are in life. And we say, can we get a one-year commitment for you to do this? And all the hands go up. Can we get a two-year? A few hands go up. We say, can we get a three-year commitment? And all the hands go down. I'm not saying that that's right, but I'm saying that is how 21-year-olds are thinking about their career, who are thinking, what do I want to do? And so getting people in the door, in my mind, is so valuable and so worth it.

And, again, I work with hundreds of people whose career paths were changed forever because of this experience; many of whom, to this day, are obsessed with the achievement gap, and they would have been lawyers who weren't obsessed with the achievement gap, or doctors who were not opening the medical clinic in inner-city Baltimore, because when she was teaching, she was thinking, my gosh, my kids are hungry and they're sick. That's what's going on here, so I am still going to go to medical school, but when I'm done, I'm going to fix some of those systemic problems that are leading to this problem in the first place.

And I understand the concern with the two-year commitment. I think our program, for our purposes, is a bet we make that is the right bet. And pulling those people in is very, very important.

MS. CHAIT: I think we have time for one more question.

MS. ROBINSON: Can I make one comment? I do want to say that benefiting from the commitment of these young people to education and the services of students who probably would have worse, by far. To me, I have to recognize the reality. Cindy reminds me of this all the time. A Teach for America recruit is a great improvement over a permanent sub without a bachelor's degree. That is night and day. What I think we have to think about now is how do we really get the most out of this? And I don't believe it's by claiming that on the first day, they can do what a five year veteran could do.

I think you get the most out of it by leveraging their passion for the agenda and helping us change the conditions that they find as a recruit for those students forever, so that these poor children are not destined then to have just Teach for America recruits, because, you see, some people think that's the answer for these poor kids. That is not the answer.

And I think that we have to be really careful. It makes the difference between advocating for the support of the program and how we represent it. The answer is to create schools where Teach for America recruits work side-by-side with really veteran

folks, and the Teach for America person, as well as these residency candidates, are really a value added. They really represent a part of the answer, rather than a stop-gap measure.

So I really want to see us take all of these innovations and find a way to put them into the systemic solution, just talk about that. That's the challenge now, so that we really get the biggest payoff for the investment in innovation, which is probably not going to become systemic. It's not going to become the way we do it. So the way you get anything out of it at all is how you change the system. That's the question we have right now, so that we're really trying to change – five years from now, we should be having a different conversation.

MR. FARR: I don't disagree with any of that. And I would just add to your list of things that need to happen, not only do we need to make this sustainable, but – I'm not saying this isn't happening. Great principals, as you suggest, are so important. And great principals are fighting to keep people and they are changing people's mind, and they are giving the context in which you're supported, and that makes all the difference. So I agree.

I think our organization is one that – again, we're focused on the achievement gap, and if we could get it done, we would be out of business and so happy. (Laughs.) But this problem is such an affront to our ideals as a country. Here we are at the Center for American Progress, and I just can't imagine that we still have this system in a world where we talk about equal opportunity, and education is the key factor. And yet the education our students get, based on the color of their skin and economic factors, is wildly different. It's just wildly different and it shapes the rest of their lives.

MS. CHAIT: I don't think we could end on a better note than with that challenge to address the achievement gap and to put all these innovations into our systemic solutions. Thank you. (Applause.)

(END)