

# LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCES OF NOVICE URBAN TEACHERS

## TEACHER EDUCATION AND INDUCTION PROGRAM FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE EFFECTIVENESS

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### Overview

- ◆ In 2018 we began conducting research to explore novice teachers' personal experiences in trying to impact student learning and development.
- ◆ This research uses Critical Incident methodology to build a composite picture of the factors in educator preparation programs and in school systems these teachers feel helped or hindered their success at impacting student learning and development.
- ◆ The intent is to annually collect data from GSU graduates who have completed their first or second year of teaching, focusing each year on teachers hired by 1-2 Metro-Atlanta school districts.



### Participants

- ◆ 15 in District A and 9 in District B
- ◆ Had completed one to two years of teaching
- ◆ 12 different areas of certification.

### Data Collection

- ◆ 45-60 minute interviews
- ◆ Focus on (a) narratives of critical incidents where graduates worked to impact student learning and development and (b) descriptions of factors that helped or hindered their ability to do so.

### Critical Incident Technique

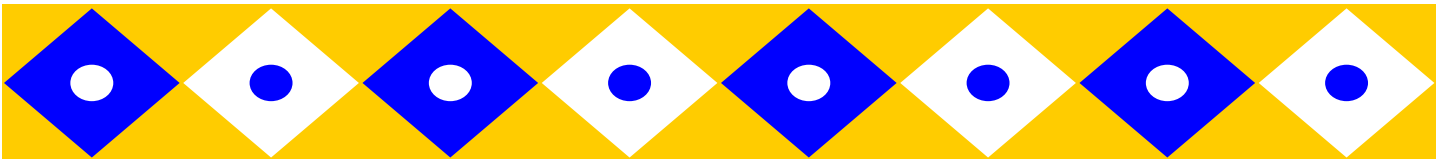
- ◆ Based on Butterfield, Borgen, Maglio, and Amundson's (2009) description of the Critical Incident Technique first developed by Flanagan (1954).
- ◆ Uses participants' lived experiences to draw insights into real world problems
- ◆ Interview data with multiple individuals are used to create a set of Critical Incidents which can describe and clarify contributing factors impacting performance

## FACTORS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE



### Modeling

- ◆ Seeing effective instruction modeled by others was identified by graduates as being helpful to their own success and when such modeling was not available novice teachers underscored the absence as negatively impacting their work. Candidates noted the value of faculty who modeled specific approaches (literature circles, CRP, community building, open discussions, building rapport), the importance of observing high quality teachers (both in student teaching and during their first years), and learning from co-teachers (inclusion teachers and general education teachers).



## Support or Lack of Support

- ◆ Graduates also attributed their successful experiences to the support they received from faculty/supervisors during the program and from the program cohort/peers. Support in the form of feedback on teaching, assistance with planning were cited as helpful during the first two years in the field. Faculty and peers from the cohort continued to work with new teachers and provide this support. In addition, the new teachers attributed their effectiveness to support from school administrators, mentors, co-teachers in inclusion settings, other teachers in the school, coaches, and behavior interventionists.
- ◆ The most frequently mentioned factor described as hindering graduates' ability to impact learning and development was, conversely, a lack of support from the district or school personnel during their first year(s). When mentors or administrators failed to provide valuable feedback, when EIP teachers were pulled for other duties and not available to provide services to students, when mentors, administrators, or counselors failed to provide information or resources, these new teachers felt their ability to be effective was negatively affected.
- ◆ Professional development offered by the district, seemed most effective when focused on a particular area over a span of time. Candidates found weekly sessions on behavior/classroom management or crisis intervention, endorsements leading to new credentials, and in-depth training on phonics/reading to be beneficial.

## Program Content

- ◆ Content from programs that graduates found to be helpful in their first year included Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, classroom management and community building, building relationships with students and how to advocate for students. Specific math and literacy content (anticipatory frameworks, direct instruction, literature circles), assessment, how to organize small group instruction were also underscored in critical incidents where graduates impacted students positively. Other helpful factors were learning how to critically reflect, edTPA (for planning / context of learning and how to link assessment/instruction), and how to diversify instruction.
- ◆ When describing factors that hindered their effectiveness, the new teachers felt they needed additional practical strategies for reading instruction, for teaching grammar, and for teaching special education learners, more classroom management techniques, more knowledge and experience with co-teaching and RTI, additional focus on legal issues and special education, and increased information on how to teach to the standards.

## School Context

- ◆ When school context was mentioned by the new teachers, the factor was cited as hindering their effectiveness. Among the contextual elements that inhibited their effectiveness, graduates most frequently discussed (a) the lack of respect of special education inclusion teachers which led to their being pulled out of their classrooms to substitute for others or to monitor tests, (b) school cultures which were restrictive, (c) an overemphasis on testing, and (d) lack of resources.
- ◆ Positive school context factors cited as helping new teachers focused on a climate of collaboration.