



# Valuing Voices: community input on the creation of an urban teacher preparation program

---

Beth R. Giles, PhD

UW System Institute for Urban Education

[brgiles@education.wisc.edu](mailto:brgiles@education.wisc.edu)



# History of the Program

---

- Phase I Goal: to give University system students a chance to blend theory and practice by teaching in the Lakeside School District which is a large urban district.

A stylized black silhouette of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights, set against a white background. The skyline is partially enclosed by a dark teal circular shape on the left and a white semi-circular arc on the right. Below the skyline, there are two overlapping circles: a larger dark teal one on the left and a smaller light teal one on the right.


# Stakeholders

---

The University System

Lakeside Public Schools

Community Organizations

A stylized graphic of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights, rendered in black and white. The buildings are set against a dark teal circular background that overlaps the top-left corner of the slide. The title text is positioned to the right of this graphic.

# Working Toward an Effective Partnership - Equal Status (Seidl)

---

- Barbara Seidl (2002), on her program's partnership with an urban community. She writes, "We have also attempted to avoid the traditional authoritative stance universities occupy in such partnerships and the damaging and exploitive effects universities, and particularly, research institutions, have on culturally diverse communities" (p. 423).



# Working Toward an Effective Partnership - Equal Status (Seidl)

---

- “It is amazing to me that so many adults work so hard to create an environment in the school that is effective. The purpose of such commitment is to raise confident, able African American children. This is their life. With racism active in society, with the rebellious acts of African American children, with schools that continually and unconsciously pass down hegemony of discrimination, it seems only natural that the members of Mt. Olivet band together to create a place to conflict these social realities. Unfortunately, Mt. Olivet is the only place I’ve seen such unified dedication”.



# Common Ground

---

- Villegas and Lucas (2002) “one goal that is often present in the use of various instructional strategies in teacher education courses is to expand the sociocultural consciousness of prospective teachers, to help them understand that ‘one’s world view is not universal but is profoundly influenced by a variety of factors, chief among them race/ethnicity, social class and gender” (p. 27).

The logo features a black silhouette of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights and a large, thin, curved line arching over the buildings. This logo is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping a large teal circle that is also on the left. The title 'Common Ground' is centered at the top in a teal, sans-serif font, with a thin horizontal line extending from the right side of the title across the slide.

# Common Ground

We need to support these students as they go into the student teaching semester

- ❑ Letting students and cooperating teachers understand the group effort involved.
- ❑ Speakers to the seminar
- ❑ Creating a safe environment
- ❑ Creating a realistic picture

A stylized black silhouette of a city skyline with various buildings and a large archway, set against a teal circular background on the left side of the slide.

# Common Ground

---

## Community involvement

- Barbara Seidl (2002), “learn about a range of cultural experiences and norms within a specific community and begin to situate education within an understanding of the goals and expectations the community has for the children and for education” (p. 170). She continues, “Culture within this understanding is not something one reads about but something that can be witnessed, lived and learned” (p. 170).

A stylized black silhouette of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights and a large, thin, curved line arching over them. This logo is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping a large teal circle.

# Common Ground

---

## Effective urban education

- ❑ discussions and enactments of culturally relevant teaching
- ❑ relevant readings and discussions to connect theory to practice



# Continuing Discussions

---

## Growth of the Program

### UW Program desires

- ❑ Secondary English
- ❑ Physical Education

**VS**

### MPS Hiring Needs

- ❑ Secondary Math and Science



# Continuing Discussions

---

## Curriculum Strategies

- ❑ Direct Instruction
- ❑ K-8 schools

## Placement Logistics

- ❑ Schools with different structures
  - ❑ sage classrooms

A stylized black silhouette of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights and a large archway on the right. The logo is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping a teal circular graphic.

# Continuing Discussion

---

## Selection of Preservice Teachers Who Engage in This Opportunity

- What are their reasons for being here?
- How should we select our students?



# Blending Thoughts and Ideas

---

## Making The Participants Feel Valued

- Providing accessible opportunities for input
  - Not just on campuses, but in communities
- Enacting suggestions on a smaller scale
  - Inviting speakers to seminar
  - Using a combination of placements

A stylized black silhouette of a city skyline with several buildings of varying heights, set against a white background. The skyline is partially enclosed by a dark teal semi-circle on the left and a white semi-circle on the right, which together form a larger teal circle on the left side of the slide.

# Blending Thoughts and Ideas

---

Making The Participants Feel Valued

- Honor thoughts and requests
- Committee Based Decision Making
- Continued Evaluation of the Program



# Blending Thoughts and Ideas

---

Why has this *partnership* worked?

- Communicate, communicate, communicate
  - Also reward those who contribute
- Honor those who know the community best
  - Value them
  - Invite them
  - Take suggestions and respond to them (yes or no, let them know)



# Blending Thoughts and Ideas

---

- Equal status relationships (Seidl, 2002)
  - Where you hold meetings
  - Answer invitations – be visible
- Be true to who your students are and what they need
  - Race – handling differences
  - Classroom management – boring but necessary
  - INSPIRE THEM