

Cornerstone University Steering Committee
AGENDA

November 5, 2024

**Attendees: Kim Hofstra, Dan Bartels, Laurie Burgess, Scott Haid, Pam Thomas,
Meggan Willink, Todd Tolsma, Timothy Mabin, Matt Wallace**

Absent: Janorise Robinson

I. Welcome/Introductions

II. Cornerstone University Updates

A. Push for more on-line course content/certification - One of the ways CU is trying to keep numbers high is through the online program. Primarily have a lot of the online classes in the Business department. We are considering putting more classes online for teacher education and would like some input on that. Todd - Depends on the individual and what they bring to the table. Megan - Teacher shortage has been unique, so anything to bring in more teachers we should be open to that. Open to promoting more teachers. Pam - Depends on how thoughtful you are about the approach and how intentional. Online or not is not the issue, it is the creative and thoughtfulness in a hybrid situation. May give students more ability to be in the schools instead of the classroom. Kim - how to handle the logistics regarding supervision. Scott - I understand the idea of trying to offer more online options. However, face to face interaction with people is vital to the learning process. Wondering if the online program serves the students well. Kim - It can affect communication, flexibility, active coaching can occur in real time (i.e. dress, classroom etiquette, etc.) Laurie - Another consideration is that the generation entering college, called the "Anxious Generation". Some of the reason for that is they have not had enough face to face interaction. Doing online classes will hinder them from learning these in-person skills. Todd - The flexibility could open opportunities for students who are in other professions now an opportunity to make a career transition. Tim - Is the online to be totally online or the hybrid to serve the non-traditional student or traditional student? Kim - it is more for the non-traditional student. The problem we are running into is the core classes they need tend to be ones taught on campus only. Tim - I see that being successful for changing careers or people looking for upper mobility in education such as paraprofessionals or aides or what have you. It is difficult to imagine the 18-20 year olds benefiting from online learning compared to traditional classroom learning. To produce high quality educators, it seems mostly the education classes should be face to face. We look for people

with heart and dedication at Ottawa, the other things can be taught. I am concerned that not having face to face you would be able to produce those things.

B. Purpose of TAP/EC/LD/ST interviews

1. Provide guidelines?
2. Usefulness?
3. Other suggestions?

We currently have students contact the cooperating teacher.

Laurie - Coordinator for the teaching assistant practicum. I meet with the students to let them know which way the meeting could go. Sometimes it is like an interview and sometimes not. Dan - It would be helpful to have some kind of contact from the teacher to give expectations and purpose of the meeting, which generally is showing the student around the classroom and showing them the ropes like a meet and greet. Kim - We are questioning the usefulness of it and do we treat it more as a meet and greet. Megan - said your current process has been pretty great. You are preparing the pre-service teachers for engaging with the students. Laurie - I think Kristin Rich is pretty mindful of raising red flags and communicating what the cooperating teacher is going to encounter with the student. Pam - I think CU needs to decide what needs to be communicated and then communicate it to the student. Giving clarity to both sides would be very helpful. Dan - Truthfully, a red flag is probably going to come up in a meet and greet, so an interview might not be necessary anyway.

- C. At-Risk/Paraprofessional training - Kim - is there a need or is that something you would ever want paraprofessionals as at-risk/paraprofessionals that did not have the in-person learning. Would extra training be necessary? Especially with literacy in the elementary. Megan - Private school is a little bit different. We provide a lot of the training needed. Where the rubber meets the road is that, do they know how to meet the students' needs? Pam - When you think about that, sometimes we put our students with the most challenges with the people who might be the least trained. I think there is a definite need for that training or to switch the model. I think there is a definite need for more training, but does that happen at the college level or the district level? Scott - Are you thinking this would be a 4-year program? Kim - MDE said there is no certification for paraprofessionals. It doesn't mean that we could come up with something, however, if there was enough interest in

more training for paraprofessionals. Scott - Parapro are not very high paying jobs, so we have tiers to determine which students stay with the teacher and which ones work with the parapro for extra help and these parapro are the ones with the least training. Kim - More and more schools are realizing that there is more of a need for training. Tim - At the end of the day, parapro positions are like \$16-21 per hour. We would have a difficult time to get these people to pay for education to continue in that pay. Megan - They have a parapro that they will not hire as an educator until she starts the process from the beginning. There doesn't seem to be a lot on the college level to get certified without starting their education from the beginning. Matt - who are advertising to? Online makes more sense for older adults to get education because of flexibility. Megan - It seems like there is definitely a need for current educators who are not certified who are great teachers, but can't get a teaching position because of the lack of certification. Dan - Tryin to reflect back on the last several years at Excel and we haven't had scenarios where the parapro are in need of getting certified. They tend to either already have their certification and don't want the pressure of being a full-time teacher, or just like the role. Megan - We have several staff in this situation. Matt - We need to look at the competition to determine how we structure a program that would attract students. Scott - Are you familiar with the WM Teacher collaborative? It might be another source of competition. It looks like the students are getting paid while they get their certification. Tim - Grand Rapids is working with that as well.

- D. TESOL needs for schools - Kim - We understand that MDE is requiring more TESOL training for current teachers. We do offer an online ESL endorsement and MA in TESOL if you are looking for something. Scott - We have not been prepared for the influx of students. It can be a real strain on the system with a lot of need and few staff with the expertise to teach.

III. News from the districts -

- A. Essential Practices: Pam - we have really been digging into the Essentials (Literacy and math and organizational practices). Our teachers have found that very helpful. Grateful Michigan has that and wonder how we might use that more. I wonder what it might look like in exploring that in the secondary level. It is through MASA (all of the ISDs that have come together). Laurie - How closely aligned is that with the core teaching practices. Pam - it is very aligned. It is research-based. Scott - We won't

deviate from it. We look at programs and compare them to best practices. We like to say if it is not founded or grounded in research then we are not doing it. You have to have something to align it to. Kim - I know that the Essentials is something that we are using with our early literacy source, but I wasn't aware that we have one for math. Scott - for secondary they are looking very closely at multidisciplinary standards. Laurie - It may be helpful to find out from Gina at MDE about the standards we get from MDE for certification. I wonder how this fits into what MDE is expecting. MDE wanted us to determine what are the best practices, the high leverage practices. We had to determine the top 5. Scott - said they have one that is called Language and Literacy for Little Ones. Pam - they have videos that show them what needs to happen in the classroom.

- B. Parent Communication: Dan - Something I have noticed is lack of ability to adjust to better interaction with parents. There is a struggle with this generation to get teachers to communicate with the parents face to face instead of through text or email. Kim - We are working with our students on this.
- C. LETRS training: Pam - Our teachers have access to Letters training for free. There has been so much evidence this is successful. The teachers are finding this so valuable in helping students learn to read. Kim - Pam George going through that training right now. It is very intensive in terms of the amount of time. Pam - Our teachers were taking that on their own time and they were so committed to the value it is adding to what they are doing in the classroom.
- D. Dyslexia: Scott - One of the things that we are really going to be taxed with are dyslexia. Whatever your views are on this, we are going to have to deal with it. We are going to have to start testing for it. We have gotten very good at diagnosing, however, the real-time decisions the teachers are making, we are not sure what to do. It is the teacher saying, "Here is the diagnosis and here's what to do," when they don't know what they are doing. If there is a way, similar to Letters, to have different pathways for students to get the help they need based on the issue they are encountering.
- E. Trauma informed teaching: Dan - I think the pendulum swings back and forth, but I sense that our newer teachers want to respond in a good way to students with trauma on how to meet them in their need, but we are struggling with the boundaries about establishing rules in the classroom in spite of the issues the student is dealing with. Students coming from trauma need boundaries and thrive in an environment that is highly

structured and consistent. More and more we need to rally teachers to encourage them that they can do it.

IV. Open Discussion

Pam - There is a book called Collapse of Parenting and it really helps understand how parents put pressure on their kids to be the best.