SELECTED URBAN TEACHER EDUCATORS' CONCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR: WHAT THEY TEACH AND WHY

by

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A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of George Mason University in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Education

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Selected Urban Teacher Educators’ Conceptions of Academic Achievement for Students of Color: What They Teach and Why

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Dedication

This is dedicated to all of the “other mothers” that have stood in the gap for me; the people of color, whose shoulders I stand upon. Thank you God for choosing me to do your work. Philippians 1:6 And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.
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Abstract

SELECTED URBAN TEACHER EDUCATORS’ CONCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR: WHAT THEY TEACH AND WHY

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George Mason University, 2016

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By 2035 students of color, specifically Blacks and Hispanics, are predicted to be the majority of students in U.S. schools, and by 2050, they will represent 62% of the public school population (NCES, 2014). Teacher preparation programs are challenged by policymakers to demonstrate that they are preparing teachers to positively impact K-12 student academic achievement, and close the opportunity and achievement gaps.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how teacher educators at three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs, (1) a traditional university-based program; (2) an urban residency program; and (3) an alternate provider of urban teacher education programs, define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features.

The significance of this study is that it provides insight into how teacher preparation programs are designed and delivered to address the challenges of teaching students of color, and how they identify and define academic achievement. This study
demonstrates that there is a lack of coherence in urban teacher preparation programs, specifically, with how academic achievement is defined. If the focus of policy, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (2016) and Every Student Succeed Act (2016), is on student achievement as the primary measure of teacher education program success, then coherence in the definition and representation within teacher preparation programs is sorely needed. This study provides implications for programs to and their future practice to increase the coherency in teacher preparation programs, with a suggested coherency framework for teacher preparation programs.
Chapter One

Statement of Problem

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2014), by 2035 students of color, specifically Blacks and Hispanics, are predicted to be the majority of students in U.S. schools, and by 2050, they will represent 62% of the public school population. More immediately, as of 2014, for the first time, the majority of students entering kindergarten were students of color (NCES, 2014). As diversity continues to increase in the United States and in K-12 classrooms, students of color continue to perform below their White counterparts on standardized tests in terms of overall academic achievement. Further, these differences appear in graduation rates where 69% of Blacks and 73% of Hispanic students graduate from high school as compared to 86% of White students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

Although Black and Hispanic students continue to perform at lower than their White counterparts, the gaps between each of these underrepresented groups and White students have narrowed. According to the data in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), this narrowing of the White-Black and White-Hispanic score gaps in reading and mathematics since the 1970s is the result of larger gains in test scores by Black and Hispanic students in comparison to White students. Only the White-Hispanic
gap in mathematics at age nine has not shown a significant change from the early 1970’s (NAEP, 2013).

Even though these statistics highlight the achievement gaps that exist between students of color and their White counterparts, they do not illustrate the systemic issues that have contributed to the achievement gaps. The gaps in academic achievement between students of color and their White counterparts are the results of the opportunity gaps inside and outside schools. Howard (2010) defines opportunity gap as:

…as an unequal access to key educational resources, including highly qualified teachers and curriculum. This gap does not focus on the function of race in determining the gap. Scholars argue that the resource allocation and the social and political context of education and schooling in the U.S. contribute to the achievement gap (p. 31).

The opportunity gap extends the argument beyond just students not performing well on standardized test or graduating from high school, but the lack of opportunities that historically have not been provided for students of color to achieve. Researchers and policymakers argue that students of color, specifically high poverty students, do not consistently have access to high-quality teaching. Their teachers tend to be novices (Akiba, LeTendre & Scribner, 2007; Ascher & Fruchter, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2000; Peske & Haycock, 2006), unlicensed (Akiba et al., 2007; Ascher & Fruchter, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Shen, Mansberger, & Yang, 2004), out-of-field, i.e. those without a major in the subject that they teach, (Akiba et al., 2007; Jerald & Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll, 1999), and/or teachers with low SAT or ACT scores (Akiba et al., 2007; Shen et al., 2004). Darling Hammond (2006) argues that unequal
access to qualified teachers and resources are likely to contribute to the long lasting achievement gaps in the United States.

**Importance of High Quality Teachers for Students of Color**

Students who struggle to achieve academically are taught in mostly rural and urban high poverty schools, where the opportunity and achievement gaps are the greatest. Darling-Hammond (2008) attests to this when she writes:

Many schools serving the most vulnerable students have been staffed by a steady parade of untrained, inexperienced, and temporary teachers, and studies show that these teachers’ lack of training and experience significantly accounts for students’ higher failure rates on high-stakes tests (p. 731).

High-poverty and minority students are twice as likely as low-poverty and majority students to be assigned novice teachers who are new to the profession (Akiba, LeTendre & Scribner, 2007; Ascher & Fruchter, 2001: National Center for Education Statistics, 2000; Peske & Haycock, 2006). Darling-Hammond further illustrated the importance of highly qualified teachers in every classroom, especially in urban and rural areas, when she emphasized that teachers are one of the most important in-school factors that contributes to the improvement of student academic achievement. Unequal access to high-quality teachers is a part of a larger issue of differential access to education based on socioeconomic, racial, or other attributes, all of which highlight the opportunity gaps (Akiba et al.).

Researchers indicate that teachers are the most important factor to improving student achievement. Hattie (2009) pushes the argument that not only are teachers the
most important entity to academic achievement, but what they do matters. Hattie agrees with Darling-Hammond (2008) that high quality teaching is most important in low socioeconomic schools, which suggests that the prevalence of teacher quality is more uneven in low socioeconomic schools than in high socioeconomic schools. If teachers are the most important aspect of student academic achievement, and are expected to close achievement gaps, then it is incumbent upon teacher education programs to help them understand what academic achievement means, how it is implicated in their teaching, and what that means to their instructional practices.

**Definition of Academic Achievement**

Today’s public school teachers at all grade levels are held accountable for focusing on their student’s academic achievement. However, many teachers have different understandings of existing discourses used to frame student’s acquisition of school-centered knowledge and skills (Brown & Goldstein, 2013). The first understanding, teachers draw on is a student-centered, developmentally oriented discourse that focuses on the development, advancement and improvement of students (Brown & Goldstein). This form of academic achievement focuses on the *academic progress* of students (Bredekamp, 1986; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). The second understanding of academic achievement is standards-based, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) driven state policies that expect students to master content standards set for their grade level within an academic year (Brown & Goldstein). This form of achievement focuses on the *academic success* of
students (United States Department of Education 2002). With different understandings and definitions of academic achievement, it is important to understand which definition teachers are exposed to in their teacher preparation programs, and most importantly, what definition of academic achievement teachers are exposed to that will teach students of color.

With the passage of NCLB, teachers who teach underperforming students of color on standardized assessments (one measure of academic success) are told what and how to teach (Gutierrez, Asato, Zavala, Pacheco & Olson, 2003). Because assessment has become as integral to education as instruction has always been, there is now a need to understand how teacher educators, and specifically urban teacher educators, define academic achievement for students of color. Understanding how achievement is defined in the coursework of preservice teachers who intend to teach students of color is important because they are expected to close achievement gaps once they enter the classroom. Closing the achievement gaps through standardized test scores was an expectation of school systems. With the passing of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2016), states will have the opportunity to decide revise their teacher evaluation system that links teachers to student academic achievement. Although states will have the opportunity to make decisions about teacher evaluations, ESSA requires that states incorporate both academic factors (test scores and graduation rates) and factors of school quality (Every Student Succeeds Act). ESSA also keeps in place the NCLB law’s requirement that schools test 95% of students, for the whole school and for subgroups of
students. Initially, as teachers are held accountable to some extent for student academic achievement, President Obama’s administration has also proposed an expectation of teacher preparation programs, be they traditional, alternative, and residency programs, as will be discussed below.

**Overview of Teacher Preparation Programs**

There are currently three distinct pathways to a teaching license: (1) the traditional university-based route; (2) non-university-based alternate routes; and (3) urban residency programs.

**University-based route.** Traditional teacher preparation programs are typically university-based four-year undergraduate or five-year or graduate programs culminating either in a BS/BA degree, a teacher licensure, and even a Master’s degree in the case of the five-year programs (Andrew, 1990; Boser & Davis Wiley, 1988; Dial & Stevens, 1993; Wilson & Tamir, 2009). Traditional undergraduate teacher preparation programs provide preservice liberal arts subject matter and professional education at a university and/or college. These programs focus on pedagogical education and guided practical experience before entering the classroom (Stoddart & Floden, 1995). Traditional graduate-level teacher preparation programs extend beyond four-year programs to five or six year programs (Stoddart & Floden). The typical five-year program is an integrated, undergraduate and graduate program for elementary and secondary teachers that can culminate in both licensure and a Master’s degree.
**Alternate route.** In contrast, alternative teacher preparation programs are defined as programs that allow persons to enter the teaching profession by earning a standard license or teacher certificate without completing a traditional four or five year university-based program (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Stoddart & Floden, 1995). Two of the most notable programs are Teach for America and The New Teacher Project, which admit college graduates into truncated summer programs as their professional education sequences. Such alternative teacher preparation programs are sometimes described as “fast-track” programs to teaching, meaning reducing the time required to meet teacher certification requirements (Boser & Davis Wiley, 1988).

**Urban residency route.** The third pathway is relatively new. It is the “urban residency” program. Teacher residency programs are district-based teacher preparation programs that pair master’s level education content with a rigorous full-year classroom practicum (National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2015). Some are offered by universities, and some are freestanding entities, e.g. the Boston Teacher Residency program that are approved by their states to offer teacher licensure programs.

These three pathways are the focus of this study, and how purposefully selected examples of them address the academic achievement of students of color.

**Accountability and Teacher Preparation**

To illustrate the increasing emphasis on accountability in education in general, and in teacher education specifically, President Obama’s administration proposed a key indicator of teacher education quality in its *Teacher Education Reform and Improvement*
initiative (TERI) (USED, 2015). Under this proposal, the states would have had to report
annually on the performance of their graduates in terms of their pupils’ student-learning
outcomes. TERI advocated for the evaluation of teacher preparation programs in three
outcome categories: 1) the achievement of K-12 students taught by preparation program
graduates, 2) the job placement retention rates of programs, 3) surveys of program
graduates and their principals (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; USED). These
regulations would have required that school districts and states report on the aggregate
learning outcomes of K-12 students taught by graduates of each preparation program. In
doing so, they would have had to use multiple measures of student academic achievement
to ascertain growth (USED, 2011), with the dominant metric being standardized test
scores. Teacher preparation programs would have been required to report where each
graduate was hired into a teaching position, with particular attention to shortage areas.
Each teacher preparation program would also have had to report on teacher retention, i.e.,
how long the teacher remained at the school in a teaching position. Beyond the
standardized test scores, the regulations would have also employed a qualitative
component by requiring surveys from the program graduates and the principals who hired
them. The surveys would focus on the preparedness of teachers in the first year of
teaching. The proposed regulation would refocus institutional data reporting, already
required under the Higher Education Act (HEA), on meaningful data at the program
level, from inputs of programs to outcomes for students. With the 2016 passage of the
Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the spirit of TERI was devolved to the states and
territories, and is therefore moot. ESSA (2016), like No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (2001) is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), which established the American federal government’s expanded role in funding public education. However, as each state takes up policies toward implementing ESSA, some states may seek to link teacher education to student achievement, for example as Louisiana is doing, and others may not. Regardless, student achievement and accountability are now central concepts in education and how they are represented to aspiring teachers remains an area lacking in research analysis.

The effectiveness of the new teachers in urban classrooms directly implicates the narrowing of achievement gaps, and thus the importance of effectively preparing preservice teachers to teach low performing students of color towards improving their academic achievement. While she may not have envisioned this form of accountability, Darling-Hammond (2008) notes, “We owe it to all of our children to give them well-qualified teachers every single year they are in school, and we owe it to our urban school systems to help them build a strong and stable teaching force” (p. 733), which speaks to the centrality of teacher quality in low-performing schools. As such, teacher preparation programs are being challenged by stakeholders and policymakers to demonstrate that they are preparing preservice teachers to positively impact K-12 student academic achievement, narrow, and eventually close, the achievement gaps. In an effort to address this issue using a policy approach, President Obama’s administration, believed it was
strengthening teacher preparation programs by holding teacher preparation programs accountable for producing effective teachers by year 2020 (USED, 2011).

Effective teachers are often defined as those who can produce one year’s growth in one year’s time, on standardized tests of academic content (Henry, Kershaw, Zulli, & Smith, 2012). The Teacher Education and Reform Improvement initiative would have also used standardized test scores to determine teacher preparation programs effectiveness, along with job placement, teacher retention, and teacher and principal surveys (USED, 2011), and some states might still use them, it is too early in the rule-writing for ESSA to know definitively. Furthermore, standardized tests are not the primary focus of every teacher preparation program (Henry et al.). The issue of linking teacher preparation programs to pupils’ standardized test scores is even more challenging for teacher preparation programs because the program cannot easily predict the nature of the students any particular graduate will teach. The challenge then is to prepare teachers for students of color in urban areas, many of whom are already performing lower than their White counterparts. The Teacher Education and Reform Initiative argued that it could lead to more teachers who are better prepared to educate low performing students of color (USED). It also placed teacher preparation programs, like K-12 schools, in the accountability era of expecting and documenting impacts on student academic achievement. However, it must be noted here that a precise equation for linking student academic achievement on standardized tests to the preparation program from which the
teacher graduated is yet to be developed, and for which the administration has yet to provide a solution.

**Linking Teacher Preparation to Student Achievement**

Regardless of the status of TERI in light of ESSA, researchers have examined which features of teacher preparation programs prepare teachers to improve student academic achievement. Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli and Wyckoff (2006) found that the field lacked a common database that includes information at the program level about candidate selection, program requirements, the schools in which teachers are placed, faculty characteristics, and content about each course. This finding caused Boyd et al. (2006) to continue this work in 2009. Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2009) found three variations across New York City teacher education. They reported that teacher preparation programs that focus on the work of the classroom, and provide opportunities for teachers to study what they will be doing as first year teachers, on average, were the most effective. Boyd et al. (2009) also found that teachers who had the opportunity in their teacher preparation programs to engage in the practices of teaching and more methods-related courses were most effective in their first year of teaching.

Harris and Sass (2011), building on the work of Boyd et al. (2006), focused their research on inputs of teacher preparation programs and district opportunities that contribute to student academic achievement. They found that elementary and middle school teachers’ productivity increased through hands-on experiences while studying to
become teachers. They also reported that formal training while teaching, i.e., earning a license “on the job,” did not enhance the teachers’ abilities to improve student academic achievement. They found almost no evidence that specific undergraduate coursework in education affects an individual’s later productivity as a teacher.

As the researchers above indicated, “hands-on, practice based programs” that prepared urban teachers had improved standardized test scores (Boyd, et al., 2006; Boyd, et al., 2009). Both groups of researchers defined student academic achievement according to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); however, both groups of authors also expressed caution regarding the over-reliance on standardized test scores as the sole determining factor for understanding student academic achievement. Levin (2012) also argues that focusing on standardized test scores only to determine student achievement does not meet the economic, social, and political needs of society. With these concerns acknowledged, and yet with the drive toward using test scores to assess the quality of teacher preparation programs, it becomes important to understand how three different types of teacher preparation programs: traditional, alternative route, and an urban residency teach and represent academic achievement for students of color. My proposed study will give teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs the opportunity to express how they define academic achievement for students of color, along with how they enact their conception of student academic achievement in their programs, via coursework and/or hands on experiences.

**Proposed Study**
Like Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009), I plan to focus on teacher educators at three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. In a similar study to the one proposed, Timisina (2014) conducted a qualitative study at a New England institution that focused on how they prepare teachers to teach low performing students effectively, what obstacles the faculty faced in the teacher preparation process, and the areas of improvement. Timisina found that the faculty strongly believed that “good” teachers should be able to teach all students, even low performing students. The faculty indicated that they effectively engaged their student teachers in examining issues related to prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, race poverty, gender, social class, ethnicity, and how to examine their biases and privileges related to their subject. Timisina provided no explanation of how the teacher preparation programs defined or represented student achievement for low performing students. With so much focus placed on the use of quantitative studies that link student academic achievement to teacher preparation programs, the voices of teacher educators are absent, yet they remain powerful in the education of a teacher.

Qualitative methods provide the opportunity for researchers to understand how people do things, how they interpret the things that they do or experience, and how they interact with and experience their world (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative research is an interpretive, naturalistic approach to understanding human behavior, their context, thinking, feelings, emotions, perceptions, experiences and reflections on a specific
situation or phenomena (Biggerstaff, 2012). Conducting a qualitative study would provide an opportunity for teacher educators of teacher preparation programs to explain their specific teaching practices and reflections on academic achievement for students of color, based on the context of their program, along with the features of the program that contribute to student outcomes. There is much of attention on improving the achievement of low performing students of color, so focusing on teacher preparation programs that are attempting to address these issues, is pertinent at this time.

**Research Questions**

In order to examine this important topic that forms at the intersection of policy and practice, this study explored the following research questions:

1. In what ways do teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color?

2. How do teacher educators define and describe the programmatic features of their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) as effective in improving students of color academic achievement?
Chapter Two

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to examine how teacher educators at three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features.

Achievement vs. Opportunity Gap

In order to completely define and understand academic achievement for students of color, it is imperative to understand the various gaps that can affect their academic performance. In the United States’ K-12 classrooms, students of color perform below their White counterparts on standardized tests in overall academic achievement. These differences appear in graduation rates where 69% of Blacks and 73% of Hispanic students graduate from high school as compared to 86% of White students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). The differences between the academic performance of students of color and their White counterparts are characterized as achievement gaps. Howard (2012) defines the achievement gap as, “the educational outcomes and access between student groups in the United States. African Americans,
Native Americans, and Hispanic students performing lower than Asian Americans and White Students” (p. 30).

Achievement gap is the expression used to describe the under-performance of students of color; however, many researchers have interrogated this term because it does not take into consideration the systemic issues that have contributed to achievement gaps. Horsford (2013) defines the achievement gap as a gap created by a failed system that was never structured for students of color to succeed. Horsford argues that the practices that have been implemented to address the comparative underperformance of students of color ignore the well-established education research literature on the structural factors that reproduce inequality and suffering. Many of the practices continue the cycle of inequity. Some of the structural factors that Horsford highlights are high stakes testing, evaluation of students and teachers, expansion of school choice through charter schools and vouchers, and the overhaul of bargaining agreements for teachers. She interrogates the language that is utilized to label students of color, such as “at risk,” and the “achievement gap,” as deficit language. She argues that the:

co-optation of the language of equality, access, equity and opportunity, poses an equal if not greater risk to both our nation and its students given its lack of attention to social contexts, culturally relevant leadership, and the role of community in education reform (Horsford, p. 10).

Darling Hammond (2006) adds to this argument that unequal access to qualified teachers and resources are likely to contribute to the long lasting achievement gaps in the United States. Horsford further asserts that these labels have negative connotations and the
words negatively impact teachers’ perceptions of students of color, their families, the communities they reside in, and the schools they populate.

Furthermore, Delpit (2012) adds to the conversation by highlighting that Black children, specifically, do not come into the world as inferior or innately incapable of achieving. To refute this argument, she highlights the work of French researcher, Marcelle Geber (1958), who discovered that Ugandan infants’ developmental rate was much higher than European babies. Frankenburg and Dodds (1960) as cited in Delpit (2012) achieved similar results in a separate study when they reported that Black American children as young as six months old developed significantly more quickly than White American infants. With this in mind, it can be argued that the achievement gap is created by the structure of society and the school systems.

The gaps in academic achievement between students of color and their White counterparts are the results of the opportunity gaps inside and outside schools. Howard (2012) defines opportunity gap as:

…as an unequal access to key educational resources, including highly qualified teachers and curriculum. This gap does not focus on the function of race in determining the gap. Scholars argue that the resource allocation and the social and political context of education and schooling in the U.S. contribute to the achievement gap (p. 31).

The opportunity gap extends the argument beyond just students not performing well on standardized tests or graduating from high school, but the lack of opportunities that historically have not been provided for students of color to achieve.
Researchers and policymakers argue that students of color, specifically high poverty students, do not consistently have access to high-quality teaching. Their teachers tend to be novices (Akiba, LeTendre & Scribner, 2007; Ascher & Frucht, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2000; Peske & Haycock, 2006), unlicensed (Akiba et al., 2007; Ascher & Frucht, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2004; Shen, Mansberger, & Yang, 2004), out-of-field, i.e. those without a major in the subject that they teach, (Akiba et al., 2007; Jerald & Ingersoll, 2002; Ingersoll, 1999), and/or teachers with low SAT or ACT scores (Akiba et al., 2007; Shen et al., 2004).

Delpit (2012) claims that the achievement gap is created because many poor African American students are not being taught, but given busy work. She cites examples of inadequate and non-engaging teaching in schools where students are completing worksheets, answering written questions, doing seatwork. Another reason she offers for why African American students are not excelling academically is that they have been affected by society’s deeply grained bias of equating blackness with inferiority. She further asserts that many scholars continue to attempt to demonstrate that African Americans are less intelligent than Whites. Delpit states, “There is probably no group of people in the world whose intellectual capacity and innate morality have been so maligned as African Americans” (p. 12). Delpit adds that African American students have consciously and/or unconsciously internalized the very stereotypes and inferiority that has been placed upon them. Delpit argues that an attempt to improve the achievement of African American students must take into consideration not just the academic issues but
the psychological trauma caused by living in a society in which black people are stigmatized daily. The final reason that Delpit proposes African American students are not achieving is the curriculum content that is taught in schools. She advocates for the curriculum to connect to their culture in a positive way. The achievement gap is a mix of deeply entrenched out-of-school factors and in-school factors that cannot be discussed without addressing the opportunity gap.

**Teacher quality and students of color.** Students who struggle to achieve academically and are the most vulnerable are taught in schools, where the opportunity and achievement gaps are the greatest. Darling-Hammond (2008) attests to this:

> Many schools serving the most vulnerable students have been staffed by a steady parade of untrained, inexperienced, and temporary teachers, and studies show that these teachers’ lack of training and experience significantly accounts for students’ higher failure rates on high-stakes tests (p. 731).

High-poverty and minority students are twice as likely as low-poverty and majority students to be assigned novice teachers who are new to the profession (Akiba, LeTendre & Scribner, 2007; Ascher & Fruchter, 2001; National Center for Education Statistics, 2000; Peske & Haycock, 2006). Research has shown that the most important factor in terms of student academic achievement is the teacher; there is a clear relationship between students’ learning and the quality of their teachers. A weak teacher can actually have a deleterious impact on learners (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2000b; Goodwin, Smith, Souto-Manning, Cheruvu, Ying-Tan, Reed, Taveras, 2014; Hattie, 2009). Darling-Hammond further illustrates the importance of highly
qualified teachers in every classroom, when she emphasizes that teachers are one of the most important in-school factors that contributes to the improvement of student academic achievement. Unequal access to high-quality teachers is a part of a larger issue of differential access to education based on socioeconomic, racial, or other attributes, all of which highlight the opportunity gaps (Akiba et al., 2007). Hattie agrees with Darling-Hammond that high quality teaching is most important in low socioeconomic schools, which suggests that the prevalence of teacher quality is more uneven in low socioeconomic schools than in high socioeconomic schools. If teachers are the most important aspect of student academic achievement, and are expected to close achievement gaps, then it is incumbent upon teacher education programs to help them understand what academic achievement means, how it is implicated in their teaching, and what that means to their instructional practices.

Understandings of Academic Achievement

Today’s public school teachers at all grade levels are held accountable for focusing on their student’s academic achievement. However, many teachers have different understandings of existing discourses used to frame student’s acquisition of school-centered knowledge and skills (Brown & Goldstein, 2013). The following sections are intended to capture some of the ambiguity regarding the definitions and understandings of academic achievement.

**Academic achievement: Academic progress.** The first form of academic achievement focuses on the *academic progress* of students (Bredekamp, 1986;
Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). In this interpretation, teachers draw on a student-centered,
developmentally oriented discourse that focuses on value-added growth, advancement
and improvement of students (Brown & Goldstein, 2013). In this perspective, a
demonstrated increase in knowledge and skill is considered evidence of student
achievement (Bredekamp, Brown & Goldstein). As measured by how students the skills
that students master individually, at their own rate and level.

**Academic achievement: Academic success.** The second form of academic
achievement is standards-based. It is the definition promulgated by the No Child Left
Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). It has driven state policies that expect students to master
academic content standards set for their grade level within an academic year (Brown &
Goldstein, 2013). This form of achievement focuses on the academic success of students
(United States Department of Education, 2002). Academic success is determined by on
students’ academic performance on a standardized test and graduation rates. Academic
success is the assertion that only mastery of the predetermined mandated content
standards are considered legitimate evidence for student achievement (U.S. Department
of Education, 2002). Standardized test and graduation rates are quantifiable and easily
measured.

**Critiques of academic achievement: Academic success.** Academic achievement
defined as academic success, has a heavy emphasis on standardized tests. Researchers
have lamented the concern that the overreliance on test scores for accountability purposes
can cause problems (Gordon Commission, 2012). Blastland and Dilnot (2009) argue that
our culture is fascinated with numbers, quantification and rankings. They claim that, “numbers provide the means for making sense of our vast and complicated world. But, they sounded a warning. While counting is easy, “life,” they explained, “is messier than a number” (p. 1). Blastland and Dilnot specify that although numbers are easily quantifiable, there is complexity behind the number. Berliner (2011) indicate that due to the emphasis on the passing of standardized tests, teachers teach to the test and shrink the curriculum, which negatively impacts schools. Campbell (1976) expands upon the negative impacts on teaching to test, “When scores become the goal of the teaching process, they both lose their value as indicators of educational status and distort the educational process in undesirable ways” (p. 52). The Gordon Commission adds to this argument by concluding the state tests do not measure higher order thinking, problem solving, and creativity needed for students to succeed in the 21st century.

Harris (2012) argues that tests are not useless for assessment purposes; however, Berliner (2011) refutes that they do leave many results questionable if used as the primary indicator, and it is immoral if standardized tests are relied upon for high stakes decisions. NCLB makes this clear: The academic achievement of all students must be the highest professional priority of U.S. public school teachers (Brown & Goldstein, 2013), thereby disagreeing with these critics.

**Critiques of academic achievement: Academic progress.** Academic achievement defined as academic progress, has a heavy emphasis on how students develop, advance and grow over time. However, there are arguments against defining academic
achievement in this manner. A report, *Pros and Cons of Standardized Testing*, by Columbia University (2013) provides pros of utilizing academic success as an indicator for academic achievement. Unlike academic progress that focuses on how individual students develop over time academic success holds students and teachers accountable for what students should know, based on the expectations of standards and standardized testing. Standardized testing is typically accompanied by a set of established standards or instructional framework, which provide teachers with guidance for what and when something needs to be taught. Without this structure a third grade teacher and a sixth grade teacher could be teaching the same content. Having this guidance also keeps students who move from one school district to another from being behind or ahead their new school (Columbia University).

With these two different understandings and definitions of academic achievement, it is important to understand which definition teachers are exposed to in their teacher preparation programs, and most importantly, what definition of academic achievement teachers are exposed to that will teach students of color. Are these teacher educators placing more emphasis on academic progress or academic achievement?

**Accountability for Students of Color Academic Achievement**

With the installation of NCLB, teachers, “particularly those serving diverse students, have increasingly been told what and how to teach” (Gutierrez, Asato, Zavala, Pacheco & Olson, 2003, p. 135). As a result, there is pressure for students to perform well on standardized tests. The achievement gap is exacerbated in schools with primarily
students of color, who are not performing well on standardized tests. In schools such as these, teachers teach to the tests and their leaders promote and focus on test outcomes, because these measures are the driving factor for evaluative purposes (Berliner, 2011; Brown & Goldstein, 2013). Student achievement measured any number of ways suggests that many students of color are underperforming relative to their potential (e.g., Ladson-Billings, 2006; Steele, 1997), and efforts directed at improving the achievement of underperforming students of color that do not deeply and directly address issues of race and ethnicity have been ineffective (Zirkel, 2008).

Ritter and Shuls (2012) simply call this an example of “bad teaching practice, but in the, world of high-stakes assessment, this optimizing behavior is expected” (as cited in Ginsberg & Kingston, 2014, p. 30). The Center on Education Policy (CEP) (2009) examined accountability in three states and found a consistent focus on test preparation in classroom instruction and a narrowing of the curriculum to address the emphasis placed on tested subjects. Others have reported the same sort of narrowing of curriculum due to the significance placed on the tested subjects (Berliner, 2011). Brown and Goldstein (2013) posed the question, what does a particular score on a test or the number of questions right or wrong indicate? Given thousands, or even millions, of students who may be taking these exams, a single question right or wrong may be very important as to a summative decision. But just as in the research arena, where effect size has become as important as statistical significance in reporting results, decision makers need to understand better exactly what meaning the scores they count on truly convey.
Brown and Goldstein (2013) conducted a qualitative study of undergraduate students enrolled in an elementary teacher education program at an urban university in the southern United States. Their research questions were: (1) How do you define academic achievement?; and (2) How do you determine whether a child has achieved academically? The 12 undergraduates were selected if they completed the sociocultural influences on schooling courses. The interviews were the primary source of data. A constant comparative method was used to analyze the interview transcripts.

Brown and Goldstein (2013) found that overwhelmingly, the participants’ personal definitions of academic achievement reflected the academic progress perspective, where growth is considered a better metric than a score (academic success). At the same time, however, the participants expressed concern and confusion about the relationship between their academic progress and the academic success view of academic achievement they expected to encounter as practicing teachers contending with NCLB driven policy mandates. The participants’ comments revealed confusion about the meaning of academic achievement. Brown and Goldstein argue that this confusion is due to the absence of specific, uniform, widely accepted terminology for discussion and the important distinctions within the notion of academic achievement. The findings of this study suggest that all preservice teachers need carefully guided opportunities to examine their assumptions and beliefs to explore the competing notions of academic progress and academic success coexisting within the term academic achievement, and to examine the
ways in which these distinctions should be taken into consideration in their practical decision making.

The Brown and Goldstein (2013) study found a disconnection between what aspiring teachers think testing is and what contemporary laws see as the purpose of testing. The implications for their study were that teacher educators must ensure that their programs address the demands that teacher candidates will face when they enter the profession. Their findings suggest that all preservice teachers need carefully guided opportunities to examine their assumptions and beliefs, to explore the competing notions of academic progress and success coexisting within the term academic achievement, and to examine the ways in which these key distinctions should be taken into consideration in the practical decision making (Brown and Goldstein). Brown and Goldstein also recommend that identifying and naming the conflicting learning goals circulating in the pre K-4 classrooms is an important step toward providing more relevant and powerful teacher education experiences. The findings of their study indicate that preservice teachers require both the opportunity and the encouragement to consider the contradictory goals of teaching found in school environments. Furthermore, in making the distinctions between academic progress and success, teacher educators create a space to interrogate the assumptions and implications for teaching that are embedded in each of these approaches to achievement. Finally, Brown and Goldstein advise using clear and distinct language to talk about the two different discourses of achievement found in
policy and school discourses would clarify and simplify conversations about achievement.

Closing the achievement gaps through standardized test scores is an expectation of school systems. With the passing of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2015), states will have the opportunity to decide to revise their teacher evaluation system that links teachers to student academic achievement. Some states may choose an academic progress model using gain, or value-added scores to determine achievement, and some may choose the academic success model. Some states that utilize the academic progress model are Ohio, North Carolina, New York City, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Florida. It is expected, therefore, that some novice teachers will be forced to adjust their own definitions of academic achievement to comply with their states’ choice.

Although states will have the opportunity to make decisions about teacher evaluations, ESSA requires that states incorporate both academic factors (test scores and graduation rates) and factors of school quality (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2016). ESSA also keeps in place the NCLB law’s requirement that schools test 95% of students, for the whole school and for subgroups of students. Educator preparation in the United States is primed for transformation. After two decades where education policy has focused primarily on structural reforms like school and district turnaround, individual teacher performance evaluation, and changes to academic standards, the gaze of policymakers and the public is shifting toward the programs responsible for preparing practitioners (Deans of Impact, 2016). Initially, as teachers are held accountable to some extent for
student academic achievement, President Obama’s administration has also proposed an expectation of teacher preparation programs, be they traditional, alternative, and residency programs, as will be discussed below.

**Teacher Preparation for Students of Color**

The evolution of teacher preparation programs encompasses changes that begin with the church but which become a function of the state. In the late 1700s, formal or community education in the United States was within the domain of the church, and performed by the clergy (Dial & Stevens, 1993). The ministers did not have formal training in pedagogy and there were no institutions that could provide teacher training. As public education expanded rapidly, the demand for better-prepared teachers brought about institutions specifically for teacher preparation. Many teacher preparation programs are responsible for ensuring that certified teachers teach the K-12 curriculum and state standards (Imig & Imig, 2008). The authority to establish standards and regulations for teacher preparation programs is held by state legislatures and state departments of education (Stoddart & Floden, 1995; Watts, 2009). They oversee a variety of types of programs; including state approved traditional, alternative, and residency teacher preparation programs. The initial development of teacher preparation programs did not specifically focus on preparing teachers to teach students of color, nor did it focus on improving their achievement. Different historical events prompted the need for teacher preparation that focused on the needs of students of color.
**Traditional teacher preparation programs.** Since the 1920’s, traditional teacher preparation programs have consisted of a four-year undergraduate program culminating in a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree and teacher certification or licensure (Andrew, 1990; Boser & Davis Wiley, 1988; Dial & Stevens, 1993; Wilson & Tamir, 2008). Traditional undergraduate teacher preparation programs provide preservice liberal arts subject matter and professional education at a university and/or college. These programs focus on pedagogical education and guided practical experience before entering the classroom (Stoddart & Floden, 1995). During the junior and senior years of the four-year program, foundations and methods courses are required. After the foundation and methods courses are complete, students are expected to complete a semester long clinical experience, in which preservice teachers are responsible for teaching a class in their content area, known as student teaching (Andrew; Boser & Davis Wiley).

Some traditional teacher preparation programs extend beyond four-year programs to five- or six-year programs (Stoddart & Floden, 1995). The typical five-year program is an integrated, undergraduate and graduate program for elementary and secondary teachers that can culminate in both licensure and a Master’s degree. According to Andrew (1990), it begins with required foundation courses and assistant teacher opportunities in the freshman and sophomore years. The program concludes with a yearlong internship, graduate concentration, and a final project/thesis. Once the students complete the graduate credits, internship, and final project/thesis, they will receive their Master’s degree. Another variation is the fifth-year program, in which a college student with a
college degree(s) returns for a year of study in teacher education in order to gain a state teaching license. In the history of teacher preparation program, and specifically traditional teacher preparation programs, there is no mention of teacher preparation programs that prepare teachers to teach students of color. Over time, traditional teacher preparation programs developed programs that focused specifically on preparing teachers to teach in urban areas (urban teacher preparation programs); however, teacher preparation for students of color did not become of importance until the development of alternative teacher preparation programs.

**Alternative teacher preparation programs.** Alternative teacher preparation programs are not novel, but are a return to the roots of teacher education in the United States. Alternative teacher preparation programs are defined as programs that allow persons to enter the teaching profession by earning a standard license or teacher certificate without completing a traditional four-or-five year university-based program (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Stoddart & Floden, 1995). Alternative teacher preparation programs are described by some as “fast-track” programs to teaching, meaning reducing the time required to meet teacher certification requirements (Boser & Davis Wiley, 1988). Most importantly, alternative teacher preparation programs were developed to address the shortages in urban areas (Dial & Stevens, 1993; Hawk & Schmidt, 1989; Hawley, 1990; Watts, 2009). Alternative teacher preparation programs are the first attempt to address the issues that occur in urban areas. According to reformers, existing teachers from traditional teacher preparation programs lacked the qualities of innovation, dedication,
social and political engagement required to teach students in America’s low-income communities (Rogers, 2009). The reformers’ critiques brought about the National Teacher Corps, which originated in the 1965 Higher Education Act (Rogers). Rogers further note that Teacher Corps focused on recruiting bright, liberal arts graduates to become teaching interns in underserved classrooms. The National Teacher Corps presumed that successful teaching in the most challenging classrooms required intrinsic qualities, a liberal arts education, an understanding of the ‘disadvantaged,’ and the rest could be learned on the job.

The National Teacher Corps was modeled after the Cardozo Project. The Cardozo Project operated on the theory that poor students of color left school because the teaching was unimaginative, curriculum was irrelevant, and the teachers lacked connections with the realities of the students’ lives. This form of teacher preparation challenged traditional teacher preparation programs professionalism and training. Alternative teacher preparation programs presumed that traditional teacher preparation programs had little value, and the ideal teacher candidates would be strangers to the communities; however, traditional teacher preparation programs do have strengths and relevant experiences that connect to disadvantaged students. Lastly, Rogers (2009) note that today many well-intentioned efforts to reform the recruitment and preparation of teachers rely on the presumptions of powerful individuals far from the realities of teaching, which perpetuates privileged notions of what makes a good teacher; most also deprecate pedagogical preparation.
Alternative teacher preparation programs are assumed to increase the diversity pool of new teachers, by attracting more men, people of color, and mature and/or experienced individuals (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007) than traditional programs. Research found that the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program and the Los Angeles Paraprofessional Program had higher percentages of males, minorities, and people older than 30 than did traditional programs. In addition, teachers in the alternative programs were more likely to prefer to teach and to continue teaching in urban areas (Humphrey & Wechsler; Natriello & Zumwalt, 1993). They were also less likely to see inner-city students as culturally deficient (Stoddart, 1993) than did traditionally prepared teachers. Advocates and detractors of alternative routes argue that these programs are designed to persuade persons with various educational, occupational, and life experiences to become teachers (Feistritzer, 1993, 1998; McKibbin & Ray, 1994; Stoddart; Wise, 1994). Some examples of current alternative teacher preparation programs are Teach for America, Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation program, New York City Teaching Fellows, Wichita Area Transition to Teaching, and many more (USED, 2004). The programs do not expedite credentialing; they expedite the process an individual goes through to become a teacher with sole responsibility for a classroom (Humphrey & Wechsler). Instead of a teacher going through four years of coursework and a clinical practice, they are immersed in the program over a summer or a year. Teach for America is closely related to the National Teacher Corps (Rogers, 2009). They also offer school districts the
autonomy to recruit, hire, and train teachers specifically for their district (Stoddart & Floden, 1995).

Many state education departments and school districts have developed ways to address the shortages in urban schools, thereby ensuring there was a highly qualified teacher in every class (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007). By 2003, 43 states and the District of Columbia had state-sponsored alternate route programs. In addition, many colleges and universities established their own alternative teacher preparation programs (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2004). The National Center for Alternative Certification indicates that more than 200,000 persons have licenses through state sponsored alternative certification programs, with thousands more earning certification through college/university-sponsored alternative programs.

*Components of alternate routes.* The components of alternative teacher preparation programs vary (Boser & Davis Wiley, 1988). Alternative teacher preparation programs have a variety of purposes and goals depending upon their location; however, most include professional coursework or its equivalent (Stoddart & Floden, 1995). For example, some programs primarily focus on specific curricula of the school districts in which their graduates teach, such as New York City Teaching Fellows program. The New York City Teaching Fellows (2015) program prepares teachers to teach students in the New York City Public School System (New York Teaching Fellows, 2015). Some alternative teacher preparation programs also focus on subject matter content, pedagogy, classroom management and child development, such as New York City Teaching Fellows.
The New York City Teaching Fellows program’s coursework is provided by local public and private colleges and universities that focus on content, pedagogy, classroom management, and child development. This is also the case at the Teacher Education Institute-Elk Grove California (Humphrey & Wechsler).

One element that all alternative teacher preparation programs have in common is clinical training; however, the length and the quality of the training vary (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007). The majority of alternative teacher preparation program participants are already full-time teachers in the classroom and learning to teach on the job (Humphrey & Wechsler; Stoddart & Floden, 1995). The alternative teacher preparation programs offer fewer hours of coursework, and require more hours of clinical practice (Stoddart & Floden). For example, the Teacher Education Institute of Elk Grove, California requires that students engage in 16 hours of student teaching in the fall with a master teacher, and four days a week in the spring (Humphrey & Wechsler). According to Stoddart and Floden, most alternative teacher preparation programs use this pragmatic model, emphasizing clinical experience and classroom management, because the candidates are screened for subject matter knowledge before they are accepted into the program. This model focuses on preparing teachers to survive their first few years of teaching (Humphrey & Wechsler; Stoddart & Floden).

Most of these programs also have a mentoring component through which an experienced teacher provides guidance and support to the novice teacher. Providing
mentors and on-the-job training avoids sending new teachers into classrooms without support, which decreases teacher attrition (Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Stoddart & Floden, 1995). For example, the New Jersey Provisional Teacher Program provides a full-time mentor for the initial 20-day period and then the mentorship is continued part-time for the next 30 weeks. The New York City Teaching Fellows program provides a monthly mentor from the university. The North Carolina Teach program assigns a mentor through a local agency (Humphrey & Wechsler). As the participants in the program learn from their mentors, some of them also learn from their colleagues and administrators informally, and formally through professional development from the districts. There is coherence between school-based professional development and the alternative teacher preparation programs, which trains teachers for the district curricula (Stoddart & Floden). What participants learn in the teacher preparation program and the district professional development program reinforce each other (Humphrey & Wechsler). As can be seen, alternative teacher preparation programs can vary according to specific districts and states. As alternative teacher preparation programs were formulated to address the issues in urban schools and student achievement of students of color, so were teacher residencies; specifically, urban teacher residency programs.

**Teacher residency programs.** According to Solomon (2009) and the Urban Teacher Residency United (2015) recently renamed the National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR), teacher residency programs do not self-identify as an alternative teacher preparation program; they build on the strength of both alternative and traditional
Teacher preparation programs. Teacher residency programs are district-serving teacher education programs that pair a rigorous full-year classroom apprenticeship with masters-level education content (NCTR, 2015). Building on the medical residency model, programs simultaneously provide residents with both theory and practice, and an “in-school” residency that typically lasts a full academic year. There are different teacher residency programs that are affiliated with school districts throughout the United States; however, there is a network of urban teacher residency programs. There are 19 urban teacher residency programs in the National Center for Teacher Residences and four programs in development (See Table 1).

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<tr>
<th>Teacher Residency Program</th>
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According to the NCTR website, teacher residency programs have a multi-pronged approach to developing and supporting teacher residences: (1) targeted recruitment and selection of residents; (2) rigorous selection and support of mentors; (3) intensive pre-service preparation focused on specific needs of teachers in diverse schools;
(4) aligned induction support; and (5) strategic hiring of graduates (NCTR, 2015). This multi-pronged approach is intended to assist aspiring teachers in high-need schools to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be successful over time so their students will exceed the learning targets. Teacher residency programs recognize the importance of preparation through an extended period of well-supervised clinical experiences as prerequisites for becoming an independent teacher in one’s own classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Denton, 1982; Henry, 1983; Ross, Hughes, & Hill, 1981; Sunal, 1980). The residency programs focus on weaving together both education theory and classroom practices (Berry & Norton, 2006; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Darling-Hammond). The residencies focus on teacher candidates learning alongside an experienced and trained mentor, in a cognitive apprenticeship model (Feiman-Nemser & Beasley, 1997; Rogoff, 1995). The teacher candidates are typically grouped into cohorts to cultivate professional learning communities and foster collaboration (Lambert, 2003). Along with building relationships among the cohort, the residencies focus on building relationships and partnerships with districts, universities, unions and community agencies to provide expertise, knowledge, resources, and support to enrich the residency program (Feiman-Nemser & Beasley; Hess, Rotherham, & Walsh, 2005). Residency programs focus on serving the needs of the district with which, they partner. Residency programs also support residents once they are hired as classroom teachers. Lastly, teacher residency programs assist the mentor teachers with advancing their careers, by serving as instructors for the residency (Boles & Troen, 1997; NCTR.).
These three types of teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) vary in their program structure (inputs and processes). In recent years, policymakers have become more interested in understanding how the inputs of teacher preparation programs impact the academic achievement of the pupils they eventually will teach. With modest growth in student academic achievement (NCES, 2013) and unacceptable achievement gaps based on race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status, policymakers have judged teacher education programs inadequate to the task and have called for increased accountability.

**Accountability in Urban Teacher Preparation**

In the United States, public education and teacher preparation programs have primarily been the responsibility of the states. States also have the primary role in licensing teachers and other educators. Any policy changes that are made for teacher preparation programs are made by the states, and the policies can differ from state to state. Although state policymakers regulate teacher preparation programs, the federal government does have the authority to construct education policies and distribute aid. The federal government constructs education policies in times of perceived educational crises, and national policymakers can “entice, leverage or mandate states to address student achievement and teacher quality” (Bales, 2006, p. 396). There are government mandates and voluntary professional opportunities that have aimed to define professional standards for teacher competence, alignment of teacher education curriculum with state K-12 curriculum standards, and increased accountability for teacher preparation program
outcomes (Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010). For example, government policies The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (USED, 2015), the Higher Education Act (HEA) Title II, specifically, the *Teacher Education Reform and Improvement* initiative and voluntary professional organizations to accredit teacher preparation programs, such as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), as of 2013 renamed the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), aim to provide accountability for teacher states and teacher preparation programs. Each is discussed briefly below.

**Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).** The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was signed into law in 1965 by President Lyndon Baines Johnson, who believed that “full educational opportunity” should be United States’ first national goal (USED, 2015). ESEA offered grants to districts serving low-income students, federal grants for text and library books, created special education centers, and scholarships for low-income college students (USED). In relation to teacher preparation, ESEA provided federal grants (i.e. Higher Education Act) to state educational agencies to improve the quality of elementary and secondary education. In 2002, Congress reauthorized ESEA and President George W. Bush signed the law giving it a new name: No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (USED). NCLB focused on measures that exposed achievement gaps between underserved students and their peers (USED). In 2012, President Obama’s administration began to offer flexibility to states regarding specific requirements of NCLB in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-
developed plans to close the achievement gaps, increase equity, improve the quality of instruction, and increase student outcomes; i.e. *Teacher Education Reform and Improvement* (TERI) initiative. With the 2016 passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the spirit of TERI was devolved to the states and territories, and is therefore moot. Under ESSA, each state may seek to link teacher education to student outcomes.

**Higher Education Act (HEA).** Teacher preparation programs are critiqued based on outcomes, such as whether the teachers are prepared to teach students, raise student assessment scores, etc., however, this is not how they were originally evaluated. President Lyndon Johnson first signed the Higher Education Act (HEA) into law in 1965 and it has been reauthorized ten times since then (Burke, 2014). The last time it was reauthorized was 2008. The specific aspect of HEA that focuses on preparing teachers for urban contexts is Part A of Title II, which includes Teacher Quality Partnership grants. These grants are competitive grants offered to eligible entities in order to prepare prospective and new teachers with strong teaching skills (Burke). Applicants for the grants must provide a description of how university faculty will prepare highly qualified teachers for high needs schools and to provide professional development to strengthen the content knowledge of teachers. Grantees can utilize the funding for all forms of teacher preparation programs: traditional, alternative, and residency.

Under the Higher Education Act (HEA), there was an input-oriented questionnaire required to report the aspects and effectiveness of teacher preparation programs. The questionnaire included, pass rates on certification exams in all subjects, program
information that focused on the details of the program (enrollment, student teaching, student teaching supervision, student-faculty ratio, and accreditation), contextual information (program demographics, history, recognition, campus community, conceptual framework, professional development, global opportunities, and high performance expected, developed, and recognized) (HEA, 2008). As can be seen from this foregoing list, the questionnaire does not require teacher preparation programs to collect data that demonstrates the outcomes of their programs; only their inputs (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013). Cochran-Smith et al. also argue that the data collected were not based on meaningful indicators of program effectiveness. Reforming teacher preparation programs to focus on outcomes will be challenging because most programs do not have outcome data, nor is it easy access to it, because they were not required to focus on student academic achievement in this manner (Cochran-Smith et al). Even the evaluation of teacher preparation programs, to determine accreditation status, minimally focuses on student outcomes and preparing teachers to teach students of color and to address the achievement gap.

Teacher preparation accreditation. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was the: profession’s mechanism to help establish high quality teacher preparation. Through the process of professional accreditation of schools, colleges and departments of education, NCATE, now CAEP works to make a difference in the quality of teaching and teacher preparation today, tomorrow, and for the next century (CAEP, 2013, p. 1).
NCATE was founded in 1954; however, NCATE did not start focusing on the importance of diversity until it issued its 1979 standards (Azevedo, 2015). NCATE created the multicultural education accreditation standard as a result of The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education’s (AACTE) Bicentennial Commission on Education report, which expressed the importance of multicultural education. The requirement indicated that, “The teacher preparation institution gives evidence of planning for multicultural education in its teacher education curricula including both the general and professional studies components” (NCATE, 1979) as cited in Ramsey and Williams, 2003, p. 213). This also illustrates the opportunity gaps because it took 25 years (1954 to 1979) to address the historical issues of not providing equitable opportunities for students of color. The original curriculum for teacher preparation focused on White students, not students of color. Prior to the introduction of the multicultural NCATE standard, the AACTE (1974) Bicentennial Commission on Education for the Profession of Teaching reported that:

Teacher educators must maintain a profound commitment to human rights.

Unfortunately, teacher educators have not always been conscious exemplars of human rights. Few actively advocate for the rights of minority groups or promote cultural pluralism. Today, leaders ask the education profession to develop in students those attitudes and beliefs which support cultural pluralism as a positive social forces. Thus, the education of teacher educators must be substantive enough to develop a respect for the culture, lifestyles, and contributions of nonmainstream cultures. Teacher educators also
need a commitment to universal human values in order to promote harmonious coexistence.

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An updated version of this mandate placed greater emphasis on multicultural understanding and pedagogical practices when it wrote, “The unit ensures that teacher candidates acquire and learn to apply the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills to become competent to work with all students” (NCATE, 1979, as cited in Ramsey & Williams, 2003, p. 213). NCATE did encourage teacher preparation programs to begin to address the issues of multiculturalism, and teacher preparation programs added courses that focused on the needs of students of color. Revisions made to NCATE standards in 1993 required that diversity be more explicit across all aspects of teacher preparation programs, including curriculum and instruction, collaborative professional relationships, and faculty and teacher candidate experiences (Zeichner & Melnick, 1996). The NCATE version of the diversity standard indicates:

The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations...
including higher education P-12 school faculty, and students in P-12 schools (NCATE, 1997-2009).

Gollnick (2011), an advocate for the NCATE diversity standard, argues that the diversity standard was important because graduates of teacher preparation programs reported that they did not know how to work with students from diverse backgrounds, many graduates of teacher preparation programs did not seek jobs in high need areas, the turnover rate in high need schools is very high, and the number of teachers of color does not match the students of color in schools. Gollnick also claims that the diversity standard was not the only way in which NCATE addressed the importance of multicultural education. The conceptual framework also focused on diversity:

…candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, including proficiencies associated with diversity and technology, that are aligned with the expectations in professional, state, and institutional standards (NCATE, 2014, p.22).

While NCATE took the initiative to address preparing teachers for the diverse needs of students of color, the latest iteration of professional accreditation, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) has not built on this foundation. CAEP’s goals are to “raise the performance of candidates as practitioners in the nation’s P-12 schools and to raise standards for the evidence the field relies on to support its claims of quality” (CAEP, 2013, p. 1). CAEP standards do not have a specific standard that focuses on diversity, as NCATE did. Standard 1: Content and Pedagogy indicates that teacher preparation must demonstrate an understanding of the 10 Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) principles, in which one of the 10 focuses
on diversity, Standard 2. InTASC Standard 2: Learning Differences indicates that “the teacher uses understanding of individual differences, diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards” (CAEP, 2013, p. 2). NCATE’s multicultural standard expected teacher preparation programs to include multicultural education in their program. In an effort to be accountable to NCATE’s diversity standard, some teacher preparation programs infused multicultural education throughout their program, or in a single course. Teacher preparation programs included single model courses, field experience that includes multicultural aspects and immersion into the community. Some programs became urban teacher preparation programs. Hollins and Guzman (2005) found that teacher preparation programs were at very different stages in developing a vision for the inclusion of multicultural practices. Some programs were becoming “more inclusive and multicultural in their approaches to teacher education,” whereas other programs report little change in teacher attitudes and practices (Hollins & Guzman, p. 512). Melnick and Zeichner (1995, 1998) found that programs often applied either the infusion approach, which places attention on diversity across the program’s courses and experiences, the single-course approach, which “treats diversity as the focus of a single course, or as a topic in a few courses while other components of the program remain untouched” (pp. 5-6).

**Single course model.** The single course model is one course in the teacher preparation program that is solely focused on diversity. Teacher educators who conducted studies of their own courses often studied their effects. Teacher preparation programs
taking the segregated single-course approach often separated foundations courses from methods courses and fieldwork experiences, and thus kept pedagogical approaches for teaching diverse learners separate from those social and philosophical foundations courses (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). Although the infusion approach was most supported in research, the segregated approach is most often used by teacher preparation programs (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Vavrus, 2002). Some researchers used Likert-type scales, while others used student work as the source of data (Azevedo, 2015). The study that is discussed below focused specifically on the single course model (input and/or programmatic features) that impacted student outcomes and/or student academic achievement.

In a case study, Jennings and Smith (2002) followed a former preservice teacher who implemented multicultural practices after taking a preservice multicultural education course. The participant was the second researcher, Smith. Smith entered the course with personal perceptions of diversity; however, the course challenged Smith to examine her views on diversity. With the knowledge and an action plan from the multicultural course, Smith developed a culturally relevant, inquiry-based unit for a history class. In the history unit, Smith incorporated historical information that focused on Native Americans and African Americans during the 1840’s to expose her students to different perspectives from different cultures. The history unit was not only implemented in Smith’s classroom, but in the classes of all the third grade teachers in the district. Smith provided the opportunity for the third grade teachers in the district to observe her teaching the unit, and
to discuss their ideas, beliefs and practices concerning the unit. Smith was concerned with the impact of the unit on diverse student’s knowledge of the topics taught.

Through Smith’s work, Jennings and Smith (2002) found that her students were previously not interested or engaged in history lessons; however, after the unit that focused on Native Americans and African Americans, the students reported being more engaged. A month after teaching the unit, the students were still able to recall detailed information about the unit. Smith gained insight into the importance of reflecting on her practice, to improve her instruction, and most importantly improving student outcomes and engagement. Jennings and Smith also found that collaboration among other teachers, students and researchers provided the opportunity for all voices to enter the space and take ownership of their learning. The collaboration between Smith and the teachers shifted their understanding of pedagogy, introduced the teachers to and developed their appreciation of culturally relevant pedagogy. This process changed the way Smith viewed learning and teaching. Jennings and Smith’s research focused on how inputs of a teacher preparation program impacted their student outcomes.

The impact of the single course model on student outcomes is difficult to establish quantitatively. The study above focused specifically on a researcher’s beliefs about her own practice as a teacher. Furthermore, the student outcomes were not quantifiable as standardized tests are. This study illustrated the importance of my study to focus on how intentions for and programmatic features of the teacher preparation programs impact student academic achievement. The single course model focuses on teaching diverse
populations in one course; however, the infusion approach focuses on diversity across the program, which requires informed expertise on the part of all faculty, and not solely on those who teach the stand-alone course. An example of an infusion approach is an urban teacher preparation program.

**Infusion approach model.** Gay (2010) encouraged a “dual approach” (p. 160) to infusing multicultural education across a teacher preparation program, which included integration of multicultural education into all courses, while also focusing on key multicultural education concepts in specialized courses. Multicultural education infusion involves replacing standard pedagogies, such as a college lecture, with more varied and engaging pedagogies that are prescribed and modeled by a program (Gay). Programs, such as urban teacher preparation programs, are intentional about infusion by ensuring that their curriculum, climate, philosophy, pedagogy and ethos reflect cultures, histories, and heritages of many ethnic, racial, and social groups in the United States (Gay).

Urban teacher preparation programs focus specifically on preparing teachers to teach in urban contexts. Hammerness and Matsko (2012) highlight the importance of context specific teacher preparation versus traditional or universal teacher preparation for all settings and all students. Context specific teacher preparation focuses specifically on the needs of a particular context, and tailors the curriculum to fit the context, whereas, universal teacher preparation assumes that knowledge about teaching and instructional strategies can be used in any context. Due to the complexities of urban school districts,
some teacher preparation programs have begun to focus specifically on preparing teachers for the urban context.

Hammerness and Matsko (2012) explored the specific aspects of the urban teacher preparation programs that are most relevant to aspiring and practicing teachers. They explored two research questions: (1) What contextual features of the larger public school district did the program address?; and (2) How did the program help the students learn about those layers of context? Hammerness and Matsko explicitly used a context-specific approach to guide their research study. They focused on how the context of a specific city, neighborhood, or community can impact the structure of schooling for K-12 students and teacher preparation programs. Hammerness and Matsko drew from a larger longitudinal study designed to examine how three teacher preparation programs addressed recruiting the best teachers, preparing them to teach in their specific context, placing them in challenging environments, and providing support for them. The researchers wanted to find out more about the specific features of the context that different programs address in attending to their unique context as well as how particular programs address these features in their programs. They focused on University of Chicago’s Urban Teacher Education program, which prepares teachers to teach in Chicago public schools. The research team collected program documents (vision and curriculum), reviewed material on websites, collected syllabi, conducted interviews and developed focus groups with the teachers in their first and second year of teaching after
graduating from the program. The researchers also interviewed the program directors and the faculty about the program.

The researchers discovered that the University of Chicago (UChicago) program is structured in layers that are interrelated and impact the program’s day-to-day work. The first layer is federal/state policy context, which is the broader educational policy landscape within which the Chicago Public Schools operate. Through this context the students are given the opportunity to analyze the challenges of achieving equitable education when society has low expectations of students of color. The next layer is the public school context, which focuses on historical features and structures of American public schooling. There is also a local geographical context layer, which focuses specifically on Chicago. Another layer is the local socio-cultural context, which focuses on the ways in which culture impacts learning. The district context layer refers to the policies and mandates of public school teachers. At the core of the framework, are the student and classroom context layer, which focus on classroom interactions and the dynamics of teaching in a diverse setting.

Hammerness and Matsko (2012) focused on the structure of the UChicago program and its attentiveness to the structure of Chicago Public Schools. Based on the teacher’s responses in the interviews, the preparation resembled their classroom assignment. UChicago prepares teachers for the context of the school district, the community, and the culture. The curriculum for UChicago not only focused on strategies that teachers can use in their classroom, but the program focused on the contexts (federal,
state, local, district, school, classroom) that contribute to the structure of the school system, that impact how schools operate, and if students achieve. UChicago provides a holistic framework for preparing teachers to work in urban contexts that exceeds just classroom strategies. The program promoted “intellectual work,” understanding of the context, subject-matter expertise, extensive clinical and pedagogical training, and knowledge of self. Hammerness and Matsko argue that although there was a large push for culturally relevant pedagogy and curriculum for all students, most teacher preparation programs based their curricula on the expectations of European American culture, which transferred to the public schools. Although this study brought to the forefront the importance of contextual teacher preparation for improving the achievement of students of color, Hammerness and Matsko did not focus specifically on the student outcomes that the program impacts.

Hammerness and Matsko’s (2012) lack of focusing on how UChicago’s program impacted student outcomes is not unordinary; it is also evident in professional accreditation. Implementation of NCATE’s mandates has been criticized for failing to prepare preservice teachers to teach students of color (Zeichner, 1993). Vavrus (2002) critiques NCATE’s multicultural mandate because of its limited transfer of intention to practice and argue that the mandate had limited impact on reforming racist and socially unjust teaching practices. Vavrus claims that when teacher preparation programs celebrate diversity and promote tolerance without directly confronting cultural gaps in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment, the teacher preparation program promotes cultural
assimilation and institutional prejudice. Ramsey and Williams (2003) add to this argument by indicating that the NCATE standard for preparing preservice teachers to teach students of color has evolved, but still “stops far short of advocating for critical pedagogy and a social reconstructionist approach” (p. 214).

Even with the regulations of the Higher Education Act, and specifically the Teacher Quality Partnership feature, NCATE/CAEP standards to evaluate teacher preparation programs, and the development of urban/context specific teacher preparation programs, there are still some policymakers, such as former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan who strongly believe that teacher preparation programs are not adequately preparing teachers. Duncan (2011) stated:

Unfortunately some of our teacher preparation programs are not up to job. They operate partially blindfolded, without access to data that tell the how effective their graduates are in elementary and secondary school classrooms after they leave their teacher preparation programs (p. 7).

Furthermore, he asserted, teacher preparation programs are not preparing teachers to educate our students to be competitive for the global society. This constant battle sparked the initiative, Teacher Education Reform and Improvement, under the Higher Education Act, which is spearheaded by the President Obama’s administration.

**Teacher Education Reform and Improvement (TERI).** In an effort to address the continuous underperformance of teachers who teach students of color, President Obama’s administration, has sought to strengthen teacher preparation programs, through its Teacher Education Reform and Improvement initiative, which was intended to hold
teacher preparation programs accountable for producing effective teachers by year 2020 (USED, 2011). It was first announced on September 11, 2011. President Obama’s administration proposed a teacher education reform policy that incorporated performance-tracking data systems that would have linked students’ test scores, teachers, and teachers’ preparation programs to increase productivity (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013). The Teacher Education Reform and Improvement advocated for the evaluation of teacher preparation programs in three outcome categories: the achievement of K-12 students taught by preparation program graduates, the job placement and retention rates of programs, surveys of programs and surveys of program graduates and their principals (Cochran-Smith et al.; USED, 2015). The regulation would have required that school districts and states report on the aggregate learning outcomes of K-12 students taught by graduates of each preparation program. In doing so, they would use multiple measures of student achievement to ascertain growth (USED), with the dominant metric being standardized test scores. Teacher preparation programs would have been required to report where each graduate was hired into a teaching position, with particular attention to shortage areas. Each teacher preparation program would also have had to report on teacher retention, i.e., how long the teacher remained at the school in a teaching position. Beyond the standardized test scores, the regulations would also employ a qualitative component by requiring surveys from the program graduates and the principals who hired them. The surveys would have focused on the preparedness of teachers in the first year of teaching. The proposed regulation would refocus institutional data reporting, already
required under the HEA, on meaningful data at the program level, from inputs of programs to outcomes for students.

The Teacher Education Reform and Improvement initiative would also have required reporting performance data at the program level, not the institution level, which would also require the teacher preparation programs to develop relationships with different stakeholders, such as other teacher preparation programs, teachers, and leaders (USED, 2015). This change also would have affected the funding for students who receive the TEACH grants by the school year 2020-2021. TEACH grants are awarded to students who are preparing to become teachers in high need school districts after graduation (USED). Only the programs that were rated effective or higher would receive grants for students to attend their program. Any program that received a rating lower than effective, would receive assistance from the state (USED, 2011). The state would be required to report to the Department of Education, the performance of all teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) based on a combination of employment outcomes of students who graduate from the teacher preparation program, surveys from principals that focus on the performance of the teacher, student learning outcomes and teacher evaluations, and accreditation (USED, 2014). At the time of this study, the future of TERI currently rests with the rulemaking process for the implementation of ESSA.

In January 2012, the Department of Education convened a rule making committee to rewrite the reporting guidelines required by Title II of HEA. The committee included a
diverse array of interest groups, practitioners, Department of Education officials, presidents of public and private colleges, and representatives from alternative route teacher preparation programs. The committee focused on the feasibility of value-added assessments as an evaluation of teacher preparation programs (Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013), defined in this study as the “academic progress” approach. The committee was charged with developing rules for evaluating teacher preparation programs according to some measure of their graduates’ students’ performance (USED, 2011).

As of today, there are 23 education school deans and some directors of teacher education programs, who are in support of the new reform. They named themselves Deans for Impact (2015). They are committed to collecting, sharing and using data to drive change within their programs and across the field of educator preparation. The guiding principles of Deans for Impact include academic deans who are committed to using common metrics and assessments that tightly align their programs with demonstrable impact on student achievement and other outcome measures. These 23 academic deans are also committed to utilizing research tools to identify the features of teacher preparation programs that improve student learning. They strongly believe in the transparency of their outcomes to facilitate accountability for teacher preparation programs.

Since Deans for Impact (2016) initiation, their work has expanded. They are still focused on outcome-based accountability and data informed improvement Deans for Impact argues that teacher educator programs, including traditional colleges of education,
should lead the way in this new-outcomes-focused era because higher education is broadly expected to demonstrate its impact. They suggest that policy can and should play a vital role in elevating teacher preparation program performance. Deans for Impact claim that educator preparation should be oriented around four guiding principles: (1) data informed; (2) outcomes focused; (3) empirically tested; and (4) transparent and accountable. They pride themselves on being a solution-driven membership organization. Rather than tearing apart every new proposal to hold teacher preparation programs accountable; they argue that we must evaluate the effectiveness of the educators that we prepare.

Deans for Impact (2016) policy agenda contains two major components: (1) improving data access through policies that provide educator-preparation programs with data on the performance of their graduates; and (2) developing a new, outcomes-focused certification process that recognizes programs that voluntarily agree to prepare educators who are demonstrably effective. The data in these systems should include: (1) timely and fine-grained data on graduate employment and retention; (2) data on teacher-evaluation results for program graduates; (3) K-12 student-performance data; and (4) data from surveys of program graduates and their employers (principals and superintendents) (Deans of Impact, p. 10). They realize that this will not be an easy effort. States will have to open up lines of communication between different data systems, as information on practicing educators may be dispersed across districts, teacher-licensure boards, state higher education entities, state K-12 education departments, university centers, and third
party contractors. Additionally, district capacity for data collection and sharing will have to be enhanced (Deans for Impact,). Furthermore, states must couple access to these data with efforts to make the information useful to programs. Ideally, the data systems will be able to link K-12 student performance back to teachers and teachers back to the program that prepared them. Deans for Impact firmly argues that the locus of data policy should be centered within states. To create a highly functioning national system of educator preparation; however, programs need to have data that are comparable across state lines. They encourage states to work collaboratively to develop cross-state data sharing agreements and data linkages. They are willing to work with federal lawmakers who may be interested in streamlining and improving the data collected on programs under Title II of the Higher Education Act. These reporting requirements should be made more useful, less burdensome, and better aligned with state requirements. What the foregoing presentation demonstrates is that the calls for evidence-based accountability in teacher education is both external and internal to the field of teacher education. Along with Deans for Impact that supports the policies of President Obama’s administration, the Gates Foundation is investing $35 million to develop new Teacher Preparation Transformation Centers that will support data-informed improvement across numerous programs (including some led by member deans of Deans for Impact). And books such as Elizabeth Green’s “Building a Better Teacher” have made The New York Times’ best-seller list, demonstrating widespread interest in the issue of improving teacher preparation that extends beyond simply education-policy wonks (Deans for Impact, p. 9).
The Hope Street Group (2016) conducted a study that focused on how teacher preparation programs could be evaluated. They surveyed teachers, and some of their responses align with some of the suggestions of President Obama’s administration and Deans for Impact (2016). The Hope Street Group found that most teachers emphasized the importance of teacher retention as an essential metric in evaluating the quality of teacher preparation programs. Teachers also mentioned several other areas that could be measured, including: job placement; graduation rates from preservice programs; educator effectiveness (e.g., student and parent surveys, student growth measures, classroom observations); college preservice coursework; and in-class and hands-on teaching opportunities in preservice. Teachers also shared that it would be helpful to incorporate feedback on their preservice experiences into evaluations of teacher preparation programs.

Deans for Impact (2016) also highlight some challenges to expanding teacher preparation accountability. For example, laws and regulations in various states limit access to teacher- and student-performance data. Data are not always reported in a timely fashion or in useful forms, and different intended uses require different “grain sizes” – data that are useful for program-to-program comparisons may not be useful for purposes of an individual program improving in its own effectiveness (Deans of Impact, p. 8). Although this is a challenge, Deans for Impact is willing to work with its membership to directly address these challenges. They are also aware that federal and state policymakers are moving to create new accountability systems that place emphasis on measurable
outcomes. However, the coming era of outcomes-based accountability must be coupled with a commitment to provide programs with access to comparable and consistent data that they can use to meet the new expectations that will be put in place.

A major challenge for teacher preparation programs and teacher educators is how to negotiate programmatic responses to new state and federal mandates in the context of the negative rhetoric of teacher preparation programs. Tensions and dilemmas have risen in response to the implementation of reform initiatives, especially the initiatives that link high stakes testing as a measure for holding teacher preparation programs accountable for educational outcomes (Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010). Teacher educators struggle with addressing the policies and accountability generated by both state and national authorities, especially with defining student academic achievement (Bales, 2006). Ginsberg (2014) expands this argument by indicating that teacher preparation programs are caught in a vise with an appreciation and desire among those in the field for greater accountability being squeezed by a sense that the approaches being suggested are prone to error and misuse.

Teacher education programs in the United States have been tasked with making a major programmatic shift from inputs and processes to outcomes. Prior to the mid-1990’s, teacher education assessment and evaluation focused on inputs, per the NCATE standards of the time—such as institutional commitment, qualifications of faculty, content and structure of courses and clinical experiences, and the alignment of these with professional knowledge and standards—rather than outcomes, e.g. student
academic achievement. In the late 1990’s and early 2000’s; however, there were fierce
debates about the evidence base for university-based teacher preparation (Ballou &
Podgursky, 2000; Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; Darling Hammond, 2000). As
Cochran-Smith et al. notes, there was a lack of evidence showing a direct connection
between teachers’ participation in traditional teacher preparation/certification programs
and student test scores. These debates paved the way for the proliferation of alternative
pathways into teaching and supported the teacher preparation deregulation agenda.

The professionalization agenda intend to ensure that all teachers were fully
prepared and certified prior to entering the classroom in accordance with professional
standards. The deregulation agenda aims to eliminate most requirements for entry into
teaching and to dismantle higher education’s monopoly of the path to state licensing/
certification. Proponents of deregulation advocate for multiple entry routes, with
preservice teachers’ state-licensing test scores as the primary focus for determining who
should teach. The goal is to improve teacher quality by exposing teacher education to the
market and letting the market decide which teachers were hired and retained. This is an
issue for traditional teacher preparation programs because many do not define
achievement or outcomes as student test scores. However, researchers Greene, Winters,
and Forster (2004) and Hanushek and Woessmann (2010) argue that student standardized
test scores could be linked to teacher preparation programs and teacher effectiveness
through value-added modeling. Hanushek and Rivkin (2010) outline a general analytical
framework (Ag = 0
Ag−1 + τj + Sφ + X γ + ε) that measures teacher effectiveness
utilizing student test scores. Hanushek and Rivkin developed this model because the most
commonly used indicators of teacher quality do not correlate with student academic
achievement gains. The value a teacher adds to a student’s education is a shift from
focusing on inputs to measure teacher effectiveness to focusing on outcomes, i.e.
standardized test scores. The value-added models mirror the efforts of President Obama’s
administration proposal, *Teacher Education Reform and Improvement*, to link teacher
preparation programs to standardized test scores, which would increase the federal
government’s role in accountability. Some argue that increasing the federal government’s
role in accountability leads to positive results; for example the adoption of NCLB applied
rewards and sanctions to student and school performance (Hanushek, 2005; Hanushek &
Raymond, 2005).

**Challenges to increased accountability.** Along with supporters of linking teacher
preparation programs to standardized test scores, there are also academic deans,
education leaders, and organizations that do not support the new accountability proposal.
The supporters and opponents of the proposed evaluations were offered the opportunity
to present their concerns during the public comment period in January 2015. There were
over 3500 comments sent to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Eduventures (2015) as cited in
Schaffhauser, 2015) analyzed all 3500 comments submitted and found five overarching
themes:

1. The proposal is a case of “federal overreach”: The new rules could constitute an
expansion of federal authority into areas typically overseen by states and institutions;
2. There’s too much emphasis on student outcomes: “Multiple measure should be used to determine the impact on P-12 learning;”

3. The changes represent a burden on providers and states: Teacher preparation programs would have to start reporting to states by October 1, 2017. “Collecting the data to meet these requirements places a high burden of time, capacity and cost on providers;”

4. There will be major impacts on high-need schools and disciplines: Because of the importance of student outcomes in the proposed regulations, the new rules would “drive teachers” into districts with higher test scores, working against “the regulation’s goal to drive teacher candidates into high-need fields and low-income schools”; and

5. Federal funding could be at stake: “The overall negative tone of the proposed regulations suggests the providers who are not concerned with meeting certain criteria will be denied access to federal funding (Schaffhauser, 2015).

Many of those who disagree with the proposal argue that this regulation would not only negatively affect all teacher preparation programs, but most importantly programs that focus specifically on teachers who will teach in high need areas and low performing schools (Calvert, 2014). In an interview on PBS NewsHour, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, Randi Weingarten, argued that the Teacher Education Reform and Improvement initiative would force teacher preparation programs to reconsider placing graduates in schools that serve our most vulnerable students. However, there have been researchers who have conducted research studies that link teacher preparation programs to student academic achievement.
In a major study, Henry, Kershaw, Zulli and Smith (2012) reviewed approaches taken in several states that have already estimated teacher preparation program effects and analyzed the proposals for incorporating students’ test score gains into the evaluations of teacher preparation programs by states that have received federal Race to the Top (RttT) funds. The purpose of the review was to inform the teacher preparation community on the state of current and near-term practice for adding measures of teacher effectiveness to teacher preparation accountability practices. Henry et al. also reported that researchers have developed various statistical models that attempt to estimate the unique contribution of a teacher to student learning above and beyond any learning that would be expected, given a student’s prior achievement and other individual student characteristics, classroom context, and school context.

To date, researchers have generated analyses that address teacher preparation programs effectiveness for North Carolina, New York City, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Florida. There are states that have received RttT funds, in which they have linked student gains and growth to teacher effectiveness; however, Henry et al. (2012) highlight the complexity of expanding this accountability to teacher preparation programs. As the literature provides evidence that estimating a teacher’s effectiveness is possible and can help to inform future efforts to incorporate student test score gains into the evaluation of teacher preparation programs, the literature also highlights the limitations and challenges that will be faced when incorporating student test scores into teacher preparation program evaluations.
Henry et al. (2012) provide a synthesis and analysis of the relevant methodological research and RttT related literature to explain the importance of many of the key decisions states and researchers have faced when attempting to generate quantitative estimates of teacher preparation program effectiveness. They categorize the decisions into three domains: selection, estimation, reporting and interpretation. Selection decisions refer to the choices that states that wish to implement an assessment of teacher preparation program will need to make about the students, teachers, and subjects they will include in the evaluation. Specifically, states must select which subjects, grades, and academic years, students and teachers will be used to evaluate teacher preparation programs. The challenges of this decision is that if a state does not test students in a certain academic year, grade, or subject, the state cannot use those years, grades, or subjects to estimate teacher preparation program effectiveness. The greater number of tested grades and subject areas tested, the greater the flexibility a state will have in creating detailed teacher preparation programs analyses. Greater content in testing programs across grades and subject matter will yield a richer data set, which allows evaluators to obtain effectiveness estimates for a larger number of teachers in multiple areas of teacher preparation. If there are states with a smaller number of tested grades, then there will not be any reliability of the evaluation.

The challenge of choosing which students are used to capture teacher preparation program effectiveness for RttT will exclude those students who do not take the state assessments selected for use in the teacher preparation program analyses. The student
pool will also exclude students who are unable to be matched to their teacher or prior test scores. The exclusion of these students is due to the need for prior test scores from which gains or losses can be calculated. The decision to limit the students included in a teacher preparation program student outcome evaluation may have important consequences, if the excluded students are disproportionately more or less likely to be taught by graduates of some teacher preparation programs or if the graduates of some teacher preparation program are either more or less effective with the excluded students. Once the state decides which grades, subject areas, and students will be used to evaluate teacher preparation programs, their policy makers will also need to decide which teachers will be included in the analyses. These decisions involve choosing whether teachers of all experience levels are included in the analysis, deciding how to handle students with multiple teachers, and deciding which teacher preparation programs will be used in analyzing teacher preparation program effectiveness.

Henry et al. (2012) reported that estimation decisions are the choices associated with selecting an analysis method that will be used to quantify teacher preparation program effectiveness. States will have to make the decision of what type of analytical model will be used to produce quantitative estimates of the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs. The challenge of making this decision is to hold teacher preparation programs accountable for the effectiveness of their graduates. It is imperative that the teacher preparation program be evaluated on both the processes that they can control that can affect teacher effectiveness: the selection of the candidates into the
teacher preparation program and the preparation provided to the teacher candidates. Reporting and interpretation decisions refer to the choices that states that have undertaken teacher preparation programs will need to make about what specific information is released to the public and the manner in which the results of the evaluation are presented.

Henry et al. (2012) highlight the complexity of utilizing a value-added model to determine the effectiveness of a teacher preparation program. This illustrates that the Teacher Education Reform Initiative views reform as a policy problem, because it does not take into account the inputs of the teacher preparation programs, including what the preservice teachers bring with them to the program. Furthermore, as Henry et al. conclude that the current efforts to incorporate student test scores to evaluate teacher preparation partially fulfills one of the four purposes, they deem important for evaluation accountability and disregards program improvement, assessment of merit and worth, and knowledge development. To address all areas of evaluation and accountability, the effects of selection and retention processes will need to be distinguished from the effects of the actual preparation processes to determine which of these processes are responsible for the teacher preparation’s success in preparing teachers to improve student outcomes.

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).** With the reauthorization of ESEA as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2016), states will have the opportunity to revise their teacher evaluation system that links teachers to student academic achievement. Although states will have the opportunity to make decisions about teacher evaluations,
ESSA requires that states incorporate both academic factors (test scores and graduation rates) and factors of school quality, which, thus far, is consistent with the Teacher Education Reform and Improvement initiative. ESSA also keeps in place the NCLB law’s requirement that schools test 95% of students, for the whole school and for subgroups of students.

Under Title II, section 202 of ESSA (2016), states may use federal funds to create educator-preparation program “authorizers” that will enter into agreements with educator programs (titled “academies”) that set forth specific performance goals. These agreements must identify the numbers of effective teachers that programs intend to prepare to serve in high-need schools; describe in detail the clinical preparation process that programs will use (and make this a “significant” component of overall preparation); and set forth specific candidate selection criteria. Programs will recommend final certification of their graduates only after obtaining evidence of their effectiveness. The new provision of ESSA creates an opportunity for educator preparation programs to be freed from burdensome regulation in return for greater transparency and performance around outcomes (Deans for Impact, 2016). These outcomes can be developed jointly between states and programs (ESSA). Programs that fail to meet the performance targets they set cannot be reauthorized under this process. This new process is entirely voluntary; states are not required to create these systems. However, Deans for Impact argues strongly that states should seize this opportunity to create a new process that will be recognized and to reward programs that voluntarily agree to an outcomes-based
performance system. Its position is that the creation of this new system will send a clear and unmistakable message that preservice preparation can be meaningful and important.

Deans for Impact (2016) conducted a comprehensive review of how data are collected within its membership. Its staff identified what categories of data are collected before candidates are enrolled in programs (pre-enrollment), during enrollment, and after candidates graduate and become teachers of record (post-enrollment). Their research question was: Are our programs getting the data they need to make meaningful judgments about the effectiveness of the educators they prepare? Using semi-structured interviews with each program, and seeking to understand efforts to monitor teacher candidate progress before, during, and after candidates are enrolled in programs, its staff then identified the data categories that were cited by one or more programs and prepopulated a standardized database, which programs verified and reviewed multiple times. They interviewed the heads of data and assessment at 23 programs led by Deans for Impact member deans, identifying not only the categories of information that programs obtain, but also the instruments they use. They examined both the categories of data collected and the sources of that data, including whether the instruments used were developed internally – i.e., by the program itself – or externally by some third party.

Deans for Impact staff (2016) found that, of all of the types of data, pre-enrollment, enrolled, and post enrollment, only clinical experience observation data of enrolled candidates were collected by every institution. There were no pre-or post-enrollment data sources used across all of their programs. There was no uniformity in the
type of evidence they collected to let them know how their candidates were doing. Also, the majority of their programs developed their own instruments and tools to track candidates, and even to track post-enrollment progress. The local development and use of instruments is understandable, as they can be tailored to local needs as appropriate. However, the results were that there is no comparability of data across their programs. Most importantly, few of their programs have managed to secure meaningful data on the performance of graduates once they begin their careers. Of the 23 programs included in their analysis, only six have access to student achievement data connected to teachers that they prepared. Less than a third have access to other forms of data on the performance of their graduates, such as information from classroom observations. They have no access to the data that they desire the most—data related to the effectiveness of the educators they prepared, and to their impact on their students.

**Critiques of Teacher Preparation**

Teacher education programs have been characterized as broken by policymakers and researchers and need to be fixed (Apple, 2001; Bales, 2006; Cochran-Smith, Piazza, & Power, 2013; Peck, Gallucci, & Sloan, 2010). Bales describe these policy debates as a “tug of war” between the state and national level policymakers, where the states have historically had control over the education of children who reside within their borders, as well as the expectations for their teachers. With each passing year, the tension between the national and state policies grows. Former United States Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan (2011), stated, “nearly all schools of education are doing a mediocre job of
preparing graduates to teach effectively.” Duncan asserted that American students must become global competitors and that K-12 schools have failed to prepare them to achieve this goal. Furthermore, as Cochran-Smith et al. notes, according to those arguing for the neo-liberal perspective, teacher education programs have also failed to meet productivity expectations regarding teacher performance that leads to improved student academic achievement. National Council for Teacher Quality (NCTQ) adds to this argument, by indicating that unlike other professional schools, teacher preparation programs are held to weak standards, enabling ineffective programs to receive state approval and national accreditation. The result is that too few teachers receive the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the classroom (as cited in Ginsberg, 2014).

There are mixed views of teacher’s perspectives of their teacher preparation and its impact on their classroom practices. The Public Agenda Survey (2008) illustrate that 80% of graduates of education schools, from a national sample, indicated they were very (42%) or somewhat (35%) prepared for their first year of teaching. These survey results provides a counter argument to the critiques of teacher preparation. More recently, the field itself created edTPA (2016), a portfolio based assessment, developed by 24 states and 160 participating institutions, to authentically assess candidate performance while in their teacher preparation program. Amid the very vocal criticism of teacher preparation, teacher educators have made advances that directly address areas of concern, and they are pushing the field to improve in new ways. For example, Ginsberg (2014) highlights that teacher preparation has embraced the idea of accountability focusing on student learning.
The American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AECTE) opens its mission statement with the goal of promoting the learning of all P–12 students. The newly created merger of the two teacher preparation accrediting bodies (NCATE and TEAC) resulted in the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which has as its mission the preparation of highly qualified educators through the accreditation of programs in which data drive decisions; resources and practices support candidate learning; and candidates demonstrate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions geared toward raising student achievement. CAEP’s recently created Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting, is charged with creating a system of standards that will “transform the preparation of teachers by creating a rigorous system of accreditation that demands excellence and produces teachers who raise student achievement.” Neither of these organizations, which represent a significant portion of the institutions preparing future teachers, appears bent on defending past practices, ignoring the need for change, or refusing to consider the importance of P–12 learning in their work.

Furthermore, Council for Higher Education Accreditation CHEA (2002), began a significant focus on student learning outcomes with its commission of a paper on the topic in 2001 (Ewell, 2001). A year later, it hosted a series of three Student Learning Outcomes Workshops addressing the issue (CHEA). An outcome defined as a set of direct and indirect types of evidence for assessing student-learning outcomes. These included the following outcomes:
1. Direct: Capstone performances, professional/clinical performances, third party testing (e.g., licensure), and faculty designated examination,

2. Indirect: Portfolios and work samples, follow-up of graduates, employer rating of graduates, and self-reported growth by graduates.

Others have also stressed the importance of student outcomes, some specifically linked to professional accreditation (Ginsberg, 2014). The accrediting bodies typically differentiate between what are called direct and indirect measures, proximal and distal measures, or internal and external measures. The greater reliance, and a requirement for some accrediting bodies, is to focus on the internal, direct, proximal measures as these are best suited for assessing student outcomes in programs as students matriculate through their course of study. Several fields are cautious about the use of the other types of measures (Ginsberg, p. 25).

One of the constant critiques of teacher preparation, which is directly related to my study, is that many teachers report that they did not receive any instruction in their preservice program that relate to serving in areas of high need/persistently low-achieving populations (Hope Street Group, 2016). When colleges did offers courses or experiences, they were typically in special education, social and cultural awareness, or student teaching and internships (Hope Street Group). This is problematic because as mentioned in the statement of the problem, the United States classrooms are becoming much more diverse. Hope Street Group argues that these experiences are not enough. Teachers want and need additional support in meeting the needs of their diverse student populations and
working with different cultures. They recommend that the United States Department of Education consider teacher retention and job placement as two important indicators that should be included as additional comments on proposed regulations for the teacher preparation accountability system under Title II of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Hope Street Group). Cochran-Smith and Fries (2008) claims that this constant tug of war, caused more policymakers to view teacher education reform as a policy problem as opposed to a curriculum, training, or learning problem as the previous decades had done.

Paradigms in Teacher Education

Cochran-Smith and Fries (2009) identify four dominant paradigms to conceptualizing and studying “the problem” of teacher education during four overlapping time periods: (1) as a curriculum problem during the 1920s through the 1950s; (2) as a training problem from the 1950s through the early 1980s; (3) as a learning problem from the early 1980s and into the early 2000s; and (4) as a policy problem from the mid-1990s and continuing to the present day. Teacher education as a curriculum problem derives from the expansion of teacher preparation programs. The industrialization, urbanization, and immigration of the late 19th and early 20th centuries prompted a shift in the curriculum for elementary and secondary students. They argue the curriculum shifted from an emphasis on the classics and the elite to one that included more subjects that were intended to meet the needs of the mass population. This pre-Brown shift generated critics of the curriculum of these times, which resulted in an expansion of the curriculum
to include students of color. Prior to this, the attempt to study teacher preparation that focuses on improving curriculum for all students was not evident.

Although the curriculum expanded to meet the needs of some students, teacher preparation programs were then critiqued for the lack of intellectual rigor, standards, arrangements, research base, and/or failure to achieve positive results in schools. Cochran-Smith and Fries (2009) labels this shift in teacher education as a training problem during the late 1950s to early 1980s. The critiques of this genre lead to the goal of developing a scientific basis for the art of teaching (Gage, 1978), known as the process-product research (Cochran-Smith & Fries; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974). The focus is to determine how the behavior of an individual in preparation for teaching could conform to certain patterns. The objective of this research on teaching and teacher education as a training problem was to identify transportable training procedures that would affect teachers’ behaviors (Cochran-Smith & Fries).

During the mid-1980s the research on teacher education shifted from teacher education as a training problem to teacher education as a learning problem. During this time, the concepts and language of “learning to teach” (Feiman-Nemser, 1983) replaced the language of “teacher training” (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008). During this period, teaching was seen as a cognitive and intellectual practice that was situated, complex, and uncertain; meaning that it was important for teachers to learn how to make decisions, apply strategies differently in different situations, and reflect on their work (Cochran-Smith & Fries). Also, during this period, teacher preparation for diverse students emerged.
(Bennett, 1995; Cochran-Smith & Fries; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1993). This was the first attempt to address opportunity gaps for students of color by preparing teachers to address the needs of diverse students. When teacher education is primarily studied as a learning problem, understanding teachers’ knowledge and beliefs are considered; however, little attention is focused on student academic achievement or the link between teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, student academic achievement and other educational outcomes (Cochran-Smith & Fries). During the late 1990s and early 2000s, research on teacher education shifted from teacher knowledge and learning issues to educational policy issues that focus on outcomes and consequences of teacher education policies and practices (Cochran-Smith & Fries).

Teacher education as a policy problem frames my research problem, because by the mid-1990s, the shifting global economy, coupled with the widening achievement gaps, created the urgency for improving teacher education (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008). The National Commission on Teaching in America’s Future (NCTAF) (2006) asserts that improving teaching and teacher education was the most important effort toward improving student academic achievement. NCTAF aims to improve teacher preparation through systematic professionalization and high standards across the professional lifespan. The American Council on Education’s President’s Task Force on Teacher Education (1999) promoted increases in higher education’s responsibilities for teacher preparation. Although these organizations promote the professionalization of teacher preparation programs, conservative foundations advocated for deregulation of
teacher education and redirection of public authority for quality traditional teacher
preparation and state level bureaucracies (Cochran-Smith & Fries). The politically
conservative Fordham Foundation (Kanstoroom & Finn, 1999) called for market-based
reforms, including alternative teacher preparation programs that focused on student
outcomes. As such, teacher education as a policy problem was focused on finding the
right policies to ensure that teacher education programs are preparing teachers the schools
need to prepare former Secretary of Education Duncan’s “global competitors” (USED,
2011).

President Obama’s administration continued former President Bush’s
administration focus on standardized test-based accountability for K-12 schools. Its Race
to the Top’s (2014) initiative demanded new curricular frameworks, standards and
standardized tests in every state. The goal was to decrease the achievement gaps and hold
schools accountable for internationally competitive standards and assessments (Cochran-
Smith & Fries, 2008; National Education Goals Panel, 1997). Along with the K-12
assessments came the increase of licensure testing for entry into teaching (Cochran-Smith
& Fries). The issue here is that looking at teacher education as a policy problem drawn
from concerns about the achievement gaps between minority and majority students, did
not take into consideration the opportunity gaps, which it is argued (Howard, 2012)
precedes and influence the achievement gaps. One way that policymakers believe that
they could address the challenges of providing a high-quality teaching force was to
manipulate aspects of teacher preparation such as teacher tests, subject matter
requirements, and entry routes, to impact student academic achievement (Cochran-Smith & Fries).

Research syntheses since the 1990s have constructed teacher education as a policy problem; however, they have reached different conclusions about what the evidence demonstrates when impacting student academic achievement. Several of the most controversial and debated syntheses during this time examined the impact of teacher preparation as part of analyses of state-level policies regarding certification, licensure, teacher tests, and other accountability mechanisms (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2000b). Hanushek’s (1997) analysis employed econometric models and techniques, cost-benefit and other analyses, to draw conclusions about the impact of school resources, including teacher qualifications on student outcomes. Other syntheses examined the research base for state or institutional policies regarding teacher requirements such as subject matter preparation, coursework and field experiences (Allen, 2003; Rice, 2003). The study of teacher preparation as a policy problem is the assumption that empirical evidence linking teacher preparation and desirable student outcomes can and should impact policies and practices that focus on teacher preparation (Cochran & Fries, 2008).

Darling-Hammond’s (2016, 2000a, 2000b, 2002) analyses of evidence that focused on teacher quality and achievement, concluded that teacher preparation and certification, contributed at least as much as, if not more than, other variables to educational outcomes including teacher effectiveness and student achievement. In
contrast, a second group of syntheses and responses concluded that while there was
evidence that teachers’ verbal ability and subject matter knowledge had an impact on
pupil achievement, there was little evidence to support traditional teacher preparation, the
study of pedagogy, teacher certification, or program approval and accreditation (Abell
Foundation, 2001a, 2001b; Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Whitehurst, 2002). A third group
of syntheses, mostly prepared by practicing teacher educators, concluded that although
there was some evidence that teacher preparation and licensure had a positive impact on
education outcomes in some content areas and at certain school levels, the research base
related to teacher preparation as policy was not robust enough to be reliable (Allen, 2003;
Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Lauer, 2001; Rice, 2003; Wilson et al., 2001). These
syntheses called for a greater investment in research that focuses on teacher preparation
and developing qualified teachers (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008). The third group of
syntheses was generally consistent in their conclusion that although the teacher education
research base about outcomes was spare, there was also no evidence supporting
elimination of credentialing requirements and no conclusive evidence about the best
teacher preparation program structures or pathways for preparing teachers (Cochran-
Smith & Fries).

The need to invest in rigorous research on teacher preparation as a policy problem
is key to addressing these issues, but research alone also has its limitations. The aspects
of teacher preparation studied from this perspective are often quantifiable indicators that
cannot be used as meaningful distinctions across institutions, pathways, and programs
(Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008). As Cochran-Smith and Fries note, this approach to research also does not take into consideration the contexts and cultures of K-12 schools or how these contexts support or hinder teachers’ abilities to apply their knowledge and skills. Teacher preparation as a policy problem has, so far, focuses solely on pupil achievement operationalized as standardized tests as the most important educational outcome. Although test scores are important, they are not the primary focus of every teacher preparation program. Other outcomes that focus on pupil social and emotional growth and their preparedness to live in a democratic society and engage in civic discourse are also a part of teaching in a democracy (Cochran & Fries).

Ginsberg and Kingston (2014) illustrates the public’s view of increasing the rigor for entry into teacher preparation program. Fifty-two percent of the public favors the use of standardized tests to evaluate teachers. Sixty-three percent favors the use of tests as one third of teacher evaluations. However, when the public was asked to describe the characteristics of teachers that made a difference in their lives, the top responses were: caring, encouraging and attentive/believe in me. The standardized tests that half of the public approved for evaluating teachers provides no evidence to the characteristics of teachers who effectively impacted their lives. This demonstrates a lack of understanding of the implications of using standardized tests to gauge the performance of new teachers.

Further, education is often celebrated as a potential means for breaking the cycle of poverty and confronting racism; however, public schools serving “disadvantaged” students are inadequate in preparing them (Rogers, 2009). The inadequacies of public
schools and the need to change them in order to meet the needs of low-income students provided the rationale for the centerpiece for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) 1965 (Rogers, 2009). The 1960’s critique of teacher preparation brought upon a new idea that disadvantaged students required specialized training. Specialized training differed from conventional training because of its aims to sensitize teacher candidates to the culture of poverty and to communities of their disadvantaged students. This new form of teacher preparation would require new courses, special instructional methods, and curriculum materials designed to meet the needs of undeserved children and introduce prospective teachers to “slum schools” for their practice teaching (Rogers). This began the new era of teacher preparation that considers the needs of students of color.

The limitations of focusing on teacher preparation as a policy problem and the paucity of research genres (Kennedy, 1999) to study teacher education ground the purpose of my study, which is to explore how teacher educators in urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define and represent academic achievement for students of color. My study will also, explore the programmatic features of urban teacher preparation programs that these participating teacher educators identify as effective in contributing to improving students of color academic achievement and closing the achievement and opportunity gaps.

**Linking Teacher Preparation Program Inputs to Student Outcomes**
There are specific studies that focus on how different programmatic features (inputs) of teacher preparation programs contribute to outcomes, including student outcomes. Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli and Wyckoff (2006) conducted a large-scale mixed methods study focusing on different teacher preparation program features, also known as the inputs of the program, and their relationships to student academic achievement in a large urban area, New York City. Boyd, et al. investigated different pathways aspiring teachers can take to gain a teaching position in New York City schools and how features of the different pathways to a teaching license determined the outcomes of the program. The outcomes were whether the candidates teach, where they teach, whether they remain in teaching, and what impact the teachers have on student academic achievement. Their research questions were: (1) What are the programmatic features of the various pathways into teaching for New York City schools?; (2) Who enters which pathway and why?; (3) Who enters which teaching job (i.e., school) and why?; (4) What features of teacher preparation are most effective in helping teachers improve the reading and math performance of elementary school students; (5) Who stays in teaching and for how long?; Who transfers? Who quits teaching?; and (6) What are the relative costs of different pathways into teaching? Boyd et al. utilized the conceptual framework of moving beyond the distinction between traditional and alternative routes of teacher preparation programs and focused on the indicators of quality in five areas recognized by researchers. The five characteristics are: (1) program structure; (2) subject-specific preparation in reading and math; (3) preparation in learning
and child development; (3) preparation to teach racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students; and (4) the characteristics of field experiences. The researchers focused on the labor market feature in their assessment of the effects of teacher preparation programs on the teacher workforce, looking at how particular pathways affect teachers’ entry into teaching and decisions to teach, and remain, in difficult-to-staff schools.

Boyd et al. (2006) collected data on more than 100 teacher education programs located within 16 colleges and universities that provide a significant number of teachers in New York City schools. They collected information from the alternative teacher preparation programs New York City Teaching Fellows Program, Teach for America, and the Teaching Opportunity Program. They investigated program documents, including statements of program philosophy, course requirements, course descriptions, class schedules, information on faculty, and information on field experience and internships. They interviewed administrators, including program directors and directors of field experiences. Boyd et al. surveyed faculty of reading and math methods courses and collected syllabi from instructors. They also surveyed preservice teachers about their experiences in teacher preparation programs. The survey focused on their undergraduate majors, experiences in teacher preparation, prior experience with teaching and with children, and their future plans and preferences. The researchers received administrative data on beginning teachers, including demographic characteristics, salary, education, and performance on certification exams, certification status, and career paths.
Boyd et al.’s (2006) quantitative analyses were based on multinomial and conditional logit models of the probability of new teachers entering pathways with differing characteristics; the probability of entering schools with differing characteristics supplemented by simulated method of moments estimates of a matching model concerned with the allocation of teachers to jobs; multinominal logit models of the decision to stay, transfer, or quit; and linear regression models examining relationships between attributes of teachers and pathways and student test score gains in reading and math in grades three through eight. For the qualitative aspect of their study, Boyd et al. utilized the surveys and interviews with key informants to discover the processes by which the participants get matched to programs and teachers get matched to schools.

Boyd et al. (2006) found that this study was very complex to conduct. First, the field lacks a common database that includes information at the program level about selection, program requirements, schools in which teachers are placed, and faculty characteristics, much less content of course work. To counteract this, they collected information directly from the programs. Also, their measure of achievement for assessments only measured a small portion of student learning. However, they continued to focus on this form of achievement because it’s what policy makers deem as success. Even though this is the dominant metric that is used, the limitations of this study are that Boyd et al. did not solicit the perspectives of faculty members, department chairs and/or program directors about student academic achievement. Boyd et al., concluded what other researchers found, that student academic achievement defined as student test scores
alone, should not be the only metric of achievement (Boyd et al.; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009).

Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb and Wyckoff (2009) continued their work in New York City by expanding their study, which focused on the debate over the best way to prepare teachers to improve the achievement of their students. They shifted the focus from inputs of teacher preparation programs that contribute to student academic achievement to the different types of teacher preparation programs (traditional and alternative) that lead to student academic achievement. They continued to focus on programmatic features that contribute to student outcomes in the urban context New York. Boyd et al. sought to develop evidence to inform the debates by studying teacher preparation programs and the consequences of their preparation for student learning. They focused on the different pathways (alternative and traditional) to prepare teachers to teach in New York City. They explored the research questions: Do these differences in experiences of teachers in teacher preparation programs affect the achievement of the students taught by program graduates? If so, are there aspects of programs that are associated with greater improvements in student achievement? The researchers conducted a two-year quantitative study to address their research questions.

Boyd et al. (2009) analyzed 31 elementary teacher preparation programs, from which the NYC teachers were educated. They focused on both traditional and alternative teacher preparation for comparisons within and between the different routes. They also surveyed first-year teachers to compare the experiences of teachers across both the
traditional and alternative routes that prepare teachers for NYC public schools, not just
the routes that they the collected information from each program directly. They analyzed
documents describing the structure and content of each preparation program, interviewed
program directors, directors of field experiences and other administrative staff of these
programs, surveyed instructors of math and reading methods courses, and surveyed
program participants and graduates of these programs. They used student achievement
data to link it to teacher preparation program content, interviews, survey data, and
observations. Boyd et al. also linked features of the program content to the change in
elementary school students’ achievement scores in math and reading. They used student
achievement gains in math and reading to measure the effectiveness of teaching.

Boyd et al. (2009) utilized a regression analysis to account for biases in their
study. Their first analysis estimated the difference in the average value added to student
learning by teachers from different teacher education programs for estimating effects on
student achievement in math and ELA separately, thereby partialing out student
classroom and school influences. Their second analysis focused on the relationship
between student outcomes and features of the teacher preparation programs. The third
analysis examined the relationship between student achievement and teachers’ own
reports, via the survey administered to all first-year teachers NYC public school teachers
in spring 2005, of their experiences in their teacher preparation programs. Researchers
have expressed disagreement with the use of value added models to link teachers to
student performance, which is why Boyd et al. presented multiple specifications of these models to test their findings.

Boyd et al. (2009) found that there is variation across programs in the average effectiveness of the teachers they were supplying to NYC public schools. The indicator variables for teacher preparation programs were significant at traditional levels. Some programs graduated teachers who were more effective than others. They concluded that teacher preparation programs that focused on the work of the classroom and provided opportunities for teachers to study what they will be doing as first-year teachers, on average, were the most effective. Teachers who had the opportunity in their teacher preparation program to engage in the practices of teaching, also showed gains in their first year of teaching.

The limitation of Boyd et al. (2009) is that it contributes to the debate of which type of teacher preparation programs (traditional and/or alternative) produces the best outcome. This debate resembles the work of President Obama’s administration’s, Teacher Education Reform and Improvement, which highlighted the public identification of teacher preparation programs that are either effective or ineffective. The initiative would require reporting performance data on the program level, not the institution level (USED, 2014). Only those that are rated effective or higher will receive TEACH grants for students to attend their program. Any program that receives a rating lower than effective will receive assistance from the state (USED, 2011). The state will be required to report to the Department of Education the performance of all teacher preparation programs
(traditional, alternative, and residency) based on a combination of employment outcomes of students that graduate from the teacher preparation program, surveys from principals that focus on the performance of the teacher, student learning outcomes and teacher evaluations, and accreditation (USED). This is a challenge for the programs that I would like to study, urban teacher preparation programs, as some of them focus specifically on preparing teachers for high need areas, in which the students are not performing well on standardized tests. My study would not seek to discover which program is more effective or less effective, but rather how they define and represent academic achievement for students of color to their preservice teachers. Furthermore, how the teacher educators in the program describe what programmatic features contribute to student academic achievement.

Harris and Sass (2011), built on the work of Boyd et al. (2006), focused their research on inputs of teacher preparation programs and district opportunities that contributed to student achievement. They focused on understanding the determinants of teacher quality and the relationship between the type of teacher preparation program, including, university, alternative, professional development, on-the-job training and teacher productivity. Harris and Sass leave the reader unsure of how they define teacher productivity; however, it can be assumed that teacher productivity indicates student academic achievement. They utilized the statewide administrative database from Florida that allowed them to link student performance to the classroom teacher and to their preservice training. The data covered all public school students in the state and included
student-level achievement test data for both math and reading in each of grades 3-10 for the years 1999-2000 through 2004-2005. They utilized estimating models, covariates, student, teacher, and school fixed effects to analyze their data.

Harris and Sass (2011) found that elementary and middle school teachers’ productivity increased through hands on experience, which they defined as learning by doing. They also reported that formal training while teaching does not enhance teachers’ abilities to improve student achievement. They found almost no evidence that specific undergraduate coursework in education affects an individual’s later productivity as a teacher. Only in the case of high school reading did teachers whose first undergraduate degree was in education significantly outperform non-education majors. Harris and Sass believe that the ineffectiveness of formal preservice and in-service training may be because teacher productivity is context-specific (i.e. the specific curriculum and/or types of students). They also believe that formal training may be too standardized to account for these differences; alternative, teacher education programs might not be focused on the types of skills that generate student academic achievement. This aligns with the fact that experience, which is less standardized, improves teacher productivity. In their discussion, they implied that teacher education programs are not focusing on the types of skills that preservice teachers need to improve student academic achievement.

The limitation of Harris and Sass (2011) is that there is a lack of clarity of how teacher productivity is defined. It can be inferred that teacher productivity is student academic achievement on a standardized test. It is imperative to explore teacher
educators’ perspectives on student academic achievement, and how they believe that field experiences contribute to their outcomes. Teacher educators’ voices are not highlighted in this study, as the Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) study that at least interviewed them. Teacher educators are some of the people that are on the ground with the students and immersed in research on how to define academic achievement. Bringing their perspectives to the table and utilizing them is imperative instead of just highlighting what policy makers want to hear, even if research does not deem it effective.

Like Boyd et al. (2009), I plan to focus on the programmatic features (inputs) of teacher preparation programs that teacher educators describe as effective in contributing to academic achievement. The overall purpose of the study is to examine how teacher educators of three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. The difference would be to explore the perspectives of urban teacher preparation program teacher educators about academic achievement for students of color. The focus of this study is significant because in the absence of an accepted definition of student academic achievement in both government and non-government regulations and documents, coupled with preservice teachers’ preconceptions that the definition is “academic progress” rather than “academic success,” and with teacher educators’ generally insufficient treatment of multicultural education, what aspiring teachers of urban students of color are being taught becomes the foundation for
their practice of preparing students perform well on their states’ federally-mandated examinations.
Chapter Three

Methods

The purpose of this study was to examine how teacher educators of three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. The three representative urban teacher preparation programs are located in the northeastern U.S. and can be characterized as: (1) a traditional university-based program; (2) an alternate provider of urban teacher education; and (3) an urban residency program.

This chapter focuses on the methods and procedures I used to guide data collection and analysis. The teacher educators included faculty members, department chairs and/or program directors of the urban teacher preparation programs. Faculty members were selected because they teach selected courses that were examined in the study. Department chairs and/or program directors of the urban teacher preparation programs were included in this study because the department chairs and/or directors lead and assist with designing their respective urban teacher preparation programs. Some of the department chairs also taught in the program. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the research questions were the starting and central point, to which the other components,
goals, conceptual framework, methods, and validity, conform (Maxwell, 2013). The following questions were explored through a qualitative research design:

1. In what ways do teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color?

2. How do teacher educators define and describe the programmatic features of their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) as effective in improving students of color achievement?

**Research Design**

I employed a qualitative research design to develop a rich, in-depth and detailed understanding of these teacher educators’ perspectives. This design allowed the researcher to understand social phenomena from the perspective of the identified participants (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I explored how teacher educators of these three teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative and residency) offered the opportunity to highlight their perceptions, truths, explanations, beliefs, and worldviews (Patton, 2002) about preparing teachers to improve the achievement of students of color.

Bales (2006) argue that teacher education policy in the United States has not focused on teacher preparation programs or their faculty. This study provided the opportunity for teacher educators of three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs to provide an understanding of how they define and represent academic
achievement to preservice teachers who are preparing to teach students of color in urban schools.

This study used a constructivist approach within the broader research design. Patton (2002) defines constructivism as the ways in which people in a specific setting construct reality. The purpose for utilizing a constructivist approach was to highlight the programs’ realities, from the perspective of these teacher educators. A constructivist approach was also used to point out these teacher educators’ definitions of student academic achievement and how they understand their program features impact on their students’ outcomes (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Using a constructivist approach provided the opportunity for these teacher educators to discuss how they have constructed their reality that is uniquely situated in each of the three settings (Christie & Alkin, 2004). This approach allowed these teacher educators to share their “realities, multiple mental constructions that are socially and experientially based, local and specific, and dependent upon their form and content” (Guba & Lincoln, 1990, p. 27). Understanding these realities has not previously been examined empirically. In the larger social context, this is important because many of the students whom their graduates will teach, may not be performing well enough on the required standardized tests.

With the passage of the 2016, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the spirit of Teacher Education Reform and Improvement (TERI) initiative was devolved to the states and territories, and is therefore moot. However, as each state takes up policies toward implementing ESSA, some states may seek to link teacher education to student
achievement, for example as Louisiana is doing, and others may not. Under TERI, teacher preparation programs would have been evaluated based on the achievement of K-12 students taught by program graduates. Standardized testing is the dominant metric for determining student academic achievement; however, Levin (2012) argues that focusing on standardized test scores only to determine student achievement does not meet the economic, social, and political needs of society. As such, it was important to understand how three different types of teacher preparation programs: traditional, alternate route, and an urban residency teach and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they prepare their teachers for addressing the achievement gaps that mark the education landscape.

I utilized purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002), and focused specifically on urban teacher preparation programs because these programs are labeled as “urban” teacher preparation programs and their visions and missions indicate that they focus on preparing teachers to teach in urban schools. I utilized aspects of the Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli and Wyckoff (2006) and Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb and Wyckoff (2009) studies presented in chapter II to explore how teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color, as well as how they identify features of their programs that they view as effective in improving achievement for students of color. Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) utilized five indicators of teacher preparation program quality that are areas recognized by researchers: (1) program structure; (2) subject-specific preparation in reading and
math; (3) preparation in learning and child development (4) preparation to teach racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students; and (5) the characteristics of field experiences.

Settings. These urban teacher preparation programs were chosen for this study because the programs focus specifically on preparing teachers to work in large urban neighborhoods that are full of socioeconomic and race/ethnicity challenges that can affect student academic achievement. This is evident through the title of the program, i.e. urban teacher preparation program, and/or the mission of their schools as documented on their institution’s website. Due to confidentiality, pseudonyms have been created for the names of the programs.

Sellers University. The traditional teacher preparation program, Sellers University, is located in a mid-Atlantic city. It is housed in the college of Education, Health and Social Work at a public, historically Black university. The urban teacher preparation program is designed to:

Provide courses and field-based learning experiences which enable students to develop the skills and competencies required to effectively meet the educational needs of children in a multiethnic urban environment; to manage a performance-based, behaviorally-oriented learning environment in the elementary grades; and to prepare students for advanced study leading to careers as specialists in education for children (Sellers University Website, 2015).

In 2015, the urban teacher preparation program enrolled 1,158 students. The college of Education, Health and Social Work has 21-degree programs, including 14 undergraduate, and seven graduate programs. The teacher education program enables students to fulfill
teacher licensure and other professional requirements in the field of elementary education. The undergraduate curriculum is designed to complete in four years, in which students enroll in 15-18 credits each semester. The minimum number of credits required to graduate with a Bachelor’s of Arts in Elementary Education in 126 semester hours. The urban teacher preparation program also offers a Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education.

**Over Achieve Alternative program.** The urban alternative teacher preparation program, Over Achieve Alternative teacher preparation program, is located in major cities throughout the United States, but this study focused specifically on the program in a large city, also in the Mid-Atlantic. Over Achieve (2015) mission is to “enlist, develop, and mobilize as many as possible of our nation’s most promising future leaders to grow and strengthen the movement for educational equity and excellence” (p. 1). Over Achieve argues that “everyone has a right to learn,” especially students from low-income neighborhoods. They prepare teachers to work in urban schools. Over Achieve have 4,200 alumni that have completed their program, in which more than 1,400 of them are teachers (Website).

Over Achieve’s alternative teacher preparation program requires that teachers complete a Master’s degree from their three partnership universities located in the Mid-Atlantic city. The Master’s program spans across two years, and they are required to complete their teaching certification within that time. Students, who are accepted into the program, have options of the subjects and grade levels they would like to teach. The
choices include: early childhood, elementary, biology, chemistry, English, math, physics, social studies, and physics.

*Ruckle Residency program.* The urban teacher residency program, Ruckle Residency, is also located in a Mid-Atlantic city. The program is in partnership with a public school district in the city, and is housed at a public university that also offers traditional teacher preparation programs. Ruckle Residency is an urban graduate teacher residency program that prepares teachers to make an immediate impact on classrooms in the public school system. Their mission is to “cultivate a pipeline of extraordinary teachers who take seriously the job of leveling the playing field and closing the achievement gap” (Ruckle Residency Website, 2015, p. 1). The residency program seeks to attract top content area experts in the nation and equip them with knowledge and skills through an experience-based field component to be effective teachers in an urban classroom. The residency program highlights the work of teaching in urban schools, “Urban schools. They demand the best. They challenge the best. They require the best. Teach for Change” (Ruckle Residency, p. 1).

Ruckle Residency (2015) is characterized as an intensive, school-based teacher preparation program that integrates a research-supported approach to effective urban teaching, with real-world classroom placements under the mentorship of a teacher in the public school system. Ruckle Residency offers three program tracks: (1) Special/ Exceptional Education: prepares students to teach special education to K-12 levels; (2) Middle School STEM: prepares teachers to teach middle school math or science; and (3)
Secondary: prepares teachers to teach content areas such as biology, chemistry, earth science, physics, math, English and social studies at the middle school and high school levels. The residency program accepts candidates of all ages from all colleges and universities who have a bachelor’s degree or higher and at least 3.0 grade point average. Candidates also have to bring a “true passion for social justice—for making a difference through education, one student at a time.” Residents are expected to make a four-year commitment to teaching that includes the residency year plus three additional years of service in the public school district. The residency program accepts 15 students per cohort per year. The students in the program take courses on the campus. They are assigned a clinical coach, three years of mentoring and professional development in schools where the residents are hired to teach. Residents who complete the program simultaneously earn a Master of Arts in Teaching or a Master of Education depending on the program.

Participants. I focused specifically on three types of urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency). There were nine participants in this study; four from the traditional teacher preparation program and five from the residency program. Through Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009)’s studies, I utilized purposeful sampling (Patton, 2002) and interviewed participants who teach in the urban teacher preparation program. The interviewees were chosen because their work and roles align with the five indicators of program quality, that Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) studies utilized to examine student achievement: the department chair and/or
program director of the teacher preparation program to gain information about the program structure, faculty members from both the math and reading content courses, a faculty member who teaches a child development course, a diversity course, and the field experience coordinator.

The demographic data of each participant are displayed in Table 2 below. The demographic data that was collected, is the same demographic dated that was collected by Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli and Wyckoff (2006) and Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb and Wyckoff (2009) studies. More than 50% of the participants self-identified as African American, over 30% White, and less than 1% Vietnamese and German. Among the nine participants, two of the participants are males, and the remaining seven participants are female. One male from Sellers University and one male from Ruckle Residency. Three females from Sellers University and four from Ruckle Residency. Five participants were interviewed from Ruckle Residency Program, and four participants were interview from Sellers University. More than 50% of the participants had experience working in urban schools prior to serving as a teacher educator in the urban teacher preparation program. Two of the participants who were interviewed, are the directors of the urban teacher preparation programs; one at both Sellers University and Ruckle Residency. Two more of the participants are the field experience coordinators, or titled, site directors for the urban teacher preparation programs; one at both Sellers University and Ruckle Residency. One of those participants is also an instructor at Sellers University. The remaining five participants are professors in the urban teacher
preparation program. Since all of the interviewees are directly involved in the urban teacher preparation program, they will be referred to as teacher educators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Pseudonym</th>
<th>Self-Identified Racial Identification</th>
<th>Position &amp; Teacher Prep Program</th>
<th>City &amp; State of Birth</th>
<th>Experience in Urban Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Alao</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Associate Professor/Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, OK</td>
<td>Worked in segregated schools Public school teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Baker</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Associate Professor/Director/ Sellers University</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>Teacher (Public &amp; Charter Schools) Co-principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ball</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Faculty Member/ Sellers University</td>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>Urban parochial schools Pre-college program for low-socioeconomic students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Caldwell</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Associate Professor/Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Freeport, IL</td>
<td>Field Experience in Urban schools Public school teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Donaldson</td>
<td>Vietnamese &amp; German</td>
<td>Director/Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Miami, FL</td>
<td>19 years of teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Collection

Data for exploring the research questions came from two primary sources, document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The two primary sources are described in length, below. The first was a document analysis of each of the urban teacher preparation programs. The information collected from the document analysis provided contextual and program information about the urban teacher preparation program, as well as some sense of how they attended to the academic achievement of students of color.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Experience Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Oakes</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Assistant Professor/Sellers University</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>19 years (teacher and principal) Founding principal (Charter School)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Cook</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Lecturer/Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Lake Trout, PA</td>
<td>No urban school experience Low income public schools (rural &amp; suburban)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Raglin</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Secondary Track Site Director/ Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Norfolk, VA</td>
<td>35 years in public school system Teacher Coordinator Program Chair Central Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Keith</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Instructor/Field Experience Coordinator/Sellers University</td>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>15 years (teaching &amp; coaching)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The semi-structured interviews with the teacher educators provided the opportunity to expand upon the information from the document analysis and/or add additional information about the urban teacher preparation programs and the work of each of the identified participants.

**Document analysis.** I collected preliminary data by first conducting a document analysis of the three urban teacher preparation programs. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher’s intervention (Bowen). Document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods, such as interviews, non-participant observation, and physical artifacts, as a means of triangulation (Bowen; Yin, 1994). Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) also conducted a document analysis of the teacher preparation programs to study the program features of the teacher preparation programs in New York City. They investigated program documents, including statements of program philosophy, course requirements, course descriptions and information on field experience and internships. I explored the programmatic features as gleaned from the following program documents: (1) statements of program philosophy; (2) course requirements; (3) course descriptions and (4) information on field experience and internships to determine how
these features contribute to teacher preparedness in impacting student outcomes. The
documents were taken from the website and cross-referenced with the department chairs
and/or program directors to ensure that the information on the website is up to date and
accurate. If the information was not up to date, the department chair and/or program
director, provided updated documents. Also, if the documents were not available on the
website, then I requested the documents from the department chairs and/or program
directors.

**Semi-structured interviews.** After the information from the document analysis
was collected, I collected data by conducting semi-structured interviews with nine teacher
educators, including a department chair/program director who is currently employed at
each urban teacher preparation programs. All interviews were conducted face-to-face
(Glesne, 2011; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009; Maxwell, 2013) and lasted for 45 minutes to
120 minutes with the teacher educators.

Teacher educators were interviewed at each site using of Boyd et al. (2006) and
semi-structured interview as “an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of
the life-world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described
phenomena” (p. 3). In order to build rapport with the interviewees (see Appendix C), I
contacted the teacher educators via email prior to our initial interview to introduce
myself. I also offered the opportunity to speak to them via phone to answer any questions
about the study. In these interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Guion, Diehl, &
McDonald, 2011; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011), I asked open-ended questions to teacher educators, to explore their understandings and definitions, and collect rich information about their perceptions, and perspectives about how they define academic achievement for students of color. I also asked questions about how the programmatic features they identify as preparing teachers to improve the achievement of students of color. The questions were crosschecked to ensure that they aligned with the research questions (see Appendix D).

The interview questions were designed using the indicators of program quality developed by Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009). This framework was chosen because they had already found that these are indicators of teacher preparation program effectiveness. Open-ended questions were appropriate because the teacher educators could answer them freely. Through interviews, a researcher can gain insight into the meaning assigned to particular actions and events by participants. In the interview process, the interviewee is the expert on the subject whereas the researcher is a learner (Patton, 2002).

Originally, there were supposed to be 18 participants, six per urban teacher preparation program, according to Boyd et al (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) indicators of program quality. Only two of the urban teacher preparation programs, Sellers University and Ruckle Residency allowed access to interview teacher educators, resulting in 12 possible interviews. I contacted the director of research for Over Achieve Alternative urban teacher preparation program, to receive contact for teacher educators to interview. I
was told that outside researchers are not allowed to interview their teacher educators. They have a private research organization that conducts any research with their program. The director indicated that I could access the documents online and analyze them for my document analysis. This was very disappointing, because Over Achieve Alternative urban teacher preparation is said to be revolutionary in teacher preparation. Over Achieve (2015) argues that “At the center of this education crisis are low-income youths living in urban communities across America. Fueling the crisis has been a nationwide failure by most university-based teacher education programs to prepare teachers for the realities of the 21st century classroom.” The founders of Over Achieve Alternative urban teacher preparation program created an independent school that will train effective teachers better than university-based teacher education programs. They claim that their program will close the achievement gap for students of color, unlike, university-based teacher education programs. If this is indeed revolutionary, then access should have been provided to showcase their great work.

When interviewing teacher educators at Sellers University, the program director, also taught the Teaching of Reading course. There was also a faculty member that taught both the Diversity and the Child Psychology courses, decreasing the number of participants from six to four. When interviewing teacher educators at Ruckle Residency, there was not a Teaching of Mathematics faculty member to interview, because there were no students in the mathematics licensure program, focusing on teaching
mathematics. Instead of six interviews of teacher educators at Ruckle Residency, there were five.

At the beginning of each interview, interviewees were asked for permission to record the interviews for transcription and analysis. A handheld device was used to record all of the interviews. All interviews were scheduled to take place in person; however, some teacher educators were interviewed via phone. The department chair at Sellers University was interviewed, face-to-face, and the other three teacher educators, opted for phone interviews due to their lack of availability on campus.

During travel to Ruckle Residency, there was an ice storm, and the campus was closed. Three interviews were conducted via phone and two, face-to-face when the campus reopened. Throughout the study, the researcher completed analytical memos (Saldaña, 2013). Before the interviews were conducted, a data collection memo was composed about the overall experience of collecting qualitative data. A reflective memo was composed after the interview, which focused on the details that were discussed during the interview that closely aligned with the research purpose and questions. After each day of interviews, a data collection memo was composed to document the overall experience of qualitative research. To track each step of data collection, a timeline was completed (see Appendix E).

A private transcription service was used to transcribe the interviews. Once the transcriptions were sent to me, I listened to the interviews again, to check for accuracy of the transcriptions. To become immersed with and in the data, I listened to each interview
and composed an analytic memo that focused specifically on the purpose of the research study and the research questions. To ensure that the interview questions were not flawed, have limitations, or other weaknesses, a pilot test was conducted.

**Pilot testing of interview protocol.** An important element to the interview preparation was the implementation of a pilot test. The pilot test provided the opportunity to address any necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). A pilot interview was conducted with a faculty member, Si Maldonado (pseudonym), at a university in California, in the Silicon Valley area. Si Maldonado was chosen for the pilot interview because he is a faculty member at a university that prepares teachers to work in urban schools. The interview took place on November 21, 2015 and it lasted for 40 minutes.

Through the pilot interview, it was confirmed that the approach to interview teacher educators as Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) highlighted as indicators of program quality, was sufficient to utilize as a guiding framework. Dr. Maldonado indicated that each of the faculty member’s courses served different purposes, which may not highlight academic achievement of students of color, e.g. a methods course. However, each faculty member was given an opportunity to describe the primary focus of his or her course. Dr. Maldonado also specified that the word choice (students of color, urban and academic achievement) in the study would prompt very different responses depending on the teacher preparation program and/or faculty member. I am aware of this, which is why I did not provide a general definition of the terms. I provided the opportunity for teacher
educators to define these terms based on their context. I discovered during the pilot interview, that I didn’t have any general questions about each interviewee. During the pilot interview, I also noticed that I should ask the program structure questions to everyone interviewed, not just the department chairs/program directors. This decision was made because this should be common knowledge for everyone that is part of the teacher preparation program. Dr. Maldonado for the pilot study, was able to articulate the answers to these questions, and made this suggestion. After the pilot interview, I adjusted the original questions (Appendix F) and added interview questions (see Appendix G).

**Data Analysis**

**Document analysis.** Through the document analysis, each document was read thoroughly to become familiar with its contents. I used a matrix (data collection sheet) to highlight the common ideas, and code the data (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). The document analysis began before the interviews. The document analysis was also revisited intermittently during the interviews and after the interviews. I tested the protocol by collecting the data from several documents, and revised it as needed based on the documents from the teacher preparation programs. I read the notes repeatedly and thoroughly, to identify the themes that emerged (Altheide & Johnson; Creswell, 2011; Patton, 2002). Each document was read four times. The first time I read the documents, I didn’t take any notes. I read it the first time, for familiarity. The second time I read the documents, I highlighted words and phrases in the document that stood out and took marginal notes. The third and time I read the documents, I underlined important words
and phrases that aligned to research question one (definitions academic achievement for students of color), and added marginal notes. The fourth and final time, I underlined important words and phrases that aligned to research question two (programmatic features that contribute to the academic achievement of students of color), and added marginal notes.

After reading through each document, four times, using the steps above, the words and phrases that were highlighted, underlined and marginal notes were added to a Microsoft Excel sheet. The words and phrases were reread to create preliminary codes. After the preliminary codes were created, I read through the preliminary codes to create the themes. The themes were added to a separate codebook for the document analysis.

**Interview analysis.** After I conducted each interview, I wrote reflective and data collection memos (Saldaña, 2013). Once the interviews were conducted, I listened to each interview and composed analytical memos. Once I had preliminary interpretations of the analytical memos, I developed a qualitative codebook. A codebook is a statement of codes that helps to organize the data and enables researchers to draw conclusions (Creswell, 2011). The codes were developed from the words or phrases from both the memos and transcripts. I then divided the text into different phrases, sentences, and paragraphs and create preliminary codes for different key points found in the data.

After each interview was transcribed I read the entire transcript of each interview, four times, thoroughly and catalogued my ongoing interpretations through memoing. I followed an inductive analysis process of qualitative research analysis where I repeatedly
read the transcribed documents, compared the data, revised and developed codes for the ideas, examined for common categories and then themes from the data (Hesse-Bieber & Leavy, 2011; Patton, 2002). Thomas (2006) indicates that the primary purpose of the inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in the raw data. I then grouped the themes into even larger dimensions or perspectives to formulate the answers to my research questions (Hesse-Biber & Leavy). While reading each transcript, I looked for the teacher educator’s definitions of academic achievement for students of color. I examined similarities and differences of how each teacher educator of the urban teacher preparation identified and described their programmatic features. I looked for how the teacher educators identified and described the programmatic features as effective in improving the academic achievement of students of color. I also looked for outliers that did not align with teacher educator’s definitions of academic achievement for students of color. Outliers were also highlighted in teacher educator’s description and identification of programmatic features that improve the academic achievement of students of color.

The same steps that were applied in reading through the documents for document analysis, was applied to reading through the transcripts. Each transcript was read four times. The first time I read the transcripts, I didn’t take any notes. I read it the first time, for familiarity. The second time I read the transcripts, I highlighted words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs in the transcript that stood out and took marginal notes. The third time I read the transcripts, I underlined important words, phrases sentences and
paragraphs that aligned to research question one (definitions academic achievement for students of color), and added marginal notes. The fourth and final time, I underlined important words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs that aligned to research question two (programmatic features that contribute to the academic achievement of students of color), and added marginal notes. After reading through each document, four times, using the steps above, the words and phrases that were highlighted, underlined and marginal notes were added to a Microsoft Excel sheet. The words and phrases were reread to create preliminary codes. After the preliminary codes were created, I read through the preliminary codes to create the themes. The themes were added to a separate codebook for the interviews. Once each codebook was created separately, I read through each codebook, comparing and contrasting the themes. One final codebook was created, illustrating the similar codes from each codebook.

After coding the data, I shared the codebook with two critical friends. One critical friend indicated that my codes were based on literature. I utilized terms from my literature review instead of using phrases from the words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs from the actual transcripts. My other critical friend indicated that the codes that I created could be utilized for discussion of study, but I would have to analyze the data again, and develop codes using only the words from the transcripts. The data was analyzed again, using the steps above.

**Comparative analysis: Document analysis and interviews.** After the themes were finalized, I conducted a comparative analysis (Patton, 2002) of both data sources;
document analysis and interviews. Comparative analysis compares and contrasts two
things (Patton). Document analysis and interviews were utilized for the first research
question: In what ways do teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs
(traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of
color? I compared and contrasted the program documents definitions of academic
achievement to the definitions of the teacher educators. This process was not performed
for the second research question, as only semi-structured interviews were utilized to
address this question.

Quality

Reliability and validity are essential components of any research study that should
concern any researcher’s quality of her/his study (Golafshani, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Reliability. Reliability is the ability to replicate results of a study in different
locations by different persons under different conditions (Oluwatayo, 2012). This
definition is only applicable to my study in some ways. I replicated some aspects of Boyd
et al. (2006) and Boyd et al (2009) studies. For example, I utilized their indicators of
program quality to determine the participants in the study and to frame the interview
questions. I also utilized their framework for document analysis. The frameworks that I
utilized in my study can be utilized in other studies.

My study could be replicated at other similar urban teacher preparation programs
that focus on preparing teachers to teach students of color. A researcher could explore
how other teacher preparation programs define student achievement and the program
features that prepare teachers to improve student outcomes. However, other teacher preparation programs that do not have this focus may not be able to transfer my findings to the context of their program.

Also, different teacher educators who are not interviewed may be able to contribute to the conversation about academic achievement for students of color, and the aspects of their programs that prepare teachers to improve student outcomes. The teacher educators may also have different definitions of academic achievement. Background information about each faculty member was explored in the document analysis and the interviews, which may provide context for their definitions of academic achievement. I gathered information about the teacher educator’s race, ethnicity, gender, academic work, and their work at the teacher preparation program. Furthermore, the programmatic features of each program are different, and this was explored in the document analysis.

**Validity.** Validity is an essential component of qualitative research (Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, it is imperative that strategies are developed to establish credibility and transferability of the research outcomes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Simon & Goes, 2011). Validity highlights the ways in which you may be wrong (Maxwell). Validity also indicates the extent to which an instrument actually investigates what it planned to investigate and how much the result allows the researcher to make inferences about the subject (Lindell & Ding, 2013). I aligned every aspect of my study, from my epistemology, constructivism, to my methods with my research question. I ensured that the interviews with the teacher educators aligned with my research question to avoid
validity threats (see Appendix D for research question alignment). The following paragraphs illustrate the threats to my research study and ways in which I improved the validity of the study. The validity threats are researcher bias, reactivity, rich data, respondent validation, and triangulation.

**Researcher Bias.** Qualitative research is primarily concerned with understanding how a particular researcher’s values and expectations may have influenced the conduct and conclusions of the study and avoiding the negative consequences of these (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013). My researcher bias is that I have always been an advocate for traditional teacher preparation programs. I am a product of a traditional teacher preparation program, Spelman College, which focused specifically on preparing teachers to be culturally sensitive to the needs of their students, regardless of race, class, gender, or socioeconomic status. Also, my race and gender as an African American woman, who grew up without both parents, in an impoverished neighborhood, increases and influences my understanding and passion for students of color from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. I taught English Language Arts for four years and coordinated an International Baccalaureate program for two years; in a high school that serves predominately African American students with more than 80% of the students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. I understand the importance of having great teachers who are culturally sensitive in classrooms for these students and to understand how academic achievement for them is more than just a standardized test score. Therefore, I had to keep this in mind when analyzing the data from the interviews and from the documents to
ensure that my opinions and bias did not influence my findings. I had to ensure that I accurately highlighted the perspectives of all of the programs, regardless of my own personal biases and beliefs. To ensure that my researcher bias did not influence my research study, I utilized two critical friends to review a sampling of my analysis from the interview transcriptions and my memos to examine if my opinions and biases are integrated, which can impact my findings.

**Rich data.** Maxwell (2013) and Becker (1970) each highlights that both long-term involvement and intensive interviews enable you to collect “rich” data that are detailed and varied enough that they provide a full and revealing picture of what is going on. I piloted my interview questions to ensure that the interview questions were simple and easy to understand. I also encouraged teacher educators to express their honest and sincere sentiments, without restrictions, about academic achievement of students of color to increase richness of the data. I only asked follow-up questions for clarification if they did not address a concept or idea that emerged as particularly important from my review of the literature (Creswell, 2012). I also used verbatim transcripts from the interviews, not just notes that I felt were significant, to inform my analysis.

An important threat to validity of qualitative conclusions is the selection of data that fit the researcher’s existing theory, goals, or preconceptions (Maxwell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Shweder, 1980). Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli and Wyckoff (2006) and Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb and Wyckoff (2009) began the work of the most integral aspects of program quality that impact student achievement: (1)
program structure; (2) subject-specific preparation in reading and math; (3) preparation in learning and child development (4) preparation to teach racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students; and (5) the characteristics of field experiences.

Along with the interviews, each program’s features were examined to explore how the teacher preparation programs prepared their teachers to improve the achievement of students of color, to avoid validity threats. These forms of data align with constructivism because teacher educators within the teacher preparation programs were given an opportunity to express freely how they construct their perceptions of academic achievement for students of color and how they should be held accountable, according to their context, to prepare teachers to improve the achievement of students of color.

**Respondent validation.** Respondent validation (Bryman, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2013) is systematically seeking feedback about your data and conclusions from the people you are studying, and to avoid the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what the participants say during the interviews, their perspective on what is going on, and a method to identify one’s biases (Maxwell).

**Member checking.** After conducting the face-to-face interviews, the interviews were transcribed into a Microsoft Word document, by a private transcription service. I listened to the transcriptions more than once; to ensure that there were not missing parts in the transcription (Marshall, 2011). Once the interviews were transcribed, the researcher and a second coder coded them. After each interview, I wrote reflective and data collection memos. The teacher educators were given an opportunity to review their
transcriptions to ensure that their responses are represented accurately. There was only one teacher educator, that wanted to review the transcript, and I extended that opportunity. This is known as “member checking” which allows the interviewees the opportunity to check errors of facts or interpretation (Glesne, 2011; Simon & Goes, 2011).

**Intercoder agreement.** Intercoder reliability or intercoder agreement (Tinsley & Weiss, 1975) is essential to qualitative content analysis. If the coding is not reliable then the study cannot be trusted (Lombard, Synder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). Intercoder reliability was determined in my study by comparing categories used and resolving coding disagreements through discussion (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004: Schreier, 2012). In order to ensure the credibility of the research, a second coder serving as a critical friend (Samaras, 2011) coded all interviews and documents using the same coding procedure described above. The second coder was trained on the coding process before I began to analyze the data. The codes were compared using a comparative coding sheet (Schreier) in which the codes from each coder were listed for each aspect of Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al.’s (2009) aspects of program. There are various ways to interpret and analyze data; however, there is value in dialoguing with a second coder not only to verify labels but to determine whether experts and researchers would agree with the ways in which data is labeled and sorted (Graneheim & Lundman).

**Critical friends.** To increase the validity, I also cross-referenced the themes with two critical friends. My critical friends are other doctoral students, whose research study
is closely related to this study. Finally, throughout this effort, I engaged an “expert review,” in which I requested assistance from my dissertation advisor and committee members to review, critique, guide, and provide feedback throughout my entire research process. My committee represents a group of experts from different disciplines, in which they bring different perspectives and theoretical understandings about my research subject (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011). I sought feedback with the interview process, coding, theme development, formal data analysis and answering the research questions.

**Triangulation.** The different types of data that were collected from different sources, provide triangulation. Triangulation is collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods (Glesne, 2011; Maxwell, 2013). This strategy reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method. To ensure the triangulation of my study, I collected information from three different urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, residency). I also interviewed teacher educators, which provided the opportunity for different teacher educators in the teacher preparation programs to provide their views and definitions of academic achievement for students of color. The different types of teacher preparation programs demonstrates a variety of settings also. Along with the different settings, in which I provided descriptive information, and the interviews of the different teacher educators, I also conducted a document analysis.

This study also did not provide the opportunity to interview other teacher educators that do not align with the indicators of program quality, defined by Boyd et al.
(2006) and Boyd et al. (2009). There may be other faculty members who teach in the program that could have contributed to the discussion about how they define academic achievement for students of color. The limitations described above, will be revisited in future studies.
Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine how teacher educators from three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color. The teacher preparation programs’ various documents and features provided the backdrop for this examination. To achieve this goal, I performed a document analysis and conducted semi-structured interviews with teacher educators from these preparation programs.

The study was guided by the following two research questions:

1. In what ways do teacher educators in urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color?

2. How do teacher educators define and describe the effectiveness of programmatic features within their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) in improving academic achievement of students of color?

This chapter will be a discussion of the findings after examining and analyzing the multiple data sources. The discussion includes the results of the data specified to Sellers University, Over Achieve Alternative, and Ruckle Residency’s definitions of academic achievement.
achievement, and will analyze the programmatic features described as effective in improving the academic achievement of students of color.

The major themes that resulted from the data analysis related to Sellers University definitions were academic achievement centered on growth, advancement, progress, and college and career readiness. Over Achieve Alternative’s definitions of academic achievement focused on development of academic skills, character development, college and career readiness, and standardized testing. The definitions of academic achievement from Ruckle Residency included mastery of standards, standardized testing, progress, college and career readiness, civic responsibility, and whole child education.

Below, I describe the findings from my study. The findings are broken up into first and second passes of data.

**First Pass of Data**

First, I describe the findings from research question one: In what ways do teacher educators in urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color? The findings from the document analysis is discussed first, the semi-structured interviews second, and lastly a comparison of the two data sources; document analysis and semi-structured interviews.

Then I describe the findings from research question two: How do teacher educators define and describe the effectiveness of programmatic features within their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) in improving academic achievement of students of color? The findings from the semi-structured...
interviews are discussed only, as document analysis was not used for this research question. Each teacher preparation program will be discussed individually; in the order of traditional (Sellers University), alternative (Over Achieve) and residency (Ruckle).

**Second Pass of Data**

The second pass of data highlights the themes across each teacher preparation program. First, I describe the themes from research question one: In what ways do teacher educators in urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color? Then I describe the themes from research question two: How do teacher educators define and describe the effectiveness of programmatic features within their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) in improving academic achievement of students of color? Finally, the teacher preparation programs are also discussed comparatively.

**Academic Achievement Defined**

**First pass of data.** The findings from the document analysis at Sellers University, is discussed first, the semi-structured interviews of the teacher educators second, and lastly a comparison of the two data sources; document analysis and semi-structured interviews.

**Sellers University.** Sellers University is the traditional teacher preparation program. The program is located in a mid-Atlantic city. It is housed in the college of Education, Health and Social Work at a public, historically Black university.
Document analysis. Sellers University urban teacher preparation program emphasized that academic achievement for students of color should include student’s success beyond the classroom; specifically, its definition centered on post-secondary success. Sellers University vision statement highlights “high-quality instruction facilitated by practitioners who are prepared to make outstanding instructional decisions, helping to ensure that students are college and career ready” (Sellers University website, 2016) They envision their future teachers impacting student achievement in the form of college and career readiness. The documents’ definitional focus on preparation for college and career readiness revealed different terminology from that used by the teacher educators.

From document analysis and interviews with four faculty members, the definitions of academic achievement for students of color that emerged from the Sellers University teacher educators included: growth, advancement, progress, and college and career readiness. Three of the four teacher educators had their own definitions for academic achievement for students of color. One of the four teacher educators, Mrs. Keith, indicated that she allows the teacher educators themselves to create definitions of academic achievement. Mrs. Keith serves as the practicum coordinator. The findings from the semi-structured

Semi-structured interviews. Dr. Baker, the director of teacher education at Sellers University, defined urban in the following way:
So we talk about the myths, the code of what urban means. So because when we say urban, you all know what that means and in your mind urban means, they are a bunch of black and brown kids… And so, what I try to get them to understand, and we read the literature and talk about it. But a lot of what urban has to do with is economics. And so we’re taking about a lack of resources. And really, the key to urban is poverty and understanding the impact and the effects of poverty on families and what that means for education because if we can’t have or we don’t have then survival’s going to be first. I mean, if that’s just hierarchy of needs, that’s basic (A. Baker, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Baker’s definition of urban hinged on the impact and effects of poverty on families.

She argued that urban is an economic disadvantage and more than race and ethnicity. She further argued that it is not that parents are unconcerned about the well being of their families, but they are focusing on survival.

Dr. Baker offered growth as a definition of academic achievement for students of color as growth:

But achievement is about growth to me and it’s reaching milestones. And so, we have to set goals and say, alright I need to always be moving forward. And so that’s what you’re going to look at. Are they moving forward in lots of areas? Because it can’t just be this one thing is all that, because you all get upset when somebody tries to come in and say, this one moment in time says everything about you (A. Baker, personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Baker’s explanation of academic achievement for students of color focused on growth over time. Her explanation highlighted how students develop over time and reach milestones based on their experience. Dr. Baker also expressed that a single moment, such as one captured during a standardized test, should not determine a student’s achievement level.
Dr. Ball, mathematics professor, provided the context of urban for the university’s urban teacher preparation program in the following way, “I define it primarily for them to deal and to prepare them to teach the students that come from the lower socioeconomic scale of that urban environment” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Ball indicated that their students are prepared to teach students from low socioeconomic neighborhoods. He also defined urban in terms of socioeconomic gaps:

Urban is with what you have an inner city of a major metropolitan area in which you have a gap or a spread of income. And in that spread of income, you have a gap between a large population of primarily people of color, who are in the low socioeconomic scale of that spread of income, alongside a population of people that are not of color, i.e. white, that are on this upper end of that socioeconomic scale (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Ball argued that urban is associated with gaps that exist between people of color who have a low socioeconomic status and Whites who are in the upper end of the socioeconomic scale.

Dr. Ball defined academic achievement as how students’ skills advance throughout a course in preparation for the next one:

Academic achievement with the – no matter what grade level you are at, that you have mastered successfully the skills, knowledge, and you are able to do the activities for that subject or within that grade level that prepares you for the next stent of activity. That could be academic achievement at the elementary school level that would prepare you for success at the middle school, likewise middle and the high, and high and post-secondary, and post-secondary into careers in the workforce (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Ball’s explanation of academic achievement for students of color indicates that a student should master skills at one level that prepares them for the next level.
Furthermore, Dr. Ball’s definition of academic achievement aligned with Dr. Baker’s definition of academic achievement when it comes to determining achievement via a standardized test. He commented that:

Academic achievement is not defined for me as a measure of how well you do on a test that’s measured at that grade level. It really is defined by how well you do on that grade level, or how well you were prepared in that grade level for the next band of grading (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

For these two professors at Sellers, academic achievement should not be measured by an assessment in one grade. At Sellers University, teacher educators defined academic achievement as growth and advancement, with one teacher educator defining it as progress.

Dr. Oakes, a professor of psychology, reading methods, and diversity, defined urban as:

Urban to me typically means challenges. It means multi-layered. It means nuance. It means special. It means diverse -- diverse in more than one way, diverse in income, diverse in gender, diverse in socioeconomic status, income, race, class. But it also means -- not mean this, but I'm going to say it. It also really means black and brown, heavily black and brown. And also in some cases it means marginalized and underserved, and that's been the historical conscience. So we're moving away from that being the narrative around urban education because of desegregation and because of flight in other way, or I should say flight back or the return. I don't know what the opposite of flight is, but there's input of white and upper middle class people that are returning to urban spaces (Personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes highlighted the multi-layered complexity of defining urban. She indicated both the challenges and complexity of defining urban. Urban communities consist of more than just people of color. Due to gentrification, Whites are moving back to urban areas.
This complexity must be taken into consideration when defining urban. She also unpacked the definition of urban to provide context for the landscape of teaching in urban schools. She challenged the negative perceptions of urban:

I let them know that for many years there's been -- and probably for decades there's been a concentration on urban education. And urban education meaning poor, meaning black, meaning marginalized, meaning disenfranchised, meaning underserved, meaning unworthy, meaning stupid, meaning inept, meaning inadequate, all of those things and helping them understand that that narrative shouldn't define urban education (Dr. H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes also expressed that she challenges her students to look beyond the dominating narrative that everything urban is negative. She shared with them the complexity of defining urban, and the structural systems of society that contribute to the negative conditions in urban spaces.

Dr. Oakes defined academic achievement as “progress monitoring and the use of data” (personal communication, February 17, 2016). Dr. Oakes elaborated on how she contextualizes this definition for students of color:

So I talked about the -- what the historical data, you know, so historically how African-Americans have performed. But I also think that -- I know that that's loaded. So there's a reason why some African-American students underperform. And so we talk about that. You know, what does that mean? What does that mean for the curriculum? And what does that mean for the teachers that engage our African-American students that are not performing well? What does that mean for the home that they're coming from? And how does that misalignment impact their ability to progress and their ability to actually see the progress that we want to see? So, achievement versus progress, I also juxtapose those. So what types of progress do we want to see and how do we quantify progress, so that it doesn't look like it's not noteworthy of change in some way? So how do we see the advances that students are making, but also what are those advances attributed to? Are they attributed to new ways of educating teachers and better preparing them
to engage students? Or do we attribute that to advances in curriculum and resources or what, you know? Or do we attribute it to how we engage parents to better help the students and provide them with the support and resources they need to be better students and better thinkers? (personal communication, February 17, 2016)

Dr. Oakes pointed to what the definition of academic achievement means historically for students of color. She provided the contextual factors that contribute to the lack of achievement for students of color, and then suggested what should determine progress based on all of the factors. As the teacher educators of Sellers University defined academic achievement for students of color as growth, advancement and progress, their program documents defined academic achievement as college and career readiness.

**Second pass of data.** The second pass of data highlights the themes across Sellers University. The themes are described comparatively. There is a comparison of the documents and the semi-structured interviews.

**Similarities and differences.** The documents for Sellers University provided a definition of academic achievement. The definitions that the teacher educators provided did not mirror the program’s definition. There was only one teacher educator who expressed a similar definition to the program documents. The similarities and dissimilarities are discussed below.

**College and career readiness.** The documents for Sellers University defined academic achievement as preparing teachers to make instructional decisions to ensure that students are college and career ready. According to Sellers University’s vision
statement, “High-quality instruction [is] facilitated by practitioners who are prepared to make outstanding instructional decisions, helping to ensure that students are college and career ready” (Sellers University website, 2016). Sellers University’s vision focuses on future teachers’ abilities to impact student’s achievement in becoming college and career ready. Dr. Ball’s definition of academic achievement for students of color specified that students should master skills that prepare them for different levels, including college, “That could be academic achievement at the elementary school level that would prepare you for success at the middle school, likewise middle and the high, and high and post-secondary, and post-secondary into careers in the workforce” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Ball articulated that each level should prepare students for the next level, ultimately preparing the student for college and career. In this way, Dr. Ball’s definition aligned with the documents of the program.

Progress. Dr. Oakes, a professor of psychology, reading methods, and diversity, defined academic achievement as “progress monitoring and the use of data” (personal communication, February 17, 2016). Dr. Oakes’s definition of academic achievement did not align with any of the other teacher educators at Sellers University. She was the only teacher educator that suggested using data as a tool to monitor student’s progress.

Growth. Dr. Baker, director of the urban teacher preparation program at Sellers University, used growth as the definition of academic achievement:

But achievement is about growth to me and it’s reaching milestones. And so, we have to set goals and say, alright I need to always be moving forward. And so
that’s what you’re going to look at. Are they moving forward in lots of areas? (A. Baker, personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Baker communicated that the definition of academic achievement is growth and reaching milestones. None of the other teacher educators’ definitions of academic achievement focused on growth. However, there was one other teacher educator whose definition of academic achievement did align with a part of Dr. Baker’s by not defining academic achievement as one measurement.

*More than one measurement.* As Dr. Baker defined academic achievement as growth, she also suggested that it should not just be a test, “Because it can’t just be this one thing is all that, because you all get upset when somebody tries to come in and say, this one moment in time says everything about you” (personal communication, February 18, 2016). She argued that one moment in time should not determine the achievement of a student. Dr. Ball also shared this same definition of academic achievement. He agreed:

So academic achievement is not defined for me as a measure of how well you do on a test that’s measured at that grade level. It really is defined how well you do on that grade level, or how well you were prepared in that grade level for the next band of grading (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Academic achievement should not be measured by an assessment in one grade. The two educators argued that academic achievement should not focus solely on standardized test during one moment in time.

**Summary**

Two of the teacher educators at Sellers University defined urban as socioeconomic differences. Specifically, Dr. Baker defined urban as economic difference,
focusing on the impact and effects of poverty on families. Dr. Ball defined urban as socioeconomic gaps that exist between people of color and White people. Dr. Oakes defined urban as structural systems within society. Finally, Mrs. Keith stated that she allows the teacher educators in other courses to define urban. The teacher educators at Sellers University agree that socioeconomics define urban; however, one argued that there are structural issues that exist that cause the socioeconomic gaps. All of the teacher educators agreed that there are structural issues that contribute to negative perceptions of urban.

There was only one teacher educator, Dr. Ball, whose definition highlighted college and career readiness. Two teacher educators, Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes defined academic achievement as growth and progress. This analysis indicates that teacher educators’ definitions do not align with definitions in program documents. As a result, the teacher educators at Sellers University are providing different definitions of academic achievement for students of color to their preservice teachers. This lack of consistency is an important element in evaluating the effectiveness of the program. This lack of consistency is also important in student’s understandings of academic achievement as they enter the classroom as a new teacher.

**First pass of data.** The findings from the document analysis at Over Achieve Alternative, is discussed only, as access to interviews were not allowed.

**Over Achieve Alternative.** The urban alternative teacher preparation program, Over Achieve Alternative teacher preparation program, is located in major cities
over the United States, but this study focused specifically on the program in a large city, also in the Mid-Atlantic.

Over Achieve Alternative’s definition of academic achievement includes mastery of academic skills, character development, college and career readiness, and standardized testing. As mentioned in chapter III, permission was not given to interview its teacher educators.

More specifically, Over Achieve’s mission document states, “Over Achieve’s mission is to teach teachers and school leaders to develop in all students the academic skills and strength of character needed to succeed in college and life” (Over Achieve Alternative website, 2016). This indicates that academic achievement is defined as development of academic skills as measured via standardized tests and character development to be college and career ready. This definition highlights academic achievement that will prepare students for achievement beyond K-12. The implied definition of academic achievement in the mission is different from the expectations of academic achievement within their course requirements.

Over Achieve’s course requirements are described in a more granular way. They focus specifically on academic achievement each year. The course requirements indicate that the courses should, “dramatically improve student learning in the classroom. We expect students to ensure that their own students achieve at least one year of academic progress and character development in one year’s time” (Over Achieve Alternative website, 2016). The primary focus of their course requirements is to improve student’s
learning by one year in one year’s time. This strongly suggests that their definition of academic achievement is standardized testing. “One year’s growth in one year’s time” implies that assessments are utilized to determine student’s academic achievement. Their vision states, “Our vision is to become the place where a new generation of continuously-improving, results-focused individuals can fulfill their destiny in the world’s greatest profession” (Over Achieve Alternative website, 2016). Students within their program are expected to be “results-focused,” which also aligns with focusing on the results of standardized test scores.

Unfortunately, due to an inability to gain access to the faculty members, it is impossible to compare their definitions to that of the program. Further, it is also impossible to compare their definitions across the faculty members themselves.

The documents for Over Achieve were the only data source. Their mission defines academic achievement as the development of academic skills and character. However, their course requirements indicate that academic achievement is focused on one year’s progress and character development. This definition of academic achievement is focused heavily on standardized test performance. The one element that aligns between the two is character development. Without teacher educator’s perspectives of academic achievement, it is difficult to determine the validity of their documents, in comparison to what happens in the classroom.

First pass of data. The findings from the document analysis at Ruckle Residency, is discussed first, the semi-structured interviews of the teacher educators second, and
lastly a comparison of the two data sources; document analysis and semi-structured interviews.

**Ruckle Residency.** The urban teacher residency program, Ruckle Residency, is also located in a Mid-Atlantic city. The program is in partnership with a public school district in the city, and is housed at a public university that also offers traditional teacher preparation programs. Ruckle Residency is an urban graduate teacher residency program that prepares teachers to make an immediate impact on classrooms in the public school system.

**Document analysis.** Ruckle Residency’s program documents did not specifically state any definition of academic achievement for students of color. There were highlights of achievement in their clinical residency documents, but not an explicit definition that provided guidance and/or a framework for the faculty and their residents. For example, Ruckle Residency’s clinical residency documents specified that residents were supported in critical assessment and their “use of data to improve student achievement” (Ruckle Residency website, 2016). The documents also stated that, “The Resident’s responsibilities will gradually increase throughout his/her experience in the school setting. Eventually the resident will be responsible for completing all instructional planning, teaching the entire day, and monitoring students’ academic and social progress” (Ruckle Residency website). This suggests that residents will be introduced to student academic achievement within the classroom. The cooperating teachers “are responsible for ensuring that their classroom, with Residents, delivers what is needed to support the
achievement of their students” (Ruckle Residency website). Cooperating teachers, then, are responsible for ensuring that residents learn how to support the achievement of students in their classroom. This statement does not reveal what achievement looks like in each classroom, nor specifically for students of color. Furthermore, the cooperating teachers are expected to “Support the Residents’ critical assessment and use of data to improve student achievement” (Ruckle Residency website). The ownership is placed on the cooperating teachers, rather than on the program, to provide support for residents in analyzing student data to improve student academic achievement. While there is not a specific definition of academic achievement in the program documents, in the individual interviews, the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency urban teacher preparation program did provide definitions of academic achievement for students of color.

*Semi-structured interviews.* The teacher educators at Ruckle Residency program’s definitions of academic achievement for students of color included: mastery of standards, standardized testing, progress, college and career readiness, civic responsibility, and educating the whole child. The five teacher educators had multiple definitions of academic achievement.

Dr. Donaldson, director of Ruckle Residency program, provided her definition of urban to provide context for the community that residents will teach in:

But it's a medium size urban city and high concentrations of poverty and other you know -- and a school system, predominantly, minority students. That isn't necessarily my definition of urban. But unfortunately in our society today, that is what has, happened especially here in the South. It's -- I'm sure you know, you know, the history of, uh, integration, is, you know, once the schools were
integrated, some -- it was so much White flight... I think it's primarily the, the
concentration of poverty that leads to the need for lots of social services for the
students (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016)

Dr. Donaldson’s comments indicated that she understands the realities of the urban
schools that the residents will teach in. When teachers apply to the program, she provides
the demographics of the urban schools that the residents will teach in. She shared the
following with the residents:

It is a city. And I show them that -- the demographics of the populations, 75
percent of the students on free and reduced lunch. You know, I think it's like over
50 percent are living below the federal definition of poverty. 60 percent -- I can
send you -- I don't have the statistics sitting, sitting right in front of me, but, you
know, are coming from single, um -- parent -- families, primarily, of course, the
female. A single mom. 20 percent are getting special education services. Um --
no, I think it's like 60 percent are below the average income within the Greater
Metro area here. So, I don't define urban. I define the local public schools and
the challenge that we're facing (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February
15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson provided the context of the urban school district that residents will teach
in. She ensured that residents have a clear picture of what they are stepping into, as
opposed to adding her own definitions of urban.

Dr. Donaldson defined academic achievement for students of color according to
the state, which is mastery of standards and standardized testing:

Well, I mean, the way it's defined, of course, in our state as in others is how the
students are performing on our, uh, [state standardized testing], that measure, you
know, how they are progressing. I think that's -- whether we like it or not, that's
the definition that you know, we are operating under. But, you know, for, for me
personally, what I would like to see is that, we are looking at growth (T.
Though Dr. Donaldson would like to define academic achievement as how students grow over time, she understood the realities of academic achievement for students of color: mastery of standards and testing in the state in which the residency program operates.

Mrs. Cook, a psychology instructor, allowed the residents and the program to define urban within the courses that she teaches. She was also transparent by stating, “I am very humble in that I know that I haven’t had as much experience working in the school systems as the other teachers have. I have more of a researcher role in the school system” (H. Cook, personal communication, February 17, 2016). Mrs. Cook was transparent in her lack of experience, so she allowed the students to express their definitions of urban based on the program’s definition and their experiences during the practicum.

Mrs. Cook defined academic of achievement for students of color as mastery of standards, testing, and progress monitoring:

We actually talk about how policy defines academic achievement, but then we also talk about academic achievement from an educator standpoint. And I, with my research interests and you know, how – I try to make a point that there is a duality in how policy defines academic achievement, and how a lot of teachers will define achievement for students, and I really try to bring that to the front of teachers’ minds. I want them to understand that it might be something that they struggle with, and that’s okay, you know. So we have discussions about that in my classroom often, and especially when we talk about motivation, we talk about goal setting for students. And so we talk about how these are the standards and these are what is expected from policy, but we also talk from motivational perspective, for example, how it’s healthy to set goals for your students, and they might not match policy but this is what you need to do to keep your students motivated in a healthy way. And we talk about how sometimes those don’t match, and that’s okay (personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Mrs. Cook emphasized the realities of policy and personal preferences as teachers. She stated that she informs residents that there are expectations that they will have to adhere to and that there are ways that they could incorporate academic achievement as academic progress within their classrooms.

Dr. Caldwell, an English methods professor, defined urban as “marginalized social groups” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Caldwell had his own definition of urban, and he provided the opportunity for students to deconstruct the term also.

Dr. Caldwell acknowledged that the definition of academic achievement for students of color is mastery of standards, “I think one specific way these questions, of achievement come up, is around, [state standards]. We're not a common core state, we use [our own state standards]” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Caldwell elaborated on the idea that urban schools have to define academic achievement as standardized testing and standards:

Residency students have -- are, are already kind of in the schools right away and many of these schools they're really locked into having to teach to the test of keeping so focused on [standards] because we know these are a huge consequence for classes and for schools, and I get it. Like I think it's chained with so much time and attention as we get overdue, but I also understand why the schools do it, given that high stakes are attached to it (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell recognized the high stakes that are attached to working in urban schools, and how teachers are expected to demonstrate students’ academic achievement through mastery of standards and standardized testing. Dr. Caldwell is aware of this pressure; the
residents who are part of the Ruckle Residency program expressed this pressure to him.

Students have to meet the expectations of the state in order to be labeled as academically successful. Dr. Caldwell also taught the residents how to understand academic achievement as standards and progress. He provided specific strategies about how it can be demonstrated in an English class:

So we talk -- we, we talk a lot about, um, how we, how we take a student-centered, engaged-act style of learning - that's a very general way of describing how I teach, how they teach English - and how to do that in a way that has some very practical, direct types of teaching that as a, as a nice added bonus also can, can help you help students strike in their [test] scores (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell articulated to the residents that there should be a balance in focusing on standardized testing and progress.

Expanding upon his definitions of academic achievement as mastery of standards, standardized testing, and progress, Dr. Caldwell included the idea of civic responsibility. He indicated that the history of education and achievement has always focused on preparing students to be active citizens within their community and in society. Dr. Caldwell argued:

Public schools in the U.S. have always had sort of a civic mission as well that the achievement of understanding what plays in and what one's responsibilities in, a democracy, a civic space, how to be a responsible and active participant in one's community, um, that's, you know, that's a major thing that we've always tried to do with schools, that is -- that's really important. It's difficult to do often but, uh, but really can be done. So that's, that's another kind of achievement (personal communication, February 15, 2016).
According to Dr. Caldwell, a form of academic achievement should include students’ lives beyond the K-12 classroom, into their community and society. He communicated that focusing on students’ identities, families, and communities first, creates buy-in and interest from students on academic tasks:

I’m convinced by all the research that shows that in fact, um, one of the ways of setting kids up to, um, take seriously and to work hard at some of the more gnarly kinds of academic tasks that, you know, more traditionally we -- what just sets you up for college or your work life. The way to help students sort of engage with that is to really strongly engage students in who they are as full people, as members of the communities, as these growing participants in the civic space, the more we can tap into that and help them find connections between those parts of who they are and those more gnarly kind of academic tasks (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell conveyed that students must be engaged as full people, members of the community, and growing participants in the civic space before a teacher can engage them academically.

Dr. Caldwell’s final definition of academic achievement for students of color was college and career readiness. He stated, “There's also the idea of setting students up. Uh, now increasingly more and more kids, uh, were, were singled. We wanna have the, the road as open as possible to either do some kind of post-secondary education” (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016). One of Dr. Caldwell’s key points was that academic achievement should provide the opportunity for students to pursue postsecondary options.
Mrs. Raglin, Secondary Track Site Director at Ruckle Residency, provided context of how residents enter the program defining urban, and the response she provides:

You know, I think that many people come to us, and I just think – I'm quite certain, with the stereotypes of what urban means, they automatically take that because it is urban, that the children are all from homes where – single parent homes that they are all from low income homes, that they are all, whatever, whatever those stereotypes are, they all of them fall into those categories. Which of course is not true. There are children from homes where parents are highly educated with graduate degrees and so forth. There are children who are from very middle class environments living in you know, they may because their house or homes are within the [city limits] that puts them in [the public school system], but those homes could be on the peripheral… So I think a lot of times their expectations are often low because here again, just a stereotypical type of thing. I think that they sometimes come with a missionary mindset, as these kids, I’ve got to help them. I think their intentions are good overall, I don’t think they always know how to reach the children because they don’t what urban means. What does urban mean, beside what the dictionary tells us. I think their connotation, aligns with the denotation, which is unfortunate. Because if urban means low income to the residents, and that’s their only view, or perspective of urban, then they won’t see it any other way (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin described the complexity of defining urban. She indicated that urban does not just include people of low socioeconomic status, but middle class status too. She articulated the mindset that some residents enter the program with. Mrs. Raglin pointed out that sometimes the resident’s connotations of urban align with the experiences of people that live in urban communities. However, residents should have more than one definition of urban.

Mrs. Raglin defined academic achievement also as college and career readiness:

And we can use the word vocation because whatever job you do, whether you are a carpenter, or you are the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, that is your vocation. So I connect everything with the expectations of the work realm. And I try to work with teachers and especially my residents on doing that very same thing
because my feeling is that when people can connect what they are learning in school to the real world, to real world usage, they will probably hold on to it. But when it appears to have no meaning whatsoever, they will toss it; it's like why do I need to know this (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin offered that everything, including academic achievement should be preparation for a student’s future vocation. Students should be able to relate what they are learning in the classroom to the real world. While some of these teacher educators stressed that academic achievement should prepare students to be ready for college, career, and life, one teacher educator, as described below, expressed that academic achievement should focus on preparing the whole child to be successful.

Dr. Alao, the professor who leads the program’s Friday Seminar, provided her definition of urban during the interviews. She also shared this definition with the residents:

When we talk about urban here in our city there are really urban schools, um, throughout the Metropolitan area if you -- of the following urban as schools with, uh, density of high poverty students. And probably, marginalized underrepresented minority students, whatever term you wanna use…but in our city, uh, the, the bulk of the students are African-American, the bulk of the students, uh, come from high poverty homes and, um -- so, that's how I define urban (Personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Alao connected urban with the concept of being in a large city with a high population of poverty students. Dr. Alao also described the families of urban students as:

I mean, some of it is -- they don’t have the background. They don’t have the literature going on at home. They don’t have the -- uh, other people have gone to college in my family…yeah, they see people in the neighborhood who graduated from high school. But there are still bums on the corner. You know, so, they don’t have this, uh, the same tons of knowledge that, uh, middle class kids have. It’s just not there (Personal communication, February 15, 2016).
Dr. Alao included in her discussion the implication that urban families are lacking—operating at a deficit, in comparison to White families.

In her definition of academic achievement, Dr. Alao argued that teachers should not just focus on the success of students academically, but personally and socially as well:

I think real, um, personal and professional and, and, um, academic and new growth, all of that stuff comes from, um, our experiences and of course, I think schools should be responsible for teaching students how to be well-developed in the personal, social, and the academic realms (Personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Achievement, in her view, should focus on educating the whole child.

**Second pass of data.** The second pass of data highlights the themes across Sellers University. The themes are described comparatively. There is a comparison of the documents and the semi-structured interviews.

**Similarities and differences.** The documents for Ruckle Residency did not express an explicit definition of academic achievement. It is implied through their program documents that the cooperating teachers with whom residents work during their practicum set the definitions of academic achievement for students of color. The teacher educators, however, provided their definitions of academic achievement. The similarities and dissimilarities are discussed below.

**Cooperating teachers define academic achievement.** The documents for Ruckle Residency program did not provide any definition of academic achievement for students
of color. There were mentions of achievement in their clinical residency documents, but not an explicit definition that provided a framework for the faculty and their residents. The cooperating teachers “are responsible for ensuring that their classroom, with Residents, delivers what is needed to support the achievement of their students” (Ruckle Residency website, 2016). This statement demonstrates that the cooperating teachers are indirectly given the ownership to teach residents how to support the achievement of students in their classroom. This statement does not illustrate what achievement looks like in each classroom, nor specifically for students of color. The responsibility is upon the cooperating teachers, rather than the program, to provide support for residents in analyzing student data to improve student academic achievement. While there is not a specific definition of academic achievement in the program documents, in the individual interviews, the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency urban teacher preparation program did provide definitions of academic achievement for students of color. Several similarities were notable, but there were greater differences among the respondent’s definitions.

*State expectations.* Two of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency defined academic achievement as standards and standardized testing. Dr. Donaldson, director of Ruckle Residency program, defined academic achievement for students of color as being aligned to state mandates for mastery of standards and standardized testing:

Well, I mean, the way it's defined, of course, in our state as in others is how the students are performing on our, uh, [state standardized testing], that measure, you know, how they are progressing. I think that's -- whether we like it or not, that's the definition that you know, we are operating under (personal communication, February 15, 2016).
This definition directly references the state’s expectations around student’s performance on standards and standardized testing.

Dr. Caldwell, an English methods professor, asserted that the definition of academic achievement for students of color is mastery of standards, “I think one specific way these questions, of achievement come up, is around, [state standards]. We're not a common core state, we use [our own state standards]” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Caldwell elaborated on the idea that urban schools have to define academic achievement through standardized testing and standards:

Residency students have -- are, are already kind of in the schools right away and many of these schools they're really locked into having to teach to the test of keeping so focused on [standards] because we know these are a huge consequence for classes and for schools, and I get it. Like I think it's chained with so much time and attention as we get overdue, but I also understand why the schools do it, given that high stakes are attached to it (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell acknowledged the high stakes that are attached to working in urban schools, and discussed how teachers are expected to discern students’ academic achievement through mastery of standards and standardized testing. Mastery of standards and standardized testing is the expectation of the state. Some of the teacher educators defined academic achievement as the expectations of the state, while others maintained that academic achievement can also include the monitoring of progress toward individual student goals.

*State expectations and student progress.* Two of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency defined academic achievement as the state expectations of standards and
standardized testing, along with monitoring student progress. Mrs. Cook, a psychology instructor, defined academic of achievement for students of color as mastery of standards, standardized testing, and progress monitoring:

We actually talk about how policy defines academic achievement, but then we also talk about academic achievement from an educator standpoint. And I, with my research interests and you know, how – I try to make a point that there is a duality in how policy defines academic achievement, and how a lot of teachers will define achievement for students, and I really try to bring that to the front of teachers’ minds. I want them to understand that it might be something that they struggle with, and that’s okay, you know. So we have discussions about that in my classroom often, and especially when we talk about motivation, we talk about goal setting for students. And so we talk about how these are the standards and these are what is expected from policy, but we also talk from motivational perspective, for example, how it’s healthy to set goals for your students, and they might not match policy but this is what you need to do to keep your students motivated in a healthy way. And we talk about how sometimes those don’t match, and that’s okay (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Cook informed residents that there are state expectations that they will have to adhere to and that there are ways that they could incorporate academic achievement through monitoring progress within their classrooms. English Methods professor Dr. Caldwell has a definition of academic achievement that is aligned with Mrs. Cook’s definition.

Dr. Caldwell taught his students how to understand academic achievement as a duality of both standards and progress. He provided specific strategies about how it can be demonstrated in an English class:

So we talk -- we, we talk a lot about, um, how we, how we take a student-centered, engaged-act style of learning - that's a very general way of describing how I teach, how they teach English - and how to do that in a way that has some very practical, direct types of teaching that as a, as a nice added bonus also can,
can help you help students strike in their [standards] (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell stressed to his students that there should be a balance in focusing on the expectations of the state, standards and standardized testing, and student progress. These teacher educators understand the expectations of the state, defined by Dr. Donaldson as academic achievement, but also understand the importance of monitoring student’s progress.

*College and career readiness.* Two of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency defined academic achievement as college and career readiness. Dr. Caldwell expanded his definition of academic achievement to include college and career readiness, “there's also the idea of setting students up. Uh, now increasingly more and more kids, uh, were, were singled. We wanna have the, the road as open as possible to either do some kind of post-secondary education” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Caldwell expressed that academic achievement should provide the opportunity for students to pursue post-secondary options. Mrs. Raglin, Secondary Track Site Director at Ruckle Residency, added to this argument by stating:

And we can use the word vocation because whatever job you do, whether you are a carpenter, or you are the CEO of a Fortune 500 company, that is your vocation. So I connect everything with the expectations of the work realm. And I try to work with teachers and especially my residents on doing that very same thing because my feeling is that when people can connect what they are learning in school to the real world, to real world usage, they will probably hold on to it. But when it appears to have no meaning whatsoever, they will toss it; it's like why do I need to know this (personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Mrs. Raglin discussed that everything, including academic achievement, should be preparation for a student’s future vocation. Students should be able to relate what they are learning in the classroom to the real world. Both teacher educators argued that academic achievement should include preparation and readiness for college and career.

_Civic responsibility._ There is only one teacher educator who defined academic achievement as civic responsibility. Dr. Caldwell’s definition of academic achievement included mastery of standards, standardized testing, progress, college and career readiness, and additionally, civic responsibility:

Public schools in the U.S. have always had sort of a civic mission as well that the achievement of understanding what plays in and what one's responsibilities in, a democracy, a civic space, how to be a responsible and active participant in one's community, um, that's, you know, that's a major thing that we've always tried to do with schools, that is -- that's really important. It's difficult to do often but, uh, but really can be done. So that's, that's another kind of achievement (Personal communication, February 15, 2016).

He maintained that the history of education and achievement has always focused on preparing students to be active citizens within their community and in society. Dr. Caldwell stated that a form of academic achievement should include students’ lives beyond the K-12 classroom, into their community and society.

_The whole child._ One teacher educator communicated that academic achievement should focus not only on the success of students academically, but personally and socially as well. Dr. Alao, professor at Ruckle Residency, referenced academic achievement for students of color in this way:
I think real, um, personal and professional and, and, um, academic and new growth, all of that stuff comes from, um, our experiences and of course, I think schools should be responsible for teaching students how to be well-developed in the personal, social, and the academic realms (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Alao argued that academic achievement should be centered on the whole child.

Summary

Two of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency, Dr. Donaldson and Dr. Alao, defined urban as large metropolitan areas with marginalized groups of people. While she did not provide her own definition of urban, Dr. Donaldson contextualized it with a focus on the demographics of the public school system in which residents will teach. Dr. Caldwell defined urban as marginalized groups. Ms. Alao defined urban as a metropolitan area, of high poverty families, primarily African Americans. Mrs. Alao also defined urban as marginalized groups. Mrs. Cook did not provide a definition of urban. She emphasized that she allowed her students to define it for her, due to her lack of experience in the public school system.

The documents for Ruckle Residency did not provide a definition of academic achievement. It is implied through their documents that the responsibility for such achievement is with the cooperating teachers with whom the residents are placed, rather than with the program or program faculty. These four teacher educators did provide their individual definitions of academic achievement. Three of the teacher educators, Dr. Donaldson, Mrs. Cook and Dr. Caldwell, defined academic achievement as standards and standardized testing. Dr. Donaldson would like to define academic achievement as
progress, but understood the expectations of the state. Dr. Caldwell and Mrs. Cook argued that academic achievement could be defined as standards, standardized testing, and progress. Dr. Caldwell added to his definition of academic achievement by including civic responsibility and college and career readiness. Mrs. Raglin agreed with Dr. Caldwell, defining academic achievement as college and career readiness. Dr. Alao summed up all of the definitions of the teacher educators by defining academic achievement as educating the whole child—academically, personally and socially. This demonstrates that the program documents for Ruckle Residency and the teacher educator’s perspectives do not align. There are some areas of overlapping agreement and some degree of consistency in the definitions provided by some of the teacher educators; however, their definitions are not framed by their program documents.

Cross-site Findings

In this study, the first research question was: In what ways do teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color? A document analysis and semi-structured interviews were conducted with teacher educators from Sellers University, Over Achieve Alternative and Ruckle Residency urban teacher preparation programs. Only two of urban teacher preparation programs, Sellers University and Over Achieve Alternative, had documents, which provided a definition of academic achievement. Sellers University’s definition of academic achievement focused on college and career readiness. Over Achieve Alternative’s definition of academic achievement focused on mastery of
academic skills, character development, and college and career readiness. Ruckle Residency’s program documents did not specify a definition of academic achievement but the documents implied that their cooperating teachers provide the definition of academic achievement for their residents during their practicum.

Documents from urban teacher preparation programs at Sellers University and Over Achieve Alternative provided definitions of academic achievement for students of color, but the definitions that are provided by the teacher educators in their program do not align. There was only one teacher educator at Sellers University, Mr. Ball, who acknowledged college and career readiness in his definition of academic achievement. The other two educators, Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes, argued that academic achievement for students of color should focus on growth and progress. Although teacher educators were not interviewed for Over Achieve Alternative, there was misalignment between their vision and coursework. Their vision focused on mastery of academic skills, character development, and college and career readiness; however, their course requirements’ definition of academic achievement for students of color focused specifically on standardized testing.

The lack of alignment between what is written in program documents and what is articulated by teacher educators in the classroom articulate was also evident at Ruckle Residency. Without any definition of academic achievement for students of color within their program documents, the teacher educators are left without any framework to guide their work. Dr. Donaldson, director of Ruckle Residency, defined academic achievement
according to the state’s expectations of standards and standardized testing. Two teachers, Dr. Caldwell and Mrs. Cook acknowledged the state’s expectations, but also suggested that residents can learn how to focus on progress monitoring too. Dr. Caldwell’s definition of academic achievement for students of color was expansive, including mastery of standards, standardized testing, progress, college and career readiness, and civic responsibility. He acknowledged that his definition of academic achievement is a very lofty goal. Dr. Alao summed up all of their definitions by indicating that academic achievement should focus on the whole child. Even with Ruckle Residency’s alignment of definitions on some things, there appears to be no framework to guide their thinking and teaching.

**Programmatic Features impact on Student Academic Achievement**

The second research question was: How do teacher educators define and describe the programmatic features of their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) as effective in improving students of color achievement? The answer to this research question was explored in the analysis of interviews. Teacher educators at both Sellers University and Ruckle Residency described specific courses, discourse within courses and university and community collaboration as effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

**First pass of data.** The findings from the semi-structured interviews of the teacher educators are discussed below.
**Sellers University.** Teacher educators at Sellers University described specific courses (Educating Urban Students, Culture and Education and Practicum), discourse within courses and in university and community collaborations as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. The discourse included conversations concerning fictional narratives about students of color, the urban community and school. Also within the courses, the teacher educators have met students where they are and helped equip them to be critical thinkers. Teacher educators also suggested that a strong programmatic feature to improve the achievement of students of color would be support beyond the teacher preparation program.

Dr. Baker, the director of teacher education at Sellers University, defined and described: deconstructing fictional narratives about students and families of color within courses, meeting teachers where they are, teaching students to be critical thinkers and community and university partnerships, as programmatic features that improves the achievement of students of color. She discussed deconstructing fictional narratives about students and families. She stated:

That’s why that narrative is so important to deconstruct because when things don’t go right, if I run with that narrative with the crack babies with mamas at 16 who don’t care about school. If I run with that narrative, when there is a breakdown it’s easy for me to blame the student because you got all of this going on because that’s the story we tell ourselves. If they do well, that narrative also allows me to take all the credit. It doesn’t work that way. So we first have to deconstruct that narrative of the urban student, recognize there are some hardships, reality, we know that. We’re going to deal the reality. But outside of a traumatic brain injury, all children can learn (A. Baker, personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Further, Dr. Baker expressed that within the courses, the teacher educators must address and deconstruct the fictional narratives about students of color, their families and their communities. She specified:

So it starts with the deconstruction of the narrative and then the constant accountability and reminding them of what you signed up for and who you’re responsible for. We can’t write kids off. You don’t have that right. You do not have the right to decide that this child isn’t worth it or can’t give it. That’s not your place. And they’re with you all day long and all it takes is one word from you and it goes left or it goes right and you have to be aware of the power that you hold (A. Baker, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

She claimed that fictional narratives provide the opportunities for the preservice teachers to develop the “savior mentality/complex” often found among teachers. In this scenario, teachers mistakenly take the credit for everything that is done well. She indicated that there are issues within the communities of students of color, but it is very complex. Dr. Baker also argued that deconstructing fictional narratives within courses was imperative because such narratives negatively impact the achievement of students of color. Dr. Baker encouraged teachers to deconstruct their fictional narratives about students of color in order to ensure that students are given an equitable opportunity for learning.

Dr. Baker described another programmatic feature, meeting teachers where they are, within the courses and the practicum that improves the achievement of students of color. Meeting teachers where they are happened in the courses and in their practicum. She specified:

So there are some people who get it and we work with. And it’s really interesting because there’s this whole, there are things that I think, like, there are some people we really need to counsel out at the profession. There are some people
who we need to help grow and see in themselves things they don’t see in their
capabilities and sometimes that’s just deconstructing that narrative and so we have
to be better and more diligent. So we have to be the teachers that we’re trying to
help them become (A. Baker, personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Baker communicated that teacher educators have to meet students where they are as a
key element in the journey of becoming a teacher. She also expressed that there are some
aspiring teachers who should be counseled out of the profession because their deficits
would prevent them from helping students of color achieve academically.

Another program feature that Dr. Baker identified as effective in improving the
achievement of students of color is equipping and pushing students to be critical thinkers
within the courses. Dr. Baker challenged the negative perceptions about teaching:

And so then you have TFA who says, we’re going to tell you word for word what
to do, what to say and it’s going to all work. And so because of that, people think
that if you just hand them a guide and they open the page that it all magically
happens. And my number one thing that I teach is that teaching is a thinking
profession. That’s what teaching is, it’s a thinking profession. You have got to
know how to think (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Baker expressed that there is no guide for teaching. It requires teachers to think
through the decisions daily that have to be made within their classroom. She teaches her
students how to think through their instructional decisions to positively impact the
achievement of their students. Dr. Baker stated:

I’m trying to grow your teacher brain because you have to make on the spot
decisions constantly and you have to be strong enough and confident enough and
know enough to be able to do that because we don’t have time to play (personal
communication, February 18, 2016).
Dr. Baker used the phrase “grow your teacher brain” to illustrate that teachers have to be pushed to be critical thinkers within the classroom, and make decisions that positively impact the achievement of students of color.

The final programmatic feature that Dr. Baker described as effective in improving the achievement of students of color is university and community collaboration. She indicated, “So, outside of the students that we teach, we have a moral, I feel like, responsibility to be actively involved in the schools in the community” (A. Baker, personal communication, February 18, 2016). Dr. Baker also highlighted the importance of building the trust between the university and the community:

I tell them and I try to explain to them, when I send my children out everyday I entrust their lives with those people in those classrooms. So my contract is not with the university. It’s with the parents of the city. I am promising them that what I send out, they can trust their children to those people. So I tell people when they come to the cohort, if I shouldn’t trust you with my children, why would I send them out there to mess with somebody else’s child? Like, we can’t do that (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Baker explained to her students that her trust is with the parents in the community, so she has to ensure that the future teachers she puts in front of the kids in the community are as prepared as possible. Dr. Baker argued that her responsibility is to the community. The community has to trust the teachers with their kids.

Dr. Baker expressed that the teacher preparation program begins the work of preparing teachers to positively impact the achievement of students of color, “I think we are moving in that direction. I would be lying if I said, yeah. Yes, there had been people who have come through here that I feel like, yes, we get it. They’re ready” (personal
communication, February 18, 2016). Dr. Baker recognizes that their teacher preparation program is moving in the right direction in preparing teachers to impact student achievement, but they have not arrived yet.

Dr. Ball, a mathematics methods professor, maintained the programmatic effectiveness in improving the achievement of students of color through the courses Educating Urban Students and through the practicum. He specified about the practicum:

We also have our practicum in which students have to go into schools if they are familiar with urban classroom to experience, to be mentored by, and all of that through hands-on practicum course..., I don’t think we can deal with what we just talked about, the root cause of the problem (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Ball indicated that these courses are impactful; however, the impact happens only to a certain extent. Dr. Ball argued that systemic issues are too complex for an urban teacher preparation program to address exhaustively. He also suggested that change has to happen at the policy level:

There is no way that a school or a department of education can take on addressing issues of policy. Other than having maybe master and doctoral degrees in education policy in which we are sending students out into our, uh, as public elected officials or, or consultant in major policy effort to change the structure of education in the urban environment (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Ball argued that urban teacher preparation programs and teachers in the classroom can only do so much; policy change must occur to positively impact the achievement of students of color. He also claimed that master’s and doctoral degrees in education policy,
preparing students to be public officials or consultants, could be a solution to effecting change in the structure of education in the urban environment. He added to this argument:

See that teachers who come out of our education programs designed to prepare them for teaching in the urban school get extremely frustrated, because they realize what they went into teaching to do, to effect change is impossible to do at the classroom level in today’s education, uh, environment. It is really – you are mandated now. You don’t have the autonomy to teach the way you want to teach. Everything you do is being measured by a standardized test and it’s--just so--it’s taken that ability to expose students to what, what you as an educator believe that they really need to have (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Ball indicated that teachers in urban schools can become frustrated because they can’t make change at the classroom level. He argued that teachers do not have the autonomy to teach the way they want to teach. Everything is measured by a standardized test, especially in urban schools. Dr. Ball proposed that the entire education system is flawed, and has to be addressed to really impact the achievement of students of color:

So we have to be willing to do that work because our initial idea of education did not take into account everybody. And so we are just doing patchwork. So what we think might work for this particular moment and then when a newer string come out then we adapt in, and we try that. You know so we are never really dealing with the foundational issues of why this system isn’t working (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Oakes, a psychology and reading methods professor, also identified the courses Educating Urban Students and Culture and Education as being effective in improving the achievement of students of color. She indicated that in an ideal world, an effective programmatic feature would be to support teachers beyond the teacher preparation program. In the courses Educating Urban Students and Culture and Education, the teacher educators focus on unpacking student’s privilege to shape their
mindset about teaching urban students. She stated, “Many of our students are white, so we have to do a lot of unpacking of this notion of privilege and how privilege tends to impact and shape their ways of knowing and being as teachers” (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016). Dr. Oakes described the discourse of unpacking privilege within the courses as having a positive impact on teachers’ abilities to improve achievement of students of color.

Dr. Oakes emphasized that unpacking terms and privilege is a continuous process:

So it’s this continuous process of learning and unpacking and theorizing. So it’s like, okay we walk through this program. It’s a yearlong, two-year long program, and then we package them up and drop them, release them to their devices and often it’s just not enough (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes described an ongoing process of deconstructing privilege within the courses; however, she doesn’t believe that this work can be done effectively within the time constraints of the urban teacher preparation program in which she currently teaches. Dr. Oakes argued due to time constraints within their program, the likelihood is that only a small impact will take place upon the academic achievement of students of color. This was evident in her explanation of teaching and defining academic achievement for students of color:

Now back to this idea of progress monitoring, and progress monitoring and use of data. While it seems like it's a no-brainer, it's a fairly new concept in the education sector. And then you place that around this idea of our program having to be under 40, 36 credit hours, we run out of space in the program scope. So how do we teach progress monitoring with fidelity in a condensed, compressed amount of time? (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Further, Dr. Oakes recognized the difficulty of teaching concepts to teachers in a small window, which is why support is needed beyond the teacher preparation program.

Progress monitoring is the most accepted definition for academic achievement; however, it’s difficult to teach this concept with fidelity due to time constraints within the program structure. Dr. Oakes claimed that the teacher preparation program has some degree of impact on their students and how they will impact the achievement of students of color; however, the program is just a start:

    Yes, it's a starter, you know. It's definitely a starter, but it is not as nearly as comprehensive as it needs to be. And that's not a big university, because I don't know a single university that has a comprehensive program (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Formal teacher preparation is only the beginning of the work that must happen to help teachers positively impact students’ academic achievement; nevertheless, the programs are not comprehensive enough to do this work as completely as necessary. Dr. Oakes suggested that the work has to continue once students enter the classroom as in-service teachers.

    Dr. Oakes indicated that an effective program feature in improving the achievement of students of color would be to provide support for teachers beyond the teacher preparation program. She reiterated that the time constraints within the program are not sufficient enough to really impact the achievement of students of color:

    So it's this continuous process of learning and unpacking and theorizing. So, it's like, okay we walk them through this program. It's a yearlong, two-year long program, and then we kind of draft -- we draft this, you know, we package them up and drop them, release them to their devices and often it's just not enough. So
how do we continuously have, what I call, professional learning communities or small learning communities or whatever to continue these conversations with teachers, so that they can really truly understand how to progress monitors? Really truly understand what achievement looks like and sounds like in some of the most challenging places. To really truly understand how we prepare students for life beyond the K-12 sector. That's what this case is about. How do we prepare students for life beyond the classroom? What are we equipping them with? You know, is it important to us? (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes suggested that the work has to continue once students enter the classroom, specifically through the power of professional learning communities. She recognized that their program prepares students for two years, and then releases them into the world without ongoing support. She asserted that this ongoing support is imperative because,

> Education is ever evolving and the only constant is change, we have to figure out ways to thoughtfully and continuously engage our teachers, so that this doesn't become a one-and-done situation. It's never one-and-done because we're never finished with this work (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

The key point she stressed was that the work is forever changing and evolving, so the support for teachers has to continue. She emphasized that the time constraints inherent in the structure of teacher preparation programs hinder the scope of the work in preparing teachers to positively impact the achievement of students of color. Dr. Oakes added to this argument by stating that she doesn't believe any teacher preparation program is preparing teachers fully:

> It's a major struggle. So, definitely they're prepared to engage, but are they prepared to be high-functioning, high quality teachers who are ready to take on all that, the complex reality that an urban classroom throws at them? Absolutely not, but I don't know any program around the country that can say, you know, unequivocally that they are prepared to do this just -- to take on all of those challenges on day one (personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Teachers are prepared but they are not prepared to be highly quality and high functioning to take on the complexity of urban classrooms, which is why they need additional support once they become full-time teachers.

Two of the teacher educators across Sellers University urban teacher preparation programs argued that the work of impacting the achievement of students of color can be effective through collaboration between the teacher preparation program, university, and the community.

Mrs. Keith, practicum coordinator, described the course Educating Urban Students and the student teaching practicum as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. In the Education in the Urban school course, the teacher educator “goes really deep into understanding what does it mean to go into an urban school” (A. Keith, personal communication, March 2, 2016). Mrs. Keith indicated that this course is effective because it exposes students to the reality of teaching in urban schools. Mrs. Keith also specified that the practicum only impacts a certain percentage of student’s ability to impact the achievement of students of color:

For our graduate students, those who are brand new to the field, I think coming out -- for this year, we definitely would need a coach to support. And I think they definitely would have the knowledge. They definitely will know the theories, that I’ve been trying to incorporate in a lot of my classes outside of the theories for, you know, you know, practices (personal communication, March 2, 2016).
Mrs. Keith explained that the students who have taken the courses will know theory and some practice. However, she indicated that some of the students would need additional help:

So maybe like a partnership with the university for the first two years. And they are becoming, you know -- and they're, and they're -- as they become teachers that the district has to post and then they also have the ones still supporting them from the university side” (A. Keith, personal communication, March 2, 2016).

She argued that there should be an ongoing partnership between the university and the community to provide wrap-around support for students once they become teachers.

**Second pass of data.** The second pass of data highlights the themes across Sellers University.

**Similarities and differences.** Teacher educators at Sellers University defined and described the programmatic features, specific courses, discourse within courses and the collaboration between the university and community as effective in improving students of color achievement. The similarities and dissimilarities are discussed below.

**Specific courses.** Three of the four teacher educators highlighted coursework as a programmatic feature effective in improving students of color achievement. Dr. Oakes, Dr. Ball and Mrs. Keith identified the course Educating Urban Students as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Ball and Mrs. Keith added practicum to the list, and Dr. Oakes added Culture and Education.

**Discourse within courses.** The discourse within courses included conversations concerning fictional narratives about students of color, the urban community, and school
in general. Also within the courses, the teacher educator met students where they were and equipped them to be critical thinkers.

Deconstructing dominant narratives. Only two of the teacher educators, Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes, argued that teacher educators should deconstruct fictional narratives about students of color, the urban community and school. Dr. Baker stated:

So it starts with the deconstruction of the narrative and then the constant accountability and reminding them of what you signed up for and who you’re responsible for. We can’t write kids off. You don’t have that right. You do not have the right to decide that this child isn’t worth it or can’t give it. That’s not your place. And they’re with you all day long and all it takes is one word from you and it goes left or it goes right and you have to be aware of the power that you hold (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes shared the same sentiments about narrative deconstruction as Dr. Baker. She argued that she challenges her students to look beyond the dominating narrative that everything urban is negative. She shared with them the complexity of defining urban, and the structural systems of society that contribute to the negative conditions in urban spaces:

Urban to me typically means challenges. It means multi-layered. It means nuance. It means special. It means diverse -- diverse in more than one way, diverse in income, diverse in gender, diverse in socioeconomic status, income, race, class. But it also means -- not mean this, but I'm going to say it. It also really means black and brown, heavily black and brown. And also in some cases it means marginalized and underserved, and that's been the historical conscience. So we're moving away from that being the narrative around urban education because of desegregation and because of flight in other way, or I should say flight back or the return. I don't know what the opposite of flight is, but there's input of white and upper middle class people that are returning to urban spaces (personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Dr. Oakes highlighted the complexity of defining such a multi-layered concept as urban. She illustrated both the challenges and complexity of defining urban. Urban communities consist of more than just people of color. Due to gentrification, Whites are moving back to urban areas. This complexity must be taken into consideration when defining urban.

Dr. Oakes also highlighted that unpacking terms and privilege is a continuous process:

So it’s this continuous process of learning and unpacking and theorizing. So it’s like, okay we walk through this program. It’s a yearlong, two-year long program, and then we package them up and drop them, release them to their devices and often it’s just not enough (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

The courses provide an ongoing process for deconstructing privilege.

Meet students where they are. Dr. Baker also underlined other topics that should take place during discourse within the courses. Dr. Baker stressed that within the courses, teacher educators should meet the students where they are. She described meeting teachers where they are within the courses as a crucial programmatic feature, and she emphasized her argument that the practicum improves the achievement of students of color:

So there are some people who get it and we work with. And it’s really interesting because there’s this whole, there are things that I think, like, there are some people we really need to counsel out at the profession. There are some people who we need to help grow and see in themselves things they don’t see in their capabilities and sometimes that’s just deconstructing that narrative and so we have to be better and more diligent. So we have to be the teachers that we’re trying to help them become (A. Baker, personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Baker expressed that teacher educators have to meet students where they are in their journey of becoming teachers.
Critical thinkers. Dr. Baker also argued that teacher educators should prepare students to be critical thinkers within the courses. She taught her students how to think through their instructional decisions to positively impact the achievement of their students. Dr. Baker explained:

I’m trying to grow your teacher brain because you have to make on the spot decisions constantly and you have to be strong enough and confident enough and know enough to be able to do that because we don’t have time to play (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

None of the other teacher educators underlined these topics as important in discussions within courses. The only courses that the teacher educators agreed upon as being effective were Educating Urban students and practicum.

University and community collaboration. One teacher educator, Dr. Baker, indicated that a program feature that she identifies as effective in improving the achievement of students of color should be a collaboration between the university, the teacher preparation program, and the community, “So, outside of the students that we teach, we have a moral, I feel like, responsibility to be actively involved in the schools in the community” (personal communication, February 18, 2016). In arguing that that the university has a moral responsibility to be actively involved in the community, Dr. Baker stressed that there should be collaboration between the university and the community. Dr. Baker is the only teacher educator that identified this programmatic feature.

Support beyond teacher preparation. Two teacher educators, Dr. Oakes and Mrs. Keith, suggested that an effective program feature in improving the achievement of
students of color would be providing support for teachers beyond the teacher preparation program. Dr. Oakes and Mrs. Keith elaborated on this collaboration by arguing that teachers should receive support from the university once they enter the classroom as full-time, employed teachers. Dr. Oakes explained further:

So it's this continuous process of learning and unpacking and theorizing. So, it's like, okay we walk them through this program. It's a yearlong, two-year long program, and then we kind of draft -- we draft this, you know, we package them up and drop them, release them to their devices and often it's just not enough. So how do we continuously have, what I call, professional learning communities or small learning communities or whatever to continue these conversations with teachers, so that they can really truly understand how to progress monitors? Really truly understand what achievement looks like and sounds like in some of the most challenging places. To really truly understand how we prepare students for life beyond the K-12 sector. That's what this case is about. How do we prepare students for life beyond the classroom? What are we equipping them with? You know, is it important to us? (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes claimed that the work of teacher educators has to continue once students enter the classroom through professional learning communities. She recognized that their program prepares pre-service teachers for two years and releases them into the classroom without providing follow-up or ongoing support. She suggested that this ongoing support is imperative because:

Education is ever evolving and the only constant is change, we have to figure out ways to thoughtfully and continuously engage our teachers, so that this doesn't become a one-and-done situation. It's never one-and-done because we're never finished with this work (H. Oakes, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Dr. Oakes asserted that the work of education is never finished because it is ever evolving. The structure of teacher preparation programs has time constraints that hinder
the scope of the work in preparing teachers to positively impact the achievement of students of color.

Mrs. Keith agreed with Dr. Oakes in providing additional support for teachers once they enter the classroom. She said that some of the students would need additional help:

So maybe like a partnership with the university for the first two years. And they are becoming, you know -- and they're, and they're -- as they become teachers that the district has to post and then they also have the ones still supporting them from the university side (A. Keith, personal communication, March 2, 2016).

She suggested that there should be an ongoing partnership between the university and the community to provide wrap-around support for students once they become teachers.

**Summary.** The teacher educators at Sellers University asserted that the discourse within courses is a programmatic feature, which positively impacts the achievement of students of color. Dr. Oakes, Dr. Ball, and Mrs. Keith identified the course Educating Urban Students as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Ball and Mrs. Keith added practicum to the list, and Dr. Oakes added Culture, Context and Critical Pedagogy.

Two of the teacher educators, Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes, argued that their courses contain a focus on deconstructing fictional narratives about urban and students of color. They maintained that this element of their coursework helps to ensure against negative mindsets, which in turn could have a ripple effect of negatively impacting mindsets of students, resulting in the low academic achievement. Understanding that some students
will enter the teacher preparation programs with pre-existing personal narratives about students of color, Dr. Baker asserted that it is important to meet their preservice teachers where they are. By doing so, Dr. Baker also expressed that she has to teach students to be critical thinkers within the courses that she teaches. These teacher educators communicated that what happens within the courses positively impacts the achievement of students of color.

Dr. Baker recommended that there should be collaboration between the university and the community. Mrs. Keith and Dr. Oakes elaborated on this collaboration by arguing that teachers should receive support from the university once they enter the classroom as full-time, employed teachers. The collaboration between the university and public school system should be ongoing.

**Over Achieve Alternative.** As mentioned previously, Over Achieve Alternative urban teacher preparation program did not provide the opportunity to interview teacher educators. There are no data about programmatic features that its teacher educators described and defined as effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

**First pass of data.** The themes from the semi-structured interviews at Ruckle Residency, is discussed below.

**Ruckle Residency.** Teacher educators at Ruckle Residency described specific courses (Ethics, Reading Across the Curriculum, Secondary Curriculum, Classroom Management and Practicum), discourse within courses, and university and community collaboration as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. The
discourse included conversations that encouraged students to deconstruct identity and privilege in looking at students of color and the urban community and school. Also within the courses, the teacher educators encouraged students to develop the disposition of being a warm demander in order to teach effectively in urban schools.

Dr. Donaldson, director of Ruckle Residency, described the Ethics and Reading Across the Curriculum courses, teacher and student relationships, practices to cultivate the practice of being a warm demander, and university and community collaboration as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Donaldson described the course Ethics and Reading Across the Curriculum as effective in preparing residents to impact the achievement of students of color once they enter the classroom. She stated specifically about the Ethics course:

One thing that I feel good about and I feel like yes, they are focusing on what’s needed for an urban context. This course is all about urban issues as, you know, inequities set forth in our public school systems (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson is confident that the Ethics course exposed residents to the realities of teaching in urban schools, effectively preparing them to impact the achievement of students of color. Furthermore, she added that the Reading Across the Curriculum course in conjunction with the Ethics course has a “community study project where they get the residents out in the community, walking the community from an asset-base rather than a deficit-base” (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Donaldson
expressed confidence in the work and the content of these courses to expose residents to
the realities and assets of teaching in urban schools.

As Dr. Donaldson described the courses that she argued prepares teachers to
improve the achievement of students of color, she also discussed the realities and
challenges of the residency program. Some residency programs require that the staff
teach the coursework; however, the traditional education school faculty at the university
teaches Ruckle Residency’s coursework. The students from the university’s traditional
teacher preparation program and the urban teacher residency are combined together in the
faculty workload. Dr. Donaldson understands that with this collaboration, teacher
educators of the courses have their perceptions about preparing students to teach in urban
schools:

For example, if we have one English resident this year. Then she has to be in the
English methods course with the regular students. So, I’m not sure that our
English educator is doing anything that uniquely urban focused. Ideally, that’s
what it would be—what we want. But in reality, if he’s got 15 people in his course
and only one of them is in the residency program, I think some of our professors
feel like, ‘Well, we’re not just preparing them for an urban setting. Some of them
are going to be teachers in suburban schools.’ I personally think that’s not true…I
feel like if we are an urban serving institution, like we say we are, we could be
preparing them for urban settings. If they end up—and I can speak from
experience, if you end up in a suburban school, if you know how to teach in an
urban setting with challenges that you know come to your class from all of the
you know, outside issues that’s still enter the school, you’ll be just fine in a
suburban school (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson discussed the complexities of their program design. She maintained that
not every course that the residents take will focus on preparing them to teach in urban
schools. She claimed that preparing students for urban schools prepares them to teach in any school, but the teacher educators at the university do not agree:

I mean, I just can’t imagine that you’re not going to be prepared. But I lost that argument. I’ve been making it for 10 years. Every time we have a strategic plan meeting, I bring up what would be our unique niche as a university in the state, if we would prepare people for the most challenging school settings. But I lost that now” (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson asserted that if all students, traditional or residency, are exposed to teaching in urban schools, they will be prepared to teach all students.

Dr. Donaldson indicated that the importance of teacher and student relationships is a program feature effective in improving the achievement of students of color is. She shared this with the residents in the program:

Well, I think the biggest you know, important piece that we try to hammer home to them is this whole notion that it's relationships, relationships, relationships. That the kids are not going to perform for you unless you show them that you truly care about them. You build a relationship with them. That is the most critical, I would argue, in an urban setting than a suburban setting, and I've taught in those. Because in a suburban setting, they come with the mindset, I'm going to college and I've got to do well in my coursework, you know, whether I like it or not, whether I think it's boring or not because I've got this school and, and that goal has been instilled in me from the time I was born, and I've heard my parents talk about it and so forth. So, for you know, the urban classrooms where that has not been the, you know, situation and often perhaps, you know, adults have failed them in their lives in numerous ways, building that relationship is absolutely critical (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson argued that relationships are especially important in urban classrooms because of the experiences that students might have within their families. She claimed that these relationships are not as critical within suburban areas because the students come with a life plan that includes going to college.
Dr. Donaldson noticed that some of the residents within the residency program struggled with the idea of being a teacher who is a warm demander. Residents within the residency program are exposed to warm demander within their courses, and encouraged to develop this disposition when teaching in urban schools. She stated:

We saw in particular more with our White middle class residents than -- than others this, um -- this, uh, what I want to say reluctance to be the classroom authority, to be the leader in the classroom, to be that warm demander. They seem to think that being a warm demander means that you're mean that you have to yell at kids. And, you know, we're saying no. But you have to be that leader. You cannot be that negotiator. And we've actually heard some of our White residents say, "Well, that's how I was raised. In my family, we negotiated," you know. "We have -- we, we talked everything through and we made a decision as a family, and we're saying, no." These children have come from, you know, a community (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson communicated that it is important for residents to be the authority in the classroom; this is a demonstration of being a warm demander. She argued that this is extremely important for students in urban classrooms:

You've got to be this warm demander, here's why. You have to teach everything. You can't assume. You have to teach them how do you want them to turn in papers, how do you want them to come into your classroom, how do you want them to go to the restroom. You've got to teach everything and you've got to engage them, you know, in the learning (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson expressed that residents have to be the authority in the classroom. Teachers also have to teach everything, with the mindset that students don’t know anything. They should not make any assumptions.
Finally, Dr. Donaldson added the last programmatic feature, university and community collaboration that prepares students to improve the achievement of students of color. She stated:

Well, we really -- and you know, our university is, um -- it's supposed to be an urban, urban serving institution. We're right in the middle of downtown. Uh, I'm not really sure, though, that we are truly an urban serving institution, because in my mind, that means that you are trying to meet the needs of your community (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson emphasized that their university is located in the downtown of the community, so they should serve the community.

The Ruckle Residency program has a direct connection and collaboration with the school district that they serve. Dr. Donaldson, explained this collaboration as:

The liaison between the two -- we coordinate the program, kind of facilitate the discussions between two very, very different organizations and climates and cultures. So sometimes I feel like I'm squeezed in the middle. But no, my job is to really oversee the whole program and make sure everything is going smoothly (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

There is already collaboration between the university and the community with the residency program, in which Dr. Donaldson argued that the university should serve the community because it is located in the community.

Dr. Caldwell, English methods professor, described bringing residents identity to the forefront along with other social groups of each course, as a programmatic feature that improves the achievement of students of color. He stated:

Each of those courses, you know, we, we foreground these, these questions of identity, your sort of larger social groups that, that have to do with race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. These are all -- and, and this is very much
policy about education. This -- all of these, these issues of identity are to be brought to the foreground (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell expressed that courses should begin with the foreground of identity. The issues of identity can also be addressed within a research methods course, which is what he teaches. When students do use specific terms about students of color, Dr. Caldwell provided the opportunity within his course, to address the connotation and denotation of the terms:

So if that's, if that's the case, then, you know, we need to be clear and upfront about who we're talking about when -- you know, who we're working with. And you know, when we use a term like "urban” we can say, “Well, all right. Well, what, what do we mean by that? (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell encouraged his students within his courses to be transparent, authentic and to deconstruct terms about students of color.

Psychology instructor, Mrs. Cook, described the programmatic feature, of teaching residents not to have assumptions about students of color within her course, as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. She stated:

This is what came to my -- it’s not necessarily that--. We can’t just make assumptions. We can’t make assumptions. And I made assumptions and I fell off the stick whenever I did. Because we don’t know what those parents are dealing with. We don’t know what their educational backgrounds are. Maybe they have an awful experience in school. And maybe they were treated like jerk, and maybe that’s why they are avoiding school (H. Cook, personal communication, February 17, 2106).

Mrs. Cook taught the residents to avoid assumptions when teaching students of color. She encouraged the residents to get to know their students to discover their stories and the
stories of their families. Mrs. Cook was very transparent during the interview, by highlighting the negative impact of assumptions that directly impacted her students. She indicated:

And it damaged my relationship with my students initially because I made so many assumptions about race, about -- just about Southern identity to be honest. I mean, there were just so many things that I was ignorant to, that I was like I just didn’t know. I tell them stories all the time about stupid assumptions I made, the neglectful parent, when it really, it was just a single mom working three jobs to get her kid through high school and then send them off to college (H. Cook, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Cook realized the negative impact that assumptions had on her students and their families. She shared these experiences with the residents to keep them from making the same mistakes.

Friday Seminar professor, Dr. Alao described the Ethics, Secondary Curriculum and Classroom Management courses, meeting the preservice teachers where they are and their role as a warm demander, as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. She stated that, “culturally responsive teaching” is the best practice within these courses (T. Alao, personal communication, February 16, 2016). Dr. Alao expressed that culturally responsive teaching is the best practice for not just students of color, but for all students. Dr. Alao, used an opportunity within one of her courses, to teach a resident how to be culturally responsive to one of her students during student teaching practicum. She detailed:

And then, you know -- but this student of mine said, "Well, she’s always looking at the, uh, fashion sites." So, after class, I wrote this young lady an e-mail and I said, look, if the kid is interested in fashion instead of offering tutoring science
after school, offer or tutor in what a career in fashion” is (T. Alao, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Alao recognized the importance of being responsive to the interests of the student in order to create interest in the subject area.

Dr. Alao also emphasized that within courses, teacher educators have to meet teachers where they are in deconstructing their thinking and their identities, in order to positively impact the achievement of students of color. Dr. Alao expressed this:

But that’s what you want to do. You just want to take people wherever you find them and -- and one of the first things I say to them like with the multicultural edu paper, it’s like, "Hey, I had to clean up -- I’ve got my bona fide as far as I’m concerned on race relations. I’m so comfortable with race until I can get myself in trouble" (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Alao indicated that students are given an opportunity to deconstruct their thinking in some of the writing assignments and classroom discourses. She stated:

You know, and, um, by the time they share some of their responses to the classroom management -- uh, I’m sorry, to the multicultural reflection paper, and I know in, in the secondary curriculum class, they do several exercises but one of them is, um, a paper that kind of leads them into understanding a little bit more their standpoint or positionality in the world. And so, I know they talk about that (T. Alao, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Alao noted that the assignments that are given in some courses within the Ruckle Residency program start the process of deconstructing identity and privilege. She also discussed that deconstructing identities and privilege occurs within their discourse in the courses. Dr. Alao claimed that deconstructing student’s identities and privilege are important because if not, it negatively impacts student’s academic achievement. Dr. Alao
added that deconstruction of one’s identity and privilege is a lifelong process, “And so, it's a life-long process. It’s not like, you just get the stop” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Alao understands the complexity of deconstructing privilege and one’s identity, is an ongoing process, which is why she expressed that within the courses, they have to meet teachers where they are in the process of deconstructing their thinking and their identities that can positively impact the achievement of students of color. Dr. Alao understands the complexity of deconstructing one’s thinking and identities, so she is open to working with teachers where they are in their journey of this work.

Dr. Alao also emphasized the importance of the role of the teacher as a warm demander as a programmatic feature that improves the achievement of students of color. She discussed the difficulty of working in urban schools and advocates for the resident to have a warm demander as a disposition, in an urban school. She stated, “Oh, and that -- yeah. It’s really hard for a lot of us. And so -- and that’s why that warm demander stuff is so smart, you know. I love you but I will tell you” (T. Alao, personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Alao expressed that it is a balance of love and care, with correction within the classroom. This is the disposition that teachers must have when teaching students of color in urban schools.

Dr. Alao described aspects of Ruckle Residency’s practicum as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. She specified:

And so, in our program, we, we really, um, consciously select teachers that we've got out and seen at work and we, and we talk to and see if they can talk about the
work they do, which is important. And then they receive, um, lots of training from our coordinator (T. Alao, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Within the residency program, there is a coordinator who coaches the cooperating teachers to provide additional support and direction for supporting the resident. The program is very selective in choosing the cooperating teachers who will work directly with the residents. Dr. Alao argued that selecting the cooperating teachers is “one of the strongest aspects of the program. We've got these people with really stellar teachers for the most part. I mean, you know, we're not 100 percent yet, but we're really pretty good at finding good teachers” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Alao expressed that this is a programmatic feature that contributes to the achievement of students of color. She argued that choosing strong cooperating teachers has a positive impact on the students in the residency program when she stated, “what we're trying to do is make certain that they don't pick up any bad habits from the teachers” (T. Alao, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin, the Secondary Track Site director, also identified practicum, student and teacher relationships, the teacher as a warm demander, and collaboration between the university and community, as effective programmatic features in preparing teachers to improve the achievement of students of color. She emphasized their rigorous selection process for selecting cooperating teachers as the key to preparing future teachers to improve the achievement of students of color. She described this process as:

We go out to the schools, an unannounced visit to those people whose names have been given to us, and we observe them as they deliver instructions. And then of
course we do our ratings and so forth and come back and we talk about it and then we decide based on the little knowledge that we really have of the residents at that time because they are just becoming residents (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

The school community recommends the cooperating teachers, however, Ruckle Residency engages in a selection process, and the practicum coordinators conduct unannounced visits to see the teachers in action. This process is selective, because the teacher educators recognize the impact of practicum on the residents in the program, and the students they will impact. Mrs. Raglin further indicated that the cooperating teachers have to be “highly respected by students and parents and administration and other teachers, you know alike. And so we work with identifying the ideal individual to pair that individual on that resident with” (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Residents are paired with a cooperating teacher who is highly recommended, respected and effective in impacting the achievement of students of color. Mrs. Raglin provided insight on how the cooperating teachers are paired with residents within the program. They are chosen based on:

How we think the two will work well together. Sometimes we have some concerns regarding that because if they are in a content area, and you know that’s the thing about secondary, you are in a specific content area and we are talking about this case in the core. The English, the science, the math and the social studies are the areas that we have residency. And it could be any area in science, it could be biology, chemistry, physics, these are all first science (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).
Ruckle Residency is strategic in pairing the cooperating teacher with the residents to ensure that the residents will be able to learn and pick up great habits and strategies from them to positively impact students of color achievement in urban schools.

Mrs. Raglin is aware of the perceptions that students have about urban students and their families when they enter the program:

You know, I think that many people come to us, and I just think – I'm quite certain, with the stereotypes of what urban means, they automatically take that because it is urban, that the children are all from homes where – single parent homes that they are all from low income homes, that they are all, whatever, whatever those stereotypes are, they all of them fall into those categories. Which of course is not true (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin’s stressed the danger of just one story about urban lifestyles. She discussed the negative impact of the one story about urban students and their families. She stated:

And if I see you already as somebody who can’t do, that’s my perception, before I even lay eyes on you, and I'm going to water down the work that we do because my expectations are low. I don’t think you can do this at a particular level, you can’t function academically at this particular level, and then it's going to always be subpar. And that is not preparing people for anything. It hurts, it doesn’t help, it hurts (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin, argued that having a deficit view of students of color negatively impacts teachers’ expectations of those students.

Mrs. Raglin also described the importance of student and teacher relationships to residents as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Mrs. Raglin communicated this to the residents during their feedback in their practicum. Mrs. Raglin expressed that students need to understand that teachers care, before students will work for them. She stated:
And they want discipline. They literally are begging for it, and then so many
people don’t see that and thus don’t give it to them. And they think, in fact they
don’t care how much you know, and you what that old adage is; they don’t care
how much you know until they know how much you care. And they think that
when you provide that structure, and you insist upon certain things, they equate
that to, this person cares about me, and that’s all that they want, because they’ll
work for you (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016)

Mrs. Raglin stated that students must be able to see that a teacher cares for them. Mrs.
Raglin expressed this to her residents as a reminder when they enter the classrooms for
their practicum. Mrs. Raglin provided an example of the dynamics of the student and
teacher relationship:

It’s a difference. And that’s the thing, I always want the students to know that, yes
I want you to feel comfortable in coming to me if you feel you want to, and I will
be that person that year, I will be that individual that you can talk to. That
individual that gives guidance and direction and that kind of thing. But there is --
we are not pals, we are not peers. So friend in terms of someone that you can go
to. But peer, I am not (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016)

Mrs. Raglin communicated that she understands the importance of student and teacher
relationships, but the boundaries have to be clear. Creating boundaries within the student
and teacher relationships is an example of a teacher who is both warm and authoritative.

Mrs. Raglin identified those two attributes as programmatic features that are
effective in improving the achievement of students of color. She also articulated why they
are especially important within the urban classroom:

I am not your peer. So we don’t -- it’s not that I am going to try to be your friend
from that perspective where we slap five that is not it. And once the residents
that I have who are doing that kind of thing generally have more difficulty with
the classroom management because as you indicated that line is not clear. And
they want to know why sometimes it’s okay for me to, or for the two of us to talk
a certain way and so forth. And then other times you are telling me I can’t do that (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016)

She claimed that if teachers do not act as the authority within the classroom, it will cause boundary issues between the student and teacher. Mrs. Raglin teaches this to the residents during their practicum. She also added the challenges for some residents:

They are so accustomed to feeling – the biggest problem we have with a lot of them that I feel is this thing goes back to this negotiating versus just putting it out there type thing. Some of them think that to be firm, be what they call, what education often describes as the warm demanding, you know, to have that kind of demeanor. Many of them see that as you being mean because you have to raise your voice. Now you voice could be at a decibel higher than it was but it still could be pleasant but just by virtue of the fact that it’s louder they see that as that’s not mean, I can’t be that person. So we’ve had to have many conversations, come to Jesus if you will, conversations about what it means to be the teacher that your students need (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin recognized the difficulty of being a warm demander when it is not a part of a resident’s personality. She conveyed to the residents that this disposition is needed within an urban classroom.

Mrs. Raglin described collaboration between the community and the university as a programmatic feature that positively impacts the achievement of students of color. The residency program is a liaison between the university and the public school system. However, Mrs. Raglin, highlighted that collaborating with the school district is not enough. There has to be trust between the university and the teacher preparation program:

Because trust is important and not they don’t have faith in the program itself, but when you are talking about, asking people to change how they do things in anyway, they need to have a base that they are familiar with and one that they trust. Because you are talking about the residents going into schools beginning on the first day the teachers report, not the first day that students report but that
teachers report and being there throughout the entire school year, not leaving until students leave in June (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin averred that there must be trust between the program and the school district. The expectations for students are high, and cooperating teachers have to be open to working with students throughout the entire school year. Beyond creating trust between the community and the university, Mrs. Raglin also discussed the importance of having important conversations between the community and university. She highlighted the importance of the conversations that they are grateful to have:

We have a liaison individual person who serves, actually her job in the [public schools] is director of professional development, but she serves as the liaison with the residency with this program pertains to protocol and how the district does things and wants things done, even so far as you know, leaping over [Laughs] the fence, and doing something without making certain that we have in fact checked with everybody or talked with everybody with whom we should have shared whatever information prior to putting the information out there as this is something factual, this will talk place, this will happen. We have, we always talk with her first (R. Raglin, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Raglin asserted that the connection between university and public school district is so imperative as it provides cultural and social capital for the residency program.

**Second pass of data.** The second pass of data highlights the themes across Ruckle Residency.

**Similarities and differences.** These teacher educators at Ruckle Residency defined and described the programmatic features, specific courses, discourse within courses and the collaboration between the university and community as effective in
improving students of color achievement. The similarities and dissimilarities are discussed below.

Specific courses. Two of the teacher educators highlighted courses as being programmatic features effective in improving students of color achievement. Dr. Donaldson and Dr. Alao identified the course Ethics as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Donaldson added Reading Across the Curriculum and Dr. Alao added Secondary Curriculum and Classroom management to the list of effective courses.

Discourse within courses. The discourse within courses included conversations that encouraged residents to deconstruct their identity and privilege concerning students of color and the urban community and school. Also within the courses, the teacher educators encouraged residents to develop positive relationships with students, and to develop the disposition of warm demander in order to teach in urban schools.

Deconstructing identity and privilege. Three of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency identified deconstructing privilege and identity within courses as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Caldwell, English methods professor, described bringing teachers identity to the forefront along with other social groups to each course as a programmatic feature that improves the achievement of students of color. He stated:

Each of those courses, you know, we, we foreground these, these questions of identity, your sort of larger social groups that, that have to do with race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc. These are all -- and, and this is very much
policy about education. This -- all of these, these issues of identity are to be brought to the foreground (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell communicated that courses should begin with the foreground of identity.

When students did use specific terms about students of color, Dr. Caldwell provided the opportunity within the course, to address the connotation and denotation of the terms:

So if that's, if that's the case, then, you know, we need to be clear and upfront about who we're talking about when -- you know, who we're working with. And you know, when we use a term like ‘urban’ we can say, ‘Well, all right. Well, what, what do we mean by that?’ (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell encouraged his students within his courses to be transparent, authentic, and to deconstruct terms about students of color.

Dr. Alao also articulated within courses that teacher educators have to meet residents where they are in deconstructing their thinking and their identities; this can be an important component in positively impacting the achievement of students of color:

But that’s what you want to do. You just want to take people wherever you find them and -- and one of the first things I say to them like with the multicultural edu paper, it’s like, "Hey, I had to clean up -- I’ve got my bona fide as far as I’m concerned on race relations. I’m so comfortable with race until I can get myself in trouble" (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Alao indicated that students were given an opportunity to deconstruct their thinking in some of the writing assignments and classroom discourses:

You know, and, um, by the time they share some of their responses to the classroom management -- uh, I’m sorry, to the multicultural reflection paper, and I know in, in the secondary curriculum class, they do several exercises but one of them is, um, a paper that kind of leads them into understanding a little bit more
Dr. Alao also noted that the assignments that are given in some courses within the Ruckle Residency program start the process of deconstructing identity and privilege. Dr. Alao added that deconstruction of one’s identity and privilege is a lifelong process, “And so, it's a life-long process. It’s not like, you just get to stop” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Alao deeply understood the complex ongoing process of deconstructing privilege and one’s identity. She advocated that within the courses she met residents where they were in the process of deconstructing their thinking and their identities so that they could positively impact the achievement of students of color. She was consistently open to working with residents where they were in their journey of becoming teachers. She shared her perspectives with the residents. Dr. Alao also argued that the deconstruction of students’ identities and privilege is important because not undertaking this difficult process can lead to negative effects on students’ academic achievement.

Psychology instructor, Mrs. Cook, agreed with this argument when she described the programmatic feature of her course: teaching students not to have assumptions about students of color. She clarified:

This is what came to my -- it’s not necessarily that--. We can’t just make assumptions. We can’t make assumptions. And I made assumptions and I fell off the stick whenever I did. Because we don’t know what those parents are dealing with. We don’t know what their educational backgrounds are. Maybe they have an awful experience in school. And maybe they were treated like jerk, and maybe
that’s why they are avoiding school (H. Cook, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Cook taught the residents to avoid assumptions when teaching students of color. She encouraged the residents to get to know their students to discover their stories and the stories of their families. During the interview, Mrs. Cook highlighted the negative impact of assumptions that directly affected her students with the following anecdote:

And it damaged my relationship with my students initially because I made so many assumptions about race, about -- just about Southern identity to be honest. I mean, there were just so many things that I was ignorant to, that I was like I just didn’t know. I tell them stories all the time about stupid assumptions I made, the neglectful parent, when it really, it was just a single mom working three jobs to get her kid through high school and then send them off to college (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Mrs. Cook realized the negative impact that assumptions had on her students and their families. She shared these experiences with the residents to keep them from making the same mistakes. The three teacher educators, Dr. Caldwell, Dr. Alao, and Mrs. Cook provided the opportunity for residents to deconstruct their identity, privilege, and assumptions about students of color. They described this as effective within courses, and if not addressed within courses, it had the potential to negatively impact their future students.

*Culturally responsive teaching.* One teacher educator highlighted culturally responsive teaching as an effective program feature in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Alao stated, “We know culturally responsive teaching is best practice” (personal communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Alao expressed that
culturally responsive teaching is the best practice not only for students of color, but for all students. Dr. Alao indicated that culturally responsive teaching is a well-known best practice in the residency program; however, she was the only teacher educator who identified it as an effective programmatic feature.

*Warm demander:* Two teacher educators indicated that an effective program feature in improving the achievement of students of color is that of cultivating the idea of the teacher as a warm demander. Students within the teacher preparation program are exposed to this idea of becoming a warm demander within their courses. Dr. Donaldson, director at Ruckle Residency, strongly emphasized that it is important for teachers to be the authority in the classroom; this is a demonstration of being a warm demander. She argued that this is extremely important for students in urban classrooms:

> You've got to be this warm demander, here's why. You have to teach everything. You can't assume. You have to teach them how do you want them to turn in papers, how do you want them to come into your classroom, how do you want them to go to the restroom. You've got to teach everything and you've got to engage them, you know, in the learning (T. Donaldson, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson claimed that teachers have to be the authority in the classroom. Teachers feeling like they have to teach everything could lead to a mindset about students not knowing anything. Dr. Alao agreed with the importance of the warm demander role. She realized the difficulty of taking on the warm demander disposition for some residents, “Oh, and that -- yeah. It’s really hard for a lot of us. And so -- and that’s why that warm demander stuff is so smart, you know. I love you but I will tell you” (T. Alao, personal
communication, February 15, 2016). Dr. Alao expressed that it is a balance of love and care, with correction within the classroom. Only two of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency identified warm demander as programmatic feature that is effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

Student and teacher relationships. Two teacher educators indicated that an effective program feature in improving the achievement of students of color is the importance of teacher and student relationships. Dr. Donaldson, director of Ruckle Residency expressed this crucial element of teacher and student relationships when she stated:

Well, I think the biggest you know, important piece that we try to hammer home to them is this whole notion that it's relationships, relationships, relationships. That the kids are not going to perform for you unless you show them that you truly care about them. You build a relationship with them. That is the most critical, I would argue, in an urban setting than a suburban setting, and I've taught in those. Because in a suburban setting, they come with the mindset, I'm going to college and I've got to do well in my coursework, you know, whether I like it or not, whether I think it's boring or not because I've got this school and, and that goal has been instilled in me from the time I was born, and I've heard my parents talk about it and so forth. So, for you know, the urban classrooms where that has not been the, you know, situation and often perhaps, you know, adults have failed them in their lives in numerous ways, building that relationship is absolutely critical (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson argued that relationships are especially important in urban classrooms because of the experiences that students might have had within their families. She claimed that these relationships are not as critical within suburban areas because suburban students come with the mindset of going to college. One of the ways that
students will work for the teacher is through the teacher demonstrating true caring. Mrs. Raglin attested to this:

It’s a difference. And that’s the thing, I always want the students to know that, yes I want you to feel comfortable in coming to me if you feel you want to, and I will be that person that year, I will be that individual that you can talk to. That individual that gives guidance and direction and that kind of thing. But there is -- we are not pals, we are not peers. So friend in terms of someone that you can go to. But peer, I am not (personal communication, February 17, 2016)

While Mrs. Raglin emphasized the importance of student and teacher relationships, she also stressed that the boundaries have to be clear. Two teacher educators at Ruckle Residency identified and described student and teacher relationships as effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

Collaboration between university and community. Two teacher educators pointed to collaboration between the university, the teacher preparation program, and the community as an effective program feature in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Donaldson elaborated:

Well, we really -- and you know, our university is, um -- it's supposed to be an urban, urban serving institution. We're right in the middle of downtown. Uh, I'm not really sure, though, that we are truly an urban serving institution, because in my mind, that means that you are trying to meet the needs of your community (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson stressed that their university is located in the downtown of the community, so the university should serve the community. Mrs. Raglin highlighted that collaborating with the school district should focus on trust:

Because trust is important and not they don’t have faith in the program itself, but when you are talking about, asking people to change how they do things in
anyway, they need to have a base that they are familiar with and one that they trust. Because you are talking about the residents going into schools beginning on the first day the teachers report, not the first day that students report but that teachers report and being there throughout the entire school year, not leaving until students leave in June (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

She stressed the necessity of trust between the program and the school district. The expectations for students are high, and cooperating teachers have to be open to working with students throughout the entire school year.

Summary

The teacher educators at Ruckle Residency expressed that the discourse taking place in courses is a programmatic feature that positively contributes to the achievement of students of color. Dr. Donaldson and Dr. Alao identified the course Ethics as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Dr. Donaldson added Reading Across the Curriculum and Dr. Alao added Secondary Curriculum and Classroom management to the list of effective courses. Three of the teacher educators, Dr. Caldwell, Dr. Alao, and Mrs. Cook indicated that within the courses they focus on deconstructing identity and privilege because if not, it can negatively impact the achievement of students of color. Dr. Alao added that the process of deconstructing identity and privilege is continuous so it is important to meet residents where they are. Within the courses, students are exposed to culturally responsive teaching, the notion of becoming a warm demander, and the development of positive student and teacher relationships. The teacher educators expressed that what happens within the courses positively impacts the achievement of
students of color. Dr. Donaldson and Mrs. Raglin indicated that there should be collaboration between the university and the community.

**Cross-site Findings**

The second research question was: How do teacher educators define and describe the programmatic features of their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) as effective in improving students of color achievement? The answer to this research question was explored in the analysis of interviews. At both urban teacher preparation programs, Sellers University and Ruckle Residency, these teacher educators defined and described the programmatic features that they identified as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Teacher educators from both programs identified at least two courses as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. At Sellers University they identified the courses Educating in Urban Schools and the practicum. At Ruckle Residency they identified the courses Ethics and the practicum. However, these teacher educators also identified additional courses that other teacher educators did not mention, e.g., Reading across the Curriculum. This demonstrates that teacher educators from both programs have different perceptions of what courses they believe are effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

Teacher educators from both of these programs identified that the discourse that takes place during courses can positively impact the academic achievement of students of color. However, the specific details identified by teacher educators varied. The teacher educators in each the programs highlighted that within the discourse, teacher educators
should focus on deconstructing identities, privilege, and fictional narratives concerning students of color. There was not, however, a consensus among all of the teacher educators. The teacher educators acknowledged the complexity of deconstructing identity, privilege and fictional narratives; in so doing, they stressed that it is a long continuous process. Furthermore, some teacher educators indicated that within a course, it is the responsibility of the faculty to meet students/residents where they are. Again, this was not the consensus of every teacher educator. Outliers included culturally responsive pedagogy (Ruckle Residency) and preparing teachers to be critical thinkers (Sellers University). Sellers University recognized that their program was in need of providing additional support for teachers beyond the program. In contrast to this is Ruckle Residency’s collaborative relationship with the local, urban public school system. The program and practicum director expressed that collaboration between the university and the community is essential.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine how teacher educators of three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. To achieve the goal of this study, I conducted a document analysis and semi-structured interviews with teacher educators from three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs.
This chapter presented an overview of Sellers University, Over Achieve Alternative and Ruckle Residency’s definitions of academic achievement, and the programmatic features they describe as effective in improving the academic achievement of students of color. The themes that emerged from Sellers University definitions of academic achievement were growth, advancement, progress, and college and career readiness. The themes that developed from Over Achieve alternative definitions of academic achievement were the development of academic skills, character development, college and career readiness, and standardized testing. Unfortunately, due to an inability to gain access to the faculty members, it was impossible to compare their definitions to that of the program. Further, it was impossible to compare their definitions across the faculty members themselves. The documents for Over Achieve were the only data source. The themes that surfaced from Ruckle Residency urban teacher preparation program’s definitions of academic achievement were mastery of standards, standardized testing, progress, college and career ready, civic responsibility, and educating the whole child.

Only two of urban teacher preparation programs, Sellers University and Over Achieve Alternative, documents provided a definition of academic achievement. Sellers University’s definition of academic achievement focused on college and career readiness. Over Achieve Alternative’s definition of academic achievement focused on mastery of academic skills, character development, and college and career readiness. Ruckle Residency’s program implied that their cooperating teachers provide the definition of academic achievement for their residents during their practicum.
The two urban teacher preparation programs, Sellers University and Over Achieve Alternative, provided programmatic definitions of academic achievement for students of color, but the definitions that were provided by the teacher educators in their program did not align with that programmatic definition. There was only one teacher educator at Sellers University, Mr. Ball, who acknowledged college and career readiness in his definition of academic achievement. The other two educators, Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes, argued that academic achievement for students of color should focus on growth and progress. Although teacher educators were not interviewed for Over Achieve Alternative, there was misalignment between their stated vision and coursework. Their vision focused on mastery of academic skills, character development, and college and career readiness; however, their course requirements’ definition of academic achievement for students of color focused specifically on standardized testing.

The lack of alignment between the program documents and what teacher educators in the classroom articulate was also evident at Ruckle Residency. Without any definition of academic achievement for students of color within their program documents, the teacher educators were left without any framework to guide their work. Dr. Donaldson, director of Ruckle Residency, defined academic achievement according to the state’s expectations of standards and standardized testing. Two teachers, Dr. Caldwell and Mrs. Cook, acknowledged the state’s expectations, but also indicated that residents can also learn how to focus on progress monitoring. Dr. Caldwell’s definition of academic achievement for students of color was expansive, including mastery of standards,
standardized testing, progress, college and career readiness, and civic responsibility. His definition of academic achievement presented a very lofty goal. Dr. Alao summed up all of their definitions by indicating that academic achievement should focus on the whole child. Even with Ruckle Residency’s alignment of definitions on some things, there is no framework to guide their thinking and teaching.

This chapter also illustrated these teacher educators’ definitions and descriptions of programmatic features of their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) as effective in improving academic achievement for students of color. The themes that emerged from the teacher educator’s at Sellers University, definitions and descriptions of programmatic features that they identified as effective in improving the achievement of students of color were: specific courses, discourse within courses, and university and community collaboration.

There were no themes that emerged from the teacher educator’s at Over Achieve University. There are no data about programmatic features that its teacher educators described and defined as effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

The themes that emerged from the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency, definitions and descriptions of programmatic features that they identified as effective in improving the achievement of students of color were also: specific courses, discourse within courses, and university and community collaboration.

At the urban teacher preparation programs of both Sellers University and Ruckle Residency, teacher educators defined and described the programmatic features that they
identify as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Teacher educators from both programs identified at least two courses as effective in improving the achievement of students of color. Sellers University identified the courses Educating in Urban Schools and practicum. Ruckle Residency identified the courses Ethics and practicum. However, the teacher educators also identified other courses that other teacher educators did not mention. This demonstrates that teacher educators from both programs have their own perceptions of what courses they believe are effective in improving the achievement of students of color.

Teacher educators from both programs identified that the discourse that takes place during courses can positively impact the academic achievement of students of color. However, what these teacher educators identified varied. Between both of the programs, they highlighted that within the discourse, teacher educators should focus on deconstructing identities, privilege, and fictional narratives concerning students of color. However, that was not a consensus among all of the teacher educators. The teacher educators acknowledged the complexity of deconstructing identity, privilege and fictional narratives, so they acknowledged that it is a long, continuous process. Furthermore, some teacher educators indicated that within the course, teacher educators met students/residents where they were. Again, this was not the consensus of every teacher educator. There were outliers such as culturally responsive pedagogy (Ruckle Residency) and preparing teachers to be critical thinkers (Sellers University). Sellers University recognizes that their program needs to provide additional support for teachers beyond the
program, unlike Ruckle Residency, which has a collaborative relationship with the public school system. The program and practicum director expressed that there should be a collaboration between the university and the community.

This study demonstrates that there is a lack of coherence regarding what is illustrated in each program’s documents defining academic achievement and what teacher educators describe in their courses as academic achievement for students of color. The teacher educators offered multiple definitions of academic achievement for students of color including, as advancement, progress, growth and/or college and career readiness because of the myriad policies requiring teachers to focus on academic achievement as standards and standardized testing, especially for students of color. The teacher educators in each program were able to name and describe programmatic features that improve the achievement of students of color: specific courses, discourse within the courses, and community and university collaboration. Students and residents who are interested in teaching in urban schools should have a coherent definition of academic achievement from the teacher educators in urban teacher preparation programs. Students and residents should also have coherent experiences within their program features that prepare them to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools.
Chapter Five

Conclusions, Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine how teacher educators of three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. To achieve the goal of this study, I conducted a document analysis and semi-structured interviews with teacher educators from three purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs.

The study was guided by the following two research questions:

1. In what ways do teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative, and residency) define academic achievement for students of color?

2. How do teacher educators define and describe the programmatic features of their urban teacher preparation programs (traditional, alternative & residency) as effective in improving students of color achievement?

The following chapter will provide an overview of the major findings from Chapter IV. A discussion of these teacher educators’ definitions of academic achievement and the programmatic features of their program, that they believe impact the achievement
of students of color. This chapter will also highlight the conclusions, discussion, limitations, implications, and significance of the study.

Conclusions

The results of this study lead to several conclusions about the state of teacher education when it comes to preparing preservice teachers to teach students of color, often in urban schools. They will be described and discussed below.

Lack of coherence. There are two dimensions to the lack of coherence within the programs at Sellers University and Ruckle Residency. The first dimension is between each program’s public documents and what the faculty said in the interviews. The second dimension is how the faculty defined key terms, such as “urban, as well as “academic achievement for students of color.” From this evidence, I conclude that at each site there is a lack of coherence regarding the definition of academic achievement that is written in each program’s documents and what these teacher educators offer as their own definition of academic achievement for students of color. The teacher educators at Sellers University, individually and collectively, offered multiple definitions of academic achievement for students of color, including achievement as advancement, progress, growth and/or college career readiness, but with little consistency. Sellers University provided a programmatic definition of academic achievement for students of color, which was college and career readiness, but the definitions that were provided by the teacher educators in their program did not align with that programmatic definition.
Over Achieve’s program documents defined academic achievement as the development of academic skills, character development, college and career readiness, and standardized testing. Unfortunately, due to an inability to gain access to the faculty members, it was impossible to compare their definitions to that of the program or their coherence. Over Achieve provided programmatic definitions of academic achievement for students of color, but the definitions that were provided by the teacher educators in their program did not align with that programmatic definition, as evidenced by the course syllabi at Over Achieve. This lack of coherence seems a feature at each site.

Some teacher educators at Ruckle Residency offered that they felt constrained by their state’s policies that stipulate a definition of academic achievement as standards and standardized test scores, especially for students of color. Their program documents indicate that the cooperating teachers that work directly with residents during their clinical experience create parameters that may lead to a working definition of academic achievement for students of color. While the teacher educators at Sellers University and Ruckle Residency were able to name and describe programmatic features that improve the achievement of students of color as specific courses, discourse within the courses, and community and university collaboration, the courses and the discourse within the courses that teacher educators identified varied from one to another.

**Definitions of “Urban.”** These findings indicate that some teacher educators define urban with a monolithic or deficit perspective and others as an opportunity to challenge those negative perceptions. Two of the teacher educators at Sellers University
defined urban as socioeconomic differences. Specifically, Dr. Baker defined urban as
economic difference, focusing on the impact and effects of poverty on families. Dr. Ball
defined urban as socioeconomic gaps that exist between people of color and White
people. Dr. Oakes defined urban as structural systems within society. Finally, Mrs. Keith
stated that she allows the teacher educators in other courses to define urban. The teacher
educators at Sellers University agree that socioeconomics are a major portion of the
definition of urban, however, Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes argued that there are structural
issues that exist that cause the socioeconomic gaps. Dr. Baker and Dr. Oakes also argued
that deficit perspectives should not be the only definition utilized to describe urban. All of
the teacher educators agreed that there are structural issues that contribute to negative
perceptions of urban.

Two of the teacher educators, Dr. Donaldson and Dr. Alao, at Ruckle Residency
defined urban as large metropolitan areas with marginalized groups of people. While she
did not provide her own definition of urban, Dr. Donaldson contextualized it with a focus
on the demographics of the public school system in which residents will teach. Dr.
Caldwell defined urban as socially marginalized groups. Ms. Alao defined urban as a
metropolitan area, of high poverty families, primarily African Americans. Mrs. Alao also
defined urban as marginalized groups. Mrs. Cook did not provide a definition of urban.
She emphasized that she allowed her students to define it for her, due to her lack of
experience in the public school system. Mrs. Raglin expressed that many of the residents
have negative perceptions about students of color and their families, in which she addresses within their field experience.

**Summary.** As with the lack of focus within programs on what “urban” means, these teacher educators’ different definitions of academic achievement for students of color and the lack of alignment with the program documents, strongly suggests that these teacher educators are not teaching what the program documents state. It also demonstrates that teacher educators are not conversing among one another about important concepts, such as academic achievement for students of color in urban settings that highly impacts teachers’ performance.

In sum, the evidence from these sites suggests that teacher education relies more heavily on the efforts of individual faculty, the courses they teach, and field experiences for helping aspiring teachers get a clear sense of the purpose of schools regarding academic achievement for students of color, than they do on a collective and additive vision that could guide the development of a novice.

**Discussion**

As Levine (2006) argues, the focus of schooling has shifted from teaching to learning—to the skills and knowledge students must master, rather than the skills and knowledge teachers must teach. There is now a huge emphasis on learning outcomes. The states now set minimum achievement levels that students must attain. States also mandate standardized testing to assess students’ mastery of standards (Levine). The task for teacher preparation programs is to design teacher education programs that prepare highly
qualified teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to raise student academic achievement (Levine). A required component and standard 4 of the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (2016) is:

The provider documents, using multiple measures that program completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth. Multiple measures shall include all available growth measures (including value-added measures, student-growth percentiles, and student learning and development objectives) required by the state for its teachers and available to educator preparation providers, other state-supported P-12 impact measures, and any other measures employed by the provider (CAEP website, p. 4).

The accreditation process for university-based teacher preparation programs requires that teacher educators demonstrate that their program has multiple measures that prepare preservice teachers to impact student academic achievement. As this is a goal for CAEP, Levine argues that:

Unfortunately, educators and policy makers disagree fundamentally about how to accomplish the task at hand. There are conflicting and competing beliefs on issues as basic as when and where teachers should be educated, who should educate teachers, and what education is most effective in preparing teachers. These differences undermine successful teacher education reform (p. 12).

The differences he is discussing are some of the same differences found in the present study. They extend to individual faculty teaching in the same program, regardless of whether the route is traditional or some alternate variation. Those “conflicting and competing” beliefs of academic achievement for students of color were evident in the urban teacher preparation program documents and teacher educator interviews. Buchmann and Floden (1992) argue that this issue can be addressed, through program coherence. This will be discussed in length, below.
Students and residents who are attending any teacher preparation program should have a coherent and accurate definition of what “urban” means and how it affects the lives of the students in urban schools. Students and residents who are interested in teaching in urban schools should have a coherent definition or conception of academic achievement from their teacher educators in urban teacher preparation programs. Further, students and residents should also have coherent experiences, within their program features that prepare them to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools. All of these are expectations of CAEP in its standards for national professional accreditation. Both Sellers University and Ruckle Residency fall under the auspices of the CAEP review structure because they are university-sponsored programs.

**Lack of coherence.** The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) (2016) states:

Teaching is complex and preparation must provide opportunities for candidates to acquire knowledge and skills that can move all P-12 students significantly forward—in their academic achievements, in articulating the purpose of education in their lives and in building independent competence for life-long learning (p.1).

This statement suggests a level of agreement within the program regarding consistent definitions of key terms in any teacher education program, such as “academic achievements.” It is further reinforced in Standard 5, where CAEP raises the expectations by requiring evidence of the preservice teachers’ knowledge and skills as part of its program evaluation plan, which necessarily requires commonly shared definitions when
operationalized to meet this Standard, Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement:

a quality assurance system comprised of valid data from multiple measures, including evidence of candidates’ and completers’ positive impact on P-12 student learning and development. The provider supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based, and that evaluates the effectiveness of its completers. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements and capacity, and test innovations to improve completers’ impact on P-12 student learning and development (p. 5).

CAEP (2016) expects teacher educators to demonstrate that their program prepares preservice teachers to impact the achievement of P-12 students. It can be implied from the CAEP standards that teacher preparation programs should define academic achievement as part of their programmatic efforts. The program documents and teacher educators at Sellers University defined academic achievement as growth and advancement. Over Achieve Alternative defined academic achievement as standardized testing and character development. Ruckle Residency defined academic achievement progress, standardized test scores, and access to college and career ready standards. The teacher educators at the teacher preparation programs defined academic achievement individually; however, collectively the teachers lacked coherent definitions for these key terms in teaching.

In Buchmann and Floden’s (1992) seminal work, they argue that multiple definitions of academic achievement are effective when teaching any concept, such as academic achievement, as long as the multiple definitions challenge preservice teachers
to make sense of many different perspectives, and draw their own conclusions.

Buchmann and Floden claim:

With multiple differences and points of contact, these overlapping voices stress people's evolving constructions of coherence, rather than presuming that the world could or should be portrayed as neatly consistent. Moreover, if learners are repeatedly presented with objects of thought that others have trimmed to fit patterns, they lack opportunities for responsibly making sense. Less agitated than the critic, the diverse speakers distinguish consistency from coherence, seeing the latter form of connectedness as more hospitable to change and growing imagination, while true to the many sides of concepts and experiences (p. 5).

Multiple definitions are also effective for preservice teachers’ understandings of academic achievement. It encourages them to figure out their values. Exposing preservice teachers to the complexity of defining academic achievement for students of color, demonstrates that the definitions are not exactly the same. It also provides the opportunity for preservice teachers to interrogate the terms and make sense of the reality of teaching in urban schools. Buchmann and Floden continue this argument when they quote Scheffler (1973):

It is highly desirable, I think, for the student to learn that the opinions and approaches of experts differ violently, that the community of truth-seekers is not just one happy family. ...A student who gets all his education screened through some neat integrative framework imposed in advance by others, without being forced to make his own sense of the discordances and discrepancies patent in experience, has been effectively protected from thinking altogether (p. 5).

The teacher educators at Sellers University and Ruckle Residency have individual definitions of academic achievement; however, there is room for additives in their collective definitions of academic achievement. The “collective” definitions can illustrate
the coherence of the program, and the “additive” is the opportunity for teacher educators to build upon these multiple definitions in a thoughtful way, from course to course, to help the preservice teachers develop a sense of urban or academic achievement. In doing so, they would be exposing their preservice teachers to the multiple definitions of key terms, such as academic achievement for students of color, and urban, in an effort to help them make sense of teaching for learning in urban schools.

The lack of agreement, which suggests a lack of programmatic coherence, can lead to novice teachers who let the work of teaching define what is achievable, thus potentially negating what was taught during the program. In the case of Ruckle Residency, the program documents and the faculty do defer to the practitioners in the field for the definition of academic achievement for students of color. This may be as incoherent as a teacher’s education can become, as every mentor teacher has her or his own definition, especially if mentors have not contributed to program’s coherence framework by participating in the planning of the residency program. For example, the multiple definitions of academic achievement can be a swirl of competing visions, which many preservice teachers are not ready to negotiate. Buchmann and Floden (1992), Levine (2006), and the new CAEP standards (2016) all assert at some level that a profession is marked by some planned consistency in language, and perhaps in practice, that serves as the foundation for the preparation of each new practitioner. In the case of Buchmann and Floden, multiple definitions of key concepts are acceptable if accompanied by some kind of organizer or touchstone, e.g. a common definition that
serves as the basis for comparison by individual faculty members. However, it also raises the tension between the program’s vision for preservice teacher learning, and those of the faculty who teach each course. Levine asserts that this approach is more like a liberal arts perspective on teacher education, when a professional perspective is what is needed now where there is a body of knowledge on which people agree. As Buchmann and Floden wrote:

an approach to curriculum and learning that fosters the weaving and reweaving of beliefs. That approach depends on loose ends, animating ideas, and patterns. There are, of course, connections, but there are also fuzzy bits and new threads of experience and meaning, with outworn or odd patches being worked over, stashed away for future use, or discarded. If the phrase *lifelong learning* means anything at all, this is it! Contrary to my emphasis on ruminative, productive thinking, I fear that some people trusting in program coherence could come to treat learners, inadvertently, as objects gradually shaped to one mold. To produce their outputs, programs may relentlessly chip away at students, just as Tyler (1949) likened education to drops of water slowly eroding a stone (p. 5)

It is the “weaving and reweaving of beliefs,” which form the foundation of definitions of key terms that is at issue here. Coherence within a program provides the opportunity for teacher educators to have several definitions that push preservice teachers to make sense of those many definitions. The multiple and varied definitions of academic achievement offered by the teacher educators at all three of the urban teacher preparation programs mirrored Brown and Goldstein’s (2013) argument of teachers having different understandings of existing discourses used to frame their students’ acquisition of school-centered knowledge and skills, which can negatively affect academic achievement, whether it is a test score, standards, progress, advancement, or civic responsibility.
Academic progress is when teachers draw on a student-centered, developmentally oriented discourse that focuses on the development, advancement and improvement of students (Brown and Goldstein, 2013). As examples, among the teacher educators across the two urban teacher preparation programs where interviews were conducted, they defined academic achievement as progress, growth and/or advancement. For example, Dr. Baker, director of Sellers University, defined academic achievement as:

But achievement is about growth to me and it's reaching milestones. And so, we have to set goals and say, alright I need to always be moving forward. And so that's what you're going to look at. Are they moving forward in lots of areas? Because it can't just be this one thing is all that, because you all get upset when somebody tries to come in and say, this one moment in time says everything about you (personal communication, February 18, 2016).

Dr. Ball from Sellers University provided another definition of academic achievement as progress. He defined academic achievement as:

Academic achievement with the – no matter what grade level you are at, that you have mastered successfully the skills, knowledge, and you are able to do the activities for that subject or within that grade level that prepares you for the next stent of activity. That could be academic achievement at the elementary school level that would prepare you for success at the middle school, likewise middle and the high, and high and post-secondary, and post-secondary into careers in the workforce (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

The definitions of academic achievement for students of color that teacher educators from Sellers University provided fit under the umbrella of academic progress. The teacher educators utilized different terms to define academic achievement. This demonstrates that their definitions of academic achievement are nuanced. In order to
increase the coherence of their program, Buchmann and Floden (1992) would suggest that their definitions are additive beyond academic achievement as progress, to ensure that preservice teachers are given the opportunity to make sense of multiple perspectives. Buchmann and Floden argue:

> While learning should not be made unnecessarily difficult, educational experiences must not sell students short. The differences and *incongruities* that characterize the disciplines of knowledge, moreover, likewise characterize life and action; they challenge students' capacity to form intentions and make connections whose reach, complexity, and flexibility indicate their learning's worth. Though learning depends on structures, it is also fostered by enticing uncertainties, eye-opening experiences, and honest difficulties. Hence denying or eliminating conflicts within and among the disciplines is foolish (p. 5).

I would agree that “denying or eliminating conflicts” is “foolish,” but would add that ignoring them is perilous because it begs the question, “whom should I believe?” in the mind of a preservice teacher.

Some of the teacher educators at Sellers University denied or eliminated conflicts when defining academic achievement. For example, Dr. Ball’s definition of academic achievement aligned with Dr. Baker’s definition of academic achievement when it came to determining achievement via a standardized test. He commented that:

> Academic achievement is not defined for me as a measure of how well you do on a test that’s measured at that grade level. It really is defined by how well you do on that grade level, or how well you were prepared in that grade level for the next band of grading (T. Ball, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Both teacher educators, Dr. Ball and Dr. Baker argued that academic achievement should not be defined as standardized assessments. However, Buchmann and Floden (1992) claim that program coherency should foster enticing uncertainties, eye opening
experiences and honest difficulties. Indicating that academic achievement should not be defined as standardized testing, forgoes the realities of working in urban schools. The definitions of academic achievement for Sellers University could be additive. There was only teacher educator who provided multiple perspectives in defining academic achievement. Dr. Oakes stated:

So I talked about the -- what the historical data, you know, so historically how African-Americans have performed. But I also think that -- I know that that's loaded. So there's a reason why some African-American students underperform. And so we talk about that. You know, what does that mean? What does that mean for the curriculum? And what does that mean for the teachers that engage our African-American students that are not performing well? What does that mean for the home that they're coming from? And how does that misalignment impact their ability to progress and their ability to actually see the progress that we want to see? So, achievement versus progress, I also juxtapose those. So what types of progress do we want to see and how do we quantify progress, so that it doesn't look like it's not noteworthy of change in some way? So how do we see the advances that students are making, but also what are those advances attributed to? Are they attributed to new ways of educating teachers and better preparing them to engage students? Or do we attribute that to advances in curriculum and resources or what, you know? Or do we attribute it to how we engage parents to better help the students and provide them with the support and resources they need to be better students and better thinkers? (personal communication, February 17, 2016)

Buchmann and Floden (1992) assert that teacher preparation programs should demonstrate the complexities of defining terms, not just providing one perspective. This framework challenges preservice teachers’ capacity to form intentions and make connections whose reach, complexity, and flexibility indicate their learning's worth.
As the teacher educators at Sellers University defined academic achievement under the umbrella of progress, Over Achieve Alternative’s program documents illustrated academic achievement for students of color, as heavily focused on academic achievement as academic success. This form of academic achievement is standards-based. It is the definition consistent with the intent of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). It has driven state policies that expect students to master academic content standards set for their grade level within an academic year (Brown & Goldstein, 2013). Academic success is determined by students’ academic performance on a standardized test and graduation rates. Academic success is the assertion that only mastery of the predetermined mandated content standards is considered legitimate evidence for student achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Standardized test and graduation rates are quantifiable and easily measured. Brown and Goldstein’s definition of academic achievement as success is another aspect of CAEP’s (2016) definition of academic achievement as progress and access to college and career ready standards.

Over Achieve Alternative’s definition of academic achievement includes mastery of academic skills, character development, college and career readiness, and standardized testing. Their mission defines academic achievement as the development of academic skills and character. However, their course requirements indicate that academic achievement is focused on one year’s progress and character development. This definition of academic achievement is focused heavily on standardized test performance. Over Achieve’s course requirements focus specifically on academic achievement as
success. The course requirements indicate that the courses should, “dramatically improve student learning in the classroom. We expect students to ensure that their own students achieve at least one year of academic progress and character development in one year’s time” (Over Achieve Alternative website, 2016). The one element that aligns between the two is character development. Zeichner (2016) argues that academic achievement for students of color focuses only on academic success. He stated:

These [programs] prepare teachers to use highly controlling pedagogical and classroom management techniques that are primarily used in schools serving students of color whose communities are severely impacted by poverty. Meanwhile, students in more economically advantaged areas have greater access to professionally trained teachers, less punitive and controlling management practices and broader and richer curricula and teaching practices. The teaching and management practices learned by the teachers in these [independent] programs are on a restricted definition of teaching and learning and would not be acceptable in more economically advantaged communities (Zeichner, 2006, p. 4).

The focus on academic achievement as success is highly favored for students of color. Berliner (2011) argues that due to the emphasis on the passing of standardized tests, teachers teach to the test and shrink the curriculum, which negatively impacts schools. Although the program documents for Over Achieve’s definitions of academic achievement as mastery of academic skills and standardized testing fit under the umbrella of academic success, the vision of the program and the course requirements used different terms to define academic achievement. This demonstrates that their definitions of academic achievement lack the coherence advocated by Buchmann and Floden (1992) because Over Achieve’s definition of academic achievement focuses only as academic achievement as academic success. They stated:
People have to be able to make sense, in some fashion, of what they hear, read, and do. But implicit adherence to consistency brings in a lot more regimentation than we need to rise above randomness. A program that is too consistent fits students with blinders, deceives them, and encourages complacency. Remember that being focused is good only if people are heading in a good direction and are not blind as bats. (Buchmann & Floden, 1992, p. 4)

According to Buchmann and Floden, teacher educators’ definitions should not be too consistent, because it hinders students from forming their own perspectives of academic achievement for students of color. Defining academic achievement as success, illustrates the realities of teaching in urban schools; however, it is not the only perspective that should be taken into consideration. Over Achieve Alternative’s definitions of academic achievement could also be more additive.

**Duality of academic achievement.** As Over Achieve’s program documents defined academic achievement as academic success for students of color, some teacher educators at Ruckle Residency articulated that academic achievement could encompass both progress and success. Mrs. Cook, a teacher educator at Ruckle Residency, shared with her students, the duality of defining academic achievement. She stated:

We actually talk about how policy defines academic achievement, but then we also talk about academic achievement from an educator standpoint. And I, with my research interests and you know, how – I try to make a point that there is a duality in how policy defines academic achievement, and how a lot of teachers will define achievement for students, and I really try to bring that to the front of teachers’ minds. I want them to understand that it might be something that they struggle with, and that’s okay, you know. So we have discussions about that in my classroom often, and especially when we talk about motivation, we talk about goal setting for students. And so we talk about how these are the standards and these are what is expected from policy, but we also talk from motivational perspective, for example, how it’s healthy to set goals for your students, and they might not match policy but this is what you need to do to keep your students
motivated in a healthy way. And we talk about how sometimes those don’t match, and that’s okay. (H. Cook, personal communication, February 17, 2016)

Mrs. Cook highlights the realities of policy and personal preferences as teachers. She informs residents that there are expectations that they will have to adhere to; however, there are ways that they could incorporate academic achievement as academic progress within their classrooms. Dr. Caldwell, English methods professor at Ruckle Residency, also teaches the residents how to understand academic achievement as a duality of both academic success and progress. He provides specific strategies about how it can be demonstrated in an English class:

So we talk -- we, we talk a lot about, um, how we, how we take a student-centered, engaged-act style of learning - that's a very general way of describing how I teach, how they teach English - and how to do that in a way that has some very practical, direct types of teaching that as a, as a nice added bonus also can, can help you help students strike in their [standard] scores (R. Caldwell, personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Caldwell expresses to his students that there should be a balance in focusing on academic success and progress. Academic progress is when teachers draw on a student-centered, developmentally-oriented discourse that focuses on the development, advancement and improvement of students (Brown & Goldstein, 2013). Dr. Caldwell articulated academic achievement as “student-centered, engaged-act style of learning” which is an example of academic progress. Dr. Caldwell claimed that student-centered styles of learning are an added bonus to assist students with their [standardized test] scores, which is an example of academic success.
Defining academic achievement for students of color as academic success and progress meets the state requirements and also provides an opportunity to meet students where they are academically. Grossman, McDonald, Hammerness and Ronfeldt (2009) attest to this, “This may mean achievement is a delicate balance in teacher education between preparing new teachers for schools as they might be and acknowledging and thoroughly preparing teachers for schools as they are; to achieve this balance might also suggest that teacher educators prepare preservice teachers for the realities of schools that they will teach in, all while preparing preservice teachers for what schools could be. Grossman et al. continue this argument:

Not preparing novice teachers to use and adapt the kinds of curriculum materials that are increasingly being mandated in high poverty schools is irresponsible. Teacher educators may rail against the limitations of Open Court, for example, but they have a professional responsibility to ensure that novices learn to use such curricula to promote student learning, even as they work to change policy. Otherwise, we risk preparing teachers for schools that do not exist rather than preparing them to negotiate the expectations that they will meet in today’s schools. By choosing to ignore these expectations, we fail both the students, and the teachers who teach them (p. 244).

Grossman et al. understand the pressures and expectations of state mandates for students, so they argue that preservice teachers should be equipped to meet those expectations. Mrs. Cook and Dr. Caldwell focus on the duality of both academic success and academic progress, but Dr. Donaldson, argues that for students of color, standards and standardized tests are what is utilized to measure the success of students of color. Dr. Donaldson defined academic achievement for students of color according to the state, which is mastery of standards and standardized testing:
Well, I mean, the way it's defined, of course, in our state as in others is how the students are performing on our, uh, [state standardized testing], that measure, you know, how they are progressing. I think that's -- whether we like it or not, that's the definition that you know, we are operating under. But, you know, for, for me personally, what I would like to see is that, we are looking at growth (personal communication, February 15, 2016).

Dr. Donaldson’s definition of academic achievement illustrates academic success because it focuses on standards and standardized testing. She would like to focus on growth, which is an aspect of academic progress, but she understands the realities of urban classrooms.

The definitions of academic achievement that some of the teacher educators at Ruckle Residency closely relate to Buchmann and Floden’s (1992) perspective of coherence. They stated:

In the university, faculty autonomy pulls the curriculum toward incongruities and fragmentation, as professors teach with regard to what they know best but with less regard to students' ease or difficulty in putting things together. But imposing consistency risks depriving students of specific and general educational benefits: being taught in areas of special faculty competence and being challenged to make sense of their disparate studies. Learners' chances for unifying their experiences with flexible responsiveness increase, furthermore, as teaching stays close to professors' live scholarship, the essence of which is creating coherence (Buchmann & Floden, p. 8)

At Ruckle Residency, these teacher educators’ definitions of academic achievement displayed such incongruities. Their definitions ranged from progress, standardized testing, standards, college and career readiness, civic responsibility and educating the whole child to cooperating teachers framing the definition of academic achievement. Some of the teacher educators, such as Mrs. Cook and Dr. Caldwell,
encouraged students to define academic achievement as both progress and standardized testing. The aspect of coherency that they could work toward is how the different definitions could fit or not fit together. Buchmann and Floden attest to this, “Even where faculty make no attempts to create overlaps, a curriculum including both theories could, in effect, be coherent—if teachers had developed the capacity and inclination to figure out ways in which these two accounts of learning do or do not fit together in thought and in practice” (p. 9). The teacher educators at Ruckle Residency have room for growth in their program coherence, especially in articulating how the different definitions of academic achievement that teacher educators provide, fit or do not fit with one another.

**Summary**

More importantly, however, is the social cost of not preparing preservice teachers with a foundation of knowledge about what student achievement is and isn’t. Teacher educators are the teachers first teachers. The words they use, how they define and use them, the expectations they create with them, and the agreement among faculty who teach the same students from one course to another, as CAEP (2016) expects, should be additive. Buchmann and Floden (1992) indicate that coherence “is found where students can discover and establish relations among various areas of sensibility, knowledge, and skill, yet where loose ends remain, inviting a reweaving of beliefs and ties to the unknown” (p. 8). This illustrates that coherence within a program, provides the opportunity for teacher educators to have several definitions that push preservice teachers to make sense of those many definitions.
Based on the findings from the study, it is evident that teacher educators do not have conversations with one another about how their definitions of academic achievement are coherent and additive. CAEP’s (2016) standards illustrate that program coherence should mirror a lesson plan, in which there are program goals, in which all of the teacher educators subscribe to. Their program documents should provide the framework on how to define academic achievement as “multiple measures,” (CAEP) in which their programs prepare preservice teachers to impact the achievement of students of color. There should be benchmarks and program completers throughout the program to reinforce the main concepts of academic achievement taught in the program.

Limitations

Limitations are natural to any study. The limitations for my study are explained below and revolve around my research design and participants.

Research design. The first limitation was that most of the teacher preparation programs that I studied are located on the east coast, and there are some geographic factors that influence the management and effectiveness of any or all of these teacher education programs. For example, Ruckle Residency is located in a state that has specific academic achievement standards for its state. Other teacher preparation programs were invited to be a part of the study, however, the three programs that responded are geographically located on the east coast.

Furthermore, I only focused on teacher preparation programs that prepare preservice teachers to teach students of color in urban settings. The teacher preparation
programs self-identified as urban teacher preparation programs. The teacher educators of the urban teacher preparation programs defined their conception of “urban” during the interviews, in which their definitions were contextual and idiosyncratic to each participating interviewee.

Another limitation of the study is that only two out of the three urban teacher preparation programs allowed the opportunity to interview their teacher educators. In the proposal for my study, I indicated that I would collect data from program documents and interview teacher educators. Over Achieve allowed me to use their program documents as a data source, however, they did not grant the opportunity to compare their program documents to the responses of their teacher educators. It was impossible to compare their individual definitions to that of the program. Further, it was also impossible to compare their definitions across the faculty members themselves.

My research design, was framed using some aspects on Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli and Wyckoff (2006) and Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb and Wyckoff (2009) studies presented in chapter II. Their framework was used to explore how teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color, as well as how they identify features of their programs that they view as effective in improving achievement for students of color. Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al. (2009) utilized five indicators of teacher preparation program quality that are areas recognized by researchers: (1) program structure; (2) subject-specific preparation in reading and math; (3) preparation in learning and child
development (4) preparation to teach racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students; and (5) the characteristics of field experiences. My interviewees were chosen based on Boyd et al.’s (2006) and Boyd et al.’s (2009) five indicators of program quality. For example, teacher educators were interviewed if they taught reading and math methods, child development, diversity, and field experience courses. I did not interview each of these teacher educators at each teacher preparation program. At Ruckle Residency, there were no students enrolled in the math secondary education program, so I didn’t interview a math teacher educator. They also had several courses that they identified that focused on racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse students, such as Friday Seminar and Ethics. I interviewed the teacher educator from the Friday Seminar.

At Sellers University, there were teacher educators that taught more than one of the courses provided in Boyd et al.’s (2006) (2009) framework. For example, one teacher educator taught the diversity, reading methods and child development courses. This limited the amount of perspectives from the teacher educators.

During the interviews, some of the teacher educators indicated that there were other courses, outside of Boyd et al.’s (2006) (2009) framework, that helped teachers understand the definitions academic achievement and urban. This suggests that Boyd et al.’s (2006) (2009) framework may be lacking other indicators of quality, as perceived by the teacher educators interviewed for the present study. With these limitations there are implications for future research.
One final limitation of the study is that I did not interview former students of the teacher preparation programs to solicit their definitions of academic achievement for students of color, based on what the program taught them. My study is premised only on the faculty, which limits data.

**Implications**

Opportunities to resolve the limitations are discussed below.

**Future research.** The first limitation that was described above was that all of the teacher preparation programs are located on the east coast. An implication for further research would be to expand the geographical locations of research. This would provide the opportunity to expand the perspectives of academic achievement from different geographical locations. As stated in Chapter II, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2016) requires that states incorporate both academic factors (test scores and graduation rates) and factors of school quality. ESSA also keeps in place the NCLB (2001) law’s requirement that schools test 95% of students, for the whole school and for subgroups of students. Each state can create their own academic factors, as long as they meet ESSA’s requirements. With this in mind, increased geographical diversity would provide different perspectives of how academic achievement is characterized and defined by state and geographical area.

The second limitation that was described above was the lack of access to the alternative teacher preparation program. This is not just an issue that I have encountered, but external researchers in general. Zeichner (2016) states:
While much or most of the descriptive material available on independent program websites and in promotional articles in the media proclaim independent pathways to teacher education to be bold, innovative efforts that represent the future of teacher education, credible evidence to support such judgments simply does not appear in existing research (p. 16).

All research data for schools such as, Over Achieve Alternative, are only gathered through their website, program documents and/or media. There is no credible research about the effectiveness of programs such as these. An implication for further research would be for the federal government to mandate that if these schools receive funding from the state, that they allow outside researchers to research their school to gather credible evidence.

The third limitation, described above was Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al.’s (2009) limited framework of indicators of program quality. When interviewing teacher educators, some described other courses that they believed would provide definitions of academic achievement for students of color. Some of the courses that teacher educators described from Ruckle Residency were, Reading Across the Curriculum, Ethics, Secondary Curriculum, Friday Seminar and Classroom Management. One of the courses that teacher educators described from Sellers University was Culture and Education. An implication for future research would be to interview the program director of each teacher preparation program, and have that person provide a list of courses that prepares preservice teachers to understand the complexities of academic achievement for students of color. Then interview teacher educators from that list. The findings from the present study suggest that the five indicators of quality Boyd et al. (2006) (2009) found in their
work may not apply to the distinctive settings found in urban residency programs. This remains an empirical question as the proliferation of alternate routes into teaching continues.

The final limitation, described above was students were not interviewed programs to solicit their definitions of academic achievement for students of color, based on what the program taught them. An implication for future research would be to interview former students from each program to determine if and what was taught in the program, prepared them to impact the achievement of their students. Interviewing former students could reinforce and/or challenge the findings of the study.

**Practice.** Based on the finding from my study, there are implications for practice. These are described below.

Teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs, have a professional responsibility to ensure that preservice teachers have multiple understandings of academic achievement for students of color. According to Levine (2006):

> The focus of schooling has shifted from process to outcomes, from teaching to learning. The measure of a school’s success is the achievement of its students and the gauge of a teacher’s effectiveness is the learning of his or her students (p. 105).

As it is the role of teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs to prepare preservice teachers to impact the achievement of students of color, it is more important that CAEP (2016) provides a clear framework of coherence for teacher preparation programs that aligns with Buchmann and Floden’s (1992) seminal work. This framework
would provide a structure for all teacher preparation programs, to ensure that their program prepares preservice teachers shift from “process to outcomes” (Levine). I propose a framework of coherence, below to assist CAEP in this effort.

Coherence framework. Fullan and Quinn (2016) developed a coherence framework for leadership in P-12 schools. I have adapted aspects of their framework, to develop a coherence framework for teacher preparation programs that addresses the findings throughout my study and provides implications for future practice.

Below is a visual (Figure 2) of the proposed coherence framework for teacher preparation programs. The words that are bolded are my suggestions to align the framework with Buchmann and Floden’s (1992) seminal work that focuses on program coherence.
Figure 1. Adapted Coherency Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) for teacher preparation programs.

Focusing direction. Focus is not just a matter of having uplifting goals. It is a process involving initial and continuous engagement (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). The three urban teacher preparation programs in the present study have visions for their program; however, it was evident that there was not a shared vision that was reinforced across the faculty members interviewed. This was evident when the teacher educators of the programs did not articulate the same or had the different definitions of academic achievement. Levine (2006) attests to a shared vision for teacher preparation programs, “Teacher education programs need to follow the example of other professional schools. They need a shared vision of what a teacher must know and be able to do to promote student learning” (p. 106). As Buchmann and Floden’s (1992) seminal work argues, teacher educators do not have to express the same exact definition of academic achievement. The teacher educators can have different definitions that challenge teachers to draw conclusions about all of the definitions. Shared vision, was added to Fullan and Quinn’s framework of coherence, to create a coherence framework for teacher preparation programs. Teacher preparation programs should have a shared vision, that they will provide multiple definitions of academic achievement for students of color, and allow preservice teachers to draw their own conclusions.
Along with a shared vision for program coherence, teacher preparation programs should also agree on the curriculum that is most effective in preparing preservice teachers to impact student academic achievement. Levine (2006) attests to this, “And there needs to be agreement on the curriculum that future teachers must complete to learn these things” (p. 106). As described above in implications for future research, it was evident that Boyd et al. (2006) and Boyd et al.’s (2009) indicators for program quality may be insufficient, as teacher educators at Sellers University and Ruckle Residency expressed that there were other courses that they claimed prepared preservice teachers to impact the achievement of students of color. Adding to Fullan and Quinn’s (2016) coherence framework, I would include that urban teacher preparation program courses, include issues of racism and equity in all of the courses. Seidl and Friend (2009) agree:

Coursework at the university in literacy, foundations classes, and other methods classes requires that students read, think, and write about the sociopolitical context of racism, the role of education in an equitable society, and their responsibilities as teachers with children from diverse backgrounds (p. 350).

As mentioned in Chapter II, CAEP (2016) standards do not have a specific standard that focuses on diversity. Standard 1: Content and Pedagogy indicates that teacher preparation must demonstrate an understanding of the 10 Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) principles, in which one of the 10 focuses on diversity, Standard 2. InTASC Standard 2: Learning Differences indicates that, “the teacher uses understanding of individual differences, diverse cultures and communities to ensure
inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards” (CAEP, p. 1). Grossman, McDonald, Hammerness and Ronfeldt (2009) suggests:

Foundational courses in multicultural education, for instance, may need to go beyond their focus upon conceptual understandings of racism, injustice, or urban schools. They must not only help novices understand the presence of inequities in our schools and understand what it means to support a “socially just” educational system; they also need to help prospective teachers develop a set of specific classroom practices that will help them succeed with students from historically oppressed groups. And in turn, methods courses that have typically focused upon teaching subject matter must also address issues of inequity directly, through introducing students to the practices associated with teaching intellectually ambitious subject matters to historically underserved children” (p. 246).

CAEP does not require that all of the courses address diversity, however, based on my findings, teacher educators at both Sellers University and Ruckle Residency indicated that addressing one’s identity, and the oppression of others, is an ongoing learning process. Infusing the understandings of racism, injustice, and urban schools would provide the opportunity for preservice teachers to engage in this work in every course. This also contributes to program coherence, as it would be something that all of the teacher educators focus on, even if it is from different perspectives. Context specific curriculum is my addition to Fullan and Quinn’s (2016) coherence framework.

As mentioned in Chapter II, Matsko and Hammerness (2014) defines context specific teacher preparation and curriculum as focusing specifically on the needs of a particular context, and tailors the curriculum to fit the context, whereas, universal teacher preparation assumes that knowledge about teaching and instructional strategies can be used in any context. Due to the complexities of urban school districts, some teacher
preparation programs have begun to focus specifically on preparing teachers for the urban context. Context specific curriculum provides preservice teachers the opportunity to analyze the challenges of achieving equitable education when society has low expectations of students of color. Context specific curriculum is also multi-layered. The first layer is federal/state policy context, which is the broader educational policy landscape within which the public school operates. The next layer is the public school context, which focuses on historical features and structures of American public schooling. There is also a local geographical context layer, which focuses specifically on Chicago. Another layer is the local socio-cultural context, which focuses on the ways in which culture impacts learning. The district context layer refers to the policies and mandates of public school teachers. At the core of the framework, are the student and classroom context layer, which focus on classroom interactions and the dynamics of teaching in a diverse setting (Matsko and Hammerness).

*Cultivating collaborative culture.* Collaborating is not just about creating a place where people feel good but rather about cultivating the expertise of everyone to be focused on a collective process (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Based on the findings of my study, I suggest that University and community collaboration is added to Fullan and Quinn’s coherence framework. Levine argues (2006), “After a history of retreating from the P-12 schools and the people who work in them, education schools have to recognize that they cannot be ivory towers” (p. 104). The expectation of CAEP’s (2016), standard 5, is that teacher preparation programs have “a quality assurance system comprised of valid
data from multiple measures, including evidence of candidates’ and completers’ positive impact on P-12 student learning and development” (p. 5). Teacher preparation programs are expected to prepare preservice teachers to impact the achievement of students of color. To accomplish this central goal, there needs to be a constant conversation between the university and the local school systems about the definitions and expectations of academic achievement. Teacher educators cannot have these conversations among each other. They need to develop partnerships with schools that the preservice teachers will serve in, beyond clinical experience. CAEP’s (2016) only expectation for partnerships between universities and public school systems is:

Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements, including technology-based collaborations, for clinical preparation and share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation. Partnerships for clinical preparation can follow a range of forms, participants, and functions. They establish mutually agreeable expectations for candidate entry, preparation, and exit; ensure that theory and practice are linked; maintain coherence across clinical and academic components of preparation; and share accountability for candidate outcomes (Standard 2.1, p. 2).

There are no expectations with CAEP, beyond clinical experiences between universities and public school systems. Levine suggests that the partnership between universities and school districts expand beyond clinical experiences.

Levine (2006) continues this argument, “Education schools need to embrace the reality that they are professional schools and refocus their work on the world of practice and practitioners. It is the only way they can become both excellent and useful” (p. 104). If teacher preparation programs are expected by CAEP (2016) to ensure that their
program impacts academic achievement, then I would also add to Fullan and Quinn’s (2016) framework professional development schools as a collaborative effort. Levine (2006) described professional development schools as:

an assemblage of university-based education school deans recommended the creation of something they called professional development schools (PDS), the education equivalent of teaching hospitals. Such schools would bring together university professors and their students, as well as P-12 teachers and their students, to enrich education, research, and professional development….it offers perhaps the strongest bridge between teacher education and classroom outcomes, academics and clinical education, theory and practice, and schools and colleges. The PDS offers a superb laboratory for education schools to experiment with initiatives designed to improve student achievement (p. 105).

This is an option for teacher preparation programs to expand and continue the relationship with school systems beyond clinical experiences, to an ongoing conversation with all parties involved (universities, teachers and students) to impact classroom outcomes. Teacher educators at Sellers University highlighted that their programs would be effective in improving the achievement of students of color, if they had a continuous relationship with public schools once preservice teachers enter the classroom as practicing teachers.

Securing accountability. The best approach for securing accountability is to develop conditions that maximize “internal accountability” and reinforce internal accountability with external accountability (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). As of right now, CAEP (2016) accreditation and expectations are only for university-based programs. However, all teacher preparation programs should be held accountable to the
accreditation standards, as they are preparing preservice teachers, also, to impact the achievement of students of color. Zeichner (2016) attests to this:

State and federal policymakers should not implement policies and provide funding streams that privilege the development and expansion of independent teacher education programs unless and until substantive credible evidence accrues to support them. There currently is minimal evidence (p. 29).

All teacher preparation programs, university-based, alternative, residency and independent, should be held accountable to clear, consistent and high standards. This will increase the expectation of coherency not just for university programs, but all programs, independent and alternative.

Deepening learning. We must shift to a deeper understanding of the process of learning and how we can influence it. This requires knowledge-building partnerships for everyone engaged (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Deep learning involves using new knowledge to solve real-life problems and incorporate a range of skills and attributes. It is imperative that preservice teachers are exposed to the state mandates of academic achievement, along with how to address systemic policy issues. Grossman et al. (2009) attests to this:

Not preparing novice teachers to use and adapt the kinds of curriculum materials that are increasingly being mandated in high poverty schools is irresponsible. Teacher educators may rail against the limitations of Open Court, for example, but they have a professional responsibility to ensure that novices learn to use such curricula to promote student learning, even as they work to change policy. Otherwise, we risk preparing teachers for schools that do not exist rather than preparing them to negotiate the expectations that they will meet in today’s schools. By choosing to ignore these expectations, we fail both the students, and the teachers who teach them (p. 244).
Instructional or pedagogical systems must include the development of at least the following five components: (1) build multiple differences and points of contact using common language and knowledge base; (2) identify proved pedagogical practices; (3) build capacity; (4) develop dispositions and; (5) provide clear casual links to impact. These components have been adjusted to fit Buchmann and Floden’s (1992) seminal work of coherence. The first component, based on Fullan and Quinn’s (2016) framework, was to build a common language and knowledge base. As this is important, Buchmann and Floden push programs to have multiple perspectives that encourage preservice teachers to make sense of the different perspectives. Buchmann and Floden claim:

With multiple differences and points of contact, these overlapping voices stress people's evolving constructions of coherence, rather than presuming that the world could or should be portrayed as neatly consistent. Moreover, if learners are repeatedly presented with objects of thought that others have trimmed to fit patterns, they lack opportunities for responsibly making sense. Less agitated than the critic, the diverse speakers distinguish consistency from coherence, seeing the latter form of connectedness as more hospitable to change and growing imagination, while true to the many sides of concepts and experiences (p. 5).

Adding multiple perspectives to the component should also have common language.

Even if the perspectives differ. Developing teacher dispositions was also added to Fullan and Quinn’s framework, as it was a key component of the findings. Feiman-Nemser (2009) highlights the dispositions needed to teach students of color:

For some time, discussions of teacher capacity have been framed in terms of knowledge, skills and dispositions. Dispositions untie ability with desire, orienting teachers to act in particular ways. For example, the disposition to see all children as capable of learning leads teachers to hold high standards, to seek out
students’ strengths and interests as a foundation for learning, and to persist in helping all students find success (p. 699).

Ensuring that preservice teachers have dispositions that they believe that all students should have an equitable opportunity to learn regardless of race, class, gender, and/or sexuality is imperative. This is important because if teachers have negative perceptions about students of color ability to learn, it will negatively impact their opportunity to achieve academically.

**Significance**

For the most part, teacher education policy in the United States has not focused on teacher preparation programs or their faculty (Bales, 2006). My study provided the opportunity for teacher educators of urban teacher preparation programs to provide an understanding of how they define and represent academic achievement to preservice teachers who preparing to teach students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. Bales suggested that teacher educators should conceptualize and examine evaluation and accountability in policy, and gain control of the trajectory of teacher education policy.

The significance of this study is that it provides insight into how teacher preparation programs are designed and delivered to address the challenges of teaching students of color, and how they identify and define academic achievement. Levine (2006) argues that, “Today’s teacher education programs are products of America’s industrial
era. They focus more on process than outcomes. They are more concerned with teaching than learning. They concentrate more on how skills and knowledge are transmitted than their mastery” (p. 105). In preparing teachers for classrooms in today’s information economy, each of these priorities needs to be addressed and reversed. The focus of schooling has shifted from process to outcomes, from teaching to learning. The measure of a school’s success is the achievement of its students and the gauge of a teacher’s effectiveness is the learning of his or her students (Levine).

My study demonstrates that there is a lack of coherence in urban teacher preparation programs, specifically, with how academic achievement is defined. If the focus of policy, CAEP (2016) and ESSA (2016), is on student achievement as the primary measure of teacher education program success, then there has to be coherence in the definition and representation within teacher preparation programs. My study provides implications for future research and practice to increase the coherency in teacher preparation programs, with a suggested coherency framework for teacher preparation programs. Levine (2006) sums it up by indicating that teacher preparation programs must rebuild their program around the skills and knowledge that promote classroom learning.
Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

DATE: January 19, 2016
TO: Gary Galluzzo, PhD
FROM: George Mason University IRB
Project Title: [826440-1] SELECTED URBAN TEACHER EDUCATORS’ CONCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR: WHAT THEY TEACH AND WHY?
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project
ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: January 19, 2016
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category #2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Office of Research Integrity & Assurance (ORIA) has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

Please remember that all research must be conducted as described in the submitted materials.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be submitted to the ORIA prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Katherine Brooks at (703) 993-4121 or kbrook14@gmu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within George Mason University IRB’s records.
Appendix B

Consent Form

Title: Selected Urban Teacher Educators’ Conceptions of Academic Achievement for Students of Color: What They Teach and Why?

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH PROCEDURES
This research is being conducted to examine how faculty members, department chairs and/or program directors of two purposefully selected urban teacher preparation programs define and represent academic achievement for students of color and how they define it in their program documents and features. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in one 45-60 minute interview that will be recorded.

RISKS
There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this research.

BENEFITS
There are no benefits to you as a participant other than to further research in the area of urban teacher education.

CONFIDENTIALITY
The data in this study will be confidential. Once the interviews are recorded, transcribed, and analyzed, the information will be stored on an external hard drive. None of the information you share with me will be shared with faculty members at the school. However, I may discuss my findings with professors and colleagues at George Mason University for analysis purposes. If you would like, your identity can be anonymous, in which identifiers will not be utilized in the research paper.

PARTICIPATION
Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no costs to you or any other party.

CONTACT
This research is being conducted by Kisha Porcher, Doctoral Candidate, at George Mason University for her doctoral dissertation. Dr. Gary Galluzzo is the chair of the study, in which he may be reached at galluzzo@gmu.edu for questions or to report a research-related problem. You may contact the George Mason University Office of Research Integrity & Assurance at 703-575-4121 if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research.

CONSENT
☐ Please check here if you agree to be audiotaped during this interview.
I have read this form and agree to participate in this study.

Signature: ___________________________  Date: ___________________________

IRB: For Official Use Only
Project Number: 826440-1
Page 1 of 1

Appendix C

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Recruitment Materials

Dr. ____________________________,

My name is Mrs. Kisha Porcher and I am a doctoral candidate at George Mason University, who is beginning the dissertation process. My qualitative research study focuses on the ways in which faculty members and department chairs in teacher education programs define, represent, and discuss student achievement for students of color in their urban teacher preparation program. My research study will also explore the programmatic features you identify that contribute to your students' understanding of student achievement in all of its forms. My study is timely because of President Obama's proposed Teacher Education Reform and Improvement initiative that seeks to link teacher preparation programs to the test scores of the pupils whom their graduates teach. I am conducting this research under the guidance of Dr. Gary Galluzzo at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA.

By way of background, I am a former high school English teacher in Prince George's County, Maryland. I most recently completed an opportunity as an Education Pioneer with the School District of Philadelphia, in which I engaged in the partnership between the school district and Temple University Urban Teacher Residency. I was able to engage in the process of selecting the first cohort of the program. My future goal is to become a professor in an urban teacher preparation program that focuses on preparing teachers who want to work in urban schools, to close the opportunity and achievement gap. My future goal has influenced my dissertation study, in which I would like to solicit your institution's participation.

My research study will focus on three urban teacher preparation programs (one traditional, one alternative, and an urban residency program). Specifically, I would like to interview six faculty members (department chair of program, faculty members of math, reading, learning and child development, diversity courses, and field experience coordinator).

My data collection will include semi-structured interviews and document analysis, which will focus on the program structure, e.g. courses, expectations, etc. The six faculty members will engage in the semi-structured interviews. I plan to collect data during the spring semester of 2016.

I intend to utilize the data to illustrate the complexity of urban teacher preparation programs, academic achievement for students of color, and preparing teachers to address the opportunity gap. I will share the profile of your programs with you.

I am open to answer any questions that you may have about my study, and would like to schedule a telephone conversation to discuss your institution's interest in participating.

Thanks in advance for taking the time to read my email. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kisha Porcher, MA
## Appendix D

### Interview Questions aligned to Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Program Quality</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Research Question Alignment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Structure</td>
<td>In what ways does the program’s philosophy align with what the faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In what ways do you believe? Are is the program designed to? the courses in your program align with what faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is urban defined?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What makes your program an urban teacher preparation program?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Specific Preparation (Reading &amp; Math)</td>
<td>What is the primary focus of your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation in Learning &amp; Child Development</td>
<td>In what ways does your course prepare students to teach students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation to Teach Racially</td>
<td>How do you define students of color in your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do you define urban schools in your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnically, &amp; Linguistically Diverse Students</td>
<td>How do you define student achievement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you define student achievement for students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>In what ways does your course prepare students to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Field Experience</th>
<th>What is the primary focus of the field experience?</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does the field experience prepare teachers to teach students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you define students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you define student achievement for students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>How are urban schools defined in the field experience?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>How are urban schools chosen to partner with the teacher preparation program?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>In what ways does field experience prepare students to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>
# Appendix E

## Data Collection Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Data Type</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/14/16</td>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Handbook</td>
<td>• Not a lot of information about the field experience expectations in the handbook.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Will ensure that I ask more questions during the interview.</td>
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<td>• I will probably have to ask for a specific document for this information</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/14/16</td>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
<td>Over Achieve Alternative Teacher</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>• Most of this information was collected from the website so it is not as in depth as the information in the handbook from the other institution.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Preparation Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Data Collection Memo</td>
<td>Interview Preparation</td>
<td>Education Pioneers Notebook</td>
<td>• Snow Emergency in the city kept me from being able to visit the campus to interview the participants.</td>
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<td>• The participants were very flexible and agreed to conduct the interview over the phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Dr. Donaldson is the program director. Dr. Donaldson made me very comfortable during our interview together. She is considered a person of color. She has longevity in working in urban areas. They have added a Special Education track to the program but I am not working with this track. My study is focusing on the Secondary track. When I asked her questions, she was very reluctant to define things. She allowed the context and students to define the terms that are a part of the study. She sent a PowerPoint to clarify any questions that I may have.</td>
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<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Reflective Memo</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Education Pioneers Notebook</td>
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<td>• I discovered that research questions that I had for her, didn’t work well. Especially for her because she is a director, but she doesn’t teach any of the classes. She allows the context of the program to define the work.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• She understands that academic achievement should take into consideration the expectations of the state and should focus on the growth mindset.</td>
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<td>• She believes that the program prepares teachers for the urban context and that all students should be prepared to teach in the urban context, because if you can teach in urban contexts you can teach anywhere.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Dr. Abner (12:30pm—Phone Interview)</td>
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<td>• Dr. Abner teaches the Friday Seminar</td>
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<td>• This conversation was very uncomfortable at times. She spoke in a very jokingly manner about the issues of race. I could immediately identify her operating in privilege.</td>
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<td>• She indicated that she worked in urban spaces and lived through segregation, which made her credible in her ability to talk about this work.</td>
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<td>• She doesn’t believe that academic achievement is the correct word to use. But she didn’t provide another term.</td>
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<td>• She spoke about students of color from a deficit mindset, and wanted to move away from being politically correct.</td>
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<td>• She does believe that the work that they are doing in the program impacts what happens in the classroom; however, she believes that it only scratches the surface. There is only so much that a teacher preparation program can do.</td>
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<td>• She indicated that dealing with racial issues is a lifelong process.</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Education Pioneers Notebook</td>
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<td>2/15/15</td>
<td>Reflective Memo</td>
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<td>Dr. Abner’s class did not necessarily fit the mode of what the classes are that Boyd listed; however, she focused on the work that would happen in these classes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I am not sure if I can use this data from this interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Dr. Caldwell (2:00pm—Phone Interview)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary focus is on the Reading Methods courses (Secondary English, Young Adult Literature, Seminar for Student Teaching)</td>
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<td>He believes that academic achievement should be balanced view; personal, civic, and community should be an aspect of academic achievement</td>
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<td>He also indicated that there should be a hybrid conversation about academic achievement; Standards of Learning will have to be included because it is a state requirement</td>
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<td>Academic achievement should be measured by teachers. We should trust the judgment of teachers.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2/15/16  Reflective Memo  Ruckle Residency  Education Pioneers Notebook

- Dr. Caldwell focused on a holistic view of academic achievement.
- He really pushed the envelope about the professionalism of teachers. Allowing their judgment to matter concerning academic achievement.
- After this interview, I also discovered that the courses in an urban teacher preparation program are much more complex that what Boyd described. The courses can have different names are not directly labeled like Boyd’s courses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2/15/16</th>
<th>Data Collection Memo</th>
<th>Ruckle Residency</th>
<th>Overall Reflection Education Pioneers Notebook</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• I sincerely understand the idea of semi-structured interviews. You can plan interviews but they will and can change based on the responses of the participants. • Also, learned about the flexibility of conducting qualitative research; or any research for that matter. You have to be beyond flexible as things come up. The most important part, is to be transparent within your analysis and data collection so that there are no secrets. • Although I had in-person interviews scheduled, and I was present within the area of the institution, due to weather, all of the interviews for today were conducted via phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Interviewee</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Sellers Traditional</td>
<td>Dr. Ball</td>
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<td>(5:30pm—Phone Interview)</td>
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<td>Analytic Memo</td>
<td>Sellers Traditional</td>
<td>Education Pioneers Notebook</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/16/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Mrs. Cook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(11:45am—In Person Interview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Interviewee</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2/16/16| Interview  | Ruckle Residency    | Mrs. Raglin (1:30pm—In Person)  | • Mrs. Raglin is the field experience coordinator for the secondary track  
• The most experienced participant that I interviewed  
• Students are organized in cohorts; the program has five cohorts  
• They have residents in 16 schools  
• Students are placed in the core areas |
| 2/16/16| Reflective Memo | Ruckle Residency    | Mrs. Cook Education Pioneers Notebook | • The interviews for Mrs. Cook & Mrs. Raglin were back to back so I couldn’t write the memos directly after the interviews  
• This interview was rushed because Mrs. Cook had other engagements  
• During this interview, I was reminded again about semi-structured interviews. I realized just how many questions I could and wanted to ask.  
• She was one of the participants that did not have experience working with urban students. She worked in rural areas  
• Unlike the conversation with Dr. Abner, she acknowledged her privilege and made the conversation much more manageable |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/16/16</td>
<td>Reflective Memo</td>
<td>Ruckle Residency</td>
<td>Mrs. Raglin Education Pioneers Notebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• This was my longest interview because we talked about the importance of cultural competence needed to work in urban spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• I felt that I needed to soak up as much wisdom as possible because she was an educator for 35 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/17/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Sellers Traditional</td>
<td>Dr. Oakes (9:00am--Phone Interview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Due to the shortage at university, she has taught several courses (Intro to Urban Teaching, ELA methods (Early Childhood), Student Teaching Supervision, Education Psychology &amp; Child Development, Children’s Literature, Methods of Social Studies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• She was also the director of the department for 8 years</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Defines urban as multilayered and challenging; highlights the stereotypes of working with this group</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• She also indicated that urban is much more complicated because of gentrification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Defines academic achievement using a binary; achievement vs. progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Person</td>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2/17/16| Reflective Memo | Sellers Traditional | Education Pioneers Notebook | • Most importantly she indicated that teacher preparation programs can only begin the work of improving student academic achievement once teachers enter the classroom space  
• She highlighted that teachers should be life-long learners and continue their quest for knowledge once they enter the classroom |
| 2/18/16| Interview | Sellers Traditional | Dr. Baker (11:30am—In-Person Interview) | • Dr. Baker is the program director at Sellers Traditional  
• She also teaches the reading methods courses  
• She indicated that a lot of the faculty members have to play multiple roles due to high a turnover rate  
• She is focusing on creating a more cohesive program and hiring faculty members that want to stay  
• She thinks that teachers need to understand assessments in order to understand achievement  
• She believes that the program is moving in the direction to impact the classrooms, but are not there yet  
• She thinks that her main responsibility is to the parents of DC |
2/19/16 & 2/21/16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflective Memo</th>
<th>Sellers Traditional</th>
<th>Education Pioneers Notebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• It took me two days to write this memo. There is a strong possibility that I forgot some things because of the gap in time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• I noticed that the face-to-face interviews are much more engaging than the phone interviews; in which the interviews run over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Due to the gap in time, I have forgotten how she defines academic achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2/21/16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Memo</th>
<th>Overall Reflection</th>
<th>Education Pioneers Notebook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Overall, I believe I really understand what “semi-structured” interviews are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The research questions evolved over time due the nature of the conversation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sellers Traditional has faculty members that teach multiple courses. I wonder how this will impact my data and its alignment with Boyd’s structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Also, the courses are not titled the same, so I will have to make alignment to Boyd’s work. I am not sure if I should change this in my work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2/23/16-2/24/16 | Analytic Memo | Listening to Interviews | Dr. Donaldson | • University is an “urban” serving institution; “supposed to be”  
• Defines academic achievement based on how the state defines it; standards of learning  
• Student’s performance on SOL’s; whether we like it or not  
• Personally: growth over time instead of test scores  
• Experience was unable to show growth with students of color but was able to show growth with suburban students  
• Doesn’t describe students of color, just describes students within the school district that the future teachers will teach in  
• It’s difficult to align the entire program with preparing teachers to teach in an urban context because the program uses faculty members that are within a larger context  
• Courses that prepares teachers to improve student academic achievement: Ethics and Reading across the curriculum  
• Relationships are the most important; students will perform for you have a relationship with them  
• Speaks about the urban contexts using deficit language |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2/25/16 &amp; 2/29/16</th>
<th>Analytic Memo</th>
<th>Listening to Interviews</th>
<th>Dr. Abner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Urban is a pseudonym for high needs schools, metropolitan area, high poverty, marginalized African Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Residency program is housed in urban schools in an urban district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Aligns all definitions with the district’s definitions</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Get residents set up with the best teachers for coaching</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• 4 days a week in classroom and the weekly seminar</td>
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<td>• Does not agree with the term academic achievement</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Schools are worrying about test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Teachers should focus on moral issues; not drill &amp; kill and close reading</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Core standards are important</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Teachers should focus on pushing students to think for themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Teachers from middle class struggle with teaching students of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Speaks about students of color from a deficit perspective; “students have issues” “don’t have same the knowledge as white middle class students” “there is a different attitude about learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Residents are aware of the issues of teaching students of color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The multicultural paper in the class helps students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/16</td>
<td>Analytic Memo</td>
<td>Listening to Interviews Dr. Oakes • Program focuses on preparing teachers to teach in urban spaces • Urban: challenging, multi-layered, nuanced, diverse in more than one way (income, gender, socioeconomic status, race &amp; class, heavily black &amp; brown kids, marginalized) • The term urban has changed due to “flight” or “return” of the middle class people to the urban spaces • Talks about the challenges of defining urban with her students • Indicates that the negative stereotypes should not define urban education • Urban education is much more complex • Concentrating on urban has neglected the issues in suburban • Where are the students going due to gentrification • Addresses academic achievement “head on”; focuses on how historically how African Americans have performed low • Focuses on achievement vs. progress; however how do we quantify progress • Many of the students that are in the program are White; so have to spend a lot time unpacking privilege and how it impacts teaching • Runs out of space and time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2/16</td>
<td>Analytic Memo</td>
<td>Listening to Interviews</td>
<td>Dr. Baker</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Moral responsibility of the university to be involved in the community where you are housed</td>
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<td>• In urban spaces there is a lot of turnover</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Teaching is life changing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Feels as if she has a contract with the parents of the community</td>
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<td>• Teachers should imagine their children in the audience</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The director is the gatekeeper of the program</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Urban: the myths; the code of what urban means</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• There is not a parent that doesn't care about their child —this is a myth</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Urban is a lot to do with economics; the effects of poverty on families</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Survival of families is the focus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Teachers are not to be stumbling blocks for students in urban spaces</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Teachers should not write off or baby urban students</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Education is about changing the trajectory of someone’s life</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Urban—challenge but not impossible</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• This is an urban teacher preparation programs because of where the school is located</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not ‘sugar coat’ the issues in urban spaces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|        |               |                        | • Certain people want the city
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/2/16</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Sellers Traditional</td>
<td>Mrs. Keith (8:00pm—Phone Interview) • Teacher at a charter school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Literacy background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Teaching &amp; coaching for 15 years</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Adjunct professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Clinical Instructor/Field Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/8/16</td>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
<td>Sellers Traditional</td>
<td>Handbook • Not a lot information about the course sequence or schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I will check the website or contact the teachers individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Document Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dr. Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3/15/16    | Analytic Memo  | Listening to Interview    | - Urban is a loaded definition  
- Inner city of a major metropolitan area  
- Spread of income  
- Gap between a large population  
- People of color = low socioeconomic area  
- White people = high socioeconomic area  
- Urban is not formally defined in the program because it is not formally defined anywhere else  
- Academic achievement is a mastered skills and knowledge for that grade level for the next band level of activities  
- Achievement is not defined by how well you do on a test  
- Achievement is how well you are prepared at this grade level for the next grade level  
- Practicum prepares teachers to improve student achievement that are not familiar with the urban setting but it doesn't get to the root of the problem  
- Policy has to change education in the urban area  
- Teachers that come out of teacher preparation get frustrated; change is impossible at the classroom level  
- Everything is measured by standardized test |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3/17/16</th>
<th>Analytic Memo</th>
<th>Listening to Interview</th>
<th>Mrs. Raglin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Some of the white students are resistant</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Students to care how much you know, until they know how much you care</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Teachers come to the program with stereotypes about the community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Urban is much more diverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Residents expectations are very low</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Residents come with a missionary mindset</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Intentions are good</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Has conversations with residents about stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Residents have low expectations for students so they give them subpar work</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Some believe that warm demander is mean</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Education is to prepare for your vocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• When students can connect their learning to real life situations, students will hold on to it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Academic achievement is how policy defines it
• There is a duality: policy vs. students
• Achievement is goal setting for students
• Have residents align their assessments to standards
• Everything is standards based
• Standards are not bad and testing is not bad, it is the high stakes that are attached to it
• Urban schools = different world
• Residents make assumptions. She made assumptions about urban students and it negatively impacted her relationship with her students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3/19/16  | Analytic Memo | Listening to Interview | Dr. Caldwell | • Identity should be brought to the foreground; race, class, gender and socioeconomic status  
• Teachers have to be clear about the issues in urban spaces  
• “What do we mean, when we use this term”  
• Academic achievement should be an expansive view of achievement  
• Should focus on individual growth  
• Growing sense of who students are = real achievement  
• Achievement should be setting students up for post-secondary education; productive work life  
• Achievement comes up with standards of learning  
• Residents are open, but they focus on raising scores  
• There are systematic issues of testing  
• Measurement of achievement should not be standardized test. Should trust teachers judgment; not individual but a collective knowledge of a school  
• Standardized test doesn’t tell students anything |
<p>| 3/19/16  | Analytic Memo | Listening to Interview | Mrs. Keith   | • Student teaching prepares teachers to go into the classroom |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/27/16</td>
<td>Document Analysis Preliminary Coding Document Analysis Chart</td>
<td>My initial analysis was lost. I have to start over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/26/16-6/27/16</td>
<td>Document Analysis Preliminary Coding Document Analysis Chart</td>
<td>Utilized a preliminary coding document to go through the process of coding (see attachment from Michele) Preliminary Codes: Deep Pedagogical Content Knowledge Content Specific Courses Results Focused Preparing Students to be College, Career &amp; Life Ready Character Development Academic Progress= Academic Achievement I noticed that these codes don’t really get to the root of the issues that I know are present. Maybe I am being bias because I know of the structural issues that exist within schools and teacher preparation programs. I hope I am not playing it safe. However, I want to ensure that I am accurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/3/16 &amp; 7/5/16</td>
<td>Interviews Preliminary Coding Dr. Ball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/5/16</td>
<td>Interviews Preliminary Coding Dr. Oakes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix F

### Department Chair/Program Director
**Pilot Interview Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Questions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What is your first and last name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How was your day today?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where are you from? You mean where they live/born?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is your ethnicity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How long have you been teaching/working at this urban teacher preparation program?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Why did you decide to teach/work in an urban teacher preparation program?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What course(s) do you teach, if any?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Were the courses that you teach assigned to you, or did you have a choice?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Structure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define urban?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How is urban defined within your program? Probe, in documents, mission statement, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What makes your program an urban teacher preparation program? What are you after here? “makes” is confusing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define academic achievement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define students of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define academic achievement for students of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In what ways does the program’s philosophy align with what the faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In what ways do the courses in your program align with what faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Faculty Members
(Math, English, Child Development & Diverse Students)

### Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Questions</th>
<th>Program Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • What is your first and last name?  
• How was your day today?  
• Where are you from?  
• What is your ethnicity?  
• How long have you been teaching/working at this urban teacher preparation program?  
• Why did you decide to teach/work in an urban teacher preparation program?  
• What course(s) do you teach, if any?  
• Were the courses that you teach assigned to you, or did you have a choice? | • How do you define urban?  
• How is urban defined within your program?  
• What makes your program an urban teacher preparation program?  
• How do you define academic achievement?  
• How do you define students of color?  
• How do you define academic achievement for students of color?  
• In what ways does the program’s philosophy align with what the faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?  
• In what ways do the courses in your program align with what faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color? |
| Subject Specific Preparation (Reading & Math) | • What is the primary focus of your course?  
• In what ways does your course prepare students to teach students of color?  
• How do you define students of color in your course?  
• How do you define urban schools in your course?  
• Does your course address the academic achievement of students of color?  
• If so, how do you define academic achievement for students of color?  
• In what ways does your course prepare students to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools? |
| Preparation in Learning & Child Development | |
| Preparation to Teach Racially, Ethnically, & Linguistically Diverse Students |  
| General Questions | • What is your first and last name?  
• How was your day today?  
• Where are you from?  
• What is your ethnicity?  
• How long have you been teaching/working at this urban teacher preparation program?  
• Why did you decide to teach/work in an urban teacher preparation program?  
• What course(s) do you teach, if any?  
• Were the courses that you teach assigned to you, or did you have a choice? |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Structure</th>
<th>Characteristics of Field Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define urban?</td>
<td>• What is the primary focus of the field experience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How is urban defined within your program?</td>
<td>• In what ways does the field experience prepare teachers to teach students of color?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What makes your program an urban teacher preparation program?</td>
<td>• How are students of color defined in the field experience for students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define academic achievement?</td>
<td>• How are urban schools defined in the field experience, for students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define students of color?</td>
<td>• How are urban schools chosen to partner with the teacher preparation program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How do you define academic achievement for students of color?</td>
<td>• In what ways does field experience prepare students to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In what ways does the program’s philosophy align with what the faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In what ways do the courses in your program align with what faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G

Final Interview Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What is your first and last name?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How was your day today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where are you from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is your ethnicity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How long have you been teaching/working at this urban teacher preparation program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Why did you decide to teach/work in an urban teacher preparation program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What course(s) do you teach, if any?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Were the courses that you teach assigned to you, or did you have a choice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Program Quality</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Research Question Alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Structure</td>
<td>How do you define urban?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How is urban defined within your program?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What makes your program an urban teacher preparation program?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do you define academic achievement?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Specific Preparation (Reading &amp; Math)</td>
<td>In what ways do the courses in your program align with what faculty members teach about the achievement of students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation in Learning &amp; Child Development</td>
<td>What is the primary focus of your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In what ways does your course prepare students to teach students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do you define students of color in your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do you define urban schools in your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does your course address the academic achievement of students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If so, how do you define academic achievement for students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
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<td>In what ways does your course prepare students to improve the achievement of students of color in urban schools?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation to Teach Racially, Ethnically, &amp; Linguistically Diverse Students</td>
<td>What is the primary focus of your course?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In what ways does your course prepare students to teach students of color?</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Characteristics of Field Experience</td>
<td>What is the primary focus of the field experience?</td>
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<tr>
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References


Biography

Kisha Porcher graduated from Western Hills High School, Cincinnati, Ohio in 2004. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English and Secondary Education, from Spelman College in 2008. She was employed as a teacher in Prince George’s County for four years and International Baccalaureate Coordinator for two years. She is currently an Education Consultant in New York City. She received her Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from Teachers College, Columbia University in 2009.