Case Study #3: Examining Completers' Teaching Effectiveness 2018-2019 Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
Component 4.1 Impact on P-12 Student Learning and Development

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Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to provide evidence of program completers' teaching skills using multiple measures; the influence of program completers on P-12 student learning and development, on classroom instruction, and on schools; and the satisfaction of completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation (CAEP Standard 4: Program Impact). The Randolph College EPP case study design was developed three years ago by EPP faculty as part of our quality assurance plan.

The Virginia Department of Education does not provide P-12 learning data or teacher effectiveness data to Educator Preparation Programs at Virginia colleges or universities. Therefore, a case study of program completers in their first three years of teaching allows us to evaluate our completers' teaching effectiveness. Using the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) teaching standards and learning progressions as a conceptual framework, we conducted this case study to understand five first-year teachers' perceptions of their preparation, classroom outcomes, level of confidence, and the ways in which they could have been better or more prepared for the classroom.

In order to analyze our program's effectiveness once candidates enter the classroom, we conducted a case study to explore the experiences of recent graduates in surrounding school divisions. The research team included all EPP faculty as well as a case study researcher (a regular department adjunct and college supervisor familiar with the program). The case study researcher helped gather data from participants through structured observation protocols and pre- and post-observation interviews. All four components of CAEP Standard 4 were addressed in the 2018-2019 case study and include the following: completer influence on P-12 student learning and development, indicators of teaching effectiveness, satisfaction of employers (principals), and satisfaction of completers. The case study elicits reflections by completers about their preparation and teaching practice and provides us an opportunity to conduct classroom observations. This observational component permits us to study our completers under natural conditions as they teach with no manipulation or control of variables. Continuation of the case study method is an effective way to demonstrate completers' teaching effectiveness in light of the lack of student achievement data from the Virginia Department of Education (i.e., Virginia SOL assessment data). Based on our previous case studies (Lindeman, Schimmoeller, & Woods, 2018 and Lindeman, Schimmoeller, Duke, & Howell, 2018), we set the following goals for the current study:

- Gather quantitative and qualitative documentation to provide evidence that Randolph College EPP completers contribute to an expected level of student/pupil-learning growth; that completers effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions the RC program is designed to foster; and that employers and completers are satisfied with the preparation program.
- Compare the current case study findings to those from the previous two case studies, examining trends or changes in perceptions about completers' teaching experience and P-12 student learning.
- Reflect on and suggest program modifications for the RC EPP and prepare the next case study protocol as part of continuous improvement.

Our first two case studies were grounded in Linda Darling-Hammond's (1999) claim that effective teachers are the product of exemplary teacher preparation programs. She purports candidates must "learn about learning and about the structures and modes of inquiry of their disciplines so they can translate what they know into effective curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessments" (p.19). Darling-Hammond asserts candidates who do not matriculate from exemplary preparation programs will not sustain research-based best teaching practices when they enter their own classrooms. Recently, Darling-Hammond and Oakes (2019) describe an updated framework for teacher preparation programs. Building on the construct of "deeper learning," Hammond and Oakes describe "classrooms where deeper learning is the goal are ones in which challenging academic content is paired with engaging, experiential, and innovative learning approaches" (p. 4) to equip students for lifelong learning. To this end, the field of learning sciences provides guiding principles for teacher preparation programs to establish practica and student teaching experiences where teacher candidates practice their skills assessing pupils' prior knowledge, helping pupils learn how to organize knowledge and apply skills outside of the classroom, and more important, assisting students in understanding how to manage their own learning (Darling-Hammond & Oakes 2019). Additionally, the Virginia Department of Education's Five Cs initiative (http://www.virginiaisforlearners.virginia.gov/media-library/) aligns with the deeper learning focus. The profile of a Virginia high school graduate establishes a new set of expectations known as the 5 Cs: critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship skills. Therefore, our educator preparation program completers should be able to demonstrate how their students are learning skills to be lifelong learners.

The EPP's rigorous coursework, extensive and varied practica, and emphasis on teachers as researchers in their own classrooms results in effective teachers and teachers who remain in classrooms and engage with learning communities. Using a yearly case study allows the EPP faculty to assess and continually improve how we support our teacher candidates through licensure so they have a solid foundation from which to grow, gaining the confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to facilitate student/pupil learning and growth.

A long-term goal of this project is to examine the influence of the EPP over time. Moreover, a deeper investigation into various aspects of the program will assist education department faculty in providing completers with the skills and knowledge they need to maintain research-based teaching practices throughout their teaching careers. As we analyzed our previous two case study artifacts, and collected information from program completers, CAEP Standard 4 guided us in examining the broader scope of preparing candidates who, according to Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, and Shulman (2005), "support their students toward productive lives and careers" (p. 441). Furthermore, we continue to work diligently with our stakeholders to provide our candidates rigorous opportunities to move toward "deeper learning" to "upend the old but persistent views about uneven distribution for learning abilities across various student populations" (Darling-Hammond & Oakes, 2019). The case study method is our best way to gather multiple artifacts about our completer cohorts with opportunities to uncover new ways to improve our program.

The RC EPP finds the case study helpful in our continuous improvement. Our focus on the use of pupil data to drive improvement in what we offer program candidates and how we model research-based instruction supports our method and use of completer comments, principal

perceptions, and supporting artifacts. We found our program completers do understand how to ask good questions about student learning and are able to collect data which in turn drives more effective instructional practice and classroom processes. We find that the experiences at Randolph provide completers skills to make changes using a grass roots approach. The use of data to support continuous improvement recommendations is key. Data collection is one of our challenges. Though meaningful, the case study approach is time and resource intensive. Beginning fall 2017 we developed a specialized data management system to address our program goals toward continuous improvement and measures. We strive to emphasize the importance of candidate learning as much as student learning, recognizing that incorporating new skills and developing different mindsets about the professional work of teachers at all states of their careers requires deliberate instruction and practice.

Method

Participants and Data Collection Schedule

The case study researcher, a college supervisor familiar with our program but not a full time member of the faculty, was hired to oversee the case study and to collect data. The case study researcher was selected from a group of college supervisors because they were familiar with the program and with the observation protocol. An initial cohort of six participants were invited to be part of the case study and reflected a purposeful stratified sample drawn from completer years 2017-2019. After IRB approval was obtained, the cohort group was contacted and a face-to-face focus group was scheduled for early October 2019. Initially six participants were invited to be part of the case study, but, one participate declined. The study continued with the remaining five remaining participants. The context of this P-12 learning data includes data collected by five completers working in rural, urban, and suburban settings within Virginia. The completers represent teachers of elementary general and special education, middle school special education and mathematics, high school physics, and high school biology/earth science. Participants are all practicing teachers who hold full-time positions and graduated from the EPP program within the last three years. See Table 1 for the list of participants' current teaching locations and licensure areas. The population of students taught by participants included first graders through twelfth graders, many of whom receive free or reduced lunch. Students are diverse in race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. During phase two, the case study researcher met with two of the completers who were not able to attend the October focus group meeting. The meetings were conducted at the completers' schools. The case study researcher went over the process and offered each participant a consent to participate form. Both agreed to participate. These two completers submitted their responses to the focus questions in digital documents to the case study researcher. In phase three (October-November 2019), the case study researcher scheduled classroom observations and pre-/post-observation interviews. One completer was unable to schedule a November observation due to family leave but was rescheduled for late January 2020. During phase four, the employers (building principals) were interviewed in late October through mid-December 2020.

Table 1

Case Study Completers' Graduation Year, Licensure Area, and Current Teaching Position

Completer pseudonym	Graduation Year	Licensure area(s)	Current teaching position
Molly*	2017	PreK-6 Elementary, Special Education General Curriculum K-12	Elementary, 1st grade
Wanda*	2017	PreK-6 Elementary, Special Education General Curriculum K-12	Middle School, Special Education Teacher Grades 6 & 7
Jane**	2018	PreK-6 Elementary, Special Education General Curriculum K-12	Elementary, Special Education teacher
Paul**	2018	Physics	High school, AP Physics I and II
Patsy*	2019 (Second-year teacher)	Biology 6-12	Alternative High School, Biology, Environmental Science, Earth Science

**Participated in the Focus Group October, 2019 ** Submitted focus group questions*

Data Collection

Data collected include the focus group interview transcript, focus group question responses from Jane and Paul, pre- and post-observation notes, and notes from principal interviews. Data also included low-inference classroom observation notes. The case study researcher met with EPP faculty and created a check list of suggested artifacts we anticipated the completers' would be able to provide to demonstrate their influence on student learning. The check list included: student assessments (from academic year 2018-2019 or fall 2019 through winter 2020 for pre/post data); an updated resume including leadership roles within the school or division; a record of projects completed within the school or classroom with examples of student growth and application of college/career readiness; other records highlighting professional growth, training, use of technology, or co-teaching experience as they relate to CAEP standards; an end-of-year evaluation by an administrator (optional), and sample SMART goals or similar yearly project to show instructional growth (optional). This change in case study procedure is part of the EPP's quality enhancement plan to improve the validity of data collected.

Individual surveys, focus group and interviews. The case study researcher scheduled the initial focus group meeting with completers to ask them to respond to the focus group questions (see Table 2). The focus group questions were answered during face-to-face interviews and through written responses as our teachers new to the profession described their preparation, their needs, their level of confidence, and their perceptions of how well prepared they were to enter the classroom. Two participants were not able to attend and were given an electronic copy of the questions. After the focus group, one participant was unable to continue with the case study and was thanked for participating with the focus group. After each scheduled classroom observation (four total), the case study researcher reviewed the questions with the completer if time

permitted. The case study researcher submitted these documents to the EPP for analysis.

Classroom observations and completer artifacts. Observations of the teachers instructing in their classrooms were conducted and evaluated. One classroom observation was arranged independently with each participant by the case study researcher. The researcher used a low-inference running record of what was observed by the teachers and the students. Low-inference features during instruction are examples of concrete and objective teaching behaviors, these may include how the teacher notifies students transitions will occur, how teachers maintain classroom management and are recorded by the observer with very little inference or opinion of student or teacher responses or reactions (Rosenshine & Furst, 1971). Following each observation, the researcher met with the teacher for an interview and a summary statement was written. The researcher collected lesson plans, resumes, summative evaluations, and de-identified student data voluntarily provided by completers as evidence of teacher effectiveness. The case study researcher submitted these documents to the EPP for analysis.

Employer (principal) survey. The case study researcher contacted completers' principals and set up a meeting to discuss the case study process and provide the administrator/principal follow-up evaluation form. The researcher recorded summary comments about the completer during the follow-up meeting. All completed forms were submitted to the EPP for analysis.

At the completion of the case study researcher's data collection, the department arranged a post-data collection meeting to review the inventory of the artifacts collected. The discussion also included a review of the process. All artifacts were then stored in our secure cloud-based digital repository.

Table 2

Focus Group and Individual Questions for Participants

Question 1. Thinking about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why?
Question 2. Tell us about your successes and highlights so far during your teaching career.
Question 3. Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.
Question 4. How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches (formative and summative).
Question 5. What employment milestones have you reached (e.g., promotion, leadership positions)?
Question 6. What is your involvement in the school outside of your classroom?
Question 7. Do you perceive your teacher preparation you received at Randolph College as relevant to the responsibilities you confront on the job? Was your preparation experience effective? *(This was a new question added based on findings from last year's case study and CAEP Standard 4, component 4.4.)*
Question 8. Is there anything we haven't covered that you'd like to share about your preparation here at Randolph's teacher education program?

Data Analysis

Cross-case analysis was conducted in writing and during EPP department meetings. A structural narrative analysis was conducted in stages where the group focused on themes within and across participants and then EPP faculty members checked these themes within and across participants. All data were analyzed to capture completers' teaching effectiveness and perceptions about their educator preparation program experience. The case study method described by Creswell and Poth (2018) was used as a guide for reviewing completers' artifacts. Our intent was to cast a wide net, gathering multiple pieces of evidence related to each of the InTASC standards. Each instrument had a target mean score or benchmark established by the EPP. Findings were organized by CAEP Standard 4 components.

Cohort group. Individual responses to the eight focus questions were coded using an etic approach, and themes related to attributes of teaching were developed from emergent codes (Wargo, 2013). Themes were tagged to the InTASC standards (1-10) and InTASC standard clusters (The Learner and Learning, Content Knowledge, Instructional Practice and Professional Responsibility). InTASC themes were tagged by question. Participant quotes were selected to support the themes for each question. The focus group recording was translated using the TacTiq Chrome extension app and further editing was done by hand. The two completers who were unable to attend the focus group submitted electronic responses to the case study researcher.

Student achievement data. Completers submitted student summative data in various formats. This was to be expected because they taught in three different school divisions and in varied teaching assignments. Two completers, employed as special education teachers, submitted de-identified student data from division assessments in reading, using the Qualitative Reading Inventory, Developmental Spelling Inventory (DSA): Assess Student Spelling, and The Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) tests. The completer teaching first grade submitted a class set of the Virginia PALS Assessment, a school division-designed Student Growth Assessment for math and reading with a benchmark score of 70. One completer submitted SMART goals for student achievement, but the pre and post data were not included. Data submitted are described in Table 3.

Case study researcher lesson observations. Based on the recommendation from the 2018 case study review, rather than use the student teaching observation rubric, the case study researcher used a running record observation protocol to ascertain teacher and student interactions during the lesson. "One strategy for taking low-inference notes is to create a running record of what you are seeing in the classroom. The goal of a running record is to take objective notes that describe exactly what actions teachers and students are taking" (The New Teacher Project, 2019). The researcher met with the completer before and after the lesson to become familiar with the classroom environment, learning materials, and instructional technology along with the completers' perceptions about classroom management and individual needs.

Employer (principal) surveys. The administrator/principal follow-up evaluation forms were returned to the EPP by the case study researcher. The data were recorded for the 22-item survey using a four point Likert scale: 4 (high), 3-2 (average), and 1 (low). Each item on the instrument was tagged to InTASC standards. Means and standard deviations were calculated for each item

(see Table 8). A target mean score of 3.0 was established as acceptable competence in the performance skill. Comments were recorded anonymously. The researcher summarized the principal's comments after the meeting in a word document. The summary comments were categorized by the four InTASC categories and are represented in Table 7.

Completer surveys. Two program completers submitted a Randolph College Graduate Follow-up Evaluation form (revised 2018) to the case study researcher. The Likert scale on the form was 4 (highly skilled), 3 (proficiently skilled), 2 (not adequately skilled) and 1 (skill level is not acceptable). Each item on the instrument was tagged to InTASC standards. Means and standard deviations were calculated for each item (see Table 10). Target means of 3.0 was set as the target.

Complete summative performance or SMART goals. The P-12 learning data that was examined varied and included lesson plans, student work samples, formative assessments and Smart Goals. Two completers submitted teacher summative evaluation reports and two submitted Smart Goals to the case study researcher. If there was summative comments relating to student growth, the information was noted and included in the summative tables.

Additional artifacts. Completers provided updated resumes, list of technology skills, certifications, and information about leadership roles, committee work, awards, or additional comments about teaching. These data were incorporated into CAEP Standard subcategories as appropriate. The resumes were used to crosscheck self-reported professional development, presentations, committee roles, and previous teaching experience during the focus group or individual interviews.

Results

In order to evaluate completers' teaching effectiveness, artifacts included completers' focus group and written responses to the focus questions, employer (principal), completer surveys, student achievement data, completer resumes, case study researcher's observations and interview notes were content analyzed using the InTASC standards for alignment. The findings are organized to show multiple ways the Randolph College completers in this cohort have an impact on P-12 student learning and development.

CAEP 4.1 Completer impact on P-12 student learning and development

Data reviewed for this section included student assessment data submitted by completers (Table 3) along with case study participants' responses to the focus group or individual written interview questions (Table 4). Sample student performance data included Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI), Developmental Spelling Inventory and Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) tests. Completers' assessment submissions were analyzed to see if there was evidence of student improvement. Three of the completers were able to demonstrate improvement in their students' achievement.

Table 3

Student Performance Data Submitted by Participants Revealing Student Achievement

Case Study Participant	**School/Subject**	**Submitted Assessments (Identified Data)**	**Results**
Molly	Rural/Elementary/ 1st grade/Special Education Inclusion	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Student Growth Assessment (SGA) designed by school division for Math and Reading – benchmark score of 70	Class data n=15 *PALS* results 100% students improved one or more levels Class data n=13 *SGA Math* Pre scores 100% below 70, Post scores- 100% above 70, range [72.5-92.5] *SGA Reading* n=14 Pre scores 100% below 70, Post scores 100% above 70, range [71.4-93.4]
Paul	Urban/High School/ Physics	None included in the SMART goal report.	N.A.
Wanda	Rural/Middle School/Special Education	Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) Case study (n=4) Fall/midyear/end-year Area of need: fluency	**Student 1** – Fall – WPM 78 End-year- WPM 85, grade level 5.5- 6.5 **Student 2** Fall- WPM 84 End-year WPM 106, grade level 6.5 to Middle **Student 3** Fall- WPM 103 End of year WPM 103 Grade level 5.5 to middle **Student 4** Fall –WPM 85 Mid year –WPM 98 End- year –WPM 85, grade level 5.5 to middle
Jane	Urban/Elementary/Special Education	case study for two students Student 1 - QRI inventory pre/post Student 2 – Developmental Spelling inventory & Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	**Student 1- Grade 5** pre instructional level (Grade 1 Equivalent) post instructional level (Grade 2 Equilvalent0 student success documented **Student 2- Grade 1**

	Fall – speller score (0) *Mid year* – speller score (7) *Fall*- pre test Concept of Word – (pre Kindergarten level) *Mid year* (Kindergarten level) Student success documented

Further evidence was gathered by connecting the teaching effectiveness themes derived from participants' individual survey responses and focus group comments (see Table 4) to the InTASC teaching performance standards. Instances of each of the ten InTASC categories were found in participant interview data. These data demonstrate intentional planning, teaching strategies, assessments, collaboration, and leadership. Table 5 shows how data sources and the InTASC standards aligned.

Table 4

Participants' Responses to Focus Interview Questions Aggregated by InTASC Standards

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
1 Learner Development	**Jane** "the summer school or summer camp class was the most beneficial filed placement..because we ran our own classroom which challenged us to develop lessons and classroom management styles." **Patsy** " I have several students how have faded into the background in the bigger schools. And so they just have not been successful for one reason or another and they become very distant. ..They just think that I'm not smart enough to do this."
2 Learning Differences	**Paul** "It is considerable difficult to teacher people difficult physical principals when there is no desire to learn them in the first place."
3 Learning Environments	**Jane** "During the summer placement, the professors were in the classroom while we were there, making it easy for them to address scenarios because they were there to see it happen." **Molly** "Success – positive feedback from parents. I communicate with my parents through emails. I got an email from a student I had last year. The parent told me that he asked his child what made his student smile..it was just that he was able to see me.. and that I was able to bring the child joy during the day." **Molly** "relationship building that is one of the first things we learned is the founding principles and every single class we took is that the relationship is one of the first things you build with the student. **Wanda** "I struggle with and now I am in the struggle with right now. I think that's because Randolph put such an emphasis on students with special needs getting what they need in the classroom. So it is a bit of a disconnect in actual practice."
4 Content Knowledge	**Molly** "our grade level meets a lot to go back and forth about what works and what doesn't work for reading and math. We meet with the reading and math specialists."
5 Application of Content	**Patsy** " my other frustration is just being the only [content] teacher in my building.. and it frustrating because I've reach out to the science teachers at the other high schools.. and I don't hear back from them about resources for my students." **Molly** "You know to make sure that they are grasping the concepts but the biggest thinks that I do with them, there's a lot of hands on stuff."

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
6 Assessment	**Paul-** " I frequently use pre and post assessments for formative purposed. **Jane** "I am able to build research about goal setting, the Orton Gillingham Instruction training and assist students with identifying reading goals." **Jane** "Frustration is the constant change of the VDOE 504 and IEP expectations. Each year it seems as though more things are expected with less time to complete the tasks. It also seems as though expectations are not the same from county to county or school to school." **Jane** "We use IXL diagnostic computer generated program that provides questions on skills in reading and math each marking period." **Wanda** " I did my smart goal based off what I noticed that students didn't understand the material. So I did QRI assessments at the beginning, middle and end. It kinda put them most of the time at their independent level but it pushes them as they continue to read the passages and build their vocabulary fluency. "
7 Planning for Instruction	**Jane** "I was frustrated because there never seemed to be enough time in a day or a week to complete lesson plans, copy materials and properly prepare for a lesson. This is an ongoing frustration for me."
8 Instructional Strategies	**Paul-** "practicum and intern teacher since I was able to receive expert guidance on things that I am doing right and as well as thinking that I am doing incorrectly." **Molly** " I think the foundations class in the classroom management is obviously essential for everyone as a teacher, they taught us the different strategies that were beneficial and proven to be beneficial for students." **Patsy** " So really learning how to implement structure into my classroom is really important… so having somebody come to my classroom every week and give me feedback even before I started my practicum… and someone would say I like that you're doing this may be think about doing that.."

InTASC Standard	Completer Comments
9 Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	**Jane** " additional highlight was attending the VEA conference. I was able to connect with other educators and reevaluate my teaching strategies by listening to a second year teacher discuss her mistakes and accomplishments." **Jane** "I participate in our school events such as "Literacy Night, Family Fun Fit Night, Mornings with Moms, Donuts with Dads and School Plays."
10 Leadership and Collaboration	**Jane** "I am exited to continue working with VEA and attending the SPARKS conference for new teachers." **Jane** "I have become a leader in my school due to my expertise in Special Education." **Wanda** " I think one of the big things is my ability to co-teach and it is really big scary when you are a special education. You and your content teacher are a think. I think this last year and this year have been like amazing.".. We know have special education teachers coming in to watch us because they think we have a good model." **Wanda** "Frustrated parents and you know … you have to rewind and say okay I hear what you are saying but we need to try these things first before we go any further.

CAEP 4.2 Indicators of teaching effectiveness

Table 5 delineates how we triangulated focus group questions, completers' submitted artifacts, and completer and employer (principal) surveys. The employer (principal) and program completer survey data are tagged to multiple InTASC standards.

Table 5

Alignment of Case Study Data Sources with the InTASC Standards

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	**Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected**	**Employer (Principal) Survey**	**Comments from Individual Reflection Questions**
1. Learner Development	Resume Lesson plans	Evaluate pupil growth and learning Show empathy for and sensitivity to all learners (survey items 2,12)	**Question 2-** Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. **Question 3** – Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.
2, Learning Differences	Running record observations by case study researcher Completers' lesson plans	Meet needs of individual students by differentiating instruction Work in inclusive classroom situations Teach and to relate to students from diverse backgrounds (survey items 3,4,21)	**Question 2-** Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. **Question 3** – Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.
3. Learning Environments	Running record observations by case study researcher	Involve pupils in varied learning experiences Manage classrooms efficiently Create a caring environment (survey items 5,6,20)	**Question 2-** Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. **Question 3** – Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected	Employer (Principal) Survey	Comments from Individual Reflection Questions
4. Content Knowledge	Running record observations by case study researcher	Basic knowledge of subject Communicate orally Communicate in writing Use technology effectively (survey items 1,15,16,17)	**Question 1** – Think about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why?
5. Application of Content	Running record observations by case study researcher	Be creative, flexible, imaginative (survey item14)	**Question 1** – Think about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why? **Question 3** – Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career.
6. Assessment	DE identified student assessment data submitted by completers Running record observations by case study researcher	Teach state required standards (SOL) (survey item 18) see note 1	**Question 2-** Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. **Question 3** – Tell us frustrations you've dealt with during your teaching career. **Question 4-** How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches- formative and summative.
7. Planning for Instruction	Completers' lesson plans.	Plan on daily and long-term basis Use a broad variety of teaching resources (survey item 7,11)	**Question 4-** How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches- formative and summative.

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (Theme)	Completer Survey & Artifacts Collected	Employer (Principal) Survey	Comments from Individual Reflection Questions
8. Instructional Strategies	Running record observations by case study researcher	Present lessons skillfully Use a broad variety of teaching resources (survey item 8, 11)	**Question 1** - Think about your education classes you have taken, which have been the most beneficial in your teaching career and why? **Question 2**- Tell us about your successes & highlights so far during your teaching career. **Question 4**- How do you measure your student-learning growth? Explain different approaches- formative and summative.
9. Professional Learning & Ethical Practice	Completers' resumes Completers' surveys	Practice professional ethics Understand how to work with parents & the community Demonstrate leadership, initiative, and professional growth Reflect, monitor, and adjust (survey item 9,10,13,19)	**Question 6 –** What is your involvement in the school outside of your classroom? **Question 8** - If there is anything we haven't covered, and you'd like to share about your preparation here at Randolph's teacher education program?
10. Leadership and Collaboration	Completers' resumes Completers' surveys	Understand how to work with parents and the community Demonstrate leadership, initiative, and professional growth (survey item 10,13)	**Question 5**- What employment milestones have you reached (e.g., promotion, leadership positions)? **Question 6 –** What is your involvement in the school outside of your classroom?

This year, we added a question to the focus group interview protocol asking completers to reflect on the EPP as it relates to their current job and if their preparation experience was effective in preparing them for their teaching responsibilities. Question 7 included two parts: Do you perceive your teacher preparation you received at Randolph College as relevant to the responsibilities you confront on the job? Was your preparation experience effective? Table 7 organizes the reponses to question seven based on the following themes: feedback and continuous improvement, developing professional confidence, research knowledge, and preparation relevance.

Table 7

Completers' Responses to Focus Group Question 7

Themes	**Responses**
Feedback and continuous improvement	"character lessons were the most important "
	"We [were] observed every week .. and that gave me so much confidence because when I get unannounced observations from my principal, I don't freak out…"
	"we got the constant feedback and the constant criticism that we were able to improve and I kind of miss it."
	"I feel that the [practicum] experience of being expected to be active and being expected to teach …was [more than my current practicum students have to do.]
	"I feel like Randolph made me educated in what I am doing."
	"represent [school] no matter where I am"
	" I feel very prepared to talk to administration or other high schools and teachers"
	"some of my high schoolers are still reading on an elementary level and I don't know how to handle that."
	"I feel confident when I am having conversations with my colleagues."
	"represent [school] no matter where I am"
Research knowledge	"use the research based strategies RC has taught me to improve my educational instruction and to

	discover why my students may have not grasped a concept."
Preparation Relevance	"my preparation is still relevant to my daily job"
	"Special education,, counties do it in different ways.. but what they taught us may have been based off of [A] or [B] but county [C] does it differently.
	"RC's TEP gave me a good foundation to being my career as an educator"
	"At RC I learned the responsibility of communicating with my peers (now with my co-teachers) and attend school and outside events.
	"I feel like Randolph made me educated in what I am doing."

4.1 CAEP Satisfaction of employers (principals)

Table 8 includes data collected via the employer surveys and aligned with InTASC standards. The means and standard deviations for each item are reported with a target mean of 3.0. All items had means of 3.3 or greater, indicating that the target was met for all survey items. During the case study process an older version of the employer survey was distributed by accident. Moving forward, the updated version of the employer survey will be used. The revised instrument aligns with the revised 2018 completer (graduate) survey.

Table 8

Employer (Principal) Survey Data tagged using InTASC Core Teaching Standards

InTASC Standard	Survey Items	Principal n=4 Means (SD)
1	1. Basic knowledge of subject	3.8 (.5)
1	2. Evaluate pupil growth and learning	3.5 (.58)
2	3. Meet needs of individual students by differentiation instruction	3.3 (.5)
2	4. Work in inclusive classrooms	3.5 (.58)
3	5. Involve pupils in varied learning experiences	3.3 (.5)
3	6. Manage the classroom efficiently	3.8 (.5)
7	7. Plan on daily and long-term basis	3.8 (.5)
8	8. Present lessons skillfully	3.5 (.58)
9	9. Practice professional ethics	3.5 (.58)
9, 10	10. Understand how to work with parents and the community	3.3 (.5)
11	11. Use a broad variety of teaching resources	3.5 (.58)
1	12. Show empathy for and sensitivity to all learners	3.5 (.58)
9, 10	13. Demonstrate leadership, initiative, and professional growth	3.5 (.5)
5	14. Be creative, flexible, imaginative	3.5 (.58)
4	15. Communicate orally	3.8 (.5)
4	16. Communicate in writing	3.8 (.5)
4	17. Use technology effectively	3.8 (.5)
6	18. Teach state required state standards (SOL)	3.5 (.58)
9	19. Reflect, monitor, and adjust	3.5 (.58)
3	20. Create a caring environment	3.5 (.58)
2	21. Teach and relate to students from diverse backgrounds	3.5 (.58)
2	22. Meet the educational needs of diverse populations	3.5 (.58)

Four principals completed the survey and shared anecdotal comments with the case study researcher during the onsite interview. Comments included: "One if my very best employees," "a very qualified and high performing teacher - lucky to have X," and "Excellent teacher." Table 9 summarizes the principal interview comments recorded by the case study researcher and tagged to InTASC standards. The case study researcher's classroom observations validated some of the comments as noted in the table. The principals' comments support our claim that our completers positively impact P-12 learning.

Table 9

Summative employer (principal) comments to RC case study interviewer are tagged to InTACS General Categories (n=3).

InTASC Core Teaching Standards	Employer Comments
The Learner and Learning InTASC 1,2 &3	"Hands-On lessons for every member of the class; equitable" *[Wanda] When in the inclusion class, it is "impossible to tell which students are SPED." [Paul] "needs to start giving up control of the class so that students are doing more of the work" *[Jane]–" each student was supported to meet with success, but the work was definitely on the students' not the teacher." *[Molly]- "is keenly aware of her students 'abilities, strengths, and weaknesses"
Content InTASC 4 & 5	"Completer knowledgeable in content area: "Hard to tell which teacher is the classroom teacher [English] and which one is the SPED teacher [Randolph Completer]" [Paul] "very knowledgeable of content" "Admits when [Paul] cannot answer a question from a student - but finds the answer"
Instructional Practice InTASC 6,7 &8	[Paul]"Warm with students; shares stories about how and why he became excited about [science]" [Paul] "needs to up the game where rigor is concerned so that AP credit course matches that of a college prep course" [Paul] "Connects content to real world in unusual ways to maintain student interest" [Jane] Innovative in thinking of ways to implement curriculum with everyday experiences; never asks for particular materials - thinks outside the box and gets it done" [Jane] highly reflective of practice;
Professional Responsibility InTASC 9 &10	*[Wanda's] "co-teaching with another teacher is flawless" *[Wanda] Plans with the regular Ed Teacher; understands the importance of collaboration [Wanda] Anxious to attend PD and implements new ideas [Jane] Dedicated - stays late, always prepared, assists veteran classroom teachers"

**Confirmed by case study researcher during classroom observation*

To understand the completer's perspective of their own practice and participation in leadership positions or applications for grants to support student success, a completer survey was given to each of the four participants who continued after the focus group. In addition, completers were asked to submit a current resume and identify the key technology skills they use to monitor student success or deliver instruction. Table 10 aligns the survey items of the revised completer survey with the InTASC Standards. The Likert scale on the completer survey had a four-point rating scale as follows: 4 (highly skilled), 3 (proficiently skilled), 2 (not adequately skilled), and 1 (skill level is not acceptable). The target was 3.0 was met. Table 11 categorizes the leadership, professional development, and technology skills of the cohort group.

Table 10

Completer Survey Data Tagged with the InTASC Core Teaching Standards

InTASC Standard	**Completer Survey (Revised 2018)**	**Mean Completer Scores n=2 (SD)**
1 Learner development	6. understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the disciplines I teach.	4.0 (0)
	2. understand how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional and physical areas.	3.5 (.71)
	15. adapt practice to meet the needs of each learner.	4.0 (0)
2 Learning differences	11. Plan instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals.	3.5 (.71)
	17. am familiar with IDEA and 504 regulations, and is able to contribute to a student's IEP or 504 meetings.	4.0 (0)
	1. use my understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures	4.0 (0)
	4. work with others to create environment that support the individual and collaborative learning.	4.0 (0)
3 Learning environments	4. work with others to create environment that support the individual and collaborative learning.	4.0 (0)
	5.Encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning and self-motivation.	4.0 (0)
4 Content knowledge	12. Use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understand of content areas and their connections	3.5 (.71)
6 Assessment	7. create learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.	3.5 (.71)
7 Planning for instruction	7. create learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.	3.5 (.71)

8 Instructional strategies	13. Use a variety of instructional strategies to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways. 13. Use a variety of instructional strategies to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.	3.5 (.71) 3.5 (.71)
9 Professional learning and ethical practice	9. understand and use multiple methods of assessments to engage learners in their own growth. And 10. monitor learner progress.	4.0 (0)
9 Professional learning & 10 Leadership and collaboration	16. seek leadership roles an opportunities to take responsibility for students learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues…	3.5 (.71)

Table 11

Summary of Participants' Leadership, Technology and Professional Development Opportunities Since Graduating from the Randolph College EPP

Completer	**Leadership Roles, Grants, & Awards**	**Technology Skills**	**Professional Development**
Paul	- Substitute for the Superintendent's Personnel Advisory Committee, 17-18 classroom grant for AP environmental science field study - NHS teacher of year	None reported [case study researcher observed operation of the VandeGraff generator in class & Smart Board]	- Attending graduate school - Sylvan Learning Center Tutor - Randolph College-Heick Ed. Symposium presenter Physics Honor Society
Molly	Coached "girls on the run" PBIS team, member of school crisis response team	Smart Board Google Suite- Google Certified Educator Level, Web resources – Interactive Achievement, IXL, Epic Reading	Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training Introduction to Responsive Classroom Principles
Jane	VEA member	Easy IEP, VA IEP, Woodcock Johnson Scoring Report, Google Classroom & Suite, IXL, Power test	Orton Gillingham certified
Wanda	Administer QRI inventories to students WIAT III educational assessment Write IEP and 504s Participate in eligibility meetings	None reported	Response to Intervention (RTI) procedures

Case Study Comparison Over Three Years

Principals in 2017-2018 rated completers the lowest (though the mean was 3.6, well above the target of 3.0) in their understanding of how to work with parents and the community. Similar findings occurred in the 2018-2019 case study. The 2016-2017 employer survey included a five-point Likert scale (which was changed based on the CAEP reviewer feedback on our assessment instruments). However, we noted similarity between 17-18 and 18-19 ratings when we compared the means for the item related to candidates' understanding of how to work with parents and the community. Principals rated this area 4.0 out of 5.0, the lowest mean rating across all questions (though the mean score did meet our target of 4.0). Based on these three years of data, we need to find more opportunities for candidates to practice interacting with parents and with the community during the EPP.

In addition, items 2 ("evaluates pupil growth and learning"), 4 ("works in inclusive classrooms"), 5 ("involves pupils in varied learning experience"), and 9 ("practices professional ethics") scored 4.2 out of 5.0 in the 16-17 case study. Comparatively, in the 17-18 case study item 4 ("work in inclusive classroom") received the lowest rating (3.6 out of 4.0), although this score remained well above the 3.0 target. In 18-19, the items scored the lowest by principals were items 3 ("meets needs of individual students by differentiation instruction," 3.3 out of 4.0) and 5 ("involves pupils in varied learning experiences," 3.0 out of 4.0). These findings indicate completers need more experience with instructional methods and in differentiating instructional delivery to meet the needs of every learner.

Completers across all three years submitted formative assessment data from teacher-developed SMART goals. Completers were able to use data from these assessments to develop appropriate instruction; however, they noted they would appreciate more training in the use of differentiated instructional practices. In 2016-2017, notes from classroom observations indicated challenges in classroom behaviors and student motivation. Focus group participants shared they were prepared and given opportunities to share opinions during the RC program which gives them confidence in their classrooms and in school-wide decisions decision-making conversations. Strengths noted included leadership skills, creativity, flexibility, and imaginative teaching. Principals reported candidates were well versed in the use of instructional technology in contrast with the completers, who rated themselves a bit lower in this area. Both principals and completers believed completers were well prepared to create a caring environment, and ratings of completer skills in written communication were high. In 2017-2018, noted strengths included developing strong relationships with students and evidence of differentiation. Principal ratings were high (3.8 out of 4) in 17 of the 22 areas listed in the survey, and a mean score of 4.0 was reported for two items: 12 ("completers' ability to show empathy for and sensitivity to all learners") and 17 ("uses technology effectively"). In this year's case study we see similar trends. The 2018-2019 case study data reveal completers felt well prepared overall and received consistent feedback throughout the entire program. Completers shared they were ready for the classroom, especially in the area of developing active learning opportunities for pupils and in their ability to communicate effectively with school personnel. The special education licensure completers reported some frustration in how differently various school divisions write IEPs. As they did in the previous case studies, principals in the 18-19 case study reported completer strengths in classroom management, written and oral communication skills, and the ability to use

instructional technology.

Over the last three years, the EPP has revised course work, increasing community partnerships. These partnerships have benefitted candidates by creating important opportunities to understand the pupils they serve in their diverse classrooms.

Discussion

The case study goal was to gather substantial quantitative and qualitative evidence to support our claim that Randolph College EPP completers have a positive influence on students' learning. The case study, using multiple measures to determine completers' teaching effectiveness, provided rich data. Findings indicated Randolph College EPP completers understand multiple facets of teaching effectiveness demonstrated by the content analysis of the individual survey questions administered by the case study researcher, classroom observations, and principal satisfaction surveys. Moreover, completers provided student achievement evidence of success, shared leadership strategies through extensive discussions about types of assessments, and know that teaching and learning is about the students. Principal surveys and the classroom observations validated the teaching effectiveness of the case study completers. Completers submitted student assessments with the option to select their own data sets to represent measured growth in student achievement, further supporting their teaching effectiveness. Additional artifacts provided by some of the completers were valuable indicators of student engagement and metacognition strategies observed while teaching. Completers shared their strategies for differentiating instruction along with ways to support students one on one in special education settings.

Organizing data using CAEP 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 components along with the InTASC standards crosswalk across multiple measures helped us triangulate findings and support our claims. The case study participants (N=5) represented a range of licensure areas (special education, secondary, and elementary) and two to four years of teaching experience. The individual completer answers provided descriptive examples that aligned with InTASC standards indicating our completers are knowledgeable about content, pedagogy, student learning and development, leadership, and assessments. Our completers are articulate about the skills and support needed to be effective teachers and to guide their students toward learning how to learn. In other words, our completers understand what deeper learning is all about.

Multiple measures including employer (principal) and completer surveys, individual case study focus group question responses, and the case study researcher's classroom observations support the EPP's claim that our program completers share a vision of effective teaching and learning. The case study completers expressed high praise for their extensive clinical experiences which prepared them for teaching. Completers provided anecdotal evidence of what helping students learn means as it relates to student development, critical thinking, collaborative learning, and achievement. Leadership activities and professional development artifacts were shared in their individual responses to the focus questions, resumes, and face-to-face discussion with the case study researcher. Several completers are involved in leadership roles or have participated in professional development tied to student success for learning and career readiness. Principals' anecdotal comments during their interviews with the case study researcher provided a clear

indication that our completers are reflective, regularly show evidence of student growth, and understand continuous improvement. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2005), striving for a shared vision of good teaching along with action research, assessments, and portfolios relating to teaching practice provides a foundation for candidates who are prepared for teaching and are highly rated by their principals.

Without a blueprint or state data system, it will continue to be challenging to gather evidence of a direct link between what our candidates learn in our EPP and how they impact student learning. We know, however, that supporting completers during their first years of teaching is a vital responsibility we share with our P-12 school partners. As a result, maintaining relationships with completers remains one of our continuous improvement aims.

For this case study design, our goal was to replicate the same process as our previous two case studies (Lindeman et al., 2018, 2019). For the current year we were able to combine a smaller focus group and follow up with two completers with a written response to the questions. The timeline for completing the process was shortened, and it helped to collect the artifacts within one month after the mid semester. We improved on obtaining student achievement data, and the completers provided explanations about how they administer their assessments and benchmarks for student growth assessments. This is the second year the local school divisions are using student growth assessments for grades that do not have Virginia Standards of Learning tests. The principals' interviews and the running record for observing each completer provided authentic data to help us understand how our completers reflect on their own understanding and process of learning and how it relates to our Educator Preparation Program.

Recommendations

The evidence provided to the EPP through analysis of case study data support our claim that Randolph College EPP completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth, effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the RC program is designed to achieve, and that employers and completers are satisfied with the preparation program. We recognize there were three areas we could strengthen based on principal ratings and comments: working with parents, rigor of high school science instruction, and differentiation of instruction. We will reinstitute our parent panel and hold mock parent/teacher conferences to give our candidates more practice interacting with parents regarding pupil work. High school science content rigor is more complex and often reflects teacher expectations and efficacy. We will work with faculty in the science department to review high school science content expectations and work with candidates on understanding the research behind teacher expectations and efficacy and the influence this has on student learning. In addition, the College Supervisors will focus on rigor of content and high expectations when conducting weekly classroom observations during the student teaching experience.

The third goal of the case study was to meaningfully reflect on and suggest program modifications as part of our commitment to continuous improvement. In the past, CAEP evaluators indicated we should increase the number of case study participants to 10 and develop a stratified sample over a three-year cycle to reflect different licensure areas. We struggle,

however, with maintaining five or six participants during each months-long cycle of data collection due to participants' many school and family responsibilities as well as our small pool of potential participants overall. Developing the list of artifacts we desired helped the case study researcher more effectively gather the information we requested. We will continue to use the check list and request participants' resume and summative evaluations for triangulating data. Because the case study researcher did not use our student teaching instrument to observe and evaluate the completers (as recommended by CAEP during one of the CAEPCON 2019 workshops), we will consider incorporating another observation instrument that is valid and reliable for observing practicing teachers. This might include working with our Virginia consortium to see if they are already using an instrument for completer observations. We also plan to ensure that the case study researcher is able to easily gather data via a Google Form for both the employer (principal) and completer satisfaction surveys. Key themes we should address based on the findings of this case study include:

Evaluate pupil growth and learning. Because Virginia's emphasis is shifting to student growth, our candidates will need to have more practice in interpreting data and applying this information in their classrooms. In field placements, candidates will be required to examine assessment measures. During student teaching, candidates will be required to develop and reflect on the effectiveness of teacher-designed assessments (formative and summative) and share their findings with their college supervisors and college faculty. Completers mentioned the desire to practice with more of the special education assessments prior to completing the MAT program. We have begun to inventory different local approaches to assessing student growth and will work with our Educator Preparation Program Advisory Committee members to learn more about their assessment initiatives. If there is enough interest in the region, we will consider hosting a regional workshop for our students, graduates, and other teachers focusing on student growth assessments and authentic assessments.

Understand how to work with parents and the community. Based on their interview responses, program completers continue to experience frustration when responding to the myriad questions and requests that arise from parents. Involving candidates with local alumni will give our candidates a better first-hand glimpse of working with parents.

Working with technology. We will continue to learn more about the testing platforms, web resources, and technology devices used in local classrooms. Our completers have been and remain vital sources of information regarding technology trends in local school divisions.

Collecting student achievement data. Although we collected three sets of student data, it would be ideal to have representative stratified data to represent PK-6, secondary, and special education (general K-12 licensure) over multiple years. As the Commonwealth of Virginia decreases the number of end-of-year SOL tests it requires, local school divisions have more freedom to develop their own benchmark student growth assessments, and our completers have more opportunities and means to demonstrate their impact on student growth. Determining the reliability and validity of new division-developed tests is a challenge we anticipate in the years to come.

Involving our graduates in our program. We will continue to invite our graduates to be

adjunct instructors, accept practica students and student teachers, and serve as sources of information regarding current division procedures, testing, and technology.

Conclusion

The EPP Case Study provides valuable information to demonstrate the quality of our preparation program in ensuring completers are able to enter classrooms with the skills, dispositions, and confidence to teach and to lead. We found completers are able to look at data and analyze and use data to regularly inform instructional practices as recommended by the findings in the *Carnegie Continuous Improvement in Education* white paper (Park, Hironaka, Carver, & Nordstrum, 2013). This supports the inclusion of action research as a theoretical thread woven throughout our program.

We recognize that in order to truly document that our graduates have a positive influence on student learning, we recognize we must continue to expand the number of completers who will participate in our study. Though we collected a variety of student achievement data, it would be helpful to have the case study participants submit multiple lessons along with student assessment data to help us determine approaches they used to prepare students for summative evaluation. Moving forward, we will provide professional development in the use of low-inference observation model for all College Supervisors, Clinical Instructors and teacher candidates. With the addition of the new Elementary Education major and the Dyslexia Instruction graduate certificate we continue to use what we learn from review of our annual measures to improve our program. Enhancing support for all teacher candidates to learn to work effectively with pupils and families from diverse background is a continuous goal of the RC EPP. This continued inquiry brought together EPP faculty and five completers in a community of practice to support the development, teaching, and critical analysis of the program and how well our graduates are able to apply what they learn as they enter the class as full time teachers. .

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