Improving Teacher Preparation: Addressing the Needs of New Teachers in Small, Progressive, Public Schools

Christina J. Dixon
Bank Street College &
Progressive Education

Through the Lens of our
Graduate Students

The Independent Study Collection
Improving Teacher Preparation:
Addressing the Needs of New Teachers in Small, Progressive,
Public Schools
By
Christina J. Dixon

Mentor: Professor Frank Pignatelli

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Science in Education
Bank Street College of Education
1998
Improving Teacher Preparation: Addressing the Needs of New Teachers in Small, Progressive, Public Schools
By, Christina J. Dixon

Abstract

As an institution committed to progressive education, Bank Street College shares the mission of educating for democracy with New York's small, progressive public schools. Case studies of three students and semi-structured interviews with Bank Street instructors and researchers illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of Bank Street's Professional Development in Early Adolescence program in preparing its graduates to teach successfully in small, progressive public school environments. Through a literature review, six distinct areas of teaching expertise are identified as factors which contribute to a teacher's success in such schools: Understanding the Child, Social Context, Classroom Life, Academic, Interpersonal and Professional. The students' experiences illustrate that the Early Adolescence program produces graduates who are well versed in a developmentalist perspective and curriculum planning, and who possess a well-developed professional identity and interpersonal skills. The program is less effective in preparing graduates to teach progressively given the varied learning styles, experiences and needs of the diverse students in their classrooms. Recommendations for possible changes to the Early Adolescence program are offered and potential implications for Bank Street College and the New York City Public Schools are discussed.
# Table of Contents

Introduction 3

The Small School Reform Effort and Bank Street 10

Methodology 13

Portraits
- Beth 15
- Joan 25
- Michael 35

Discussion of Data
- What factors contribute to teachers' ability to meet the challenges successfully? 45
- What are the most pressing challenges the three graduate students faced in teaching in small, progressive public schools? 57

Discussion of Issues Raised by the Data
- Support 65
- Common Philosophy 67
- Effective School Leadership 69
- Communication 71
- Professional Development beyond the Classroom 71
- Bank Street Preparation and the factors which contribute to small, progressive, public school teachers' ability to meet the challenges they face successfully 74
- Understanding the Child 75
- Social Context 77
- Classroom Life 79
- Academic 82
- Interpersonal 84
- Professional 85

Recommendations 87
- Specific Recommendations
  - Understanding the Child 89
  - Social Context 90
  - Classroom Life 96
  - Academics 97
  - Professional 98
- Broader Recommendations for Change
  - Extending the Duration of the Early Adolescence Program 101
  - Collaborating with Public Schools to Implement Induction Programs 104
  - Collaborating with a Public School to Create a Professional Development School 106
Results of Making Improvements

Effects on Teachers Like Beth, Joan and Michael

Effects on Bank Street College

Effects on Public Schools

Conclusion

References
Improving Teacher Preparation:
Addressing the Needs of New Teachers in Small, Progressive, Public Schools

Introduction
Since its founding in 1916, Bank Street College has been respected as a leader in progressive education. Over the years, the organization of the college and the social environment have changed, but the basic philosophy guiding the practice of educators who pass through Bank Street's doors has remained constant. Perhaps the college's founder, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, expressed this philosophy best in the Bureau of Educational Experiments' Credo which is still included in The Bank Street College Graduate School of Education Catalogue today:

What potentialities in human beings - children, teachers, and ourselves - do we want to see develop?

- A zest for living that comes from taking in the world with all five senses alert.
- Lively intellectual curiosities that turn the world into an exciting laboratory and keep one ever a learner.
- Flexibility when confronted with change and ability to relinquish patterns that no longer fit the present.
- The courage to work, unafraid and efficiently, in a world of new needs, new problems, and new ideas.
• Gentleness combined with justice in passing judgments on other human beings.

• Sensitivity, not only to the external formal rights of the "other fellow," [sic.] but to him as another human being seeking a good life through his own standards.

• A striving to live democratically, in and out of schools, as the best way to advance our concept of democracy.

Our credo demands ethical standards as well as scientific attitudes. Our work is based in the faith that human beings can improve the society they have created (The Bank Street College Graduate School of Education Catalogue 1994-96, p. 9).

In founding the Bureau of Educational Experiments, which later became Bank Street College, Lucy Sprague Mitchell hoped to create an institution which would successfully prepare teachers in the developmentalist and progressive traditions, and develop in them the potentialities described above. She believed firmly, as did Dewey, in the need to continually seek new knowledge about how children learn and grow, and thought that progressive educators should draw on their understanding to "construct educational situations whereby the student is in need of knowledge to solve problems and to ensure that the required knowledge and information is available" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p.48).

In selecting education students she sought "Renaissance-like" people who had an interest in cultivating their abilities and talents in many areas, and who could bring both artistic and scientific approaches to their work. They also
needed to have a vision of a new social order, and the desire to work toward achieving it through education (Perrone, 1989). Because the Bank Street program sought to educate students in new ways of thinking, teaching, and living, it was personally challenging and extremely rigorous. In the first Bank Street student catalogue of 1931, Lucy Sprague Mitchell eloquently summed up the school's mission, proclaiming, "Our aim is equally to help students develop and express an experimental, critical, and ardent approach to their work, and to the social problems of the world in which they, as adults, must take an active part" (Shapiro, p. 6, 1991).

The components of the early Bank Street program were specifically tailored to help students meet these goals. Student teachers not only learned the most recent information about child development, but also studied specific children in depth. Learning through experience took priority in Lucy's program, and instead of taking courses in pedagogical methods her students enjoyed painting, dance, working with clay, drawing, and drama. Other parts of the program included learning about language and environment, and creating curriculum for experimental schools. Once a year the entire college went on a "Long Trip" to discover together what could be learned about a new place and the concerns of the people living there. Across the curriculum, the emphasis was always placed on cultivating intellectual curiosity and learning to live life to the fullest. Through the Bank
Street experience, Lucy wanted to give her students "a sense that joy and beauty are legitimate possessions of all human beings," (Antler, 1987, p. 309) as well as the experiences and convictions they would need to work toward achieving the dream of bringing joy and beauty to the whole world.

In fact, according to Edna Shapiro, in Bank Street's early years, "The ethos of the institution was one of belief in education as an ameliorative social force, a means of effecting social change" (Shapiro, p. 6, 1991). The student teachers' 'social education,' valued as one of the most important aspects of their training, included preparing comprehensive studies of the communities in which they had been teaching, interning at social agencies once a week, and working at experimental schools which aimed at social reconstruction. Lucy believed that true understanding of the social contexts of schooling could come only through experiencing them "emotionally as well as intellectually," and therefore provided her students with the experiences necessary to gain such understanding (Antler, 1987, p. 324). She hoped that ultimately her students would be able to use what they had learned to help break up the old social order and build a new society, "based on sounder human values," through their work in education (Antler, p. 314).

In its early years, Bank Street also acted as an institution to help further its social goals, though not as much or as effectively as Lucy would have liked. By 1941, Bank Street had had an important role in bringing its form of
progressive education to several private experimental schools in New York, most significantly at Little Red School House. Despite success in the private sector, however, Bank Street had failed to establish ties with public schools beyond the occasional talk to teacher organizations and the union. This was unacceptable to Lucy, who in her later years set an example for her students by using the experience she had gained at the experimental schools to bring a Bank Street education to public school children. Eventually, she completed a successful three year project which introduced progressive education to P.S. 186, and then extended the project to other public schools. In doing so, she demonstrated to the education community that her experimental vision of education could successfully inform the education of economically and culturally diverse groups of children who were not typical of the pupils attending private schools (Antler, 1987). Through such work in public schools, as well as in her education of future teachers, Lucy was able to demonstrate in a practical way that "she believed in the need to reconstruct society. . . . (and that) she saw the education of children as the pathway toward a more democratic, progressive, and cooperative world" (Antler, p.242).

Lucy was not alone in her aspirations. Other progressive educators shared her desire to make the world a better place for children through education, and believed in the power of schools to make a difference in the struggle for a more
democratic society (Perrone, 1991). In fact, this philosophical orientation was so intrinsic to the progressive movement that historians have deemed it essential to the work of those who were instrumental in furthering the movement's goals.

For Bank Street today, maintaining this vital focus demands that we take responsibility as an institution for educating our students in how to truly "live democratically, in and out of schools" (The Bank Street College Graduate School of Education Catalogue, 1994-96, p.9). This commitment requires that we give our graduates the experiences, skills, and abilities they will need to courageously confront the many challenges they will face in teaching in today's socially stratified society, and that we work toward creating a more just and humane future for our students. According to William Trent (1990), "Failure to prepare teachers responsibly for the existing conditions will at least perpetuate if not exacerbate the current conditions of high dropout rates and low levels of educational attainments or achievement that characterize the minority educational experience" (p. 65). If our teachers are not ready for service in public schools, they will be unable to help those who already experience limited opportunities.

In the spirit of democracy, our progressive movement must be inclusive of all children, and we must ensure that we, as educators, are prepared to meet and work to alleviate the many needs of the United States' economically, ethnically and
culturally diverse student population. As a progressive institution, one of our priorities must be to "awaken the social consciousness of prospective teachers, and provide them with alternative and concrete possibilities for realizing the goal of a high-quality education for everyone's children," (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p.35) within the context of a progressive approach to education.

We are not only obligated to social action by tradition, but by practical necessity as well. To honestly claim to be a teacher preparatory institution, Bank Street has the responsibility to competently prepare new teachers for the realities of their professional workplace in its many settings. In our country, seventy percent of students learn in urban settings and public schools are increasingly serving pupils of color who come from backgrounds of poverty (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Our graduates, predominantly white, middle class and educated in places far removed from the inner city, must be able to serve diverse student populations if they hope to compete in the job market. Only fifteen percent of all teacher education students express a desire to teach in cities, primarily because the vast majority of them feel ill prepared to teach in an urban environment (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Yet urban environments are where new teachers are most likely to find employment. Sadly, every year many graduates of teacher education programs elect not to enter the teaching profession because they are unable to find 'more desirable' positions in suburban and rural areas (Irvine,
personal communication, 1996). In today's competitive world, we have a responsibility to our graduates to optimize their chances for successful employment by providing them with superior preparation.

As a progressive school of education, we have a responsibility to give our graduates a foundation in the necessary skills and experiences which will enable them to thrive and effect positive change in whichever setting they choose. We must aim to educate competent teachers who are "passionately committed to work in and outside of schools for a more decent, humane, and just society, and for the creation of conditions in schools and society that will support their efforts" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p.218). To the extent that we succeed in preparing our graduates, we will make exemplary contributions to the field of education and promote true democracy in this country. But if we fail, we rapidly lose the trust of our graduates, our social relevance, and our ability influence national debate on a topic which could not be more vital to the future of our country.

The Small School Reform Effort and Bank Street

The movement toward restructuring large, unsuccessful public schools into new, small public schools which has taken place over the past fifteen years in New York City has changed the educational landscape and created new opportunities for teachers and students. Because of these new schools' geographic and philosophical proximity to Bank
Street, they seem to provide logical settings for Bank Street graduates to begin their teaching careers. Although many find jobs elsewhere, a significant minority at least consider working in such settings. A comparison of the values and goals of the new, small public schools movement and those which Bank Street claims as its own suggests that this connection is more than accidental.

Two organizations have emerged as leaders in New York City's school restructuring effort, New Visions for New York City Public Education, and the Center for Collaborative Education's Campus Coalition Schools (Reinventing Leadership brochure, 1996). Each has helped to create many small, new schools guided by specific, common principles. New Visions has created an educational network of schools which share a vision of public education as:

- Offering small, supportive environments with high expectations for all students
- Providing a rigorous, engaging, high-quality education for all students
- Reflecting the unique perspective of the particular community that creates the school
- Including students with diverse needs and achievement levels in the school and in each classroom
- Mobilizing community and family resources to support student learning and growth
- Supporting effective teaching through professional development and collaboration
Likewise, the schools affiliated with the Center for Collaborative Education commit themselves to a similar priorities. As described in the National Elementary School Network newsletter (Fall 1995), "establishing a climate in which the whole school community is engaged cuts to the heart of the Center for Collaborative Education's (CCE) philosophy, which views schools as more than a collection of classrooms and materials and maintains that genuine school reform must come from those closest to the real life of schools." The CCE schools emphasize collaboration, communication, and consensus among parents, teachers, students, and staff so that the entire school community can contribute to creating the best education possible for the kids. Esther Forrest, Principal of The Bronx New School, explains this cooperation as recognizing that "we are always a whole community, and we have to work together as a whole community" (National Elementary School Network Newsletter, Fall 1995, p.4).

Many of the ideas articulated in these commitments and principles of some of New York's new schools resonate with Bank Street's philosophy. Both the schools and Bank Street value cultivating intellectual curiosity and optimally supporting each individual student's learning and growth. The smaller size of the new public schools eschews the 'factory model' and allows the staff at the schools to get to
know and focus more attention on each individual student. Philosophically speaking, just as the early progressives at Bank Street were hoping to reconstruct society, the new schools are striving to advance democracy in their school sites, and hope that through their efforts they can effect democratic change in society at large. They, like Lucy Sprague Mitchell, realize that flexibility and innovation is required to face new challenges in education, and are committed to doing what it takes to improve education for all New York City public school children. Given that there exist so many similarities between the values and ideas of Bank Street and the new schools movement, it is hardly surprising that some Bank Street graduates are eager to use what they have learned about education within the setting of a new, small school in New York City.

Methodology

The Professional Development in Early Adolescence program at Bank Street College is designed "to enable participants to develop specific knowledge and skills for teaching children aged 9 to 15 years" (Bank Street College Graduate School of Education Catalogue 1994-1996, p. 65). To illustrate the experience of students who have participated in the Early Adolescence program at Bank Street and chosen to begin their teaching careers in new, small schools, I present the stories of three current and former graduate students. I collected the information for the following portraits during face-to-
face and telephone interviews with each student. The interviews were semi-structured, and I tailored my questions to elicit from the students the quality of their experiences with teacher training at Bank Street, as well as with teaching in new, small schools. The sample of students is not random, nor are their narratives intended to represent the range of experiences of new teachers from Bank Street in new, public school settings. I chose to tell the stories of these particular students because they trusted me with their ideas, their joys, and their struggles, because they articulate a variety of different perspectives on education and teacher preparation, and because their experiences raise substantive issues about the preparation they received at Bank Street which I wish to address in the body of this paper.

To complement the views expressed by the three graduate students, I broadened my research to include information from other sources. I conducted semi-structured interviews with three members of Bank Street's graduate faculty and a literature review. I sought out other perspectives when I attended relevant sessions at the 1996 national conference of the American Educational Researchers Association (AERA).

I have chosen to present the data I have collected using the case study design because such a format best serves my goals for this study. According to Merriam (1988), "...investigators use a case study design in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and its meaning for
those involved" (p. xii). By presenting the stories of three Bank Street graduate students who have taught in small public schools, I hope to provide them, as well as the greater college community with a detailed portrait their lived experience. However, my purpose extends beyond the merely informative. I chose the case study approach because it "...is often the best methodology for addressing these problems in which understanding is sought in order to improve practice" (Merriam, 1988, p. xiii). With knowledge comes the power to make improvements, and I offer this study in hopes that it will help Bank Street to address the needs of students such as those whose stories are presented here.

Portraits

Beth

Beth¹ is currently completing her first year of teaching at the Harmony School², a middle school started in a 'choice district' (a district in which all students must choose which school to attend because there is no neighborhood preference after elementary school) on Manhattan's Upper West Side two years ago. Originally from a primarily white, urban community on the West Coast, Beth always worked with kids in her summer jobs. When she came East to study at a prestigious Ivy League University, teaching seemed like a natural career choice, but she rejected it as a "cop out"

¹ All student names have been changed
² Elementary and secondary school names have been changed
because of its history as a female dominated profession. Surrounded by feminists in college, she thought that "doing what every white woman had done," and choosing a career that many women in her family had already chosen would mean "selling out." She remembers, "I felt like I needed to cross some boundary . . . be a radical," in deciding on her line of work. Nevertheless, upon graduation she found herself torn between pursuing a career in social work or education.

In an attempt to give herself exposure to both fields, Beth taught high school math and science for eighteen months at a therapeutic boarding school in the Berkshires. Through this experience she "decided that the . . . approach to human growth that I liked was more academic, and so I was more interested in teaching, and being a compassionate teacher, than I was in being a therapist who believed in academics."

Rather than deal with children's problems through social work, she became convinced that she wanted to be a compassionate teacher for children "without strong support systems." Whether they might come from a single parent home, face financial instability, have parents with less education than themselves or shoulder adult responsibilities at age twelve, Beth wanted to provide them with a good education. She reasoned that "there are a lot of people who want to teach kids who have strong support systems, so if I were remotely interested in teaching kids who didn't have strong support systems, that I should go for that. And also hoping that I could be good, and I felt like they deserved good."
Beth's motivation came from her desire to share some of the advantages she had been given with her students. As a child she had valued having "teachers (who were) devoted to their students and invested in them," and who gave them "stability. . . hands-on things . . . (and) a sense of community, a place where they could be themselves." She also appreciated the ongoing support and attention she received from her parents. In choosing a career in teaching, she hoped that, like her teachers and parents, she could provide a healthy element of stability, consistency and support in the lives of her students.

Additionally, Beth aspired to eliminate as many of her students' disadvantages as possible so that they can have an equal opportunity for acquiring the tools that they need for success. She perceives "education as an equalizer . . . because once you get into college, no matter how much money you're receiving, or how much money you're paying, you're all living in the same quality housing, with the same people, eating the same meals . . . . When you get into college there's an equalizing factor." She believed that she could make a difference in her students' lives in this regard.

Because she needed certification to teach in public schools, Beth applied to a variety of Masters Degree programs in New York and was accepted at Bank Street. At the time, she "knew nothing about Bank Street except that it was a school that some friend of a friend had gone to, and it was in New York City, which was all I wanted." She originally
perceived her participation in the Early Adolescence program as more of a means to an end than a pursuit of Bank Street's ideas.

However, upon her matriculation, Beth found herself in agreement with the progressive philosophy. She professes that had she known about the philosophy, she would have been even more motivated to apply. Inspired by the new ideas she initially encountered at Bank Street, she raised her expectations for her graduate experience, hoping that she would become proficient in exciting and new educational methods. Unfortunately, many of these expectations remained unfulfilled because much of her course work failed to build on the knowledge and experiences she had gained teaching high school math and science.

Now, as a first year teacher looking back on her Bank Street experience, Beth once again sees Bank Street as one of the hoops she had to jump through to become certified. In reflecting on her experience, she wishes her time at Bank Street could have had more meaning for her as a teacher. She admits "I've . . . heard that education classes are a waste . . . everybody told me that. I don't think I went in feeling that way . . . but in doing portfolio, (a final project which requires students to figure out which of their experiences as teachers have been most significant for them, collect artifacts which represent them, and find themes which connect them) and trying to figure out the classes that I've learned the most in, and what have been important to me
educationally, I came up with 'Child Development' and 'Reading in the Content Areas.' And 'Social Studies.' So three of the courses."

She also valued learning how to incorporate children's prior knowledge and experiences into the classroom, and found the student teaching component "excellent" because of the quality of the cooperating teachers with whom she worked, but she still feels she could have acquired much more useful preparation during her time at Bank Street. Despite having gained some new insights, she asserts that "having been through (the Bank Street Program), I don't think it was an efficient use of time, so for the amount of time I put in, I don't think I've gotten what I think I should have."

Because of her commitment to under-served children, Beth thinks she should have gotten better preparation for teaching in a public school. From her perspective, "They (Bank Street faculty) teach you how to teach in an ideal situation," but do not address many of the difficulties public school teachers face each day. She laments, "I don't have all the skills to teach in a public school." Instead, Beth feels unprepared and cites frequent violence and conflict, problems associated with the low socio-economic status of the kids, lack of resources and bureaucratic requirements as the most salient concerns of her first year.

In her classroom, Beth struggles daily with implementing progressive education in a situation where the ideas and methods are unfamiliar to the children and 'hands-on'
materials are scarce. Some activities are more effective than others, but structuring every day is a challenge. For the majority of Beth's students, the expectations placed on them at the Harmony School are very new. "They don't know how to get help from each other or give help other than to say 'this is the answer,' or are so used to teacher centered education that they don't want to ask . . . . It's not satisfying to them." Furthermore, for a variety of reasons, many students have difficulty living up to behavior standards, while others are failing their classes. A kid who would benefit from hands-on learning but habitually throws crayons, and students who talk at top of their lungs instead of using a classroom voice are all in a day's work for Beth.

A large part of Beth's job consists of teaching the children to listen to her and to each other, enforcing behavior standards and dealing with her students' failure to produce acceptable academic work or to attempt it at all. Beth sees the circumstances at her school as preventing her and her colleagues from realizing their common educational vision, and she thinks that Bank Street did very little to prepare her to overcome these adverse conditions.

That is not to say, however, that the Harmony School is unsupportive of her efforts. Beth perceives the school's philosophy of education to be consistent with her own, and speaks highly of colleagues who have invested themselves in her success.
The common vision and philosophy that Beth shares with the staff is a tremendous support for her as she deals with the circumstances at her school. All the teachers work together to try to teach the children that they are important members of their school and other communities, and that respect for one another and self-monitoring is expected of them. The notion that students and staff are engaged in building a learning community together is the common thread underlying daily interactions at school. Together, the teachers are working toward ensuring that the students' voices are valued, school rules are consistently applied and students are held accountable for their actions. They also emphasize working together cooperatively and reflecting on one's learning.

To further support each other in working toward their community vision, the staff have also committed themselves to working for the good of the whole. They hold frequent staff meetings and have scheduled times to meet with one another. They created school rules and a discipline procedure together, and they back each other up in the enforcement of these policies when necessary.

Additionally, Beth's Director and Assistant Director often come into her classroom to monitor her progress, and Beth frequently speaks with one of them on the phone when she needs help with planning. They regularly support her efforts at disciplining the students, and even helped Beth to develop a behavior contract for her class when the environment became untenable. Beth also values the accessibility of her
colleagues. On occasions when she has approached other teachers for help, she has felt listened to and has perceived their aid as useful and non-threatening.

In fact, Beth finds the support given to her by her colleagues at work to be not only quite satisfactory, but essential to her as a first-year teacher. She feels that she could hardly ask for a more supportive environment in a public school, but nonetheless offers a few suggestions for improving it. Beth thinks that if staff members committed themselves to frequent, scheduled observations of each others classrooms, they could learn from each other, give each other helpful feedback and promote consistency by sending the message to the students that the teachers are aware of what goes on in each class. She also cites the need for more help in the area of curriculum development, and believes, "that it would be ideal to have a good curriculum in place that you would have the freedom to manipulate."

Currently, Beth is responsible for creating the entire math curriculum and teaching the science curriculum, tasks which together require incredible amounts of time, energy, and preparation. As a first-year teacher she would have found it helpful to have a good curriculum already in place which she could adapt to her children's needs, rather than having to create everything new in her first year.

Given her present needs, Beth has reflected upon how Bank Street could have prepared her better for the challenges she faces in her first year. The essential question for her is
how to implement progressive education in a situation where most of the children are unaccustomed to it, even if it is simultaneously welcomed. More concretely, Beth struggles with how to get her children to work together cooperatively while keeping tight reigns and setting clear limits so that she can remain in control of what happens in her classroom. She laments the reality that "When the kids get crazy, I don't think, 'How can I make this more cooperative?', I think 'How can I make this more controlled?'"

It follows that Beth feels strongly that classroom management issues should be given more time in the Early Adolescence program. Class rules, routines and conflict resolution should be addressed in more detail, and "strategies for classroom management should be discussed in processing conferences" with advisors along with the talk about teaching strategies. Simply more time spent responsible for classroom management during student teaching would also be helpful, and Beth suggests that "as soon as you're able, the cooperating teacher should be asked to leave the room." Furthermore, an advisor's or cooperating teacher's help with management 'trouble shooting' at the beginning of one's first year of teaching could be very useful in making the transition from student teacher to teacher a little more smooth.

Beth further recommends that students in the Early Adolescence program have the opportunity to focus on ages nine to fourteen in all of their classes, rather than spend
time on learning strategies for working with younger children which do not apply to adolescents. She also feels that her development as a math and science teacher could have been better supported by her Bank Street program. Informing prospective public school teachers of the public school calendar and holding workshops on how to prepare students for standardized tests would also be helpful. Finally, Beth recommends that supervision and support from Bank Street continue through the first year of teaching. She expresses a personal desire for such support, particularly in the form of a homogeneous conference group to address issues particular to her school setting. "I would really like to get together with other public (middle school) teachers."

In looking toward the future, Beth thinks she would like to stay at the Harmony School, but she is not sure she wants to stay in New York City. In fact, she "would want to stay forever if it were in (my home town)." Though she has experienced "trial by fire," and feels tired and worn out by this past year, she is optimistic about the future. She feels physically stressed out, suffers from sleep deprivation and sometimes forgets important things in her personal life, but she is happy that she is "getting educated in school, and thus getting better at it and more able to deal." For her it has become easier to see the good things that are going on and not look so much at the bad.

In deciding what to do about next year, she is taking into consideration that the experience of not being the first year
teacher anymore would help her professional growth. She also recognizes that her colleagues at Harmony have invested a lot of energy in her success and would want her to continue with them. Whether she stays, or decides to leave, Beth is thankful for the experience of teaching at the Harmony School, challenges and all.

Joan

Having worked as an independent consultant for textbook companies and spent two years on Wall Street, Joan brings a lot of related business experience to her teaching career. In particular, she spent a number of years writing and editing literature texts for use in schools across the country. Joan originally decided to get a Masters in Education to help her understand basic theories of education and the design of educational programs, thereby giving herself more opportunities for advancement in her publishing career. She chose Bank Street over other institutions because she liked the college's child-centered philosophy and emphasis on theme based, integrated subject curriculum development.

Joan was first accepted to the Studies in Education program, a general program aimed at preparing professionals for non-traditional roles in education, not certification (Bank Street College Graduate School of Education Catalogue 1994-96). However, after finding inspiration in Victoria
Brown's course, "The Uses of Language," Joan decided to switch to the Early Adolescence program to become one of Victoria's advisees. Learning about what an everyday person can do to make language exciting and relevant in kids' lives and teach them to use it as a creative force made her feel eager to learn more. When she received good reviews on her student teaching accomplishments, particularly in regard to her lesson planning and rapport with students, she decided to earn her teaching certification and make the career switch to teaching full-time.

Upon completing her supervised field work, Joan applied for a variety of teaching positions in both public and private schools. In reflecting on this process, Joan thought that she did not actively pursue jobs at more prestigious school, either private or public, because of "lack of self-esteem" and her belief that they would not want a first year teacher with so little experience. Instead, she focused on P. S. 400, where she had had a successful student teaching experience. When her lack of certification prevented the school from hiring her, she decided to work at the Writer's Collaborative School, a public middle school in the Bronx.

The Writer's Collaborative is one of four schools housed in a new facility in a school district in the Bronx. Unlike many schools in New York City, it includes a cafeteria, art labs and a large auditorium with a raised stage. It is a neighborhood school which serves students in Kindergarten.

3 Name has been changed
through 8th grade, and the student body is composed of equal numbers of African-American and Latino students. The school is currently in its second year of existence.

Joan was originally attracted to the philosophy and organization of the Writer's Collaborative School. Tied to the Teacher's College Writing Project, this school professed a commitment to building a learning community and to learning through writing. Staff developers from Teacher's College came to campus three days per week to begin writing projects with the students and train the staff on how to continue the work. The idea of teaching in a self-contained classroom in which integrated subject learning was encouraged at the middle school level also appealed to Joan. In August of 1995, she started teaching a class of 33 seventh graders.

Once she began, Joan found the practice at the Writer's Collaborative School to be incongruous with the philosophy which attracted her to the school in the first place. When she ran into difficulties in implementing her progressive teaching practices, Joan could find no support for attempting to make progressive education work with the children at the Writer's Collaborative School. Instead of offering help in realizing the school's vision of child-centered education, the directors advised her to "teach them traditionally" and to "put their desks in rows!" Not only did Joan disagree with this response, but she also resented the unhelpful attitude which accompanied it and she had no idea what to do with the advice. Her reaction was, "and once I get them (in
rows), then what?" Bank Street had not prepared her to teach traditionally, the students would not sit still for lectures, and she had no textbooks with which to work even if she had wanted them.

Furthermore, Joan encountered similar administrative resistance to getting involved when she spoke up about her need for help with classroom management issues and establishing behavior standards. When she told them she did not know how to remain in control of the kids who had problems sitting still, keeping quiet when others were speaking and staying out of conflict with other students, she was told "It's your responsibility to see that those kids stay in your room." Likewise, in a lame attempt at helping her find a 'progressive' solution, one administrator suggested, "Maybe kids wouldn't fight so much if you put pictures on the wall and made it a warmer atmosphere." From Joan's perspective, most of the advice she received failed to meet her needs because it was general and vague, ran counter to the stated philosophy of the school and did not address the real issue of how to create a productive learning community with these children.

To Joan, the directors seemed to be primarily concerned with keeping order, not with productively managing and leading the students and staff. In her words, "There's a difference between keeping order and being boss . . . . They were just keeping order." Many of her complaints center around their lack of availability. When she wanted to send
students to the office, find our why the art teacher had not shown up to take her class, or even just make a phone call, she often found the directors' office abandoned and locked. Joan wanted a "boss" to get involved in the difficulties she was experiencing in her classroom and take responsibility for leading the school in solving some of its most severe problems.

Compounding the problems of ineffective leadership and conflicting educational visions was the lack of resources. Not only were there no textbooks, but there was also no library. All supplies had to be bought with money out of the teachers' own pockets, and even toner for the school's one copy machine had to be bought with 'teacher's choice' money. Human resources were scarce as well. In the building which The Writer's Collaborative School shares with three other schools, there are two guidance counselors for 2,000 kids and no psychologists. Class size averages between 30 and 35 children, and classroom teachers are entitled to only one or two preparation periods per day.

Realizing that she could not do her job as a teacher properly under such adverse conditions, Joan decided to leave the Writer's Collaborative School at the winter break. She now teaches at the Abraham School, a Kindergarten through 8th grade, private Jewish day school on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Tuition is over $14,000 per year and few of the students are there on scholarship. The average class size is
sixteen students. Over 95 percent of the students are white and all of them come from Jewish families.

After two months at the Abraham School, Joan is pleased with her experience there so far. The school provides the resources and support she needs to do her job. Joan is particularly pleased that three hours per week are dedicated to meeting with her supervisor and with another teacher in her department. She values having a time to bring up issues and "say what I need."

In regard to her experience at the Writer's Collaborative School, Joan credits some aspects of her Bank Street preparation for enabling her to survive as long as she did. In particular, she named three courses through which she learned to do the long-range curriculum planning which helped her to decide what she would teach for an entire semester. "Uses of Language" taught her to build a whole-language program around the concept of story, "Curriculum Development through Social Studies" required her to create an integrated social studies curriculum, and "Field Study in Biological Sciences at Tiorati" taught her to create lessons around themes of scientific inquiry.

However, Joan cites her student teaching experience as being the most useful in preparing for the challenges she faced, in that she learned everything she knew about classroom management through her work with cooperating teachers. She also speaks highly of the conference group system, and contends that she would not have survived the
Bronx experience without the help of a group of Bank Street friends who continued to meet regularly for the year after the official end of conference group. Likewise, Joan valued the support of her advisor even after supervised field work officially ended. Finally, she felt more confident in setting up a classroom after a year at Bank Street than she had before.

Joan's Bank Street experience also shaped her ideas about education. She learned more about how children think and learn, and how she thinks, learns, and interacts with children and adults alike. Bank Street's clear focus on child development changed the way she approaches curriculum development, and challenges her to continually consider her audience. Every class emphasized the need to apply knowledge of how students learn to creating curriculum. She says it was Bank Street which taught her to constantly ask "Who are you trying to reach?" and "What do you want them to do?"

Bank Street gave her the knowledge she needed to feel confident teaching in those areas for which she already felt most prepared. While she still feels unprepared to teach middle school science because the Bank Street science courses were short on content, Joan was able to take many classes, such as "Uses of Language" and "Reading in the Content Areas," which gave her the expertise she needed to teach Social Studies and English. She also valued the fact that most classes were geared toward teachers of adolescents, and
she can now confidently proclaim, "I feel like I'm prepared to teach the age group well," when it comes to curriculum.

However, she feels very strongly that the Adolescence Program at Bank Street did not prepare her to do a good job at the Writer's Collaborative School. In her words, "Teaching at PS 400 and teaching at Bank Street in no way prepared me to go to the Bronx . . . . I had no idea . . . . I just had no background whatsoever to walk in there and do that and it was just awful. It wasn't fair to the kids, it wasn't fair to the school, and it definitely wasn't fair to me . . . . They may be preparing people for (P. S.) 562 and 400 (schools with a strong tradition of progressive education and parental support), but not for your average public school . . . absolutely not." Disillusionment and anger are present in her tone of voice as she remembers the experience.

Joan attributes much of her lack of preparation to lack of knowledge about what to expect in a New York City public school. She realizes that every school may not face the same number of problems as the Writer's Collaborative School, but she contends, "I had a lot, and I was unprepared for them . . . . I didn't know enough about the problems the kids in that situation might have. I didn't know what to do about it in terms of the system. I didn't know what to do about it in terms of the actual kids in my room." She also did not know what to do about emotionally disturbed children in her classroom, and she spent much of her time at the Writer's
Collaborative School figuring out the meaning of various bureaucratic labels (such as "MIS 1").

Joan feels like she could have benefited from learning more information about the New York City school system and how the schools work, and she recommends that an elective on navigating through the system be made available to students seeking careers in public schools. Included in such a course should be information about the standardized tests that the children are required to take, so that Bank Street teachers are adequately equipped to be a helpful resource for their students who are trapped in a school system they do not understand. More help with certification would also be useful to public school teachers.

When it comes to acquiring necessary abilities, Joan believes that including more instruction in and experience with classroom management would also be a useful improvement to the Adolescence Program for public school teachers. As Joan puts it "I don't know, except for being in Doug Jones' class as a student teacher, anything about classroom management," and since that experience was in a fourth grade classroom, she feels that learning more about appropriate management strategies for other adolescent ages would have been helpful.

Joan recommends giving classroom management skills more of a priority in supervised field work and referring back to classroom management for various age levels throughout Bank

---

4 Name has been changed
Street course work, in the same manner that professors refer
to child development across the curriculum. She laments
"...if I knew more about how to present a lesson, I would
spend less time worrying about classroom management." In
particular, Joan names a math professor as one who did an
excellent job of teaching how to teach the subject matter and
managing the students simultaneously, and she recommends that
other Bank Street professors follow his example. In any
case, to adequately serve prospective public school teachers
the program needs to be amended, for as the Adolescence
Program is currently structured, "(Bank Street) is preparing
students for private schools."

In addition to these improvements at Bank Street, Joan
believes that a more supportive environment at the Writer's
Collaborative School would have helped her to succeed. She
desperately needed the administration to support her in
establishing and enforcing behavior standards both in and out
of the classroom. She also needed the directors to be
qualified and competent leaders who could understand what she
was going through as a teacher, and who would take time to
help her solve some of her problems. Furthermore, dedicated
time to meet with the directors and collaborative time to
work with other teachers teaching the same curriculum would
have made her feel much more supported.

Realizing that the school had budgetary limitations, Joan
nonetheless felt that other 'unrealistic' improvements could
greatly improve the quality of the school environment for
both the staff and the students. Her first priority would be to relieve the over-stressed teaching staff by doubling the number of teachers at the school. This improvement would allow for smaller class sizes, more prep periods, and more time for collaboration. She would also hire more guidance counselors, and add psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists and social workers to the staff to help teachers meet the wide variety of needs that their children bring to school. Buying books and other necessary supplies such as calculators, paper, and toner for the copy machine would be another priority, as would adding more space for an office, a teacher's lounge and a copy room. Joan realizes that making such fundamental changes would profoundly affect the Writer's Collaborative School such that the school would probably be unrecognizable to its current staff and students, but she believes adding such support would go a long way toward helping teachers to create the learning community the school seeks to become. The school would also become a place where her Bank Street preparation would have more relevance and would be more useful in serving the needs of the students.

Michael

Michael was referred to Bank Street by a family friend at a time when he was working at a "mind-numbing" job selling clothes at Bergdorf Goodman. From the outset, he liked Bank Street's philosophy and small size, as well as the liberal political leanings of its faculty. Having always been one to
want to think about things, and share and discuss his thoughts, Michael decided to seek mental stimulation in Victoria's Social Studies curriculum course. It was in such contrast with his day job that, as Michael tells it, "I got so excited I would sweat in class . . . . I got so involved and interested."

This enthusiasm, fueled by Michael's latent interest in becoming a teacher and creating a better education for children than he had personally experienced, inspired him to continue in the Early Adolescence Program. Even now, after completing the program and four years in the classroom, Michael continues to enjoy thinking about children. It is this reflection which drives his practice. There's something about children he has found "very renewing . . . and very interesting. There's so much to learn about them." Michael recognizes that students can be resistant to spending time thinking about things in depth, but for him, "getting them involved is the challenge and the fun." To illustrate his point, he smiles as he recalls a time when he gave the class a homework assignment to think of as many parts of a comic book as possible. One girl came in the following day with 400!

Michael decided to begin his career in teaching at a public school because he wanted to bring Bank Street ideas to a community where people were in need. His primary motivation was, and still is, the desire to help people who "really need a lot of help" and who have had many negative experiences in
school rather than experiencing Bank Street style learning. Embedded in this altruistic vision is a political agenda as well. Says Michael, "I read a lot of very contemporary books, intellectual books on teaching and free thought, freedom, liberty, helping other people . . . . those things inspired me."

His experiences as a teacher in the New York City Public School system has only fueled the fire. "You see how you yourself are treated in the system, and you imagine if you had fewer defenses, if you weren’t as well educated, if you hadn’t had such a good life, or if you didn’t feel as good that day, if you didn’t have any money, what could happen to you, and it reminds you how you want to help somebody else, maybe to make it better. . . . at least there will be someplace where it’s a little better." As a teacher Michael aims to improve his students' public school experience and give them the opportunities to learn that they deserve.

The Ecological Studies Academy provided Michael with the opportunity to teach the children to whom he felt committed to reach out, in an environment in which he would be allowed to teach in the Bank Street tradition. As one of the oldest alternative schools in New York City, the Academy used to draw students from two districts on the East Side, but since the site was moved a few years ago, the racial composition of the students has changed from more racially mixed to primarily Latino and African-American. Over the years the school has become a showcase for the district because student
performance is above average, and because it is partially funded by private grants which help provide adequate resources.

The unifying philosophy of the school is that "there is a wish to have the children prosper academically, and to have an atmosphere that is warm and also under control." Teachers at the Academy have varying degrees of experience and bring different educational philosophies and backgrounds to their practice, but these differences are allowed to co-exist. According to Michael, teachers may exercise their own judgement in their classrooms as long as the school director feels that they are "accomplishing something with the children." Keeping the children in line with school-wide behavior standards is also required, but the administration is generally helpful in delivering consequences when necessary.

For Michael, the biggest challenge he faces in teaching in such an environment is to "use alternative (progressive) ideas in a setting that is not particularly responsive to those ideas." The laissez-faire attitude of the director when it comes to curriculum can in no way be construed as active support on his part, or on the part of the faculty. Even purely structural changes which would facilitate progressive education, such as block scheduling, are met with formidable resistance from much of the faculty. Many are older teachers who do not want to change the way they have been teaching for their entire careers. Michael perceives
them sympathetically, but he asserts that those who are no longer interested in teaching and in being intellectuals should be able to do other things. He expresses his frustration at the fact that his school is partially ruled by such people.

In response to this resistance, Michael is constantly creating new ways to use Bank Street ideas that will be accepted by his students, their families and his colleagues. While different approaches to education are allowed, "Bank Street is viewed as loose, and out in space . . . . spacey and not real . . . too philosophical . . . . not based in real learning or, more importantly, I think, to the traditional teacher, are the kids going to pass the tests?"

Michael also struggles with the need to socialize his students to his way of teaching in addition to teaching them the subject matter. Most of his kids do not have experience with group work or with critical thinking, so trying to develop such capacities in his students takes more effort and preparation than if the children had been discussing and processing what they learned throughout their educational careers. Michael sees the process of getting the children involved in a new way of participating in learning as the primary challenge and source of fun in teaching.

For Michael, learning how to meet this challenge started with his education at Bank Street and has continued through his four years as a teacher. As a student in the Adolescence Program he learned to create curriculum and became acquainted
with the idea of using story as the basis for teaching language arts through Victoria Brown's "Uses of Language" course. He now bases his daily lesson planning on his experiences in her course. Michael also deems essential the knowledge he gained from the child development course and from observing and reflecting on the teaching styles of his professors. Furthermore, as a student teacher he gained valuable experience in creating positive learning environments.

Michael also learned to describe his curricula in detail and give his teaching methods scholarly justification in the face of the skepticism and criticism which he often confronts at the Academy. For example, parents are often skeptical of his literature curriculum because it involves many different types of activities around the concept of story, rather than focusing primarily on reading books. With a Bank Street education in hand, Michael enjoys rather than fears the opportunity to explain the rationale behind his lessons.

Making the transition from theory to practice has extended Michael's education in teaching. Coming into the Academy, Michael faced a lot of suspicion and encountered "people who viewed my difficulties as a first year teacher as a result of my training at Bank Street rather than as a result of being a new teacher." He openly admits that his first year was a nightmare, and that he was finding his way primarily through trial and error. This was the time when he found out where his boundaries were and saw how far he could be pushed before
he was ready to explode. He had to think through questions like, "How are the children in this environment? How am I in this environment?" Then slowly, by reflecting on the answers to those questions, "you can start to think about the kinds of rules that are really important to you, and where you want to direct the children in terms of their thinking about getting along and being with other kids, and being with you. You are the leader, and if you are being damaged by a class, you have to stop it because you have to take care of everybody, including yourself." The circumstances at the school forced him to learn to cope, and his Bank Street training inspired him to do so in the progressive tradition.

During this time, Michael learned from his daily experiences in the classroom and he asked for advice from many sources. He sought out colleagues from Bank Street and other teachers at the Academy who seemed to know how to control a class. He also continued to read about education and drew inspiration from writers who he admired, such as Herbert Kohl, Nel Noddings, and Maxine Greene.

Through reflecting on his practice, Michael has come to the conclusion that in his school setting "Bank Street's progressive ideas can be used with a very firm hand." He has found that carefully setting boundaries is essential in his progressive classroom, and he goes to great lengths to create an environment conducive to participatory learning. When children break the rules, Michael explains about safety and has severe penalties for unsafe behavior. He tells them "I
am here to take care of everybody, and I am not going to allow you to hurt other people." Quoting Victoria, Michael asserts that "what children really want to know is that they're going to be safe . . . If you can create an atmosphere which is safe, you can do all sorts of alternative things."

Michael believes that in addition to the sustaining resources he utilized during his first year, it was his own determination and perseverance coupled with the inspiration he gained from his students which allowed him to overcome the adverse conditions in his teaching environment. He realizes that typically, "People go in and they get so challenged by the environment, by misbehaving and their colleagues, that they give up on Bank Street ideas, and resort to much more traditional teaching methods."

Michael perceives himself to be different from those who would abandon Bank Street's ideas in that he is "a bit of a true believer." He testifies that "the things that I was taught (at Bank Street) about how people think are exactly the way I think, and I was really determined . . . I decided that that was the right thing." For Michael, switching to traditional teaching methods was never an option, no matter the many pressures he felt to do so. "I wanted to be thinking along with the children and I wanted to create my own curriculum, and if I didn't do that, I was going to be bored, and I wouldn't want to be a teacher." He also allowed himself to take solace in the profession's conventional
wisdom as he worked toward his creating his vision of education. "Everybody always talks about their first year, and how the second year is much easier, and the third year is better . . . . so it seemed to me that if you held on long enough, things would get better . . . and so it was."

Now, as a fourth year teacher at the Academy, Michael sees teaching "as combining being an intellectual and being an artist." With the management and curriculum components of teaching under control, he describes the tension between building a meaningful extra-curricular life, and staying on top of the demands of the classroom as being his current challenge. To be a good progressive teacher, Michael asserts that "you essentially have to all the time be informed and involved in other things. To have a nice, creative life is one of the hardest things about being a teacher because the demands of teaching can be really oppressive and you don't have time to do anything else, or think about anything else, or read anything."

Michael credits Bank Street for inspiring and sustaining his learning process as a progressive teacher, but he also believes that the Adolescence Program could better meet the needs of teachers beginning their careers in public schools by offering more instruction in classroom management. He acknowledges that direct instruction in specific techniques may run counter to Bank Street philosophy, but believes that valuable discussion about this issue can be accomplished in Bank Street fashion. Says Michael, "I think that maybe
people were worried that there wasn't . . . scholarly thought about classroom management, and that maybe people would get stuck in certain ruts, and that that wasn't what Bank Street was trying to do. And I think now that there is real thought, and there are sensitive people thinking about these issues, that there could well be a course in that, and a lot of people would be tremendously relieved."

Sarah, Michael's student teacher of four weeks is quick to agree. "You have to have some kind of class management philosophy. It's great to have educational ones, but if your class is completely out of control because you haven't thought about classroom management, then you can't teach." Sarah did take the one unit course on classroom management and found it very thought provoking and valuable to consider some management problems before one's first year as a head teacher. She credits the course with helping her to develop a philosophy of her own, and to help her think analytically about the way teachers manage their classrooms.

Sarah would also add more explicit instruction in teaching kids how to do group work to the Bank Street curriculum. In the environment of the Academy she feels like she needs more tools to counteract the common perception that "Bank Street has these lofty ideals, but they don't teach you how to really teach." From her perspective Bank Street's program is based on the assumption that the children its graduates will be serving are going to be familiar with Bank Street's methods, but at public alternative schools like the Academy
this assumption is woefully false. Currently in the Adolescence Program, "you can go in blind thinking 'I'm going to do all this great stuff' and be completely overwhelmed because no one had warned you that it might not be like (teaching students at Bank Street School for Children)."

Michael also thinks it is essential for new public school teachers to seek environments where they feel supported. Speaking from his experience, he would recommend finding a school where the parents are interested in their children's academic success and the administration supports the teachers when it comes to setting limits. As he explains, "it's extremely important that you are supported in discipline . . . by administration. If you are not, I think it's going to be very hard to create a safe place." Although he does not feel he has it at his school, Michael also believes that collegial support is essential and he sees sharing an educational philosophy as strengthening. Later on, Michael recommends that Bank Street educated teachers mentor student teachers from Bank Street, because the opportunity to observe them and share ideas is an invaluably renewing experience.

Discussion of Data

What factors contribute to teachers' ability to meet the challenges they face successfully?

The nature of Michael, Joan, and Beth's preparation and the circumstances at their school presented them with many challenges in their first years in new, small schools.
However, they each brought knowledge and experience to their teaching situations and found support in and out of school which contributed to their ability to meet these challenges. Their prior work experiences, professional self-concepts and educational philosophies had important effects on their feelings about teaching, but the kinds of support they were offered at their schools and at Bank Street influenced them as well. Perhaps most importantly, the preparation they received at Bank Street increased their chances of success in many significant ways.

Each of the teachers had been employed prior to studying at Bank Street. Beth had had direct experience working with children at summer camps during college, but gained most of her knowledge about education through teaching math and science at a therapeutic boarding school in the Berkshires. It was there that she learned to 'process' problems in a group, deal with 'difficult' teens and structure math and science classes, all of which are skills she uses daily in her current job. Joan was also familiar with education because she worked with her family's textbook company for more than a decade. As a result, she had an understanding of curriculum and cursory knowledge of schools and school systems. In contrast, Michael's prior work experience was in no way related to education. In fact, it was the mind-numbing quality of his career in retail that inspired him to go into teaching, in hopes that he could find a job which was more interesting and less exploitative. Though they all came
from very different backgrounds, all of their previous work environments seem to have helped to prepare them to face the challenges of teaching.

Having a positive professional self-concept also appeared to have an effect on each teacher's experiences. Beth believes that she has much to contribute to her students, and hopes to give them advantages, almost as if she were a parent. She also has long considered teaching to be a natural career choice for her, and seems to have a sense that she is in the right field. Similarly, Michael also believes that he has much to offer as an educator and thinker, and cares deeply about properly educating the children at his school. Both Beth and Michael give the impression of people who are confident that they are doing the best that they can under adverse conditions, and they draw on their belief that they have chosen the right profession for them when they are under stress.

Joan first began to think of herself as a teacher while student teaching, when she received very positive feedback from her advisor. However, when it came time for her to look for a job, she admitted that she did not try for what she viewed as the more 'prestigious jobs' because of a 'lack of self-esteem.' She did not think that the 'better' (private) schools would hire someone without more experience. This combination of knowing herself as a successful teacher, while still doubting her marketability had an interesting effect on her teaching experience at the Writer's Collaborative School.
While she could see that the inhospitality of her school situation was contributing to her inability to do the job of which she knew she was capable, teaching there also caused her to deeply doubt her professional abilities. However, ultimately it was her belief that she could be a much better teacher under different circumstances that helped her to decide to leave her job in the Bronx.

The teachers' philosophies of education seem to be closely linked with their professional self-concepts and with their opportunities for thriving at their jobs. As an educator, Beth is primarily concerned with imbuing her students with community values and giving them the school experiences they will need to go to college. She is committed to serving "children without strong support systems," who are less likely than other children to get the opportunities in life that they deserve. She sees education as a social "equalizer" for them. Though she is not a zealous advocate, Beth agrees generally with Bank Street's progressive philosophy and tries to make sure her classes are child-centered, active and cooperative. In addition, she hopes that her students will learn better how to live in harmony with one another, perceive the contributions that they can make to society and feel their own self-worth.

Fortunately for Beth, her philosophy closely matches that of her school, and her fellow staff members have committed themselves to working together with her on achieving their common vision. As a result, Beth's philosophy has sustained
her not only as a source of personal inspiration, but also as a strong tie with others who see supporting her as an essential part of putting their own educational philosophy into practice.

For Michael, Bank Street's child-centered approach to learning, which focuses on incorporating the children's knowledge, interests and abilities into instruction, makes intuitive sense. He calls himself "a bit of a true believer," wishing that he had been educated in the Bank Street style, and he is unwaveringly committed to creating a caring learning community in the Bank Street tradition in his classroom. His philosophy also has a political component in that he wants to make the world a better place for New York's children who live under very difficult circumstances due to their socio-economic status, and he believes he can do that best by bringing progressive education to them. Michael also thinks of teaching as an intellectual life, so he reads and discusses new ideas constantly to improve his practice. It was Michael's deep seated dedication to improve upon the traditional education that he had received that helped him to resist the pressures at his school to eschew his progressive methods, and it was his intellectual life that gave him the sustaining support he required to keep going.

Joan, like Michael, held beliefs about education that were in conflict with the common practice at her school, but she ultimately came to the conclusion that she needed to leave her situation. Drawing on her experience working in the
textbook business. Joan came to the conclusion that Bank Street's approach made sense before she decided to enroll in the Early Adolescence program. The integrated-subject, child-centered learning which came from the students' knowledge and interests appealed to her, and now feels she has neither the desire nor the ability to teach any other way. Unlike Michael and Beth, Joan was not particularly motivated to teach in an urban or public school. Just as she "happened" into teaching because she liked student teaching more than she expected, she ended up in public school because she needed a job more than because of particular philosophical leanings. Once at The Writer's Collaborative School, Joan became confused and frustrated by the school's flagrant disregard for its stated progressive philosophy and felt demoralized by her directors' insistence that she switch to more traditional methods. She found it impossible to enjoy teaching as she had as a student teacher, and she found success impossible under the circumstances at her school. Finding no support for her vision of education contributed to her decision to leave.

In fact, the issue of support in their work environments seemed to be a salient one for each teacher, not only in relation to philosophy, but in many other areas as well. For each of them, the amount and nature of the support they have received has made a significant difference in their ability to thrive at their schools. Each cite specific kinds of
support which they believe helped them to deal more productively with their jobs as teachers.

At Beth’s school, the staff takes collective responsibility for the school’s functioning, and for achieving school goals. Together they create and enforce school-wide rules, and have scheduled regular times to work through school issues, make collective decisions, talk about kids and plan curriculum. The school leaders have a vision, and possess significant experience and expertise in working with urban public school children which they share with their colleagues. Beth finds them willing to take time to help her work through her difficulties, support her in her classroom practice, and provide honest feedback. They seem to respect her, and they acknowledge that the work is difficult.

Michael and Joan speak with less enthusiasm about the support they have received at their schools, but nonetheless name a few significant contributions which their schools made to their success. The director of Michael’s school helps him with discipline by emphasizing familial respect for each other and communicating that, "there is a wish to have the children prosper academically, and to have an atmosphere that is warm and also under control." Michael’s administration further gives him permission to teach any way which seems to be effective with children and provides him with the material resources he needs, even though it does not specifically condone his style. When he has needed help, Michael has found that a few colleagues, especially those who also
attended Bank Street, have been valuable resources in his quest to create quality, progressive educational experiences for his students.

At her school, Joan found such sympathetic colleagues to be her only allies and support. Without strong leadership, collaborative time or a unifying vision, Joan's last resort was to turn to a couple of trusted co-workers to check her perceptions. She valued the opportunity to speak with them, but in recollecting the experience she focuses more on the essential support that the school failed to give her, rather than the support she did receive.

Beyond the support these teachers found at their schools, they sought out support from other sources which helped them to improve their teaching. Both Beth and Joan met bi-weekly with friends from Bank Street for an ad-hoc conference group to discuss issues raised by their teaching, share ideas, hear others' teaching stories. They also regularly got together socially with Bank Street friends, and stayed connected with the school itself by continuing to take classes to fulfill their degree requirements throughout their first year teaching. In addition, Joan remained in close contact with her advisor, asking her for help and support along the way.

Like Beth and Joan, Michael also continued to take Bank Street courses for a while to give himself a fresh source of ideas and a group of peers with which to discuss them. In his first years, he also came back to Bank Street just to 'hang out' and feel what it was like in a calmer school
environment. To nurture himself now, he stays connected with Bank Street professors and continues to read educational literature.

Beyond the personal characteristics they brought to their profession and the support they found in and out of their work environments, all three teachers named some aspects of their preparation at Bank Street as central to their ability to perform their jobs. While they did not uniformly agree on which courses and experiences were most essential, all found some components of the existing program to be extremely valuable to them.

As Beth reflected on her Bank Street education, she saw three courses and her student teaching experiences as being particularly important in her preparation for teaching at a small, progressive public school. Through studying child development, Beth felt she gained an essential understanding of what children can and cannot be expected to do at a given age. Her abilities to plan a curriculum, think long term about what to teach and structure social studies learning in a 'Bank Street' way all came from her Social Studies curriculum course. The third course, "Reading in the Content Areas" gave her insight into how children use language and how to better incorporate reading into her math and science classes. Across these courses, the professors also reinforced the idea that multiple methods of expression are legitimate, an idea that Beth encountered in her previous teaching experiences, but had not yet fully believed.
Beyond her course work, Beth contends that the student teaching component with advisement really helped her to learn the practical basics of teaching, especially when her personality matched that of her cooperating teacher. She especially valued learning to establish routines and having close contact with teachers she wanted to emulate. For example, Beth recalls, "I felt like I learned a lot of good systems from Rebecca, such as . . . how to keep a grade book . . . she gave me a strong sense of organization . . . how to collect homework." Participating in conference group along with her student teaching gave Beth the chance to talk through ideas and problems with other new teachers, while she also got positive reinforcement in knowing that talking about problems helps to process them.

Joan also found the student teaching component to be essential to her preparation. She readily admits, "I would have been completely lost at the Writer's Collaborative School without student teaching." In her three months in the Bronx she found the long range curriculum planning skills, organizational systems, and homework checking procedures that she had learned as a student teacher to be invaluable. She also attributed her ability to satisfactorily set up a classroom to her experience in a variety of child-centered environments. Furthermore, having an advisor who facilitated her growth as a student teacher and was invested in her success was at least as valuable as any knowledge she acquired.
Joan did not cite specific courses, but named the most useful knowledge and skills which she gained from her academic work instead. She found Bank Street's focus on child development across the curriculum to be particularly useful, in that it enabled her to apply her knowledge of how kids learn to creating curriculum, and taught her to consider her audience. The Early Adolescence program also gave her enough experience with nine to fourteen year-olds to make her feel "prepared to teach the age group well." Joan's experience at Bank Street truly shaped her ideas about education and as a result she knows more about how kids think and learn and about how she herself thinks, learns and interacts with others.

Like Joan and Beth, Michael has also valued social, practical, and academic components of his Bank Street experience. Like Joan, he deemed his connection with his advisor and fellow students at Bank Street to be essential to his ability to teach, and he added other professors to his list of key contacts as well. Over the past few years he has networked with Bank Street alumni to secure his current job, sought out Bank Street colleagues for help on many occasions, and felt encouraged in his efforts to be a progressive teacher under difficult circumstances.

The most important skill Michael's cooperating teachers taught him was how to create positive learning environments. They did so by giving him the opportunity to experience such an environment in their classroom, and to observe them as
they carefully created and maintained it. Simultaneously, Michael learned from his advisor that what students want to know is that they are going to be safe. Her guidance with creating safety has helped him to create classroom settings where he and the children feel comfortable and can learn.

As far as his course work is concerned, Michael used all his classes as a forum to think and reflect on teaching issues and his own practice. In particular, he named the Group Processes course as the place where he came to feel better about being a leader in his own classroom. Child Development gave him a much better understanding of kids and how they think, and in a number of courses he learned how to create curriculum and got practice in doing so. As a result, Michael can describe curriculum in detail, give scholarly explanations for actions in classroom and hold an informed discussion of the ideas underpinning his curriculum.

Finally, taking Bank Street courses also gave him the opportunity to watch professors teach, and to learn from their examples and non-examples.

Interestingly, Beth, Joan, and Michael's ideas about the effectiveness of Bank Street's program seem to be affected as much by their experiences prior to attending Bank Street as their teaching experiences. They tended to value their Bank Street experiences when they gave them a new perspective on teaching, a necessary skill that they had not yet acquired or a new opportunity. For example, all three valued Bank Street's focus on child development, not only because it
changed their understanding of how people think and learn, but also because it became an important influence on how they structured their own classrooms. They each also felt that student teaching and advising were essential to their preparation because of the practical skills they learned, as well as for the opportunity to discuss their ideas and experiences with other teachers.

However, when the Early Adolescence Program did not build on or complement their prior experience, the new teachers expressed less satisfaction. None mentioned the two science courses required by the program, but each omitted them for different reasons. Beth did not think that they complemented her previous knowledge about teaching science, while Joan and Michael knew little about teaching science before the class and did not use the information they had learned afterward. Although all evaluated their preparation in terms of how much it helped them in teaching in the small, new progressive schools, they primarily focused on how well it bridged the gap between what they knew before entering the program and their anticipated capabilities upon completing the program.

**What are the most pressing challenges the three graduate students faced in teaching in small, progressive public schools?**

In reflecting on their first years of teaching in small, public, progressive schools, all three new teachers characterized their experience as 'difficult.' They each perceive this difficulty to result from a combination of
factors in their school environments and their preparation at
Bank Street. While some of the challenges confronted by
these teachers were shared by all, others were common to only
a couple of teachers, and some were unique to one teacher
alone. Just as their stories are individual, so are their
interpretations of their experiences, and they do not always
agree on the sources of their most pressing challenges in
their first year of teaching. However, careful examination
of the similarities and differences between these teachers'
experiences and their resulting views provides valuable
insight into to the very demanding and 'difficult' job of
teaching in a small, public, progressive setting in one's
first year.

Beth, Michael and Joan each found that particular
characteristics of the populations of children at their
schools presented them with many of the most serious
challenges they faced in their first year. Each faced
classes of children who had little experience in complying
with the behavior standards which were necessary for creating
a learning environment true to progressive principles. Many
of the children had difficulty sitting still, listening while
others were speaking, and staying out of verbal and physical
conflicts with classmates. Some brought so many serious
personal problems and emotional needs to school with them
that they could not focus on learning. Furthermore, few
children appeared sufficiently enculturated into such ways of
formal learning, and all three teachers found themselves
struggling to effectively teach their students how to learn through progressive methods while teaching them curricular content.

Speaking out of their experiences in their schools, all three teachers listed classroom management, familiarizing children with progressive methods, knowing the bureaucratic requirements of New York City Public Schools, and recognizing, understanding and addressing their students' diverse needs as areas in which they could have used more or different preparation before embarking on their careers. In preparing to manage their classrooms, Michael, Beth and Joan each wished they had had more opportunities at Bank Street to think about management issues with other teachers and to develop their own philosophies about classroom management. They felt ill-prepared to set appropriate boundaries for carrying out progressive education at their schools and struggled with promoting cooperation and autonomy in their students while keeping control. They also had trouble implementing effective rules, routines and conflict resolution in their classrooms, and would have benefited from many more age-appropriate management strategies, had they been available at Bank Street.

In terms of instruction, all three new teachers expressed difficulty with developing in their students the capacity to learn through progressive methods. They agreed that much of Bank Street's preparation assumes that the children have prior knowledge of, and experience with, cooperating and
doing group work, using critical thinking skills, participating in large group discussions and learning through other instructional methods commonly used at Bank Street School for Children. Given their experiences, they saw the need at the graduate level for more explicit instruction in teaching students how to learn in the ways in which they, as Bank Street graduate students, had been trained, but which were unfamiliar to the children.

Understanding their students' social context and needs, both in and out of school, was a final common concern among these three educators. In their teaching positions they thought that they initially lacked knowledge about the school system and the requirements of the New York City school system bureaucracy that could have enabled them to better help their students navigate the system. They also felt they could have served their students better had they known more about their students' diverse needs and learning styles, and learned more about how to address them within their classroom environments. In particular, they wished they had known more about issues common to children with low socio-economic status to which they, as members of the middle-class, had little or no exposure prior to teaching.

In their school settings, Beth and Joan both expressed concerns about the lack of resources and frequent student conflict affecting their teaching, and perceived these issues as causing their enthusiasm for their jobs to wane. On the other hand, Joan and Michael both lamented the lack of
institutional, family, and student support for progressive education at their schools. In terms of their preparation, Beth and Joan felt that the Bank Street program had neglected to address issues particular to teaching in public school, failed to adequately prepare them to teach science and did not satisfactorily support them in their first year. Michael, in contrast, shared neither of these concerns, nor any others with either Beth or Joan.

Lack of resources and student behavior were salient issues in Beth and Joan's descriptions of their work environments. Beth complained of the impracticality of doing research projects without a library and of the amount of resourcefulness required to create 'hands on' learning experiences when few materials are available. Under even more spartan circumstances, Joan felt the need to spend over a thousand dollars of her own money in three months to be able to teach at all. Furthermore, they each wished that they had more specialists on staff to help them better meet the psychological and social needs of their students. Counselors and school psychologists topped the lists of people whom they wished they could ask for help, especially in dealing with children whose emotional needs exceeded the teachers' expertise. Joan and Beth both felt particularly ineffective in coping with the frequent conflict and violence they experienced in their classrooms, and attributed much of their loss of energy over the course of the semester to these hostile environments.
The issue of concern to both Joan and Michael is their schools' lack of support for their efforts at creating a viable, progressive educational environment. Rather than being encouraged and helped by their administrators, the teachers experienced apathy and criticism. The directors at Joan's school, and the teachers at Michael's, went as far as pressuring them to 'revert' to traditional teaching styles when they experienced difficulties with classroom management. Unlike the staff at Beth's workplace, Michael and Joan's colleagues did not take collective responsibility for dealing with their most pressing difficulties, and were either unable or unwilling to offer much help when it came to figuring out ways to implement effective progressive education. Furthermore, the scheduling precluded much staff collaboration. Large class sizes also made the task of knowing the needs and interests of each child, and therefore the implementation of truly progressive education, all the more difficult.

In regard to preparation, Beth and Joan agreed that the Professional Development in Early Adolescence program at Bank Street did not address many of their needs as public school teachers. Beth asserted that "Bank Street is preparing students for private schools," while Joan thought that Bank Street faculty "teach you how to teach in an ideal situation." They each emphasized the importance of addressing concerns common to public school teachers in the graduate school curriculum, and also felt strongly that Bank
Street's support should continue at least through the first year of teaching. Both felt that they could have used structured support in the form of extended conference group with public school peers, observations and advising. They also thought that Bank Street did not adequately prepare them to teach science, and suggested that the content of the science courses be changed to include more of the content that they were required to teach.

Some of the challenges each teacher faced were unique to his or her experience. Michael voiced particular concerns about the lack of a unifying philosophy, even in name, among the staff. Unlike Joan's situation, in which the school claimed one ideology but was not committed to it, at Michael's school the administration tolerated many educational approaches. As a result, he found that his attempts at creating and sustaining progressive education were met with skepticism, disapproval, and resistance from many of his colleagues, and that their conflicting visions kept them from productive collaboration with one another. In particular, Michael felt challenged by having to work with many older teachers who were not interested in innovation and change, and who viewed Bank Street as "loose" or "not real" when it comes to its educational approaches. Finally, Michael spoke with concern about his struggle to balance the needs of his classes with a fulfilling personal life.

In her situation, Joan found the ineffectiveness of her school's leadership to be a major hindrance to her attempts
at creating a positive classroom environment. From her perspective, the directors were primarily concerned with keeping order and did not take the required time to productively manage and lead the students and staff. When she asked for help, they were unwilling to take the time to aid Joan in working through her problems, or had an unhelpful attitude and little expertise to share. When they did make suggestions, their advice was often incongruous with the school's stated philosophy. Even in regards to establishing and enforcing behavior standards, Joan found the leadership to be particularly unsupportive. Furthermore, the schedule of the day at her school prevented Joan from collaborating with other teachers.

Beth had unique concerns about her preparation at Bank Street, but not about her school situation. She felt that in addition to more science preparation, she should have received a better foundation in teaching math. Now that she is required to create the middle school math curriculum in her new job, she is acutely aware that her understanding of how to do so in a "Bank Street" way is far inferior to her understanding of creating curriculum in social studies and language arts. In addition, Beth felt very challenged by the task of implementing progressive education at her school, even though she was very supported in her efforts, and she wished this issue had been more explicitly addressed in her graduate education.
Discussion of Issues Raised by the Data

The ideal progressive educator has been described as growing, creative, expressive, experimental (Antler, 1987), imaginative, and passionate (Liston & Zeichner, 1991). Perrone (1989) goes further in saying that she must have broad experience, a personal intensity about learning, inquiry, and invention, a powerful social vision and a commitment to change. In order to realize this complex and challenging range of qualities, both schools of education and the schools in which teachers work need to be deliberate and intentional about the kinds of supports and conditions that need to be set in place.

Support

Researchers from a variety of perspectives have come to the firm conclusion that a supportive work environment is extremely important to a new teacher’s success (Colbert & Wolff, 1992). Developmental theorists contend that because cognition and affect interact, to master new and complex ideas and skills, novice teachers need a supportive atmosphere in which to engage in relaxed professional reflection (Theis-Sprinthall & Gerler, 1990). They need to feel comfortable in their working environments if they are to maximize their ability to learn their new craft.

Liston and Zeichner (1991) also point out that the amount of support available to teachers affects their effectiveness with their students as well. They have found that “if teachers are overworked, emotionally drained, and lack the
time and support to be intellectually engaged in their educational tasks, it is highly unlikely that we have the minimal conditions for engendering students' deliberative capacities" (p.96). In a study done by McLaughlin (1995, as cited in Huffman-Joley, 1996), none of the teachers who was able to create and sustain "challenging learning opportunities for the students" did so alone (p. 209). Collaboration and support in the context of a professional learning community were found to be essential for effective teaching (Huffman-Joley, 1996).

All of the three teachers interviewed specifically mentioned their personal needs for support in their work environments, and they tend to agree with the researchers about the reasons behind why they find it to be so essential. Beth's situation particularly illustrates many of the researchers' conclusions. She refers to the past year as an "incredible education," and thinks that through collaborating with her colleagues in an environment where she knows she can ask for help, she has been able to significantly develop her abilities as a progressive urban educator. At the same time, however, she sees that the level of stress she experiences on a daily basis directly affects her ability to create positive interactions in her classroom. The more stressed out she is, the more anxious the children get, and the harder it is for the class to run smoothly.

Given that support in the workplace is so important to improving teachers' performance, it is worth understanding
what elements of support make the biggest positive difference in teacher's lives. With this knowledge, teachers can make informed choices about where they can work and develop professionally most effectively. According to our teachers, Bank Street faculty and educational researchers, the important supports at school may include holding a common philosophy, effective school leadership, frequent communication and professional development opportunities.

Common Philosophy

All three teachers stated that they felt that a unifying educational philosophy among the staff was an extremely important component of a teacher's support at a school. A former director of a Coalition school and current Bank Street faculty member in the Educational Leadership Department agrees. She speaks with pride about her school having a particular philosophy and ethos, and says that finding teachers who had "a way of thinking about kids that matched the school's philosophy" was her priority in hiring. As an administrator, she felt that for the school to succeed, she had to "get everyone on the same page." In contrast, a veteran public schools teacher who teaches at Bank Street, as well as being the founder and former head of the Early Adolescence program, did not name a unifying philosophy as critical. Instead, she recommended that teachers find at least one or two like-minded colleagues in whom they can confide.
Literature about supporting new teachers most often
describes the situation suggested by the two aforementioned
Bank Street faculty members, probably because it is more
likely to occur than the instance of the staff having a
common vision (Housego, 1994; Young, Crain & McCullough,
1993). It is only in documents related to the small school
reform effort that the importance of collaboration,
community, and uniting around common values is emphasized as
essential to the entire staff (National Elementary School
Network Newsletter, Fall 1995; Request for Proposal, New
Visions II, 1995).

However, even when the importance of unity is acknowledged,
its achievement requires extraordinary effort and commitment.
Furthermore, Fountain and Evans (1994), in their study of new
teachers in urban schools without such unity, found that the
beginning teachers valued meeting with other beginning
teachers and discussing problems on an individual basis with
their more experienced colleagues more than they valued
opportunities to meet in groups with both experienced and
beginning teachers. This suggests that in schools where
there is no common vision, finding a couple of confidants may
be the best solution for beginning teachers.

The best support for Bank Street graduates joining the
small school reform effort would be to find a work place with
a common philosophy, but the reality of most school
situations forces many teachers into leaning on one or two
empathetic teachers for support instead. It would also be
helpful for such teachers to make sure that they find themselves a support group outside of school to complement their school situation. In their study of such support groups for novice teachers, Theis-Sprinthall and Gerler (1990) support this idea, contending "it can be argued that novices in any high-stress, unfamiliar yet demanding new role may need more than individual supervision by a master teacher. Group support can be an important complement to individualized help" (p. 19).

Effective School Leadership

In describing the attributes of effective school leadership, our three teachers, the founder of the Early Adolescence program and the former Coalition school Director are in remarkable agreement. School leaders need to be involved with conflict resolution and support their teachers when it comes to enforcing rules and carrying out discipline. They need to serve as role models, both in and out of the classroom. The former Coalition school Director goes as far as suggesting that they should be master teachers and curriculum developers. Effective leaders must also take a very active role in encouraging and supervising their staff, and be willing to take time to help teachers if they struggle. They must have respect for teachers' troubles and difficulties, as well as their successes, and give teachers honest feedback (Perrone, 1989).

Another component of effective school leadership involves giving staff genuine input into determining the direction of
the school. Progressive and urban education researchers both
acknowledge that providing teachers with the opportunity to
make professional decisions, collaborate, and discuss
important school issues is essential to building a quality
school (Perrone, 1989; Cochran-Smith, personal communication,
April, 1996; National Elementary School Network Newsletter,
Fall 1995). Furthermore, our three teachers and the Bank
Street faculty agreed that cultivating a collective sense of
responsibility among staff and holding continuing dialogue
about how to build a school where people value life-long
learning are essential to effective school leadership.

Practical implementation of these qualities of effective
school leadership can be seen in the advisement model of
supervision that Esther Rosenfeld developed in her years at
CPE II. By holding weekly meetings with small groups of
staff, Esther was able to engage her teachers in planning and
thinking that addressed their individual needs (Rosenfeld,
1991). According to Esther, "The teachers were continually
stimulated and responsive to others' ideas and problems.
Their functioning was much broader than their personal
classroom experience" (Rosenfeld, p. 66). Furthermore,
Esther expanded her role as advisor/director by working in
her teacher's classrooms as a role model, performing
demonstration lessons, observing and recording classroom life
and giving comprehensive feedback. Esther contends that the
relationships she built through the implementation of her
model of supervision created the possibility for educational
risk-taking and helped her staff to collaborate and share responsibility for success. Adopting such structures could help the leadership of schools involved in the small schools reform effort better meet the needs of its staff. Furthermore, choosing to work at schools with such carefully planned support systems and effective leadership could help new Bank Street teachers get the support they need in their first years on the job.

Communication

Just as Esther's model demonstrates effective leadership, it also shows the importance of a school valuing communication. As Michael, Joan and Beth explained from their own experiences, not only is communication essential for collaboration, the mere knowledge that they had trusted colleagues with whom they could share their struggles made them feel supported. Sharing daily experiences and talking about issues with difficult students are only a couple of forms of communication at a school that help staff work together more productively and happily. In the words of Meier (1991, as cited in Perrone, 1991), "People work best when they're valued; to be valued requires respect, and respect requires being "listened to" (p. 139). Furthermore, to feel listened to, faculty must have ongoing, regularly scheduled times in which to communicate.

Professional Development Beyond the Classroom

Professional development is a component of support not mentioned explicitly by the three teachers, but which speaks
to each of their quests to learn as quickly as possible to teach effectively in their respective settings. However, the founder of the Early Adolescence Program and the former public school teacher each spoke about the need for many opportunities to expand one's professional understanding outside of the classroom. The former Coalition school Director further emphasized the importance of the school nurturing each staff member as a life-long learner. Professional development can include, but is in no way restricted to, holding staff meetings about important school issues, giving staff articles to read and discuss, and sending staff to professional conferences and graduate school courses. As the Director at CPE II, Esther Rosenfeld saw her role in professional development as "continually try(ing) to light fires in people so that the energy they received from external sources could reinvigorate their curriculum and teaching" (Rosenfeld, 1991, p.66). Perrone concurs that "in the ideal school a diverse staff encourages ongoing learning for all" (Perrone, 1989, pp. 130-31).

Another important component of professional development is a school's willingness to devote time and resources to mentoring new teachers. Esther notes that at her school, experienced teachers were able to help give new teachers ways of thinking about kids, managing the classroom environment, structuring the day, integrating the curriculum and setting a climate for learning in the classroom. They were able to do this because supporting new teachers was an important part of
taking collective responsibility for the success of the school.

Colbert and Wolff's (1992) project support new urban teachers vividly demonstrates the importance of schools having such an orientation. They assigned groups of new, urban teachers to a master teacher with whom the beginners met weekly to discuss professional concerns. In addition, the new teachers were coached by second year teachers and attended university seminars with their master teachers. The program ran for three years and each year of the program the retention rates were significantly higher for program participants than for teachers without the support. Colbert and Wolff concluded that "if we want to retain new teachers, particularly those teaching in inner-city schools, we must introduce them to the profession humanely, in ways that engender self-esteem, competence, collegiality, and professional stature. We must develop a more gradual method of induction into teaching within a supportive and collaborative environment" (p. 193). Though Michael, Joan, and Beth did not specifically ask for support particular to beginning teachers, the kinds of supports described by Rosenfeld and Colbert and Wolff are those they considered important to any supportive work environment.

Colbert and Wolff's program also speaks to the need for teachers to seek support outside of the school, the kind of support that Beth, Michael, and Joan all found to be essential for them. Our veteran public school teacher and
the founder of the Early Adolescence Program also note its importance. They agree that it is vital for teachers to constantly further their professional development by being aware of research, reading professional journals, taking courses and taking time for personal reflection. Harris and Harris (1993) concur that "the most effective teachers, educational leaders, and university professors are also vibrant learners . . . . They expand their knowledge by keeping abreast of current findings within the profession . . . ." (p. 236). The networking with other teachers outside the school which was so important to Beth and Joan is also commended by teacher educators and advocates for African American students alike (Hilliard, 1996). Both think that successful teachers need to share their successes with others who can benefit from their insights.

The literature and the voices of Bank Street faculty and students speak to the need for Bank Street graduates who wish to improve their chances for success in new progressive, public schools, to choose their work environments very carefully. The more supports they receive at the school, the more likely it will be for them to find job satisfaction and serve their students well.

Bank Street preparation and the factors which contribute to small, progressive public school teachers' ability to meet the challenges they face successfully

Without support, a teacher cannot perform her job optimally. Without proper preparation, she will not be ready
to take on the immense responsibility of running a classroom and she and her students will most likely suffer as a result. To understand how attending Bank Street affected Michael, Beth, and Joan's experiences in the classroom, it is important to examine how they were prepared, and how well that preparation matched the demands of their eventual work environments.

Drawing both upon the interviews with graduate students and instructors, as well as on relevant literature, the data can be best understood as belonging to six categories, each of which represents an area of teaching expertise. For the purpose of this study, the categories are called "Understanding the Child," "The Social Context," "Classroom Life," "Academic," "Interpersonal," and "Professional." Learning which abilities and understandings Bank Street College successfully cultivates and which ones its preparation addresses less successfully can shed insight on how the College can best prepare its graduates for working in the small schools reform effort.

Understanding the Child

"Understanding the Child" includes those aspects of teacher preparation which help new teachers get to know their students as complex individuals with unique abilities, behaviors and needs. Within this area of expertise, Beth, Michael and Joan agreed that one of the most valuable components of their preparation at Bank Street was their thorough education in child development. The
developmentalist perspective which dominates many courses at Bank Street aided them in their understanding of individual children's abilities, and helped them to apply knowledge of how children learn to creating age-appropriate curricula.

A firm foundation in child development is an essential tool of an effective progressive educator. Without it, teachers are severely handicapped in their attempts to nurture children's "lively intellectual curiosities that turn the world into an exciting laboratory and keep one ever a learner" (Antler, 1987). Even social-reconstructionists Liston and Zeichner allow that good teachers are sensitive to their students' individual needs, and "understand the social experiences and cognitive orientations of their students" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p.39).

However, despite the centrality of such knowledge to their teaching, each of the three teachers found that developmentalist understandings alone did not adequately prepare them to accommodate all of the diverse learning styles and experiences belonging to the children in their classrooms. Feeling impotent in the face of educational needs they encountered for the first time on the job was common to all. Indeed, they are not alone in their appraisals. In her research on professional development schools, Huffman-Joley (1996) asserts that "children from diverse cultures with varying learning styles and with special learning needs are in every classroom...Teachers and all educators need to be prepared differently (than in past
years) to teach effectively in the schools that are being created today" (p. 208). Darling-Hammond, Griffin and Wise's (1992) assessment of educational environments today led them to believe that "knowledge about special learning circumstances and their treatments needs to be in the hands of all classroom teachers" (p.19). Particularly in schools which purport to serve a diverse student population as a matter of moral and political principle, teachers not only need to be armed with an understanding of basic child development, but also with specialized knowledge about diverse learning styles. Or, in the words of Francis-Okongwu and Pflaum (1993), "when classroom activities do not bring about desired outcomes, teachers need to be able to reconceptualize the problem and develop new strategies" (p. 123).

Social Context

Along with a need for deeper understanding of diverse learning styles, multicultural critics give voice to the need to not only focus on cognitive developmental levels, but also to build on the varied experiences the children bring to the classroom. As Liston and Zeichner (1991) contend, "without an understanding of students' cultures and contexts, it seems that the prospects for nondiscriminatory educational success are minimal" (p.110). If teachers do not honor their student's backgrounds, they cannot serve their children well.

While the Early Adolescence Program does give its participants some opportunities to consider issues
surrounding the "Social Context" of the children they teach, the preparation may not be adequate for the demands placed on today's teachers, as articulated by Michael, Joan, and Beth. Bank Street provides opportunities to discuss such issues in conference group, as well as some courses such as "Foundations" and "Uses of Language." However, it is the rare professor who gives practical instruction in how to incorporate into the classroom the experiences of children belonging to the populations most often found in small, progressive public schools. Notably, the teachers mentioned the founder of the Early Adolescence Program as a faculty member who regularly addresses such issues and who has helped them create curriculum suitable for their school situations.

While the three teachers did not explicitly state their desire for acquiring greater cultural understanding, they all complained of an inability to deal with all of their students' diverse cognitive and social needs. Because teachers' approaches to these needs depend a lot upon their cultural understandings about students, many multicultural researchers suggest that one of main reasons teachers are failing with minority students is that they lack cultural understanding and are unable to value the experiences of diverse students in their classrooms. Teachers need to know where their students are coming from to be able to build their instruction around the experiences the children bring with them to the classroom (Fountain & Evans, 1994). In fact, Fountain and Evans learned from their project which
linked teacher preparation with urban school renewal that, "demonstrating a respect and understanding for cultural diversity is an essential and necessary attribute for successful urban preservice and inservice teachers" (p.225). Even Lucy Sprague Mitchell "felt that the teacher's 'social education' was 'perhaps the most important' of all aspects of teacher training" (Antler, 1987, p.312). The words of these educators suggest that giving new teachers ways to acquire a better understanding of the lives of their students will help them make progressive education accessible and relevant to children in small, public, progressive schools.

Classroom Life

In regard to establishing a positive environment for learning, or "Classroom Life," Michael, Joan, and Beth unanimously agree that their student teaching was an invaluable learning experience. All of them use the abilities and understandings they acquired as a result of their student teaching everyday in their new classrooms. Through gaining teaching experience under the guidance of a cooperating teacher in a variety of settings, they found that they became more sensitive to the needs of the group and therefore more able to create a positive group experience for their classes. They also learned about organization and how to set up a classroom. All of these learned skills have helped them "arrange the physical and social conditions in the classroom in ways that are conducive to learning and that fit the academic task," an ability that Reynolds (1992, as
cited in Housego 1994, p.370) found to be essential for beginning teachers. Liston and Zeichner (1991) agree that teachers must be able to "construct educational situations whereby the student is in need of knowledge to solve problems, and to ensure that the required knowledge and information is available" (p.39). Classroom arrangement and sensitivity to the needs of the group are essential teaching skills which Bank Street cultivates very effectively in its teachers through the student teaching experience.

The teachers also acknowledged that their student teaching experience, while inadequate by itself, was their most significant opportunity to acquire another of Reynolds's essential skills, the ability to "establish and maintain rules and routines that are fair and appropriate to students" (Reynolds, 1992, as cited in Housego 1994, p.370). By observing their cooperating teachers, Michael, Joan, and Beth learned how an experienced colleague accomplished these tasks and were able to adopt some of the teachers' methods for their own use. Over all, however, our three teachers felt less satisfied with their ability to effectively incorporate rules and routines into their classroom life than they were with the other abilities they acquired during student teaching. They each wished that they had had more opportunities to discuss issues surrounding the creation and implementation of rules and routines with other teachers.

Finally, Beth, Joan, and Michael agreed that though they had learned much about classroom management through student
teaching, their understandings and abilities in this area were woefully inadequate for managing their classrooms at their new schools. Our teachers are not alone in this concern, either at Bank Street, or in the larger educational community. Recently, a Bank Street faculty member designed a one unit course "specifically focused on classroom management" because "regular ed" had no such course. She kept hearing from students that management is a "serious problem for new teachers," and thought that the course would be helpful.

In his study of beginning teachers' preparedness, Housego (1994) not only found that classroom management was one of the three most important skills for first-year teacher success, but also discovered that this was the area in which beginning teachers typically felt least prepared. Just like Michael, Joan and Beth, he concluded that "classroom management requires more attention" in teacher preparation programs and that new teachers "need information about good practice, and experience in implementing good practice" (p. 370). Darling-Hammond, Griffin and Wise (1992) concur, and include "knowledge about organization of instruction and classroom management" in their list of teacher knowledge needed to facilitate learning (p. 19).

Liston and Zeichner (1991) also speak to the need for teachers to receive careful guidance in the area of classroom management, but for a reason that reaches beyond survival. They point out that "whatever strategy of control is adopted
always requires an emotional commitment in a particular
direction. By pursuing a particular strategy one becomes a
particular kind of teacher and a particular kind of person" (p. 99). Giving teachers more extended opportunities to talk
through issues related to classroom management with other
professionals, as well as more diverse and frequent
experiences in managing students, could help new teachers
discover a personal style and direction that suits them.

**Academic**

The "Academic" part of teaching includes content area
knowledge, instructional methods, curricular planning, and
student assessment. Historically, the academic tradition in
teacher education has valued only one component of this area
of teacher preparation above all others, asserting that
"subject matter is the most important thing in the education
of a teacher" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p.6). Progressives,
while valuing subject specific knowledge, have viewed it more
as an important piece in a much larger puzzle of teacher
preparation.

In their experiences in the Early Adolescence Program,
Michael, Joan and Beth found that they received much less
instruction in the content areas than they did in the
pedagogy related to those content areas. In regard to social
studies and language arts, they agreed that the balance
between pedagogy and content suited their needs. However,
Beth and Joan each thought they needed a more thorough
science background in order to be able to teach the subject
well, which is a need currently not filled by the program's process and pedagogically focused science courses. The explanations they gave for this desire agreed with Irvine's contention that a teacher must have a mastery of content, and then she can more effectively prepare multiple representations of that content for her students (Irvine, personal communication, April, 1996).

Pedagogically speaking, however, all three teachers agreed that the philosophical orientation and the instructional and curriculum planning skills they acquired at Bank Street were invaluable. All agreed that they had received a solid foundation in creating engaging, meaningful, age-appropriate curricula and had learned the skill of long-range curricular planning. For each of them, the social studies curriculum course was particularly helpful in developing these skills. By going through a group process of planning a semester's curriculum, they made great strides toward acquiring another of Reynolds's essential abilities: to "represent and present subject matter in ways that enable students to relate new learnings to prior understanding and that help students develop metacognitive strategies" (Reynolds, 1992, as cited in Housego, 1994, p.370). Discussing their goals and strategies with their fellow graduate students gave them a forum for thinking about which teaching methods are appropriate for promoting certain learning goals. This social studies class, as well as "Reading in the Content Areas," also taught the three the related skills of creating
integrated subject curricula and helping students see interdisciplinary connections.

The "Academic" area in which Michael, Joan, and Beth all wished they had received more instruction was in how to introduce progressive instructional methods to middle school students who may not be very familiar with them. They had no experience in teaching progressively in a class of such students until they started their jobs at their small schools, and they each found it to be an ongoing struggle. Oddly, the literature is quiet about this particular difficulty. It does not address the issue of how a teacher can make the transition from teaching progressively in a middle-class laboratory school environment where the children have been participating in group discussions since they learned to speak, to doing so in a public, urban setting with children who have learned in teacher-centered classrooms for their entire lives. The experiences of Michael, Beth and Joan indicate that this is an issue that Bank Street must address if the Early Adolescence program aims to prepare its graduates for service in schools like these three chose.

Interpersonal

Michael, Joan and Beth made few references to the realm of the "Interpersonal" in describing their preparation, perhaps because each of them feels comfortable in their daily interactions with students, colleagues and families. The student teaching and advising component of a Bank Street education gives teachers-in-training ample opportunity to
interact with children, learn to collaborate with other adults and even meet with a few families. While interpersonal skills are extremely important for teachers, the Early Adolescence Program already encourages the development and refinement of such skills as an integral part of the program.

Professional

In regard to "Professional" concerns, or those areas of preparation which help students develop their professional identities and become versed in professional knowledge, Michael, Joan and Beth thought that the Early Adolescence program prepared them well in a variety of areas. Specifically, Bank Street helped them to develop and intelligently defend their own philosophies of education. They learned to explain their rationales for educational decisions, to "identify and articulate their purposes, and give good reasons for their actions" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p. 39). They further developed their capacities to "reflect on their own actions and students' responses in order to improve their teaching," which is a skill also valued by Reynolds (Housego, 1994, p. 370).

Getting to know themselves better as teachers is another benefit of the program that has made a positive difference for Beth, Michael and Joan. Michael felt better about himself as a leader in his classroom as a result of taking "Group Processes in Adolescence," and all three teachers thought that student teaching boosted their professional
confidence. Likewise, meeting with fellow students in advisement for two hours every week provided each with the perfect place to start the professional networks which helped to support them as new teachers. The contact with teachers outside of one's school environment that Colbert and Wolff (1992) found so essential to the support of new teachers began for each of the three teachers at Bank Street.

However, Michael, Beth and Joan do have a couple of concerns about their professional preparation. First, they expected that attending Bank Street would prepare them to succeed in their new work environments but found that they fell short of their own expectations for themselves as teachers during their first years on the job. Coming to the realization that they were not the teachers they had hoped to be caused each of them much distress and led Joan to leave the public schools entirely. This study has already identified many contributing factors to this phenomenon, but explanations cannot minimize the pain that these new teachers and their students experience when they fail to meet their expectations for success.

New teachers are not alone in creating these expectations for themselves. In her study of beginning teachers, Reynolds (1992) found that the "constituencies most involved in the education and licensing of beginning teachers hold rather high expectations for the competency of . . . teachers once they begin full-time teaching" (p.212). This makes sense, as no profession wants to consider some of its members
incompetent. Unfortunately, Reynolds's findings also indicate that beginning teachers are not able to perform all the tasks expected of competent teachers. As a teacher preparatory institution with students who have experienced this demoralizing discrepancy between the expectations and abilities of new teachers, Bank Street could better serve its students by implementing changes to help close this gap.

A final area in which all three teachers wished they had had more knowledge is that of understanding the New York City Public Schools system. Liston and Zeichner agree that "it seems advantageous for future teachers to understand how the institutional and larger societal context encourages or obstructs their chosen educational aims" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991, p.85). It would help teachers to provide them with the information they will need to do a good job in whatever setting they chose, including a public one. Specifically, Michael, Beth and Joan wanted to know more about the functioning of the public school system, standardized tests, the public school calendar, the system's bureaucratic labeling of students and the teacher certification process. They felt that their lack of information about such topics increased the level of difficulty of their already extremely challenging jobs.

Recommendations

Participating in the Early Adolescence Program has made numerous significant and positive contributions to Michael,
Joan and Beth's professional preparation. In particular, their preparation in child development and interpersonal skills serves them well in their schools. However, their experiences, the voices of Bank Street faculty members and the literature indicate that there are a number ways the Early Adolescence program could change to better meet the needs of its graduates who chose to teach a new, progressive, public schools. In terms of Understanding the Child, new teachers need a thorough understanding of how to accommodate diverse learning styles in the classroom. Learning more about their students' social contexts and how to reflect and incorporate the varied experiences of their populations of children into the curriculum could help new teachers better meet the needs of their students as well. To make classroom life more conducive to learning, teachers need more preparation in classroom management, particularly in establishing and maintaining rules and routines. In regard to teaching methodology, teachers need instruction in how to introduce progressive education to kids who are unfamiliar with it. Finally, providing teachers with more information about what they can expect if they choose to teach in the New York City Public School system would help Bank Street graduates.

Having identified areas for improvement, it is also important to identify feasible methods for making positive changes in the Early Adolescence program's preparation of small, progressive, public school teachers. Some require
relatively minimal changes in the Adolescence program, such as adjusting the content of a course or adding a new one. Others challenge the faculty to adopt larger structural changes to the Early Adolescence program. All are consistent with Bank Street’s philosophy of making progressive education available to all children.

The first set of recommendations is for improving teacher preparation in a specific category of abilities. They are followed by descriptions of broader changes the Early Adolescence program could consider which would address multiple issues in preparation at once. These proposed changes in no way comprise a comprehensive list, but each suggests ways for Bank Street to better prepare its students in the Early Adolescent program for service in small, progressive public schools.

Specific Recommendations

Understanding the Child

In the area of Understanding the Child, Beth, Michael and Joan’s greatest challenge was accommodating the diverse learning styles of their students. This issue could be addressed through the Observation and Recording course. Instead of enrolling in sections with students studying children of all ages, students in the Early Adolescence program could take a special section of the course focusing on children ages ten and above. In that way, class time could be devoted entirely to discussing the behaviors of adolescent children. More attention could be paid to
children's observed cognitive styles during class discussions as well.

In their article about preparing teachers for diverse populations of students, Francis-Okongwu and Pflaum (1993) suggest that student teachers should observe not one, but two children closely. One should be of the teacher's own ethnic and socio-economic background and one should be of another. The goal would be for teachers to understand how each child perceives the world, and use the experience to reflect on their own world views and understandings to help them better understand the perspectives of all children.

Outside of Observation and Recording, professors who teach courses for the Early Adolescence program could be asked to discuss more explicitly and demonstrate more often how different learning styles can be accommodated when using the material they present in their courses. Across the curriculum, issues such as what to do with children who cannot read or write near grade level need to be addressed often. In regard to this topic, one instructor suggested that more integration of regular and special education courses could help "regular ed" teachers become acquainted with children's diverse ways of learning and knowing. Many of the ways teachers help "special needs" kids can be used to help all children.

Social Context

To prepare Early Adolescent graduates to better incorporate their students' experiences into classroom learning, the
program must provide them with more opportunities to explore and reflect upon their Social Context: their cultural heritage, and daily experiences within their families and communities. Educators have written from a variety of perspectives about how this understanding can be encouraged throughout teacher preparation programs.

In their article "Diversity in Education: Implications for Teacher Preparation," progressive educators Francis-Okongwu and Pflaum (1993) make a number of insightful recommendations for preparing teachers of diverse students which directly address the concerns that Joan, Beth and Michael expressed. They describe their ideas in greater detail in their article, but it is worth summarizing the most pertinent ones here. Francis-Okongwu and Pflaum advocate that prospective teachers have the opportunity to have the following kinds of experiences in the course of their preparation programs:

- Explore how their own experiences in education were influenced by race, gender, culture, etc., and use their educational paths as the basis for studying difference.
- Observe and speak with professionals "who successfully work with children and their families facing hopelessness, divorce, AIDS, substance abuse, etc.," with the goal of becoming fluent in speaking with students and parents about social ills, and supporting students through difficult times (p. 126).
- Experience at least one placement in both a school and one non-educational setting with children from cultures and social classes
different than their own, in conjunction with course work which includes reflective discussions with other students.

- Learn about "the impact of early experience and differential schooling on later learning" (p. 128).
- Read and discuss education news and consider how community changes and issues affect schooling.
- Study the history of various groups with the goal of understanding how people come to understand the same phenomena quite differently.
- "Observe practicing teachers whose students achieve academic empowerment in a context in which too often there is academic failure,...take on the challenge of working with a difficult-to-teach student, and, with faculty guidance, to achieve success," and experience demonstrable successes in the teaching of children from a variety of social, economic and educational settings (p. 129).

Francis-Okongwu and Pflaum offer these and other recommendations in the belief that "there are significant gaps in experience that may contribute to problems in teacher preparation, gaps that need to be closed to enable teacher candidates to acquire knowledge, sensitivity, and explicit behaviors to be in a position to alter the process of social reproduction that inhibits real equity in the outcomes of schooling" (Francis-Okongwu & Pflaum, 1993, p. 121). These recommendations are particularly noteworthy in that, as a group, they provide practical and specific methods for addressing Michael, Beth and Joan's concern about incorporating their students' experiences into the classroom.
Though she comes from a different tradition, Asa G. Hilliard (1995) also has much to say about being prepared to teach culturally diverse students, particularly African Americans. It is her view that the "problems of education of African people, and problems of education of people in general, are considered without reference to the point of view and practices manifest in the cultural tradition of Africans," (p. 3) and that this results in inferior education for all students, with African Americans suffering the most. While she approaches educational issues from an explicitly African perspective, rather than a progressive one, many of her insights address the struggles named by our three teachers.

Hilliard first takes issue with the "implied universality about the curriculum in the traditional foundations courses, even though most of it applies mainly to students or school environments reflecting European/American culture" (Hilliard, 1995, p. 24-25). She contends that in order to effectively serve children of African descent, teachers need to know about history and culture of African Americans, as well as their educational history in Africa and in the United States. Teachers have problems because they tend to define African Americans' identity in terms of socio-economic status instead of culture, which leads to explaining low achievement among African Americans as resulting from student, family or community deficiencies. According to Hilliard, "With such a limited and distorted problems definition, and with no
recognition or respect for African ethnicity, it is impossible to pose valid remedies for low student achievement, including design of valid teacher education (p. 4). Teachers must have the opportunity to acquire an awareness of best practice with African American students, learn about examples of successful education, and become aware of literature on the successful schooling of African Americans.

To further those ends, Hilliard (1995) proposes the following recommendations for teacher education:

- Student teachers should have placements in schools where teachers are successful with African American students, because "by thinking of how to be successful with the traditionally lowest performing groups, we understand how to prepare teachers for all children" (p. 19).
- Student teachers should work with teachers who are successful with children who are otherwise predicted to fail.
- Student teachers should participate in outreach to communities and families.
- Supervisors of field experiences "must be able to demonstrate that they can raise the achievement of traditionally low performing students to levels of excellence" (p. 22).
- Teacher educators must understand their disciplines in a pluralistic cultural perspective.
- Student teachers must acquire proficiency in cultural knowledge about African and other people in order to develop respect, and minimize alienation.
Educators from other ethnic perspectives echo Hilliard's call for cultural understanding as an essential prerequisite for serving diverse student populations. Sonia Nieto (personal communication, April, 1996) points out that honoring "Latino perspectives and their implications for programs and practices is difficult in a mono-lingual culture where difference is seen as suspect." To resist educational practices that could be harmful to Latino children, she recommends that teachers should know the history of at least some groups of Latinos, confront myths about learning English, learn a second language, and promote parent involvement. Similarly, Valerie Ooka Pang (personal communication, April, 1996) calls on teachers to educate themselves about the huge diversity within the Asian community, especially in terms of achievement, and learn how culture affects children's interactions in the classroom.

However, as we consider incorporating experiences to further new teachers' cultural understanding into teacher preparation programs, Lisa Delpit (personal communication, April, 1996) warns against merely "adding on" diversity. Teacher preparation must take into consideration the values which underscore various educational philosophies, and find common ground among them. For example, "self-actualization" is a central tenet of progressive education, yet too narrowly focusing on it can lead to the alienation of African American and other cultures which focus on community more than
individual rights. To be optimally effective with all students, teacher preparation programs in general and Bank Street's Early Adolescence program in particular, must keep students as their focus and prepare teachers to provide educational opportunities for a range of children.

Classroom Life

Classroom management is the area of Classroom Life in which Joan, Beth and Michael agreed they needed more preparation. One of their recommendations for improvement included asking cooperating teachers to leave the room as soon and as often as possible in order for the student teachers to build confidence in their ability to manage the class themselves. They also suggested emphasizing classroom management throughout the curriculum, including in conference groups and conferences with advisors. They further recommended offering a specific course in management strategies. Michael's student teacher, Sarah, recommended that the new one unit course on classroom management be continued because it gave her a forum for considering and discussing management issues with other teachers.

The teacher of that course offers a few suggestions of her own. While she created her new course to help graduate students with management, she thinks that her three unit course on structuring classroom environments so that children with special needs can function optimally could also help 'regular ed' teachers eliminate management issues by changing the design and routines of their classrooms. In either case,
she is convinced that reading and thinking consciously and concretely about models of discipline and behavior goals for children can heighten teachers’ awareness of the effect of their practices in the classroom. Furthermore, creating opportunities for new teachers to collaborate about dealing with management issues with other teachers can only help them in their quest to establish and maintain rules and routines that are fair and appropriate to students.

Academics

The literature reviewed does not offer solutions specific to Beth, Michael and Joan’s most salient pedagogical issue: the question of how to introduce progressive instructional methods to middle school students who may not be very familiar with them. Our three teachers suggested that professors at Bank Street regularly address this issue as it relates to the subjects they teach in the graduate school. However, to be able to teach this skill effectively professors must have experience with it. Sarah also mentioned that observing and planning with a cooperating teacher who is skilled in this area is invaluable for developing it for oneself, and recommends that this opportunity be made available to all student teachers.

The literature does, however, describe the need for teachers to develop many different approaches to the same material to help make it accessible to all students. Darling-Hammond, Griffin and Wise (1992) contend that “because students learn at different rates and in different
ways, there will never be "one best system" of education, or a singular set of teaching prescriptions that can meet all of their diverse needs" (p. 13). Francis-Okongwu and Pflaum (1993) go one step further in that they recommend that specialists from the different content areas need to help teachers understand how to make the knowledge base for their subjects more accessible and make cross-disciplinary connections. They contend that, armed with such knowledge, teachers can develop effective strategies for approaching problems in different content areas with their children.

The other issue in the academic category is that of preparation for teaching science. Joan and Beth both felt that they did not receive adequate preparation in terms of acquiring content knowledge in this discipline. Class time was spent primarily on learning science pedagogy and curricular planning. This problem could easily be remedied by changing the focus of the current science course to include more content, or by awarding Bank Street credit for science courses offered by other institutions.

Professional

Beth, Michael and Joan's Professional concerns were that their abilities did not allow them to meet their expectations for the quality of their teaching in their first year and that they wanted more information about the New York City Public School system before they set foot in their classrooms. Bank Street can approach the first issue in two ways: by helping students develop more realistic
expectations, and by better enabling their students to teach well in their first year. Edna Shapiro (1991), Bank Street researcher, speaks to the first in her article about becoming a teachers, arguing that, "One of the fundamental premises of a program of teacher education must be that it cannot be complete. Students should know that graduation does not confer expertise, that they should expect to fumble and make mistakes, and that they will and must keep on learning and trying and reexamining their experiences" (p. 17).

Shapiro's message resonates with the Bank Street idea of being a life-long learner and acknowledges that teaching is a difficult profession which takes years to learn. However, it does not address the problem of new teachers who think they are failing their students because they have failed to acquire minimally sufficient competence for the job they are performing. Such teachers need help doing a better job. To that end, Bank Street can try to make changes in its preparation program, such as those suggested in this study, which help public school teachers approach their jobs with more skill and confidence. It can also offer more structured and effective support for its graduates in their first years of teaching.

As Beth suggested, Bank Street could extend the advisory group into the first year of teaching to give new teachers a forum for discussing the difficulties they encounter with supportive peer group led by a seasoned professional. Colbert and Wolff (1992) found this approach to be effective
in retaining new, urban teachers. A less formal approach of organizing weekly discussion and support groups for recent graduates could serve a similar function, particularly if faculty members were involved. Advisor duties could be expanded to include observations and conferences not only during student teaching, but also during the first year on the job. Bank Street could also use its alumni network to match first year teachers with an experienced mentor, preferably someone at the teacher's new schools.

There are a variety of approaches Bank Street could take to help its graduates understand and navigate through the New York City Public School system better. Bank Street could encourage graduates who work in the public schools to create and teach a New Perspectives course on navigating the system. The career counseling office could also keep a list of alumni who are public school teachers who would be willing to act as resources for new teachers from Bank Street. Furthermore, the Early Adolescence program could offer a course on examining "schools as organizations, and as contexts that influence teaching and learning" (Darling-Hammond, Griffin & Wise, 1992, p. 35). Part of the reality shock experienced by new teachers partly comes from "confronting organizational properties without developing a prior understanding of them" (Darling-Hammond, Griffin & Wise, p. 35).

Additionally, the Adolescence program could place more student teachers in urban public, progressive schools, to help ensure that placements represent the range of schools
teachers could experience once they graduate and not just "model environments." After all, as Asa G. Hilliard (1995) notes, successful urban educators are born at successful urban practicum sites. Darling-Hammond, Griffin and Wise (1992) suggest that beyond just completing a placement in such schools, student teachers need to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the entire school setting. They can do this in a variety of ways, such as interviewing the principal and other teachers, analyzing faculty interactions and examining the distribution of authority as well as what is rewarded.

**Broader Recommendations for Change**

Broad changes in the basic structure and expectations of the Program could address many issues in preparation at once. Extending the duration of the Early Adolescence Program, collaborating with public schools to implement induction programs for Bank Street graduates and creating a partnership with a public school to create a professional development school could each help the Early Adolescence program better meet the needs of some of its graduates.

**Extending the Duration of the Early Adolescence Program**

The object of extending the Adolescence program would be to give new teachers more practical teaching experience with the support of the graduate school before seeking employment. Students would have more time to reflect on their experiences, build their professional confidence, encounter more educational settings, and gain greater understanding of
the social contexts in which they teach. After all, according to the founder of the Early Adolescence program, "If you want to be a practitioner, you've got to practice and develop your craft," and it is important to have ample time to do so before taking on full responsibility for students' learning.

In fact, one Bank Street faculty member believes that Early Adolescence students could benefit from spending one more year in schools than they typically do now before seeking head teaching positions. That extra year would allow graduate students to use their year of student teaching to "take it all in," and "create a bridge between class and course work." The first year in the classroom would then be followed by an internship, in which the graduate student would spend a year as a co-teacher working under a master teacher, learning to become a classroom teacher through experience. Throughout the program, the student would have the support of an advisor and conference group, undergo frequent observation and reflect on his or her practice in the graduate course work.

Donald Jones (1986) also speaks about the need for prospective teachers to bring a broad liberal arts background to their practice, followed by two full years of student teaching internships and courses on pedagogy. However, he goes further in recommending that during a teacher's first year of employment, she should receive a "complete initiation into practice" (p. 67). For Jones, that includes receiving
direction and guidance from a master teacher and college faculty, taking accompanying seminars for credit, regular observations and a summer assessment seminar at which teachers would create a plan for individualized professional growth for the next two years.

Jones is not alone in his recommendation that new teachers participate in an extensive induction program. Littleton and Littleton (1988, as cited in Young, Crain, and McCullough, 1993) provide compelling reasons for Bank Street to become involved with teacher induction. They found that:

first-year teachers typically possess three characteristics: they are often unfocused workers, meaning they are unable to think of appropriate ways to improve their teaching; they are highly motivated and coachable; and they tend to be idealistic, with their expectations often exceeding what they can reasonably achieve. These characteristics point to the need and possibilities for teacher induction programs (p. 174).

Darling-Hammond, Griffin, and Wise (1992) further caution that current teacher preparation programs are not serving their graduates optimally because "the initial induction period, in which teachers learn to translate knowledge into practice, provides an important kind of learning that cannot take place solely in the school of education and may take place sub-optimally if the school does not support a carefully guided and supervised introduction into the art of
teaching" (p. 21). One way Bank Street could think about "restructuring teacher education," and helping its graduates make the most of their graduate training would be to collaborate with public schools in developing an effective induction program for Early Adolescence program graduates.

Collaborating with Public Schools to Implement Induction Programs

In Colbert and Wolff's (1992) model, the primary responsibility for induction of beginning teachers lies with an urban school district, but university plays a role in support and training and the potential exists for it to become involved further. Their rationale for the project addresses many of the concerns voiced by Michael, Joan and Beth. Colbert and Wolff assert that "If we want to retain new teachers, particularly those teaching in inner-city schools, we must introduce them to the profession humanely, in ways that engender self-esteem, competence, collegiality, and professional stature. We must develop a more gradual method of induction into teaching within a supportive and collaborative environment" (p. 193). In the urban school districts they studied, Colbert and Wolff found that the number of newly hired teachers leaving the profession within five years is often over fifty percent. Beginning with these concerns, Colbert and Wolff developed an induction program involving a large urban school district and a state university school to provide beginning teachers with systematic support and assistance.
In Colbert and Wolff's (1992) program, schools created teams of two to four beginning teachers and one lead teacher who was chosen for his/her nurturing and non-judgmental qualities, and excellent teaching and leadership skills. University personnel trained the lead teachers in methods of classroom observation and coaching to provide needed assistance and support. The lead teachers met with their teams weekly for cooperative planning, problem solving and assistance, and addressed topics jointly determined by project participants and staff. They discussed issues such as instructional problem solving and classroom management strategy planning. The beginning and lead teachers also enrolled together in university courses for participants which focused on topics they suggested, such as effective instruction and management strategies. Additionally, second year teachers who had participated in the program the previous year provided additional support for beginning teachers. They modeled lessons, coached them and helped them plan instruction.

The results of Colbert and Wolff's (1992) project indicate that it is meeting its goals. Over ninety-five percent of their beginning teacher participants were still teaching in urban classrooms after three years, and the "retention rates of project-supported new teachers were significantly higher than the retention rates of (new teachers without support)" (p. 196). Furthermore, the project was especially good at retaining teachers from under-represented ethnic groups. If
Bank Street is committed to helping its graduates to succeed in urban classrooms, it could look to this program's example of collaborating with urban schools to support teachers in their first year of teaching.

Collaborating with a Public School to Create a Professional Development School

A third, and perhaps most radical, option for change would be for Bank Street to become involved with creating a professional development school as a site for training its graduates. There are many models of professional development schools in existence, but all of them are partnerships between teacher preparation programs and schools which share the goals of teacher preparation, professional development and school renewal. They have been variously described as "analogous to teaching hospitals in the medical profession, (involving) practicing teachers in the preparation and training of new teachers," (Moore & Hopkins, 1993, p. 219) and "schools where the combined resources of both institutions can be brought together to better address the challenges schools are facing and to better prepare educators for new schools" (Huffman-Joley, 1996, p. 208).

Goodlad (1986, as cited in Harris and Harris, 1993) goes further in describing professional development schools as places where "universities and schools are equal partners in a linkage in which they share a common goal for renewal of both levels of education" (p. 234). In his model, partner schools "become facilitating environments in which
principal, teachers and university professors work together toward the simultaneous renewal of the school and strengthening of teacher education at the university and in the schools" (p. 235). All commit to "pre-service education for new teachers, in-service renewal and professional development for practicing teachers, curriculum development . . . and research/evaluation for extending knowledge within the teaching profession" (Harris & Harris, p. 236).

The reasons for creating a professional development school are many. It allows a graduate school to have a direct impact on the functioning of a school where its teachers are trained, while the prospective teachers receive the opportunity to work in a public school environment where teachers and university faculty are collaborating to meet the challenges of creating effective education for every student. A professional development school is different from a lab school in that it can give preservice students a more realistic idea of what many teaching jobs will be like because it works within the public school system and often serves a more diverse clientele (MacNaughton & Johns, 1993). Perrone (1992) laments that teacher education programs are not as vital as they could be because:

even those considered most innovative seldom have a significant impact on public education in the regions they serve. That portion of a university committed to the preparation of teachers is often removed from the societal forces that effect change in the public schools. At
the same time, local school districts and the communities they represent do not make any meaningful contribution to the preparation of teachers (p. 104).

Professional development schools provide universities and schools with a structured way to address these serious issues in education.

In her description of an inner-city professional development school, Devlin-Scherer (1993) names the new roles and behaviors required of the parties involved for the experiment to work. "Local teachers are trained to mentor preservice teachers, participate in ongoing professional development, and assist in planning and teaching in college teacher preparation programs. They assume more responsibility in developing new professionals for the field" (p. 231). College faculty take increasingly large roles in school concerns, collaborate with school personnel to design training for pre- and inservice educators and conduct site-based research focusing on school improvement. Ultimately, "the school becomes more than a placement for student teachers. In its final stages, the professional development school can become an exemplary site where the most promising and effective practices are demonstrated" (Devlin-Scherer, 1993, p. 231).

In their description of their model for a professional development school and college, Fountain and Evans (1994) conceptualize it "as a community of learners where ongoing
inquiry, learning, and assessment routinely occurs, intellectual activity is valued and rewarded, best practices are modeled and refined, and educators are encouraged and supported in their efforts to transform the teaching and learning process" (p. 219). In their model, the training of a teacher can be seen as a continuum beginning with preservice and continuing throughout the teacher's career, with the professional development school supporting him/her each step of the way.

In their early field experiences, preservice teachers make observations and begin a portfolio of their beliefs about teaching. Next, they use their pre-internship time to observe and analyze teaching practice according to educational theory, develop teacher-as-researcher skills and work with exemplary teachers. As interns, they plan instruction in teams of interns, teachers and professors. In their first year of teaching, beginning teachers are assigned to peer teachers for help and participate in a practicum focusing on solving teaching problems, innovative strategies and student needs. Finally, as professional educators, they participate in professional development, work with colleagues and trainees toward mutually agreed upon goals and learn to manage the change process at their school. Additionally, all teachers at the professional development school take one course per semester at the university.

In designing their professional development school, Fountain and Evans had the primary goal of educating
beginning teachers to be capable of creating positive environments for urban students, but they desired many other outcomes as well. Specifically, they wanted teachers and professors to use problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork and reflection to help teachers carry out their responsibilities. They hoped teachers would adapt learning experiences to meet special learning needs of students, pay attention to students' prior experiences and integrate multicultural education into the curriculum. They also wanted them to be teachers-as-decision-makers, and continue to improve their practice throughout their careers.

The results of Fountain and Evans' efforts are remarkable. The professional development school affected the lives of its faculty and students in many ways, but the improvements for teachers were most striking. The program increased confidence levels expressed by interns, reduced the turn-over rate of experienced teachers and engendered strong interest by other urban principals to hire participant graduates. Bank Street's goals and desired results for their graduates are similar to those expressed by Fountain and Evans. The Early Adolescence program could consider some of their approaches in its efforts to better prepare its teachers for small, progressive public schools.

Results of Making Improvements

Implementing any combination of the recommendations described in the previous section would have an important and
significant effect on the teaching experiences of new Bank Street graduates, Bank Street as an institution and the small school reform effort. Graduates would be more prepared to teach in small, progressive public schools. Bank Street could become more involved with issues pertinent to such schools. The schools themselves could benefit from sharing closer ties with Bank Street and hiring the College's well prepared graduates. The preparation process would become more closely linked with public school realities, and the values in education common to both Bank Street and the schools would guide the education of graduate school and public school students alike.

However, implementing such changes would require a shift in priorities for everyone. Graduate students must value gaining the preparation required for teaching in public schools. Bank Street must recommit itself to the philosophy of its founder and strive to create a more democratic and socially just society through its work. The small school reform effort must be willing to invest time, energy and resources into collaborating with Bank Street College. These changes cannot be achieved by a small group of zealous individuals, but must be embraced by the respective communities in the belief that they will help create a better world for children.

Effects on Teachers Like Beth, Joan and Michael

Specifically, changing the content and/or focus of some courses at Bank Street in the described ways would make a
positive difference in Bank Street graduate's abilities to meet the challenges they will face if they choose to teach in a small, progressive public school. They would know more about the children's cognitive functioning, achieve a more comprehensive understanding of multicultural and social issues and have more experience with bringing progressive education into an environment where it is unfamiliar. Teachers like Michael, Beth and Joan would bring more confidence and knowledge to their work as teaching professionals, and as a result would most likely be more successful and feel more supported in their first years of teaching.

Adopting at least one of the suggested structural changes would do even more for helping future teachers in the small schools reform effort prepare for their important work. By extending the Early Adolescence program, Bank Street could provide even more support and variety of experience to prospective teachers. Likewise, an induction program created in collaboration with one or more public schools could help ease the transition between student teacher and teaching professional by providing new teachers with the supports they need, both from the graduate school and the public school. Finally, by creating a professional development school with a small, progressive public school, Bank Street would be able to provide teachers like Beth, Joan and Michael the opportunity to actually teach in an environment very similar
to the one they can expect to encounter if they choose a career in such schools.

How the Changes Could Affect Bank Street College

Making changes to better address the needs of graduate students seeking a teaching career in the small, progressive public schools would require Bank Street to reassess its values and priorities and commit itself to working toward better education for all children. The recommendations presented in this paper challenge the status quo and may not be perceived by the faculty as necessary to Bank Street's mission as they see it. Some may see a tension between providing graduate students with a 'model' of child-centered, progressive education and achieving the more social-reconstructionist goal of specifically educating teachers to cope productively with the current challenges in public, urban education. Others may feel unprepared to train teachers for such jobs. If the will of the community is not behind the changes, then Bank Street will not be able to do an effective job of executing them and, at best, the results will have a minimal impact on the experience of new teachers.

If, however, Bank Street were to decide to educate its students for service in the small school reform effort, many significant and positive changes could occur. The graduate school could become more oriented toward change, and gain new vibrancy from the process of assessing institutional goals and figuring out how to work toward them. Bank Street could learn to accommodate more diverse ways of learning and
knowing, and become an agent of social change through the process of figuring out how to best prepare its graduate students to implement progressive education for all children. This emphasis could attract more experts in the practice of urban education, including successful classroom teachers, to work with Bank Street. It could also motivate the graduate school community to become more involved with the political aspects of changing New York City Public Schools. As a result, Bank Street could become an even greater leader in the field of progressive education and prepare its graduates to be more professional, successful new teachers.

Before embarking on this new mission, however, Bank Street must realize that some of the new priorities would involve sacrificing some important parts of old ones. Many prospective teachers do not come to Bank Street to learn to teach in an urban, progressive public school. If they want to learn to teach in other environments, the individual focus in which Bank Street takes pride may be lost a little for them if the program begins to pay more attention to the concerns of teachers involved with the small school reform effort. In terms of structural changes and partnerships with the public schools, Bank Street must also consider whether the extra effort spent dealing with the New York City Public Schools bureaucracy is worth the benefit of giving its graduates a more thorough preparation.

How the Changes Could Affect Public Schools
If the Early Adolescence program at Bank Street were to adopt some of the recommendations, the small school reform effort in New York City Public Schools would be affected in two significant ways. First, if Bank Street were to form a partnership with one or more schools to induct and or train Bank Street students, the partnership schools would have to include Bank Street in its decision making and daily functioning. They would have to commit themselves to teacher training and continuing professional development as well as urban school reform. In return, they would have access to the human and institutional resources that Bank Street could provide. Additionally, if Bank Street were to focus on preparing its graduates for their schools, the faculty in the progressive public schools could look forward to well prepared colleagues joining them in their efforts. Eventually, Bank Street would create a network of alumni who would comprise an essential part of public school reform effort. These alumni would be an invaluable resource of knowledge and experience in urban progressive education, who could contribute their expertise to the training of new teachers.

Conclusion

Bank Street has made many important contributions to the education of children over the course of its history. The Head Start program, Bank Street Writer computer software, the Voyage of the Mimi program, and much new children's
literature are only a few of Bank Street's more recent and notable contributions to the education community. However, in many ways, it could do a better job of educating prospective teachers to successfully meet the challenges of teaching in small, progressive public schools. This outcome is not only desirable for future Bank Street graduates and their students, but it is imperative if the college is to continue its tradition of educating for democracy. There are public schools in New York which are striving to reform education to make it more democratic and enable each child to develop to his or her potential. Bank Street graduates should be prepared to successfully teach in them.

By explicitly designing the program to prepare graduates for service in these kinds of schools, Bank Street would move closer to Lucy Sprague Mitchell's original vision of progressive education and contribute to creating better education for children and a more democratic society. As a graduate school of education, we cannot claim to fulfill the vision of our founders if we do not do more to prepare our graduates for today's urban challenges. However, if we make preparation for service in small, progressive, public schools our priority, we can bring the joys of a progressive education to those who have yet to experience them, and help build a better future for all of our children.
References


Pignatelli & S. W. Pflaum (Eds.), Celebrating diverse voices (pp. 112-132). Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.


Helping new teachers: the performance enhancement model.
Clearing House, 66 (3) 174-176.