

Letter From the Editors

We are excited to welcome you to the first edition of *Excelsior: Leadership in Teaching and Learning*, published in an on-line and open-access format. As the key outlet for publishing work in teacher preparation for the New York Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, *Excelsior* has enjoyed over a decade of reporting research across content disciplines, research methodologies, theoretical perspectives, and current issues in the field. We wish to extend our most sincere thanks and appreciation to the former editor Dr. Cynthia Lassonde, who guided the publication of this journal for over two decades. Our aim as co-editors is to build on and extend the successful stewardship of Dr. Lassonde and her editorial team. As we look to the future of *Excelsior*, we hope to extend the scope of topics and range of researchers and practitioners published in *Excelsior* and extend the range of readership, including an expanded social media presence for *Excelsior* and NYACTE. One of the changes we find exciting is that, because of the collaboration with NYACTE, the Syracuse University School of Education, the Syracuse University Libraries, and Open Publishing Services, we are now able not only to publish online but also to assign a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) to each article, which will remain a persistent link to articles, regardless of what platform is used to publish *Excelsior* in the future. Articles with DOIs are also more discoverable in search engines, which will raise the profile of *Excelsior* articles, and thus authors. We want to thank Amanda Page, the SU Open Publishing and Copyright Librarian, and Suzanne Preate, Digital Initiatives Librarian, for their assistance in bringing this issue to fruition. Due to the open-access nature of the journal and a Creative Commons CCBY license, authors will retain copyright of their articles, and the peer-reviewed journal is free to all readers. We will also work with the publisher to ensure that *Excelsior* is indexed in Google, Google Scholar, and other major search engines.

As we move the journal in new and expanded directions, we welcome and encourage your active participation. There are numerous ways to get involved - from considering *Excelsior* as an outlet for your scholarship, to reviewing submitted manuscripts, to recommending potential special issue topics. With the ambitious goals discussed above, and the support of our readership and the larger community of teacher and administrator educators in New York State, we hope to expand *Excelsior's* impact on teacher education policy and practice in New York State and beyond.

These are both challenging and exciting times in the field of education. We are seeing a decrease in enrollment in teacher preparation program and an increased emphasis on the role of clinical approaches and partnerships on teacher education. The current issue addresses these topics, specifically around university-school district partnerships and candidate recruitment. In the first article Driskill addresses the roles of P-12 partners in clinical teacher preparation experiences, specifically, the perceptions of clinical educators in relation to a revised clinical teacher preparation model. She found that clinical educators in many ways lack clarity and feelings of being prepared in their roles and responsibilities of preparing teachers. These issues are addressed in part in the next article, in which Gómez and Wepner address the role of university faculty and administration in the oversight of professional development schools (PDSs) and relationships with clinical educators. However, relationships with mentor teachers is only one aspect of administration of PDSs—other, challenging aspects include the time that goes in to cultivating and managing PDSs, and securing the resources and supports to sustain these partnerships. Clark-Gareca and Fontana provide an example of a university-school district partnership around

serving multilingual learners. Their findings echo those of Driskill and Gómez and Wepner, in that they describe the struggles of building and sustaining relationships, but they address the benefits of this collaboration, specifically the increased capacity of teachers to address the needs of multilingual learners in the district. Finally, Saddler and colleagues discuss the need for teacher preparation programs in New York State and beyond to recruit teacher candidates. They present the findings of a survey of special education and literacy program applicants to help determine ways to better utilize and increase recruitment efforts of the program. Without teacher candidates, the efforts to build and sustain PDSs and university-school district partnerships would be moot, and we are happy to frame this first issue of a new iteration of *Excelsior* as one that explores new collaborative endeavors in preparing teachers.

Thank you for reading, and we welcome your feedback on this issue and your input into future issues. If you have ideas for a special issue, please let us know!

Christy and Julia