



# **CYCLES: Change Yourself—Connecting Learning, Energy, and Standards**

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# Introduction

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- Overview of study
  - Development and piloting of self-assessment instrument based on state standards
  - Candidates develop professional growth plan, monitor progress, select evidences
  - Faculty and peers serve as support coaches



# Fostering Professional Self-Responsibility

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“Things do not change, we change.”

- Henry David Thoreau
- Changing schools requires changing teachers.



# Study Questions

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- What factors support teacher candidates' professional growth?
  - Ongoing self-assessment against standards
  - Professional growth goals and action plan
  - Multiple sources of coaching
  - Support evidences and reflections
- Do teacher candidates' demonstrate professional growth on standards as they progress through the teacher preparation program?



## Becoming a Reflective Practitioner: Review of Literature (Daniels, 2002)

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- Teachers engage in written reflections through journals (Hillocks, 1995)
- Coaching can guide reflection through communication with a peer (Costa & Garmston, 1994)
- Action research can provide a more formalized reflective process (Lomax & Whitehead, 1996)



## Becoming a Reflective Practitioner: Review of Literature

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“Now is the time for teachers to be thinking about their goals. Perhaps you were wise enough to write down a few at the end of last year while your successes and failures were still fresh. If not, try to revisit last year’s concerns to see if they can be formulated into some down-to-earth, observable objectives. I’ve heard it said that we should try to be 10% better each year—certainly an achievable goal. Professional development can help with that goal.”

(Judith Baenen, September 2008. Goal-Oriented Teachers Benefit Everyone. *Middle E-Connections*. NMSA.)



# Supporting Professional Development Review of Literature

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- Need ongoing opportunities to practice reflection (Davies & Willis, 2002; Zidon, 1996)
- Professional development requires long-range efforts related to everyday teaching (Kent, 2004)
- Need teacher commitment to growth (Kent, 2004)
- Culture of professional development supports change/growth (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002)



## What do you think?

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- How do your teacher preparation programs guide candidates toward self-responsibility for their professional development?



## Methodology: Subjects

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- Pilot subjects – B.A. degree seeking and licensure only candidates
- Data collection points:
  - Phase One (initial required course):  
n = 17 (77% return rate)
  - Phase Two (required methods course):  
n = 21 (84% return rate)
  - Phase Three (required internship)



## Methodology: Instrumentation

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- Self-assessment instrument aligned with NC Professional Teaching Standards
  - Part One: 4 point frequency scale
  - Part Two: Professional Development Plan including goals (aligned with standards) and action steps



## Findings: Initial Analysis

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- Indicators with  $\geq 50\%$  subjects responding NA (I have not had the opportunity to do this) in Phases One and Two
- What do you see? Any interesting patterns, emerging questions?



## Findings: Initial Analysis

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- Indicators with  $\geq 50\%$  NA response
  - Phase One has higher NA response on all indicators compared to Phase Two with two indicators being almost equal
    - 4.6 (Help students develop critical thinking and problem solving), and
    - 5.4 (Understand change is constant)



## Indicators by Standard with $\geq 50\%$ NA Responses

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Standard	Phase 1	Phase 2
1 Demonstrate Leadership	4/6	4/6
2 Establish Respectful Environment	4/7	1/7
3 Know Content	4/5	0/5
4 Facilitate Learning	11/11	4/11
5 Reflect on Practice	2/5	1/5



# Ten Lowest Rank-Ordered Indicator Combined Mean Scores

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- Emerging data patterns:
  - Phase One candidates: 7 of 10 lowest indicator means are from Standard 4
  - Phase Two candidates: 5 of 10 lowest indicator means are from Standard 4



# Other Patterns

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- Phase One: Mean differences  $\geq .7$  between B.A. degree seeking and licensure-only
  - Licensure-only higher on 11 indicators
  - B.A. higher on 2 indicators (NC standards alignment; teach cooperation/collaboration)
- Phase Two:
  - Licensure-only higher on 2 indicators (counter stereotypes; know subject)
  - B.A. higher on 1 indicator (foster students' curiosity)



# Initial Analysis of Goals and Action Plans

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- Candidates' action plans were vague
  - Lack measurable action steps
  - Lack connection to the standards in which they assessed themselves as "rarely" or "no opportunity"
- Coaching intervention:
  - Instructors/researchers presented models
  - Peer coaching in groups to discuss and rewrite as necessary



## Findings: Goals & Action Plan (Example Before Coaching)

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- **Goal One** (Addresses Standards III and IV): Develop an understanding beyond the content to allow my students to succeed.
- **Goal Two** (Addresses Standards II and V): Provide an environment in which my students can actively learn.
- **Goal Three** (Addresses Standards I and III): Take a proactive stance when concerning my class's needs.



## Findings: Goals & Action Plan (Example Before Coaching)

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### Action Plan (Goal Three)

1. Work with other team members to learn what works best for them and what hasn't worked well.
2. Always strive to improve the teaching profession by continually learning the content, working with the community, and realizing change is positive.
3. Planning instruction so my students can take what they learned outside of the classroom walls.
4. In relation to step three, do this by teaching real life examples and relating content to different areas.



## Findings: Goals & Action Plan (Example After Coaching)

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- Goal (Addresses Standard I): Gain knowledge on young adolescents and the middle school community.



## Findings: Goals & Action Plan (Example After Coaching)

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### Action Plan

- Do observation hours in the middle school field and take notes in my journal concerning student's behavior and reaction on the teacher's lesson plan.
- Attend local school board meetings in the Wilmington area to comprehend issues taking place currently.
- Take a stance (depending on issues taking place) and volunteer where help is needed to make a positive change in the educational field.



# Findings: Goals and Action Plan

## Example 2

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- Goal 2: Incorporate more critical thinking and problem solving activities into my instruction (addresses Standards 3, 4, 5)
  - Action Plan:
    - I will strive to make meaningful and relevant connections between content and current events **by teaching conceptually. Students will reflect on these connections in writing weekly.**
    - I will research projects and simulations to incorporate into weekly lessons. **These findings will be documented in a resource binder.**



## Findings: Goals and Action Plan Example 2 (continued)

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### ○ Action Plan:

- I will plan for more peer teaching and collaborative activities, **which will be documented in my lesson plans.**
- I will encourage my colleagues to plan a thematic unit with me.
- **I will begin each class period with a critical thinking bell ringer activity.**



## Next Steps

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- Analysis of data for statistical differences
- Examine candidates' longitudinal professional development from program entry into first years of teaching
- Focus groups to probe into other possible patterns



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