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Adding Value to Public Schools: A Summary and Analysis of Konold et al.'s Article from a

Policy Perspective

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### Summary

Konold et al. (2008) conducted a study that examined the differences in teacher effectiveness between teachers who had received instruction in classroom pedagogical practices and teachers who had not. Preservice teachers enter preparation programs with formative experiences that influence their behavior. Formative experiences influence teaching processes for both teachers who possess only content knowledge and teachers who receive education in formal teaching processes. The effectiveness of these teaching processes can be measured in terms of pupil self-efficacy and task difficulty. Successful completion of tasks builds pupil self-efficacy and the perception of task difficulty is based on instructional practices. The final products of student achievement, including non-standardized instruments such as curriculum base assessments used in a specific classroom environment, determine the overall effectiveness of the teacher. The study consisted of 90 college students with approximately half of them enrolled in a teacher education program and the other half enrolled in different disciplines. These students taught four lessons to 680 middle school pupils broken into groups of 3-13 pupils on data analysis. The students were rated on pre- and posttest results, a pupil self-report scale, and the Teacher Performance Record. The data analysis of these three instruments indicated that teachers with education in classroom procedures demonstrated more positive teaching behaviors which had a statistically significant influence on pupil achievement in the content area being taught. Effective teaching practices reduced pupil perception of lesson difficulty which increased pupil achievement. While these results may not be generalized to the entire field, they do provide evidence that teachers who have received formal teacher education are able to plan lessons and interact with pupils more effectively than those who possess strong content knowledge only draw on formative experiences for teaching processes (Konold, Jablonski, Nottingham, Kessler, Byrd, Imig, Berry, & McNergney, 2008).

**Comment [pme1]:** Very nice summary of a complex study.

### Analysis

The evidence in this study supports the belief that teachers with education in classroom pedagogy are more effective than teachers who only possess content knowledge. This evidence has policy implications at the school, district, state, and federal levels.

At the school level, policies would need to be developed to ensure that professional development courses included content on classroom pedagogy. Including teaching process as part of professional development curriculum ensures that all of the teachers are exposed to the most current research on effective teaching practices. Principals may need to identify teachers who participated in alternative pathways to licensure that included minimal or no education in classroom processes. Principals would be responsible for making sure these teachers received the appropriate instruction in pedagogy to help make them as effective as their peers who went through teacher education programs. Mentoring programs may need to be established to help teachers who are less skilled in classroom procedures be more effective educators. Finally, schools may wish to offer programs in classroom pedagogy over the summer or before school starts to teachers who are strong in content areas but have not received any formal teacher education.

Comment [pme2]: Or should ensure...

At the district level, policies may be developed to focus on attracting teachers who have completed formal teacher education programs. These policies would include finding ways to incentivize teachers who complete teacher education programs. Creating an incentive would encourage teachers who are strong in content areas to take additional coursework in pedagogy. School districts may also want to assist schools in developing their professional development programs to ensure that it reflects current research on effective teaching practices. Districts

Comment [pme3]: I believe these authors would support teacher education programs that include some of the supports they offered to their treatment group teachers.

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would also benefit from developing policies that helped retain teachers who had education in teaching processes. Retention policies could provide fiscal benefits or preferential choice in which school they will teach. However, the latter policy could contribute to an inequitable distribution of teachers across the district. Finally, districts may wish to partner with university teacher preparation programs to provide classroom experiences for students while also having the potential benefit of having faculty provide education on teaching processes. Creating a partnership with a university may help with recruiting teachers as they graduate from teacher education programs.

At the state level, policies may be developed that create rigid standards for licensure. While alternative pathways to licensure may continue to exist, these pathways would include education in classroom processes as part of the process. An alternative policy would be to only allow graduates on approved teacher preparation programs to obtain a teaching license. State policy makers would have to take into account the demand for teachers and vacant positions as they are developing these policies. Otherwise, the policy makers may create a shortage of teachers by making the licensure standards too rigid for applicants who may wish to enter the teaching profession. Licensure policies may encourage district partnership with university based teacher preparation programs. Additional funds may need to be allocated to school districts to attract candidates who have completed formal teacher education programs.

At the federal level, policy makers may need to redefine the concept of highly qualified teacher. While alternative pathways to licensure may still exist it would be paramount to ensure that alternative pathways include background in teaching processes before the teacher enters the classroom. Currently, some states allow teachers to obtain licensure through alternative pathways to begin teaching as they are starting their teacher education program. Several

**Comment [pme4]:** Yes, market forces are very powerful.

**Comment [pme5]:** Institutional program approval would likely be more effective to change IHE policy and encourage partnerships. Mason has to report annually all of our partnerships with K-12 schools in the Commonwealth.

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semesters may pass before these teachers are able to receive instruction in teaching practices. Therefore, federal policy makers may develop policies that require states to include instruction in effective teaching practices before teachers are able to enter the classroom. The alternative policy may be to develop a set of federal teacher licensure standards that includes education in teaching processes before the teacher is able to begin work in the classroom. Federal licensure standards would streamline the interpretation of highly qualified teacher and create a universal licensure standard for the entire country that would ensure effective teaching practices. Federal licensure standards may also attempt to adopt the alternative policy of only allowing graduates of approved teacher preparation programs to obtain a teaching **license**.

**Comment [pme6]:** Dreams of the NGA aside, it will be difficult for state governments to agree on the details of licensure standards.

The evidence presented in the study by Konold et al. (2008) indicates support for the belief that teachers who receive education in classroom pedagogy will be more effective in the value of pupil learning. However, the value of pupil learning based on four lessons in one content area may not be generalized to the entire **field**. While teachers may benefit from education in teaching practices that **goes extend** beyond the knowledge of their content area, developing policies that create rigid standards requiring formal teacher education may reduce the number of teachers entering into an already shallow pool. Further research is necessary to be able to generalize the findings of Konold et al. (2008) to the entire field in a manner that may drive significant policy change. For the present, a possible solution would be that teachers who have not received instruction in teaching practices can benefit from either university based or professional development coursework in effective teaching practices.

**Comment [pme7]:** And possibly cannot be generalized to all schools and students. The authors are UVA faculty and likely all of the students in the study were from UVA. That suggests the study may have taken place in the Charlottesville area...not necessarily representative of the rest of the United States.

Nice job. 25 points

References

Konold, T, Jablonski, B., Nottingham, A., Kessler, L., Byrd, S., Imig, S., Berry, R., &

McNergney, R, (2008). Adding Value to Public Schools: Investigating Teacher

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