

NEW TEACHER TRAINING UNIVERSITY CONCEPT

COST FREE ADVANCED TEACHER TRAINING IN RETURN FOR YEARS OF
SERVICE IN OUR NATION'S NEEDIEST CLASSROOMS
- "THE WEST POINT OF THE EDUCATION WORLD"

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE PROBLEM:

Our nation lacks sufficient numbers of high quality teachers to staff the classrooms of our public schools. The 1,200 Schools of Education are said to be doing a poor job of training new teachers, with low standards, weak curricula and a disconnectedness from the needs of today's classrooms among the problems (See *Educating School Teachers*, 2006, Arthur Levine, former President Teachers College, Columbia University). Many alternative training and certification programs have emerged, some with good success. Given the sheer volume of teachers needed (>250,000 new teachers per year), no one solution will suffice. No one is specifically focused on providing high value, advanced degree education at scale to identified high achieving public school classroom teachers who have demonstrated success in improving student achievement in our nation's neediest public schools.

AN ANSWER:

One approach to attracting the very best talent to our nation's neediest, public school classrooms is to build a program and institution of the highest quality with the best practices, a focused curriculum, talented people and intentional culture and offer it very selectively to high performing, public classroom teachers. Effectively create a new Teacher Training University (Program) modeled after the U.S. Service Academies: "cost-free" education in return for years of service to the profession (Advanced Teacher Training in return for years teaching in our nation's neediest classrooms).

THE BENEFITS OF SUCH AN INSTITUTION INCLUDE:

- ✓ The ability to start with a "green field" allows for an entirely new curriculum crafted from the ground up, unfettered by the potential biases of the existing modes of advanced teacher training. (See the Olin College of Engineering for a recent, successful case study, www.olin.edu).
- ✓ As a highly selective institution, only the best will enter and its graduates will seed the neediest classrooms and schools of our nation with their talents, their newly acquired skills and their improved methods. The K - 12 students in their charge will achieve more, the schools and districts which employ graduates will gain advantages and the overall perception of public school classroom teachers will rise along with the reputation of this new university/program.
- ✓ Teachers learn more readily "horizontally" from their peers than "vertically" from their superiors, further reinforcing the power of populating our nation's schools with graduates of this new university/program to serve as colleague/mentors. (See Dan C. Lortie research, *Schoolteacher*, U. of Chicago Press, 1975)
- ✓ As the graduates deliver improved student achievement in the nation's classrooms, other schools and programs of teacher education will take note and have the opportunity to adopt these same improved methods of teacher training at their schools. (See the evolution of other professional schools [schools of law, schools of business] and the impact Olin College of Engineering is having on engineering curricula worldwide today).
- ✓ Heightened demand for graduates of this new university/program will highlight the novel work of the institution creating a powerful new voice in teacher training and reinforcing the strength of the reputation of the new university/program (see the brand effects of elite colleges, universities and the strength of the Teach for America brand/reputation).
- ✓ With the success of this new alternative to advanced teacher training, the perceived social status of high performing classroom teachers will rise in the eyes of the public. This cultural effect will be an important byproduct of the efforts of the new institution (likening it to the cohort effect of other elite professional schools such as West Point, Yale Law School, Harvard Business School).

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CURRENT VISION:

An Advanced Teacher Training Program, located in an urban center(s), close to K – 12 public school classrooms, graduating 1,000 – 1,500 public school classroom teachers per year.

Initial funding for the start-up phase, working capital and building requirements provided primarily through combination of philanthropic and public sources. Long term financing provided through combination of local, state and federal education funding and alternative revenue sources derived from relationships with the nation's school districts who employ graduates of the new university/program.

NEXT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT [LAUNCHED OCTOBER, 2009]

Complete a six – nine month Early Planning Project to address five crucial aspects of the Plan (items 1 – 4 were generously identified by Norman Atkins CEO UKA Teacher U., Founder Uncommon Schools):

1. Develop **viable economic models** for new university/program including funding sources, start up, construction and operating cost estimates, revenue sources, balance between public and private funding, role of government and philanthropic sources, short and long term financial outlook.
2. **Market Positioning** options for new university/program. Where will the Teacher Training University (TTU) fit within the landscape of traditional and alternative teacher training programs? How might it occupy the influential and central positioning necessary to effect the levels of change aspired to, near term and long term? Investigate plausibility of teaming with brand name institutions of higher education or building an entirely new institution or some other hybrid positioning model.
3. Begin process of building **optimal curriculum** from ground up. Develop first pass at key curricular elements and program structure. Highlight the best of what is available today. What new programmatic elements have the most promise? What organizational structure and program duration makes the most sense? Who are the best practitioners in the field of advanced classroom teacher training? What role will technology play?
4. Map out the **regulatory pathways** needed to get the program(s) of the new university accredited and the graduates of the program(s) licensed and certified to teach in the various public school districts in which they will be placed.
5. Identification of new approach to **recruiting and selecting best potential classroom teachers**. Report on results of survey work to be conducted with “good” teachers; describe methods of interviewing, testing, screening employed in other school and work settings to identify top candidates; include work on identifying candidates and candidate attributes with a propensity to stay in the classroom for an entire career.

DELIVERABLES WILL INCLUDE REPORTS RELATING TO:

1. Viable economic models for new university/program
2. Market Positioning Map and alternatives for final positioning of new university/program
3. First pass at key curricular elements and program structure
4. Map of regulatory pathways, costs and timetable
5. Suggested elements of new approach to recruiting and selecting best potential classroom teachers.

Key Industry Contacts

Author Note: I am grateful to each of the following persons who have given time, critiqued, encouraged, challenged and/or added to the ideas behind building a new Teacher Training University/Program (TTU).

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- Mr. Seth Andrew, Founder Head, Democracy Prep, NYC, Cumberland RI
- Mr. Norman Atkins, Founder Chairman UKA Teacher U, Uncommon Schools, New York, NY
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- Cpt. Susan Bibeau, Director Admissions, US Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT
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- Mr. Angus Davis, Regent, State Board of Education, Founder Best for Kids Foundation, Providence, RI
- Col. Michael Endres, Deputy Director Admissions, U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY
- Mr. Michael Goldstein, Founder CEO, Match Charter Public HS, Boston, MA
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Tony Klemmer - 2009

Tony Klemmer received his Ph.D. in Humanities from Salve Regina University. His doctoral work focuses on Moral Coherence in the Modern World. He graduated from the Harvard Business School and has a BS in Economics from the Wharton School of the U. of Penn. Tony taught Production and Operations Management in the MBA program at Babson College, while helping develop entrepreneurship course materials there. He is a cum laude graduate of Portsmouth Abbey School, Portsmouth, RI.

Tony is the Founder and President of The Center for Better Schools currently focused on developing new methods of advanced teacher training for high performing K - 12 classroom teachers. He served as the Assistant Headmaster of Portsmouth Abbey School. Tony has participated in the start up and board level activities of a number of social enterprises. He has a long history in entrepreneurial settings, having helped found several high tech companies in the medical device, advanced materials and industrial automation industries. He has international experience as well, developing distribution networks in Europe and running Asian sales offices and serving as the Chief Marketing Officer of a \$1.5 Billion public, multi-national technology company. Tony managed a successful marketing, strategic planning and investment consultancy and led the healthcare and life science practice at a Boston-based boutique investment bank.