RAISING THE QUALITY OF TEACHER PREPARATION:

It's a Window of Opportunity

Deborah Loewenberg Ball

AASCU Academic Affairs Winter Meeting

February 7, 2015 • New Orleans, Louisiana



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
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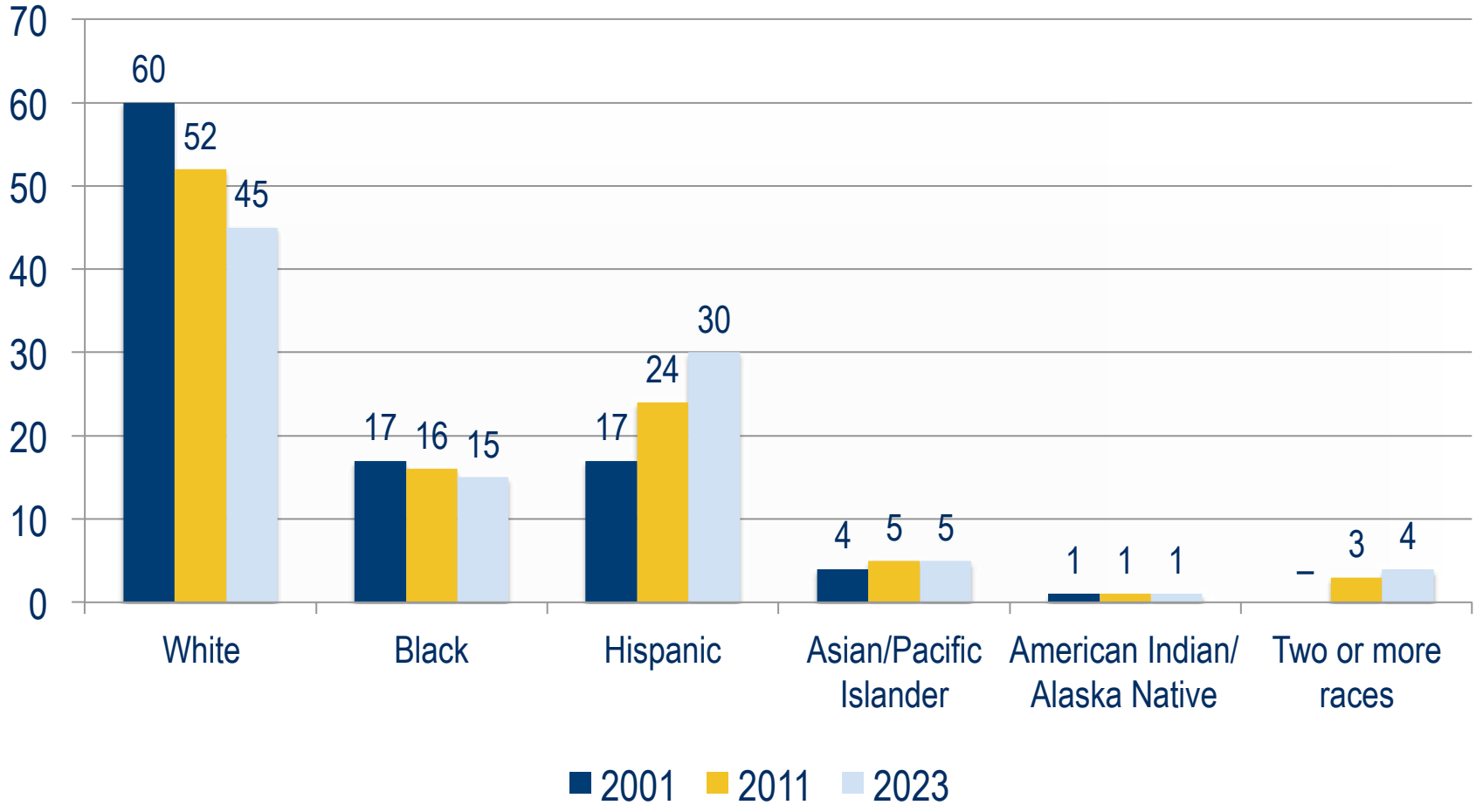
K-12 TEACHING AS THE #1 POLICY IMPERATIVE OF OUR TIME

- 74,000,000 children in U.S.
- Schooling: Our society's commitment to individuals' lives and to the future of our society
- Educational opportunity and quality are inequitably distributed and significantly associated with income and race
- OECD data are revealing
  - The U.S. spends more per pupil than any other OECD country
  - U.S. students score below the median of the OECD countries
  - The U.S. is fourth from the bottom in upward social mobility
- Evidence of the power of skillful teaching
- Overwhelming lack of public respect for the work of teaching

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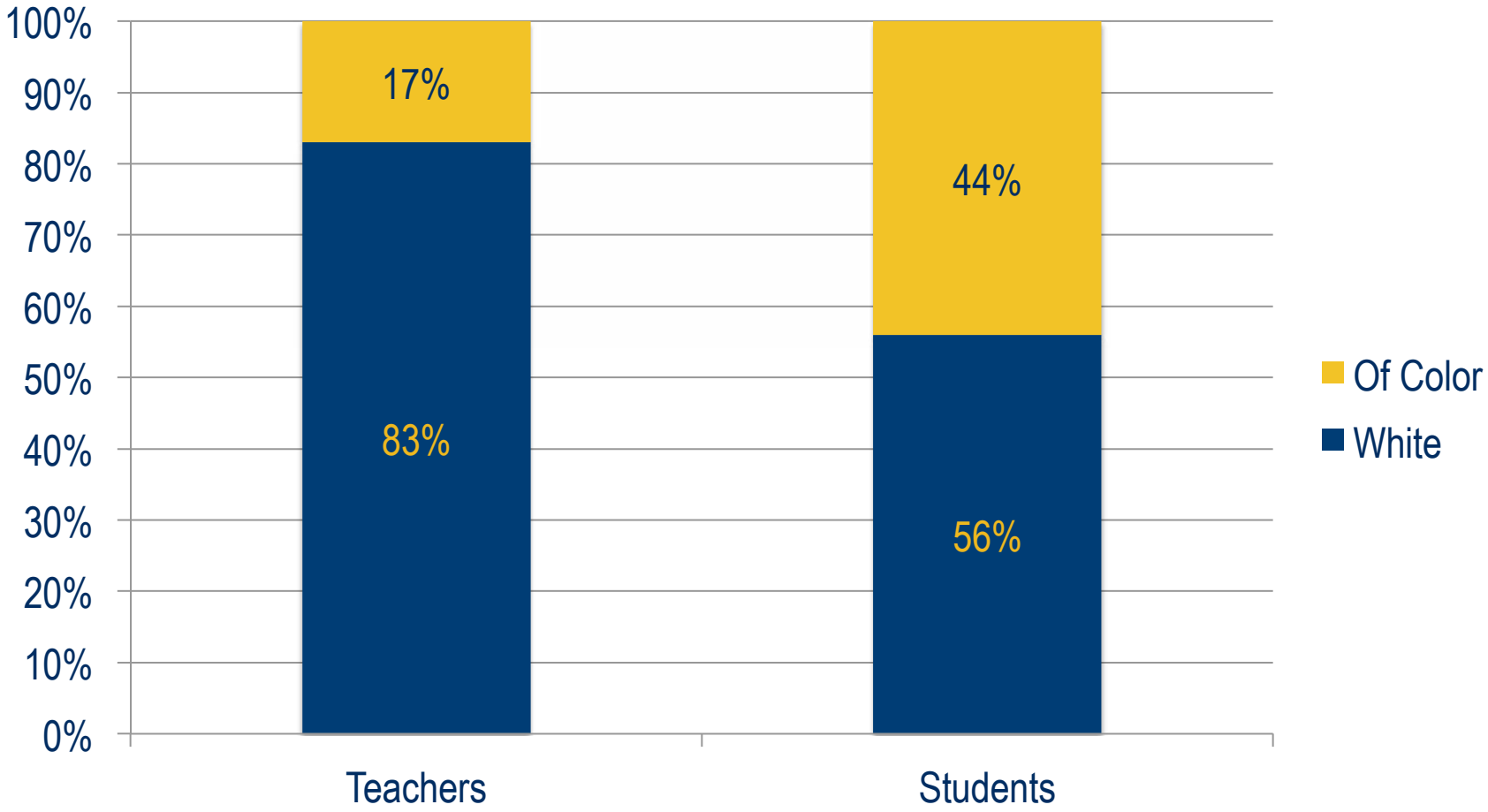
CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDE IN THE U.S.: K-12 TEACHERS AND STUDENTS



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WHY IS THIS GAP SUCH A CRITICAL PROBLEM?

- The profession responsible for developing the primary human capital of our society should reflect our population
- Importance of children interacting with adults in school with whom they can identify
- The knowledge base of the profession requires the expertise and experience of people who are diverse with respect to race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, language, gender
- Other reasons?

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ENTRY-LEVEL TEACHING AS A CRITICAL FOCUS

1. More U.S. schoolchildren have a teacher with fewer than five years of experience than a teacher with any other number of years of experience.
2. Most beginning teachers say they are underprepared for teaching, and on average they are less effective.
3. Distribution of beginning teaching is concentrated disproportionately in low-income and high-minority schools.

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AN INDUSTRY OF MEDIOCRITY?

"How America prepares its teachers has been a subject of dismay for many years. . . .There are 3.3 million public school teachers in America, and they probably can't all be trained by start-ups. Raising up the standards of our university programs should be an urgent priority. But one reason for the widespread mediocrity is that universities have had a cozy, lucrative monopoly. It's about time the leaders of our education schools *did* feel threatened."

Bill Keller, *New York Times*, October 20, 2013
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/21/opinion/keller-an-industry-of-mediocrity.html

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OBJECT OF CHANGE, OR ITS LEADER?

Keller: “The heartening news is that the universities that for so long have resisted pleas to raise their standards are now beginning to have change pushed on them from the outside.”

Professionalizing teaching and teacher preparation is our responsibility, not something others can—or should—do.

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A SPECIAL MOMENT FOR CHANGE

OPPORTUNITIES

1. "Teacher quality" of more interest than ever
2. Higher education teacher education dominates the market
3. Teacher shortages

CHALLENGES

1. Lack of belief in and concern about teacher preparation
2. Dominance of individualism in education and ed reform

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A LEGACY OF BENIGN NEGLECT

- High demand led to an occupation that was easy to enter, and high turnover
- A broadly shared conviction that teaching cannot be taught, and depends on either
  - Talent (the "natural born" teacher), or
  - "Hard knocks" figuring out what works through experience
- The result? A "hit or miss" approach to supplying skillful teaching

It's time to put a stop to this.

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PREDOMINANT APPROACHES TO "QUALITY TEACHING"

- Recruitment, raise selectivity
- Residency and induction programs
- Teacher evaluation (concerns for ineffective teaching)
- Small, local innovations

WHAT IS NOTABLY MISSING?

- A broad strategy for preparing responsible beginners

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NO PROFESSIONAL SYSTEM FOR TEACHER PREPARATION OR CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT

- Thousands of programs
- No common specific curriculum for preparation for initial teaching
- A reliance on conventional academic credentials as a proxy for content knowledge for teaching
- No common standard of performance for entry to independent practice with (on) young people

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WHAT SHOULD INITIAL TRAINING AND LICENSURE DO?

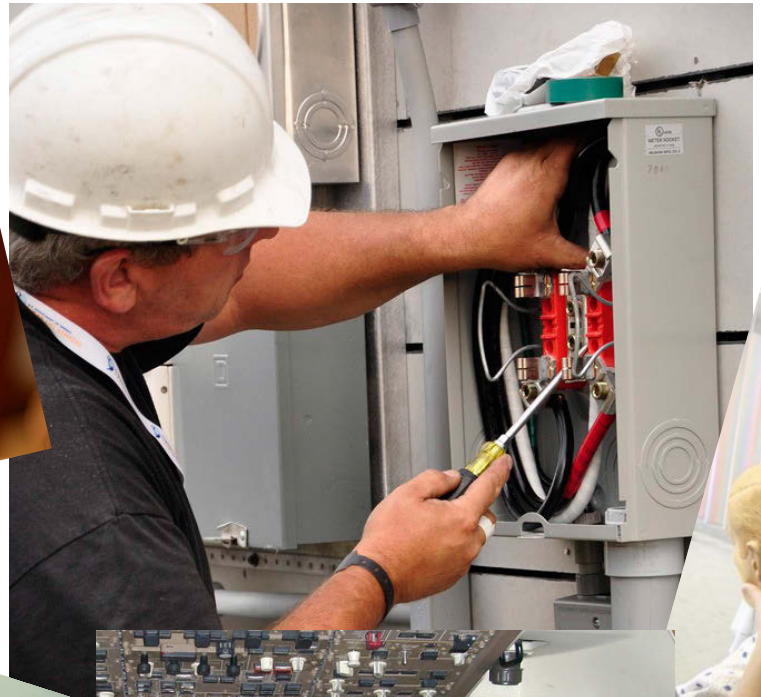
1. Take as the central imperative the **rights of children**
2. Focus on preparing entry-level teachers who are ready to care for the **academic, social, emotional, and physical safety** of children, and to conform to standards of **ethical practice**
3. Provide assurance to parents and to the public that the beginning professional has met the standards necessary to be given **initial responsibility for students' learning**

In other words, ensure that the beginning teacher meets the standard of "safe to practice"

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FEATURES OF STRONG TRAINING FOR RESPONSIBLE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

1. **Clear specification of knowledge, skills, capabilities, and qualities of performance** necessary for independent practice
2. **Detailed developmental clinical training**, progressing from observing to simulations to apprenticeship to supervised independent practice
3. **Performance assessment of individual competence** before allowing independent practice

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MOVING FORWARD TO A PROFESSIONAL SYSTEM OF TEACHER PREPARATION

1. *Build on basic agreements about domains of teaching and evidence about content knowledge for teaching:* Identify **key practices of teaching** and **high-leverage content** essential for responsible beginning practice
2. *Build on commitment to clinical preparation:* Develop **specific approaches to training** beginners to carry out those practices, along a **continuum of contexts** for learning and practicing practice
3. *Build on commitment to performance assessment:* Develop **performance assessments of specific practices and content** and make them required for entry to the classroom

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HIGH-LEVERAGE PRACTICES

High-leverage practices (HLPs) are instructional tasks and activities that powerfully promote learning and are fundamental to skillful teaching.

Based on work done at the University of Michigan School of Education in the redesign of our teacher education program, and at TeachingWorks, an organization housed at U-M whose mission is to improve the quality of teaching and learning by transforming teachers' education.

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EXAMPLES OF HIGH-LEVERAGE PRACTICES

- Explaining ideas or skills (including content, practices, and strategies) using modeling, representations, examples
- Leading a group discussion
- Eliciting and interpreting individual students' thinking
- Diagnosing particular common patterns of student thinking and development
- Establishing and maintaining a productive learning environment by implementing organizational routines and strategies and giving directions
- Learning about students' cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources
- Knowing and managing one's cultural and personal resources and practices with sensitivity to context
- Selecting and modifying tasks and texts for a specific learning goal
- Checking student understanding during lessons
- Providing oral and written feedback to students
- Communicating about a student with a parent or guardian

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CONTENT KNOWLEDGE **FOR TEACHING*

- Knowing the content that the students are supposed to learn
- Knowing ways to unpack, represent, and make that content learnable
- Knowing how students think about the specific content
- Knowing ways to teach the specific content

(Ball, Thames, and Phelps, 2008, *JTE*)

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“KNOWING” MATHEMATICS

Calculate:

$$\frac{5}{6} \div \frac{1}{3}$$

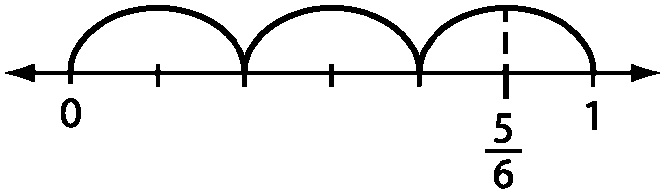
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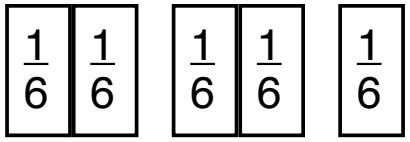
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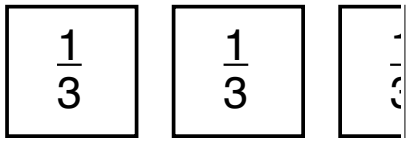
ANALYZING—AND "TALKING"—REPRESENTATIONS

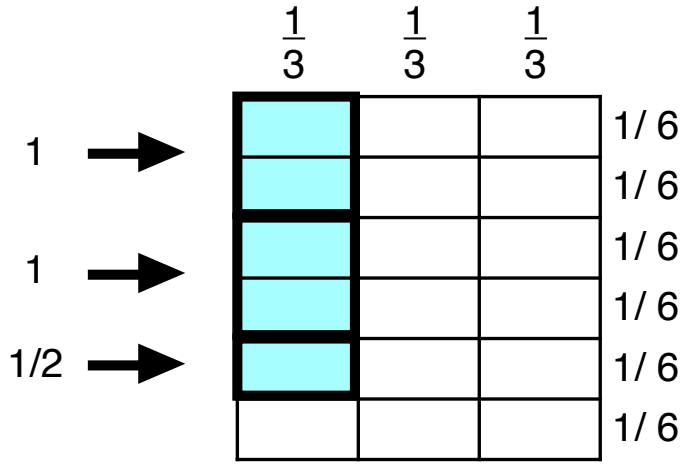
Which of these can be used to represent $\frac{5}{6} \div \frac{1}{3}$?

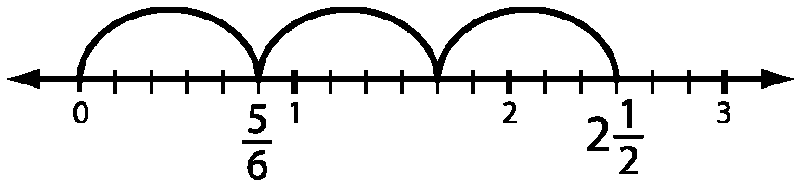
Explain with reference to all parts of the expression.











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PRACTICING DEFIBRILLATION



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PRACTICING A GUIDED READING LESSON



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REFINE ENTRY STANDARDS BASED ON PROFESSIONAL CONSIDERATIONS, AND ON PROFESSIONAL *PRACTICE*

CONSIDER THE RESOURCES CRUCIAL FOR LEARNING TO TEACH

1. What are the resources, experiences, and skills that are most likely to be crucial in success in learning to teach?
2. How could evidence of these be obtained or assessed?

SPECIFY THE THRESHOLD FOR ENTRY TO THE CLASSROOM

1. What are the essential skills, knowledge, and qualities for responsible first-year practice?
2. How could evidence of these be obtained or assessed?

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WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL SYSTEM FOR ENTRY TO TEACHING?

1. A common standard for the capabilities required, and common tools for determining readiness for practice
2. Resources for the teaching of teaching, including specific pedagogies, video libraries, and instructional materials and methods for teaching particular high-leverage practices and content knowledge for teaching
3. The development of teacher educators

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IT WON'T BE EASY.

1. The scale of the enterprise is vast and the U.S. has weak educational infrastructure.
2. It will take a movement to build a rigorous system of professional training for the responsibility of teaching our nation's youth, in order to achieve fairness in common access to skilled teaching.
3. It focuses on **teaching**, not **teachers.** It focuses on building capacity, not finding talent and firing.
4. It is not the "American way"—it is detailed (even prescriptive), not individually discretionary, common.

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