Unpacking the Role of the Teacher Performance Assessment in Teacher Preparation Programs

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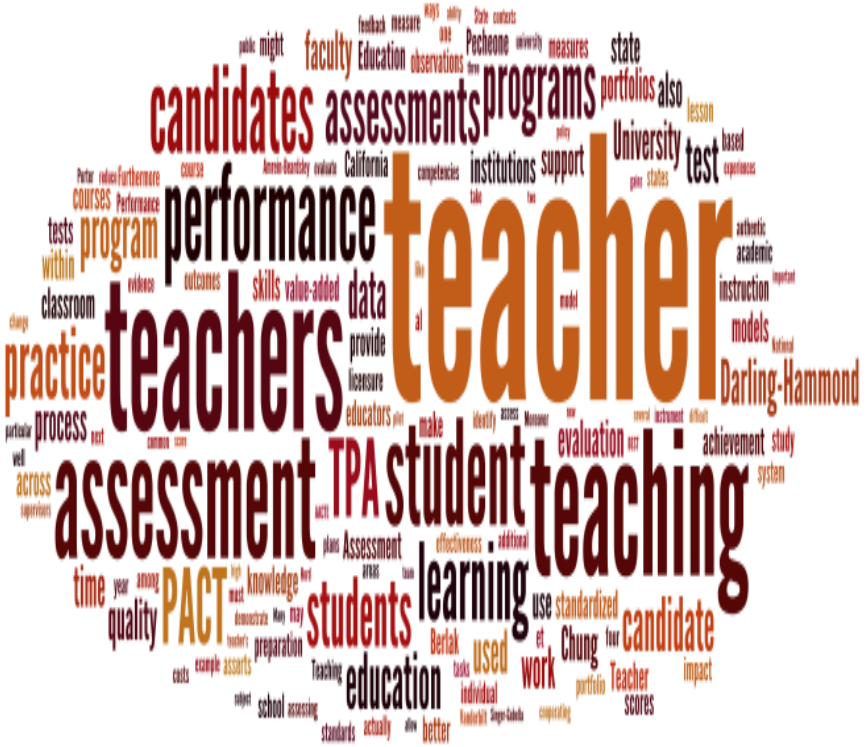


Origin of the Question

"I am urging every teacher education program today to make better outcomes for students the overarching mission that propels all their efforts."

US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, 2009

"Meeting the expectation that all students will learn to high standards will require a transformation in the ways in which our education system attracts, prepares, supports, and develops expert teachers who can teach in more powerful ways – a transformation that depends in part on the ways in which these abilities are understood and assessed."

Linda Darling-Hammond, 2010

Main Research Question

What is the role of the Teacher Performance Assessment in teacher education programs?

Sub Questions

- How did each program take up the TPA?
- How, if at all, did teacher educators use data generated from the TPA to inform revisions of program content, pedagogy and supervisory practices?

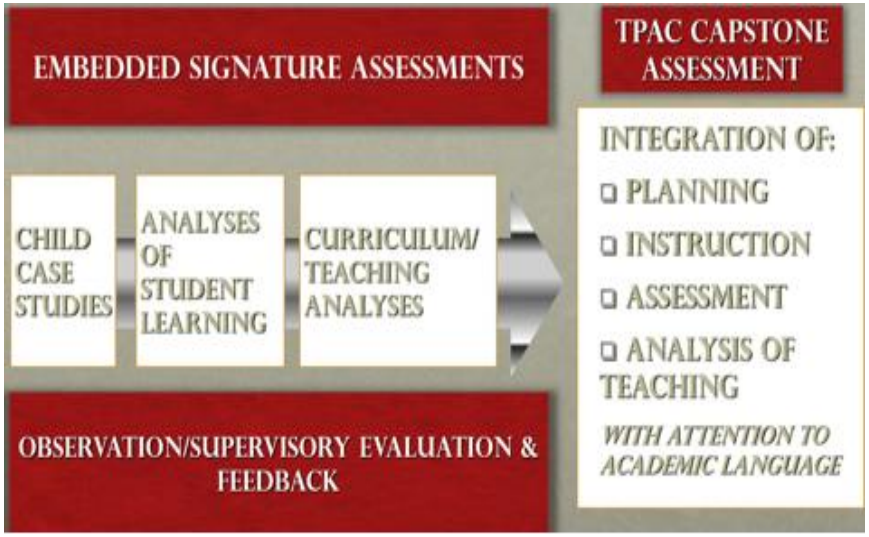
Review of the Literature

- A plethora of teacher assessments
  - Standardized tests, e.g. Praxis I
  - Value-added, e.g. EVAAS
  - Performance-based, e.g. PACT, BEST, NBPTS

- Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) – a proposed national solution

- Debates about teacher performance
  - Definition of teacher quality uncertain
  - Teaching is complex; thus assessment is complex
  - Overlooks role of student learning

TPA: A Proposed National Solution

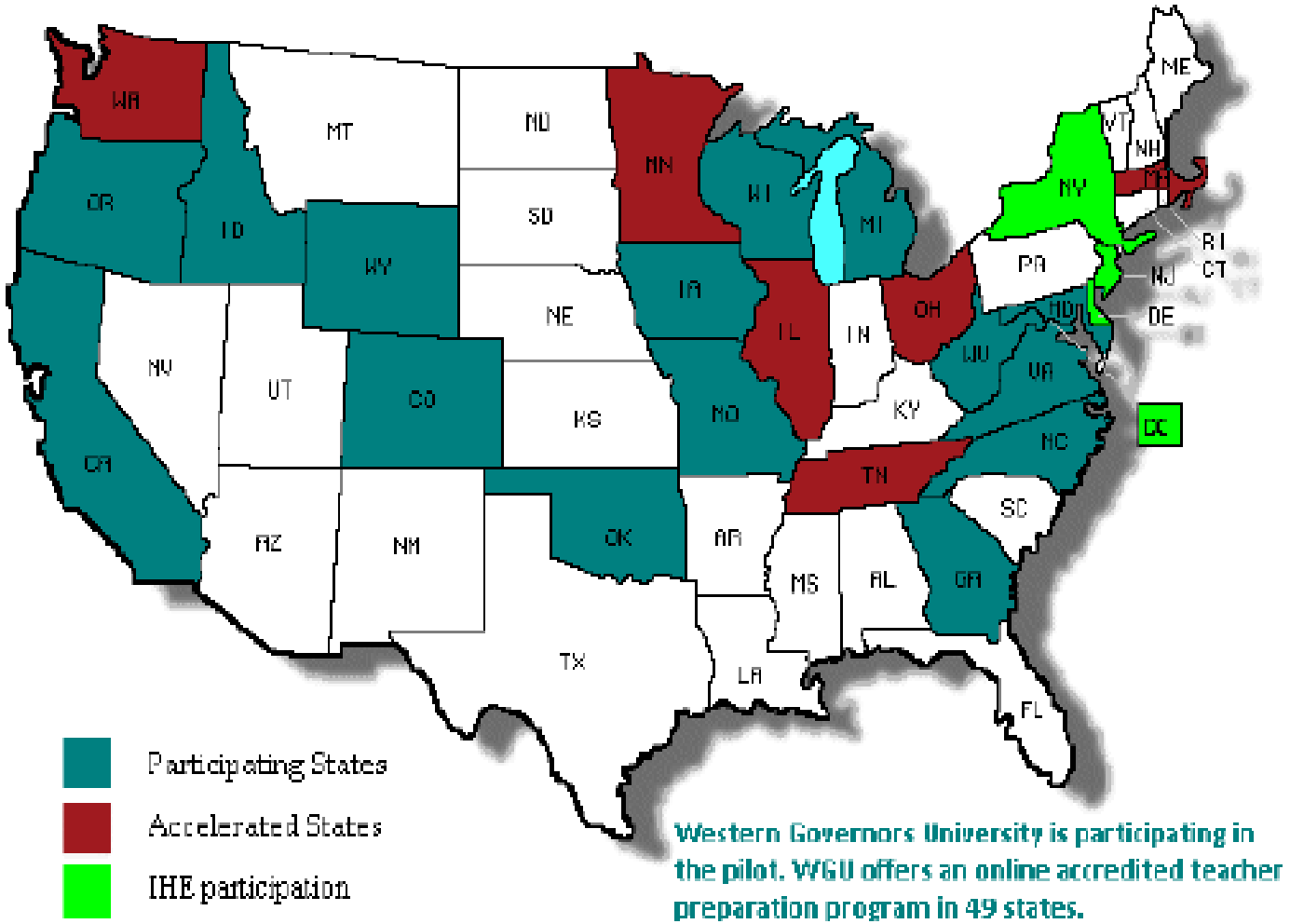


Teacher Performance Assessment Consortium (TPAC):

- AACTE
- CCSSO
- Stanford University

Developed, piloted, and field tested the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) in 25 states.

States Involved in National Assessment



Western Governors University is participating in the pilot. WGU offers an online accredited teacher preparation program in 49 states.

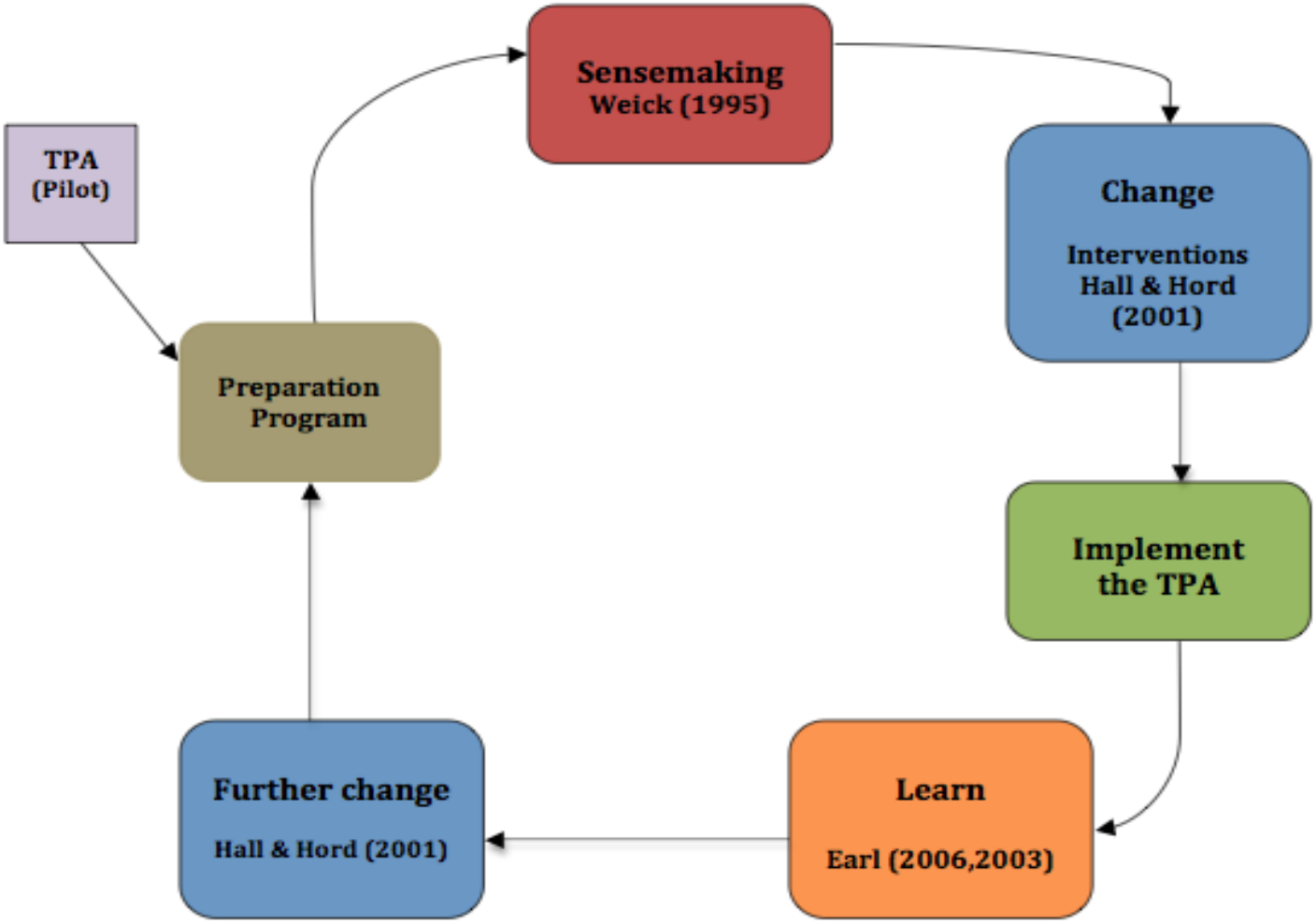
TPA Evaluation Standards

STANDARD	TASK
S1: Planning, focused, sequenced instruction	Planning
S2: Using knowledge of students to inform instruction	
S3: Planning assessments	
S4: Engaging students in learning	Instruction
S5: Deepening student learning during instruction	
S6: Analyzing student work	Assessment
S7: Using assessment to inform instruction	
S8: Using feedback to guide further learning	
S9: Monitoring student progress & adjusting instruction	Reflection
S10: Understanding lang. demands & resources	Academic Language
S11: Developing students' academic language	

What do the Scores Mean?

- Level 1: The candidate has *some skill*; needs more practice to become a teacher of record.
- Level 2: The candidate has attained an *acceptable level of performance* sufficient for beginning teaching.
- Level 3: The candidate has a *solid foundation* of knowledge and skills.
- Level 4: The candidate demonstrated an *advanced level of proficiency*.

Theoretical Underpinnings



Limitations of the Study

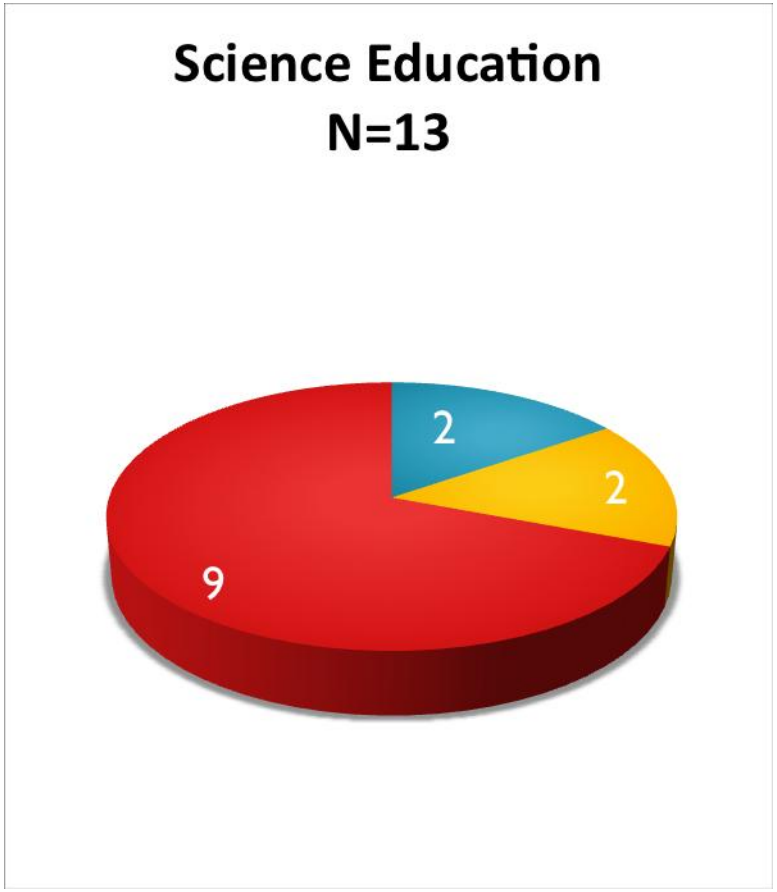
- Structure of the pilot- cooperating teachers missing.
- Ethical considerations (IRB)-certain data not collected.
- Voluntary participation – key people missing.
- Small sample size- limited generalizability

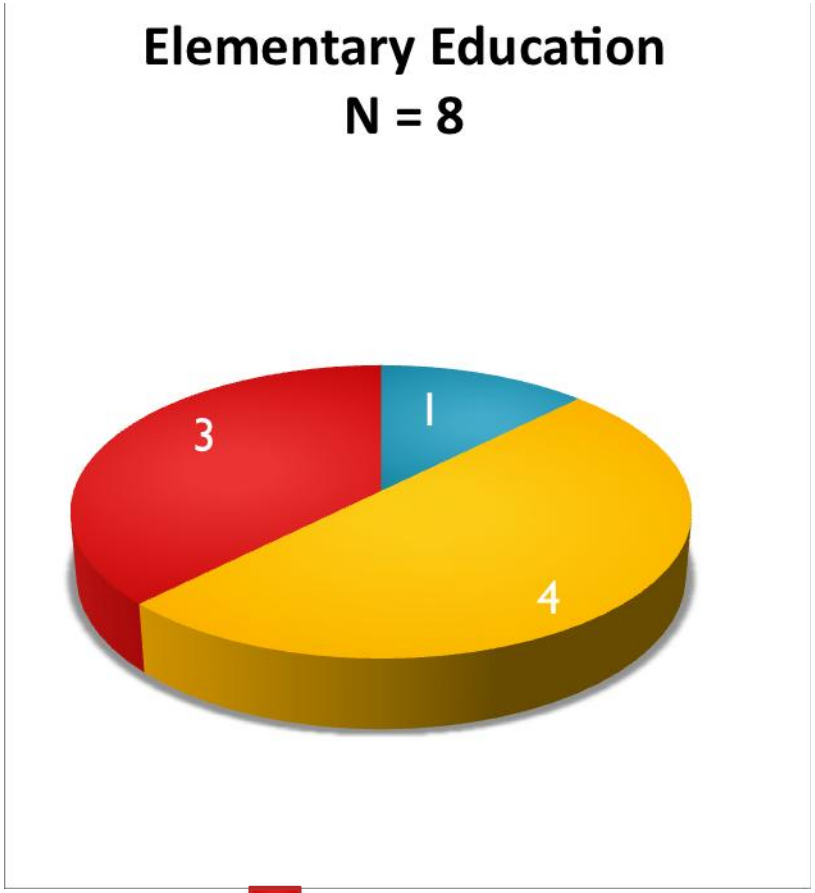
Research Context

- The University of Wisconsin-Madison- a large, research university in the Midwest.
- Two programs participated in the pilot:
  - Science Education – TPA required
  - Elementary Education – voluntary
- All teacher candidates in their final student teaching semester.
- Political protests against State Governor's proposed state budget cuts & removal of public sector employee rights.

Research Participants by Program

Associate Dean- Coordinator





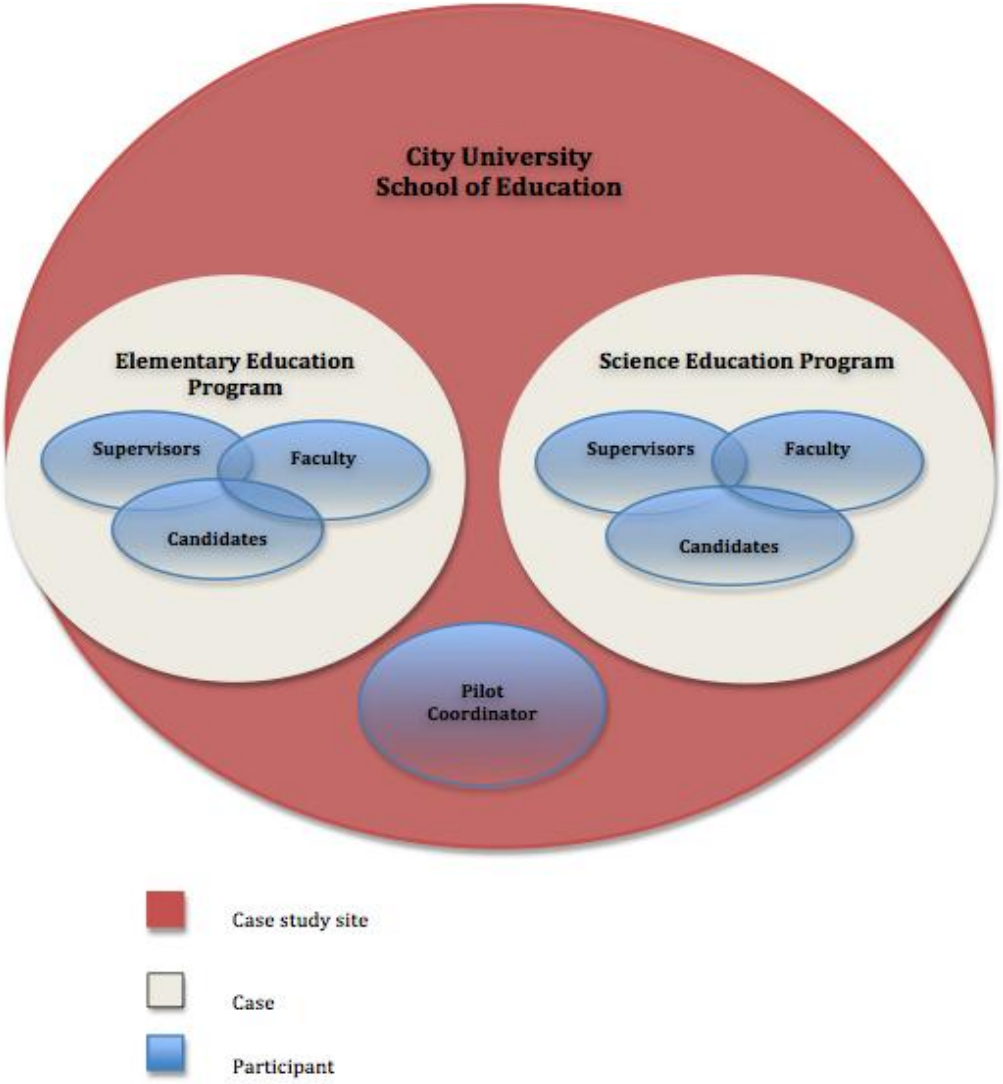
Faculty Supervisors Teacher Candidates

Teacher Educators

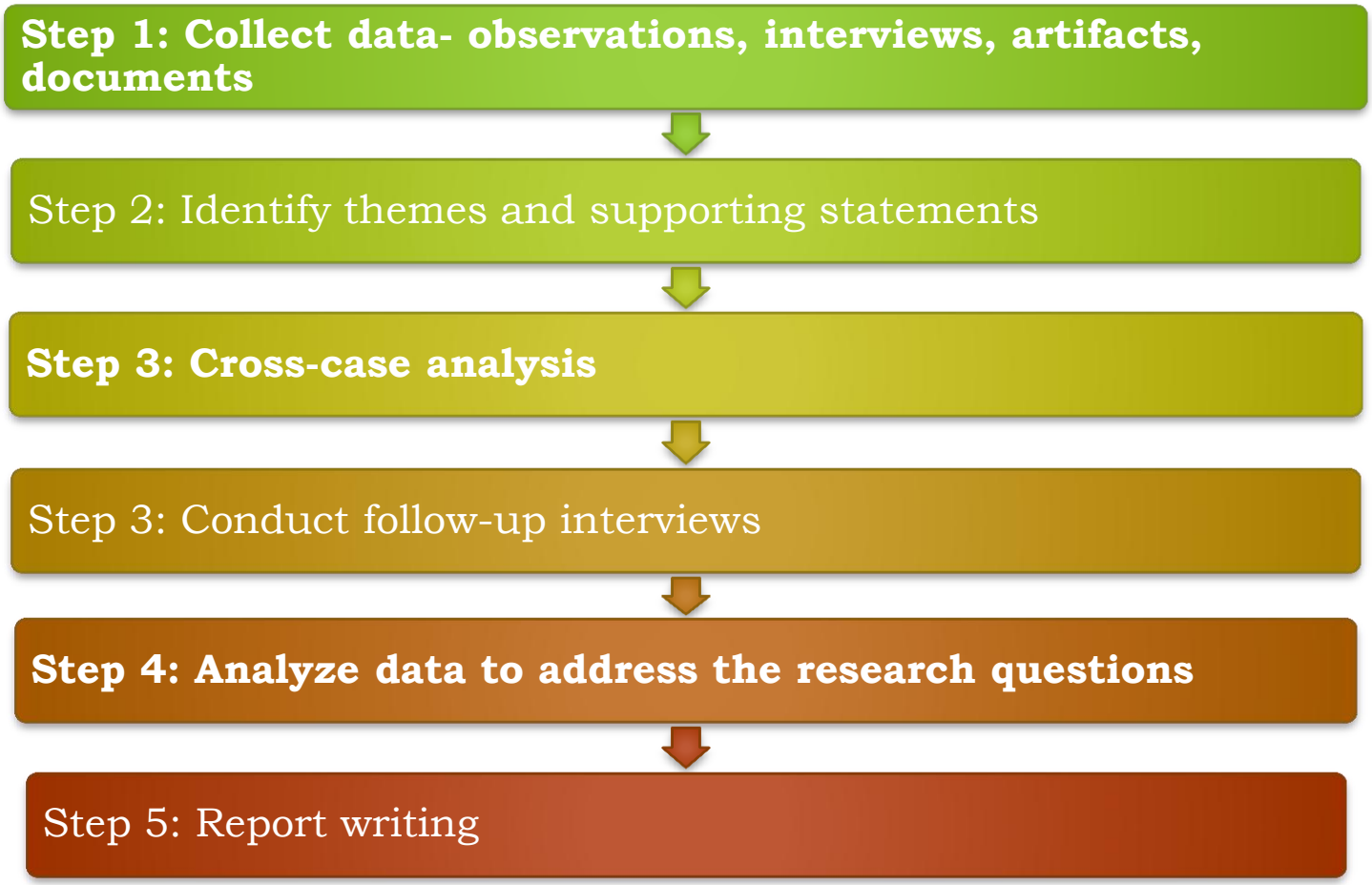
- **10** participants:
  - Associate Dean (Pilot Coordinator)
  - **3** faculty members
  - **5** supervisors/raters
  - **1** supervisor/methods instructor

Methodology

Qualitative Multiple Case Study (Yin, 2009)



Data Collection and Analysis



FINDINGS

Candidate Performance (Average)

TPA Evaluation Standard	Science Education	Elementary Education
S1: Planning, focused, sequenced instruction	2.7	2.4
S2: Using knowledge of students to inform instr.	2.5	2.4
S3: Planning assessments	2.4	2.5
S4: Engaging students in learning	2.4	2.6
S5: Deepening student learning during instruction	2.4	2.75
S6: Analyzing student work	2.4	2.3
S7: Using assessment to inform instruction	1.8	2.0
S8: Using feedback to guide further learning	2.1	2.0
S9: Monitoring student progress & adjusting instr.	2.1	2.6
S10: Understanding lang. demands & resources	2.4	2.1
S11: Developing students' academic language	2.1	2.1
Overall	**2.2**	**2.5**

General Comments

- Mirrored many current practices

- A "step up" to others
  - Higher quality video production & analysis.
  - Deeper reflection on practice
  - Better congruence among objectives, planning & assessment.
  - Greater attention to academic language

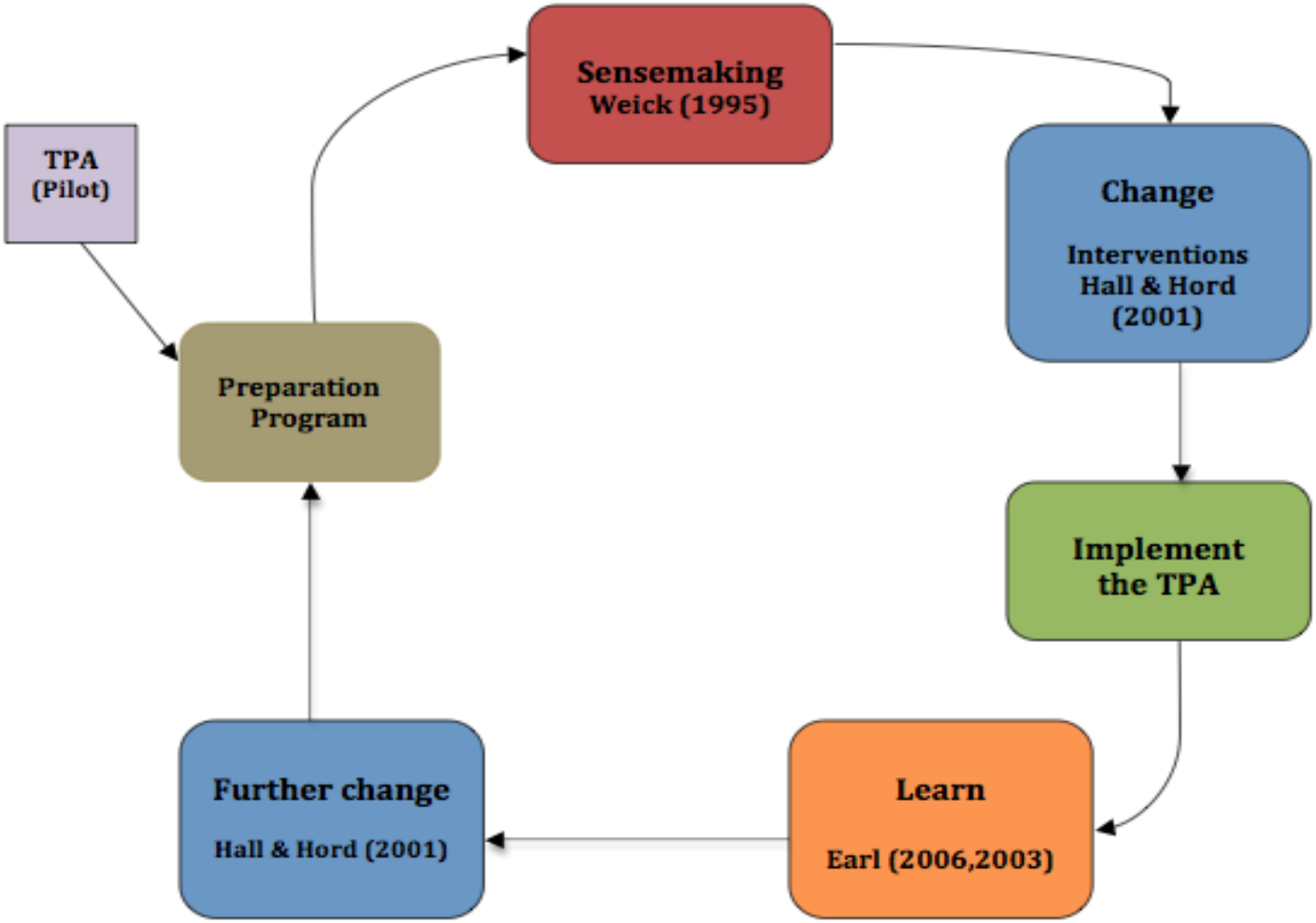
Change Implementation (Hall & Hord, 2001)
Science Education- *Adopters*

Task	Before TPA	Pre-Teaching Event Preparation	Post TPA
Lesson planning	Single lesson	Plan a unit	Mini-Unit Design
Scientific Inquiry	**Just talked about it**	**Revisited in methods course**	**Integral part of methods course- Mini Unit Teaching**
Videotape a lesson	Of varied quality	Of specific quality	Mini-Unit Reflection
Assessment & Reflection	**TPA reqs. already in methods course**	**Not much more**	**Critical Friends Groups & Explanation Trackers**
Academic Language	At the level of science jargon	Not in significant detail	Instructor modeled TPA language in methods course
Supervision	**Four observations**	**One of 4 obs. was a TPA lesson**	**Ongoing collaboration**

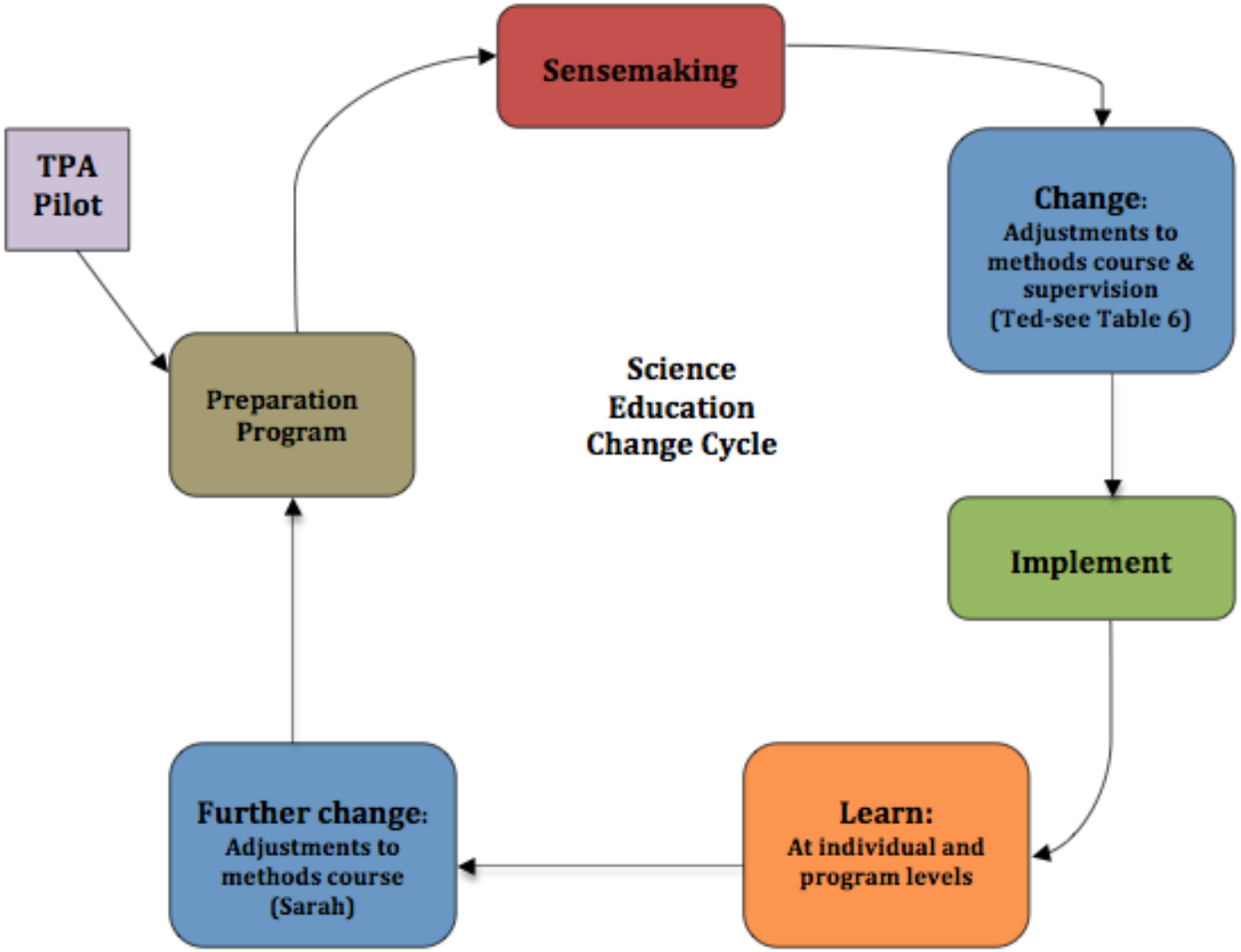
'Change' Implementation (Hall & Hord, 2001)
Elementary Education - *Avoiders*

- TPA incidental to existing agenda of the program.
- No supervisor & faculty participation .
- Fear, suspicion & 'eye-rolling.'
- Clare, Lorraine & some CTs trained/supported the volunteers (intervention).
- High attrition among participants.
- No post-TPA information forthcoming.
- Post-TPA change at individual, reflective level.

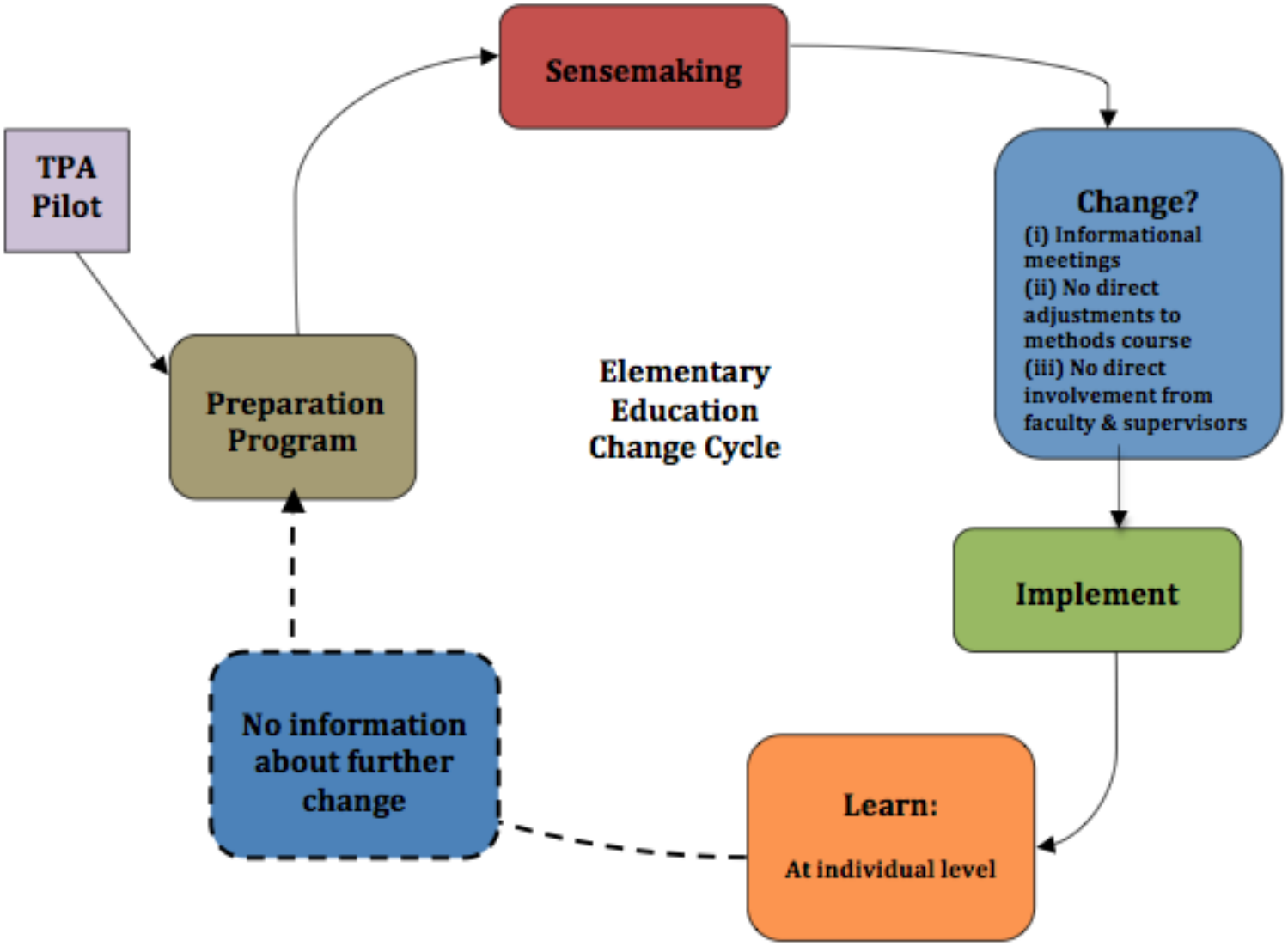
Hypothesis


TPA
(Pilot)
Sensemaking
Weick (1995)
Change
Interventions
Hall & Hord
(2001)
Preparation
Program
Implement
the TPA
Further change
Hall & Hord (2001)
Learn
Earl (2006,2003)

Science Education



Elementary Education



What do these Findings tell us?

What is the role of the TPA in teacher education programs?

- Summative
- Diagnostic
- Confirmatory
- For Professional Development
- For Learning & Self Assessment

Recommendations for Programs

- Faculty buy-in (Elementary Ed.)
- Horizontal change (Science Ed.)
- Continuous professional dev. (All)
- TPA Coordinator
- Develop/Expand Embedded Signature Assessments (ESAs)
  - Social justice
  - Classroom observations
- Re-think candidate placements

Recommendations for Future Research

- Follow-up study on the field test in the Elementary Education and Science Education programs to increase generalizability.
- How academic language might improve outcomes for students.
- Comparison with other TPA pilots around the country for similarities and differences

CONCLUSIONS

Why is this Important?

"I don't know if I can stress this enough. I'm Chicken Little right now. *The sky is falling on Teacher Education*. If we don't get these things up and running (and I see we are losing high quality teachers), *we will cease to exist*. I'm hearing that in every quarter of the nation"

(Clare, pilot coordinator).

Policy calls for it!

"The TPA will be required for licensure for candidates who complete programs after August 31, 2015."

(Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)

Better Stewardship. Stronger Workforce.

- The 2011-2013 Wisconsin Budget Bill permitted the university to develop its own personnel system. A *compensation system* that is more *driven by market and performance factors*, a more flexible hiring system, realigning vacation and sick leave into a single system, and redefining the academic staff employee category are among the first draft recommendations from the teams working on the HR Design project.

David Ward, Interim Chancellor
City University

Programs will be made Accountable

"The Secretary of Education's new blueprint for teacher education is to evaluate and rank teacher education programs in universities based on the standardized test scores of the pupils taught by their graduates" (Zeichner, 2012).

Arne Duncan
US Secretary of Education

S. 1250: GREAT* Teachers and Principals Act, 2011

Authorizes the Secretary of Education to award grants to states to create or approve teacher or principal preparation academies (charter teacher ed. schools).

* Growing Excellent Achievement Training Academies

Therefore…

University teacher education programs must seek to remain relevant in this hostile policy environment.

Implications for the Caribbean

- There can be adaptations of the TPA within teacher education programs in the Caribbean:
  - diagnostic
  - video analyses
  - focus on the academic language within classrooms
  - professional development of teacher educators

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