

Fond Memories of Cal Council

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In the fall of 1960 I drove with four other members of the University of California, Davis faculty to my first meeting of the California Council for the Education of Teachers (Cal Council), being held at the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park.

Cal Council and I started with blank slates. I knew nothing of Cal Council and it knew nothing of me. Further, as a second-year UC Davis supervisor of teacher education, my knowledge of preparing teachers was limited to what I learned from nine years of public classroom teaching, the supervision of student teachers from Stanford, and two years of administrative experience. My knowledge of teacher credentials was based on my own experiences.

When I came to California from Colorado and applied for a General California Teaching Credential, I came across two requirements not covered in my Colorado preparation. They were the Hollywood-sponsored requirement of a course in audio-visual instruction and the state Chamber of Commerce insistence on a course in California history.

And the chalk dust on the Cal Council slate gave evidence of a recent hurried erasure. The organization had been established so top university and college administrators could advise the State Superintendent of Public Instruction about the education of teachers. The post-Sputnik

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concern for educational reform extended to the education and credentialing of California teachers. Cal Council was organized for leaders in teacher education from the University of California, California State University, and private colleges and universities to advise the State Superintendent on best professional practices.

The original members of Cal Council were college presidents and deans of schools of education. They met periodically with top State Department of Education leaders. The dialogue continued until a report was issued that led to discussion of legislation suggested by Hugo Fisher, the Democratic State Senator from San Diego. Conflict over this report and the subsequent Fisher Act resulted in Cal Council and the State Superintendent parting company, with Cal Council then becoming an independent organization.

In the fall of 1960 many of those attending Cal Council in Yosemite were different from the founders. There were a few college presidents and deans, but the majority were faculty representatives from their various institutions. Although no longer needed for its original advisory mission, the massive turmoil about credential regulations and the structure of teacher preparation programs meant an even greater need for California teacher educators to work together to discuss and seek to solve mutual problems.

The Council served as a home for many of the people who had worked so hard during the late 1950s on policy to reform teacher education along with a large number of novice teacher educators who needed mentoring. It continued its tradition of luxury meeting places, such as the Ahwahnee in Yosemite and the Miramar in Santa Barbara.

Meeting Key People

When registering for my first Cal Council conference, I was able to meet a group of senior members who had worked within the Council during the long-heated discussion of California teacher credentialing policy. At the registration table staffed by the State Department of Education that fall day in 1960 I met Jim Stone, my major professor at the University of California, Berkeley, who introduced me to Carl Larson, who was then the State Department of Education's chief credential officer. Their being present to greet colleagues was a long-standing ritual over several decades.

In my tenure in Cal Council these two men and Jim Cusick were critical in assuring that the Council functioned. Carl Larson provided staffing from the State Department of Education. Jim Cusick as Executive Secretary of the Council participated in planning Board meetings and worked very

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closely with the Board and officers on day-to-day operation. Jim Stone, one of the key members of the original group who started Cal Council in 1947, was an early and key editor of the organization's journal that evolved into the current *Teacher Education Quarterly*. As a professor at UC Berkeley, Jim mentored his graduate students to become active in the Council. During my three-plus decades of activity in the Council, five of Jim Stone's graduate students become Cal Council presidents (John Nelson from 1971-74, Dorothy Blackmore from 1974-76, myself from 1976-78, Al Thompson from 1980-82, and Jerry Brunetti from 1992-94). Sister June Kearney from Holy Names was another of my Berkeley classmates, and she also served as key figure in the organization and on the Board of Directors.

In the next two days at my first meeting I met many of the key people in California teacher education and credentialing. Father Darrell Finnegan of Loyola was president of the Council. I met and heard many presentations and comment about the state of teacher preparation. The program that time also included presentations on teaching machines and a report on credentialing.

The beginning of my understanding of teacher education policies and practices came from Glenn Kendall, Wendell Cannon, William Schrupp, and Bill Sweeney plus other senior teacher educators from around the state. Those attending that fall also included many other newly-hired teacher educators. Most were straight from classrooms and beginning doctoral programs. Their knowledge of teacher preparation amounted to little more than their teaching experience and having had student teachers in their classrooms.

A Tutorial for New Teacher Educators

Thus, the Council meeting at Yosemite in the fall of 1960 provided a tutorial for those of us new to teacher education. It was a time of turmoil. The legislature was in the process of using Sputnik era evidence of lagging U.S. educational systems to start a process that would soon take control of teacher credentialing policy away from the State Department of Education. This came to fruition in 1970 with passage of the Ryan Act and creation of the Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing (since renamed the Commission on Teacher Credentialing). It was clear as early as 1960 that various members of the legislature were considering some major changes. Legislative enactment of credentialing requirements would end the long-standing flexibility and cooperation between colleges and universities and the State Department of Education.

The rich discussions among Cal Council participants in the 1960s

and 1970s took place in meetings, the dining room, the bar, and at Yosemite on the patio watching the Camp Curry fire fall from Glacier Point. What the discussions revealed was great discomfort with pending legislation and lack of agreement among participants about the best policies for preparation for certification.

The California State University campuses (then typically called State College at [name of city]) favored and offered the four-year BA degree with an education major. The University of California and many of the private colleges and universities favored a BA with an academic major and a fifth year of professional preparation to qualify for the teaching credential.

Charles Hamilton and J. Alden Vanderpool, the California Teachers Association's representatives, stated the CTA's opposition to intern programs and many of the reforms being discussed in the legislature. Those of us new to teacher education were, in three short days, introduced to topics that one way or the other were the issues for the next few decades and that would continue to dominate questions of best professional practices on the agenda of Cal Council.

I left Yosemite that fall with the topic for my doctoral research suggested. I tested the acceptance of the many assumptions about teacher preparation among a variety of stakeholders. About the only thing all agreed to be essential was student teaching.

During Four Decades

For the next four decades Cal Council was the place where I learned about preparing teachers. My mentors were the senior members of the Council. Gradually my generation became the presenters and we continued to learn from each other.

Key agenda items during my time at Cal Council were adjustment of programs to the Fisher Act, accreditation of teacher preparation programs, equity in faculty hiring, and development of bilingual preparation programs. There was a major interest in early childhood education and a good number of members engaged in that area. Presentations tended to be best professional practices as reported by members. Over time this agenda of staff development and networking came to lack the necessary substance of a statewide organization in such a critical endeavor.

Starting a Journal

Two suggestions for changes to enhance the Council emerged. The first was to start a professional journal. The Board of Directors was most

receptive of this idea and welcomed a proposal from Professor Joe Beard of Saint Mary's College to publish the journal at his own expense. It was first published in 1972 and initially entitled the *California Journal of Teacher Education*. Two of Joe's colleagues were Professor Robert Terrell, who was the first editor, and Professor Paul Burke, who served as copy editor for many years.

After a few issues, a lack of financial support from the Council Board and Robert Terrell's departure to the University of Missouri meant that Joe Beard could no longer issue the journal. My colleague Professor Janet Cross of Sacramento State University and I got out two mimeographed issues to keep the Journal alive, and then the Board voted to provide ongoing support. Jim Stone soon became editor, a position he served in from 1978 to 1986, with Malcolm Douglass of Claremont Graduate School as managing editor. When Jim and Malcolm stepped down, Alan Jones of Prakken Publications was recruited to be both publisher and editor; he served as editor for 12 years and continues today as publisher. Towards the end of Jim Stone's editorship the journal was renamed *Teacher Education Quarterly* to reflect its growing national audience. No other action by the Council did as much to forge a viable Council mission than starting and maintaining this journal. We moved from an advisory council to a group interested in best professional practice and ultimately to serve as a major source of research on teacher education as well as best professional practices.

A second major event in my leadership tenure was the profession's adjustment to the California Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing. The Commission was established by the Ryan Act and was designed to implement reform policy in the Ryan credential legislation. Early efforts by the Council to cooperate with the Commission resulted in the Commission's Executive Secretary becoming an ex officio member of the Cal Council Board.

A New Strategy

The recognition soon emerged that the loss of autonomy and flexibility represented by the Commission bureaucracy required that a new strategy be developed by the Council. Two major ideas were proposed, each with Council followers. The first was to seek to become a major political force. The second was to develop expertness that could influence policy by working with legislators as experts.

Over the next few years my Council colleagues and I worked with Assemblyman Leroy F. Greene, Senator Gary Hart, and Senator Al Rodda as pro bono consultants and expert witnesses. The recognition of

the value of the distributive academic major in the state universities by Senator Rodda, which was an effort to create an appropriate knowledge base for elementary teacher candidates, is an example of Cal Council members' concerns influencing legislation.

The sponsorship of a scholarly journal and a changing membership have provided the Council with a double mission. The organization now shares both the scholarship of best professional practice and empirical research on teaching. The result has earned Cal Council well deserved national recognition.