

Education Licensure Candidates During the Time of COVID-19: University Supervisors' Reflections About the Forgotten Few

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Presenters



- ▶ **Cheryl Burleigh, Ed. D.**

- Contributing Faculty
- Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership
- cheryl.burleigh@mail.waldenu.edu

- ▶ **Andrea Wilson, Ph. D.**

- Core Faculty
- Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership
- andrea.wilson6@mail.waldenu.edu



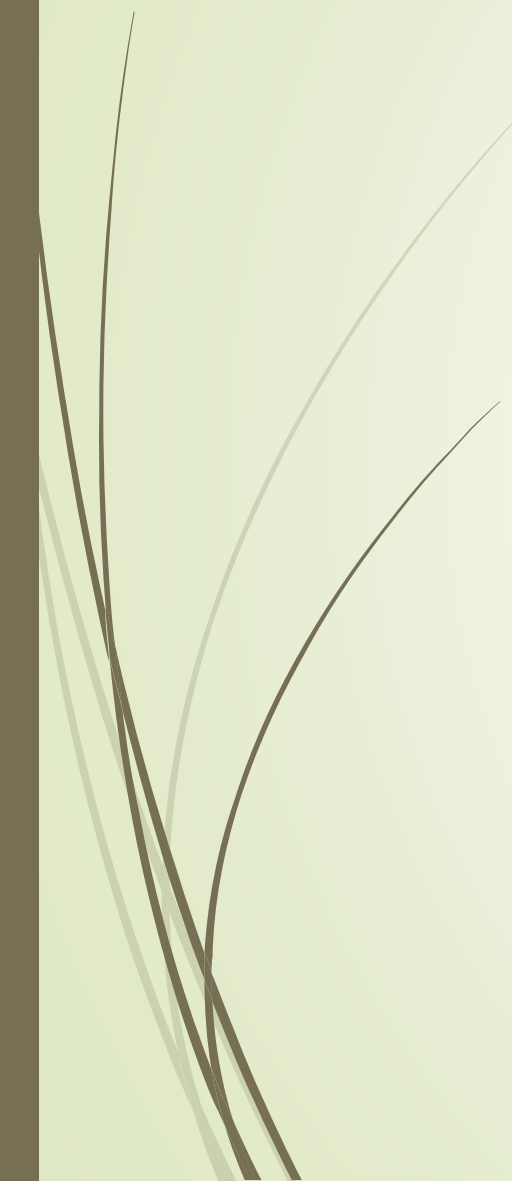
Introduction



- ▶ Thousands of K-12 Education Teacher and Administrator Licensure Candidates were actively conducting their on-site, field placements during the height of the 2020-2021 COVID lockdown and virtual pivot
- ▶ Unpredictable, simultaneous closures and disruptions at the K-12 and University levels gravely affected these individuals
- ▶ Licensure Candidates were caught in between without significant attention or guidance from their University programs or K-12 Public School placement settings
- ▶ Assigned Faculty Supervisors from their respective universities were often the only consistent source of support and guidance



Who are the Forgotten Few?

- ▶ Licensure Candidates in Education
 - ▶ Actively Enrolled in a Higher Education Program for classroom teaching or school administration
 - ▶ Placed in a K-12 school setting to conduct full-time classroom teaching or education administration responsibilities under supervision
 - ▶ Completion of this Field Placement is a requirement for licensure
 - ▶ Novice educators and administrators who are dependent upon the field placement as practical learning experience, achieving degree program completion, and meeting state mandated licensure requirements
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Approach to the Inquiry

- ▶ Scholarly Essay
 - ▶ Derived from Personal Experience and Insights of the Presenters
 - ▶ Not Representative of a Singular University or K-12 School Setting
 - ▶ Variety of Universities with Different Types of Licensure Programs
 - ▶ Comparison of Events to Traditional, pre-COVID Faculty Supervisor Experiences
- ▶ Current presentation is based on recent publication:

Wilson, A.M., & Burleigh, C. (2021). Education licensure candidates during the time of COVID-19: University supervisors' reflections about the forgotten few. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 11(1), 308-319.
<https://doi.org/10.5590/JERAP.2021.11.1.22>



Changing Role of the Licensure Candidate

- ▶ Virtual Pivot of K-12 Education
 - ▶ Schools unprepared for sudden conversion of instruction to virtual delivery
 - ▶ Expert Educators struggled mightily to develop and deliver virtual instruction
 - ▶ Teacher Candidates lacked the knowledge base and practical skills for virtual instruction
- ▶ Candidates were left without practical experience in traditional classrooms and school settings necessary for future professional practices
- ▶ Candidates needed to be flexible and adaptive in and out of the classroom



Changing Role of the University Supervisor

- ▶ University Supervisors forced into a lead role supporting and guiding the licensure candidates in the field
 - ▶ Supports from University Programs were limited due to closures and other factors
 - ▶ Variations in state licensure requirements made it impossible to develop blanket guidance that applies to all candidates
 - ▶ Many states were slow to respond with amendments to licensure requirements
- ▶ All supervisory activities were conducted virtually
 - ▶ Classroom observation for the purpose of candidate evaluation based on virtual instruction and/or virtual observation of limited in person classrooms
- ▶ University Supervisors needed to be adaptive leaders and problem solvers



Candidates' Mental Health and Wellbeing

- ▶ Amplification of Effects due to Novice Educator Status
 - ▶ Physical and Emotional Exhaustion
 - ▶ No Separation of Work and Home Life
 - ▶ Lack of Traditional Boundaries created by Virtual Existence
 - ▶ Perceived Threats to Personal and Professional Security
- ▶ Lack of Student-Teacher Relationship Building
- ▶ Decentralized Leadership from the School Level
- ▶ Recognition of Need and Relevant Support Services were Lacking



Recommendations

- ▶ Times of Crisis Shine Light on Strengths and Needs
 - ▶ Communication Systems were tested
 - ▶ Account for All Relevant Stakeholders
 - ▶ Alternative and Adaptive Methods Paramount for Success
- ▶ Crisis Action Plans must be Mandatory at all Levels of Education
 - ▶ Seamless Distribution of Responsibility and Leadership
- ▶ Support Services and Resources must Continue if not Expand
- ▶ Consider and Accommodate Human Needs with Compassion



Conclusion




- ▶ Licensure candidates fell in the gap between the higher education and K–12 sectors during the pandemic crisis
- ▶ University supervisors patched these gaps through their own practical knowledge, experience, and leadership
- ▶ Hard-working, dedicated licensure candidates continued with their progress despite the chaos of the moment
- ▶ Ultimately, these candidates emerged as stronger, more resilient, and better prepared for anything that may come their way in and out of the education setting



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