A Message from the Executive Director

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Can Everyone Be Included?

We live in a day and age where it is relatively easy to use catchphrases such as partnership, collaborative and stakeholder! We also live in a time when words like equity, access, inclusion and diversity seem to roll off our tongue in every conversation we have about education. The question is are we really seeking to create partnerships and cooperatives that are equitable and diverse? If we are building partnerships and cooperatives to grow the teacher preparation pipeline, are community college teacher preparation programs being considered in the conversation?

I would challenge each of our members to reach out to their local department of education or standards board and ask how many community college representatives are sitting at the table when conversations about recruitment, preparation and retention are being discussed. Are the partnerships and stakeholder groups representative of the communities that need to be served? Is someone sitting at the table that can bring a voice to the issues of nontraditional students?

I would challenge you to reflect on your own cooperatives within your program? Are you actively seeking to ensure that different voices are represented within your own program? When was the last time you reached out to a senator and congressional representative that might have a different point of view from your own? We can’t talk about civil discourse and social justice if we can’t model this within our own programs and with our own collegiate partners. I will continue to talk about equity, access and diversity for the rest of this year. But you will also hear me talking about the need to act as one to impact the teacher preparation pipeline. Gone are the days where higher education programs can operate in silo! It must be our goal to ensure equity and access at all levels, not just within our PreK-12 classrooms.

It’s okay to invite yourself to the table? If “we” keep talking about equity and access for all; then no one will be surprised when you bring your ideas to the table. Be bold, be intentional and use your voice! I recognize that it’s not always easy, but our student’s need us to speak out for them and their needs. We must be sure that articulations work for ALL students, that grant funding is allocated to all and not just to research institutions and that all pathways are supported as long as they ensure rigor and accountability.

If you are interested in getting involved in this conversation at the state or national level, please contact me directly at nacctep@riosalado.edu. Do some research into serving on a board, create a state-wide teacher education organization or invite yourself to someone else’s meeting and bring your passion for your community to the conversation. Once this happens then we may see true equity, access and diversity within our partnerships, cooperatives and stakeholder meetings.

See you all in Baltimore with AACTE!

~Kim