

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL CASE STUDY OF A GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE DEAF  
EDUCATION TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM: IMPLICATIONS FOR  
COLLABORATIVE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN DIVERSE CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

There exists a critical shortage of teachers of students who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing in the United States; yet, deaf education teacher preparation programs are on the decline. Little is known about the functioning of deaf education teacher preparation programs that exist, namely, how they prepare teacher candidates while simultaneously providing services to learners who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing. A phenomenological case study of a Midwest, graduate, comprehensive deaf education teacher preparation program was conducted. This study explored the essence of empowered and enabled learning of program teacher candidates centered on MO-DESE's educator pillars deemed critical to the development of quality teachers. Data from the study revealed a strong connection between the program's espoused comprehensive philosophy and its practice. Embracing diversity of d/Deafness and differentiated instruction were the two strongest themes that resonated from the participants. Teacher candidates displayed outstanding commitment to the profession and strong proficiency in practice, within the first two pillars. Program improvement was most needed in navigating the public school system.