

Challenges in teacher education: Global influences and local solutions

Desafios na formação de professores: Influências globais e soluções locais

Les défis de la formation des enseignants: Influences mondiales et solutions locales

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Abstract

Teacher education is influenced by a global meta-narrative that states that improving the quality of teacher education will lead to improved pupil outcomes, which in turn will lead to economic competitiveness in the global context. Thus, teacher education is seen as a powerful lever for achieving this ambition and is therefore positioned as a policy problem. This article outlines some of the key global challenges both in terms of global teacher education policy and in relation to wider societal influences. It problematises the notion that global challenges can be addressed by wholesale global solutions, arguing that liberal democratic governance in the global north mitigates against longer-term reform that does not achieve results within one election cycle. Instead, the article suggests that certain programme/partnership-level changes can work in powerful ways to achieve the ambition of more socially progressive teacher education.

Keywords: teacher education, global policy, neoliberal influence, liberal democracies

Resumo

A formação de professores é influenciada por uma meta-narrativa global que afirma que a melhoria da qualidade da formação de professores conduzirá a melhores resultados para os/as alunos/as, o que, por sua vez, conduzirá à competitividade económica no contexto global. Assim, a formação de professores é vista como uma alavanca poderosa para alcançar esta ambição e é, por conseguinte, posicionada como um problema político. Este artigo descreve alguns dos principais desafios globais, tanto em termos de política global de formação de professores como em relação a influências sociais mais alargadas. Problematisa a noção de que os desafios globais podem ser enfrentados através de soluções globais de grande envergadura, argumentando que a governação democrática liberal no Norte global é contrária a uma reforma a mais longo prazo que não alcança resultados num ciclo eleitoral. Em vez disso, o artigo sugere que certas mudanças ao nível do programa/parceria podem funcionar de forma poderosa para alcançar a ambição de uma formação de professores mais progressista do ponto de vista social.

Palavras-chave: formação de professores, política global, influência neoliberal, democracias liberais

Résumé

La formation des enseignants est influencée par un méta-récit mondial qui affirme que l'amélioration de la qualité de la formation des enseignants conduira à de meilleurs résultats pour les élèves, qui à leur tour conduiront à la compétitivité économique dans le contexte mondial. La formation des enseignants est considérée comme un levier puissant pour réaliser cette ambition et est donc considérée comme une question politique. Cet article présente

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certains des principaux défis mondiaux, à la fois en termes de politique de formation des enseignants au niveau mondial et en relation avec des influences sociétales plus larges. Il problématise l'idée selon laquelle les défis mondiaux peuvent être relevés par des solutions globales à grande échelle, en faisant valoir que la gouvernance démocratique libérale dans le Nord mondial est hostile aux réformes à long terme qui ne donnent pas de résultats en un seul cycle électoral. Au lieu de cela, l'article suggère que certains changements au niveau des programmes/partenariats peuvent contribuer fortement à la réalisation de l'ambition d'une formation des enseignants plus progressiste sur le plan social.

Mots-clés: formation des enseignants, politique mondiale, influence néolibérale, démocraties libérales

Introduction

The influence of a strong and well-developed global meta-narrative has had considerable influence over how individual nation-states position their teacher education policy in recent times. For many years now, teacher education has been positioned as a policy problem, and “when teacher education is constructed as a policy problem, pupil achievement scores are considered the most important educational outcome” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 298). This global meta-narrative, with its focus on enhancing the quality of teachers, has undoubtedly become a key plank of the neoliberal creep where the state adopts an increasingly bureaucratic quality assurance function, ‘measuring’ the quality of the service provided to the public (Biesta et al., 2021). This global teacher education policy push, together with global societal challenges, has created significant challenges for contemporary teacher education.

It is worth noting at this point that I am referring principally to teacher education in the global north, as while some of the influences of the global meta-narrative are felt across all parts of the world, the dominance of liberal democracies in the global north gives some level of broad similarity in respect of what might be possible in the future. Liberal democracies are characterised by “a system of government in which individual rights and freedoms are officially recognised and protected, and the exercise of political power is limited by the rule of law”¹. Elected governments are the backbone of democracies (Hedtke, 2016), and this inevitably means that political parties are constantly seeking voter approval and striving to demonstrate evidence of having made a positive impact. This inevitably favours short-term gains over longer-term programmes of significant change, thus creating a paradox whereby the big challenges of the day require big solutions, but the structure and operation of national governance in liberal democracies mitigate against such wholesale or longer-term solutions.

This article starts by outlining some of these big global challenges for teacher education in terms of both the global teacher education policy context and the wider societal context. It argues that these big challenges are unlikely to be met with long-term, systemic changes owing to the dynamics of liberal democratic governance. I suggest, therefore, that incremental, sustainable change can be instigated from the programme level upwards, and I go on to suggest two key areas for focus that I argue could lead to

¹ Oxford Dictionary Online, <https://www.oed.com/search/dictionary/?scope=Entries&q=liberal+democracy>

'better' teacher education. It is important to acknowledge that the concept of 'better' or 'good' teacher education is ideologically shaped and very much depends on what one believes teacher education, and ultimately, schooling, is for and should look like. Biesta (2008, p. 41) argues that

When we engage in discussions about what constitutes good education we should acknowledge that this is a 'composite' question, i.e., that in order to answer this question we need to acknowledge the different functions of education and the different potential purposes of education.

This point pertains to teacher education too, as well as to education more broadly.

For the purposes of this article, I want to be explicit about my own understanding of 'good' teacher education: I understand good teacher education to be socially progressive in its orientation. By 'socially progressive' I mean teacher education that is explicitly oriented towards social good and that embraces three overlapping ideas: social progressivism as a political movement; pedagogical progressivism as an educational movement; and social and environmental justice as ethical imperatives (Kennedy, 2022). Such an approach to teacher education

is explicitly not neutral, rather it is driven by a desire for knowledge-informed reform which works for social good through participative and contextually-relevant approaches. Social good, from this perspective, requires an explicit critical lens and works to identify and break down barriers to equity, fairness and progress. (p. 687)

Ultimately, this article recognises the size of the challenges faced by teacher education and acknowledges the limitations of liberal democratic governance in being able to address these challenges in systematic, longer-term ways. Rather than being overwhelmed by the enormity of such a task, it proposes some smaller-scale actions that can be taken by universities and local teacher education partnerships (schools, school districts and professional bodies), which, I argue, have the potential to act as levers for system-level change in pursuit of socially progressive teacher education.

Global challenges in the teacher education policy context

Global meta-narrative regarding teacher quality and pupil attainment

There exists a strong global meta-narrative around the importance of teachers in raising student test scores and, therefore, contributing positively to nation-states' economic competitiveness. This apparently simple logic derives from an overarching narrative that is based on a number of assumptions that Morris (2015) argues are rarely made explicit or interrogated. These assumptions are that:

- (1) economic success in nation states is primarily a function of schooling or, more generically, of 'lifelong learning' within that nation (the development of human capital);

- (2) tests of pupil achievement or adult competencies, such as PISA or Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIACC), provide a reliable proxy for a nation's stock of human capital and therefore future economic competitiveness;
- (3) the tests are valid and reliable;
- (4) the causes of pupil performance lie primarily within the educational system;
- (5) the cause(s) of high performance can be isolated and policies based on those causes can be transplanted into a different context; and
- (6) the evidence is faithfully and consistently considered and the policies advocated are coherent insofar as they are validly derived from that evidence. (p. 471)

It is clear from these assumptions that 'improving' teacher education (whatever that might mean) is seen as a surefire way to increase a nation-state's economic competitiveness. This narrative has been prominent in teacher education for almost twenty years, most explicitly since the publication of the OECD's influential "Teachers Matter" report in 2005. The narrative suggests a very simple input/output model where increasing the quality of teachers increases the performance of pupils on standardised assessments, thereby increasing the overall education of the nation, which in turn will increase its economic competitiveness. The appeal of this simplistic model to governments is clear and forms the foundation of many reform attempts globally. It is heavily influential in national government policy-making circles, often resulting in immediate intervention-type reform such as the establishment of Centres for Teacher Training in Germany (Sälzer & Preznan, 2017) and significant reform of curriculum in relation to numeracy and literacy in Ireland, and associated implications for teacher education (Conway & Murphy, 2013).

Such responses to the meta-narrative lead to the entrenchment of the neoliberal predilection with measurement and externally mandated accountability, what Grek (2009) calls "governing by numbers". This trend is evident to greater or lesser extents across different nation-states in the global north, being more or less prominent depending on the extent to which right or left-wing parties are in government. Adding to the challenge here is that in teacher education, governance is not simply carried out at the national government level, and therefore solutions to such challenges cannot be found solely in the national space, even if the will was there.

Competing governance levers

Teacher education is governed by a number of different stakeholders, each with slightly different remits and priorities. While these interests might broadly coalesce around aspirations to provide 'quality' teacher education, they can often be in conflict in terms of the way(s) in which they conceptualise 'quality'. Many national systems of teacher education are governed simultaneously by party politics, professional bodies and, where teacher education is not entirely school-based, by university regulations; teacher education,

therefore, exists simultaneously in political, professional and university spaces (Kennedy, 2018). This tripartite form of governance can cause significant tensions as different spaces are shaped by slightly different narratives reflecting institutional positions and priorities. This means, for teacher education providers in particular, a balancing game between compliant and disruptive narratives that are not consistent across the three spaces:

A compliant narrative can only be understood to be compliant or disruptive in relation to a particular policy space; the compliance or otherwise of any particular narrative therefore needs to be understood within a context. Thus, compliant and disruptive narratives should be seen as exceedingly unstable and entirely contingent. (p. 650)

This interplay of tripartite governance is where the excesses of neoliberal accountability approaches are at their most obvious. Teacher education providers can find themselves accounting against a number of different frameworks such as professional standards in the professional space, university quality assurance processes in the university space, and inspection frameworks in the political space. This challenge becomes two-fold: it can bring conflicting conceptions of the purpose of teacher education into sharp relief, causing significant cognitive dissonance whilst also placing considerable administrative burden to provide evidence for different governance processes that use different frameworks to account for 'quality'.

The challenge of identifying and using contextually-appropriate measures of quality

The pursuit of increasing quality in teacher education, of course, means the need to identify measures of quality. There is no one agreed way of doing this, and frameworks of measuring quality tend to reflect how teacher education is positioned in any particular context. Quality frameworks might be guided principally by shared values, by professional standards or by theoretical constructs (Rauschenberger et al., 2017). While neoliberal governance regimes increasingly favour “value-added measurement” models (Koedel et al., 2015) – models which correlate the scores of pupils on standardised tests with their individual teachers and the teacher education programmes that these teachers undertook – Kennedy et al. (2021) argue that any framework for measuring teacher education quality has to be contextually appropriate; that is, it must take into account the historical, cultural, social and educational beliefs and practices of the context in which it is to be deployed.

There are two levels of challenge associated with this: 1) that very often, frameworks for measuring quality are based on pre-existing models of measurement and are not explicitly designed with the particular context in mind, and 2) that different ways of measuring quality mean that global comparisons are difficult to achieve, thereby working in tension with the metanarrative which subliminally encourages competition between countries. This often leads to measurement frameworks such as PISA test results being used as a proxy for teacher education quality. The use of proxy frameworks is compounded by a

lack of funding for large-scale longitudinal, systematic research that might help to give a better picture of the impact of teacher education.

Lack of funding for large-scale, longitudinal, systematic research

National governments across the global north have bought into the message that “the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers” (Barber & Mourshed, 2007, p. 16). This has resulted in a laser-like focus on improving the quality of teacher education and a global governmental preoccupation with accounting for quality. It seems paradoxical, then, that this preoccupation with accounting for quality is not matched by a preoccupation for understanding and properly evaluating quality through support for high-quality, large-scale, longitudinal, systematic research.

Numerous reviews of teacher education research have “concluded that it is underdeveloped, small scale, often under-theorised, fragmentary, and some-what parochial” (Mayer & Oancea, 2021, p. 2) and “ungeneralizable” (Mayer, 2006). And perhaps more disturbingly, that teacher education research is often misused “to manufacture a narrative of failure of teacher education designed to build a logic of deficiency and necessity for interventionist reform policies” (Mayer & Oancea, 2021, p. 2). The political nature of teacher education research should not be ignored, both in terms of what is supported and listened to and what is absent in the research literature.

However, while (Sleeter, 2014) calls for more collaborative, large-scale research (potentially including the synthesis of several smaller-scale studies), Mayer & Oancea (2021) call for a richer diversity of approaches, scale and focus. While debates could be had about the approach, focus and scale of teacher education research, what is clear is that it rarely attracts large-scale funding “and as a result teacher educators often study their own teaching and their own programs, producing a wide variety of studies that include many small-scale and unconnected studies of practice” (Mayer, 2006, p. 10).

The challenge of research for and on teacher education is not simple: there are challenges around both funding and capacity for such research, but also around focus and purpose, with a growing number of calls for teacher education research to be focused on informing and persuading policymakers. This is a deeply political challenge, recognising challenges around power and voice.

Challenges from the wider societal context

The above section discusses some key global challenges in the teacher education policy space. However, challenges for teacher education do not exist in a vacuum, and the field is deeply impacted by wider societal influences. While such influences do, of course, vary in relation to specific contexts, there are some societal contexts that could be considered to be more global in nature, including the increasing diversity of pupil populations and the fast-paced nature of technological advances.

Increasingly diverse pupil population

Growing global migration is leading to increasingly diverse pupil populations in mainstream state-funded schools (Arar et al., 2019). This results in classrooms with multitudes of different cultural and linguistic experiences. While this can bring richness to the classroom, it also brings myriad challenges for teacher education in seeking to ensure that teachers are suitably prepared to work in culturally responsive ways (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Despite the increase in ethnic diversity in many classrooms today, teacher populations tend to be much less diverse, with many countries recognising this as a weak point in their systems. For example, the Scottish Government (2023) established a working group to consider diversity in the teaching profession, which has resulted in challenging targets being made and annual data reporting on a national basis. Currently, 4% of the general population of Scotland identifies as black or minority ethnic, but only 1.8% of the teacher population. In the US, a recent report indicated that 20 states have established specific teacher education programs that have an explicit goal of diversifying the ethnic diversity of the teacher workforce, while many others have established apprenticeships, residencies and high school intervention strategies with the intention of promoting and supporting the entry to teacher education of candidates of colour (Swisher, 2023).

There is clearly much work to be done in achieving greater ethnic diversity in the teacher population, but Ware et al. (2022, p. 1418) point out that “discussions on teacher diversity in countries around the world tend to focus on race, gender and ethnicity with very little attention being paid to other factors such as disability and sexual orientations”. This seems out of step given the increased focus on inclusive education and the fact that across the globe pupil populations are increasingly diverse in relation to (dis)ability, with the expectation that children with special educational/additional support needs will attend mainstream schools an increasingly global phenomenon (Garrotte et al., 2017). This is a challenge for teacher education, both in terms of ensuring that all new teachers are prepared to work in inclusive ways with a very wide range of pupils and in terms of attracting and supporting disabled teachers.

In their systematic review of literature that addresses the ways that initial teacher preparation prepares future teachers for student diversity, Rowan et al. (2021, p. 112) reveal “a literature broad in focus – referencing many groups – but shallow in depth”. They also grapple with the conceptualisation of ‘diversity’, highlighting its use in the literature both as a description of population variation and as a proxy term for characteristics of diversity. An important finding in the review is the limited attention in the literature “relating to the skills and knowledge of teacher educators themselves with regard to topics of diversity and teacher preparation” (p. 146). This is perhaps unsurprising, given the relatively recent attention in the literature to teacher educators in general and the lack of systematic national approaches to supporting the professional preparation and learning of teacher educators (Cochran-Smith et al., 2020).

Undoubtedly, increasingly diverse pupil populations, especially when coupled with much less diverse

teacher populations, causes challenges for teacher education. However, this situation also brings opportunities – opportunities to capitalise much more systematically on the richness that diversity can bring to our classrooms and, ultimately, to society.

Technological advances

Rapid technological advancement, including the increasing use of artificial intelligence, is a real challenge for teacher education. In part, there is a challenge to ‘keep up’ with developments, but there are also significant challenges that persist in ensuring the availability of relevant hardware and software, as well as inconsistent internet access across school sites.

Much of the literature from technology experts suggests simplistic solutions such as: “Effective teacher education and continuing education programs have to be designed and offered to support the adoption of these new technologies” (Luan et al., 2020, p. 7). While seemingly sensible at face value, such a recommendation does not take into account the complexities of how teachers learn, nor the time and resources required, such as specialist software or licence fees. Content cannot simply be added to an already over burgeoning teacher education curriculum.

In their recent literature review, Timotheou et al. (2023) identify eight factors that affect the impact of digital technologies on education in general, namely:

- a) digital competencies;
- b) teachers’ personal characteristics and professional development;
- c) school leadership and management;
- d) connectivity, infrastructure, and government support;
- e) administration and data management practices;
- f) students’ socio-economic background and family support and
- g) the socioeconomic context of the school and emergency situations.

It is clear from this that the challenges of rapid advancement in this area pertain not only to teachers’ skills and the provision of hardware, software and connectivity but also to wider data management practices and socio-economic contexts. In addition, for teacher education, the use of digital technology as part of practicum feedback and assessment is also a significant challenge. This has become much more prominent since COVID lockdowns (Kidd & Murray, 2020), but there is still some resistance in many places, with drawbacks cited as challenges in drawing up partnership agreements regarding data privacy and respective roles of school and university staff (Kadir & Aziz, 2021). While learning from the COVID-19 context has undoubtedly enhanced our understanding of how technology can be used in teacher education (Torres et al., 2021), constant innovation, such as the advent of mainstream artificial intelligence use in the general population, means that teacher education will have to learn rapidly to understand and support new ways of working.

Mitigating these challenges locally

The enormity of the global challenges outlined above should not be underestimated, and the power of the neoliberal narrative, with its focus on accountability and ever-increasing calls for ‘effective’ use of resources, provides significant challenges for teacher education. This, set alongside global challenges such as migration and climate change, begs for a teaching workforce that is prepared and supported in navigating the wicked problems of contemporary times in creative, respectful and democratic ways – hence my focus on socially progressive teacher education. However, living in a liberal democracy, with its constant focus on voter appeal, means limited opportunity for longer-term cultural change or huge investment at a system-wide level. It is important, therefore, to find ways to work strategically and locally to leverage change in incremental and sustainable ways. I want to suggest two particular areas that, if focused upon, have the capacity to enhance teacher education in socially progressive ways despite national governments being unwilling or unable to invest in longer-term systemic change. These two areas for change include educating teacher educators and changing assessment practices.

I am not arguing that these two suggested areas for focus could mitigate wholesale the global challenges outlined earlier. However, there is clear evidence for each that a forensic focus and commitment to develop these areas can have considerable payoffs for teacher education, particularly for socially progressive teacher education.

Educating teacher educators

In talking about ‘teacher educators’, I support the European Commission's (2013) definition that this includes “all those who actively facilitate the (formal) learning of student teachers and teachers” (p. 8). This means not only teacher educators based in universities but also school-based teacher educators based in schools. The focus on teacher educators in the literature is relatively recent, with agreement that as an occupational group they are often misunderstood and overlooked (Livingston, 2014). School-based teacher educators in many (if not most) countries have been overlooked, their role in supporting teacher education is often dismissed as ‘mentoring’ and the support required to do the job properly is not unilaterally available (Czerniawski et al., 2019; Postholm, 2019), while university-based teacher educators as well as having to think about first and second order professional identities (Murray & Male, 2005), typically receive no specific preparation or targeted education for their role (MacPhail et al., 2019). Instead, there is an assumption that teacher educators will be able to do the job by virtue of having learned to be teachers themselves.

In the absence of specific focused education about how teachers learn and how this learning can best be supported, teacher educators tend to rely on their own experiences of learning to teach. In many cases, this means resorting to well-intentioned but ultimately restrictive practices of giving advice rather than supporting conditions for socio-constructivist learning. In their systematic literature review of what,

how and why teacher educators learn, Ping et al. (2018) conclude that “there is no clear knowledge base essential for teacher educators’ work”, and they call for a “pedagogy of teacher education” (p. 93) distinct from the pedagogical knowledge that teachers have in relation to their classroom practice in schools. While this literature review focuses on university-based teacher educators, the same arguments can be made for school-based teacher educators. Indeed, Kennedy & Bell (2022) make similar, although potentially stronger, recommendations in relation to the need for school-based teacher educators to be educated, recognised and valued in their role, with the weight of evidence suggesting that this “would have the potential to seriously improve both quality and retention in the profession, thereby providing a firm basis upon which ambitious, socially progressive education policy can be advanced” (p. 525).

While ideally the support, education, and recognition for teacher educators would be prioritised and organised at the system level, they can be organised at more local levels. The benefits of such an approach, especially when done at the partnership level between all the teacher educators associated with a particular programme or portfolio – across university, school and district sites – are manifold. A programme/portfolio-wide approach can serve to limit some of the traditional boundaries between school and university that very often cause pre-service teachers considerable confusion when teacher educators working in separate parts of the partnership view the purpose of teacher education differently. A systemic approach to supporting teacher educators has the capacity to unite, inform and motivate in such a way that teacher education reform can be carried out coherently, and discussions about quality and expectations can be more easily shared across partners.

Changing assessment practices

Gibbs (1999) argues that assessment is “the most powerful lever teachers have to influence the way students respond to a course and behave as learners” (p. 41). Written more generally in the context of higher education, this statement arguably pertains to learners across the spectrum, be they in schools, universities, or professional education. He goes on to argue that “a modest change in an assessment regime [can] achieve dramatic improvements in student performance” (p. 43), illustrating this with a case study that implemented peer assessment tasks as a prerequisite for sitting the final exam. Such a change would reorient what was valued and rewarded, and limit ‘game playing’ where students work strategically to pass assessment tasks rather than to engage in deep learning – what Gibbs refers to as “dysfunctional” learner behaviour “as a by-product of the assessment” (p. 52).

While Gibbs writes about university-based learning, the same principles can be translated into professional education, which straddles university and work-based sites. For example, an initial teacher education programme at the University of Edinburgh designed an assessment of professional competence in such a way as to avoid student teachers being encouraged to focus on producing a slick performance for a visiting tutor, instead handing over responsibility for gathering evidence of competence to the students themselves. They were not assessed summatively in the school-based element of the programme,

instead being asked to map their progress against the “Standard for Provisional Registration” (General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2021) across the two years for the programme, and then to produce a portfolio of evidence which was then examined by a panel of school-based and university-based teacher educators through a viva. This allowed students and teacher educators to use the professional standards developmentally rather than simply as accountability tools (Kennedy et al., 2020).

Through changing assessment practices, and thereby changing how student teachers engage with their professional education, it is possible to create a more authentic teacher education experience through which beginning teachers can learn to be democratic, collaborative and inquiring – supporting a socially progressive teacher education vision. Tannock (2017) argues for the concept of the “public university” as a means of nurturing “collective ideals of a just, sustainable and democratic future”. The public university, he argues, would not engage in the grading of assessment tasks, a practice that he argues “undermines learning and is undemocratic” (p. 1345). While it is clear that many university administrations would resist such a wholesale move, his arguments serve to illustrate the power of assessment practices and their influence on student engagement and learning. Even within traditional universities, it is possible to shift assessment practices in ways that engage students more deeply with learning than with credentialism. In teacher education in particular, where it is common across the globe to work towards a set of professional standards, it would seem that a reduction (if not a wholesale rejection) of grading could work. After all, a standard can either be met or not met, and in some teacher education programmes the school component is already graded on a pass/fail basis. It is, therefore, not too huge a leap to think that an entire programme could be assessed on such a basis, making much better use of teacher educators’ time in giving formative feedback rather than engaging in extensive moderation to ensure grade boundaries are consistently applied.

There is no space in this article to go into further detail about possible changes to assessment practices that might support more democratic and collaborative engagement, but taking a serious look at assessment practices in teacher education programmes does appear to be a powerful and fruitful way of furthering the ideals of a socially progressive teacher education experience that in some small way might serve to challenge some of the big global challenges of the day without having to have system-wide changes in government policy.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that teacher education faces significant global challenges, and it is appealing to try to suggest global solutions. However, despite being heavily influenced by the global meta-narrative, the function of liberal democratic governance mitigates against wholesale, longer-term systemic change at the national level. This context produces tensions for teacher education reform in the global north. It is clear that teacher education does not sit in a vacuum and is intimately bound by notions of power, politics

and ideologies at play in the various levels of global, national, local and professional governance, as well as from wider societal phenomena.

Complex, multi-layered governance structures, together with powerful but nebulous global narratives, mean that reforming teacher education systemically can be hugely problematic. However, within this complex web of governance structures lie spaces of opportunity – places where important but perhaps less obvious changes can be allowed to grow and develop in ways that can support a socially progressive teacher education vision.

If the energy that is expended on critiquing global policy and seeking global solutions was put to work in quieter, more localised ways (like the two suggestions made in this article), then there is hope for a more socially progressive teacher education ahead. Such moves have the potential in some small way to help meet global challenges by inducting new teachers into ways of practicing that are intellectually defensible, deeply practicable and ethically rigorous.

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