Mathematics Leadership in Primary Schools

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In response to the recent Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report (2014), teacher education providers are developing new units of study and pathways of study within existing programs to cater for pre-service teachers (PSTs) who elect to undertake a specialization in mathematics. Entry requirements for students electing such a pathway are not specified; however, it is expected that when they graduate, they will have demonstrated competence in mathematics and perhaps taken one or more additional units in mathematics pedagogy.

Teacher education providers currently know little about the background experiences, aspirations, and expectations of primary school PSTs who might elect and be accepted into a primary mathematics specialization pathway. This gap in our knowledge is partly due to prior research foci on primary PSTs who lack the mathematical content knowledge required as a basis for teaching mathematics well (Callingham & Beswick, 2011).

Teacher education providers also know little about what potential employers are expecting of PSTs who will graduate with a specialization in mathematics. This knowledge is necessary for teacher education providers to be able to select appropriate candidates for a mathematics specialization pathway and plan units of study for them.

In the round table, we will begin by presenting the aim of our research, some preliminary data concerning the PSTs who have elected to undertake a new primary mathematics specialisation at The University of Sydney, and the skills and characteristics that some potential employers have identified as being essential or desirable for mathematics leadership in primary schools. These data will provide a stimulus for discussion amongst participants.

References

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