Hope in the Work of Becoming

What does it mean to *become* a teacher?

Becoming is rarely a straight line. It is sometimes tangled, uncertain, and unfinished. It takes shape through the experiences we encounter, the questions we ask, the conversations we have, and the relationships that help us make sense of our practice.

The research I conducted with colleagues suggests that becoming a teacher cannot be captured in a single lesson, observation, portfolio, or assessment. Professional learning unfolds over time, through reflection, dialogue, feedback, and opportunities to reconsider what happened and imagine what might happen next.

This is where I locate hope.

Not in the assessment tool itself. Not in the expectation that pre-service teachers will get everything right. Rather, hope resides in the relationships and conversations assessment can make possible: someone asking a question, offering another perspective, listening, encouraging, or helping a beginning teacher see possibility where they may have initially seen uncertainty.

The tangled thread does not remain tangled. It moves through connection and toward growth.

For me, hopeful pedagogy is not about certainty or perfection. It is about creating the conditions in which becoming remains possible.

Keywords: hope, teacher education; becoming a teacher; professional identity; relational pedagogy; reflective practice; professional learning; mentoring