

PDS Partners

The Official Magazine of the National Association for Professional Development Schools

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A Message From the President

Alison Rutter, East Stroudsburg University



Why do you think we continue to ask our classes, "What did you do on your summer vacation?" While this assignment has become the fodder for much stereotypical humor, don't we ask it in earnest? Don't we want to know what has excited our students; what has captured their interest? Don't we hope that they, like us, have relished that time to refresh and renew, and want the chance to share what they've experienced and learned as we have? How many of you bring back ideas from vacation to use in your classrooms? That's part of how we learn and improve our teaching. This informal learning can be very powerful. I remember one vacation when I was walking along the beach and came upon two whelks (those pretty spiral shell univalves you often see in shell shops) propelling themselves along the sand. I had never seen the live animals in action, so of course had to take numerous pictures to try and capture what I had just experienced to share with my students when I got back. I spent way too much time watching them trying to pull themselves along with that one snail-like foot. My husband thought I was a wonk, but I was in high gear teacher learning mode. We've all had experiences like this. I hope you've had many opportunities to share them.

Penn State University Partnerships & PDS Summer Conference

This summer I didn't get to see any mollusks in action, but I did get my fill of informal learning by attending Penn State's first annual PDS and Partnerships conference in early July. NAPDS endorsed the conference and I had the pleasure of not only attending, but introducing Bruce Field, our former President, as one of the keynotes. It was a smallish, loosely structured conference, designed to accommodate a variety of areas of pursuits, emphasize both the P-12 and university interests, and promote discussion and conversation. Simply put -- a quick fix of personal "simultaneous renewal." I was excited to see old friends and meet some new ones who may be joining us in Orlando for the first time. I was fortunate to also have a team of colleagues with me to help process all we were taking in. Over the course of two and a half days in "Happy Valley" there was lots of opportunity for sharing, listening, and learning in a very relaxed atmosphere.

Conference Keynotes

Even though the four keynotes had prepared remarks, it was significant that each successive speaker included ideas from preceding discussions in their talks, giving the conference a truly organic feel to it. They gave our smaller group talks a focus and topics for rich discussion. The first, Patricia Best, the former superintendent from State College Area School District (Penn State's PDS P-12 partners), really made me appreciate the power of high level P-12 support. This was a woman who could get things done, who understood partnership and the power of PDS to her schools and students. How can we get more administrators and policymakers to buy in the way this superintendent had? Similarly, Bruce Field's keynote made me think about how we need to collect more information about PDSs in general. We've certainly been growing, but we don't have a handle on where all of the PDSs are. Are there other Patricia Bests out there that we don't know about? His comments also prompted lots of thinking about the types of evidence we need to demonstrate PDS's impact on our teaching and student learning. How can we get that across to policymakers? Leaders who understand the nature of our work is one answer offered in Audrey Kleinsasser's keynote. Audrey, from the University of Wyoming NNER partnership, reiterated the importance of leadership support, challenging our thinking about it, encouraging us to think about its purposes and how we can use leadership to promote our work. How can we grow leaders that really "get" PDS? By the time Jim Nolan gave the last keynote

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A Message From the President

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on Friday, we were well on our way to renewal. His comments, “The goal is not sustaining the PDS, it is sustaining the adaptation or sustaining renewal that leads to achievement in shared goals” and “[the] more critical issue is not whether we sustain, but what we sustain” reminded us that this is a creative, organic process that is very complex. It needs clarity of purpose, leadership and renewable energies.

Small Group & Team Sharing

The importance of this conference to me was much more than the keynotes. There were a number of smaller sessions as well as team planning time and just plain old talking and networking. I got to know a bunch of people a whole lot better by listening to them talk and sharing ideas with them. The time was filled with good old fashioned face to face talking about experiences that we could relate to immediately. I know I was in high gear teacher learning mode listening to ideas about teacher mentoring and ways to select mentors, learning more about leadership, as well as the inner workings of various PDS. This triggered lots of ideas for our ESU team as I’m sure it did for others. I think we all drove away thinking that this was something we couldn’t wait to share, couldn’t wait to tell what we had learned and done on this special part of our summer vacation.

Looking Ahead – Elections, Orlando & More

I look forward to seeing you all in March in Orlando at the USC Professional Development Schools National Conference and hope that you, too, can become more active in the Association. Elections are just around the corner and we are trying to start some committees that will give more of you the opportunity to participate beyond the conference. Please feel free to e-mail me with your interests, and if you have a particular PDS learning experience you’d like to share from this summer, I’d love to hear about it. Write me at alisonrutter@embarqmail.com.

Write a “Portrait” of Your PDS Partnership

Board of Directors and Executive Committee of NAPDS

As NAPDS states in the “The Nine Essentials of PDS Work,” each of our PDS partnerships is unique in the way it structures its individual school/university relationship, but all partners operationalize elements of these nine tenets. These core principles distinguish the NAPDS concept of educational partnership from others, and the association believes that it is useful for all partnerships to consider these essentials as frameworks for discussion and self-analysis—to appreciate what these still new essentials might look like in action.

The Executive Council and Board of Directors invite individual PDS partnerships to communicate the relevance of the essentials to their school/university relationships. We ask interested PDS partnerships to share their progress in addressing one of the essentials, in part as an effort to provide detailed guideposts and case studies of PDS work for both nascent and established partnerships around the United States and beyond. In constructing a portrait, partnerships may find that their PDS excels at one or another of these essentials or that they are having difficulty addressing a particular essential. We hope these portraits will encourage other PDS partnerships to engage in analyses of their own programs and to recognize that there are multiple strategies for fulfilling the PDS agenda.

These richly detailed depictions of the relevance of the essentials to an individual partnership’s efforts will be considered for publication in *PDS Partners* (the official magazine of NAPDS), in *School-University Partnerships* (the official, peer-reviewed journal of NAPDS), and/or highlighted with special sessions at the PDS National Conference or other NAPDS-sponsored leadership events. “Portraits” of 1,000 words or less addressing a single essential may be submitted to *PDS Partners* (to Kristien Zenkov, the newsletter editor based at George Mason University, at pdspartners@gmu.edu).

Taking the First Steps

Edward N. Davis and Michael Mahan, Armstrong Atlantic State University

The creation of a formal Professional Development School partnership requires a degree of collaboration among all of the parties involved. In this small southern city, an informal arrangement has long been in place between the local public school system and the small university which prepares pre-service teaching candidates for their chosen field. While there has been cooperation in the placement of student teaching interns, the placement of these interns has historically been randomly accomplished without a formally developed plan to guide the placements.

In recent months, it has become apparent to many of the professional educators working in the university's College of Education that formalizing the roles of the individuals involved in the preparation of new teachers would be beneficial to the candidates themselves, the school district, and the university. Thus, a dialogue has been established to initiate the creation of just such a formal partnership.

Initial discussion among those involved in the development of the formal partnership centered on the establishment of specific goals for the partnership. According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2001), a Professional Development School should focus on meeting five major standards:

1. Developing a learning

- community that supports the integrated learning and development of pre-K-12 students, candidates, and PDS partners through inquiry-based practice;
2. Being accountable to the PDS partners and the public for upholding the professional standards for teaching and learning;
3. Collaborating with partner institutions to move from independent to interdependent partners by committing themselves and making a commitment to each other to joint work focusing on the PDS mission;
4. Developing and demonstrating knowledge, skills and dispositions resulting in learning for all pre-K-12 students and ensuring a diverse learning community for PDS work; and
5. Articulating resources and establishing governing structures that support the learning and development of pre-K-12 students, candidates, faculty, and other professionals.

Having determined the specific objectives for the partnership, the process of actually developing the formal partnership began. Discussions were conducted between university faculty responsible for clinical supervision of university student teaching interns and the Director for Human Resources of the school district. Specific schools within the district

were designated as sites into which student teaching interns would be placed for their internship experience.

When the individual schools had been designated, the clinical supervisor met with the principals of the schools and specific faculty members who would be serving as cooperating teachers in support of student teaching interns. Expectations of both the university and the hosting school were identified. Finally, the interns were introduced to the principal and cooperating teachers who would be supporting them during their internship. The interns are currently completing their internships. Preliminary results are positive that this process has been a successful one.

As this initial stage of the PDS has been implemented, other areas leading to a formal agreement between the university and the school district have begun to evolve. Discussion is ongoing regarding the specific components which will comprise the formal partnership. There is much still to be accomplished, and all parties involved in the process are optimistic that a formal agreement will soon be in place. As that occurs, the benefits will be clearly apparent for the university, the school district, and, most importantly, for the students who are served by professional educators who have been prepared for the important work they are charged to do.

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Undergraduates Learn about Qualitative Research at a PDS

Cecile M. Arquette, Bradley University

“One of the most interesting things about this project was watching how Ms. Taylor and Ms. Nichols went from students in my methods class to my research partners.”

The intertwining of teacher and student needs at the PDS site, with university students’ learning and research exemplifies the philosophy of PDS. For this edition of *PDS Partners*, I would like to describe a project that contained these facets, as well as enabled two undergraduates to grow even further as they became co-researchers with me.

I have been the PDS coordinator at Whittier Primary in Peoria, Illinois for three years. When I began working with the faculty, I surveyed the teachers to find out what they needed help with. Many indicated they wanted to work on improving student writing, so we decided to try dialogue journals, at first using college students to write to the primary students. (A dialogue journal is writing done between a student and another person, usually an adult, but sometimes with another student.) In addition to the desire of the teachers to improve their students’ writing, and mine to give my own students a venue to work with students in the classroom, I had

another objective. I wanted to first provide assistance to the teachers (via my students) when they were introduced to the strategy, as writing back to one’s students daily is very time consuming. I envisioned the teachers would then take over answering the journals, but the journaling stopped when my university students finished their assigned weeks.

During the second year, I collected interview data from both participant teachers and university students who wrote with the primary children to find out how to improve the project and how I might help the teachers continue journaling once the college students were done. I read the interviews with an eye to improving the project but did not deeply analyze the material.

This fall (the third) year of the project, I decided to revisit this data and to add to it by interviewing as many primary school participants as possible. In order to do this, I solicited help from my college students. Two of them, Jamie Taylor

and Erin Nichols, volunteered even before we knew for sure they would get stipends for the year.

One of the most interesting things about this project was watching how Ms. Taylor and Ms. Nichols went from students in my methods class to my research partners. They, along with my graduate assistant Carrie Hoffman, interviewed over one hundred students and learned how to code qualitative interview data. Jamie and Erin also helped write a proposal, which was accepted for presentation at the National PDS Conference. We worked together to prepare our presentation, and the three of us traveled to Daytona Beach this year to attend the conference. We are continuing our collaboration, as we co-author a paper which will discuss the project in depth, and include results of the interview data, showing how the three groups of participants, (teachers, pre-service teachers and primary students) perceived the journaling project.

University and School Partnerships Build Successful Collaboration

Timothy Ferguson, Veterans Memorial Elementary School

Debra A. Giambo and Linda Ray, Florida Gulf Coast University

The formal PDS arrangement between the College of Education at Florida Gulf Coast University and Veterans Memorial Elementary School provides an opportunity for university students to attend some of their teacher preparation classes on the elementary school campus. For two courses in particular, “Early Literacy” and “Second Language Acquisition, Communication, and Culture,” this provides a unique opportunity for completing field experience during class time, with extended class hours.

Connecting theory to practice in a more immediate way seems to benefit students’ understanding of the applicability of the content they are learning. The field experience for the two courses involves working with either a young child on early literacy skills or with a student with limited English proficiency on language development, respectively. Holding the field experience in the middle of class meeting time provides an opportunity to connect the content of class to students’ experiences

with their elementary buddies in a meaningful way in addition to providing more support in helping students process their experiences, questions, and concerns. The university students engage in lively conversation with each other and the professors each week. The professors are on site, moving from classroom to classroom, supporting the tutoring model and offering encouragement and ideas during the sessions.

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A PDS Writing Initiative

Cyndi Giorgis and Sue Steaffens, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Two years ago, I [Sue] became principal at Dean Petersen PDS, an at-risk, urban school. During the beginning months of my principalship, it became evident there was not a school-wide writing program being implemented. With little money, we were not able to purchase anything that would provide the needed foundational piece to increase our present writing test scores. However, it was soon discovered that the previous administration had purchased the Lucy Calkins' professional series of writing books to provide guidance for the implementation of writer's workshop. So, this is how our writing initiative began.

During the 2007-08 school year, grade levels were expected to collaborate on the implementation of the Calkins' strategies. A pacing calendar was developed for each grade level, and teachers were expected to delineate a specific time for writing on their daily schedules. Supervisory observations were conducted that looked for the implementation phase of these strategies. In addition, a consultant from the District's Curriculum and Professional Development Department came monthly to dialogue with teachers. This

dialogue was organized to be free flowing with teachers sharing their successes and frustrations in a way that would guide their own growth. In the end, teachers felt they needed more guidance.

This is where the partnership between Dr. Cyndi Giorgis and Dr. Lori Olafson from the University of Nevada Las Vegas began. When Sue indicated that the school-wide focus would be on writing, I [Cyndi] recruited my colleague, Lori Olafson, to assist in providing professional development in this area. We began by meeting with the staff to explain our role and to conduct a needs assessment. This needs assessment informed us that there was confusion as to how to implement writer's workshop. At our first professional development, we requested that all teachers acquire a writer's notebook for their own writing and so that their students would view them as writers. We then presented various pre-writing strategies to assist students who were struggling with how to generate writing ideas. In February, we suggested a school-wide writing activity, "Mapping the Heart" (Heard, 1998) and discussed ways in which this could be adapted to each grade level.

Lori and I also visited classrooms to gather more information and provide support. The focus for the next several months was on conferencing with students - what to look for in a conference, how to collect data, and what to do with the data that was collected.

Several teachers at Petersen have also taken leadership roles in this writing implementation. At the beginning of the 2008-09 school year, the staff adopted a plan to conduct common writing prompts throughout the year. This included the grade level teachers collaborating on the progress of their students and generating future lessons. At the end of the school year, cross-grade level collaboration was conducted with teachers sharing the current students' writing with the teacher the student would have in the upcoming year.

Through the collaboration with the university and the leadership at the school, the writing program at Dean Petersen will, no doubt, progress. This partnership will be ongoing as we build our writing program to increase student achievement.

"Several teachers at Petersen have also taken leadership roles in this writing implementation. At the beginning of the 2008-09 school year, the staff adopted a plan to conduct common writing prompts throughout the year. This included the grade level teachers collaborating on the progress of their students and generating future lessons."

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It's All About the Tools

Gena Brigman, University of South Carolina

Sally Catoe, Denise Barth, Pamela Powell, and Beth Phillips, North Springs Elementary

"Architecture starts when you carefully put two bricks together. There it begins."

~ Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

Building a Professional Development School is a difficult task—don't let anyone tell you differently. However, if you use a construction model and follow simple guidelines, it can be a rewarding process for both university and school faculties as well as the interns it is designed to benefit. In this article we will present information pertinent to

both beginning and experienced PDSs, following the process from blueprint to foundation, framework, basic construction, interior design, and designer upgrades.

As with all construction projects, building an effective program begins with a "blueprint"—a vision of how you want the finished project to look. At this stage, you

should be asking questions like, "What are the expectations of the parties involved?", "What are the key roles?" and "What are the conditions of the relationship?" Tools for this stage begin with the Nine Essentials put forth last year by the NAPDS. They present a clear planning outline. Take time to identify the "tool"

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“Insufficient math and reading scores by students with Individual Education Programs (IEP) on state-wide testing was an obvious concern, but the team wanted to delve further into the data to determine underlying causes and to identify direct and immediate solutions that could be addressed by both the school staff and the university interns.”

Integrating University Interns into the PDS Special Education Strategic Plan: Yielding Immediate Student Academic Gains

Elizabeth Neville, Towson University/Pine Grove Middle School PDS

A PDS partnership has so many possibilities! In anticipation of the arrival of the first class of special education interns to a new middle school PDS, the school and university staff analyzed student data to determine how these interns could best support student achievement. Insufficient math and reading scores by students with Individual Education Programs (IEP) on state-wide testing was an obvious concern, but the team wanted to delve further into the data to determine underlying causes and to identify direct and immediate solutions that could be addressed by both the school staff and the university interns.

Background

Policy in this school district stated that students could fail a maximum of two subjects and be promoted to the next grade level. Furthermore, they could receive a failing grade (E) for two of the four reported quarters and pass the course for the year, as long as they achieved a below average grade (D) or better in the final quarter. A close examination of final report card grades for incoming seventh and eighth grade students was concerning. Sixty-seven percent of incoming seventh grade students with IEPs and 73% of incoming eighth grade students with IEPs received below average or failing grades in content area subjects on their fourth quarter report cards in one or more subjects.

It appeared that many students with IEPs were advancing grade levels without achieving solid foundational skills on which to build future knowledge.

Several root causes were identified. The one that was selected to be addressed by faculty/intern collaborative support was the consistent completion and/or submission of class work and homework assignments. Students no longer had the choice of whether or not they would complete an assignment. The expectation was firmly established that all students with IEPs would complete and submit all assignments and the support to assist them in accomplishing this significant goal was developed.

Intervention

It was determined that the special education teacher and university intern (SE team) would record each classwork and homework assignment as it was submitted. If an assignment was not submitted on the due date, the SE team would assist the student in class, time permitting, or during homeroom the next morning until the assignment was complete. In order to accommodate this additional support system and promote student accountability, Homework Hospital was established for all students with IEPs. For each grade level, a location was designated for students to report ten minutes

before school and throughout homeroom period, which resulted in a 40 minute tutorial period each day. Homework Hospital was staffed by the special education teachers, who were released from before school and homeroom duties, and the university interns. Participation was mandatory for those students who had not completed their assignments the day before. Other students with IEPs could voluntarily attend for assistance with the previous night's homework assignment. The environment that was established was one of caring and support, rather than punitive, thus Homework Hospital became a popular destination for many of the students.

Results

This intervention yielded immediate and sustained results throughout the school year. Student progress was tracked every five weeks, with interim or report card grades. Compared to the previous year, the percentage of students receiving one or more D/E grades on the final report card decreased as follows: Entering seventh graders – 67% to 12% (-55%); entering eighth graders – 73% to 53% (-20%); entering ninth graders - 39%. The special education faculty/intern partnership resulted in significant student achievement and continued to be included in the special education school improvement plan for subsequent years.

From a Partnership to a PDS

Joseph Carriero, Monmouth University

Affirming the belief that rich professional relationships create positive school cultures leading to enhanced student performance, Monmouth University and the Hazlet Township School District (NJ) entered into a “partnership” relationship two years ago. Primarily, our work focused on providing meaningful, sustained professional learning opportunities for both pre-service and in-service teachers. Both the university and the school district have benefited from the partnership, and we have now set our sights on more far reaching goals by initiating a Professional Development School dialogue. While the foundational experiences we have developed through our partnership will continue to serve as the basis for our evolving PDS relationship, we realize the need to understand and appreciate the differences between our original partnership arrangement and the attributes of a PDS.

At the recent National PDS Conference in Daytona Beach, representatives from Monmouth University and the Hazlet Public Schools participated in a panel discussion to outline the steps we have taken to transform our existing university/school district partnership into a PDS model. Two critical issues served as the focus of the forum: What

are the fundamental differences between the original partnership arrangement and our evolving PDS? How will our roles and responsibilities change? Upon reflecting on these two questions, we discovered that the primary difference involves a shift in how we perceive our work together.

As we progress toward a PDS model, our cooperative interactions that marked our original relationship will become more collaborative or even symbiotic in nature. In our existing partnership, one partner frequently assumed the “lead” role and developed objectives or an agenda whereby that partner principally benefited from the experience. This partner was largely responsible for “getting it done.” Trust was earned through relationships that were developed between individuals on a personal and informal level. In our PDS, both partners will jointly establish objectives and set the agenda for mutual benefits to occur. Responsibility for “making it happen” will be shared between the partners. In addition to personal relationships, institutional experiences will become the forum for establishing credibility and trust, and relationships become more formal and institutionalized. This transitional stage represents a change in the roles we assume and the responsibilities we fulfill.

Next steps

As we transform our existing partnership relationship to a PDS model, we anticipate opportunities and challenges including our need to:

1. Consensually develop shared belief statements that reflect the core values of each institution and give meaning to our key assumptions. Professional learning remains central to our vision and becomes the shared responsibility of the school district and university with faculty from each institution contributing to the development of pre-service, novice, and in-service educators. These belief statements will serve as the framework for the development of our mission statement, articulation agreement, and governance structure.
2. Have stakeholders identify goals and outcomes that will result in mutual benefits for the university and the school district.
3. Identify and assume roles and responsibilities within and across organizational settings that support these goals and objectives.
4. Encourage support and participation from university and school district faculties.
5. Seek funding sources to support our work.

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School-University Partnerships Submission

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**Manuscript Submission
 Guidelines**
 can be found at
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“Each week teacher candidates engaged in case-based discussions on P-12 student learning specifically focused on diversity. On a rotating basis, each teacher candidate shared one difficult scenario or case from their teaching that week. They discussed what they did, what the P-12 students did, what supports or materials were available from the school, their mentor teacher’s feedback, etc.”

Computer Mediated Collaboration in a Teacher Internship: A New Approach

Laura Corbin Frazier and Barbara A. Onofrey, Mount St. Mary's University

MSMU is a small, Catholic university located in rural Emmitsburg, Maryland. The faculty and student population is predominantly Caucasian. Our local PDS partners employ a teaching staff that is also predominantly Caucasian with a student population that is more diverse. In addition the number of students on free and reduced lunch reaches as high as 56.8 % in an elementary school and 32.5% in a middle school. MSMU is challenged to create opportunities for teacher candidates to work with diverse faculty, teacher candidate peers, mentor teachers and P-12 student populations.

Research indicates that computer mediated or supported collaborative learning is an effective way for

students to become sensitive to and respond to differing student populations (Merryfield, 2003). The unit field tested an electronic learning community for teacher candidates placed in urban and rural PDSs over a six week period. The threaded discussions engaged fifteen teacher candidates and two PDS Coordinators.

Each week teacher candidates engaged in case-based discussions on P-12 student learning specifically focused on diversity. On a rotating basis, each teacher candidate shared one difficult scenario or case from their teaching that week. They discussed what they did, what the P-12 students did, what supports or materials were available from the school, their mentor teacher’s feedback, etc.

The remainder of the cohort then added their thoughts or suggestions to the presenting teacher candidate, and compared and contrasted with experiences from their school setting. This experience was to provide for meaningful and purposeful connections between students from each setting.

The project objectives were to provide teacher candidates (1) an increased awareness of the kinds of experiences that teachers encounter in different school settings; (2) examples of plausible strategies teachers can use to facilitate learning for diverse learners and learning styles; and (3) an increased confidence in their preparedness to teach in various school settings.

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From Intern to Intern: Tips on Attending and Presenting at a National Conference

Lindsy Ciuffetelli, Park Forest Elementary School / Penn State University

When I think about attending a national conference, two words come to mind: scary and exciting. Normally, I am greeted each day by a group of smiling and excited first and second graders. It is so refreshing and relaxing because it is comfortable, but attending a conference is completely the opposite; it is the unusual and unexpected. As I prepared for the Professional Development Schools National Conference, the thought of a new audience seemed unsettling. A thousand questions filled my mind:

- What will it look like?
- Who will be there?
- What do I wear? What do I take?
- What should I do in a session? How will sessions be set up?
- How will I plan where I am

going?

Attending this conference is more than just traveling, arriving, and presenting. If you are thinking about attending next year, I offer you some advice.

Tip 1: Organize Yourself

At check-in, you will receive valuable information. Familiarize yourself with the pamphlet that lists the sessions and their locations, the program book that tells you the summaries of each session, and the map that helps you navigate around the conference. When planning your conference agenda, plan it one day at a time and select sessions that really interest you. Marking them will help catch your attention when you need to quickly find the sessions later on. Also, compare your marked session to

the summary given in the program book to see if it still matches your interest. Be willing to deviate from your plan. Schedule reflection time to process and reflect on the great knowledge you are hearing.

Tip 2: Practice for Your Presentation

Preparation is key to a successful presentation. Presenting takes time, collaboration, and effort. Think about what you are going to say, but do not write a speech. People care about what you really know; if you really know it, you will be able to passionately speak about it from the heart. Ask others on your presentation team for advice. Practice your presentation – team “dress rehearsals” help because you can work through all of the “ums,” “uhs,” and stumbling

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It's All About the Tools

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of school culture with input from the faculty. Finally, establish a dialogue between key university partners and key school players including both administration and teaching faculty, and create a contract that delineates mutual roles and responsibilities.

The next stage, foundation, addresses issues such as “Why do we want to be a PDS?” and “How do we develop total faculty buy-in?” It is critical that all faculty at both institutions support the relationship. Tools will include meetings with the faculty and with the university partners, schedules, space for the university liaison, and the use of resources. It is especially important to develop faculty buy-in, even from teachers who may not be directly involved with intern teachers.

The framework stage allows the partnership to examine other PDS sites, compare the mission statements of the College of Education and the school, and identify strengths of teachers in the school. A good tool for this stage is participation of teachers and administrators in a conference that addresses PDS issues (PDS National Conference, Holmes, or National Network for Educational Renewal to name a few).

Basic construction will activate

your PDS. In this stage, interns work with teachers in the school and collaboration is taking place. Interns receive professional development using the school’s technology, and they are included on the school’s email address book. Both school and university should be asking questions like: “How long should an internship last?”, “How many grade levels should be incorporated?”, “How should mentors be trained?”, “How will we integrate interns and the university liaison into our school?” and “What are the university requirements that the interns must meet and how do they fit the realities of the classroom?” Answers will determine the tools you choose.

As your program develops, you will begin to look for ways to enhance it. We call this stage “Interior Design.” Our school identified a need to look beyond the internship and assist student teachers with the task of preparing resumes and planning for interviews. The tools we utilized were resume preparation, organization of a small “interview portfolio,” and mock interviews. We also examined rewards for mentors.

Finally, we have “Designer Upgrades.” At this stage, an experienced PDS begins to ask questions like “What could we do

to make our program really stand out in terms of preparing future teachers?” and “What cutting-edge research-based strategies would help us be better educators and mentors?” Tools used by our school included a school-wide practice of integrating service learning into each classroom as well as the development of a grand rounds model we call our “Celebration of Teaching” in which teachers of all subjects and in all grade levels open their classrooms for interns to observe a specific model lesson. The interns get to view 12 different offerings (a total of 36 are offered) and then sit at an after-school roundtable discussion where they can ask the teachers questions. Coordinating a research project with a professor is another good example of a “designer upgrade.” Upgrades should be designed to energize the faculty and spur them to new ideas and more universal ownership within the collaborative.

Each of these stages of development presents challenges and rewards. Obviously, dialogue within the school and in collaboration with the university is critical at every stage. PDS is an on-going process: if you aren’t growing, you begin to deteriorate. Throughout the process, remember: *It’s all about the tools!*

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Computer Mediated Collaboration in a Teacher Internship

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The project had moderate success. The threads of discussion did address the different experiences found in the urban and rural settings. However, discussions did not provide concrete strategies on meeting the needs of diverse learners. The discussions revolved around classroom procedures rather than broader issues involving diverse learners and learning styles.

An end of project questionnaire

was administered to assess candidate feelings of confidence. Candidates indicated interest in continued dialogue but also shared that they were too busy during internship to regularly seek advice and respond to the community postings. All indicated that the community facilitated understanding and awareness of diverse issues in schools, but none indicated improved confidence as a result of participation in the community.

This project would be valuable to continue with greater involvement of the PDS Coordinators and mentor teachers to help facilitate teacher candidates’ selection of cases to discuss. Further, the establishment of group norms for participation would enhance the dialogue while reducing the time commitment for individual candidates. With a larger number of participants these norms would still provide a venue for individual sharing of experiences and strategies.

The “Stages” of a Professional Development School (PDS) Relationship

*Fran Greb and Amy Bembridge, Montclair State University
Alison Noel-Alva, Knollwood School*

The “script” for our PDS partnership was written over nine (9) years ago. Some of the original ‘cast’ has moved to other “stages” while others who had “leading roles” are now “stand-ins” or “extra’s.” The “stage” seems to remain the same; however, the players assume different roles. This theatrical metaphor serves as a description of the life of a PDS relationship between Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ and Knollwood School in Parsippany, NJ.

At the beginning of this partnership one of the now “leading ladies,” Allison Noel-Alva, was an “understudy” while she completed her student teaching. She attended professional development workshops, gained confidence through experience and profited

from mentoring. Allison then secured a position as a first grade teacher at Knollwood. As she became more confident in her “role” as an educator, she began to investigate ways to further hone her skills. This investigation brought her to the work of Ruth Charney and the Responsive Classroom® approach to classroom management which she shared with her university mentor who is also the PDS Liaison to Knollwood School. The Liaison shared this information with the school and due to great interest a study group was formed. The study group, facilitated by seasoned Knollwood teachers and the Liaison, continued to learn how to improve their teaching through a Responsive Classroom® lens. As the teachers became “experts” in various teaching techniques

they shared this information at “local theaters” and took it on the road “nationally.” After years of ‘touring’ some of the actors were ready to assume supporting roles. Now, Allison assumed the leadership role of the study group and is facilitating research on the power of teacher language. The staff is embracing the work and attending monthly lunch and learn sessions. Plans are in place for continuation of this community of learners facilitated by Allison, one of our former student teachers.

Our PDS is constantly changing and actors move from “stand-ins,” to “leading people,” to “members of the audience.” This metaphor describes the ‘show’ that is constantly developing in our collaborative and adaptive school/university partnership.

“Editors’ Corner”

*Kristien Zenkov, George Mason University
James Harmon, Euclid High School/MUST Program PDS Partnership
Athene Bell, Manassas City School District*

With this issue we have made a significant and formal transition for PDS Partners: we are now officially recognized as the “The Official Magazine of the National Association for Professional Development Schools.” This decision—made by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of the NAPDS—recognizes the transition of this publication two years ago to one focused on sharing more extended stories of PDS work from around the United States and beyond. While you will not notice any immediate changes to PDS Partners, we will look forward to further expanding the publication and including more stories and services from and for our members. We look forward to your input about what else we might include in this magazine, to support, inform, celebrate, and nudge the PDS movement. As always, we appreciate your ideas for magazine stories and your articles—please submit these to Kristien at pdspartners@gmu.edu. We will also look forward in an upcoming issue to focusing on a particular theme, likely including a number of stories that detail how PDS constituents are addressing “social justice” in their partnership work.

University and School Partnerships Build Successful Collaboration

(Continued from page 4)

By teaching these classes in the PDS, university students encounter the real world of teaching long before their first internship. There have been instances where children are absent, tired, or uncooperative. Other days, the university student feels the euphoria of successfully teaching something for the first time. Both the highs and lows of education are experienced during the days at the PDS, and those experiences are addressed immediately in class.

University students benefit from the extra support that can be provided through the collaboration of the university professor, the

classroom teacher, the ESOL teacher, and the school principal. Through modeling, students can also see how professionals solve problems together for the benefit of their students as well as the need for flexibility in the real world of the school day. Holding these two classes on the same day provides a logistical benefit for university students and their busy schedules.

As the principal of a PDS, the impact of the university and school PDS partnership is evident in all aspects of our school culture. Our PDS partnership supports the vision and beliefs of our school in

establishing a professional learning community committed to the success of both students and adults in reaching high levels of learning and performance. Our students and staff members experience professional development and continuous learning opportunities daily as they interact with students and faculty members from the university. The opportunity to connect learning theory and instructional practice daily is truly evident through our PDS collaborative partnership. Preparing teachers for 21st century schools requires new ways of thinking and working collaboratively to prepare educators of tomorrow.

“By teaching these classes in the PDS, university students encounter the real world of teaching long before their first internship.”

From Intern to Intern

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blocks before you are in front of the audience.

Tip 3: Make the Most of the Experience

Conferences are about learning, but in order to learn, you must take time to reflect on what you have learned. You will get a wealth of information from the different sessions. Give yourself time to process what you hear. Take notes, but only take notes that you really need. It is not like a college class – you will not be tested on the information later; write down what you think you will use. Talk to as many people as you can; they all have valuable information to share. Attend the socials. They are a great space to meet and network with other colleagues from across the

country. How often do we ever have a chance to engage in such dialogue?

Attending a conference is about many things. It is about meeting other colleagues, engaging in educational conversations, gaining presentation experience, and learning about other PDS programs. Of the many things I learned from attending this conference, there is one overarching belief that will stay with me forever. There is power in professional development, and attending a conference is an unbelievable way to gain that valuable experience. I learned so much in just one weekend, and it will forever affect the way I conduct myself in the profession. After attending this conference, I

gained so many valuable thoughts that I am forever changed, and I hope that if you take this advice, you, too, can be touched by such an experience.

Note: Lindsy Ciuffetelli is an intern at Park Forest Elementary School in the State College Area School District. She teaches in a first and second grade multiage classroom. This article was prepared with guidance, encouragement, and support from Rebecca West Burns, a Professional Development Associate (PDA) for the Pennsylvania State University. As a PDA, Rebecca works closely with interns and mentors on a daily basis.

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What to Watch for Fall 2009

- NAPDS Executive Council and Board of Directors Nominations and Elections (Deadline: September 25)
 - *President (Higher Ed)
 - *Board Member (Higher Ed or P-12)
- The NAPDS Award for Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement Submissions (Deadline October 5)
- 2010 PDS National Conference Call for Proposals (Deadline: October 15)

Go to www.napds.org for more information