

PDS Partners

The Official Magazine of the National Association for Professional Development Schools

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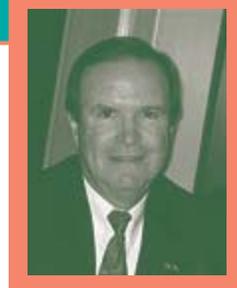
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A Message From the President

Bernard Badiali, Penn State University



The NAPDS is very pleased to send you another edition of PDS Partners. I am confident that you will find this issue interesting and informative. Our thanks to all of the contributors to this issue. You will notice that there has been a change in the editorship. Kristien Zenkov, who so capably led the magazine for the last several years, has moved into the managing editor's role of *School University Partnerships*, the scholarly publication of NAPDS. Kristien and his new editorial team have been working tirelessly to get SUP back on schedule and out to the membership. Ron Siers, Jr. from Salisbury University has agreed to become editor of *PDS Partners*. We see these two publications as vital to the health and heartbeat of the NAPDS and we are very confident at this point that both Ron and Kristien will continue to provide the PDS community with informative publications that represent the views and interests of the membership.

Of course there is growing excitement about the PDS National Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada beginning March 8, 2012. Bruce Field informs us that this could be the best conference ever. We know that more than 134 different partnerships will be represented from all over the United States. The range of topics being presented is very impressive. The conference has had a powerful influence on the field, bringing together Professional Development Schools from all over the country and at every stage of development. The conference can be a rich learning experience regardless of where your PDS is in its development. It is also a great venue for your PDS team to bond and plan for the future. The PDS National Conference is not only a good place for those of us who work in a PDS every day, it is also an excellent place to bring potential partners and key people from within your community. Incoming president Judy Beiter and I will be hosting a session for new members. Please encourage any first-time conference attendees to join us. Our enthusiasm for NAPDS just might be infectious. See more details on the NAPDS website or go to <http://www.ed.sc.edu/pds/register.htm>.

Speaking of enthusiasm for NAPDS, I'd like to say a few words about the power of visiting other PDS settings. At Penn State, we have hosted visitors from all over the country and all over the world. Visitors can be critical friends who give us the opportunity not only to share what we are doing, but also for us to articulate to one another what we value as a community. Sometimes I think folks within our PDS gain as much from telling and retelling "our story" as the visitors do in learning the intricacies of our context. I would like to encourage all of us to engage in more site visits if possible. I know that time and budgets are tight, but hosting visitors and making visits serves to benefit everyone.

Finally, I would like to thank you for allowing me to represent NAPDS as president for the last year. The experience has been amazing. I am more convinced than ever that the PDS movement is strong and gaining momentum. Those of us who work in a PDS are absolutely engaged in the right work at the right time. I am more convinced than ever that we prepare the best teachers in the country. Thanks for the work you do. Thanks for keeping NAPDS viable and thriving. And thanks for the privilege of representing the organization.

Skype a Scientist and Educator? Ask Your Professional Development School Consortium for Some Assistance!

Michelle Francisco, Coralee Smith and Rosemary Arioli-Leibowitz, Buffalo State College

“As a student teacher, I became aware of the importance of collaborative teaching and learning. Using Skype allowed real-time communication for elementary students, BSC college faculty and me.”

The Buffalo State College (BSC) Professional Development School Consortium, Buffalo, NY, includes 17 school districts with 48 elementary schools. The partner schools can apply for mini-grants from the Center of Excellence in Urban and Rural Education at BSC for “supplies, substitute teacher pay, instructional materials, literature, software, technology, and for support of the research process in the school. In addition to funding, the Consortium provides college support in the form of faculty expertise for research design” (Buffalo State College, 2011, para. 2).

A 2010-2011 funded mini-grant was the Junior Einstein’s Mini Grant for Henry Hudson School, Rochester, NY, written by Rosemary Arioli Leibowitz of BSC and Melissa Heywood of Rochester, NY.

I am a BSC graduate student with a Communication degree. I was unaware of the PDS mini-grant until I began student teaching. I knew that student teaching was collaborative, but I did not realize the potential of the Professional Development School Consortium until student teaching in a gifted sixth-grade classroom. I was to teach a Physical Science unit. I wanted a hands-on, minds-on experience. Luckily, my student teaching school was a member of the BSC Professional Development

School Consortium. I asked my supervisor, Rosemary Leibowitz, who suggested collaborating with Dr. Coralee Smith, who had taught both gifted education and science methods. The collaboration began by email and developed using Skype for the up-close and personal aspect of teaching.

Dr. Smith suggested it would be an excellent idea to get my students engaged and involved by using the Great Explorations in Math and Science (GEMS, 2011) kits and Skype. Dr. Smith provided a GEMS overview with multiple ways to utilize it. The Physical Science unit I was to teach included chromatography in the GEMS Crime Lab Chemistry. The GEMS resource aligns with The New York State Science Standards Physical Science #3: Matter is made up of particles whose properties determine the observable characteristics of matter and its reactivity. The purchase of the materials was possible from the BSC Professional Development School Consortium mini-grant.

I developed an agenda to introduce the first chromatography lesson and have Dr. Smith Skype. I read six different scenarios to students so they could gather evidence about a written note. The students were divided into groups and chromatography stations. The stations had chromatography tests

to observe and record different ink pigments. Dr. Smith answered students’ questions and provided scientific explanations using Skype.

With Dr. Smith Skyping, the students became scientists! Through Skype, Dr. Smith provided guidance and positive feedback. The students generated amazing conclusions, based on their data. The hands-on activities allowed students to apply information and relate their chromatography testing in real-time.

The BSCPDS Consortium provides student teachers opportunities to connect with experts. The mini-grants provided funding to purchase the GEMS materials. As a student teacher, I became aware of the importance of collaborative teaching and learning. Using Skype allowed real-time communication for elementary students, BSC college faculty and me. We were able to do something that had not been done before. What a positive experience for all!

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Waiting for Superman? Superman Has Arrived! Meeting the Challenge of Urban PDSs

Nicole Nickens, Deb Theiss, and Georgia Jarman, University of Central Missouri

Julie Hentges, Marian Brown, and Tony Dickerson, Benjamin Charter Academy of Technology

On October 29, 2010, the host of “Dialogue” (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars), John Milewski, called the co-creator (of Davis Guggenheim’s Documentary, *Waiting for ‘Superman’*), Margaret Gayle, and Hugh Osborn, one of her collaborators to discuss the film’s influence on educational reform. Milewski asked, “While such examples (*Waiting for ‘Superman’*) make for dramatic storytelling, they don’t suggest a model for reform that is easy to duplicate or sustain. What can work for the most schools over the long haul?”

Many have found it easy to point out failings within the system of public education in the United States, but few of those critics have tried to develop a feasible model to foster success. The director of a charter school in one of the most embattled public school districts in the country decided not to wait for a superhero to help her school; instead, she wrote a school improvement grant that outlined a partnership with the school’s charter sponsor, a midsize Midwestern university long known for its dedication to teacher education.

The charter academy is a pre-k – 8th grade urban school with a composite population of 98% qualifying for free and reduced lunch; the student body is 99% African American. A majority of students in grades 3-8 perform at least 2 or more years below grade level in communication arts and math. The director hoped to transform the school culture and raise student achievement between 2010 and 2013 using the Turn Around School Model. Instead of waiting for Superman, the grant proposed more of a “Justice League” approach by bringing

together a team to achieve school improvement goals.

Along with education experts at the Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC) and faculty from the university, the director worked out the logistics and details of the university-school partnership. The grant-funded services provided by the university in 2010-11 included:

- A job-embedded MSE program provided on-site by two UCM faculty members and supported online
- Instructional coaching and modeling in primary and intermediate lab classrooms
- An instructional technologist to work with the school technology team to develop technology curriculum and identify funding sources
- Preschool consultation to establish a preschool, adopt and implement a language-focused curriculum, select and seek state licensure and accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children; and ongoing professional development for preschool teachers
- Speech and Language evaluations of preschool and kindergarten children with delivery of speech and language services to students identified with needs
- Early literacy assessment and reading assessment grades K-3
- Data team to meet with the school data officer to interpret and analyze data for required grant reports to the State
- RPDC services including coaching the coaches and school-wide supports: Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) consultation and training, assessment consultation including analysis of common assessments and in-service training for faculty

One year into the grant, the “Justice League” members reflect upon the past year and look toward the second year of the partnership. The work of the partnership was aided by many strengths of the school including:

- Strong student-centered philosophy of administrative and instructional staff in the school
- Teachers’ willingness to benefit from instructional coaching and other consultation services provided through the grant
- Director’s vision to create a professional development consortium with other area charter schools and to create a ‘lab school’ environment that allows continual professional growth and sharing of best practices

Every superhero effort faces its own unique kryptonite. Some challenges of the first-year partnership included:

- University faculty members navigating an administrative structure that is not similar to that found in most public schools
- Significant academic and non-academic needs of the student population
- Lack of cohesive curriculum for all content areas across grade levels
- High pressure upon administrators and teachers to make AYP
- Some loss of instructional time to test prep and testing
- Low teacher retention (voluntarily, involuntarily, and

“The director of a charter school in one of the most embattled public school districts in the country decided not to wait for a superhero to help her school; instead, she wrote a school improvement grant ... bringing together a team to achieve school improvement goals.”

- due to SIG requirements)
- Lack of school-wide discipline support or behavior management system and high incidence of behavioral disruptions in the classroom.

The second year of grant funding will bring some adjustment to services, and a primary goal for year two is to establish lab classrooms. These classrooms will host a Professional Development School (PDS) experience for UCM education majors. The groundwork must be successfully completed before PDS interns can add a new dimension to the partnership. Summer MSE classes included a focus on mentoring to prepare classroom teachers to host and mentor PDS interns. Pre-service teacher interns will complete an orientation to urban education; the majority of education students from this Midwestern University are from rural and suburban areas and do not have any experience with the unique needs of urban education.

Orientation will include demographics of the student population in the charter school; surfacing and addressing stereotypes that interns may hold; and the mission, vision,

and practices within the charter school. The urban PDS will employ a different structure than that employed in other current partner schools. Interns and teachers will be trained in and will utilize co-teaching two days each week throughout a semester-long internship. University faculty will teach within lab classrooms to allow co-teaching planning time. The block of courses tied to the internship will be offered on-site. PDS interns will contribute to the school improvement goals by assisting with literacy assessment, participating in staff professional development for PBIS, and collecting grant-related classroom data. Data will be collected to assess the four-dimensional mission for the university's PDS partnership:

- pre-k – 8th grade student achievement
- pre-service teacher preparation
- professional development of public school teachers and
- professional development of university faculty

In the early years of his super-heroic career, Superman was not endowed with the power of flight. He did possess superhuman

speed and could leap tremendous distances. Over time, Superman's running speed and leaping ability increased but the transition to flying was "extraordinarily gradual and was punctuated by a great deal of inconsistency" according to Yahoo Answers (para. 2, 2011). Similarly, our partnership is gradually enhancing the "powers" it was initially endowed with, while seeking to discover and build upon new possibilities of working together...we are learning to fly!

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A New Tradition Evolves in Our Community School/PDS

JoAnne Ferrara, Manhattanville College

Amy Simmons and Barbara Terracciano, Thomas A. Edison Community School

Finding innovative ways to support PDS constituents for success is fundamental to the work of PDSs. In schools serving a mostly poor immigrant student population, innovation and creative use of resources are critical for preparing teacher candidates to understand the issues related to poverty and to provide supports which help classroom teachers meet the needs of their students. One innovative approach to meet the multiple challenges of student poverty is to create a community school that uses partnerships to support its children and their families. Community schools function as the hub for community agencies located at the school site offering mental health care, primary medical care, and a host of social services. For those community schools lucky enough to have a PDS as a partner, this opens another dimension for creating resources for success.

Helping pre-service teachers to navigate the complexities of diverse classrooms while also preparing them with skills for a successful career is one important goal of PDS work. An equally important goal is helping practicing teachers to enhance their own professional growth so they, too, are more successful in their craft. But how do we as PDS partners attempt to address the broadly defined goal of student success? We recognize that the ability to achieve success in life requires more than just good grades, but also includes access to resources and the ability to envision one's self as successful. For many students living in poverty the ability to envision success is often overshadowed by the daily struggles of survival. In this article, we describe one of our many PDS goals that help to positively impact student achievement and their ability to consider a future where

academic success is more than a fleeting idea.

It started as a conversation. During a PDS retreat a few years ago, one teacher identified the need for children at Edison to see college as a viable option, or better yet as an expectation. Most of these students' families are recent immigrants experiencing the economic and social challenges associated with living in the United States and raising a child in our educational system. A suggestion was made to take our fifth graders to college for the day. The overwhelmingly positive response made this idea become a reality. 'College to Career Day' was born. The goal was to bring the abstract concept of 'college' into a concrete and attainable goal. Initially, it was set up to provide the children with a half day experience on the college campus of our PDS partner, Manhattanville College, where they would have fun learning about college and what it could mean to them.

In our first year, the half day program was designed to show the children several things about college including: seeing a college campus (for most, their very first time!), visiting a college class, and interacting with college students and professors. There was an all-around epiphany. These students would be going to college!

As 'College to Career Day' grew, it became another Manhattanville-Edison PDS tradition that also now provides student teachers with a leadership opportunity. They work together, along with classroom teachers and the PDS Steering Committee, to plan and execute this annual event. 'College to Career Day' has evolved into a full day experience preceded by

a unit of study about shaping our futures through college. The event has an added benefit of helping pre-service teachers to directly and positively impact a child's academic future and potential for success in life.

In its second year, 'College to Career Day' was extended to the parents as well. This was critical because many of the parents had not graduated high school. They would need much more information and exposure to the realm of higher education to become proactively supportive of their children going to college. The PDS committee addressed this need by arranging for the parents to attend 'College to Career Day.' They would see their child on a college campus, have sessions targeted just for them on how to approach the college process, including meetings with financial aid and admissions counselors. These conversations allow our families to learn the ins and outs of the complex nature of the world of college, one that is extremely overwhelming and confusing to anyone. In our hearts, we knew it could never be too early to begin these dialogues.

Aside from the parent component, 'College to Career Day' now includes the children's participation in traditional college open house events normally attended by high school juniors and seniors. Tours of dormitories, visits to the cafeteria, observing a class in session, talking with admissions counselors, hanging out on the green and chatting with students on campus as well as their professors is now commonplace in fifth grade, rather than the end of high school.

This annual educational event has

"In schools serving a mostly poor immigrant student population, innovation and creative use of resources are critical ... 'College to Career Day' was born."

been so successful that it has now been replicated in seven other PDSs within the college's network of schools. As a PDS and a full service community school, Edison continues to provide resources like this event for our families, allowing us to continue working within the

mission of educating the whole child. Because we realize the importance and value of continued education, our mission does not end in fifth grade; this college conversation is the beginning of their futures.

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Nurturing Junior Faculty in Professional Development Schools

*Claudette Thompson and Christine Hunt, St. Bonaventure University
Kathy Petruzzi, Smethport Elementary School*

"... a major factor that has contributed to their ability to cope with teaching in Professional Development Schools while preparing their tenure portfolios is co-teaching with carefully selected elementary teacher-turned university faculty."

The Professional Development School model has become a mainstay for preparing competent teachers for the 21st century elementary schools in the United States. Consequently, it is becoming more common for beginning teacher education professors to receive their induction in higher education by teaching in Professional Development Schools.

The teacher candidates in this program complete two semesters of field-based work with the support and supervision of a university faculty member as well as an adjunct faculty member. During the course of each of these semesters, they spend two days of the week completing their university coursework within the walls of an elementary school building. Part of the day is devoted to learning theory and pedagogy while the rest is devoted to seeing this in action (or not in action) as the teacher candidates work with an assigned classroom teacher in that school. University and adjunct faculty observe the students and interact closely with the elementary teachers.

For tenure-track assistant professors who teach in this setting, the added mentoring, relationship-building, coupled with the scholarship and service requirement, make the beginning of a career in higher education even more challenging.

This is further compounded when the junior faculty members have a 4-4 load.

This is the tale of two junior faculty members. They land their first college teaching jobs at a university whose teacher preparation is primarily field-based. In this article they, along with their co-instructor, identify some of the inherent systems of their unique professional development model. They concur that a major factor that has contributed to their ability to cope with teaching in Professional Development Schools while preparing their tenure portfolios is co-teaching with carefully selected elementary teacher-turned university faculty. A partner adjunct faculty shares her experience.

"I was quite comfortable when asked to orientate a new faculty to the university's unique Field Block experience. I had taught both Field Blocks I and II with three different professors. I had retired from the Smethport Elementary School after 34 years of teaching grades K-4. I also directed Head Start and served as building principal for two years. I was familiar with the university, as I had also mentored several student teachers over the years. It was an honor to introduce a new university faculty to our administrators with whom I had worked and my former colleagues who would serve as

clinical faculty. Some of the 'leg-work' in preparation for my co-teaching role included scheduling time to meet the superintendent and adding my new co-instructor and interns to the library's computer system. I find it so rewarding to plan, co-teach, observe, and advise interns with a team of university professors and experienced teachers. What a privilege to have co-taught with such fine educators who share my love of teaching and preparing future teachers of our most precious resource—our children!"

Authentic Assignments

Many university assignments are strongly tied with interns' work with elementary students. Two major semester-long assignments that are highly connected include an integrated math or science unit plan and a Teacher Work Sample (TWS). Teacher candidates generate a thoughtful unit plan, pre-assess the students to guide their instruction, teach as much of the unit as possible, post-assess the students on what was taught, and analyze the results. A second ongoing assignment requires that the teacher candidates examine some aspect of their teaching. They identify a question, review literature, collect data while they are teaching in the classroom, analyze the data, and present this to their peers. For another semester-long assignment interns

gather a variety of work samples for a single student in their elementary classroom, analyze each artifact, and produce a script for a conference with the parent of this child.

Technology Competence

In our partnership, some clinical faculty members rely on their interns to “lead the way” in infusing technology in elementary instruction. Elementary education majors begin using technology in instruction as early as their sophomore year. Prior to Field Block, students enroll in a technology lab, a companion course for Basic Instructional Design. By the time they get to Field Block, interns are competent at using technology to enhance instruction.

One of the major assignments is designing a Virtual Field Trip (VFT) to a site. For this assignment students discuss their destination with the clinical faculty. Most of the assignments are related to the elementary curriculum. Interns consult their mentor teachers and design a virtual field trip to a place that is included in the elementary

social studies curriculum. The showing of the virtual field trip is part of a social studies unit for their assigned grade. Since the virtual field trips are developed with consideration for the national social studies standards and are vetted by the university faculty, they are credible and pedagogically sound. In addition to meeting INTASC and technology standards they are teaching resources that may be used during student teaching and beyond.

Professional Development

Successful collaboration is not limited to planning and teaching. Our Professional Development School partnership facilitates joint professional development. A Keenan Grant that was awarded by St. Bonaventure University sponsored a clinical faculty at our partner school and a university faculty to participate in a workshop. The intensive one-week training, Powerful and Authentic Social Studies (PASS), exposed participants to a variety of instruction and assessment strategies that meet the National Council for the Social Studies-endorsed criteria for excellent

social studies lessons. We received binders with literature and DVDs that are serving as valuable resources for teaching elementary social studies.

The partnership between this private university, with its emphasis on mentoring and modeling by competent and experienced faculty, technology integration, authentic assignments, and professional development may be a model for partnerships between similar institutions. These factors are also powerful support for junior faculty as they prepare tenure portfolios while teaching primarily in field-based teacher preparation programs.

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“Editors’ Corner”

*Ron Siers, Jr., Salisbury University
Cathy Ramey, Mardela Middle and High School*

This is the first edition of PDS Partners with your new team of Editors, Assistant Editors, and Section Co-Editors. We have been working hard to make a seamless transition for our PDS members. The transition has been invigorating and challenging. Our Editorial teams from Maryland, New York, Texas, Alabama, and California are excited for the opportunity to serve our constituents throughout the United States and beyond during our tenure with the magazine. The addition of our Section Co-Editors adds another layer to our editorial review process and provides new opportunities for PDS collaboration among P-12/university partnerships.

The expansion of the magazine also affords more opportunities for PDS submissions. The Editorial team looks forward to working with you and hopes that our service to the NAPDS organization provides you with a viable service that is congruent with your professional life. We welcome your comments on other ideas for the magazine and look forward to seeing each of you at the PDS National Conference in March.

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Partnership Structures and Relationships: The NNER in Action

*Ann Foster, Executive Director National Network for Educational Renewal
Lisa Johnson and Jennie Rakestraw, Winthrop University*

Partnerships are tough stuff. They demand participation, agreement on goals, recognition that those goals can best (or only) be achieved by collaboration, and—in the common business definition—partners share ‘profits and losses’ and must make changes by learning what works and what does not as measured against the shared goals.

The National Network for Educational Renewal (NNER), initiated by John Goodlad and colleagues in the mid 1980s, adapted these core partnership requirements for education. An education visionary, Goodlad conducted extensive research on schools and places that prepare teachers. He found that while these two institutions share responsibility for current and future students’ success, they operated as separate, isolated units—sometimes with overlapping goals and sometimes working at odds. To tackle this bedrock structural problem, Goodlad and colleagues formed the NNER, forging the path to simultaneous renewal of schools and places that prepare teachers. By recognizing and then building on one another’s strengths, school and university partners began learning from and about one another’s cultures, constraints, and core missions. Goodlad’s vision included the tripartite of public school and university education and arts and sciences colleagues—all of whom contribute to and benefit from preparing quality teachers (Goodlad, Mantle-Bromley, and Goodlad 2004). And while this is conceptually obvious, bringing the divergent perspectives together in real partnerships requires hard work; nurturing and renewing relationships and structures is an ongoing challenge.

“At the heart of our co-labor, NNER partners share a common mission; we recognize that there is a public purpose for schools in a democracy.”

At the heart of our co-labor, NNER partners share a common mission; we recognize that there is a public purpose for schools in a democracy. To ensure that students have the skills, knowledge, and experiences to contribute to improving this democracy, we must provide access to quality knowledge for all, engage in pedagogy that nurtures individual strengths while continually challenging students, and be authentic stewards of our profession studying and implementing concomitant change. Guided by this compass, NNER members attend to the roles and structures that form the partnership infrastructure. And, while relationships can be built to promote conversation across institutions, the NNER has learned that specific roles are required to bridge the cultures.

For this complex role, the cultural boundary spanners called hybrid educators require specific characteristics. Fundamentally, they must ‘generously’ listen to multiple points of view, be creative, and open to new ideas. They are the go-to people who build and retain cross-boundary trust and mutual confidence. Beyond quality hybrid educators, successful partnering requires good structures—space for hybrid educators and other partnership members to converse openly, make changes as needed, and keep the partnership on mission. The following example of one NNER setting’s journey and work provides insights into how an effective collaboration navigates these challenges.

With the NNER mission as an umbrella, the Winthrop University-School Partnership (WUSP) commits to four goals: 1) improving student academic achievement; 2) improving professional learning for school/university faculty and teacher candidates; 3) strengthening the pre-baccalaureate preparation of teacher candidates; and 4) increasing new teachers’ support. Such goals are too far reaching for one organization to tackle alone. To know how to improve teacher candidates’ preparation, the university must know the challenges practicing teachers face. Improving student academic achievement requires teachers who are prepared to address diverse learners’ needs. When the WUSP began, we shared a commitment to addressing the four goals but came together with different perspectives on each other’s work; we did not have the “trust and personal connection” (Teitel, 2003, p. 11) seen in many beginning partnerships. Thus, structures were needed to forge a pathway to a shared educational renewal vision. Two key structures are the individual hybrid educators and the collective partnership council. Each school-university partnership has its unique name for these structures. At Winthrop, hybrid educators are called Winthrop Faculty-in-Residence and are paired with P-12 School Liaisons; and our partnership council is called the Partnership Network Advisory Council (PNAC). It is essential to have individual faculty serve in essential roles at the forefront of the work and a collective group to keep the partnership mission-centered and goal-oriented.

Hybrid educators are responsible for creating and managing the physical and philosophical spaces between

and among the collaborating constituencies and are accountable to fulfill the partnership mission and goals. Motivated by the power of the work, hybrid educators create an empowering role. Winthrop partnership hybrid educators emerge from the university and public schools. They share the common characteristics of successful work across institutional boundaries. The PNAC applies the NNER notion of a “tripartite council” at the local level to build, guide, and sustain effective school-university partnerships. Public school, colleges of education and arts and sciences colleagues come together to determine how the partnership’s common goals can be met. Through the PNAC individual and professional relationships are formed, differing cultures and traditions are acknowledged, and trust is built.

Hybrid educators play a pivotal role in the PNAC. Together, they

coordinate, communicate, and oversee the Partnership Network focusing on the schools’ networking and creating collaborative teaching, professional development, and inquiry opportunities. Hybrid educators, with critical input from the PNAC, are responsible for initiatives including teacher preparation curriculum decisions and models of mentoring. They advance the institutions’ mutual roles in preparing future educators and providing professional development. It should be noted that, for the hybrid educator, the ability to have these conversations and to be effective in that role is not something that immediately occurs once the hybrid educator is identified. Just as the cultivation of school-university partnerships is a developmental process, the role of hybrid educator must be allowed to grow and mature. As one colleague noted, “Neither one of us knew exactly what to do when

tasks, and navigating the nuances of unknown territory.” In addition, engaging in honest and sometimes difficult conversations is something that is an ever-evolving feature of the PNAC. Hybrid educators gain great professional insight and benefit from the role they play. As one noted, “This role has truly functioned as part of the educational renewal process for me.”

We have found that good school-university partnerships do not just happen, and merely creating partnerships does not always result in successful collaborations that achieve shared goals. However, with key structures and roles in place and diligently nurtured, including individual-level and group leadership, quality partnerships do emerge and have a positive impact on schools and institutions that prepare teachers for work in those schools.

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entering these relationships; we just had to do things such as simply being there, listening, meeting.” In nurturing new partnerships, the hybrid educators spent much time on the “nuts-and-bolts processes of establishing relationships, determining appropriate

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Kristien Zenkov, Senior Editor,

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New Mentor Surprises

Kristen Dewitt and Bill Benson, Penn State University

Tara Pollick and Katie Shoemaker, State College Area School District

Each year, many classroom teachers commit themselves to becoming teacher educators in the Penn State University/State College Area School District Elementary Professional Development School collaborative. By agreeing to mentor student interns in their classrooms for the entire school year, these teachers take on the role of supervising teacher as well as many additional responsibilities. For two years we have examined the experiences and insights of twenty-eight first year mentors, allowing us to identify areas of need and improve the support we provide new mentors. Through interviews and surveys, they have shared their stories of personal and professional growth as new mentors and members of our PDS community. What follows is a brief summary of our research findings through the voices of new mentors as well as first person accounts from two first year mentors involved in our study.

Research findings

My decision to become a mentor

“There is a community of mentor teachers out there that I know I can rely upon for advice and feedback.” Many teachers chose to become PDS mentors because they are familiar with the partnership and they know others in their buildings that are currently mentoring or have had experiences as mentors or student teacher supervisors. They’ve seen a glimpse of what is involved in mentoring by observing others and count on the help and support of colleagues. Reflecting on their own experiences as mentors or student teachers, many also see mentoring as a way to give back to the teaching profession.

My responsibilities as a mentor

“A mentor’s responsibilities are not set in stone because it’s a day-to-day thing, like teaching. One day you’re the mom. The next day you need to show the strong side and what it means to take the lead. It’s the nurturing and guiding and facilitating that go on along the way that matters.” New mentors identify a variety of responsibilities in working with interns. These include providing formal and informal feedback on a regular basis, providing continued opportunities to teach and learn, and painting a clear picture of teaching. They also ask thought-provoking questions, explain and think aloud, guide, and facilitate.

My goals as a mentor

“My goal is to provide the best experience I can and to help her feel comfortable in teaching. That was one of my fears as an intern. We have that in common.” Some of our new mentors were PDS interns themselves and set goals based on their own experiences. A goal many new mentors have in common is to build a trusting relationship with the intern early on which helps prepare the intern for a career in teaching. Other goals include offering comfort and support throughout the year, helping the intern build confidence, and becoming better organized in order to be more effective as a mentor.

Communicating with my intern

“We talk a lot – about everything.” Mentors identify communication as the most important element in building a successful relationship with interns. They feel that face-to-face communication is most effective, although many communicate with their interns over the phone or via email or texting. Communication takes place throughout the school day, especially at times when students are not in the classrooms. It also takes place before and after school. On any given day, teachers have a variety of topics to discuss. New mentors say that most of the conversations they have with their interns are professional, about individual students, curriculum, or instructional strategies. Many also believe that having personal conversations with their interns is valuable in building a trusting relationship.

My support system: the PDA

“I truly appreciate the input and feedback of my PDA. I don’t know what I would have done without that support.” While positive and consistent communication between each mentor teacher and intern is clearly seen as being important, the role of the Professional Development Associate in the relationship is crucial as

well. New mentors welcome the support and feedback they receive from their PDAs and often use information they receive to confirm what they are noticing about their interns. Although many are experienced teachers, there is still an uneasy feeling by many mentors about how they are performing in their roles as mentors. These teachers want to be sure that they are doing what is right for their interns and they state that feedback from the PDA is very helpful. Clearly, one of the roles of the PDA is supporting the mentor in this new role and providing information about this on-going relationship.

Reflecting on my practice

“I recognize that every day we learn something more about ourselves as teachers and that I am still learning.”
When experienced teachers begin to work in the training of interns they also analyze their own practices. As interns ask questions about daily routines, curriculum, and classroom management, the teachers naturally look at the practices that they have had. While some may find this unnerving, most find the opportunity to reflect on exactly why they do what they do refreshing and an important part of teacher growth.

New Mentor Experiences

Tara Pollick, former PDS intern and fourth grade teacher, State College Area School District.

From the day I accepted a job in the same elementary school where I was a PDS intern, I looked forward to becoming a mentor. This year, I had an opportunity to mentor my first intern. I was immediately surprised by the amount of support I received as a mentor. As an intern, I didn't see this side of the PDS program. The support I received came from other mentors and PDAs in my building who answered every question I had about my responsibilities as a mentor and what expectations I should have for my intern. Other mentor support opportunities included mentor sessions and retreats. Early in the school year I carried most of the responsibilities in the classroom. On top of these responsibilities, I also invested a lot of time into my intern to help her grow and learn. As the school year progressed, I still invested the same amount of time into my intern, but she began taking over more of the responsibilities. I could see that the time I invested in my intern was worthwhile as I watched her transform from a student to a teacher. As the year progressed, so did my intern's responsibilities. This was a stressful time for her as she juggled her job search, PDS and classroom responsibilities. My intern began missing school frequently and one morning she sent me an email saying that she was leaving the PDS program because she was not happy anymore. I was shocked and saddened about her decision because she demonstrated the potential of becoming a great teacher. This experience forced me to reflect and think about what I could have done to help her feel happier. We regularly communicated but our conversations revolved around educational topics. I realize I could have spent more time talking with my intern about how she was feeling during this busy and stressful time. If I was aware of her feelings, I could have helped more. While my experience as a PDS mentor was more challenging than expected, the challenges forced me to grow and I believe I am a better teacher and will be a more effective mentor because of this experience.

Katie Shoemaker, kindergarten teacher, State College Area School District

After my sixth year of teaching I was ready to have an intern. Many of my colleagues were previous interns and several interns had been part of my teaching team so I felt prepared. I was excited to have another teacher in my classroom to collaborate with and to share my love of teaching with. Together we could create a nurturing learning environment for our students. Throughout the year I learned that there were countless benefits to having an intern in my classroom. An intern brought a fresh new perspective and creative lesson ideas. An intern helped implement interventions with students and helped with transitions and management. We were able to implement math stations and literacy stations with ease. We were able to meet the needs of all our learners by co-teaching and reflecting on student progress. With two teachers in the classroom the students were receiving twice as much instruction. Throughout the year I saw more student success than any other year, but I was surprised by the lack of success that I felt. I often questioned my ability to be an effective mentor. Was I giving my intern too much freedom, too much feedback, not enough support, too much support? Are my expectations too low or too high? I often wondered if I was able to provide everything that an intern needs while balancing my responsibilities as a teacher and a mother. I feel confident that with time and more experience as a mentor I will gain confidence and balance. The numerous benefits of having an intern definitely outweigh any setbacks that I experienced.

Conclusion

Although our mentors rate their first year experiences exceptionally high and our research shows that their experiences are generally quite positive, we have listened to the voices of our new mentors and used what

“For two years we have examined the experiences and insights of twenty-eight first year mentors, allowing us to identify areas of need and improve the support we provide new mentors.”

we've learned through this study to grow and improve. Through continued discussions with the mentors involved in this study, as well as new mentors that join our community each year, we hope to

continue to look for ways to better support the new mentors in our PDS community.

Kristen Dewitt is an Assistant Professor at PSU; Bill Benson

is a Professional Development Associate for the PSU/SCASD PDS. Tara Pollick is a first year PDS Mentor in the SCASD PDS. Katie Shoemaker is PDS Mentor in the SCASD PDS.

Protocols Deepen Professional Learning Conversations at PDS National Conference

*Sally Valentino Drew, Central Connecticut State University
Paula M. Talty, Cromwell Public Schools*

This past March at the PDS National Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, our PDS team presented our most recent collaborative research project during our session “Who’s the Boss? Creating a Collective Vision for Professional Development.” During the session, we shared a reflective process through a protocol for professional learning (Easton, 2009). The process engaged attendees as active participants in the presentation, rather than as passive audience members.

SWOT Protocol

The SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) Protocol is a strategic planning method that helps organizations evaluate their objectives or analyze problems (Easton, 2009). The development of this process is attributed to Stanford University’s Albert Humphrey while he was leading a research project based upon the United States’ Fortune 500 companies during the 1960s and 70s. The SWOT protocol is divided into four dimensions to help the group process internal and external factors and influences.

Introduction

We began the session by introducing ourselves and the world of protocols. Many participants were unfamiliar with protocols, and were very interested in learning more about how our PDS uses them in district professional development initiatives. We handed out copies of the SWOT protocol (figure 1)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Of the partnership that would help address the problem	Of the partnership that hinder the ability of the partnership to address the problem
Opportunities	Threats
External factors or additional conditions of the partnership that can help to address the problem	External or additional factors that would hinder the success of the partnership

Figure 1. Albert Humphrey’s SWOT Organizer

for participants to study. The next step in the protocol was to describe the context of our problem while participants listened and took notes.

Context

During this point in the protocol we shared the context of our issue, which in this case was our most recent collaborative research project. We also provided a brief background on our PDS journey to date:

Straddling the divide between university schools of education and public schools is difficult work. As a university professor of education and an assistant superintendent also serving as an adjunct university professor, we acknowledge that merging these two worlds is always difficult and sometimes nearly impossible. Yet, we believe this work is critical, because the marriage of the two worlds is where true school reform can happen.

Our university-school partnership began five years ago. We believed that our individual work as a university teacher

educator and public school assistant superintendent would be grounded and enhanced through a relationship with the other.

Our district is a small, diverse suburban district in Connecticut with rural roots. In the past five years we have worked to build a multi-layered professional learning community, centered on student learning, to enhance reflective best-practice in ways that neither party could do alone. This past year we embarked on our first joint research initiative with a cohort of third grade teachers and specialists, examining the effect of performance assessments on student and teacher motivation and student achievement.

The teacher cohort took part in monthly professional development sessions, customized to enhance teacher knowledge and application of classroom-based performance assessment design, implementation and analysis. Teacher-participants were scheduled to participate in three cycles throughout the school year. After the first cycle, the project was discontinued in its intended form due to issues that arose

“The past year we embarked on our first joint research initiative with a cohort of third grade teachers and specialists, examining the effect of performance assessments on student and teacher motivation and student achievement.”

with other teachers feeling shut out of an important professional development initiative. Twenty additional teachers joined the initiative once it was opened to them in the second cycle.

Findings from the first cycle of the research project pointed to an increase in student achievement on the assessment domains, as well as an increase in student and teacher motivation of the cohort group. More notable, however, were the conclusions the researchers drew from the process. The project began as a research initiative, “owned” by the CCSU professors, and not as a school-wide initiative. Because of this, the researchers did not have complete administrator and teacher buy-in from the beginning.

Guiding Question

At this point in the protocol we shared with participants our guiding question for the remainder of the session: “How do you negotiate a shared vision when university research agendas don’t align with school-based stakeholders’ perceived needs?”

Clarifying Questions

Participants had five minutes to ask non-evaluative questions about the issue presented. During this Q and A, we responded with facts, and not judgments. We provided sample questions to spark the session (What did the building principal initially say about the project? How did teachers respond to the idea?), and participants were eager to clarify and participate fully in the protocol.

Individual Writing

After the round of questioning, participants have a chance to individually respond in writing by taking notes. We handed out four different colored large post-it notes that participants labeled S (Strengths), W (Weaknesses), O (Opportunities), or T (Threats) (see Figure 1). On these post-it notes, participants wrote down

their observations and questions about the dilemma we shared with them. We asked them to consider their own PDS experiences as they wrote. This part of the protocol helped each participant to focus and have something to contribute during the discussion that would follow. We have captured the comments from participants.

Discussion

A discussion followed where individuals shared their thoughts with a small group of three or four participants. Following the small group discussion, group reporters shared out insights and recommendations to the presenting team.

Debrief

At the end, we thanked participants for their candid responses. We shared our future research goals and PDS initiatives. We asked participants to consider using professional learning protocols in their own PDS work and shared some further resources. Participants were very positive about our use of this protocol in a conference setting.

Reflections on the Process

Participants’ responses were insightful and valuable for us as we refine our future PDS research initiatives. With a deeper understanding of the issue, we have fresh ideas for moving ahead.

Strengths. Our PDS constituents are generally willing to try something new and innovative to enhance student outcomes. As university and district facilitators, we have continually opened the circle to welcome shared leadership and vision. The data from the first round of the research project showed promising student growth.

Weaknesses. We did not have complete buy-in from all teachers and building administrators. This lack of communication created a rift and diminished the value of

the project.

Opportunities. Our PDS is small enough, and the research cohort was a manageable size to make adjustments throughout the process. This model shows promise for future initiatives. We have worked to put structures in place to handle the level of communication required to have a successful research project. Generally all PDS participants share the common desire to enhance student learning opportunities.

Threats. Throughout our research process, we had many conflicting messages for teachers. The fear of failure on high stakes tests is very real for building administrators and teachers. Without building administrator buy-in, teachers are fearful of participating in such projects. Furthermore, without fidelity to the research design, the research team risks negatively impacting classroom practice.

Conclusion

University-school partnerships such as these are the impetus for transformational professional learning. This was the case within our own research initiative, but also among our session participants at the PDS National Conference in March. Professional learning protocols help “co-facilitate” the important conversations professional learning communities (PLCs) must have in order to enhance student outcomes (Easton, 2009). Having such conversations with PDS colleagues and experts from all across the country further deepened the learning that we can now bring back to renew our own PDS communities.

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Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement: Recognition and Challenge

Diane G. Corrigan, Cleveland State University

Edward J. Weber, Cleveland School of Science and Medicine

“The MUST/CSSM PDS was founded on the belief that today’s urban teacher educators must be focused on preparing city teachers who are equipped to promote urban students’ academic achievement, will remain in urban locales, and will endeavor to improve the conditions of urban students’ lives and communities.”

The NAPDS Award for Exemplary Achievement bestowed significant recognition on its recipients for the consistent and often hard work of partnerships. It also bestows a clear challenge to continue the work at more exceptional levels. The response of the Master of Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST) program/Cleveland School of Science and Medicine (CSSM) partnership to this award embraced both concepts and, on the heels of accepting the award, looked back to its foundation as a PDS and forward to the challenge of developing a more successful PDS marked by higher levels of student achievement and exceptionally well-prepared new teachers.

The MUST program at Cleveland State University (CSU) was developed to train teachers who would be prepared for and remain in urban settings. The program’s goal is to prepare thoughtful teacher-activists who address the effects of race, class, gender, and other differences on student achievement and communities’ well-being. The program founders fashioned a unique set of urban and social justice-oriented teacher licensure outcomes upon which its students are evaluated. These outcomes have evolved across MUST’s thirteen-year existence into the following standards: Social Justice, Urban Teaching, Urban Schooling and Communities, and Resilience, Resistance, and Persistence.

CSSM in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) was formed to create the nation’s best school of science and medicine and prepare students to be our next generation of leaders. CSSM, in collaboration with its partner institutions, offers a unique college-preparatory education for motivated, high-achieving students

interested in entering science or health-related professions. CSSM prepares students for success in postsecondary education and careers in science, medicine and related fields through an intellectually demanding culture of innovative teaching and learning in partnership with the world class medical institutions of Greater Cleveland. CSSM is guided by the following Core Principles: Selective Then Committed, a Respectful Environment, Extraordinary Teaching and Learning, Unique Community Partnerships, and a National Model in Governance.

The MUST/CSSM PDS was founded on the belief that today’s urban teacher educators must be focused on preparing city teachers who are equipped to promote urban students’ academic achievement, will remain in urban locales, and will endeavor to improve the conditions of urban students’ lives and communities. Urban districts and students need teachers who consider both how their practices can promote academic achievement and successfully influence city communities’ engagement with the school, democratic processes, and the highest ideals of equity. The faculty members of CSU and CSSM participating in this PDS relationship further believe that urban education professionals must work to make a difference outside of the classroom and consider the social and political structures in which classrooms are embedded.

The accomplishments of this PDS began with its formal establishment as a PDS, in current practice and authentic achievement. The participants in this PDS have attained high levels of success and recognition for their work in their classrooms and communities.

Three exemplary accomplishments are:

1. A MUST graduate, Sarah Sells (2008), raised over \$65,000 in grant funds from Donors Choose for equipment and projects in her physics lab while interning and now teaching at CSSM. She motivated other faculty members to collectively raise over \$115,000 for materials and projects in their own classrooms to date from Donors Choose. She is also the School Program Director for the Health Profession Pipeline Program (HP3), a \$10-12 million project funded by the Joan C. Edwards Charitable Foundation which engages CSSM students with the medical education and hospital systems at Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals of Cleveland.

2. CSSM staff members and faculty partners at CSU received the 2010 Claudia A. Balach Teacher Research Award. This award, sponsored by the American Educational Research Association, honors the true spirit of school university collaboration by supporting research conducted by school district personnel and mentored by university researchers. The faculty of CSSM, CSU instructors and MUST interns designed and implemented instructional strategies regarding reading attitudes, perceptions of role models, and technology use. The focus was on the academic achievement of African American male students. Analysis of the data indicated academic progress as well as areas for further study.

3. The PDS continued its relationship with its prior co-coordinator, Dr. Kristien Zenkov, and research professor, Dr. Ronald Beebe, who are now teaching at George Mason University

and the University of Houston-Downtown, respectively. The ongoing work with these professors encompassing all aspects of the PDS ensures the growth of the PDS at CSU/CSSM and the spread of its programs to other universities. Current projects resulting from this ongoing relationship are professional development activities, development of the Journal of Teacher Research to promote publication of action research projects by pre-service and in-service teachers, analysis of the mentor/intern matching processes in PDSs and publication of a book focused on PDSs and their social justice practices.

In response to the challenge of continuing and improving the work of the PDS, MUST/CSSM outlined three projects to begin during the 2011-2012 school year:

1. CSSM faculty, MUST interns,

CSU faculty and CSSM students will work together to write grant proposals for community health services. The students will implement the projects in the greater Cleveland community.

2. A team of teachers and the administrator of CSSM are working with the coordinator of the MUST program to develop a grant-funded program to match CSSM teachers with teachers in neighboring school districts to improve teaching strategies and student achievement on AP tests in all AP level classes.

3. The mentors and administrator at CSSM and the MUST coordinator are working with faculty members at the PDSs at George Mason University and the University of Houston-Downtown to study and improve the process of matching pre-service and in-service teachers for field experiences to increase

levels of excellence in teaching and student achievement during these experiences.

As the work of the PDS continues, so does the challenge to better serve all of the constituents of the PDS. Edward Weber, administrator of CSSM, stated, "Certainly, the role of new high performance teachers is in great demand everywhere and the MUST program is the first place CSSM looks to fill our open positions. We have invested our time and talent into this successful model and in the years to come we have a sustainable pipeline for our own profession."

Diane G. Corrigan is an Associate Clinical Professor at Cleveland State University. Edward J. Weber is an Administrator in the Cleveland School of Science and Medicine for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

PDS Partners Call for Submissions

PDS Partners is published three times per year (in January, May, and September) by the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS). Past issues can be viewed at http://www.napds.org/pds_partners.html. Magazine article submissions are welcomed from all school, university, and community constituents of Professional Development Schools (PDSs) from the United States and beyond. Articles are typically narrative in style, co-authored by school- and university-based teams, and address any aspect of PDS efforts. Articles are typically 300-1000 words. All articles are reviewed by the editor and assistant editor, as well as by the appropriate section editor team. Current sections of the magazine include "Interns and the Internship," "PDS Partners and Partnerships," "PDS Researchers and Research," "PDS Inquiries and Ideas," "Professional Development and PDS," and "PDS and Alternative Schools/Community Settings." Authors are asked to identify at least one of the NAPDS "Nine Essentials" addressed by the information on which they are reporting. Article authors do not have to be NAPDS members, but members and school-/university-based teams of PDS constituents receive priority when publication decisions are made. Most articles are invited (the magazine is classified as an "editorial-reviewed" rather than "peer-reviewed" publication), and all article submissions are acknowledged via email by the editors. Authors receive letters of acknowledgement and complimentary copies of the magazine in which their articles appear. Submission of an article indicates that the authors have not submitted substantially similar reports to any other journal or publication. Deadlines for article submissions are November 1st for the January issue, March 1st for the May issue, and July 1st for the September issue, although exact publication dates of accepted articles cannot be guaranteed. Submissions must be prepared using Word and adhere to APA 6th Edition format. Text should be double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font with any tables, figures, or visual images placed after the reference section. Submission must include a Cover page (Title of article, date of submission, authors name(s) and position or rank with complete mailing address, and email address). Articles are only accepted electronically and should be submitted to the magazine's editor, Ron Siers, Jr. at Salisbury University, at rrsiers@salisbury.edu.

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