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PDS Partners

Turning the Preparation of Teachers Upside-Down: Realism or Fantasy?

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The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Educators (NCATE) Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2010) recommended that strategic partnerships and clinical preparation (i.e., field experiences) be at the center of all teacher preparation programs. Clearly, the report reflects NCATE's long-standing commitment to Professional Development Schools (PDS). But, while the recommendations are very intriguing, we wonder how realistic they are given the current economic and political climate. Since many of today's teacher

candidates are non-traditional students who have to work while preparing to be a teacher at night (and often online), is it possible for all preparation programs to adhere to the 10 design principles for clinically-based preparation (NCATE, 2010)? This article describes how a non-traditional university has partnered with a rural school district to share in the preparation and on-going development of teachers in California. It is our hope that the article will prompt honest discussions regarding the promises and challenges of implementing and sustaining the practices recommended in NCATE's 2010 Report.

A Non-Traditional Partnership. In 2008, Tulare City School District (TCSD) and National University (NU) forged a unique partnership to prepare teachers. TCSD is a rural, P-8 school district located 50 miles from NU's Fresno campus. NU is the second-largest private, non-profit institution of higher education in California and is known

primarily for its large online course offerings. For the past decade, NU has prepared more teachers than any other single institution of higher education in California. Within the partnership, courses are delivered in a hybrid format (i.e., partially on ground in Tulare and partially online). Candidates negotiate the evening that works best for them to meet, and field experiences are arranged flexibly to accommodate individual students' work schedules and/or childcare needs.

Propelling this partnership is a shared belief that collaboration is the key to developing a highly skilled cadre of new teachers and minimizing the time spent orienting them to life in public schools. The partners are dedicated to innovative and reflective practice (NAPDS Essential 4), and evidence-based practices that will improve opportunities for P-8 students. Additionally, partners share a commitment to value the knowledge,



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Evelyn Perry, Northwood Appold Community Academy, MD

CHANGE.....scary, challenging, exhilarating. The aforementioned words describe how we sometimes feel about unsolicited change in our personal or professional lives. Some will seek it. Others will embrace it. Many will resist it.

This 2013 -2014 academic year, I decided to seek and embrace “change”. For the past 6 years I have been a university director for professional development school partnerships. It has been both a rewarding and challenging professional experience. This year, however, I decided to leave academe to become the principal of one of the university’s urban elementary charter schools. I will, so to speak, be sitting on the other side of the table of the partnership observing, interacting and evaluating PDS from a different perspective. Several members of my new school faculty are interns whom I taught and supervised. As one of my university students said, “How cool is that!”

I am very excited about this new professional course. The last few weeks have not been easy. I think I forgot just how hard a principal works! What has been easy, however, is the continuation of the PDS partnership. The school has new leadership, several new teachers, students and parents and some changes in curriculum and routines but the PDS and the Memorandum of Understanding remain intact. When I met with my university partners to plan for this school year, we reflected on what makes a great PDS and I, of course, referred to the NAPDS nine essentials. The beginning of a new school year and college semester is a

great time for all of us to revisit the NAPDS nine essentials and once again have a conversation about “what makes a great PDS.” Have a great academic year!

The nine required essentials of a PDS:

1. A comprehensive mission that is broader in its outreach and scope than the mission of any partner and that furthers the education profession and its responsibility to advance equity within schools and, by potential extension, the broader community;
2. A school–university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community;
3. Ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need;
4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants;
5. Engagement in and public sharing of the results of deliberate investigations of practice by respective participants;
6. An articulation agreement developed by the respective participants delineating the roles and responsibilities of all involved;
7. A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration;
8. Work by college/university faculty and P–12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings; and
9. Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures.

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experiences, and perspectives of both public school and university personnel and utilize the partnership as a vehicle for continued professional growth (NAPDS, 2008).

Valuing All Partners. What makes this partnership unique is that the instructors are hired directly from TCSD. Working with the university partnership director, a core group of TCSD administrators collaborate on how to best prepare teachers for the unique challenges facing Central California. Partnership personnel meet regularly to discuss the progress of teacher candidates coupled with ways to better align clinical experiences to course content. Because TCSD personnel teach in the program, time-sensitive adjustments can be made, keeping the curriculum relevant and instructional activities consistent with real-world teaching. One of our instructors noted, “We

the United States, to conduct their research. These incentives have helped us sustain consistency in partnership personnel.

Similarly, university professors have the opportunity to participate in professional development activities offered to TCSD educators. This reciprocal professional development diminishes the common perception that university faculty live in an ivory tower, far removed from the realities of today’s classroom. Recently, all partnership personnel learned about how the new Common Core Content Standards (CCCS) differ from California’s current content standards and the timeline for implementation. As a result of this partnership, faculty remain current and our teacher candidates are better prepared.

Conclusion. In 2008, the National Association for Professional Development Schools identified

planning curriculum and conducting action research to increase student achievement. While not a full-scale PDS, the partners are proud that this partnership meets several of the recommendations for transforming teacher preparation. Certainly, all innovative programs started with some level of collaboration between public school and university personnel.

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“... ALL INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS STARTED WITH SOME LEVEL OF COLLABORATION BETWEEN PUBLIC SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL.”

really get to know the candidates ... the time we spend as professors allows us to evaluate the talent before the official interview process even begins. The candidates, in turn, learn about the vision and expectations of the district and come into the profession with that knowledge” (personal communication, D. Freitas, June 4, 2012).

University faculty are valued for their ability to ground candidates in the theory and research regarding how students learn within today’s best instructional practices. Familiarity with the credentialing and accreditation regulations also serves to keep all participants focused on the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions consistent with current standards for the teaching profession.

Aiding in the Professional Development of All Participants. Darling-Hammond, et al. (2005) noted a lack of incentives as one of the major challenges to securing the participation of public school personnel in collaborative teacher preparation programs. In addition to hiring and paying public school personnel as NU adjuncts, our instructors have access to an extensive list of professional development opportunities offered by NU (e.g., technology training, integrating technology into one’s teaching, clinical supervision, teaching online, grant writing, etc.). Adjuncts also have access to the university’s electronic library, one of the largest in

Nine Essentials of a PDS. This document was written to guide the work of those committed to the PDS model of teacher preparation; however, it should not diminish the important efforts put forth by other types of school-university partnerships.

Since many districts must maintain strong relationships with multiple universities and colleges, all of which continue to experience deeper budget cuts, full-scale PDS work may become even more challenging in the future. The growing number of non-traditional students enrolling in online education programs poses yet another challenge to the PDS model and increasing school-embedded field experiences (Allen, I. E., & Seaman, 2012). While educators may long debate the practicality of the recommendations put forth by NCATE (2010), the authors believe the call to increase clinical experiences and strategic partnerships is not advocating for a specific model of teacher preparation. Clinical preparation can occur through “a combination of both school embedded practice and laboratory-type experiences”... students can “learn through on-line and video demonstrations, analyzing case studies... and participating in peer and micro-teaching” (NCATE, 2010, pp. 5 & 10).

Our partnership recently expanded to include the on-going development of district teachers. Through a collaborative graduate degree program, teachers across the district are collaboratively

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"Practice with data-driven instruction will help teachers become proficient over time."

DATA: Data Advances Teaching Adolescents: Lessons Learned from Action Research During the Internship

*Pascal Weber, Salisbury University
Robin Adamopoulos, James M. Bennett High School
Ron Siers, Jr., Salisbury University*

"Data, more data, and even more data. It's all about the data these days," a teacher argued while waiting for his copies to be done printing. I left the planning room and headed back to my ESL classroom asking myself: "Why is data the buzzword in the field of education?" Well, it turns out, that I am not the first person contemplating the importance of data. The faculty at James M. Bennett High School have been intrigued by the relationship between data-enhanced pedagogy and student outcomes. Yet, some educational stakeholders express their concerns arguing that the concept of data-driven instruction requires time that a lot of teachers simply do not currently possess. Thus, after intense consultation with my mentor teacher, it was decided that an action research project congruent with this relationship would be appropriate for study in the internship (NAPDS Essential 5). The purpose of the action research project was to help teachers understand the relation between data-enhanced pedagogy and student outcomes. Soon after starting the 100-day student internship, I felt the desire to help my students not only master, but also enjoy learning. To enhance student outcomes, I was determined to improve my pedagogy through the use of data.

James M. Bennett High School is a highly diverse school. The school functions as an academic powerhouse for 1374 students: 34 percent are African Americans, 48 percent are White. Of the 1374 students that attend James M. Bennett High School, 45 percent are FARM, receiving free and reduced meals, and about 7 percent receive ELL services (Maryland Report Card, 2012). 21 percent of the 67 ELL students participated in this action research project. The project's objective was to stimulate student learning through student comprehension and mastery of standards-based learning concepts. The action research team consisted of one high school ELL instructor and one student intern. James M. Bennett High School's mentor teacher and ESL instructor, Mrs. Adamopoulos, and Salisbury University student intern, Pascal Weber, co-taught English to Speakers of Other Languages at the beginning proficiency level to ninth and tenth grade high school students.

Mrs. Adamopoulos and Mr. Weber developed and handed out a pre-test at the beginning of the unit and a post-test half way through the unit. Each test listed ten Ecology concepts discussed throughout the unit. An 11 by 16 table was developed by the researchers to collect data on student knowledge, marking student responses either correct or incorrect. During the 2-week Ecology unit period, two observations were made in the ELL classroom where the 10 Ecology concepts were taught. The observers (1 mentor teacher and 1 student intern) used a simple table to determine the degree of understanding that students (14

beginner level ELL students) demonstrated with respect to 10 learning objectives. The pre- and post-assessment allowed both teachers to check-in on student work assessing student knowledge of the 10 Ecology terms. The pre and post assessments were given in a true-false and matching format so that beginning ELL students were able to solve problems without experiencing high levels of frustration and debilitating anxiety. The assessments were slightly above their current academic levels. It is pertinent to note that, for the sake of valid data, pre- and post-test items used the same phrasing for all 10 concepts.

The data collected indicated a relation between data-enhanced pedagogy and student outcomes. The three primary findings were as follows: (1) 28.5 percent (4 out of 14) of ELL students knew the ten concepts discussed throughout the course of the unit. (2) 14 percent (2 out of 14) of ELL students improved their test scores indicating a grasp of concepts. (3) 35.7 percent (5 out of 14) students demonstrated a need for further instruction, well-developed memorization skills, and underdeveloped conceptualization skills. The two researchers concluded that using different testing formats in pre- and post-tests might not be the most reliable option to choose when conducting action research. Nonetheless, choosing different testing formats facilitated their forming of three major realizations. First, it is important for teachers and students to master the learning of concepts. Second, data improves the teaching approaches of all teachers. Third, varying formats in pre- and post-tests, though not the preferred option, is a starting point for the teachers when embarking on the long and mysterious journey of improving pedagogies and student outcomes.

The research findings were presented at the 17th Annual Regional PDS Conference that took place on May 9th, 2013, at Bennett High School, Salisbury, Maryland. Following the presentation, the researchers developed an outline that schedules monthly check-ins in the form of action research projects. The scheduled projects make use of both a chart, as well as a pre- and post-test of the same format that embody the prospect of enhancing teacher pedagogy and student learning outcomes. The researchers have also requested professional development and practice of the action research model on behalf of time-constrained teaching colleagues to promote academic growth of the entire James M. Bennett High School community. One of the most relevant research findings that has crucial implication for the present and future of the teaching profession prevails: Regardless of how experienced teachers actually are in terms of understanding, collecting, and evaluating data, they can all improve their pedagogy in order to increase student-learning outcomes. Practice with data-driven instruction will help teachers become proficient in collecting data over time. By welcoming the buzzword into their classrooms, students with greater learning outcomes will be ready for mastering 21st century skills, such as creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking.

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Committee Chair Search

Are you ready to make a difference in partnership work? If your answer is yes, the NAPDS leadership team would like to hear from you.

This fall, we will be replacing two committee chairs: Membership and Elections as well as Policy and External Relations.

Watch your email in the coming weeks for more information from NAPDS about the process we will use, which will include the submission of a short resume as well as an interview with Association leaders.

For further information, please contact Karen Hassell at karen.hassell@icloud.com or JoNancy Warren at jonancy@comcast.net. Or visit the NAPDS website at www.napds.org and look in the Bylaws for more information about the work of each committee.



Harry Wong Never Told Us About This! Unique Ways to Address Classroom Management with University Student Interns

Jean Glick, Stan Fitzanko, Matt Green, & Morgan Belcher, Pekin Public Schools

Walking into one classroom, students are working independently or quietly in small groups while the teacher is guiding another small group in literacy. However, walking into the classroom down the hall shows students walking around the room, off task and not listening as the teacher raises her voice to gain control. What is the difference? Classroom management! Teaching, inspiring, and managing your students is challenging, even for veteran teachers, and pre-service teachers face the same struggles as they begin their internship in the classroom. Pekin Public Schools, in conjunction with Illinois State University, share a commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants and are committed to the preparation of future educators in the school community. To help guide pre-service teachers in this area as they take over the classroom, we developed five strategies to help our PDS interns develop more effective classroom management skills.

We think highly of Harry Wong and reference his book, *The First Days of School* (Wong, 2004), at the beginning of the school year when the interns are still in their clinical phases to help them get started with classroom management. We begin by having them brainstorm in small groups potential attributes of effective teachers. We then reference Harry's definition (p.83) and spend time looking at how to be fully prepared, by considering the areas he suggests, such as preparing the floor space, work area, student area, teaching materials and preparing themselves. A complete immersion in setting up the classroom environment is one critical component of their learning in regards to classroom management as the school year begins.

Since we work in a school district where all evaluations are based on the Charlotte Danielson's *Enhancing Professional Practice-A Framework For Teaching* (Danielson, 2007), we focus on Domain 2-Classroom Environment and all components in this domain. These include: creating an environment of respect and rapport, establishing the culture for learning, managing classroom procedures, managing student behaviors, and organizing physical space. One activity we use that helps interns develop classroom management skills is to divide them into partners and share a paper (Appendix A) with one of Charlotte's components listed at the top. The paper is divided into two areas: what it looks like in the classroom and ideas to help get there. Students fill out the left side with their partners, and then exchange lists with another pair as they address each area with a practical suggestion on the right.

Each component under the Classroom Environment Domain is covered and collected. Their responses are compiled and emailed to them so each intern has a copy to refer to as needed.

Reflect, reflect, and reflect! This is another way we develop management skills during the year. The interns are encouraged to reflect daily with their mentor, their peers, and us. Another activity we complete with the interns involves reflection with a partner. Real life scenarios from real classrooms are presented and then elbow partner discussions occur as they figure out how to handle the situation. The whole group then shares out and brainstorms other possible solutions.

A third important stage of classroom management skill development comes through "Practice by Immersion." Within Pekin's year-long internship, teaching candidates are given multiple

“STEP INTO MY CLASSROOM HAS PROVEN TO BE A GREAT WAY TO DISCUSS AND REFLECT ON REAL SITUATIONS HAPPENING EVERY DAY IN CLASSROOMS ALL OVER THE WORLD.”

opportunities to practice these skills daily in real classroom situations under the guidance of a mentor (cooperating teacher). They are able to observe the mentor in action and develop that "bag of tricks" needed for classroom management. Again, the interns have the opportunity to reflect and ask questions as they figure out ways to become problem solvers and lifelong learners.

The intangibles of classroom management are also a focus for the interns in Pekin. Professionalism is one key component of classroom management. This is shown through professional dress, oral language and a positive demeanor. These critical components are constantly reinforced in the PDS program through seminar and discussions with mentors. We talk about their overall presence in the classroom and how these areas affect management. We point out that using their teacher voice, body language and eyes to watch students' body language help measure student engagement. Active listening and movement around the room are two other intangibles suggested to aid in their classroom environment.

Finally, we tried a new activity this year that we call "Step into my Classroom." We have our interns write down classroom scenarios they observed, as well as provide them with other situations we had either experienced or noticed. We sit down on the

Domain II-Learning Environment

2a-Creating an atmosphere of Respect and Rapport

- o Teacher interaction with students
- o Student Interaction with other students

What it looks like in the classroom

Ideas to help create this atmosphere

Appendix A

floor in our PDS room and invite them to share what they have written with a partner first and then our whole group. They then exchange their scenario with a new partner and brainstorm ways to handle the situation. "Step into my Classroom" has proven to be a great way to discuss and reflect on real situations happening every day in classrooms all over the world. Sharing together helps the interns gain the necessary strategies to be prepared to handle future situations.

Illinois State University and Pekin Public Schools have worked together successfully for thirteen years to create a culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community (NAPDS Essential 2). By involving mentors, principals, and university supervisors, we all work together to ensure that interns receive the best possible teaching preparation to help them become the future educators of tomorrow.

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The Endless Benefits of Exit Interviews

Gray Jack and Kathrine Wrench, Salisbury University
Diane Shorts, Showell Elementary

DESCRIPTION OF EXIT INTERVIEW PROCESS

During the 2012-2013 academic year, Showell Elementary School conducted exit interviews with 4 interns following the completion of their internship. The goal of the exit interviews was twofold: (1) gather candid feedback from the interns and (2) use the data collected to improve subsequent internship experiences. The PDS Liaison partnered with the principal of Showell Elementary School and developed the following four protocol questions:

1. What was a success that you experienced while at Showell?
2. What was a challenge that you faced during your internship and how did you overcome it?
3. What did you learn about yourself and/or the teaching profession?
4. What would you offer if hired at Showell Elementary School? What makes you stand out from the rest of the applicants?

To ensure the interview would yield as much information as possible, the interns were provided with the questions in advance to allow them to collect and organize their thoughts and prepare their responses. In addition to making sure the interviews garnered the most constructive feedback necessary, sharing the questions in advance fostered a less intimidating and more collaborative environment, especially since this may have been the intern's first interview experience. During the interview, once the four topic areas outlined above had been addressed, the interns were allowed to ask questions while the interviewers offered advice on what to expect in a real interview.

In retrospect, the exit interviews were informative and instructive as they provided a forum for the exchange of information. The feedback gathered during the discussion is undoubtedly beneficial to all parties involved and will be instrumental in improving the internship program from the perspective of the intern, the PDS liaison, and the participating school administrator (NAPDS Essential 3).

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER BENEFITS

INTERN: Exit interviews provide a realistic, yet low-risk, interview experience for interns. They provide an invaluable opportunity for interns to experience an actual interview with a school administrator, gain practice answering behavioral questions and receive constructive feedback on their responses. Additionally, exit interviews offer interns the opportunity to showcase their talents, present samples of their work, and share insights about themselves and their experiences at the school. Ideally, interns can capitalize on their exit interview by strengthening their relationship with the administration and positioning themselves as a qualified candidate for future employment opportunities with the school or county.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR: Exit interviews enable administrators to gain useful information about their schools, mentor teachers, programs, and policies. Administrators face high demands for their time and energy each day. Thus, exit interviews provide an opportunity for the administrator to meet with the interns without interruption and learn about their successes (including their "golden teaching moment") and challenges during their internships. A more detailed and cogent understanding of intern's respective experiences allows administrators to identify school and program strengths as well as areas for improvement. It also provides an opportunity for administrators to vet potential teachers for future employment.

PDS LIAISON: The information exchanged during exit interviews provides PDS liaisons with valuable, first-hand insight about the participating school, administration, and mentor teachers. The exit interview also gives PDS liaisons the chance to hear a more detailed explanation of interns' experiences, including effective lessons, teachable moments, and successful projects. Intern and administrator feedback gives the PDS liaison a well-rounded, more robust perspective about the overall internship experience that can be valuable for further placements in that particular school or classroom. From a more practical standpoint, the exit interview provides an opportunity for PDS liaisons to ask

any questions that may arise after reviewing all the paperwork that interns submit throughout the experience, such as professional trackers, showcase lessons, and professional development documents.

CONCLUSION

Exit interviews can be an effective tool for all PDS stakeholders. Showell Elementary School found their experience with exit interviews to be very productive and have committed to continuing this practice moving forward. Taking the time to hold exit interviews is a valuable learning experience for all parties involved. The information gleaned in exit interviews supports the professional growth and development of interns as well as promotes continued program and school improvement for PDS liaisons and administrators respectively. The benefits are endless.

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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," "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. 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 attached as separate documents. Photographs of the authors and PDS site are encouraged. 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.

get to work.





Round 'Em Up: Using the Medical Practice of Rounds

Angela Albertson, *Whetstone Elementary School*
Joyce Erb-Appleman, *Greenbelt Middle School*
Tracy Dunheimer & Karen Rehder, *University of Maryland College Park*

Teachers working with teachers is a form of professional development that shows the ultimate respect for those on the front lines of instruction. In an effort to tap into the rich resources among our school partners, we rounded up PDS partners and used the practice of rounds to provide ongoing and reciprocal professional development (NAPDS Essentials 1, 2, & 4). The practice of rounds has been a tradition of medical education dating back to 1889 with Professor William Osler, the first professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins University. Medical rounds are discussions among professional colleagues about the clinical problems of real life patients and an analysis of treatment in real life patients (Johns Hopkins, 2012). With medical rounds, the patient is the link between research and modern therapeutics. Teaching rounds link the teacher's observation and self-reflection with current research and classroom practice. In teaching rounds, small groups of teachers make brief observations of fellow teachers as a means to compare their own professional practice with practices observed in the classroom. Self-reflection and collaborative post-round discussions are the chief benefit (Marzano, 2009).

The innovative and reflective practice of rounds was the agreed upon method of professional development in identified areas of study for our Professional Learning Community (PLC; NAPDS Essentials 3 & 4). Three approaches to rounds of pedagogy were utilized to best meet the needs of school partners. The approaches varied in scope and depth as determined by stakeholders.

Intra-Network Rounds

School partners determined that professional development for growing self-determined learners coupled with the composition of essays were areas of professional development to explore. Network partners agreed to create a PLC to accomplish these instructional goals. Phase one of the PLC consisted of professional development provided by a University of Maryland (UMD) professor through demonstration lessons throughout our network (NAPDS Essential 8). The debriefing sessions that followed were pivotal in creating a network of professionals who utilized the methods of rounds to provide ongoing and reciprocated professional development in focus areas (NAPDS Essential 3).

Phase two of the PLCs involved teachers across the University of Maryland/Prince Georges County Public Schools PDS network using rounds as a means to further teachers' capacity to build self-determined learners and continue the instructional practices initially demonstrated. PDS Coordinators consulted school Site Liaisons to identify teachers who were successfully employing the learned strategies and identify foci for each series of rounds.

PDS Coordinators rounded up network mentor teachers to observe the identified teachers. Three half day sessions of rounds were planned. At each session mentor teachers made rounds to observe four teachers implementing the same teaching practice in different ways. Participants agreed to focus solely on the teaching moves and student interactions directly related to the pre-determined instructional practice. Participants met after observations and shared gathered evidence. Groups analyzed data identifying patterns and exceptions among the teachers' practices and student performance. Questions were created to guide the data study and next steps were determined (City, 2011). At each subsequent session of rounds, participants discussed how the strategies have evolved, impacted student performance, and currently appear in teaching practices.

Participants were surveyed regarding the value and quality of the PLC rounds. Between fifteen and twenty mentor teachers participated in each session. Seventeen participants responded to the survey. One hundred percent of participants believed that learning from discussions with colleagues is an effective learning experience. One hundred percent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that learning from rounds is an effective learning experience. Ninety-four percent of participants agreed the work of the PLC was worthwhile and that the organization/structure of rounds was effective. Fifteen of the seventeen participants (eighty-eight percent) believed the post-round discussions provided learning that could be used in their classroom. Sixteen of the seventeen participants responded that rounds provided learning that could be used in their classroom. One hundred percent of the PLC participants said they would attend more sessions. The survey indicates teachers strongly agree that professional development opportunities using rounds are effective learning experiences and worthy professional development opportunities.

School-to-School Rounds

Through debriefing sessions in the first phase of our PLC, school partners discussed their schools, openly sharing successes and challenges alike. Members of the PLC noticed opportunities where rounds would provide peer-to-peer professional development that would be individualized to support specific school dilemmas. These exchanges established school-to-school rounds. In particular, administrators from two network schools arranged for a team of teachers from one school to make rounds to observe collaborative team planning meetings in the second school. The goal of the rounds was for teachers to observe successful planning protocols which had resulted in a more equitable and productive distribution of resources. The observations were done with the focus on how collaboration had evolved while implementing new curriculum. The visiting team made plans to observe the same grade level at a second school in

the network multiple times to identify team members' input in the planning. Debriefs were planned upon return to their home school. Teams share evidence collected and analyzed.

Team to Team Rounds

At one partner school the leadership team began noting grade level teams of teachers who had participated in the initial PLC demonstration lessons were implementing the strategies and expanding on those practices. The leadership noticed students in these classrooms were meeting with greater success with reading and writing as demonstrated through student work. This increase in student achievement led to team-to-team rounds. Grade level teams of teachers opened their classrooms to other staff in the building as a means of providing additional staff development. Debriefs were conducted at Vertical Team meetings. Observations at the end of the school year found more teachers implementing the identified strategies and more student success.

Regardless of the manner of delivery, participants agree that the practice of rounds as a professional development delivery method benefits teachers and students alike. Teachers are opening their classrooms to model or demonstrate teaching strategies identified through collaboration and inquiry. The self-reflection initiated by comparing one's teaching practices to those of others results in real teaching improvements. Ultimately, students are reaping the rewards of this focus on solid instructional practices. The prognosis is success for all.

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Editors' Corner

Ron Siers, Jr., Salisbury University
Cathey Ramey, Mardela Middle & High School

Our editorial team is excited to bring you the September 2013 edition of PDS Partners. We hope you enjoy our exciting new design. Articles submitted and reviewed for this edition come from California, Nevada, Maryland, Illinois, North Carolina, and New Jersey. The intentionality of seizing growth opportunities is paramount to success within our growing Professional Development School network. Each of our authors in this edition of PDS Partners offers us wisdom and insight for bridging the growth gaps in our unique organizations.

Why do people choose to work in Professional Development Schools? Why do they decide to accept challenging situations, often in underfunded and undersourced environments? Why do they choose to mentor and inspire others in a PDS venue? The answers to these questions accrue a sense of urgency as we begin a new and exciting school year. We hope that each of you develops a vision, mission, and clarity of purpose that is congruent with the spirit of the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS).

We welcome your thoughts, comments, concerns, and ideas for our magazine and look forward to learning with you during the new academic year.

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Why Team Mentoring? Collaborating and Reflecting to Deepen the Mentoring Practice

Marisa Dudiak, Towson University
Cheryl Dembroski and Katie Kelly, Ronald McNair Elementary School

In the Professional Development School (PDS) community, much is written and shared about the relationship between an experienced mentor and his/her pre-service teacher (intern). We were inspired by the desire to explore how two experienced mentors could join forces with their university partner to focus on professional learning with a collaborative and reflective mentoring focus. The goal was to design a learning experience to create and maintain change in each other's practice (NAPDS Essential 4).

The Players and Their Inspiration

The concept that mentoring is "an alliance of two people that creates a space for dialogue that results in reflection, action and learning for both" (Rolfe-Flett, 2002, p. 2) was the clear inspiration for the project. The key players in this project were two experienced kindergarten teachers who have mentored early childhood interns in the past. These mentors, along with their university partner, recognized the need for mentors to focus on their own learning in order to better their practice.

To give the project a balance of data-driven and qualitative insights, the project team made the decision to utilize technology to help streamline consistent observation criteria and other qualitative data. Each mentor teacher used an iPad2 WiFi tablet to document real time intern observations and record evidence with photos and video capabilities. The Office² HD app was an all-in-one office document editing suite, which allowed the mentors to view, edit and create Microsoft Word compatible observation documents on their iPads.

The team made decisions about the observation criteria they wanted to utilize to mutually record and analyze data. A consistent observation criterion was created so both mentor teachers were using the same instructional best practices for feedback and coaching. The criteria was copied as a "template" onto the iPad Office2HD app for ease in typing real time observations and taking pictures or video at the same time. A rubric was also developed so observation scores could be entered into a Google Docs shared spreadsheet for project analysis.

The Observation Criteria included instructional best practices that were familiar to the interns throughout their coursework and previous placements. The criteria and rubric consisted of:

- Criteria 1: Purpose/Objective/Introduction of lesson/activity/strategy
- Criteria 2: Instruction
 - 2a. Teacher Models
 - 2b. Guided Practice
 - 2c. Independent Practice
- Criteria 3: Assessment (matches objective)

Team Mentoring Rubric/Scoring Tool

Observation Criteria	3	2	1
Purpose/Objective/Introduction of lesson/activity/strategy	Lesson purpose, objective, and/or introduction had all of the following components: represented a skill or strategy that was developmentally appropriate and aligned with MCCSC. It was clearly shared with the students and matched the assessment.	Lesson purpose, objective, and/or introduction had some of the following components: represented a skill or strategy that was developmentally appropriate and aligned with MCCSC. It was clearly shared with the students and matched the assessment.	Lesson purpose, objective, and/or introduction had few of the following components: represented a skill or strategy that was developmentally appropriate and aligned with MCCSC. It was clearly shared with the students and matched the assessment.
Instruction	Instruction contained all of the following: teacher models and think alouds that explicitly demonstrated a model of the focus skill or strategy (didn't just provide directions of an activity but a think aloud), and used a gradual release of responsibility with direct instruction to guided and independent practice.	Instruction had some of the following components: teacher models and think alouds that explicitly demonstrated a model of the focus skill or strategy (didn't just provide directions of an activity but a think aloud), and used a gradual release of responsibility with direct instruction to guided and independent practice.	Instruction had few of the following components: teacher models and think alouds that explicitly demonstrated a model of the focus skill or strategy (didn't just provide directions of an activity but a think aloud), and used a gradual release of responsibility with direct instruction to guided and independent practice.
Assessment	Assessment contained all of the following: Assessment was appropriately formative or summative. It was detailed, measurable and matches the objective(s).	Assessment had some of the following: Assessment was appropriately formative or summative. It was detailed, measurable and matches the objective(s).	Assessment had few of the following: Assessment was appropriately formative or summative. It was detailed, measurable and matches the objective(s).
Classroom Management	Classroom Management contained all of the following: directions were clearly shared and demonstrated. Pacing and wait time was appropriate. Student's level of understanding was monitored. Provided constant and consistent reinforcement for positive behavior and was consistent in dealing with misbehavior.	Classroom Management had some of the following: directions were clearly shared and demonstrated. Pacing and wait time was appropriate. Student's level of understanding was monitored. Provided constant and consistent reinforcement for positive behavior and was consistent in dealing with misbehavior.	Classroom Management had few of the following: directions were clearly shared and demonstrated. Pacing and wait time was appropriate. Student's level of understanding was monitored. Provided constant and consistent reinforcement for positive behavior and was consistent in dealing with misbehavior.

Copyright Team Mentoring MCPS/TU (2012)

Observation Rubric (available on project blog)

Intern Name:

Date:

Lesson:

Criteria 1: Purpose/Objective/Introduction of lesson/activity/strategy

Criteria 2: Instruction

2a. Teacher Models

2b. Guided Practice

2c. Independent Practice

Criteria 3: Assessment (matches objective)

Criteria 4: Classroom Management

4a. Shared clear directions/instructions for guided and independent practice

Additional Comments to share:

Copyright Team Mentoring MCPS/TU (2012)

Observation Criteria (available on project blog)

"We were inspired by the desire to explore how two experienced mentors could join forces with their university partner to focus on professional learning with a collaborative and reflective mentoring focus."

Integrated Methods Block: Capitalizing Upon Existing PDS Partnerships to Strengthen Elementary Teacher Preparation

Kate Popejoy, Tracy Rock, Jean Vintinner, Amy Good, University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Melisa Little & Elizabeth Rodgers, Shady Brook Elementary School

Motivation for Change

At UNC Charlotte, an urban university of over 25,000 students, we have improved the clinical preparation of undergraduate elementary teacher candidates. During the 'Integrated Methods Block' (IMB) semester, candidates now take the majority of their methods courses (language arts, math, reading, science, and social studies) and participate in an integrated, intensive early clinical experience, providing a solid foundation of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

In 2008, our state directed teacher education programs to move from input-based models (what we teach) to outcome-based models (what teacher candidates can do). We recognized the opportunity to revise and streamline our whole program; here we focus on how we restructured the early clinical experience of our candidates, in many cases at our

accountability, and increased communication.

- Classroom teachers and ULs use evaluation instruments to gather and report candidate knowledge, skills and dispositions.

Program Changes

In our prior program, as students enrolled in various preparatory courses, our Office of Field Experience (OFE) assigned clinical placements for each student. Thus, a student enrolled in five courses would receive five placements, in up to five different schools, spread over our large metropolitan area. While diverse placements allow candidates to experience a wide variety of school populations, spreading her/his work too thinly may result in a more shallow experience, rather than immersing the candidate in a more realistic setting. Also, as numerous candidates need placement each term, little selectivity could be exercised, resulting in a wide variance of quality in classroom (and teacher) placements. We were providing high-quality

(Goodlad, 1994), with substantial time devoted to clinical experiences before student teaching (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). In our metropolitan area, there is one large district (Charlotte-Mecklenburg, with 88 elementary schools), and a few smaller districts (comprising approximately 108 elementary schools). We first relied predominantly on our PDS sites to become our IMB partners. We want to provide a wide variety of good choices for our students, in areas not too far from the university to allow for UL travel, but also in various regions as most candidates commute to campus. We also need to accommodate approximately 100 methods students each semester and place them in manageable cohorts for each UL. We spoke to administrators of chosen schools, explained the relationship we desired with them as IMB partners, and then signed formal contracts that delineated what would be expected.

In our first transitional semester, we placed approximately 50 IMB candidates in nine schools (remaining 'à la carte' students were placed in the traditional way). In the next two semesters, we placed 75 (twelve schools), and 90 IMB candidates (thirteen schools), respectively. Some schools host candidates every semester, others as needed. Our relationships with these schools, and their teachers, are essential.

Evaluation

We use our university's evaluation of candidates' dispositions to monitor progress towards becoming effective teachers. Cooperating teachers and ULs provide feedback on candidates' (a) professionalism, e.g., attendance, appearance, and disposition; (b) success as teachers, including organization, classroom management, and responsiveness to diversity; and (c) ability to work effectively with teachers, students, administrators, and parents. These data allow us to track candidates' abilities, offering positive encouragement for many students, while also identifying candidates at risk for failure. These data also help to identify areas of weakness in our program to be addressed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

So far, we are satisfied with our new IMB program, and we plan to continue it. Our recommendations for colleagues who might want to implement something similar follow. First, encourage all faculty to take part from the beginning. All should attend planning meetings, and be University Liaisons. While change can be implemented without 100% participation, over time, lack of buy-in and collaboration can damage the program.

Second, stakeholders should expect an unsettled initial period (Fullan, 2007). We strongly recommend keeping parallel (old and new) programs in place as needed. Maintaining two different syllabi for each course makes expectations clear. Third, gather data from the very beginning, surveying teacher candidates before changes are made, and

"A NEW WAY OF FOSTERING INDEPENDENT LEARNING FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES WHILE IN A PDS SETTING."

Professional Development School (PDS) partner sites, beginning in fall 2010.

Undergraduate elementary teacher candidates already take part in a yearlong internship during their final two semesters, which provides sustained and meaningful clinical experience. However, our evaluation data suggested that we should provide a more systematic, coordinated, and focused earlier clinical experience. In addition, NCATE's Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2010) recommends early intensive, integrated, rigorous, and meaningful clinical experiences for teacher candidates that require engagement, monitoring, and collaboration among methods faculty and PK-6 schools. Lastly, we chose to frame our work within the context of NAPDS Essential 2, by working closely with our PDS partners in "a school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community" (NAPDS, 2008).

We have accomplished the following goals:

- Clinical assignments are integrated across methods courses.
- Students spend extended time in clinical classrooms, often at PDS partner sites.
- University faculty liaisons (UL) at each clinical school provide on-site support, feedback, seminar instruction,

classroom instruction, but clinical experience was sometimes lacking. We also preferred that this experience take place in our PDS partner schools.

Three features of our program's second semester changed. First, almost all methods faculty serve as a University Liaison for one carefully selected elementary school (many PDS partners). As a UL, we (a) build school relationships as the university contact, (b) spend time in school during two placement weeks for candidate feedback and accountability, (c) orient and communicate with teachers and administrators who host our candidates, and (d) conduct two seminars with clinical students.

Second, we suspend methods classes for weeks ten and eleven of the semester, requiring each student to spend a minimum of 15 hours each week in his/her assigned classroom in the school. Third, clinical assignments for each course have been consolidated and integrated via a 'clinical handbook' for candidates. Host teachers receive a copy of the handbook, and orientation from the UL, providing a foundation for a robust and successful clinical experience.

Partner School Recruitment and Implementation

Schools and universities should work as partners in teacher candidate development

continue to do so. Also, survey and/or interview key participants to allow for continued program analysis and improvement.

Fourth, take advantage of improvement opportunities. We were dissatisfied with parts of our program when the state mandated changes. We saw that as an opportunity to fundamentally transform what we do. While incremental steps can be more comfortable, examining how we did things from beginning to end allowed our changes to be more successful.

Finally, relationships with partner PDS sites are crucial to the success of a program like ours. Expectations should be clear, with ample opportunity for two-way communication. ULs should be in schools as much as possible, and communicate often. As university methods faculty, we often feel distant from the life of the elementary school. Being in school allows us to fine-tune the process and opens a window into candidate experiences to provide support for the journey from novice to professional educator.

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The NAPDS Award for Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1, 2013, 4:30 PM

Purpose:

The NAPDS Award for Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement recognizes Professional Development School relationships for their ongoing contributions to the mission and vision of the National Association for Professional Development Schools in creating and sustaining genuine collaborative partnerships between P-12 and higher education that shapes educator leadership and practice.

Eligibility:

Nominees for the award must include, at a minimum, one school/district and one college/university that are in a formalized Professional Development School relationship. Nominations for the award are restricted to such relationships that support, through one or more individual memberships, the work of the NAPDS. Nominees must have had their PDS work presented at the PDS National Conference by one or more individuals at least once since 2009. Recipients of the award in 2011 are not eligible to apply until fall 2014. Recipients of the award in 2012 are not eligible to apply until fall 2015. Recipients of the award in 2013 are not eligible to apply until fall 2016.

Complete submission guidelines can be found at www.napds.org.

2013 Award Recipients

- Professional Development School Collaboration between Lake Carolina Elementary School and the University of South Carolina
- Winthrop University University-School Partnership Network
- Professional Development School Collaboration between Friendship Elementary School and the University of Central Florida
- Professional Development School Collaboration between Holly Glen Elementary and Edward R. Johnstone Elementary Schools, and Rowan University



NAPDS Leadership Elections

September marks the month that NAPDS begins the election process for new leaders for the Association.

This fall, we will elect a president-elect from a college/university. This position requires a three-year commitment as he or she will serve as president and past-president as well. We will also elect a member to the Board of Directors (three-year commitment) from either a college/university or a P-12 setting.

Watch your email in the coming weeks for more information from NAPDS!

For further information about the president-elect position, please contact Cindy Stunkard at cjstunkard@gmail.com. For information about the Board of Directors, please contact Doug Rogers at doug_rogers@baylor.edu or Ginger Zierdt at ginger.zierdt@mnsu.edu.



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Criteria 4: Classroom Management

4a. Shared clear directions/instructions for guided and independent practice

The team committed to observe both interns at least once a week using the observation criteria and logging the rubric scores into a shared spreadsheet. On an intermittent basis, the team observed individual interns in collaborative observations and met with the intern to share their combined feedback.

Attitudes and Data Discoveries

The team felt it was important to gauge the general attitudes of the mentor teachers and interns before and after the project. Surveys were administered and the results were analyzed for trends in attitudes over the course of the project. You can find the complete results and blank surveys at the Team Mentoring blog (<http://pdsteammentoring.edublogs.org/>). The mentor teachers reported becoming more comfortable with identifying and discussing trends noticed while analyzing data. As the project progressed, interns comfort level increased with being observed and obtaining feedback from multiple mentors.

When the team analyzed the data gathered from over 30 individual and collaborative observations, they noticed that lower rubric scores were consistently found in the observation criteria related to instruction. The average scores for Criteria 2 (which included teacher models, guided practice, and independent practice) were 2.38 out of 3.0. Criteria 1, 3, and 4 consistently scored in the 2.9 to 2.83 range. The data in itself was insightful to both mentors, but reviewing the anecdotal observation notes for the same lesson (reviewing the “-ick” word family) was even more impactful to the project.

Mentor A	Mentor B
<p>Criteria 2: Instruction</p> <p>2a. Teacher Models</p> <p>Think about... Modeling how to build a word with magnets first; need some direct instruction of the word family.</p> <p>2b. Guided Practice</p> <p>Students coming up to build word with magnets, write word on chart paper. Using “chicks” to think of words or can think of their own.</p> <p>Having students hold up white boards for you to check.</p> <p>White boards and clipboards allowed for very active engagement.</p> <p>After lunch, restated the words that had already been built/written, and picked right back up where you left off with the lesson; smooth transition back in.</p> <p>The “l” was missing from -ick when Leslie came up (what happened to it?), you helped her to figure out what was missing.</p> <p>Helped Halie figure out “click”... Someone else said it; you also had her repeat it.</p> <p>You let them generate their own -ick words.</p> <p>Think about... Make sure you build/write all the words on the chick to clear up any possible misconceptions.</p> <p>2c. Independent Practice</p> <p>Made decision to skip this activity due to time (had to get to math minutes). Will you do it another time?</p>	<p>Criteria 2: Instruction</p> <p>2a. Teacher Models</p> <p>Didn’t observe.</p> <p>2b. Guided Practice</p> <p>On your chick we are going to slide through, the first word is chick. Called on students to build the word on the chalk board, while the other students wrote the words on their white boards. After the students wrote the word chick Student A did a board check. Then they identified another word by sliding the onset and identified a new -ick word. Repeated the process.</p> <p>Stopped lesson to go to lunch. Student A resumed the lesson when they returned. The students who had a clipboard got it back out and got a new paper. Student A called the students to get white boards and markers.</p> <p>The students who got paper wrote all of the ick words.</p> <p>Student A reviewed the words that they had already created. She continued to call on students to build -ick word on the chalk board while the other independently wrote the words on their boards.</p> <p>A K student didn’t have a board held him accountable, you need to write all of those of those words and I am going to come back and check.</p> <p>Think about: Maybe they could have kept their materials in their squares?</p> <p>I am going to give you your chicks to take home to write -ick words</p> <p>2c. Independent Practice</p> <p>ick books in center on Monday.</p>

(Anecdotal Observation Feedback from each mentor)

Though both mentors observed the same lesson, they had different instruction “think abouts” for the intern to consider. The scores showed the intern did not employ an explicit teacher model that could have strengthened the learning experience.

Keep it, Lose it, Change it

The team carefully reflected on the project once it was completed and made decisions for future implementation. The decisions fell in the following categories: what aspects of the project to “keep,” what aspects to “lose,” and what they would “change.” There were no immediate aspects in the “lose it” category that stood out to the team. In the chart below are considerations for the “keep it” and “change it” categories:

Keep It	Change It
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall focus on mentors and their craft should be retained and deepened. The use of technology should be continued. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider issues that surface when mentors reside in inclusion and general education classrooms. Emphasize mentors’ different classroom approaches and styles as a benefit to interns. Consider the opportunity for interns to switch and visit other mentor’s classroom. Use more iPad technologies—video more observation sessions for enhanced debriefing meetings.

The team plans to continue the project with the “keep and change it” considerations mentioned and further advance their desire to grow and improve their mentoring skills and practice.

Intern Feedback

The two pre-service interns also benefited from the team mentoring project. They participated in individual and collaborative feedback sessions and used that feedback to reflect on and adjust their instruction. After teaching in their own classrooms for almost a year, each intern reflected on the benefits of the project and what it meant to them. One intern said, “Throughout my team mentoring experience I was continuously exposed to numerous opinions and suggestions concerning my teaching. This has provided me with the useful skill of accepting constructive criticism and being able to prioritize what I would like to improve on.” The other intern shared, “While team mentoring is meant to be beneficial to the teachers, it was also extremely beneficial for me. While at times it was difficult to be videotaped or to have two people observing me teach, it ended up being the best feedback that I’ve gotten. Because of this, I feel a lot stronger in my teaching as a first year teacher.”

Blog Resource

<http://pdsteammentoring.edublogs.org/>

Please visit the Team Mentoring blog for more details on project resources and ideas.

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How One Urban PDS Builds Bridges With Parents and Involves the Next Generation of Teachers in the Process

Julie Rosenthal, William Paterson University
Maika Bonafe & Mary Lebron, William B. Cruise Memorial School

In its statement *What it Means to Be a Professional Development School*, the National Association for Professional Development Schools provides nine essential characteristics of a PDS (NAPDS, 2008). Included is Essential #2: A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community. Partnerships which adhere to Essential #2 include "...schools whose faculty and staff as a collective whole are committed to working with college/university faculty to offer a meaningful introduction to the teaching profession..." (p 4). While teachers and university professors often find themselves in the role of teacher co-educators, when additional school staff join the team, the result can be rewarding for all involved.

William B Cruise Memorial School in Passaic, N.J. and William Paterson University in Wayne, N.J. have been in partnership since 1999. The partnership has developed in several ways, including the addition of an on-site initial certification literacy course which is co-taught by school and university faculty. Recently, the school-parent liaison offered to assist in a section of the course to engage teacher candidates in working with families of children in the literacy program. The results of this collaborative effort are reported here.

Parental involvement has been associated with a range of improved school outcomes. However, there are several factors which can inhibit the participation of some parents, particularly Hispanic and economically disadvantaged parents (Smith, Stern & Shatrova, 2008). At the same time, the undergraduates in our teacher preparation program are predominantly White, middle class, suburban females with very little experience interacting with people culturally, linguistically, or economically different from themselves, a life experience which may lead to low expectations for ethnic minority students (Groulx, 2001). Teacher candidates with multicultural experiences are more likely to have favorable beliefs and attitudes towards diverse families (Kyles & Olafson, 2008). Our hope was that by providing candidates the opportunity to interact with families in this predominantly Hispanic, low income school, we could increase their positive expectations for family-school involvement and improve their belief in their ability to engage families.

The parent liaison visited the class to speak to candidates about building relationships with families. Candidates were asked to anonymously write about their concerns and expectations for working with families during the afterschool literacy tutoring sessions that are a part of the course. Candidates worried about their ability to communicate with families because of language differences and about their ability to design activities that could be used to get parents to participate rather than just observe. Finally, many predicted that parent participation

would be low at a school with similar demographics.

The parent liaison invited families, through a letter sent home in each child's homework folder, to three sessions of the afterschool program. She followed up with a phone call to each of the families to ensure they had received the invitation and to urge them to attend. This process was explained to candidates to model for them that effort in reaching out to families could yield results.

For the first session, candidates planned literacy games that families could participate in such as "rhyming word concentration," or chose familiar books for children to read aloud to their family members. During the second session, families, children, candidates, course co-instructors, and the parent liaison went on a walking trip to the city's public library which is very close to the school. During the final session, candidates hosted a publishing party in which children shared a piece

with them, even if they spoke a different language. Parents appreciated the literacy games and used ideas from the tutoring session to work with their children at home. Importantly, all parents signed up for and received library cards for their children during the library visit; none had known how close the library was to the school. Many reported having returned after the group visit.

Children were clearly pleased to bring their literacy tutors and families together. The publishing party allowed them to "show off" their hard work to their parents and aspects of their culture to the candidates through the food brought in by families.

The program addresses NAPDS Essential 2 because it involves preparing future educators by engaging them in the school community beyond the walls of the classroom. Further, the school-university culture is enhanced by the participation of school staff, namely a parent liaison who is dedicated to

"THEY EXPRESSED DECREASED INHIBITION FOR WORKING WITH LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE PARENTS BY USING ALTERNATE WAYS TO COMMUNICATE AND ENLISTING CHILDREN AS TRANSLATORS."

of writing they worked on with their tutors over the term, and families brought in food.

After the final session, candidates and parents were asked to write about their thoughts on the "parent component" of the course. Responses revealed that the experience of providing the opportunity for candidates to engage with families positively impacted all participants.

Candidates were pleased by the near perfect attendance of families at the events. They expressed decreased inhibition for working with linguistically diverse parents by using alternate ways to communicate and enlisting children as translators. Several comments made by candidates underscored how such experiences begin to challenge stereotypes. For example, one noted that she had been scared to meet her student's mother because of the perceived language difference, but found the parent spoke English despite her Hispanic last name. Another candidate was surprised at how many children had two parent families; she had expected fewer fathers to participate. Several candidates noted how excited children were to share their school life with families and felt that facilitating parent participation would be a great motivator for their future students. Emphasized was recognition of the importance of utilizing community resources such as the public library. Finally, candidates felt that periodic publishing parties would allow them to invite parents into the classroom to participate in school activities.

Parents also expressed that they benefitted from the program in several ways. They felt that the candidates tried to engage and communicate

improving the role of parents in the school partner. The success of implementing "parent involvement" into this single section of the literacy course has convinced us to implement a similar program in all 15 yearly sections. The challenge will be eliciting the same level of parent involvement in schools that may not have a liaison on staff.

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Taking Solid First Steps: Helping Interns and Mentors Have Tough Conversations About Basic Professional Dispositions

Sandra Hamar, Nancy Halferty, Allison Dudley, and Tanya Coffelt, Graceland University
Debbie Marlowe, Procter Elementary Independence School District

"It isn't the mountain ahead that wears you out; it's the grain of sand in your shoe."

Robert W. Service

Starting out strong with the basics of teaching is vital. Those important first steps should be as solid and pain free as possible! PDS partnerships need to share the wisdom they have gleaned from the field to augment the current knowledge base (NAPDS Essential 5). Experience has taught us that it is often the professional dispositions that trip up our PDS interns, rather than lack of subject knowledge. NCATE defines dispositions as the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions for teaching are ultimately observable in the act of teaching (Carroll, 2002). One of the most involved and influenced participants with these "observable" acts of teaching are the mentors in classrooms who work daily with our candidates.

Mentors can find it challenging to address dispositional behavior with their interns. Graceland University School of Education PDS Partnership has sought to find ways to help foster these tough conversations between mentors and interns. We have all felt the time crunch of PDS training days, so providing four simple "doable" tools has become a cornerstone of our dispositional support.

1. Shell Conversations: One way we encourage conversations about tough subjects between our mentors and interns is promoting a "shell conversation." We use the old tale of how the oyster forms a pearl. The pearl first has to endure the grain of sand, which irritates and hurts before finally coating the sand, turning it slowly into a treasured pearl. We make the analogy between the pearl story and how just like the sand, something an intern does may "really irritate" their mentor or other school professionals. If the mentor approaches their intern and is willing to address the issue, they are really "coating" the sand. On occasion, an intern may also need to have a "shell conversation" with his/her mentor. We give each member of our teams a shell, so when they lay it on the table before a tough conversation, the other person knows that this is a tough subject and the ONLY reason the other person is addressing the issue is because they treasure the other person and their relationship.

2. Disposition Rubric: Another way we draw attention to those gritty dispositional situations for our interns is to ask mentors to fill out our disposition rubric and discuss it with the intern. This is done once in the fall after the intern is inducted into the classroom and four times in the spring, during the intern's full time student teaching placement. This allows our interns to begin early in the year to

address any dispositional concerns.

3. Stars and Steps Notes: Kristen Gutierrez, one of our mentor teachers, shared a mentoring tool, "Stars and Steps", that she picked up a few years ago. "Stars and Steps" is a small form that has a place to jot something the intern did that day that was stellar, a shining star, and something the intern can do the next day to grow as a teacher, a step toward the stars. This form encourages the day-to-day feedback which is vital for improving teaching practice.

4. PDS Toolkit: The last way we support tough conversations between interns and mentors is by providing a toolkit flipchart. Our toolkit gives behavioral descriptions of what mentors can do to model the knowledge, skills, and dispositions we want to nurture in our young professionals. Mentors have mentioned how helpful it is to have this tool for ideas of what to say and do to support their interns.

The journey for our mentors and interns is a yearlong endeavor that we want to go as smoothly as possible. Having the ability to discuss tough subjects, things near and dear to our hearts, is critical. We have found these ideas useful to assist our mentors and interns in making the journey pleasant and ensuring our interns grow in all areas. We agree with the premise that "good teaching requires self-knowledge: it is a secret hidden in plain sight" (Palmer, 2007, p.3). By having a gentle guide, like our mentors, interns are able to identify and perhaps fix any faults they may have through those

tough conversations; we believe self-knowledge and understanding is a must.

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“More Like a Conversation”: Cultivating Reflective Dialogue With a Student-Centered Classroom Observation Form

Raymond Flores, Texas Tech University

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Supervision of teacher candidates (TCs) in the field is often teacher-centered, anti-dialogical, and focused on the evaluation of TCs (Nolan & Francis, 1992; Coombs et al., 2013). With a teacher-centered approach to supervision, university supervisors often play the role of “silent outsiders” who take notes at the back of the room, produce written reports of what is observed, and provide TCs with ratings of their performance. While this approach is common, it is not always compatible with the learning needs of TCs (Paris & Gespass, 2001). In addition, it does not promote active engagement by TCs, require them to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning, or promote reflective practice.

Observation forms help guide the interactions between TCs and their supervisors. Unfortunately, many forms do not consider the individual differences of TCs, have ratings that can be consistently defined, and gauge TCs based on standards that assume a teacher-centered philosophy (Paris & Gespass, 2001). Rather than promoting a dialogical mentor-mentee relationship in which observations/conferences are opportunities for TCs to receive constructive and supportive feedback, observations with these forms often become sessions where TCs' performances are evaluated and quantified (Coombs et al., 2013).

Context of Pilot

Prior to fall 2012, faculty and university supervisors at Wichita State University used a locally-developed 13 item classroom observation form which was aligned with the contextual framework of the College of Education. During an observation, university supervisors rated TCs on each item using a five-point Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1=Unsatisfactory, 2=Needs Improvement, 3=Proficient, 4=Very Good, 5=Distinguished). After the lesson, supervisors and TCs generally conducted a short post-conference in which they discussed the lesson, ratings, and observation notes.

While the paper-based observation form and protocol had been used for the past 30+ years at the college, they had numerous limitations. First, the Likert scale ratings were vague and inconsistently defined among supervisors. Secondly, the quantitative nature of the form items rendered it a tool for evaluation rather than one that could provide TCs with support and opportunities for growth. Further, items did not provide TCs with much qualitative feedback or details as to how they could improve their lessons (Coombs et al., 2013). Finally, because supervisors often did not have measures of the TC's prior knowledge, their feedback was solely based on lesson plans and short observations.

Beyond the form, faculty and supervisors also noted limitations in the observation process which was more teacher-centered and placed extensive responsibility for reflection and critical lesson analyses on supervisors.

Purpose of Pilot and Participants

In efforts to promote more student-centered supervision, faculty members (at the time) piloted a new digital form and protocol. The purpose of this project was to investigate the successes and limitations from the perspective of faculty and supervisors. Participants included five faculty members from the middle/secondary teacher education programs at Wichita State University, five university supervisors, and 55 middle/secondary level TCs.

New Classroom Observation Form and Protocol

The new observation form and protocol is aligned with NAPDS Essential 4 (a shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants) and addresses many of the limitations of the previous teacher-centered form. It consists of eight items aligned with the research-based InTASC standards (e.g., Learner and Learning, Content Knowledge, and Instructional Practice). Example items included: “The teacher planned instruction based on the learning and developmental levels of all students;” “The teacher demonstrated a thorough knowledge of content;” and “The teacher used methods and techniques that are effective in meeting student needs.” On the form beside each item, two columns are provided for qualitative notes. The first column labeled “Observable Teacher Evidence” was used to document evidence of observable teacher behaviors demonstrated during a lesson, while the second column labeled “Observable Student Evidence” was used to document observable student behaviors (see Figure 1). This observation form was developed by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) and was concurrently piloted by several school districts in the state of Kansas (KEEP, 2012).

student-centered. Before the observation, TCs reflected on the decisions they made while planning their lesson and documented anticipated observable teacher and student evidence based on those decisions. In addition, TCs described why they designed the lesson in the manner that they did and justified their decisions based on InTASC standards. During an observation, supervisors built on what TCs typed and posed questions for reflection.

After the lesson, TCs and supervisors discussed the lesson and observation form. In addition, TCs made updates to the form and composed answers to questions asked by the supervisor on the same form.

Successes and Challenges

In depth discussion and evaluation indicated that faculty and supervisors preferred the more student-centered form and protocol, which required TCs to take a more active role in critiquing their own lesson plans and teaching. Supervisors also appreciated having TCs partially complete the form before the lesson because it allowed them to informally assess and build upon TCs' prior knowledge, which in turn led to richer post conference discussions. Furthermore with the form, which emphasizes qualitative rather than quantitative feedback, the observation process became an opportunity for collaborative dialogue and learning. Supervisors and administrators praised the new form, revealing that it “helped start up good conversations,” “allowed collaboration between supervisors and TCs,” and helped observations feel “more like a conversation rather than evaluation.” Furthermore, the digital format of the form helped make the conversations more immediate, accessible, and transactional.

While the form had successes, the novelty of the form may have resulted in challenges, including increased time commitments from TCs and supervisors and uncertainty by TCs as they completed the form.

Future Plans

In future semesters, once TCs are familiar with the new form and protocol, faculty members plan to gather feedback from TCs, analyze the quality of their reflections, and revamp the types of questions supervisors pose. We are especially interested in the collaborative interactions between supervisors and TCs.

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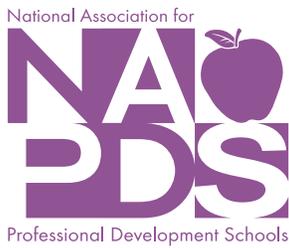
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Construct 1: Learner and Learning

Component	Observable Teacher Evidence	Observable Student Evidence
<p>1.1 Learner Development: The teacher planned instruction based on the learning and developmental levels of all students.</p> <p><i>Examples of demonstrated evidence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson plans illustrated teacher understanding of student developmental levels and needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of a variety of teaching methods and resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Student work and/or lesson plan demonstrated adapting instruction to meet student needs. 		

Figure 1: Screenshot of Observation Form Item

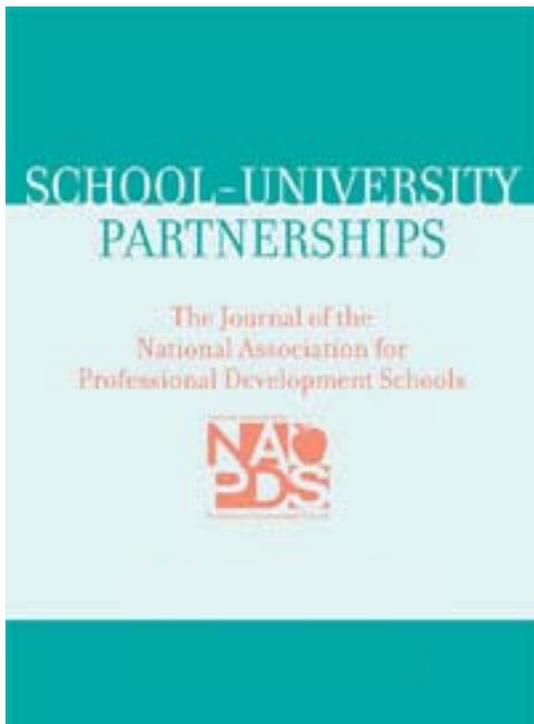
In addition to a new form, we strove to make the observation process more



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School-University Partnerships Submissions

Kristien Zenkov, Senior Editor, George Mason University

School-University Partnerships is committed to advocating for collaborative ventures across the PreK-12 and college and university communities as vehicles for the discovery and sharing of knowledge that shapes educational best practices. Honoring the voices of both school-based and university-based educators is central to the mission of the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS), and *School-University Partnerships* seeks manuscripts that represent partnerships across stakeholders. The journal strongly encourages submissions that reflect collaborative partnership initiatives. Submissions may focus on (but are not limited to) original school-university research designed and implemented collaboratively, descriptions of effective pedagogies and content delivery in PDS contexts, explanations of successful partnership models and structures, examples of measures of assessment and results of evaluative processes, and analyses of the professional development of all constituents involved with school-university partnerships.

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