

# PDS Partners



**NAPDS President,  
Alison Rutter**

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## A Message From the President

*Alison Rutter, East Stroudsburg University*

Greetings,

We all need to thank the University of South Carolina, particularly Bruce Field, Bryan Burgin and Jason Kinsey, for once again doing such an exceptional job in putting together the PDS National Conference. This year's conference in Daytona Beach is certainly one to be remembered – for the energy and excitement of sharing our work as well as the gorgeous setting and wonderful weather. The conference started off with a series of workshops that immediately set the tone for the rest of the conference. The participants from last summer's Leadership Forum proved that they had been busy since last August, sharing ways in which they had begun to implement and analyze the Nine Essentials at home. They, like the Director's Group that followed, were eager to discuss ways to network and develop shared resources. Another group met with Kristien Zenkov to suggest ways portraits could be drawn to highlight the individual essentials and publish the good work in this newsletter. Roger Brindley met with an aspiring group of journal authors who would like to contribute to the journal's growing reputation. Donna Cullan spoke with district personnel about their growing involvement and Karen Schafer gathered a group interested in policy development.

Then the fun began—we got to learn from each other over the next three days, choosing from more than 300 sessions. One of the most pleasant surprises was the large number of students presenting both with their professors and P-12 teachers and together at the poster sessions. These future teachers personify the PDS message. It was also a thrill to have Salisbury University recognized for the USC "Spirit of Partnership" award and to announce our first NAPDS "Exemplary PDS Partnership" awards. The overall quality of this first set of applicants for the "Exemplary PDS Partnership" awards made it difficult to choose, but three emerged as truly "exemplary." The awards committee decided given the range of applicants to acknowledge two different categories this year – one for a broad multi-PDS configuration and another for a single site-single university PDS. For the multiple PDS configurations the committee found two as exemplary – Penn State University and the University of North Florida. One single-site PDS stood out – North Springs Elementary PDS/University of South Carolina. We are looking forward to learning more about these PDSs when their stories are published in the fall journal.

Furthering our excitement at this year's conference was the message sent by our keynote speakers, Donna Culan, LouAnne Johnson, and Art Levine, who cheered us on and encouraged us to be advocates – within our partnerships, for our students, and for PDS within the context of broader educational policy. Part of this advocacy is ensuring that we are recognized as one of the key associations that addresses firsthand the issues facing education in this country and abroad, particularly making teacher education and professional development more relevant, responsive, and effective for improving student learning. To do that, we need to ensure that we are the voice of PDS across the country. Van Dempsey and Paul Chaplin, our policy and membership chairs respectively, will be launching an effort to enlist these voices from each state and increase and broaden our membership. We look to our journal—*School-University Partnerships*—as a tool for publicizing our work and the research conducted on it. Likewise, this newsletter will continue to showcase our stories and reflect the images of successful PDS work to all of its readers. Our hope is to have these shared broadly. To accomplish these goals we need a much more extensive and widespread group of members participating in this work. How can you help? Become an advocate for PDS at your school, in your district, in your community, at your university and in your state. Encourage your PDS to address the Nine Essentials. In addition to participating in the conference, take the next step—find a partner and get involved in NAPDS as journal reviewers, newsletter contributors, journal authors, or join one of our ad hoc committees. The strength of NAPDS is in having a broad representation of its membership being actively engaged in its work. If you are interested, speak to one of the individuals mentioned above—or contact me and we can discuss ways in which you might best contribute. My e-mail is [alisonrutter@embarqmail.com](mailto:alisonrutter@embarqmail.com). I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

# Write a “Portrait” of Your PDS Partnership

*Board of Directors and Executive Council of NAPDS*

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

The Executive Council and Board of Directors invite individual PDS partnerships to communicate the relevance of the essentials to their

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

These richly detailed depictions of

the relevance of the essentials to an individual partnership’s efforts will be considered for publication in *PDS Partners* (the official newsletter of NAPDS) and/or highlighted with special sessions at the PDS National Conference or other NAPDS-sponsored leadership events. “Portraits” of 1,000 words or less addressing a single essential may be submitted to *PDS Partners* (to Kristien Zenkov, the newsletter editor based at George Mason University, at [pdspartners@gmu.edu](mailto:pdspartners@gmu.edu)). Please read on in this newsletter to find the article by Barbara Smith Chalou, where she presents a portrait of essential #7 as enacted by the University of Maine-Presque Isle/Teague Park School Professional Development School.

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## The “Unwritten and Understood” Shall Become... A Partnership Agreement

*Kathy Thomas Willhite and Gary L. Willhite, University of Wisconsin – La Crosse*

Every school/university partnership has preconceived notions of what it means to have a Professional Development School agreement. Often, beginning PDSs have oral agreements and those agreements stand for a period of time; however, each partnership has individual unique needs and PDS partnerships tend to grow and expand over time to other sites.

Once the PDS partnership is well established, and seeking to expand to other schools or districts, the “unwritten and understood” expectations of partnership and collaboration need to be centralized and confirmed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Many have taken the approach that it is necessary to have a MOU before having a partnership – we believe that is individual preference and/or need.

Our past and current experiences with PDSs (dating back to 1990) have left us with a couple of basic impressions: 1) that there are a core of participants in any

PDS (university and school administration, faculty, staff and teacher candidates and classroom students); 2) that the concepts of the vision and mission statement should be included in the MOU; and 3) a number of key questions need to be explored and then considered for inclusion in the MOU. They are:

- Who are the key participants and what are their individual roles?
- What does each participant expect from the relationship?
- How firmly embraced is the concept of a PDS in the administrative line and the university line?
- Is there mutual agreement that this is a partnership?
- Is there an understanding that a PDS is not “just” placing student teachers for field experience?

If we may be so bold as to use the analogy of the beehive, essentially the partnership needs to understand who the Queen Bee(s) will be and

who will be the workers. We have found an exploration of these questions informs the partnership and helps alleviate issues that may arise in the future, such as what happens when a key player leaves the PDS partnership, how does the PDS keep going, and must each partnership be identical?

Another point of value for consideration is the newly published *Nine Essentials* of a PDS. Though many partnerships have worked within the framework of all or some of the *Nine Essentials*, it is now critical to look at them when developing new sites and new MOUs. For a healthy, vital and viable PDS it is imperative to not only consider the items mentioned above but to align the PDS with the *Nine Essentials*. The established PDS and the PDS of the future should consider whether all practical work of the PDS has been framed around the *Nine Essentials*.

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# A PDS “Portrait”: “Building the Future” in Maine

Barbara Smith Chalou, University of Maine at Presque Isle

NAPDS Essential #7: A structure that allows all participants a forum for ongoing governance, reflection, and collaboration.

“Building the Future”

Our motto: developed by Lois Brewer

In response to an invitation to local K-12 schools, from the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI), to collaborate with us in formulating a Professional Development School, Lois Brewer (principal of the Teague Park School in Caribou) suggested that the teacher education faculty come into her school for cake, coffee, and conversation. What we found on arrival was an engaged, relaxed, and generally contented Teague Park faculty.

This simple gesture of amity resulted in what is now a nascent Professional Development School with bright promise for the future. First order of business: Attend the 2008 PDS National Conference in Orlando, Florida. For residents of Northern Maine, bobbing languidly in a cool aquamarine swimming pool on a blistering sun-drenched Florida afternoon can produce amazing results. We knew from the onset that we wanted to formulate a partnership; we spent a short period of time in discussion about how to begin and quickly moved to “Let’s just do it” and see what transpires.

A mere four months later we are up and running with, among other things, a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), regularly scheduled meetings, three year-long interns placed at the Teague Park School, a university course delivered on-site, and virtually 100% involvement from all constituents. We are currently the only formalized Professional Development School in the state of Maine, and it was decided early on that strict adherence to the NAPDS *Nine Essentials* would not only lend credibility to our PDS, but guide us in formulating a partnership that truly advances professional development rather than just gives lip service to the phrase. We have

hung posters, reminding us of the *Nine Essentials*, at each of the (so far) two sites: Teague Park and UMPI. All PDS meetings are focused on these principles.

One particularly inspiring workshop at the PDS conference, “Appreciative Inquiry,” based on the work of Cooperrider, Whitney, and Stavros, became the guiding philosophy of our governance structure (NAPDS Essential #7). With its focus on renewal, change, and increased performance rather than on the problem, we instinctively began imagining the possibilities. We already know what the problems are and historically have expended far too much of our energy on them, with little movement toward solutions. Guided by the ideologies inherent in the Appreciative Inquiry philosophy, we are building a positive future, not agonizing over how to achieve one.

Appreciative Inquiry engages individuals at every level of involvement and at every rank in the decision-making process, wherein student interns have as much voice as cooperating teachers and university faculty have as much voice as student interns. Our two-tiered governance system, consisting of an executive board (the Steering Committee) and a working team (The Planning Committee), creates the forum that allows for greater flexibility in the decision-making process. The working team consists of the front line people: university faculty, cooperating teachers, and interns; the executive committee consists of the assistant superintendent, site coordinators, and other educational administrators. The working team can focus on developing ideas and planning activities, while the executive committee can make

decisions based on budgets, law, and school policy.

Reflection on our practice occurs in a recursive and on-going manner. While it is too early in the game to report out (we have little data collected at this point), we are already thinking about future research projects. At this juncture, I can be seen strolling around the school, asking teachers if they mind me sitting in on classes, or if I can help them out in any way. Once we have attained an adequate comfort level with each other, we can begin to identify some collaborative research questions. While we have no observable, deliberate, concrete, or prescriptive plan for our future, we are actively formulating relationships, adding our voices, and letting ideas emerge naturally from real life situations and the needs of the school and university. This informal approach then becomes our deliberate plan and all voices are considered.

Overall, this experience has been intellectually stimulating and professionally challenging; reason enough to proceed, but above all else, it has been fun, and fun is a powerful motivator. It can be difficult to arrange a schedule that allows for hours in the school, or to attend multiple meetings, but working with a collegial group who demonstrate mutual respect for one another, who are fully invested in the PDS, and who aren’t afraid to speak up for fear of making a mistake, transforms what could be a tedious experience into one that is invigorating and revitalizing. We have an exceptional group which confirms our thinking. It is all of the individuals in our group who are critical to our success, more than any prescriptive plan of action, hence the shared governance structure.

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## From College Students to Teachers: A View from Interns

*Eva Garin, James Bell, Ashley Cox, and Lanee' Sheffield, Bowie State University*

“Our bag has slowly been filled this semester on Mondays and Wednesdays as we attend classes as students; however, we have had the opportunity to try the tools in the field as we started the first phase of our year-long internship on Tuesdays and Thursdays visiting our PDS site.”

The doctor walks into the bedroom, plops down his case of tools and begins to diagnose the problem. He pulls out his stethoscope and listens to her heart. He then pulls out a hammer to test her reflexes. And finally, he stares down her throat. He was simply trying everything at his disposal to diagnose and treat the patient.

As teachers we have our medical bag as well, but as pre-service interns we do not have the stethoscope or the tongue depressor yet. Our bag has slowly been filled this semester on Mondays and Wednesdays as we attend classes as students; however, we have had the opportunity to try the tools in the field as we started the first phase of our year-long internship on Tuesdays and Thursdays visiting our PDS site.

Taking a look through the eyes of three Bowie State University pre-service interns, a typical college week has transformed from daily classes to Tuesdays and Thursdays visiting a Professional Development School (PDS) to observe a mentor teacher’s classroom. Alternating days of the week, Mondays and Wednesdays are devoted to the Methods of Teaching (reading, science, math, and social studies) classes and

Fridays are off. Looking from the outside in, it may appear that this college schedule is pretty reasonable but taking a more intimate look at this schedule through the eyes of the pre-service teacher interns you will find a particularly different view.

Mondays our “bag” was filled with best practices and concepts of teaching math, social studies and sciences. Wednesdays our reading assessment course opened into the PDS reading clinic. The PDS reading clinic, as an extension of the Reading Assessment Course, permitted us to diagnose and implement interventions related to literacy in a one-on-one environment with a struggling reader. We were able to learn about different literacy assessments and apply concepts the same day. This valuable real life application allowed for immediate reinforcement of the assessment. This course allowed us to flow into the reading methods course, where time was often spent discussing what we had done earlier in the clinic. As the class progressed we added to our bag all of the tools related to reading that we would need to pull out the following week.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays we

experienced working side by side with a mentor teacher at our PDS site who helped us build collaborative skills we will need when working with our peers. We observed classroom designs, teaching techniques, and interacted with students all in the same day. We were guided to use our new tools in the PDS classroom with our mentor teacher. Helping us with planning and teaching lessons in a variety of subjects, our mentor teacher’s role as a guide and model to follow really helped us visualize what type of educator we are to become. We were required to participate in literacy assignments. Such assignments were observations of guided reading lessons, read alouds, and reading recovery lessons. We even had to design and implement an intensive author study about a selected children’s author.

In retrospect this semester, the first half of our internship has ended. As we look ahead, preparing our minds for the next phase, we also reflect upon our growth. The teacher traits and qualities that we’ve gained will allow us to better utilize our bag of tools and properly diagnose and teach our students next year as full-time student teachers.

### “Editors’ Corner”

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

Welcome to our loaded spring Issue of PDS Partners! This newsletter is itself the culmination of a school/university PDS: Kristien in his role as literacy faculty at George Mason University in Virginia, Jim in his role as an English teacher at Euclid High School in Ohio, and Athene in her role as a Literacy Specialist for the Manassas School District in Virginia. We all have experience working in the PDS model and are committed to continuing what we see as the natural benefits of the PDS process. Of course, being strong technology users, the geographical distance between us is minimized, making our collaboration seamless. A case in point is our recent email invitation to NAPDS members to submit articles for this publication. The response was overwhelming, filling up both this issue, our September issue, and almost our January (2010) issue! This is not say we don’t want more quality articles... we especially encourage those of you in the K-12 setting to submit your teacher research that delves into the PDS effect on student achievement. Keep those wonderful PDS stories coming, and in the meantime, enjoy the inspiring work being done by our colleagues in the name of Professional Development Schools! Articles can be submitted to [pdspartners@gmu.edu](mailto:pdspartners@gmu.edu).

# Confessions of a University PDS Liaison: A Study in Transformation

Frank L. Tavaño, DePaul University

A year and half ago, when my department head asked if I would be a Professional Development School Liaison to one of our six PDS sites, I quickly asked, “What does it entail?” She readily informed me that I would supervise students as they complete a component of the clinical hours leading to student teaching. She also added that I would have one course release. “Well, yeah—count me in.”

My first meeting with the faculty and principal from the school was in late June as our university held a two day institute to discuss the inquiry process, develop core teams, study groups, and a plan for school improvement. I was so pleasantly surprised at the warmth of the team and the level of professionalism. As an example, our school teams were given an assignment to develop an over-riding inquiry question. We were assigned a given amount of time. After that time we were to report back in large group. The teachers, principal and I talked, collaborated, reviewed, revised until the very last minute that was assigned. Yes, they were friendly, but so very professional. This institute was followed by another two day institute in August. This time more teachers came, talked, collaborated, and planned.

Beginning in September, I taught my classes on Mondays and Tuesdays on the university campus. On Wednesdays and Thursdays I was in my Professional Development School observing my students working with K-8 students and giving my students professional feedback. I was highly visible, basically serving my students; however, I began to question, “What am I doing for the professional staff at our PDS?” As of right now nothing. My students are the ones benefiting. We not

only had over one hundred pre-service teachers gaining hands-on-experiences, we now had thirteen student teachers. (It should be noted that five of the thirteen student teachers got teaching positions in the school.)

I liked the principal, teachers, and parents; they seemed to like me. I got to know many of the parents when I was asked to address the parents at their open house. After that point, when parents saw me at the school, I was addressed by my first name. I felt comfortable in this school.

The principal was wonderful. Her teachers would follow her through a swamp. So would I if she had asked. She did, however, begin to meet with me on an “as need basis” asking for my input on sundry administrative issues. Initially it was “administrivia,” but as time went on the discussions became more substantive.

It was now February, and I was one month into the new quarter with new classes. I had just taught a lesson (and modeled it) on Literature Circles. My students practiced the newly learned strategy in their PDS classrooms. Their cooperating teachers wanted to learn more about Literature Circles and asked if I could present at the next regularly scheduled early dismissal professional development day. I was delighted to accept their invitation. This would allow me to reciprocate for all the teachers had done for my pre-service teachers.

In April, the faculty and parents invited me to join the school’s Strategic Planning Committee. Of course I agreed. The Committee brainstormed, reviewed, discussed, evaluated, and articulated where we want our PDS to be five years from

now. No one told me Saturdays were involved; there was even a meeting on a Sunday evening at a local coffee shop.

The school year came to a close. I did arrange for over one hundred pre-service teachers to each complete a minimum of twenty clinical hours. Thirteen student teachers received support that may not be afforded in any other school—support from a master cooperating teacher, a dedicated principal who personally observed, coached, and handed each student teacher an application for a teaching position in the Professional Development School. (This principal became an adjunct faculty member conducting the weekly student teaching seminar—the seminar met off campus in the Professional Development School.) Student teachers also saw their university supervisor, and of course, me. Lots of feedback and input.

The truth is that I did spend more time at the PDS compared to planning and teaching my regularly scheduled class load. But I really liked the people with whom I consulted and collaborated. Two more Institute Days were held in June. Teachers had time to talk, plan, and discuss curricular needs and initiatives.

During the summer, the PDS faculty worked on authentic assessments aligning curriculum to state standards. This was supposed to be time off for the teachers. Had they not heard of the extrinsic rewards of teaching—June, July, and August? The document was completed by mid-August. Portfolios were created for every student in the school.

Prior to the first day of school

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*“She readily informed me that I would supervise students as they complete a component of the clinical hours leading to student teaching. She also added that I would have one course release. ‘Well, yeah—count me in.’”*

“The relationships among PDS participants are multi-layered and require individualized attention. We offer strategies for cultivating trust as university instructors with interns, mentor teachers, administrators, and public school students.”

## Building Trust: Examples from Elementary and Secondary Professional Development Schools

Jean Ann Foley and Emilie Berruezo Rodger, Northern Arizona University

*Symbiosis refers to unlike organisms (or institutions) joined intimately in mutually beneficial relationships (Goodlad, 1988, p.14).*

At Northern Arizona University our partnerships are based on Goodlad’s (1988) principle of complementary dissimilarity and overlapping self-interest. While the university’s primary goal is the education of its interns, the public school’s primary goal is the education of its students. Due to the complexity of these dual priorities, the development of trust is of utmost importance. In this article, we will first situate ourselves within two partnerships. Next we will share curricular examples that focus on building trust in our respective programs.

At our small southwestern state university, there are three elementary PDS programs that have been in place for the past 20 years. These programs are housed on site at three different elementary schools. The secondary partnership

has been operating for five years. The relationships among PDS participants are multi-layered and require individualized attention. We offer strategies for cultivating trust as university instructors with interns, mentor teachers, administrators, and public school students.

### *Elementary Interns*

The first week in the partnership, the instructors model an introductory assignment by creating a poster that describes who they are by expressing their life passions through pictures and symbols. The interns complete this poster assignment and use it as a prop to introduce themselves to their peers and to each of their assigned classrooms. When one is willing to risk, one is open and vulnerable to a mutually beneficial relationship.

### *Secondary Interns*

Each class period on the university campus begins with a five minute “contribution.” As an example, the instructor models her “contribution” by briefly describing her love for dance and how she uses it as a metaphor for teaching in terms of rhythm and movement as expression, then the cohort stands, the boom box is cranked up, and the instructor leads them in an aerobics style dance to the tune of “Footloose.” This experience only lasts five minutes, gets the students physically engaged, models the assignment, and breaks down barriers for building authentic relationships. Each intern shares something meaningful about themselves with the cohort throughout the semester.

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## Professional Development School Collaboration to Enhance Field Experiences

Frank Carrano, Southern Connecticut State University

The PDS initiative at Southern Connecticut State University has been in place for over five years. We initially developed relationships with four New Haven schools as potential models for a professional collaboration. Those efforts have resulted in a number of opportunities for university faculty and school administrators and teachers to interact and communicate about improving the preparation of teacher candidates. Over time, we have been able to bring university classes into school buildings, provide university resources for teacher professional development, communicate more effectively with school

faculty about field experiences, and entertain recommendations for improving the processes for student placement and creating a genuine professional relationship with public schools.

Our experiences have been productive in a somewhat limited way, since we have nearly 500 teacher candidates who are placed into schools for field experiences each semester, and we have been working with just a handful of schools. We began to consider some other opportunities that might be created as a means of enhancing field experiences for a larger number of candidates. We

began by defining our needs. They included:

- Defining our field experience expectations
- Developing some criteria for assessing students’ efforts in classrooms
- Identifying desirable schools and classrooms
- Identifying school liaisons for candidate placement
- Development of an information form for student data
- Development of an electronic format for all communication

The next step was to identify

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# Preparing PDS Interns to Work with Diverse Students

*Emily Eicke, Deb Larson, and Melissa Reed, Emporia State University*

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standard for Diversity states that the target for experiences working with diverse students in P-12 schools includes:

Extensive and substantive field experiences and clinical practices for both conventional and distance learning programs [that] are designed to encourage candidates to interact with exceptional students and students from a broad range of diverse groups. The experiences help candidates confront issues of diversity that affect teaching and student learning and develop strategies for improving student learning and candidates' effectiveness as teachers (NCATE, 2008).

A large percentage of Professional Development School (PDS) interns in the Midwest are middle class students with little experience working and communicating with low socioeconomic students, one aspect of diversity. To support PDS intern experiences in Title I schools and ensure interns have some base knowledge about working with low socioeconomic students and their families, PDS interns participated in a jigsaw book study using *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Ruby Payne (2005). This book helps students understand the challenges students in poverty face and offers some practical ways to help these students become effective learners. Fifty-two interns participated one week prior to starting their PDS internships. They were to be placed in eight Title I schools.

To introduce the book, students were given a pre-test asking about their knowledge and experience in working with students of poverty. The pre-test was composed of nine questions rated on a scale of one to five. One was the lowest

rating and five was the highest rating. Nearly seventy percent (36/52) of the students had little or no experience dealing with students of poverty or understood the problems these students and families face. Approximately eighty-two percent (43/52) thought that money was the biggest issue for these families. And the same number (43/52) felt they could effectively teach these students and that all students deserve a good education.

The students then read the book using a jigsaw strategy and came back together for a group discussion. Each group presented their section of the book. Students were given bags with materials to present the concepts in their section of the book. Some bags had a large number of materials including poster board, markers, construction paper, glue, stickers, etc. Other bags contained a few crayons and one or two pieces of construction paper. Bags were distributed at random. There were comments on the differences in the supplies. Each group worked only with their supplies and designed a visual to present their section of the book. Groups were creative in their presentations. The materials did not matter as much as the abilities of the interns to be creative, however, students did discover that resources did make a difference in what they could do. For example, the group with the poster board and art supplies was able to rely on visuals and the group that had paper scraps and old crayons had to rely solely on themselves. That group chose theatre to present their information. PDS interns discussed the role resources play in education and how they must be cognizant, as teachers, of their students' social, emotional, financial, and physical resources to accurately determine what their students need to be successful in school.

One of the key points highlighted

and considered important by all students was the role of language. Most students entering school are familiar with casual register, but have little exposure to formal register. Casual register refers to the language used every day by students for survival. It is general in nature and usually consists of a 400-800 word vocabulary. In casual register talk revolves around the issue before coming to the point. Formal register is the language of academics. It consists of talking in complete sentences and specific word choice. Formal register is needed for success in school. If students are fluent in casual register, educators sometimes assume they are proficient in formal register also. This can cause problems for both student and educators in the classroom. In formal register the pattern is to get straight to the point.

An example of casual register versus formal register might be story grammar. In story grammar in formal register there is a definite pattern. The characters and setting are introduced, the plot is developed and the resolution follows. In casual register the resolution may be introduced first and the story travels back to the beginning. The result may be a more colorful story, but one that is hard to follow or understand. Take for example the story of "Little Red Riding Hood." Most of us know the familiar version. In casual register the story might start with, "Did you hear about that Big Bad Wolf?" This is something the teacher must address throughout daily teaching. For example, if a student replies to a question inappropriately for the school setting (e.g., replies to a question in a way that the student may answer a question at home, such as "yea" instead of "yes") yet the teacher knows the child's parent would have most likely answered the question the way the child did, the

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*"A large percentage of Professional Development School (PDS) interns in the Midwest are middle class students with little experience working and communicating with low socioeconomic students, one aspect of diversity."*

## Confessions of a University PDS Liaison

(Continued from page 5)

*“My PDS Director approached me and stated that there is a possibility that Liaisons may have two course releases next year. It doesn’t matter. All I know is that even if there were no course releases, I want to work with my PDS Learning Community. We all can make a difference as we work in concert.”*

the university sponsored two more Institute Days for the PDS Network. This time the PDS teachers unveiled the authentic assessments to all of the teachers in the PDS Network; the presentation was presented in the form of a skit. How very creative!

It was now September of the second year for both PDS and me. I would be given another course release—this time it didn’t matter—I was hooked. I knew I would work a lot harder than teaching another course but there was a high degree of satisfaction working with teachers and pre-service teachers who wanted to learn and grow professionally.

I again placed students from all three of my fall courses in the classrooms in the PDS. The PDS teachers were happy to have another “set of hands.” Although there is no empirical evidence, the teachers suggested to me that the K-8 students appeared to demonstrate higher levels of learning. For example, the first graders by November were reading more sight words per minute as compared to the previous year’s class at the same time of the year. Was it due to a ratio of more adults to students? Too many variables—I could not definitely pinpoint a cause.

I saw an opportunity for research—“Has mentorship impacted classroom practice and student achievement? How have pre-service teachers been impacted?” My PDS assignment was beginning to blossom. I am reminded of the adage “Publish or perish.”

With the help of graduate assistants (all IRB approved), I interviewed all of the teachers in the PDS and sixty pre-service teachers. The data suggest genuine synergy. (An article for a later date.)

The principal and I were meeting weekly to discuss, analyze, and postulate alternatives to administrative concerns. The teachers began to stop me in the halls with questions regarding effective reading practices.

The School of Music from our university requested that seven music education students spend one day a week for one semester observing music classes; during the second semester these students would each teach one music class per week.

In January, I addressed the faculties from the six Network PDS’s on Guided Reading. All of the teachers in my PDS were in attendance. This led to requests from individual teachers in my PDS for me to model Guided Reading lessons in their classrooms.

At the same time another role emerged. Could I serve as a broker in securing experts from other colleges in our university to help teachers in math, science, and the arts? Rich staff development followed. Students in grades 5-8 from my PDS came to the university to use the science labs. Students in grades 1-8 came to the university so see live theater.

I also met with one of the special education professors who had just received a grant to train special education teacher candidates by providing the candidates with hands-on experiences with at-risk children. She requested that she bring her students to our PDS. With approval from the principal the program was a “Go.” Not only was there excellent training for the special education teacher candidates, the at-risk K-8 students in our PDS were tested, identified, and once a week after school received intensive one on one services.

More involvement. Could I talk to parents at another Open House? Would I explain to The Home School Association the partnership between the university’s School of Education and their school? I was also asked to invite some of my pre-service teachers to speak as to what they have learned. One parent even offered to co-author a professional article on Academic Planning. I have begun training faculty in the implementation of Guided Reading.

My PDS Director approached me and stated that there is a possibility that Liaisons may have two course releases next year. It doesn’t matter. All I know is that even if there were no course releases, I want to work with my PDS Learning Community. We all can make a difference as we work in concert. I feel that I may even help the PDS Network by re-defining my role. My role was definitely transformed as compared to what it was at the onset. Giving pre-service teachers meaningful, hands-on experiences is important. But now I facilitate a two-way street of mentorship, collaboration, and communication that leads to professional development resulting in curricular change, innovation, and best practice in the classroom. What started out as an assignment has become a passion.

### *Sharing the Secret*

It is now the beginning of our third year. Portfolio Assessment and a Balanced Literacy Framework of Guided Reading and Phonics are firmly in place. I still assign pre-service teachers for clinical experiences. I do provide professional development, but I also coach teachers—they invite me into their classrooms where I observe their reading classes and provide feedback as to their teaching methods, assessment tools, and student progress.

I am certainly fortunate to work with the referent groups I have mentioned; however, there is one final piece that must be presented for the reader's review and consideration. What is happening and what has happened in our Professional Development School is good, but nothing happened by chance. I very purposely in concert with pre-service teachers, teachers, principal and parents worked to create a culture of mutual trust and dependability.

As a liaison I am a guest in the Professional Development School. I needed to establish trust. I did this by being visible, approachable, and true to my word. I needed to make sure that all referent groups were treated as I want to be treated—with dignity and respect. It was important that I would see all of the teachers and principal on a weekly basis at minimum; I stayed at the school until dismissal time and was on the sidewalk talking to parents. When the principal or teachers asked questions, made requests,

or sent emails, all were answered as promptly as possible. I made it clear that I genuinely wanted to help and be part of the team. There were, of course, times I could not satisfy a request; however, I got back to the individual with a direct, honest explanation.

Yes, I am there for my pre-service teachers, but the teachers also realized that my intentions to help them were sincere. The teachers felt comfortable in asking questions and discussing curricular concerns. The principal, as was stated previously, brought conversations to the table that had greater depth. Confidentiality for all was respected and maintained. Had confidentiality not been maintained, frank, honest dialogue and collaboration would not have existed.

I did not hide the fact that I wanted to form relationships that would benefit my pre-service teachers, the Professional Development School teachers, the school, and most definitely the K-8 students.

We sought each other out. We had professional conversations knowing that our end goals were win-win. My pre-service teachers received guidance and meaningful teaching experiences. The teachers received opportunities for continued professional growth that is demonstrated in best practice.

Our K-8 students saw wonderful role models in the pre-service teachers. The first grade teacher reports that three of her students were playing school. One first grader volunteered to be the teacher; the second first grader would be the student; and the third first grader wanted to be the pre-service teacher.

Being visible, available, and approachable costs nothing, but most definitely creates a culture of collaboration and cooperation. Together we can accomplish our individual and institutional goals from the kindergarten classroom to the university.

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## Building Trust

*(Continued from page 6)*

### *Mentor Teachers*

An approach used by both elementary and secondary programs to develop trust with the mentor teachers is to encourage the teachers to plan, organize, and implement the topics requested by interns for monthly professional development meetings.

### *Administrators*

To guard against being perceived as exploiters of public school institutions, university instructors need to be available and visible. An attempt is made in both the elementary and secondary programs to connect with the

public schools as an integrated whole that includes all faculty and administration. In the secondary program, the university instructor, bearing nutritional treats, is able to connect briefly with all school employees during their weekly faculty meetings. At the elementary level, the university instructors are seen throughout the school visiting mentor teachers daily.

### *Public School Students*

In order for the interns to have the opportunity to teach students in the partnership schools, the mentor teachers must entrust their students to them. The tenets for building this trust are found in making sure the

interns are prepared. It is required that the interns' lesson plans are presented to the mentor teacher for approval a week in advance to allow time for feedback and necessary revision. Occasionally when plans are not submitted in a timely manner, interns have not been allowed to teach. This breaks the chain of trust with all involved which provides a strong lesson for the intern.

With any given PDS, there is constant change and evolution. In order to maintain fluid and healthy relationships, all concerned must remain vigilant in keeping trust and community as a priority.

*“Occasionally when plans are not submitted in a timely manner, interns have not been allowed to teach. This breaks the chain of trust with all involved which provides a strong lesson for the intern.”*

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# The Core of Our Relationship: Impacting the Learning of All PDS Participants through Family Literacy Events

*Christine Walsh, Marilyn Yensick, and Sherry DuPont, Slippery Rock University*

*“At the core of our relationship is one central question: ‘How can we impact the learning of all PDS participants, including the elementary learners, their families, teacher candidates, in-service teachers, and university faculty?’. This question guides the collaborative planning of family literacy events each semester.”*

Slippery Rock University (SRU) and the Sharon City School District form a vibrant learning community with the goal of engaging all PDS participants. At the core of our relationship is one central question: “How can we impact the learning of all PDS participants, including the elementary learners, their families, teacher candidates, in-service teachers, and university faculty?” This question guides the collaborative planning of family literacy events each semester.

In this PDS setting, teacher candidates are enrolled in three on-site methods courses, an elementary field experience, and student teaching. School and university faculty plan for a true blending of theory and practice by establishing a shared vision, collaboratively selecting theoretical readings for courses, and planning district-wide events like family literacy events. The on-site courses utilize the “teaching hospital model,” as candidates make “rounds” to witness effective teaching practices connected to course readings and then facilitate subsequent discussions.

Each semester SRU teacher candidates enrolled in the on-site methods courses, field experience, and student teaching plan and implement an interactive event

where families join their children to participate in learning activities. This collaborative endeavor requires reflective planning for all constituents. Reading coaches in the schools meet with the teacher candidates to discuss the areas of academic need and topics relevant to the parents. With these topics in mind, university faculty and teacher candidates study the neighborhoods where the children and their families live through a cultural tour and reflective assignment. Then university faculty model activities and materials designed to address the areas of need. They also show the integration of the curriculum by modeling the use of social studies content to engage in family literacy experiences.

Once a theme is chosen for each event, the teacher candidates develop activities to foster learning interactions among K-6 learners and family members. In early winter, families of 1st-3rd graders were invited to a “Winter WonderLEARN” and in the spring families of 4th-6th graders were invited to “Our Town: Sharon, Pennsylvania.” To extend this learning, the candidates also design, explain, and distribute materials that families can use with their children at home. They model how the materials can be

adapted to address other curricular areas. The teacher candidates also prepare extra copies of the activity, a handout for reference, and alternatives for the use of the instructional tool at home.

Student teachers mentor the teacher candidates enrolled in this field experience. In-service teachers witness the integration of curriculum and they receive copies of materials that are distributed to the parents. Constituents engage in sharing feedback through a survey that is distributed to parents and teacher candidates.

While interacting with families, the teacher candidates use and refine their organizational, instructional, and interpersonal skills. They also begin to understand the caring nature of the parents/caregivers and how interested they are in their children’s education. Many of these Sharon children are living at or below the poverty level and the teacher candidates often lack an understanding of some cultural differences. The family literacy events give all PDS participants the opportunity to continually reflect on how they can better communicate with the home, why this contact is important, and how it impacts the performance of the K-6 students.

## *School-University Partnerships Submission*

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**Manuscript Submission  
Guidelines  
can be found at  
[www.napds.org](http://www.napds.org)**

# Preparing PDS Interns to Work with Diverse Students

*(Continued from page 7)*

teacher must explain the difference between how students talk at school and at home. This allows the teacher to be respectful of the child's family while teaching them how to speak in school and later in professional settings. PDS interns understood the importance of this type of instruction and noted that they would not have thought about language in terms of formal and casual registers, or how students speak, if they had not read the Payne (2005) book.

The importance of support systems and role models were also considered vital by the interns. They discussed how this might look in school in terms of home support and community role models. Interns also discussed their own support systems and role models when they were in public schools and how those factors impacted their education.

After reading and discussing the book, interns were given a post-test. It consisted of the same nine questions and used the same rating scale. All fifty-two interns expressed more confidence in teaching students in poverty. Only seventeen percent of the interns still thought money was the biggest issue for families in poverty. This is a change from the eighty-two percent who thought money was the biggest issue for families in poverty prior to reading the Payne book.

There was an open-ended question on the pre-test and post-test that asked about their beliefs and attitudes towards poverty. In the

pre-test most said they believed that all students deserved a good education regardless of economic background; however, they did not report confidence in knowing how to teach students in poverty. In the post-test these statements were stronger and more interns expressed confidence in knowing how to work with students of poverty. One student summed up the feelings of most students by stating, "School is the only place some students learn they can get out of poverty. We need to teach them how."

This activity provided PDS interns with minimal foundational knowledge of how to stop and think about why a student may or may not respond to situations in the desired way. When teachers understand the reasoning behind student actions and/or responses, they are better able to assess each situation and be responsive teachers. This allows teachers to then take the action that will benefit the student and enable them to succeed. PDS interns report a change in their level of understanding and knowing how to teach students in poverty; however, this change appears to be on a surface level. This activity resulted in an awareness of the need for PDS interns to further their understanding of the diverse student population they would encounter in their teaching role.

To ensure a more in-depth understanding of diversity issues, including poverty, a required class called Teaching Diverse Elementary Populations specifically

designed for PDS interns has been created. The course focuses on the literacy development, research, and effective teaching practices that support emerging bilinguals (EBs) becoming literate in the elementary schools as well as how to effectively and equitably teach diverse populations. Students will examine how learning to read, write, speak, and view in a new language are similar and/or dissimilar from these modalities in a first language. Cognitive, socio-cultural, linguistic, and educational perspectives are investigated as part of this examination. Specific examples of challenges that exist for students as they learn to communicate in English are shared and problem-solved. Ways to connect students' home languages, background literacy knowledge, and development are also explored.

"Classroom teachers today confront higher numbers of children living in poverty, more children learning English as a second language, and children who have been identified with a disability and receive special education services within the general education program" (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). Because of the population we are teaching, we have the responsibility to recognize and understand the background of the students we teach. We need to be sure PDS interns have the opportunity to learn about the needs of these students and be provided the information to enable each student to reach their potential.

*"The importance of support systems and role models were also considered vital by the interns. They discussed how this might look in school in terms of home support and community role models. Interns also discussed their own support systems and role models when they were in public schools and how those factors impacted their education."*

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# Project SOAR: Launching a Professional Development School

*Lynn V. Clark, University of Louisiana at Monroe*

*Ann Cook, Cypress Point University Elementary School*

*“While the project is still in its initial stages, preliminary data from standardized testing suggest that the DIBELS literacy interventions are resulting in significant increases in student achievement for both those students below benchmark and those students who were already reading on grade level.”*

Originally built as a lab school, but never used as such, the relationship between Cypress Point University Elementary School and the University of Louisiana at Monroe lay dormant for over a decade. It took a trip to New Orleans to attend the NAPDS Leadership Forum to forge a new relationship based on trust and a shared vision between the site principal and the university liaison. During the three-day forum, university faculty and site personnel from across the United States not only shared their experiences as PDS partners, but they engaged in dialogues that drew on the diversity of the group. Moreover, the forum provided the partners with a shared vocabulary that served as a platform upon which to hold equal and open dialogues that could both generate and sustain collaborative projects.

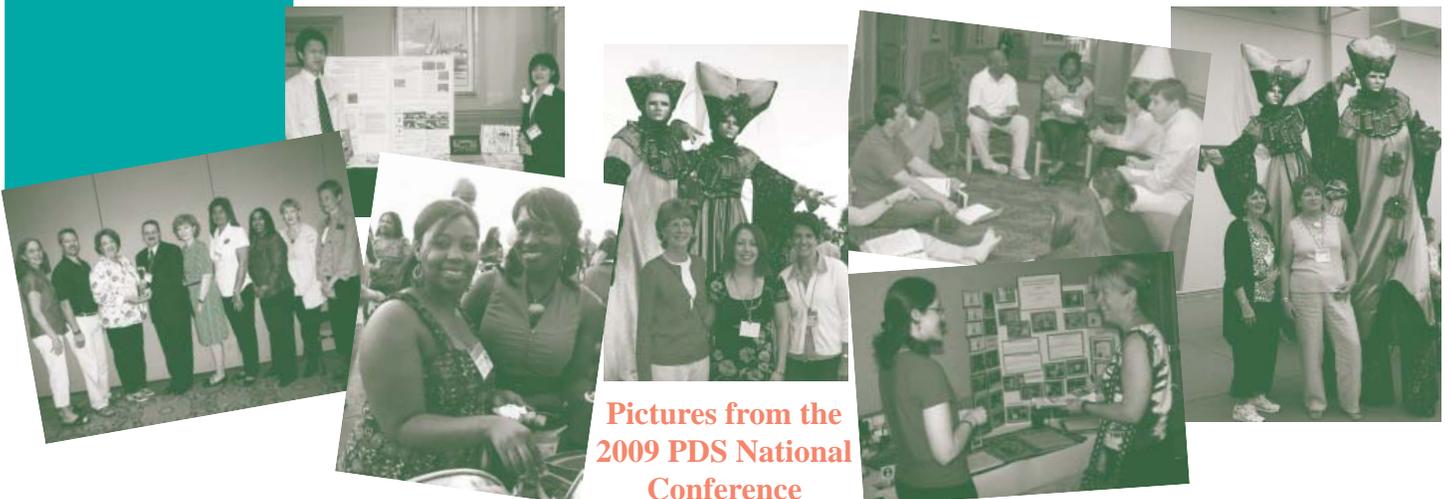
One of the most important ideas to emerge from the NAPDS Leadership Forum was the use of two key questions as a check for equity: 1) How might you impact student learning if a large number of teacher candidates were made available to your site on a regular basis? 2) How might regular access to a P-12 classroom enrich the learning experiences of

your teacher candidates? At the PDS site, the university liaison and site principal have used these questions to successfully bridge differences and build partnerships at both the macro and micro level. For example, the questions often serve as a protocol during formal meetings with other faculty and district personnel as well as hallway conversations to make sure that “everyone leaves the table with a party favor” (Ann Cook, Principal).

The resultant two-phase project, Project SOAR, draws on the Nine Essentials of a PDS which advocate for Shared decision-making, Ongoing and equal partnerships, Assessment-based interventions and Reciprocity of resources. The project brings over 60 elementary teacher candidates to the school site to work weekly with over 300 elementary students on research-based literacy strategies. In Phase I, teacher candidates in an Early Literacy course work with small groups of 1st and 2nd grade students on individual reading interventions (DIBELS) for 30 minutes a week. In Phase II, teacher candidates in an Intermediate Literacy course implement weekly 30-minute writing conferences (e.g., 6+1 Trait Writing) with small groups of third

through fifth grade students.

Both classroom interventions require faculty and teacher candidates to hold one three-hour class session a week on site, of which the last thirty minutes are spent with elementary students. In an effort to meet the needs of the university faculty and teacher candidates, the site principal provided an empty classroom and desks for the university classes, but the room was lacking presentation technology that was available in other site classrooms (e.g., Smartboard, Elmo document camera). Although the project was originally unfunded, university faculty applied for and received state funding for a service learning grant that provides the necessary presentation technology for the site classroom as well as 6+1 Trait Writing classroom kits for both teacher candidates and site teachers. While the project is still in its initial stages, preliminary data from standardized testing suggest that the DIBELS literacy interventions are resulting in significant increases in student achievement for both those students below benchmark and those students who were already reading on grade level.



**Pictures from the  
2009 PDS National  
Conference**

# Facilitating Communication Through OSTE Camp

*Seth Parsons, George Mason University*

*Salem Rainey Metzger, Hunter Elementary School*

We once heard that the three most important ingredients of effective Professional Development School (PDS) relationships are communication, communication, and communication. In this paper, we describe how a break in communication was remedied through an event called OSTE Camp.

## *Setting*

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) and Meadows Elementary (pseudonym) have had a PDS relationship for more than 10 years. UNCG's elementary education program is large, graduating approximately 125 certified elementary teachers each year. UNCG teacher candidates are organized into teams of 20-25 students. Each team of students is placed in a Professional Development School, where they complete internships their junior and senior years. Prior to student teaching, which takes place in the spring of the senior year, teacher candidates complete an internship at their school for three hours every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning.

The interns are placed with an on-site teacher educator (OSTE) each semester. The OSTE models effective instruction, observes the intern teach lessons, and generally

fulfills the duties of a cooperating teacher. Two or three university supervisors are team leaders. They serve as the link between the university and the school. Their responsibilities include communicating with OSTEs and other school personnel, observing and evaluating interns, teaching weekly seminars for interns, and serving as a resource for the school, teachers, and interns.

Meadows Elementary School is a highly diverse Title I school located in an urban school district. Eighty-six percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch, 92% are minority, 35% are English language learners, and 50% come from single-parent families. There are 25 teachers in the building, so nearly every teacher serves as an OSTE for an intern. There is no formal training for becoming an OSTE. However, due to the ongoing PDS relationship, many of the teachers are former UNCG interns who were hired after graduation.

Nonetheless, in evaluating the effectiveness of the PDS relationship, school and university personnel identified communication as a shortcoming of the partnership. Team leaders, who are typically doctoral students, come and go and OSTEs leave the

school and are replaced. Therefore, despite the long-term relationship between these institutions, not all parties were on the same page with issues concerning the PDS. For example, there was confusion as to expectations for interns, evaluation procedures, and routes of communication. To facilitate more effective communication and to get all stakeholders on the same page, school and university personnel created OSTE Camp.

## *OSTE Camp*

In August before school began, Meadows Elementary classroom teachers and UNCG pre-service teachers spent a day on UNCG's campus collaborating for the upcoming year. UNCG students met with their assigned OSTEs to discuss common expectations for teaching and learning, procedures for planning, and grade level curriculum mapping.

The day was divided into two sessions: a morning session for OSTEs and university personnel and an afternoon session included OSTEs, university personnel, and UNCG pre-service teachers. The morning session was designed for OSTEs to meet with university personnel to review the OSTE Handbook that features policy and regulations related to the

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## Professional Development School Collaboration

*(Continued from page 6)*

additional schools to invite into our Professional Development Schools Network, a group of schools that have agreed to participate as sites for our candidates to be placed for field experiences. These schools, while not fully designated as PDSs, are instead infiltrated into our professional network of schools where a collaborative relationship exists. The schools and administrators and teachers are all participating in a professional experience in that they have agreed to become part of an extended

teaching collaborative. The schools are expected to provide experiences for the candidates that are based on the expectations that have been formulated by university faculty and embedded into each course. All candidates are placed into a network school and all schools in the network are part of a dynamic, interactive learning community.

We expect to invite additional schools to become more fully invested as a PDS and we have

twelve schools that are now part of a collaboration team that meets regularly to discuss improvements in our program for classroom-based learning. Those meetings generate important recommendations for improvement as well as opportunities to respond to school needs. The overall improvement of our field experiences has been impressive, and we look forward to continued efforts to provide excellent classroom experiences for our candidates.

*"These schools, while not fully designated as PDSs, are instead infiltrated into our professional network of schools where a collaborative relationship exists. The schools and administrators and teachers are all participating in a professional experience in that they have agreed to become part of an extended teaching collaborative."*

# A New Definition for PDS: Taking the University to the Schools

*Van E. Cooley and Walter L. Burt, Western Michigan University*

*“Thusly, we believe the PDS movement must be expanded to systematically use scarce resources and to merge university theory and best practice into a cohesive approach to the preparation and maintenance of educators’ skills.”*

The PDS movement is currently in its third decade. There were approximately 100 PDS schools in 1994 (Darling-Hammond, 1994) which increased to over 1,000 by 1998 (Abdal-Haqq, 1998). The proliferation of PDS schools has resulted in a corresponding reshaping of PDS goals. These overarching goals include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: maximizing student learning through exemplary practice, engaging aspiring and practicing teachers in sustained inquiry or practice, implementing meaningful professional development, and preparing teachers to increase student achievement (Ridley, Hurwitz, Hackett, & Miller, 2005). PDSs have also been associated with small learning communities. PDSs are generally more focused, aligned with best practices, and rely on a stronger relationship between universities and schools, as compared to the more loosely configured traditional teaching environment (Teitel, 1992). The PDS definition is not stagnant. Experts and practitioners continue to re-define the PDS mission to address the complexities of 21st century schools and universities.

There is a paucity of research on the effectiveness of PDS programming. Previous studies indicate that PDS graduates spent more time on instruction (Sharpe, Lounsbury, Golden, & Deilber, 1999) and more time answering student questions and checking student work (Houston, Hollis, Clay, Ligons, & Roff, 1999). PDS-trained teachers perceived themselves as well-prepared change agents (Cobb, 2001). Although there are glimpses of PDS success, there is little research denoting PDS superiority over traditional teacher preparation programs (Ridley, Hurwitz, Hackett & Miller, 2005). Abdal-

Haqq (1998) suggests that the PDS movement may be compromised with the proliferation of PDSs, many of which are more similar to a PDS in name than in function. Although this assertion holds merit, the reshaping of PDSs represents a strong argument for improving student achievement by concurrently addressing the strengths and shortcomings of both aspiring and practicing teachers.

There is no question that the “No Child Left Behind” legislation has had a tremendous impact on K-12 schools. As teachers and administrators continue to struggle with NCLB, higher education institutions are criticized regarding the inability of administrator and teacher preparation programs to meet the needs of aspiring and practicing teachers and administrators. Thusly, we believe the PDS movement must be expanded to systematically use scarce resources and to merge university theory and best practice into a cohesive approach to the preparation and maintenance of educators’ skills. Our premise is based upon several tenets. Firstly, the impact of a PDS aspiring teacher’s career, and the influence these novice teachers have on student achievement when they enter a failing school, cannot be overstated. Secondly, both university and K-12 curricula need to be modified as a linear approach holds limited promise. Thirdly, and finally, if universities continue to prepare teachers and leaders who inadequately function in their professional roles, it results in a recurring “cycle of inefficiency,” with attendant examples of finger-pointing, depletion of resources, and haphazard approaches to teacher and administrator development.

Our work with a middle school in a large Midwestern urban school

district focused on both pre-service and in-service education. Although our work emphasis was placed on professional development for practicing teachers, several interns participated in this semester-long professional development program. The middle school was characterized as a “failing” school. There had been over 5,000 disciplinary referrals in one year in a school with less than 600 students. There was a lack of respect among teachers and a general feeling by teachers that students were incapable of learning. A team of external evaluators recommended that the school be closed. Instead, a decision was made by district officials to reconstitute the school. A new principal was appointed and over 65% of the former teachers were reassigned. Even with a new principal and many new teachers in place, many school officials quietly expressed the school could not be saved.

Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USOE), Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programming (GEAR UP), a partnership between the school and university was established. The partnership focused on school improvement activities that involved curriculum revision; parent programming and support; student activities that included clubs, tutoring, experiential field experiences, student-led conferences, and student internships. Another important component was to establish structures that would support students, parents, and teachers. This was accomplished through a graduate class that targeted key educational leaders within the building, including 30 teachers, the principal, assistant principal, and guidance counselor. That project-based class was based on the

*(Continued on page 15)*

# Facilitating Communication Through OSTE Camp

(Continued from page 13)

supervision of pre-service teachers. Designated teachers shared ways they organized shared teaching time and other tips and strategies for supervising pre-service teachers. The floor was opened so that all teachers could offer anecdotal stories of successful strategies for communicating with their previous pre-service teachers. Teachers spent time in small groups, reading and discussing the elements of the OSTE Handbook, specifically OSTE roles, assessment procedures, and how to develop open communication using a reflection model in the handbook. Within these discussion groups, teachers generated questions and concerns, and the university personnel addressed these at the

conclusion of the morning session with the whole group. All the current university supervisors introduced themselves and explained their schedule for observation for the semester and distributed their contact information. Based on suggestions from the previous year, team leaders scheduled "office hours" on Meadows' campus to increase their availability for OSTE and pre-service teacher communication.

Pre-service teachers joined their OSTE and university supervisors for lunch, and the afternoon session convened with OSTE and pre-service teachers working in their grade level teams. Each grade level worked on curriculum mapping for

first quarter, joint planning, and beginning-of-the-year preparations. Pre-service teachers and OSTE were given the opportunity to share their goals for the year and to begin shaping their year together. University supervisors as well as Meadows administration circulated among the teams asking questions, listening, and offering support as needed. The afternoon session was critical in helping OSTE and pre-service teachers collaborate before students even arrived at school. Following concluding remarks from university personnel and Meadows administration, the day ended with initial plans in place and a common understanding of expectations and procedures.

*"All the current university supervisors introduced themselves and explained their schedule for observation for the semester and distributed their contact information. Based on suggestions from the previous year, team leaders scheduled "office hours" on Meadows' campus to increase their availability for OSTE and pre-service teacher communication."*

## A New Definition for PDS

(Continued from page 14)

work of Robert Marzano's (2003) book, *What Works in Schools*. This project class included activities designed to address challenges faced by students, parents, and administrators. Each group of teachers was required to complete the following tasks: (1) develop a problem statement, (2) conduct a literature review, (3) collect data, (4) develop a defensible plan to address issues, (5) identify short and long-term ramifications, (6) establish a timeline for implementation, and (7) develop a budget around proposed project activities. Projects involved six areas that included: PBS: Positive Behavior Support, or a plan to address student discipline; a staff and student handbook; a student advisory program; strategies to improve classroom instruction; and a parenting program. Participants

spent between 120 and 150 hours developing projects that were defended at the conclusion of the class. The principal remarked that approximately two years of work was completed during the class. Results of this initiative included: changed practices and procedures, a reduction in discipline referrals by 50%, improved relationships with parents through the partnership with community leaders and organizations, attainment of NCLB's goal of having made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), and institutionalizing these school efforts within the building's school improvement planning process.

PDSs provide significant opportunity to merge university programming and K-12 professional development. We learned that a systematic approach

to school improvement is not easy and requires considerable dialogue and compromise on the part of both the university and K-12 leaders. Egos and entrenched perspectives must submit to a mindset that both the university and public school can improve through sustained collaboration. This work was not easy, and borders more on art than a science. Based on our experiences, we concluded that the PDS movement holds considerable promise to re-engineer and energize how we train educational leaders. While PDSs have predominately focused on pre-service education, use of PDSs in a more systematic process to concurrently improve the novice and veteran teachers in schools and university professors holds considerable promise.

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# What to Watch for Fall 2009

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