Breaking with Tradition:
A New Approach to Professional Development Schools

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Abstract: A middle school program at a midsize Mid-Atlantic university has been teaching the first of two required reading courses in the middle school classroom. This field-based course is innovative, in that it was created by a literacy professor and a reading teacher to involve pre-service teachers and middle school students in the middle school reading classroom. It requires pre-service teachers to actively take part in the classroom, supporting, teaching, and applying theory, literacy strategies, and content knowledge two semesters before their full-time student teaching begins. This approach, not often seen in Professional Development Schools (PDS), purposefully allows pre-service teachers to gain critical experience by teaching lessons created by themselves and the reading teacher, and by working one-on-one with middle school students earlier than their educational curriculum requires.

The reading classroom is often shunned by many middle school students, as it denotes being behind in school and not being able to be in a specials (e.g., Spanish, music, art) classroom. But with the help and support of pre-service middle school teachers, it has become a, lab-like environment where one-on-one instruction and new literacy strategies are taught and supported. This early classroom PDS experience is not based on tutoring. Instead, it is rooted in the practical application of literacy theory and strategies that pre-service middle school teachers learn in and outside of the classroom and have the opportunity to adapt to real-world middle school content area classrooms. By starting their teaching earlier, in this particular environment, these students are better equipped to support their future middle school students. This model adds to the conversation of what it means to be mutually beneficial in a PDS, expanding the concept, and providing a new model for other programs to consider implementing in the future.

NAPDS NINE ESSENTIALS ADDRESSED:
2. A school–university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community;
4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants;
8. Work by college/university faculty and P–12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings;

Introduction

Walking into Ms. G's reading classroom, one notices some extra students who appear to be college-aged. The classroom is filled with loud chatter, questions, and smiles as people work. The conversation is centered on an article that they have read. They are annotating it and developing higher-level questions. The middle school students seem enthusiastic while working with the college students, and the college students are focused on the small groups around them. The middle school students are going up to the board and back; some are writing down questions, and others are writing down answers. This is what the classroom looks like when Ms. G opens it up to pre-service middle school teachers.

Research shows that student teachers who teach in a Professional Development School (PDS) become better teachers (Cozza, 2010), and students who are educated in a PDS achieve higher grades than those that are not (Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2005). Often, the PDS model is considered mutually beneficial because all parties (i.e., teachers, interns) benefit from the experience. Keeping a PDS partnership going and improving entails time and continuous re-envisioning of what will work best for all individuals involved (Rice, 2002; Smith-D'Arezzo, 2011).

The PDS setting in Ms. G's classroom differs from the traditional one that involves only the teacher and intern, and presents a case for a new PDS partnership. Here, the middle school, university, reading teacher, middle school students, and faculty member worked together, expanding the partnership beyond school, university, teacher, and intern to include students and pre-service teachers.

This paper opens up a dialogue to broaden and enhance the currently accepted expectations of mutually beneficial partnerships between teacher preparation programs and PDS sites. It examines the outcomes of a different, innovative PDS partnership: beginning the PDS model with pre-service teachers in field-based reading course two semesters before student teaching begins. It presents the perspectives of the pre-service teachers, middle school reading students, a middle school reading teacher, and the university instructor, and offers recommendations for expanding the scope of a PDS and re-envisioning how to include pre-service teachers earlier in the PDS setting to further the mutually beneficial aspects of the PDS model.

Review of the Literature

Field-based Teacher Preparation Courses

Field-based teacher preparation courses are founded on research indicating that learning in a closed university classroom setting is no substitute for real-classroom application with mentor guidance and teaching experience. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) (2013) states that pre-service teachers should be in the schools, doing clinical work throughout their entire program, not just during their last semester. Research and professional associations support earlier and more frequent experiences in the schools with the guidance of school-university partnerships (Council for the Accreditation of Educator

Preparation, 2015; National Association of Professional Development Schools, 2008). It has also shown that field-based experiences are vital for student teachers to learn and not just show what they learn (Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2005). Nothing impacts and improves teacher education more than field-based teacher preparation, and nothing replaces the opportunity to teach (Ball, Sleep, Boerst, & Bass, 2009; Grossman & McDonald, 2008). Schön (1987) asserts that pre-service teachers (i.e., those who are one semester before interning) need opportunities to make decisions, implement content and strategies, and put theory into practice to take them to the professional level of teaching. Moreover, putting these interns into the classroom with strong mentor teachers and professional development experiences creates an opportunity for them to learn and grow while receiving feedback and professional guidance (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & López-Torres, 2003). This field-based opportunity provides interns with the best circumstances to train in a setting where they can develop their teacher persona and essential practices, consequently moving beyond being novices to more accomplished pre-professionals (Troyan, Davin, & Donato, 2013). Some research has begun focusing more on the importance of "learning on the job" while using theory and practice without serious failure (Grossman & Loeb, 2008) and learning from practice, not just preparing for practice (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2005).

PDS Partnerships

The standards for a PDS, outlined by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (2001a; 2001b), are in place to create a learning community that develops and reflects the results of improvements of teaching and learning. They also support a learning community that fosters collaboration, promotes diversity, equity, and the development and demonstration of knowledge, skills, and theory, and endorses the mission of the university and the school.

Research supports that PDS partnerships are beneficial but difficult to maintain and implement (Rice, 2002; Smith-D'Arezzo, 2011). While a partnership is one of the best ways to teach new teachers, it is also difficult to achieve the right balance of support and value for all (Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2005). Some studies have found that both maintaining the PDS and ensuring that the partnerships are equal and all involved individuals benefit is often difficult and time consuming (Gallego, Hollingsworth, & Whitenack, 2001; Leonard, Lovelace-Taylor, Sanford-DeShields, & Spearman, 2004).

Benefits of a PDS for Universities, Schools, Student Teachers, and Mentors

Much research indicates that teacher education that is coupled with a PDS model is beneficial for change in the teacher, mentor, and both school environments (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Goodlad, 1990; Levine, 2002). Darling-Hammond (2006) asserts that the best programs integrate pedagogy and clinical work to achieve the balance needed for student teachers to succeed. It is not enough just to be in the schools; the experience must be followed with reflection, feedback, and connection to teaching and theory, making for a greater impact on the student teacher's education (Ball & Bass, 2000; Grossman & Stodolsky, 1995; Shulman, 1987).

Student teachers learn the practice of connecting pedagogy to the real classroom through innovative and informed experience. A strong PDS offers students the chance to advance the knowledge of its teacher and student teachers while working collaboratively with teachers, teacher educators, and researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Rice (2002) found that the success of a PDS is often based on collaboration and goals agreed upon by teachers and faculty. Sparks (2006) noted that a successful PDS requires multiple goals that are important to all involved to be in place. Students who were in a PDS for their student teaching were three times as likely to stay in teaching (Henke, Chen, & Geis, 2000) after their first year. Also, veteran teachers feel as though their practices change for the better when they are involved in a PDS experience (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Creating a culture of working together to achieve multiple goals (e.g., student scores, better teachers, collaboration, innovation) is essential to the success of a PDS partnership (Sparks, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

The PDS model is limited and needs to be expanded. Preliminary research shows there are benefits of beginning the PDS relationship earlier with pre-service teachers. The current PDS model focuses solely on the mentors and interns, who, most studies show, reap advantages from the partnership. These experiences, however, usually only apply to the last two semesters of the teacher education program, where the interns are in the classroom part-time at first and then full-time. Such a constraint limits the scope of individuals that could benefit from the interns being in the schools.

The concept of mutually beneficial does not consider or account for any prior experiences, in this case, a field-based reading education course for pre-service teachers. Teacher education programs are fierce supporters of the PDS, and research has shown the benefits of this partnership, but there is the question of what mutually beneficial means and looks like in various PDS models. Preliminary research shows that mutually beneficial can apply more broadly, to include more than the interns and mentors involved, and thus expand the conversation. This paper explores the outcomes of beginning the PDS model with future interns (pre-service teachers) at the start of the middle school program (i.e., two semesters before student teaching begins) to explore the perspectives of pre-service teachers, middle school reading students, reading teachers, and professors.

Moving Beyond the Norm: A New Approach to a PDS

The middle school major was launched during the 2011–2012 academic year, establishing its first cohort. The program is based on two of the nine essentials outlined by the National Association of Professional Development Schools policy titled, *What it Means to be a Professional Development School,* which outlined the nine essentials for a PDS (National Association of Professional Development Schools, 2008). The middle school major focuses on Essential Two, "A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community," Essential Four, A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants," and Essential Eight, "Work

by college/university faculty and P–12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings" (National Association of Professional Development Schools, 2008). It also focuses on three elements that "are essential to the success of the program: (a) a dual content major; (b) a three-semester field experience; and (c) co-taught, field-based methods courses" (Mee & Haverback, 2016, p. 80). Students receive their degree in middle-level education and are certified to teach two content areas (e.g., math/science, English/math). These factors have made the program desirable to students and produced successful middle school teachers with 100% placement rate (Mee & Haverback, 2016).

The Middle School Reading Course: A Field-Based Experience

Overview of the middle school program model. For the past three years, a middle school program at a midsize Mid-Atlantic University has been teaching the middle school program's first of two required reading courses in the classroom. This course takes place in the first semester of the program, and does so concurrently with a middle-school-specific foundation course also taught in the classroom at another school. That course, titled *Using Reading and Writing in the Middle School*, is a state-required reading course for certification. It focuses on the foundation of reading and connects the pre-service teachers' content knowledge to literacy and what it means for their future classrooms. The pre-service teachers are able to translate their knowledge of theory, practice, and content into the classroom. The course also focuses on topics such as principles of content and disciplinary literacy, Common Core Standards, real classroom application, and addressing various levels of reading ability in one middle school classroom. Originally taught on campus, the course was moved to the university's middle school site, once it became apparent that the partnership could include pre-service teachers. This move and the overall approach were intentional, to expand the PDS. The course is a co-teaching experience, with the faculty member and reading teacher supporting both the pre-service teachers and the middle school students, thereby creating an interdisciplinary immersion.

The reading course model is built on pre-service teachers having more practice with middle school students in one-on-one and small group experiences as well as the opportunity to teach two lessons during the semester. The students in the middle school reading class are aware that they are low-readers, and Ms. G shared that many struggle with self-confidence in reading and often shut down in class when things get too difficult. With the help and support of the pre-service middle school teachers, however, the classroom became a lab-like environment in which instruction and innovative ideas and literacy strategies were used to help the middle school students become stronger readers.

This approach is not often seen in a PDS. The course is unique, for several reasons. First, it is co-designed by a literacy professor and the reading teacher with an underlying assumption that the experience in the classroom can be mutually beneficial to all individuals (i.e., middle school students, pre-service teachers, the reading teacher, the professor). Second, most of the course takes place in the middle school classroom, giving pre-service teachers the opportunity to work and interact with middle school students, teach, and apply real literacy strategies to all content areas. Third, it allows pre-service teachers two chances to implement specific strategies

and teach content area literacy based lessons: one that is designed by the reading teacher and another that is created by the pre-service teachers themselves.

This new PDS practice also allows the pre-service teachers to immerse themselves in the classroom and school cultures. The class goes beyond the basic tutor model or support system by giving pre-service teachers teaching and lesson-planning experience at the start of their program—experiences that are invaluable in developing one's teaching persona, content knowledge, and comfort level (Darling-Hammond, 2006). What makes this reading class even more appealing for the partnership is that, since many of the pre-service teachers will encounter struggling readers in their future classrooms, they will have already garnered first-hand experience working with and supporting such students. Facing middle school students' concerns and understanding the strategies and literacy support needed for them to succeed and grow is a perfect setting for pre-service teachers. The course is designed to have an impact not only on the pre-service teachers, but also the middle school students, with direct instruction, hitting on the NAPDS guidelines, and creating a mutually beneficial experience for the PDS setting.

The middle school's demographics. The university's middle school site, River Oaks Middle School (ROMS), is in an urban area in the mid-Atlantic where the household median is $20,000 less than state average and approximately 62% of the population is on free and reduced meals. The middle school is culturally and socioeconomically diverse, with approximately 837 students in grades 6,7, and 8, of which 39% are White, 46% are African American, 7% are Hispanic/Latino, 5% are two or more races, and 3% are Asian or other. In 2016, seven students were deemed striving, 132 were on track, and 703 were in danger, based on state- and school-wide testing. The students were below the state and county in all seven testing areas in Level 4, met expectations.

As part of the PDS collaboration, the school has not only the site-based reading course, but also several interns working there every year. In addition, it receives professional development for the teachers and has hired several former graduates who were there previously as interns. The collaboration has taken time to cultivate and is ever evolving.

The middle school's reading classroom. The middle school reading classroom at ROMS had twenty-two students, with twelve boys (seven eighth graders and five seventh graders) and ten girls (three eighth graders and seven seventh graders). Most of the students tested at least one grade level below in reading. Seventy-five percent of the eighth graders had been in seventh-grade reading, and 60% of the seventh graders had been in sixth-grade reading. The cohort was racially mixed (White, African American, Latino). At least 50% of the students in the class had labeled behavior issues, and ten students had IEPs.

Method and Data Sources

This case study asked the questions: "What are the outcomes of beginning the PDS model with pre-service teachers at the start of a middle school program?" and "What does mutually beneficial mean and look like in different PDS models?" Research in a bounded case can improve the understanding of a specific phenomenon; furthermore, a defined and bounded case

can yield clear and rich data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 2000). This case was bounded by the experience of the pre-service teachers (22), the middle school students (22), the reading teacher, and the faculty member. Data collection occurred throughout the spring 2016 semester and included meetings between the reading teacher and faculty member, informal discussions throughout the semester with the pre-service teachers and middle school students, lesson feedback forms (see Appendix A), a lesson plan rubric (see Appendix B), and lesson reflection papers (see Appendix C). The meetings and informal discussions were transcribed and analyzed. The lesson feedback forms were completed by the middle school students and given to the pre-service teachers upon completing their lessons. The lesson plan rubric was filled out by peers and the faculty member for those teaching a lesson. The reflection paper was based on the rubric feedback. Content and inductive analyses were used to discover categories that lead to the emergence of themes. Data was coded and recoded to ensure a constant comparison method. Once themes were established through inductive analysis, the researcher confirmed the qualitative analysis by "testing and affirming the authenticity and appropriateness of the inductive content analysis" (Patton, 2002, p. 454), and a second party checked the applicability of the codes to the data. Content analysis was used as "the process of identifying, coding, and categorizing the primary patterns for the data" (Patton, 2002, p. 381). A member check was done to ensure that the words of the participants were correct.

The data indicates that having a reading course for pre-service middle school teachers in the middle school classroom benefitted them, the middle school students, the reading teacher, and the faculty member, expanding the scope of and creating a mutually beneficial PDS.

Participant Perspectives

Pre-service Teachers. The twenty-two pre-service teachers who took this course had an overall positive view of their time in the middle school PDS setting. For many, this was their first time in that setting (since they were middle schoolers) and their first time teaching in front of children.

When asked about the course, the pre-service teachers asserted that the theory, practice, and working with middle school students were all extremely helpful and eye opening. Many of the pre-service teachers indicated that having this experience was helpful not only for teaching but also for better understanding of the middle school setting. Dennis [1] stated, "I enjoyed working with the students and being in the middle school. I feel better prepared for my student teaching." Emily agreed: "I liked being able to teach and work with students one-on-one. I learned so much."

Moreover, some pre-service teachers asserted that they enjoyed being able to teach a lesson and getting to know the students. They commented that they enjoyed learning the literacy strategies that would be applied to a multiple-content-area classroom, but especially appreciated seeing how those strategies would actually work in a real classroom. Many also stated that they benefitted from the experience and were glad they had the chance to work with students, learn strategies, and teach those strategies in a real-world setting. Tara shared, "I liked getting to know

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[1] All name are pseudonyms.

the students," and "it was cool that we could use some of [the strategies] when we taught." Matt enjoyed "teaching his own lesson," and said, "Seeing the middle school students change over the semester was awesome." Ashley said, "I found getting to know the students and what worked for them in the classroom really valuable. Seeing them get excited about leaning and giving me feedback on my lesson was helpful." Jessica was excited to teach her own lesson and "put into practice what we learned, in and out of the classroom." As a whole, the pre-service teachers had a positive view of their first foray into the middle school classroom, despite some trepidation that it was a reading class.

Part of the course work included reflections on the lessons each wrote and taught. Reflections (see Appendix C) were based on a feedback form completed by the middle school students (see Appendix A) and a rubric (see Appendix B) filled out by the faculty member, the reading teacher, and the student's peers. Based on constructive criticism and personal experience, the reflections proved to be important to the pre-service teachers' growth and their ability to change aspects of their teaching and lessons. For example, Craig wrote:

> Although I believe that I made some big steps forward, I have noticed that there are some fundamentals of teaching I need to polish during my senior year. I felt that the most successful part of our lesson was our circle and squares activity, which required the students to work together in order to produce products. . . . As I read my feedback, I noticed comments about my pacing in group discussions. As I ran the warm up activity, I could tell that I was going too fast. In the future, I will work on pausing after responses and working on the pacing of a discussion. . . . Reading some of the student comments, I noticed that some students felt like the lesson was too many activities thrown at them at one time.

Craig's reflections show that he took into account his own experience as well as the students, something that is fundamental to becoming a successful teacher. He benefitted not only from the opportunity to teach his own lesson, but also by receiving feedback from multiple directions.

Like Craig, Alice discussed the feedback she received and how it will bring to bear on her teaching in the future:

> In my evaluations, most people commended me for the presence I brought into the classroom. The directions were also very clear, and people appreciated the examples/models that I used throughout the lesson. . . . Some things that my peers believed I could improve on were repeating student responses, our movement around the room, and shortening the content of the lesson. I could not agree more with this constructive feedback. While presenting, I realized that it looked like I was glued to the floor, so I made a conscious effort to try and move around while I spoke. . . . If I could go back and fix this, I would solely use pictures as examples and explain the meanings behind the pictures in my own words. I would shorten the teacher discussion, and allow students to play a game, take a quiz, do group work or some kind of activity that discouraged Google slides. In order to be a successful teacher, I think it is important to go back and figure out methods of iteration. Successful teachers should always reflect on ways to improve a lesson, and reading this feedback was beyond helpful.

Alice pointed out that there are things that she needs to work on in the future, noting the importance of reflection and feedback in becoming a successful teacher. Jack indicated the

positives in his lesson as well as what he learned, what he needs to knows about his future students, and what students need from him as a teacher. He wrote:

> I found this teaching experience to be very enjoyable, and was pleased with the success of the lesson. I was able to see the application of concepts we have learned, in the classroom, and could see the effective nature of these practices. . . . The lesson also went well, better than we had thought, and I feel it was a meaningful experience for the students. I now understand the importance of a well-structured activity, as well as carefully choosing the content of each lesson. When teaching a class, a teacher will learn about the limits of their students, and can tailor these lessons to their classroom. This was a meaningful learning experience, and I very much enjoyed the opportunity to teach in a real classroom.

Based on the pre-service teachers' feedback, it is apparent that teaching a lesson in the middle school classroom was educational and positive. The pre-service teachers enjoyed being able to use what they learned (i.e., strategies, theory) in the real-world classroom and indicated that working with middle school students allowed them a better grasp of the middle school reader. Their reflections show the impact that early feedback from multiple perspectives will have on how they see their future teaching. Their field-based experience seemed to be very important to these future teachers, and will no doubt enhance their teaching of reading and literacy in their future content area classrooms.

Middle School Reading Students. The middle school students were not shy when asked their perspectives on having the pre-service teachers in the classroom. A majority of them were excited to work with the pre-service teachers, appreciated the one-on-one attention, enjoyed the lessons that were planned, and were eager to give their feedback on the pre-service teachers' lessons. Several students stated that they liked having the teachers in the classroom and that the lessons they had planned were enjoyable. For example, Sean said, "We got to work with them by ourselves and with others in the classroom." Aaron stated, "Having the [pre-service] teachers in the room was cool. They were fun to talk to, and they were helpful." David agreed that "the teachers were cool." While Eric enjoyed "doing group work and having help," he "didn't like having to do work." Loretta stated, "It was cool to have them here." Overall, they supported having the pre-service teachers in the classroom.

The middle school students were also asked their perspectives on the lessons that the pre-service teachers designed and taught. This was done through a short, anonymous feedback form (see Appendix B) that the reading teacher and the professor designed to further involve the middle school students. The survey not only provided feedback, but also served to reflect back to the students their own knowledge of what constitutes good teaching in the classroom and showed that their expertise is valued.

Overall, responses to the survey were positive and constructive. One student asserted, "I love how the lesson seemed to be creative, but it would have been better if the teacher asked more questions." Another student stated, "The lesson was fun," but that the teachers could have "talked about things we liked." Critiquing a math lesson, one student wrote that the only negative thing about the lesson was that "we did math," and suggested that the teachers to "do something with a basketball and share ideas about [mathematical] functions and how it all relates." Another

student was enthusiastic about an English lesson, saying, "The lesson was a really good lesson," yet, "At times, I got confused." Another student said, "It was fun to have the [middle school] students say things," and "it was cool to have the [pre-service] teachers teach a lesson." One student's advice to the pre-service teachers was, "Have fun being a teacher."

The advice and constructive criticism was given to the pre-service teachers, who used it to write their reflections on their lessons and took it to heart as they moved through the program. For the middle school students, the classroom experience allowed them not only to receive extra support but also lend a hand in molding future teachers.

Reading Teacher and Literacy Professor. The professor and the reading teacher worked together to design the course syllabus and assess how both the pre-service teachers and the students would benefit from the experience. When Ms. G (the reading teacher) and Professor S (the literacy professor) were asked to discuss the partnership that they created, they emphasized the benefits for their respective students as well as for themselves.

Reading teacher. Ms. G stated that, with the help of the pre-service teachers, her students were given the extra support they need and deserve. Having the pre-service teachers teach lessons allowed her students the opportunity to use various strategies and get new perspectives on reading, which her students enjoyed and she valued. Her students had one-on-one time with the teachers and many of them seemed to relish that they had something no other class had. Ms. G explained:

> My students enjoyed having the pre-service teachers there, not only because they helped them throughout the class, but [also] because they got positive feedback, which boosted their self-confidence. . . .They also liked when the pre-service teachers taught the class because they got another perspective on the topic and also had to think outside the box. Overall, this made class more enjoyable for the students.

Moreover, Ms. G was excited to share her views about working collaboratively with the literacy professor:

> Working with Professor S was very collaborative. I felt like my opinion was heard, respected, and viewed as valid at the collegiate level. I also felt that she was open to new ideas and wanted to make this course and experience a team effort-more than anything. Not often do college professors view and listen to the classroom teachers' point of view and ideas. She was open to what would be best for all the students [college students and the middle school students], and there was no doubt that their needs came before anything else. Overall, it was a really great experience.

Overall, Ms. G had a positive experience with the co-teaching model reading course, and she made it clear that she thought her students benefitted from the experience. She also felt that the lab-like experience was essential to her students' success in and enjoyment of reading.

Professor of literacy. Professor S was positive about the partnership between the two teachers and the benefits for her pre-service teachers. She expressed that her students' experience in the classroom was invaluable:

> My students got to work with middle school students and be in the middle school environment early on in their course work, giving them the chance to figure out if this was for them. Also, [it] was helpful to see and work with struggling readers, who they will have in their future content area classrooms. For many of them, this is an eye-opening experience and beneficial to their growth in becoming effective teachers.

Professor S further indicated that the opportunity for her students to teach a lesson this early in their program was important:

> [It] was invaluable and not something that many future educators get the chance to do. . . . I find that these middle school interns are more confident in their teaching, and receive constructive feedback better because they have these earlier experiences. The opportunity to see literacy strategies that we learn in class actually be used in the reading classroom is instrumental in the pre-service teachers actually seeing the importance of reading in each of their content areas.

> Professor S also felt that her own teaching improved as a result of working with Ms. G, and the collaboration was also very helpful to her students. Professor S explained:

> You never know what it will be like when you walk into someone else's classroom, but Ms. G welcomed us with open arms and could not have been more enthusiastic about our students working with hers. . . . She wanted to make sure all the students benefitted, and I could not have asked for a better partner to work with. . . . I believe that my teaching was better for this course, because I was able to reference experiences from the class, and Ms. G was able to put forth real-world application, either by letting the students teach or by working with students.

This anecdote shows the value of having the reading course in the middle school reading classroom. The professor saw how the pre-service teachers benefitted from the multiple opportunities to teach and work with the middle students. Moreover, her own teaching was better because of her collaboration with the reading teacher.

These observations showcase the positive perspectives and outcomes of an extended mutually beneficial PDS when a required reading course for pre-service teachers is taught in the middle school setting.

Discussion and Next Steps

Expansion of Mutually Beneficial

Often, when a PDS is discussed, one states the benefits for the interns, mentors, and the university. As intentionally designed, this middle school classroom reading course allowed more individuals to be included in the mutual benefit. Because the program includes the middle school reading students, pre-service teachers, a faculty member, and a reading teacher, it expands what mutually beneficial looks like in the PDS setting. Including pre-service teachers allows them the opportunity to write and execute a lesson early in their program. It helps them figure out who they are as teachers, and allows them to see the impact they can have on students, even over a short period of time. These pre-service teachers are more prepared by the time they get to their intern site, and have more confidence in their teaching ability. As many of the pre-service

teachers stated, the course was helpful in becoming a better teacher, and having more time with students allowed them to get to know the reading struggles that many of their future students might have. The middle school students benefitted by having the pre-service teachers in the classroom, giving then more confidence, the needed extra support and attention they needed, and a unique class setting. Expanding the benefits beyond interns and mentors, as this course has done, opens up the idea that PDSs can go beyond their traditional applications and apply also to pre-service teachers, middle school students, classroom teachers, and faculty members.

Constraints and Importance

There are several constraints to this study. It only assessed one class of pre-service middle school teachers. In addition, the study was conducted over the course of one semester, for one reading class, and in one school. To further explore these results, more middle school pre-service teachers, middle school students, teachers, and faculty need to be employed and studied. Including quantitative data (i.e., test scores) might provide more data to further the discussion of the benefits of having pre-service teachers in the middle school reading classroom earlier in their college course sequence. This study should be expanded to include more teaching courses in the middle school setting, and more data should be collected to assess the benefits for more individuals (e.g., pre-service teachers, middle school students, multiple teachers) involved in this PDS partnership.

Despite these constraints, this study shows the value and importance of expanding the conversation of what, who, and how more individuals can benefit from the PDS experience. By having pre-service teachers in the reading classroom, the conversation shifts from solely interns and mentors to include pre-service teachers, faculty, teachers, and middle school students who need and want support in their educational pursuits. The expansion provided in the study shows the benefits and positive perspectives of the various individuals involved, and pushes the boundaries of who can be included in and benefit from the PDS site and experience. While more exploration is needed, this study provides a strong starting point.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The discussion surrounding what makes a PDS mutually beneficial needs shift to the importance of having more field-based courses earlier in the curriculum for teacher education students. The conversation needs to move from having pre-service teachers simply observe in the PDS setting to more hands-on practices. Pre-service teachers should have opportunities to work with students as well as teach lessons. By expanding the PDS framework to include pre-service teachers and taking into account students and teachers that are affected by their involvement, the PDS broadens its impact. The anecdotal data from this study, along with the positive feedback, are strong and make us rethink what a PDS looks like and how many individuals can benefit from this practice.

Mutually beneficial looks different in various PDS settings, but this model, created for the pre-service middle school students and middle school students, shows the importance of working together to achieve support and growth for all individuals involved. It underscores that,

to be mutually beneficial, all parties must find value in the experience, and that the value looks different for each group involved. This beneficial relationship can be replicated in many ways, but especially with the help of a PDS that is willing to support pre-service teachers early, work to create an environment that supports their students and teachers, and recognize that the value in this model takes time and work (Rice, 2002). Working together in various capacities is important for the future of teaching. This new partnership was received positively by all parties involved in the field-based reading course. It appeared to yield positive outcomes, and supports the perspective that a mutually beneficial PDS can begin earlier and include pre-service teachers and a reading classroom.

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Appendix A MRMS Student Feedback Form

	Some of the time	Yes	No
The teacher is prepared for class			
The teacher knows their subject			
The teachers like and respect the students			
I could understand everything that the teachers said			
I enjoyed the lesson			

One positive thing about the lesson:

_____
_____

One negative thing about the lesson:

_____
_____

One thing you would change about the lesson:

_____
_____

Any advice for the teachers:

_____
_____

Appendix B Teaching Lesson Rubric

Highly Effective: Fulfills skillset completely
Effective: Adequate enough to fulfill skill
Developing Effective: Growing and evolving in the skillset
Ineffective: Lacking confidence and skills

Skill/Score	Highly Effective: 10	Effective: 7	Developing Effective: 4	Ineffective: 1
Presence • Teacher Voice: Tone and Volume • Movement around the room • Calls on Students by Name • Calls on Different Students • Praises students • Questioning- (ex. Can you please explain your answer?)				
Transitions • Fluidity from one activity to another • Passing out materials • Collecting work • Explaining directions clearly				
Modeling • Explaining procedure(s) • Directions are clear				

• Explanation of content • Examples and representation				

Additional Feedback: (One Praise/One Suggestion)

Appendix C Micro-teaching Reflection

Directions:
Please write a reflection of your experience micro-teaching. Make sure to take into account, student, peer, and professor feedback as well as the questions below. Feel free to add anything else you see as pertinent to your reflection.

- What part(s) of your lesson were successful in terms of student learning? On what evidence are you basing this opinion? Why do you think your students met with success?
- What parts of your lesson did not quite go as you expected? (This can be positive or negative.   For example, you may not have expected the high quality of the response you received from lower-ability students.) What is your evidence? Why do you think your students responded the way they did?
- What feedback did you receive from your peers, students, and professors or any other observer of this lesson?
- What, if anything, would you change if teaching this lesson again? What results would you anticipate from this change?
- How did you integrate technology into the lesson? Did it enhance the instruction? Why or why not?

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