

# **What It Means to Be a Professional Development School: *The Nine Essentials***

## **Second Edition**

**A Statement by the National Association for  
Professional Development Schools (NAPDS)  
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# The Nine Essentials at a Glance

## Essential 1: A Comprehensive Mission

*A professional development school (PDS) is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity, antiracism, and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.*

## Essential 2: Clinical Preparation

*A PDS embraces the preparation of educators through clinical practice.*

## Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading

*A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.*

## Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation

*A PDS makes a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation, and generative knowledge.*

## Essential 5: Research and Results

*A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets.*

## Essential 6: Articulated Agreements

*A PDS requires intentionally evolving written articulated agreement(s) that delineate the commitments, expectations, roles, and responsibilities of all involved.*

## Essential 7: Shared Governance Structures

*A PDS is built upon shared, sustainable governance structures that promote collaboration, foster reflection, and honor and value all participants' voices.*

## Essential 8: Boundary-Spanning Roles

*A PDS creates space for, advocates for, and supports college/university and P-12 faculty to operate in well-defined, boundary-spanning roles that transcend institutional settings.*

## Essential 9: Resources and Recognition

*A PDS provides dedicated and shared resources and establishes traditions to recognize, enhance, celebrate, and sustain the work of partners and the partnership.*



## Foreword

The purpose of the following statement is to share with the educational community the National Association for Professional Development Schools' (NAPDS's) articulation of the term "professional development school" (PDS). This statement is not intended to be either an evaluation or a critique of the phenomenal work that has punctuated PDSs over the past 35 years. Rather, the association recognizes that there is a tendency for the term "PDS" to be used as a catchall for various relationships that constitute school–university partnership work that may or may not be best described as PDS. Thus, the intent of this NAPDS statement is to assert the essentials, or fundamental qualities, of a PDS. NAPDS encourages all those working in school–university relationships to embrace the Nine Essentials of PDSs communicated in this statement. The essentials are written in tangible, rather than abstract, language and represent practical goals toward which work in a PDS should be directed. For those in established PDSs, some aspects of this document will be confirmed, whereas other aspects may be identified as needing attention. For those aspiring to establish PDSs, we offer this statement as a useful guide for their work. NAPDS invites individuals involved in school–university partnerships to share this statement with colleagues in the spirit of continuous improvement. By coming to terms with the challenges and opportunities inherent in this statement, we can collectively fulfill the vision of this remarkable and distinct partnership we call PDS.





# What It Means to Be a Professional Development School: *A Statement by the National Association for Professional Development Schools*

Colleges and universities and P–12 schools and districts in the United States have often worked together to advance agendas of mutual interest. Such collaboration has been particularly noteworthy in the field of education where the goals of preparing and sustaining professional educators have enhanced the need for school–university collaboration. In the mid-1980s, thanks to the work of organizations such as the Holmes Group and the National Network for Educational Renewal, the term “professional development school” (PDS) emerged as a part of the nation’s educational discourse. Unique and particularly intense school–university partnerships, PDSs should be built upon four pillars: (1) the improvement of P–12 student learning; (2) the joint engagement in teacher education activities; (3) the promotion of professional growth of all its participants; and (4) the construction of knowledge through intentional, synergistic research endeavors (Holmes Partnership, 2007). PDSs should be demonstration sites that model innovative and exemplary practices. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) gave credence to the significance of PDSs by conducting a study that resulted in the publishing of the NCATE PDS Standards. That document identified five standards, 21 elements, and dozens of descriptors that could be used not only to evaluate the efficacy of a particular PDS but also to determine the developmental state of that PDS.

Despite the valuable work of these PDS pioneers, in the decades since PDSs first hit the American educational landscape and since the publication of the NCATE PDS Standards, the term “PDS” has come to be used to describe all manner of school–university relationships.

In particular, educators seem to be routinely using PDS to describe any school–university relationship that engages in the preparation of new teachers. As such, the term lost its authenticity as schools and universities climbed on the PDS bandwagon without giving sufficient attention to the question, “What precisely does it mean to be a professional development school?”

It became imperative that recognizing a PDS by some means be communicated throughout the educational world, particularly as PDSs have been praised in recent years as being among the most effective models for furthering educational goals and exemplars of school–university collaboration (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2018; Levine, 2006; Robinson, 2007). Arthur Levine, in his 2006 report *Educating School Teachers*, cited PDSs as “a superb laboratory for education schools to experiment with the initiatives designed to improve student achievement” (p. 105). He further indicated that a PDS can “offer perhaps the strongest bridge between teacher education and classroom outcomes, academics and clinical education, theory and practice, and schools and colleges” (p. 105). Responding to Levine, former president and CEO of AACTE Sharon Robinson posited that PDSs “are emerging as particularly effective, evidence-based school–university partnership models in many sites across the nation, providing academic content and pedagogical instruction that is well integrated with extensive, closely supervised, hands-on in-school clinical experience” (2007, p. 2). In addition, AACTE’s (2018) report on clinical practice identified PDSs as “significant exemplars for practice” (p. 9). ♦





## Looking Back: The Origin of the Nine Essentials

In 2007, 2 years after the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) was officially formed, the leadership of the association recognized the need to define what it means to be a PDS. At that time, a variety of descriptions of PDSs existed, but no official definition of PDS had yet been determined (Teitel, 1998). Across the country, school–university partnerships in various stages of development called themselves PDSs, but the term was widely interpreted. Because NAPDS had been founded as the only national organization dedicated to supporting PDSs, it set a goal of identifying the essential characteristics of a PDS and establishing a common understanding of the meaning and substance of a PDS.

**PDSs have been praised in recent years as being among the most effective models for furthering educational goals and exemplars of school-university collaboration.**

The NAPDS leadership at the time carefully considered how such a definition should be crafted. Instead of simply adopting a description of a set of characteristics from the Holmes Group, the National Network for Educational Renewal, or the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, then president Bruce Field suggested a process for crafting a definition by consensus. Field's

notion was to bring together a group of educators from schools and colleges/universities who were engaged in a broad spectrum of partnership work to answer one simple question: "What are the *essential* characteristics necessary for a partnership to call itself a PDS?"

To that end, in August of 2007, the Executive Council and Board of Directors of NAPDS brought together 22 individuals from various partnership settings and national organizations—as diverse and comprehensive a set of constituents as could gather—for a 2-day summit they called "En Route to a Common Understanding." During the summit's 2 days of intense discussion, participants considered a wide range of partnership and PDS concepts and characteristics. The single criterion used to weigh the merit of each suggestion was the extent to which it focused on the essential nature of a PDS.

At the conclusion of the summit, three educators, Bruce Field from the University of South Carolina, Roger Brindley from the University of South Florida, and Elliott Lessen from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, were charged with the task of drafting a document to capture the consensus, eventually distilling the agreed-upon concepts into the "essential" traits. A draft was circulated among the summit attendees for edits, clarifications, and additions. A final version of the work—the original "Nine Essentials"—was approved by the NAPDS leadership and the membership and was published as a final policy statement and in a journal article in 2008 (Brindley et al., 2008).

That original policy statement—*What It Means to be a Professional Development School* (NAPDS, 2008)—provided clarity about what it means to be a PDS to partnerships both in the United States and internationally. School districts and colleges of education have used the Nine Essentials as the bases for PDS memoranda of understanding, and NAPDS has appealed to the Nine Essentials to create its conference themes, describe the conditions necessary for becoming an affiliate of NAPDS, and to identify criteria for the association's Exemplary PDS Award. ♦



## Rationale for Revising the NAPDS Nine Essentials

In 2015, NAPDS celebrated its 10th anniversary, and members and leaders asked for the Nine Essentials to be reviewed; thus, in 2016, then NAPDS Board Member Michael Cosenza was charged with leading an ad hoc committee to review the existing document. The committee was charged with learning how the field was currently using the Nine Essentials, determining their relevance, and deciding what revisions, if any, should be made to the original criteria. Consequently, at the 2017 NAPDS Annual Conference (in Washington, DC), 41 participants in the Directors' Forum shared how they were using the Essentials, discussed better ways to implement them, and determined which elements of the Essentials were relevant and which should be revised. The results of this forum were shared with NAPDS leadership, which agreed that the work of revising the Nine Essentials should continue.

At the 2018 NAPDS Annual Conference in Jacksonville, FL, 36 individuals participated in a 90-minute session known as the Nine Essentials Forum. Participants considered the emerging themes from the 2017 Director's Forum and shared their insights about each of the Nine Essentials. Based on these series of discussions, a roster of the attendees from the 2017 and 2018 meetings joined with a team of additional constituents—invited to ensure diversity and representation—to formally consider

revisions to the original Essentials as members of the Nine Essentials Symposium. At the 2019 NAPDS Annual Conference (in Atlanta, GA), Nine Essentials Symposium participants reviewed the Essentials, considering issues of use and relevance and closely examining and providing feedback on the wording and descriptions of each of the Essentials. In the summer of 2019, the NAPDS association leadership met in Burlington, Vermont, to review the results from the Nine Essentials Symposium and build upon those revisions during the Summer Leadership Retreat. Eventually, recognizing that substantially more work needed to be done to properly complete the revision to the Essentials, a Nine Essentials Committee, composed of eight members, was formed to finalize this task.

At the 2020 NAPDS Annual Conference (Atlantic City, NJ), the Nine Essentials Committee presented a revised draft to, and welcomed feedback from, 45 participants at a second iteration of the Nine Essentials Symposium. Carefully considering that input, the Nine Essentials Committee continued to meet regularly to develop a final draft of the Essentials along with a glossary and an historical background on the document's origination and revision. This final document was shared with the 45 members of the symposium for final comments. The second edition of the Nine Essentials was launched and made publicly available in 2021. ♦





## Adding Meaning and Depth Going Forward: *What Is New in the Second Edition*

The second edition of the NAPDS Nine Essentials confirms core elements of PDSs identified in the original document, details new features of and beliefs about the nature of PDSs, and suggests aspirations and directions for this national movement. The document preserves the essence of the original Nine Essentials and expands on them by setting expectations for the work and ideals that NAPDS, as an association, encourages, endorses, and stands behind. The document also addresses how PDSs should attend to the topics of equity, antiracism, and social justice. The 2021 edition employs a consistent three-element structure, with each Essential framed by a heading, described in a sentence explanation, and elaborated upon in a summary paragraph. The hope is that this format conveys the essence of the Essential to both internal and external audiences, including those just being introduced to PDSs. The 2021 edition includes a glossary of terms used in the document and by PDS practitioners and scholars. This move responds to recommendations made by the AACTE Clinical Practice Commission, which detailed a unique lexicon. We propose that these terms become an accepted part of the nomenclature when engaging in school–university partnerships.

**The PDS is a unique kind of community that lies between two or more organizations.**

Like all documents, the original Nine Essentials were drafted in a particular context and reflected the circumstances of the time. In 2007, the PDS movement was in need of a guiding organization and a clarifying set of purposes. The then-nascent NAPDS filled that organizational void, and its early leadership offered us that collection of descriptors and ideals. However, NAPDS and our movement have matured tremendously in the nearly 15 years since the Essentials were delineated. The PDS research literature has blossomed, thanks in part to our flagship publications, *School-University Partnerships* and *PDS Partners*, now supplemented by multiple special issues of both journals each year. NAPDS conference presentations have developed into sharing of innovative, integrated projects, including presentations detailing long-standing collaborations between partners, reports of the results of research inquiries in a wide range of contexts, and considerations of problems of practice encountered in partnership work.

The evidence of the impact of the PDS movement, NAPDS, and the original Essentials is substantial. Reports of innovations in teaching and learning in PDSs have become commonplace. PDS networks have formed and NAPDS affiliates have been constituted to produce greater collaborations across regions. The number and nature of exemplary PDS partnerships have grown. NAPDS itself has become better equipped to serve the membership by revising and updating internal policies and procedures and by adding a significant number of new leadership roles and an elaborate committee structure that involves members in real, everyday ways.

Our schools, communities, and nation continue to struggle with issues related to racial injustice and structures of inequality. As NAPDS members, we examine how to strongly advocate and lead the fight for equitable teaching, antiracism, and bridging the opportunity gap. As an organization, we do not condone any act of discriminatory behavior. By observing and engaging in these struggles, we are not just better prepared to include bolder statements regarding equity, antiracism, and ethical teaching and learning, and partnership practices, but we are ever more committed to enacting these ideals. The 2021 edition of the NAPDS Nine Essentials is intended to help light the way. ♦





## Key Concepts and Ideas that Undergird PDSs

The PDS is a living, learning community intended to close conceptual and practical separations that tend to exist between teacher education programs and the nation's schools. PDSs are guided by principles, not prescriptions. Each PDS develops as a result of local needs and conditions. Partner educators interpret and implement PDS principles according to the needs of their contexts. Therefore, the PDS is not a model, but a set of community agreements arrived at through collaboration and sustained by a respectful, fair, and reciprocal approach to addressing priorities. Above all, a PDS labors to create conditions that benefit all learners. PDSs are grounded in key ideas such as boundary-spanning roles and structures; clinical practice; community; equity and social justice; innovative practice; inquiry; third space; professional learning for all; reciprocity; reflection; respectful relationships and collaboration; shared governance; simultaneous renewal; and traditions, celebrations, and recognitions. The remainder of this section is dedicated to defining and explaining these key ideas in PDSs, which we have listed in alphabetical order.

### Boundary-Spanning Roles and Structures

Goodlad (1990) argued that PDSs allow for—or are actualized by—new, boundary-spanning structures and roles. Boundary-spanners are individuals operating in the third space who “understand the dynamics and culture of both worlds and are vital in linking schools and universities in viable collaboration” (Sandholtz & Finan, 1998, p. 24). In PDSs, boundary spanners

have assumed roles that have been called many names (AACTE, 2018; Burns & Baker, 2016; Zenkov et al., 2018), but all of the individuals in these boundary-spanning roles can be considered hybrid educators because their work spans interinstitutional and intrainstitutional boundaries (Clark et al., 2005).

### Clinical Practice

Like many other concepts in PDSs, the notion of clinical practice derives from clinical education in the medical professions, where it is referred to as the “centrality of practice-based learning” for professionals (Cantatore et al., 2016, p. 6). In 2010, teacher education underwent a major transformational shift when the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education released their Blue Ribbon Panel Report arguing for making clinical practice the core of teacher preparation. In this report, they identified 10 design principles for high-quality teacher preparation. Specifically, they argued for the creation of strategic partnerships for the clinical preparation of teachers and designated sites that were well resourced and funded in order to embed clinical practice. As programs began making shifts to centralize clinical practice, it became apparent that there was great diversity in what constituted clinical practice. The AACTE (2018) Clinical Practice Commission released a report that identified 10 proclamations to strengthen the understanding and implementation of clinical practice in educator preparation. They defined clinical practice as “a model to prepare high-quality educators with and through a pedagogical skill set that





provides articulated benefits for every participant, while being fully embedded in the P–12 setting” (p. 6). PDSs are designed to be those funded, designated sites where clinical practice is centralized in the teacher preparation curriculum and embedded in the P–12 setting.

There are some programs that have no clinical components. Other programs can be classified as clinically accompanied, clinically rich, clinically centered, or clinical only (Dennis et al., 2017; Yendol-Hoppey & Hoppey, 2018). Clinically accompanied programs have clinical practice usually positioned as a capstone experience and detached from the rest of the educator preparation curriculum; clinically rich programs have strong school–university partnerships and intentional and scaffolded clinical practice throughout the curriculum; clinically centered programs position clinical practice as the center of the educator preparation curriculum; and clinical-only programs have clinical preparation placed only in schools without university collaboration. Because of the Nine Essentials and the emphasis on clinical practice, PDSs are either clinically rich or clinically centered models of educator preparation. They exist as exemplars of clinical practice (AACTE, 2018).

### Community

Community has become a popular metaphor for schools and schooling. The PDS is a unique kind of community that lies between two or more organizations. Whereas organizations and institutions are driven by policy guidelines and standards, communities coalesce based on common values, moral agreements, and professional relationships. The PDS is a community that is actively coconstructed by the partners.

Learning through inquiry and reflective practice is at the core of the PDS community. These actions occur best in environments marked by openness, dialogue, and collegial sharing (Lieberman & Miller, 2008; Sergiovanni, 1994). As a context, a PDS community paves the way for the simultaneous renewal of schools, colleges, and working professionals.

### Equity and Social Justice

PDS practitioners have historically named, considered, and attempted to integrate justice ideals into their practices and structures (Zenkov et al., 2013). The PDS commitment to social justice is supported by numerous current research examinations, professional association policy stances, and narrative reports of justice- or equity-oriented teacher education efforts (Cormier, 2020; Richards & Zenkov, 2015). Such social justice ideals typically involve addressing notions of antiracism and antioppression, critical consciousness, considering P–12 teachers’ equity-oriented instructional and assessment practices, and identifying specific skills required by school leaders to enact social justice (Chubbuck & Zembylas, 2016; Dover, 2013; Love, 2019; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

A PDS social justice approach requires considerations of structural inequities beyond traditional social foundations classes and attempts to address these in content-area methods courses and P–12 classrooms (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016; Dyches & Boyd, 2017). PDS structures support participants in cultivating identities as change makers and with antiracist and antioppressive pedagogies (Zeichner, 2020), nurturing their abilities to disrupt injustice and reallocate educational opportunity (Warren & Goodman, 2018; Zeichner, 2019; Zenkov et





al., in press). Teaching—and teaching teachers—for social equity is a craft that takes conscious intentions and time to develop (Dominguez, 2017), and the collaborative orientation of PDSs is ideal to develop such skills.

### Innovative Practice

PDSs are inherently innovative (del Prado Hill & Garas-York, 2020). They embrace a culture of innovation and look for ways to refine practice by examining their current context and the needs and desires of PDS participants. Innovative practice begins with PDS participants, either individually or collaboratively, seeing a need and determining ways to respond to their context (Rogers, 2003). PDS participants examine research and theory, and they reflect on how those ideas may be used to innovate their PDS work. An inquiry-based perspective accompanies the idea of innovative practice, as PDS participants should embrace a culture of examining how the design, implementation, and refinement of innovations influence each PDS participant as well as the teacher candidates and P-12 learners. PDSs are uniquely positioned for teacher candidates and school- and university-based teacher educators to engage in innovative practice because of the close and trusting relationships that exist (Dresden et al., 2014).

### Inquiry

Inquiry is one of the four pillars of PDSs. The founders of PDS were deliberate in their use of the word “inquiry” (Goodlad, 1994; Holmes Partnership, 2007; Teitel, 2003) in part to suggest its scope, but also to avoid the word “research.” One concern was that calling inquiry “research” would either put off some educators in the partnership or privilege others. Research is more closely associated with the university culture than with the P-12 culture, but the intention for this activity was meant to engage everyone and anyone in the PDS. Teachers in particular have

reservations about research for two reasons. First, many have had negative experiences with it (Hubbard & Power, 1999). The second reason that some teachers are reluctant to be involved in research is the perception that it is just another time-consuming activity in an otherwise time-impovertished schedule. Perhaps if they came to understand inquiry as a state of mind, they would be more willing participants in it as a professional endeavor. For these and other reasons, research has been more commonly called by its friendlier word “inquiry” in the PDS community; it is defined as the systematic study of one’s practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, 2009; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020).

### PDSs as Third Spaces

Zeichner (2010) used the notion of “third space” as a means to address the historical disconnect between university and P-12 programs. He posited a need for hybrid spaces in teacher education where university and P-12 constituents come together in ways that value and integrate the expertise of both practitioners and academics. Hybrid third spaces are sites of innovation and are a unique society in and of themselves (Bhabha, 1994). But creating a “third space” is much more complex than simply bringing university courses into P-12 contexts or inviting a classroom teacher to make a presentation in a university methods class (Ikpeze et al., 2012; Norton-Meier & Drake, 2008). Rather, it is “a rejection of binaries, such as practitioner and academic knowledge and theory and practice, and involves the integration of what are often seen as competing discourses in new ways” (Zeichner, 2010, p. 92). When two binaries collide, new knowledge can be generated, resulting in new possibilities not yet imagined (Soja, 1996). Thus, PDSs exist as a third space at the intersection of the binaries of schools and universities. In essence, PDSs are the center of a Venn diagram, existing as a unique, innovative third-space learning community, where such binaries of schools and universities, theory and practice, academic and practitioner knowledge, and so on are integrated in new ways.

### Professional Learning and Leading for All

In a PDS, everyone is a learner. When the Holmes Group (1986) conceptualized PDSs, they strove to link high-quality professional preparation programs and faculty development. Therefore, PDSs are actively engaged with preparing teachers and educators as well as contributing to their ongoing professional learning. Teacher preparation encompasses all elements of certifying or licensing teachers, including curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and evaluation (AACTE, 2018). Additionally, PDSs are engaged in preparing other educators such as administrators, counselors, university- and school-based teacher educators, and others outside of classroom teaching. Thus, in the Nine Essentials, the term “educator preparation” is used to be more inclusive of those who are learning and preparing for other roles within education.

The vision of professional learning for all was modeled after teaching hospitals. The logic is that PDSs create the conditions for a learning environment; integrating ideas, practices, and





perspective from all educators enriches that learning environment (Shoemaker et al., 2020). The result of working and learning together in a PDS should be better teachers and better schools, which means better learning for children and youth, thus leading to a better society. Professional learning for all is the keystone for educational renewal (Goodlad, 1994).

Leadership is an elusive concept that requires a good bit of interpretation and constructed meanings that must be placed in context. Sirotnik (1995) defined leadership as “the exercise of significant and responsible influence” (p. 236). Thus, leadership is a function and therefore distinct from a person in a role. By bringing together schools and universities, PDSs disrupt traditional hierarchies and roles present in either institution, opening new doors, avenues, and opportunities for all. Everyone can and should have the opportunity to responsibly influence others in the community; therefore, everyone has the opportunity to exercise responsible leadership.

**PDSs are uniquely positioned for teacher candidates and school- and university-based teacher educators to engage in innovative practice because of the close and trusting relationships that exist.**

### Reciprocity

Over the decades, the preparation of aspiring teachers was the responsibility of colleges and universities, both in perception and in practice. P-12 schools were called upon to provide experienced teachers to host and mentor teacher candidates in their classrooms to obtain practical experience. The process was very one-sided, and the relationships were typically dominated by the university (Abdal-Haqq, 1989; Holmes Partnership, 2007; Teitel, 2003). The P-12 school primarily served the needs of the university’s teacher preparation program.

The Holmes Group (1995), in their publication *Tomorrow’s Schools of Education*, called for reciprocity between the P-12 school and college/university. Reciprocity is the mutually beneficial outcome for both parties when they engage in collaboration. In a PDS, reciprocity means that the relationship is not one-sided. Rather,

both partners share the work and benefit from the collaboration. PDSs that are built on mutual trust can experience reciprocity by implementing new strategies and piloting new programs resulting in improved instruction, improved learning, and better teacher preparation (Ricci et al., 2018).

Reciprocity at its core also means both the P-12 school and college/university formally accept joint responsibility for the preparation of new teachers and P-12 student learning. With this stance, P-12 teachers are viewed and accepted as peers by the college/university faculty. Neither is subordinate to the other. Teitel (2003) supports the concept of reciprocity, suggesting that all stakeholders develop professionally as a result of the interaction and development of the unique professional learning community that develops in a PDS. Teitel (2003) further suggests that PDSs are distinctive partnerships in which university faculty, teacher candidates, veteran teachers, and P-12 students are all engaged in learning, studying, and researching together as a collaborative professional learning community.

### Reflection

The work of PDSs must include opportunities for all participants to reflect on their experiences (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Hatton & Smith, 1995). Reflection is a critical component in supporting learning. Dewey (1933) described reflective thought as “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge” (p. 118). Additionally, Schön (1987) described the concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action is the process that individuals are able to simultaneously reflect while engaging in an activity. Reflection-on-action is the process of reflecting after an activity. PDSs include opportunities to reflect in and on practice. In education, developing reflective practitioners is imperative for high-quality education and positively impacting P-12 student learning (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2020; Zeichner & Liston, 2009).

Reflection provides many benefits, but participants need opportunity, time, and support to successfully engage in metacognitive activity (Lieberman & Miller, 1990; Zeichner & Liu, 2009). In PDSs, all participants continually engage in reflective activities related to their own development of knowledge and skills and their beliefs about teaching and learning. PDS participants reflect individually and collaboratively on the influence of the partnership on themselves, but also on their students, their colleagues, and the institutions involved in the partnership.

### Respectful Relationships and Collaboration

Schools and universities are simply better when they work together. In other words, they are the embodiment of the adage “more than the sum of their parts.” PDSs recognize the idea put forward by McDaniel (as cited in Weir, 2018) that “no one person has the skills or knowledge to accomplish all that we want to accomplish” (p. 46); collaborative teams achieve more. Respect and collaboration are the essential elements *and* the ultimate evidence of the success of a PDS. By working together, PDSs draw



on intellectual capital from each partner to enhance student learning (Teitel, 2003). They intentionally rely on respectful relationships and authentic collaboration (Breault & Breault, 2012; Goodland, 1994).

**The result of working and learning together in a PDS should be better teachers and better schools, which means better learning for children and youth, thus leading to a better society.**

#### **Shared Governance**

Shared governance is the collective oversight and responsibility of and to the partnership. It involves joint decision-making and leadership. It recognizes and values each partner's perspective in the collaborative process. Partnerships must be strategically based on the recognition that none can fully do the job alone. NCATE (2010) calls for participants involved in clinically based teacher preparation to share responsibility, authority, and accountability in all aspects of program development and implementation. Thus, decisions about the PDS are made together. Successful PDSs develop governing structures that are grounded in a shared and equitable commitment from both

partners promoting dialogue and collaboration for long-term sustainability (Cosenza, 2018).

#### **Simultaneous Renewal**

Simultaneous renewal is the continuous process of getting better together. Goodlad (1994) argued that true educational renewal happens when P-12 schools and universities/colleges of education mutually change, grow, and improve because they examine and refine their purposes, roles, responsibilities, and structures in an ongoing manner as a result of their collaboration. The PDS has the potential to do more than reform the relationship between schools and universities; it has the ability to renew those relationships. Although responsible schools and universities undergo constant efforts to improve themselves independently from one another, the PDS relationship calls for partners to engage in this process together, simultaneously. Goodlad coined the term "simultaneous renewal," maintaining that it does little good for colleges of education to revise programs with an eye toward the future if there were no clinical sites prepared to receive leading-edge practices. Likewise, program improvements in P-12 settings are stronger when they collaborate with those preparing teachers to work in those settings (Goodlad, 1994).

#### **Traditions, Celebrations, and Recognition**

Traditions define PDSs. Over time, traditions develop that begin to identify the PDS and tend to be rooted in recognition of accomplishments through celebrations and joint events. Ceremonies and celebrations are examples of communal events where both partners can communicate their common values and acknowledge success (Peterson & Deal, 2002). Taking the time to plan and implement forms of recognition and incentives can lead to long-term sustainability, community building, and partnership strength. Bringing stakeholders together through the use of celebrations helps to promote dialogue, revisit shared norms, unearth individuals' tacit beliefs and values, and affirm the sense of community (Badiali, 2020). ♦





# The Nine Essentials

## Essential 1: A Comprehensive Mission

*A PDS is a learning community guided by a comprehensive, articulated mission that is broader than the goals of any single partner, and that aims to advance equity, antiracism, and social justice within and among schools, colleges/universities, and their respective community and professional partners.*

Although schools/districts, colleges/universities, educator preparation units, and their respective community and professional partners are guided by unique commitments, the mission statement of a PDS explicitly describes the shared promises of its collaborative community.

It is imperative—essential—that PDS mission statements articulate shared visions for promoting equity and social justice.

Additionally, the mission statement should address the four PDS pillars (Holmes Group, 2007)

1. the improvement of P–12 student learning;
2. the joint engagement in educator preparation activities;
3. the promotion of professional growth of all its participants; and
4. the construction of knowledge through intentional, synergistic research endeavors.

## Essential 2: Clinical Preparation

*A PDS embraces the preparation of educators through clinical practice.*

A PDS is committed to nurturing and developing the next generation of educators by engaging candidates and valuing them as active members of the school and PDS communities. In a PDS, educator preparation is a joint responsibility involving all partners in shared decision-making. PDSs serve as authentic educational preparation settings where coursework and clinical experiences are closely coupled, ensuring that educators are profession ready.

## Essential 3: Professional Learning and Leading

*A PDS is a context for continuous professional learning and leading for all participants, guided by need and a spirit and practice of inquiry.*

In a PDS, participants are engaged in learning and leading. Professional learning takes a variety of forms in response to a range of needs and interests. PDS partners and participants collaborate to identify areas for personal and collective growth, and they collaboratively determine the manner in which professional learning occurs. Continuous professional learning in a PDS is a community norm that values the discovery and sharing of innovative practices that disrupt the status quo.

Part of professional learning is the development of leadership skills. PDS participants engage in the process of significant and responsible influence of others. PDS should look for opportunities to develop educators' leadership capacity. In a PDS, everyone is encouraged to lead with the expectation to exercise responsible leadership.

## Essential 4: Reflection and Innovation

*A PDS makes a shared commitment to reflective practice, responsive innovation, and generative knowledge.*

APDS values and respects professional knowledge that is practical as well as theoretical and that recognizes the influence of context and culture. In a PDS, reflection is a shared expectation. PDSs are living laboratories for creating, implementing, refining, and sharing innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Any PDS participant may initiate innovations, and everyone should have the opportunity to serve in the role of leader and learner. Through innovation and reflection, PDSs generate new knowledge about teaching and learning.

## Essential 5: Research and Results

*A PDS is a community that engages in collaborative research and participates in the public sharing of results in a variety of outlets.*

PDSs are guided by a culture of inquiry and continuous improvement. PDS participants regularly engage in research and dissemination. Collaboration is the keystone of PDSs, and as such should be reflected in all aspects of the research and dissemination processes.

PDS research seeks to

1. improve practice and outcomes for all learners,
2. contribute to improvement within the PDS and to the field of education,
3. simultaneously renew schools/school districts and universities/colleges of education, and
4. inform educational policies.

## Essential 6: Articulated Agreements

*A PDS requires intentionally evolving written articulated agreement(s) that delineate the commitments, expectations, roles, and responsibilities of all involved.*

PDS partners collaboratively create, review, and renew written articulated agreements. The document(s)

1. identify the commitments of each entity,
2. articulate the expectation that each partner will have an equal voice in decision-making, including in determining the content of the agreement(s),



3. describe the roles and responsibilities of various individuals, and
4. outline processes for developing, maintaining, and identifying desired shared outcomes to promote sustainability and renewal.

Renewed agreement(s) should reflect the evolution of the partnership.

### Essential 7: Shared Governance Structures

*A PDS is built upon shared, sustainable governance structures that promote collaboration, foster reflection, and honor and value all participants' voices.*

PDSs include structures that not only guide the work of the partnership, but also enable collaboration, ongoing communication, and reflection among all of its participants.

These structures provide opportunities for shared decision-making related to matters such as

1. how the PDS identifies and meets its goals,
2. how the work of the PDS is assessed,
3. how the outcomes of the PDS will be used for continuous improvement, and
4. how resources will best be utilized for the benefit of the relationship.

Participation in the PDS community should be mutually beneficial for all partners and participants.

### Essential 8: Boundary-Spanning Roles

*A PDS creates space for, advocates for, and supports college/university and P-12 faculty to operate in well-defined, boundary-spanning roles that transcend institutional settings.*

PDSs—figuratively the spaces between schools and universities—are conceived of as places of discovery and experimentation,

governed by ideas and ideals and not bound by the traditions of any one institution. They are designed to renew a culture of teaching, learning, leading, and schooling. PDS participants span boundaries between university and P-12 settings; thus, their work is situated in the “third space,” which distinguishes it from work occurring solely in school or only in university organizations. PDS participants assume a variety of boundary-spanning roles, defined by each respective PDS. These boundary-spanning roles incorporate necessary functions and are integral to the operations of each PDS.

### Essential 9: Resources and Recognition

*A PDS provides dedicated and shared resources and establishes traditions to recognize, enhance, celebrate, and sustain the work of partners and the partnership.*

A PDS requires significant resources and recognition structures beyond the normal operating scope of schools/districts and colleges/universities. Each partner dedicates material support to strengthen and honor the collaborative work of the PDS. Celebrations should reflect the culture and community of the partnership.

Resources can take a variety of forms, including but not limited to leadership, time, space, people, money, materials, expertise, and workload. Monetary or in-kind resources are contributed by the college/university and the P-12 school to sustain partnerships, acknowledge successes, and celebrate achievements.

### Summary

NAPDS maintains that these Nine Essentials need to be present for a school–university relationship to be called a PDS. Without having all nine, the relationship that exists between a school/district and college/university, however strong, will not be a PDS. How individual PDSs meet these essentials will vary from location to location, but they all need to be in place to justify the use of the term “PDS.” ♦

**PDSs that are built on mutual trust can experience reciprocity by implementing new strategies and piloting new programs resulting in improved instruction, improved learning, and better teacher preparation.**



# Glossary

In an effort to create a common lexicon about professional development schools (PDSs), this glossary provides definitions of terms that are foundational to the Nine Essentials (second edition). The number(s) after each word corresponds to the Essential in which it appears.

- **Antiracism:** (1) Antiracism is the action of opposing and condemning prejudice and discrimination of individuals or groups of people based on their race/ethnicity through various methods. Antiracism aims to actively challenge racism and demand change in policies, behaviors, and ideas that preserve racist beliefs and actions.
- **Articulated Agreement:** (6) An articulated agreement is a written document (e.g., memorandum of understanding or contract) between a college/university and a P-12 school/district/division that outlines the structure and goals of the partnership and the expectations for each partner. Additional documents may include handbooks, policy manuals, glossaries, and so forth.
- **Boundary-spanning:** (8) Boundary-spanning means engaging in and understanding professional life in both P-12 and college/university contexts or cultures.
- **Clinical practice:** (1, 2) Clinical practice is a form of what has traditionally been known as “field work.” Providing articulated benefits for all participants, the clinical practice model supports the development of educators’ knowledge and pedagogical skills through embedded, sequenced coursework and clinical experiences.
- **Collaboration:** (6) Collaboration is the action of P-12 and college/university PDS stakeholders to work together to achieve common goals.
- **Community Partner:** (1) A community partner is both broadly conceived and context specific. It includes the fullest range of institutions that engage with the PDS.
- **Educator:** (2) An educator is a professional in a school, university, or other educational context who supports the learning of another.
- **Equity:** (1) Equity in education involves the implementation of antioppressive interactions, practices, and structures that ensure that every individual has an unbiased, impartial, responsive, and appropriately scaffolded opportunity for academic and professional success. An equity approach to education addresses discriminatory and systemically marginalizing actions and traditions related to race/ethnicity, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, nationality, and various other intersecting identities.
- **Generative Knowledge:** (4) Generative knowledge leads to new knowledge, which can be used to interpret new situations, solve problems, think and reason, and learn.
- **Governance Structures:** (7) Governance structures are committees, councils, or steering groups equitably representing all partners that ensure fidelity to the mission and vision of the PDS partnership.
- **In-kind:** (9) In-kind means a combination of human or material resources that ensures an equitable balance of contributions by all PDS partners.
- **Leadership:** (3) Leadership is a deliberate, action-oriented, decision-making function. It is not passive. Leadership is a process of responsibly influencing others.
- **Learning Community:** (1) In a PDS, learning community means that everyone is committed to deliberate and continuous learning.
- **Professional Development School:** (1) A PDS is a concept as well as a setting. As a concept, a PDS is the third space formed through the joining of schools and colleges/universities in partnership for a larger, moral purpose. As a setting, a PDS is a place where a unique partnership between a school or district/division and a college or university exists. A PDS exemplifies the Nine Essentials.
- **PDS Participants:** (3) PDS participants are individual members of either a school/district/division or a college/university community who are engaged in PDS work.
- **PDS Partner:** (1, 2, 5) A PDS partner is an entity involved in a PDS partnership, which can include but is not limited to P-12 schools/districts/divisions, universities, colleges, and other organizations.
- **Professional Learning:** (3) Professional learning is an ongoing process by which individuals acquire knowledge that informs and advances practice.
- **Reflective Practice:** (4) Reflective practice is the process of habitually thinking about, analyzing, and assessing one’s own actions and experiences in order to learn, grow, and improve one’s practice.
- **Responsive Innovation:** (4) Responsive innovation is the development of new processes, products, and practices that address issues identified by data and the needs of PDS participants and partners.
- **Research:** (5) Research is the systematic investigation, inquiry, or application of topics/subjects to discover or revise facts, theories, or practices.
- **Social Justice:** (1) In a PDS, a commitment to social justice encompasses the belief that all members of the community contribute to disrupting inequitable interactions, practices, and structures, with a focus on enhancing each individual’s opportunity to learn and succeed. Social justice ideals involve antioppressive and equity-oriented practices.
- **Third Space:** (8) The third space is the unique space created at the joining of at least two partners that gives rise to something different or something new.
- **Variety of Outlets:** (5) A variety of outlets refers to any venue, publication, or recording through which the results of research can be disseminated. This can include but is not limited to blogs, books, conferences, conventions, conversations, faculty meetings, magazines, newsletters, podcasts, professional development workshops, reports, research journals, school district board meetings, social media, staff meetings, and videos. ♦



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# The Nine Essentials Committee

## Chair

**Michael N. Cosenza, EdD**, is a professor and director of professional development schools for the Department of Learning and Teaching in the Graduate School of Education for California Lutheran University. With experience in both P–12 and higher education, Michael has been an advocate of the PDS model to develop new teachers and provide ongoing professional development to veteran teachers. Under his leadership, Cal Lutheran has an award-winning PDS program for candidates seeking both elementary and secondary general education credentials. Michael's work at the university focuses on the methods and communication strategies needed to sustain these partnerships over the long term while providing a high-quality teacher preparation program for aspiring candidates. Michael's scholarly work centers on clinical practice, teacher leadership, and the PDS model. He is the author/editor of several publications and two books. Michael has served on the board of directors and is the past president of NAPDS.

## Committee Members

**Bernard Badiali, PhD**, His main teaching and research activities have been in the areas of school/university relationships, staff development, school renewal, instructional supervision, and curriculum. He is a past president of NAPDS and has twice served on the board of directors. He was selected as a leadership associate with the Institute for Educational Inquiry at the University of Washington with John Goodlad. He has acted in various roles and positions in school university partnerships, including coordinator of the nationally recognized Elementary Professional Development School Partnership between Penn State and State College Area School District, liaison with the Madeira City Schools and Miami University PDS, and AED scholar with the National Network for Educational Renewal. In addition, Badiali has consulted with numerous colleges and universities throughout the United States as well as more than 100 school districts in the United States and abroad. He has published essays and articles in numerous educational journals, including *School-University Partnerships*, the *Peabody Journal of Education*, *Action in Teacher Education*, and *Education Week*.

**Rebecca West Burns, PhD**, is the Bill Herrold Endowed Professor and the Director of Clinical Practice and Partnerships for the College of Education and Human Services at the University of North Florida. Her community-engaged scholarship is situated within clinically based teacher education, where she studies supervision, school-university partnerships, and teacher leadership. In particular, her research is aligned with national calls to transform teacher education by increasing clinical practice and school-university collaboration. Dr. Burns is a nationally recognized leader in teacher preparation, serving in leadership positions for the National

Association for Professional Development Schools, the American Education Research Association Professional Development Schools Research Special Interest Group and Supervision and Instructional Leadership Special Interest Group, and the Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision. She also has received national recognition for her exemplary school-university collaboration and impact on urban education. Dr. Burns has authored and coauthored over 50 publications, including the second edition of Carl Glickman's best-selling ASCD book, *Leadership for Learning: How to Bring Out the BEST in Every Teacher*, and the upcoming book *(Re)Designing Programs: A Vision for Equity-Centered, Clinically Based Teacher Preparation* with Dr. Jennifer Jacobs.

**Cynthia Coler, EdD**, is an adjunct professor with California Lutheran University and teaches in their PDS Residency Program. She has worked as a PDS liaison supervising cooperating teachers and teacher candidates. She also served 7 years as the director of field placement and credential services at California State University Channel Islands, where she was affiliated with two PDS sites and placed teacher candidates in coteaching residencies or a coteaching traditional model. She has over 30 years of experience as a teacher/administrator in public schools. Most recently, she has served as the secretary for NAPDS. Cynthia has been on the board of Southern California Professional Development Schools since its founding in 2010 and continues with the organization under its new name, the California Association of School-University Partnerships. She has attended and presented at NAPDS conferences and serves on the Events and Conferences Committee.

**Schools and universities are simply better when they work together. In other words, they are the embodiment of the adage “more than the sum of their parts.”**

**Krystal Goree, PhD**, is the director of professional practice and PDS liaison in the School of Education at Baylor University where she also teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in teacher education and educational psychology. Dr. Goree is the author of numerous publications and a frequent presenter at state and national conferences. She has served as the primary investigator



for numerous grants as well as a consultant for many school districts. She is currently managing editor of *Tempo*, associate editor of *Gifted Child Today*, and board member and chair of the Educator Preparation Division of the National Association for Co-Teaching. She is past president of the Texas Association for the Gifted and Talented and the Texas Directors of Field Experience, and has served as a leadership team member and membership chair for the National Association for Professional Development Schools, past chair of the Texas Education Agency Commissioner's Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted/Talented Students, board member of the Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education, and board member for the Council for Exceptional Children. Her past professional experiences include service as a classroom teacher, campus principal, and district curriculum program director. Dr. Goree's research interests include preservice teacher education and development, mentoring of beginning teachers, gifted and talented education, and social and emotional needs of twice-exceptional children.

**Drew Polly, PhD**, is a professor in the Elementary Education program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Drew is the author of over 60 peer-reviewed publications and has coedited 6 books on teaching and learning. Drew also serves as the coeditor of the NAPDS Journal *PDS Partners: Bridging Research to Practice*. Drew has engaged in PDS and partnership work in numerous contexts, which include coteaching mathematics with elementary school teachers, coleading professional learning communities with school-based leaders, and mentoring teacher candidates who are engaged in clinical experiences and their student teaching internship in partnership schools. Drew's

research agenda focuses on supporting teachers' and teacher candidates' use of learner-centered practices in mathematics through professional development and teacher education experiences.

**Donnan Stoicov, MEd**, is the head of school at State College Friends School. She worked for many years in the State College Area School District as a lead learner (principal) at Park Forest Elementary School, which was a part of the PDS collaboration of the Pennsylvania State University and State College Area School District. Eight elementary schools comprised our PDS. Donnan retired from State College Area School District after 42 years in public education, "flunked" retirement, and is loving her time at this small Quaker school. She has been a longtime advocate of teacher voice and choice in professional development. She has served NAPDS in the three-year presidential cycle and now is a member of the Board of Directors. She has done multiple presentations over her many years of involvement in NAPDS through SCASD and her various positions on the board. She is also a member of the Policy Advocacy and External Relations Committee of NAPDS.

**Kristien Zenkov, PhD**, is a professor of education and coordinates the Secondary Education program at George Mason University. He is the author and editor of more than 150 articles and book chapters and eight books, focusing on teacher education, literacy pedagogy and curricula, social justice education, school-university partnerships, and PDSs. Dr. Zenkov is a longtime boundary-spanning educator and school-university partnership facilitator. He collaborates as a coteacher at T. C. Williams High School (of *Remember the Titans* fame!) in Alexandria, Virginia, and regularly conducts project-based clinical experiences with youths and preservice and in-service teachers in schools throughout northern Virginia. He codirects "Through Students' Eyes," a photovoice project through which young people document with photographs and writings what they believe about citizenship, justice, school, and literacy. He served for 10 years as the senior editor of the journals of the National Association for Professional Development Schools, *School-University Partnerships* and *PDS Partners*. ♦

**The PDS has potential to do more than reform the relationship between schools and universities; it has the ability to renew those relationships.**



## Nine Essentials Symposium Members

David Allsopp, PhD	University of South Florida
John-Neal Atkins, Jr., MA/MS	West Chester Area School District
William Blakeney, MA	Dreher High School
Pixita del Prado Hill, EdD	SUNY Buffalo
Linda Catelli, PhD	City University of New York
Janna Dresden, PhD	George Mason University
Sara Elburn, MS	Salisbury University
JoAnne Ferrara, PhD	Manhattanville College
Eva Garin, PhD	Bowie State University
Diane Gomez, PhD	Manhattanville College
Robin Hands, EdD	Sacred Heart University
Sari Harris, PhD	Ball State University
Roger Hatcher, MA	Columbus State University
Angela Hooser, PhD	University of South Florida
Nena Houston, MA	John Brown University
Jana Hunzicker, PhD	Bradley University
Eunsook Hyun, PhD	Florida Gulf Coast University
Woodland Johnson, MA	Hillsborough County Public Schools
Marcy Keifer Kennedy, MA	Ohio University
Barbara Korn, PhD	West Virginia State University
Margaret Krause, PhD	University of South Florida
Jessica Leeman, MA	University of South Florida
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Mary Madden, PhD	University of Maryland Eastern Shore
Martha Mobley, PhD	Kean University
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Dawn Nowlin, MA	Prince George's County Public Schools
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Rich Waters, PhD	Rahway High School
Debby Whatley, MA	Columbus State University
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