

# PDS Partners

The Official Magazine of the National Association for Professional Development Schools

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## A Message From the President

*Alison Rutter, East Stroudsburg University*

This has certainly been a year of hope and change, particularly within NAPDS. With our five year anniversary approaching, the Executive Council and Board of Directors met last summer to review our vision and begin a long term strategic planning process for the organization.

We are also conducting our three year in-depth review of the by-laws.

We are excited by the direction and changes that will help our continued growth as an organization. We will continue to work on them at our January meeting and into next year when Donna Culan, Howard County PDS, takes on the role of President and I move on to being the Past President. It has been personally rewarding to be President for two years, but we are looking forward to the promise of strong leadership from the P-12 representation.

Much change has continued to occur within our leadership in this past year. As you all know, we conducted a search last winter for a new senior editorial team for the journal with Dr. Roger Brindley (University of South Florida) successfully handing over the reins of School-University Partnerships to Dr. Eva and Dr. Pam Campbell (Clark County School District/UN-LV PDS). While Roger's final issue has just arrived, highlighting the first annual NAPDS Awards for Exemplary PDS, we are looking eagerly forward to the spring issue to see what Pam and Eva have in store for us. Two of our Committee Chairs will also be changing. Dr. Van Dempsey (Fairmount State), our Government Relations Committee chair, has stepped down due to additional new responsibilities he accepted at his university. We wish him the best and are comforted in knowing that we have yet another friend of PDS in a senior administrative position. Dr. Paul Chaplin (University of South Carolina), our Membership Committee Chair, will be leaving this position as he was just elected to the NAPDS Board of Directors. Paul, with his knowledge of NAPDS and his strong clinical background in P-12, will help to strengthen the association. While we are pleased that Paul will be moving over to the Board, we are saddened that Lyn Krenz, first grade teacher in the Bethlehem Area School District, PA and the P-12 Board member, decided this fall to step down from her leadership role in NAPDS. She has been an active voice for P-12 members for the past four years and will be very much missed. We are in the process of trying to determine an appropriate P-12 replacement for this position and hope to announce one soon. On the other hand, we are very pleased with the hope and continuity of leadership that Dr. Bernard Badiali (Penn State University) will bring to us in his newly elected role as President Elect.

Of all the changes we have experienced, the most significant will be that of Dr. Elliott Lessen, one of our founders, finishing up his term as Past President. I would like to take this opportunity to thank and recognize him for all of his work on behalf of the association and his personal assistance in mentoring me. Elliott has reminded me on a number of occasions that the leadership roles in NAPDS are voluntary—something we all do on top of our day jobs. Sometimes I doubted that he really had a "day" job, given the work he put into NAPDS. With a fledgling organization there are always visionaries and those charged with carrying out the vision. Elliott has had the vision and found the time to push us forward. Along with Bruce Field and Roger Brindley, Elliott has been the driving force behind the Nine Essentials—organizing the Leadership Summit, drafting their final wording, and institutionalizing them through the Exemplary Award process. As the first chair of the NAPDS Exemplary Award committee, Elliott has helped to establish the evaluation and review process. He also chaired the first NAPDS Leadership Forum two summers ago and stepped in to serve as President and Past President for extra terms when we had unforeseen vacancies. I hope that Elliott will continue to be an active presence. Please join me in thanking him for all that he has already done for us.

Our new year begins with the PDS National Conference in Orlando in March. With it comes much more hope and the changes that help to make us a stronger organization. I hope to see you all there.



# Turning School-based Concerns into Research through Collaborative Leadership in a Professional Development School

*Sharon Castle, George Mason University*

*Linda Smith, Randolph Elementary School*

One of the purposes of professional development schools (PDS) is to promote school-based inquiry that supports the additional purposes of student learning, teacher preparation, and professional development (NCATE, 2001). When our PDS began eight years ago, our primary focus was on teacher preparation, and we did not have a clear idea of what the other three foci would look like. Since then we have come to a clearer understanding of what joint responsibility for school-based inquiry means and how it serves as a vehicle for integrating the PDS purposes (Castle & Smith, 2005).

Collaborative partnerships such as professional development schools have been forwarded as a way of improving teaching and learning for over 20 years (Holmes, 1986; Levine, 1992). The NCATE PDS Standards (NCATE, 2001) define PDSs as having four integrated purposes: teacher preparation, student learning, professional development, and inquiry-based practice. Teacher preparation is often the initial focus of PDS partnerships with the other three purposes lagging behind or coming into fruition later.

Collaboration is at the heart of PDS work and receives considerable attention in the literature (Goodlad, 1995; Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 1994; Teitel, 1998). PDS partners hold a strong belief that only by working collaboratively within and across the school and university can they realize their joint purposes of improving student achievement, engaging in on-going professional development, preparing future teachers, and supporting research and inquiry (NCATE, 2001). However, faculty involved in PDS work quickly discover that the realization of PDS purposes is challenging (Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Teitel, 1998). In practice, higher education faculty and K-12 practitioners find all too often that time is hard to obtain. This leads to frustration when partners try to develop sustained professional conversations (Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Teitel, 1998). Consequently, school and university partners are presented with the immediate challenge of finding ways to support sustained collaboration that addresses the PDS purposes.

Some direction for PDS partnerships can be found in the staff development literature. Effective staff development is embedded in the needs of the school in order to nurture on-going learning and school improvement (Fullan, 1991, 1993; Joyce & Showers, 1995). This implies a paradigm in which staff development is no longer regarded as a "menu" that is offered during sporadic times, but rather a sophisticated, organic process (Fullan, 1991). This paradigm requires new structures to support collaboration (Fullan, Rolheiser-Bennett & Bennett, 1989; Pounder, 1998) so that partners can begin to work together to pursue the "shared vision of professional teaching as knowledge-based, collegial, and inquiry-oriented" (Levine & Trachtman, 1997, p. 5).

The same might be said of PDS research. It must be embedded in the needs and culture of the school and grow out of sustained professional conversations that are supported by collaborative structures. However, the education literature includes little that describes how the inquiry-based practice aspect of PDS work gets implemented (Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Teitel, 1998). This article describes how that process developed in our PDS.

We did not set out to find something to research; rather the research grew out of our concerns and discussions. When the partnership was initiated, we developed a school-based Leadership Team that included the university facilitator, site facilitator, principal, a clinical faculty representative, an intern representative, a central office representative, and our business partner, a Kindergarten lunch buddy from Educational Research Service (ERS). The Team met regularly to discuss concerns, issues, changes, plans, and policies. Initially, as is common in beginning PDSs, the focus was on implementation of the teacher preparation program. Over time, discussions became less programmatic and more focused on facilitating the growth of our interns, which led to greater reflection on and discussion of teaching and learning issues in the clinical faculty members' classrooms and to a greater focus on school-wide teaching and learning issues.

At several points in a Leadership Team meeting, our business partner from ERS said, "You could research that." As a result, during our third year, we began conducting research-based inquiry projects. We added a Research Coordinator to the Leadership Team and involved teachers within the school. A common

question became, “Should we/could we research that?” The school and university partners designed and conducted the inquiries collaboratively. The primary purpose was to inform our work at the school, but we also contributed to the larger education community in some instances by presenting at local, state, and national conferences (e.g., Castle & Smith, 2003a, 2003b, 2006). Inquiry studies focused on the impact of curriculum changes on student learning, mathematics testing policies, teacher and student questioning, and the impact of various aspects of the school’s International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) on students and teachers. Figures 1 and 2 show the developmental phases of two of the studies from concerns, to research, to changes with collaboration indicated at each phase.

Figure 1: Jamestown Study

| Concerns   | Research  | Changes  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Concerns</b><br/>Low SOL Scores in Social Studies<br/>Desire to teach content and big ideas</p> <p><b>Effectiveness of changes in teaching Jamestown unit</b><br/>Sources<br/>Principal<br/>3rd grade team that taught Jamestown</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b><br/>Principal brought SOL concern to intern seminar<br/>Interns analyzed SOL results and made Recommendations to PDS Leadership Team<br/>At Leadership Team, business/research partner suggested study and design</p> | <p><b>Question</b><br/>To what extent do the new teaching strategies improve student learning of content and big ideas?</p> <p><b>Design</b><br/>Interview with students 1 year after Jamestown unit<br/>Interview 1 group that had old teaching methods and that had revised teaching methods<br/>Interview for content retention and big idea understanding</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b><br/>University facilitator and GA collected student data and interviewed teachers<br/>University facilitator and site facilitator analyzed data and wrote report<br/>3rd and 4th grade teachers were interviewed and facilitated interviews</p> | <p><b>Results</b><br/>Improvements in content knowledge and big ideas</p> <p><b>Changes</b><br/>Confirmed changes in teaching methods<br/>Decision to continue new methods</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b><br/>3rd grade team reviewed results and made decisions along with university facilitator and site facilitator<br/>University and site facilitator presented study at state and national conferences</p> |

Figure 2: Teacher and Student Questioning Study

| Concerns  | Research   | Changes   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Concerns</b><br/>Need for more student centered teaching and learning<br/>Desire to teach content and enduring understandings using an inquiry approach<br/>Effectiveness of the questioning models in place</p> <p><b>Sources</b><br/>School based IB Coordinator<br/>Central office - school system focus on Understanding By Design (UbD)<br/>BO requirements for PYP schools</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b><br/>Coordinator brought concern to Principal and University Facilitator<br/>Research Team established for GMU PDS Inquiry Project (Site Facilitator, school-based Research Coordinator, and University Facilitator)<br/>Research Team brainstormed study at inquiry workshop<br/>Principal approved study as a Professional Development Plan</p> | <p><b>Question</b><br/>How does the modeling of effective teacher questioning using higher order thinking impact the development of student questioning skills?</p> <p><b>Design</b><br/>Teacher and student questions were documented in writing by participating teachers (K, 3, 5 grades) fall, winter, spring.<br/>Teacher and student questions were analyzed using PYP Criteria for higher order questioning and UbD Facets of Understanding<br/>Results were shared with participants<br/>Fall, Winter and Spring to inform instructional practice</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b><br/>K, 3rd and 5th grade teachers participated in documenting questions<br/>Site Facilitator and Research Coordinator collected data, interviewed teacher participants<br/>Site Facilitator and Research Coordinator analyzed data and wrote report.<br/>GMU PDS Research team provided training and guidance during the process through workshops and feedback sessions</p> | <p><b>Results</b><br/>Growth in teacher and student questioning skills<br/>Increased teacher awareness of questioning practices across grade levels<br/>Improvement in higher order questioning for both students and teachers across grade levels<br/>Increased student-centered teaching focused on the facilitation of inquiry</p> <p><b>Changes</b><br/>Confirmed changes in teaching/questioning practices<br/>Documentation of changes made on IB/PYP Unit Planners<br/>Focus on moving to higher and higher levels of questions</p> <p><b>Collaboration</b><br/>Site Facilitator and Research Coordinator presented results to administration and school faculty<br/>School Based PYP Vertical Team reviewed results<br/>Site Facilitator and Research Coordinator presented findings with the GMU PDS Research Team<br/>Colleagues at national Conference</p> |

In reflecting back, we see that these studies: a) emerged from professional conversations among the leadership of our PDS; b) were related to issues of teaching and learning in the school; c) were conducted collaboratively; d) integrated professional development, student learning, teacher preparation, and inquiry; and e) impacted policy and practice. It occurs to us that we might have missed opportunities by not noticing researchable concerns as such when we discussed them. We also realize that we do not need to research every concern that arises. We learned to look for “researchable moments,” make careful choices regarding where to put our research energies, ground our research in the life of the school, and align it with the PDS purposes.

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## Write a “Portrait” of Your PDS Partnership

*Board of Directors and Executive Committee of NAPDS*

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

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

These richly detailed depictions of the relevance of the essentials to an individual partnership’s efforts will be considered for publication in PDS Partners (the official magazine of NAPDS), in School-University Partnerships (the official, peer-reviewed journal of NAPDS), and/or highlighted with special sessions at the PDS national conference or other NAPDS-sponsored leadership events. “Portraits” of 1,000 words or less addressing a single essential may be submitted to PDS Partners (at [pdspartners@gmu.edu](mailto:pdspartners@gmu.edu)).

# Teaching and Learning 21st Century Skills within the Context of Urban Professional Development High Schools

R.D. Nordgren, Cleveland State University

## Introduction

Much is made of 21st Century Skills in the media (e.g., Thomas Friedman's NY Times articles and his books *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* and *The World is Flat*) and in scholarly work (see Reich, 2000). Educators are told that these skills should be taught and learned by our students by the time they reach the workforce if they are to be successful in the global economy. These skills, however, are just as crucial for citizenship in a participatory democracy (Goodlad, 2008). In this article, I report on an action research project I conducted with my graduate students, all of whom were interning at urban professional development high schools in the Cleveland area.

This action research was inspired by a funded project involving 10 Cleveland-area high schools and my university, Cleveland State (CSU). Teachers from the high schools were matched with a professor at CSU who was not in the College of Education and Human Services (CEHS): secondary science teachers collaborated with a physics professor, mathematics teachers with a math professor, social studies teachers with a history professor, and language arts teachers with an English

professor. A CEHS colleague and I were charged with helping to facilitate the project and write the report.

Each high school was to develop a unit plan incorporating at least one of the 21st Century Skill sets espoused by Ken Kay (Partnership for 21st Century Schools) who presented these to the participants in one of the four times they were convened by CSU. The sets included the following items:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Communication and Collaboration

The university professor was to advise the high school teachers as well as develop her/his own unit of instruction for a freshman or sophomore college course. In addition to 21st Century Skills, the assessments for each unit were to reach high cognitive and application levels as described by Willard Daggett in his Rigor-Relevance scholarship, known as "Quadrant D"; Quadrants A, B, and C include either low cognitive or low application levels, or both (International Center for Educational Leadership). The unit

plans were written, implemented at their respective schools, and presented at a conference broadcast across Ohio by the local PBS station. The results were true to both Kay's and Daggett's work: they were engaging and demonstrated students' ability to think at high levels and apply their knowledge in real world situations. Two of the high school teachers were graduates of my program, Master of Urban Secondary Teaching (MUST), and they both told me that these lessons were very similar to what the program required of them during their internship. I agreed—they closely followed the format and expectations established by MUST.

## MUST and General Methods Unit Plans

MUST has professional development school partnerships with five Cleveland-area schools, two of which were involved in the project mentioned above. Students or "interns" have a two-semester internship, and the first semester requires them to implement a two-week unit plan that they write in a general teaching methods course that I teach. The guide and grading rubric for these unit plans follow best practice in that they

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## School-University Partnerships Submission

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Manuscript Submission  
Guidelines  
can be found at  
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## Our PDS-Based Literacy Course is a Great Way to Celebrate the Work We Do!

*Julie Rosenthal and Marie Donnantuono, William Paterson University  
Mary Lebron, Christina Flynn, and Denise Fitzpatrick, William B. Cruise Memorial School*

William B. Cruise Memorial School in Passaic, N.J. and William Paterson University in Wayne, N.J. are currently celebrating ten years of a mutually beneficial partnership. The partnership, originally supported by a federal Teacher Quality Enhancement grant, began in 1999. A major focus was and continues to be literacy. In 2001, the university started to offer a single section of their undergraduate literacy course on-site at the school; at that time, candidates had the option of taking the course on site or on campus.

Beginning in 2006, all sections of the course were brought to the field, and currently seven sections per year are taught at School #11. The first few class sessions meet on campus to build background in literacy development and introduce assessment and instructional methods. Teacher candidates are then brought into a primary classroom each week for three hours, where they work directly with beginning readers on literacy tasks. The session begins during the latter part of the school day and continues for one hour after school ends. Each candidate teaches a whole class lesson; after school, teacher candidates work with individual at-risk readers. Co-instructors provide feedback and model teaching. Finally, candidates and instructors come together for a reflective conversation about instruction, children's progress, and how their experiences relate to theory.

This project embraces the spirit

of the PDS as a collaborative learning community. This contextualized teacher education course, embedded as it is in several classrooms in a partner school, appears to support the learning of students, candidates, and faculty.

To examine the impact on children, participants were matched on beginning-of-year DIBELS scores with non-participating children from classrooms with similar profiles. A comparison of participants' and non-participants' mid- and end-of year DIBELS scores revealed that children who received tutoring through the course outperformed their matched controls. Further, children seem to benefit emotionally from the individual attention they received from a caring adult who was there "just for them": Teachers shared that the students eagerly anticipated tutoring sessions and showed increased motivation to read and write which spilled over into the school day.

Candidates grew in their understanding of how assessment informs instruction, and they gained procedural knowledge by using and then reflecting on "best practices" literacy instruction. At the beginning and end of the course, an "attitude and knowledge" survey was administered. Responses revealed that most candidates, prior to engaging with children during the course, had strong ideas about how reading should be taught. Many replied with a variation of "...you must first teach the basics..." Following the course,

all candidates mentioned the need to assess students before making instructional decisions. Many also appeared to have developed an "inquiring practitioner" stance by reflecting on the results of their instruction and planning for subsequent tutoring sessions based on their interpretation of students' behavior.

Instructors grew professionally by co-teaching the course. University faculty benefitted by spending more time in schools. It is critical that university faculty stay informed about current school and student needs. Cooperating teachers, several of whom are graduates of the university's teacher education program, were empowered by co-teaching and being involved in all aspects of teacher education in this course. By modeling "best practices" instruction for teacher candidates and by assessing future teachers and giving ongoing feedback on candidates' instruction, school faculty have the opportunity to reexamine their own extensive knowledge bases.

In sum, this PDS-based undergraduate literacy course, which began as an option for interested candidates, has grown into a required field experience which benefits students, candidates, and faculty. Students benefit academically and emotionally, candidates learn best when learning is contextualized, and faculty recommit to lifelong learning.

# Teaching and Learning 21st Century Skills within the Context of Urban Professional Development High Schools

(Continued from page 5)

require interns to engage their students in meaningful learning which is relevant to their lives. They must also show that they are establishing an environment of intellectual curiosity through inquiry. After my experience with the aforementioned 21st Century Skills project, I decided that they also needed to include at least one set of these skills in their objectives and at least one assessment would be at a high-cognitive level knowledge, applied in a real world situation (a real-world unpredictable situation would be the ultimate goal).

## Findings

What I found was that language arts, social studies, and visual arts interns easily and willingly focused their unit plans around the learning of 21st Century Skills and assessed them at high cognitive and application levels. Science and mathematics teachers (we only had six in a cohort of 35) did not include any of the four sets of Skills nor did they competently assess in Quadrant D. When this was discovered, I administered a questionnaire to the MUST interns (N=15) asking which Skills were the most difficult or easiest to implement, most important to learn,

and what helped or hindered their implementation (e.g., content area, mentor) and why they believed their answers to be so. What was found from these questionnaires was that language arts, visual arts, and social studies interns found implementing the skills quite easy, almost natural. Science and mathematics interns did not even respond to the questionnaire.

An interesting theme coming from what might hinder the teaching and learning of 21st Century Skills was resistance. Most of the interns mentioned some sort of resistance from students and mentors to teach these Skills and assess them at high cognitive and application levels. Students, according to several interns, were “spoon fed” information in their present classes as well as, apparently, in their previous schooling experiences. Some interns mentioned that their mentors supported this type of low-level learning; this “Pedagogy of Poverty” (Haberman, 2005) was discussed at length in their MUST courses. A fourth set of Skills mentioned by Kay (self monitoring and self directedness), although not included in this research, implies that students who passively learn content will be unsuccessful in the global

economy (Reich, 2000), and will be disengaged citizens (Goodlad, 2008). One of the pillars of the MUST program is “resistance, resilience, and persistence” which forces interns to fight against a system that promotes low-level learning that prepares students for “systematically routinized” jobs (Ritzer, 2004) instead of those that are held in high esteem and yield high rewards in our Post-industrial society.

## Conclusions

If the findings of this small action research study can be generalized in any way (and much scholarly work would imply that they can—for instance, Giroux, 2003) then it is crucial that teacher preparation programs and colleges of education work closely with professional development schools to promote 21st Century Skills and high levels of assessment. The findings from this study were presented and discussed at the National Professional Development Schools conference in March 2009; those in attendance suggested that I present these findings to our five PDSs, allowing them to examine the possible implications to their practice.

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# Using Year-Long Pilot Programs to Create New PDSs that Benefit All Stakeholders

*Michael N. Cosenza, California Lutheran University*

The cultures of a university and K-12 schools are quite different. Rapport, communication and trust are paramount between the partners when building a PDS partnership. The development of a collaborative culture is essential for a PDS partnership to be successful (Holmes Group, 2007). Many PDS partnerships begin by first developing and signing a contract or memo of understanding (MOU). Once the parameters of the partnership are put into writing, the stakeholders attempt to live up to its expectations. This too often occurs before the partners have developed a collaborative relationship.

California Lutheran University (CLU) entered such a partnership in 2002. A five-year MOU was drafted and signed prior to beginning the relationship. This seemed very logical and appropriate at the time and was even the recommended course of action in the guidelines for PDSs published by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2001). A few years into the agreement, the partnership became fraught with disappointments. A PDS is intended to be an institution where university faculty, student teachers, veteran teachers, and young students are all engaged in learning, studying and researching together as a collaborative professional learning community (Teitel, 2003). This was not taking place in this relationship and each partner had difficulty living up to some of the terms of the MOU. The discontent was experienced by stakeholders from both the school and the university. Though the exact issues are no longer important, it was very evident that the two partners committed themselves to a five-year agreement without fully understanding each others' roles and without fully developing a

collaborative culture among all the stakeholders. After a five-year relationship, the partners decided it was in the best interest of the stakeholders to allow the MOU to expire and the partnership was dissolved.

Despite what occurred, the CLU School of Education was very committed to the PDS model. The lessons learned from the former partnership were the basis for going forward with a new PDS partnership in the form of a year-long pilot. The idea was to encourage a new partner to work with the university for a year without any formal commitments. This pilot would allow time for the development of a strong relationship before either party made a long-term commitment by signing a MOU. The Flory Academy of Science and Technology in Moorpark, California had been hosting a few of the university's teacher candidates for a few years. This K-5 school in suburban Los Angeles had many characteristics that made it an attractive PDS partner. The school was demographically diverse, their test scores had been steadily increasing over a five-year period, and the teaching staff was very collaborative in both planning and using data to inform instruction.

The principal was approached by the university and a series of meetings took place to discuss the possibility of a PDS partnership. Groups from both the school and university visited other PDSs in Southern California and attended the National PDS conference in Las Vegas, NV to become better informed about the PDS model and its benefits. After five months of collaboration, a presentation was made to the entire faculty of the school. The teachers were asked vote to approve a one-year

pilot program. The vote from the staff was favorable and the pilot program began.

The first task was to form a steering committee that would oversee the pilot during the course of the year. This committee was made up twenty people including K-5 faculty, district administrators, teacher union representatives, university faculty and university administration. The job of the steering committee was to collaborate throughout the year to develop rapport between the university and school while ensuring that all activities involving the partnership were communicated to all of the stakeholders. Through a web-based virtual office, all steering committee work was posted for all to see. This kept everyone informed as decisions were made and also allowed stakeholders not on the committee to provide comments or recommendations.

The university began to teach three methods courses on the campus of the school. Ten teacher candidates were assigned to cooperating teachers to begin a 15-week field experience. Several teachers from the school began to collaborate with professors from the university to create meaningful experiences so that teacher candidates could make immediate connections between theory and practice.

As the steering committee met each month, discussions took place to evaluate the pilot program and suggestions were continually made to improve what was taking place. As a result of these meetings additional programs were implemented that met needs that existed for both the university and the school. One example was the creation of a new undergraduate internship program. This program

utilizes undergraduate students of the university to provide targeted assistance to the K-5 students of the school. Undergraduate students can work up to 20 hours per week helping teachers during the school day or in after-school programs. The young K-5 students benefit from additional assistance while the university's undergraduate students earn elective college credit for working at the school site. Another supplementary program that developed was having actual PDS classroom teachers serve as the supervisors of teacher candidates. By having the university provide funds for release time, several classroom teachers were trained to supervise three teacher candidates each semester. This added program gives these teachers an opportunity to develop new leadership capacity while the university gains expert supervision for its candidates from actual practitioners.

All this took place over the course

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of one school year without a contract or MOU in place. This permitted the partners to first develop the rapport and trust necessary to ensure a viable collaborative relationship. The year-long pilot made certain the partnership was meeting the needs of all involved and allowed each partner to explore what should be included in an MOU. At the end of the pilot year, an MOU was drafted by the steering committee that made sense for both parties. The MOU and its supporting documents were written to include all of the activities, programs and expectations that were collaboratively designed during the pilot. This commitment could have never taken place if a contract was written first. Instead, through a year-long pilot the partners embarked on a journey to create a quality PDS.

As a result of the success of the pilot, the decision was made to formalize the PDS partnership

by signing the MOU. There is no expiration date on the MOU. The intention is that the MOU can be amended to continually meet the needs of the partners. Each party has the option of ending the relationship with 90 days notice if for some reason the partnership was no longer viable.

CLU was so pleased with the success of creating an elementary PDS partnership in this manner that it began a second pilot in September 2008 with a secondary school. By following the same steps as described above, a year-long pilot is currently underway with Los Cerritos Middle School in Thousand Oaks, California. CLU is confident that this second pilot will also be successful and that this strategy could benefit other universities and schools seeking to build PDS relationships.

## Teacher Concerns in the PDS Partnership Change Process

*Sarah McMahan, Texas Woman's University*  
*Diana Bernshausen, Kennedy Middle School*

When forming school-university partnerships, the process of creating new frameworks is no different than any other purposeful change. Any time human beings are asked to change from their comfort zone to a new paradigm, they must feel they are respected as key players in the process of change. In order to feel ownership of the change, all involved must first understand the purpose of the change, the intended outcomes of the change, and the procedures necessary to work through the change (Cunningham & Bernshausen, 2001).

Resiliency is generally defined

as the capacity to spring back and adapt in the face of adversity (Henderson & Milstein, 2003; Sagor, 1996; Wang, Haertel, & Wahlberg, 1994; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990). When in the stage of self-concern, resiliency allows the issue to be dealt with quickly so that the anxious parties move out of self-concern quickly.

The recognition of individual concerns is primary to the change process when developing successful school-university partnerships. Fuller (1969) identified a consistent pattern in concerns expressed by individuals as they move

from inexperience to experience in the profession of teaching. Although over four decades old, Fuller's developmental model of teacher concerns is true not only in teacher development but also in many situations in which change is involved. Fuller's model of concern proposes the following three phases through which a person might pass: 1) concern about self, 2) concern about tasks, and 3) concern about impact on others.

Self-concern focuses on personal concerns about how specific items  
*(Continued on page 11)*

# Professional Development Schools and Social Justice: Studies of School-University Partnerships Committed to the Highest Ideals of Equity

*Kristien Zenkov, George Mason University*

In the past decade the “Nine Essentials of Professional Development Schools” of the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) and the Professional Development School (PDS) standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) have described how teachers and teacher educators should focus on social justice issues through their PDS partnerships. A number of PDS constituents—university- and school-based educators—are currently attempting to document their efforts to study these equity ideals within their settings. Approximately 30 teams of PDS partners from around the United States and Canada will be sharing their partnerships’ activities that are oriented towards social justice notions at the 2010 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

These “boundary-spanning” PDS educators and scholars are currently engaged in a broad range of research and activities focused on promoting social justice in school, university, and community contexts. A team of West Virginia PDS educators is concentrating on diversity and

equity “standards”; they will report on emerging qualitative indicators that shed light on the challenges associated with preparing teachers for urban schools in their southern US context. Connecticut PDS partners are preparing pre-service teachers to address the largest achievement gap in the nation; at this AERA presentation they will share the results of a twenty-year partnership that concentrates on improved achievement amongst diverse youth.

A team of Virginia PDS educators will also report on practices in a new PDS in an ex-urban district that has seen an exponential increase in students whose first language is not English. School- and university-based PDS partners from Ohio will share their efforts to provide authentic professional development for its constituents, with a concentration on implementing teacher research into mentor teachers’, pre-service teachers’, and university faculty members’ practices. A team from Maryland will describe their examinations of the role that action research and inquiry groups play in promoting equity and social justice in their PDS network.

A major emphasis of these

social justice-oriented efforts is to consider culturally relevant practices. As a part of this AERA presentation a group of Texas PDS partners will discuss a social action project for teacher candidates to test their abilities to educate applying a problem-based approach; impacts of this project on the math achievement of Latino/a youth will be shared. A Maryland PDS program has made efforts to integrate culturally relevant pedagogy that situate teaching and learning in the diverse, lived experiences of students.

Today’s PDS partners can promote K-12 students’ academic achievement, help teachers to remain in the teaching profession, and improve the conditions of students’ lives and communities. Few definitions of teacher quality consider the goals the presenters consider most important: the activist-oriented qualities that teachers, teacher educators, and education researchers working in increasingly diverse contexts must possess. The presenters involved with this session are also united by their long-term efforts in PDS partnerships and the belief that PDS structures are the most effective for addressing and researching these concerns.

## “Editors’ Corner”

*Kristien Zenkov, George Mason University*

*James Harmon, Euclid High School/MUST Program PDS Partnership*

*Athene Bell, Manassas City School District*

When we first took on this opportunity three years ago, PDS Partners was a mere newsletter. It’s grown into a source of pride for NAPDS as its official magazine. As we continue to share the great stories of PDS partnership, the organization, and indeed, the movement, has grown. PDS Partners continues to reflect this trend and is actively seeking to put theory into practice: we’d like your critical insights as to how we can improve and grow this forum. The magazine is published three times a year and gives those who practice the PDS model more opportunities to publish and share their fine PDS work and best practices. But we continually ask the question of ourselves and the organization: “What more?” What more can we do to make this publication a valued part of the NAPDS? What information can we share that is currently lacking? Whose voice needs to be included that isn’t already? What features should we make a part of the magazine? Is the magazine structured in a user-friendly way? We value your input and we look forward to hearing how this magazine can better serve you. Send your comments and suggestions to Kristien at [kzenkov@gmu.edu](mailto:kzenkov@gmu.edu), to Jim at [jharmon@euclid.k12.oh.us](mailto:jharmon@euclid.k12.oh.us), or to Athene at [abell@mail.manassas.k12.va.us](mailto:abell@mail.manassas.k12.va.us).

# Teacher Concerns in the PDS Partnership Change Process

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are going to affect the individual self or group. Individuals ask questions such as “What role do I get to play in this consortium?” and “How is this partnership going to affect my students?”. Task concern focuses on the task at hand. Examples of task concern-oriented questions included “Where is class going to be taught?”, “How many pre-service teachers will be at each PDS site?”, and “What are specific responsibilities of each pre-service teacher?”. Impact concerns shift the focus to students in schools. People addressing these concerns ask question like “What impact is the partnership going to have on [student] lives?”, “How is this partnership going to improve/affect students’ state test scores?” and “How is it going to affect at the university level better prepared teacher candidates?”.

As schools and universities collaborate to create a PDS partnership, this model of change related to teacher concerns is an important piece of the puzzle. As individuals enter collaborative partnerships, lack of experience or lack of trust gives little basis for typical initial concerns that relate to the partnerships. Instead, their concerns focus on issues of a personal nature such as the following items/: 1) Will they like

me? 2) Will I like them? 3) Can I work with them or them with me? 4) Can I get them to listen to my needs for this collaboration?

As individuals gain trust and experience in the ways of collaborating, the concerns about “self” become less personal in nature since the focus begins moving toward fitting into the scheme of things. As the individual transitions into concerns about the task, which focus on the work of the collaborative such questions include “Who will be responsible for mentor training?”, “Where will classes be taught?” and “Who will teach the classes?”.

Only after experiences with the tasks outlined by the partnership can there be a move to concerns about the impact of the partnership on students in the classrooms. It is important to note that the three levels of concern can blend smoothly and that movement among these levels can go both up and down depending upon the situation at the time (Fuller, 1969). What is more important is knowing that if self-focused concerns are not recognized and resolved early in the partnership, collaboration will not occur. Members must be at least at the task level to ensure successful collaboration.

Individuals and groups move through these stages of concern as defined by Fuller (1969). Everyone begins as self-concerned and when self-concern goes unrecognized there is no movement to task or impact; therefore, when dialoguing with school district representatives the first question becomes “What is your role in this partnership?”. Listening to teachers’ responses allows for the self-concerns to be discussed and addressed.

A major goal of school-university partnerships must be the initial recognition of individual concerns and the focus on resiliency prior to embarking on the tasks at hand. It must be recognized that best practice cannot occur until elements are identified that will have positive, neutral, and negative impact on both concerns and resiliency. Neutral elements must be carefully analyzed to determine the value of their continuation. Negative elements must be removed and replaced by enhancement of those elements that have positive impact. Identifying and resolving these issues and building resiliency in the partnership will lead to practices that will both promote and sustain a healthy school-university partnership.

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