

**Cultivating, Connecting, and Capitalizing on our Merged Spaces:
Voices from a PDS**

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Abstract: While the foundation and principles of Professional Development School (PDS) partnerships have been present for decades, the relationships, connections, and results derived from these partnerships are ever evolving. This paper examines one University-PDS partnership that was developed as an alternative to the traditional teacher preparation model. The merged spaces of this University-PDS collaboration empower teacher candidates to develop skills in teacher leadership, advancing access and equity and responsiveness to critical needs, along with foundational competence in collaboration, innovation, and reflective practice. The voices of the teacher candidates and PDS personnel echo the sentiment that the seeds they have planted, and continue to cultivate, will allow the stakeholders of the partnership to capitalize on the skills and talents of all involved and reflect on what was, is, and, most importantly, what could be.

KEYWORDS: equity, agents of change, complex-wide PDS, partnership, teacher leader

NAPDS NINE ESSENTIALS ADDRESSED:

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

9. Dedicated and shared resources and formal rewards and recognition structures.

Introduction

In union there is strength.

–Aesop

The preceding quote defines the partnership between the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) and Waipahu High School (WHS), which began informally in 2010. In 2014, the Superintendent of the Hawaii Department of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Master of Education in Teaching (MEdT) Program, formalizing the work all of the Professional Development School (PDS) stakeholders had been doing, the relationships that had been developed, and the merged spaces that had been cultivated and maintained. In this paper, we present a University-PDS partnership that was developed as an alternative to the traditional teacher preparation model. The merged spaces of this University-PDS collaboration empower teacher candidates to develop skills in teacher leadership, advance access, equity and responsiveness to critical needs, along with building foundational competence in collaboration, innovation, and reflective practice.

When posed with the question, “What is a PDS?” we reflected upon this shared history between WHS and the MEdT Program with respect to the Nine NAPDS Essentials (NAPDS, 2016). We determined the factors that came into play as we first cultivated the partnership, worked to connect all of the various stakeholders, and finally capitalized on the strengths that emerged as all the players worked in union. In the paragraphs that follow, we will demonstrate how foundational proficiencies have been married with progressive competencies to produce a portrait of a PDS that honors tradition while consistently evolving and improving.

Context of the University-PDS Partnership

The University

The University of Hawaii at Manoa is a land, sea, and space grant university dedicated not only to academic and research excellence but also to serving the local, national, and international communities that surround it. The University’s hallmark is a culture of community engagement that extends far beyond the classroom to bridge theory and practice, fostering creative and critical thinking, and promoting students’ intellectual growth and success as contributing members of society (University of Hawaii at Manoa Strategic Plan, Draft, 2011-2015). Toward this end, the UHM’s College of Education (COE) seeks to develop knowledgeable, effective, and caring educators.

The Program

As part of UHM’s COE, the MEdT Program follows the COE’s mission of preparing educators who, through their sense of purpose and sense of place, contribute to a just, diverse, and democratic society. This is particularly evident in the MEdT Program’s four guiding principles of (a) Integrating Theory and Practice; (b) Inquiry Based Learning; (c) Collaboration;

and (d) Reflection. These principles, when combined with the PDS' foci, formed the basis for a collaborative partnership where the University, PDS, and community work together to improve student learning by (a) researching the problems of educational practice; (b) collaboratively supervising pre-service teachers; (c) connecting educational theory to practice; (d) implementing and modeling innovative practices; and (e) sharing available resources for the benefit of all parties.

The MEdT Program is one of the most successful teacher preparation programs in UHM's COE. Founded in 1991, the MEdT Program has over 750 graduates who have excelled not only in the classroom, as three State Teacher of the Year winners indicate, but in other areas such as school administration in positions ranging from Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education to local leadership positions including deputy superintendent, principals, and assistant principals of various schools. The success of this program is due in part to the idea that we work collaboratively with a PDS partner to define mutually beneficial goals and assign personnel from both sides to work with teacher candidates. The blurring of the traditional roles of school and university personnel allows the goals of the partnership to be realized and achieved.

The PDS Partner

Waipahu High School's student-centered motto is "My Voice, My Choice, My Future." This focus not only helps WHS prepare students for success in the 21st century by engaging them in learning opportunities that promote academic, physical, and emotional growth, but also made them an excellent choice to partner with. In the classroom, students experience rigorous and relevant coursework and develop relationships with teachers, mentors, and their peers in Smaller Learning Communities and Career Academy Pathways. Teachers design standards-based lessons/units which include a variety of effective instructional approaches and strategies for all learners, emphasizing literacy and math and encouraging innovation using the Design Thinking (DT) process. To measure the success of the school initiatives, data teams inform instruction by analyzing student achievement data. Students can also receive support and enrichment via an array of comprehensive support services that include a school mentor program, student learning time, a positive behavior support system, co-curricular clubs/organizations, student government/class leadership opportunities, and athletics. Dual high school and college credits can be earned through the Waipahu High School Early College (WEC) program. College readiness and academic success nights, organized for parents and students, prepare grade 9-12 students for college and careers (SSIR report, 2015).

What is a PDS?

As Levine (2006) mentioned, 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). In the following sections, we will demonstrate how this bridge has allowed us to develop, what Sharon Robinson, president and CEO of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), described 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).

Below we describe how each of the nine essentials of a PDS are woven throughout the UHM-WHS partnership.

PDS Essential #1: Advancing Equity

The purpose of life is to contribute in some way to making things better.

- Robert F. Kennedy

To create change, one must act. Simply talking about things like advancing equity in one’s classroom, school, and community will not get the job done. The importance of choosing to make a contribution is emphasized in both the quote above and the PDS partnership. The WHS – UHM – MEdT (Waipahu High School-University of Hawaii at Manoa-Master of Education in Teaching Program) PDS mission focuses on action and is far broader in both outreach and scope than the mission of either partner; it is focused altruistically on the greater good of all community stakeholders, with special attention toward advancing equity (NAPDS Essential #1). To achieve this end, the MEdT faculty began the relationship by asking WHS’s teachers and administrators a simple question: “What can we do for you?” This modest inquiry opened the door to previously unavailable learning opportunities that were designed to build community among all PDS stakeholders and advance equity for all of the PDS students.

One example of how a new learning opportunity was created arose from a discussion between stakeholders about a common problem - teacher candidates (TCs) who would benefit from additional fieldwork prior to entering student teaching. A specific matter that came to light was the TCs’ need to be able to address the issues of equity and access in their classrooms. The MEdT and WHS personnel discussed the situation and came up with a novel idea - the TCs would enroll in a University summer course designed to support them while they taught summer school at the PDS. This simultaneous experience of taking a University class, combined with teaching a condensed, fast-paced curriculum with support from mentors, was designed to incorporate the needs of all stakeholders while at the same time focusing on equity and access. Each stakeholder group benefitted in this arrangement: secondary students (taught by qualified, dedicated TCs), the PDS (filled summer school positions with qualified, enthusiastic instructors), the University (TCs developed a summer school curriculum for the PDS and TCs were able to participate in an invaluable field experience), and the TCs (gained more teaching experience and increased confidence).

The summer school experience was formatted in such a way that TCs were paired up as co-teachers, supported by PDS and University staff, and as the teachers of record, were responsible for everything from setting up the classroom, to developing a management system, to planning and executing lessons. This work was paired with University course assignments that consisted of weekly reflections, peer-to-peer advising, and culminating in curricular development in the form of a course compendium. Most importantly, the TCs were provided with authentic and hands-on experiences dealing with equity and access, which, at times called for decisive action or adjustment to curricular decisions. Being faced with these situations and having the opportunities to put what they had learned about equity into practice was a valuable piece of the summer experience. The success of the summer school venture was important to document, as it

was an innovative win-win-win solution developed for and by members of the partnership. The highly favorable results were confirmed in reflections and surveys as 100% of the teacher candidate participants cited the experience as being valuable and one that they would definitely recommend for future teacher candidates in our program.

A second example of how the PDS mission is broader in scope than that of either partner is evidenced in how the PDS views the TCs. That is, the PDS views the TCs as continuing assets who will be vital contributors to the long-term vision for the PDS stakeholders and community. The PDS is currently expanding their already successful Waipahu Early College Program (WEC) for their students as part of their commitment to equitable access to college for each and every student. The TCs, who have received professional development from the University, community organizations, and the PDS on issues including equity, are being groomed to take positions not only as teachers in the PDS, but as instructors for the WEC classes as well as other potential higher education classes. The TCs' ongoing professional development gives them the knowledge of what equity and access mean in practice, the ability to recognize when either or both are absent, and the tools to create a safe, supportive classroom for their students, making for a seamless transition into teaching in the WEC. Thus, the educational benefits of the TCs can be leveraged by the PDS to benefit multiple stakeholders within and among those in the school community.

These educational benefits are transferred into the TCs' classrooms, when they are hired, specifically targeting the equity of the students at the partner school. When a TC says, "The MEdT Program was definitely effective in contributing to the understanding of equity," we know that what we have done has shaped their understanding of equity in education. Further evidence of this was mentioned by the quote's author, TC Bruce (pseudonym), who elaborated,

Reflection was a key in my education in the MEdT Program and I've used that to help students evaluate themselves, their peers and their teachers. This reflection, in addition to adding a level of accountability for everyone, gives the students a feeling of justice because their voice is directly involved in the progression of their education.

This partnership focused on advancing equity via collaboration among PDS stakeholders including TCs, classroom teachers, administrators and University faculty. This resulted in the creation of new learning opportunities and viewing the TCs as assets to the long-term vision of the school and the community, providing TCs with a means to contribute and make things better. Such an idea is aligned with Pantic & Florian's (2015) view that teacher education programs should serve as places to highlight issues of equity through the promotion of social justice and teachers as agents of change. In the next section we explore how the TCs served as agents of change.

PDS Essential #2: Agents of Change

I have one life and one chance to make it count for something... My faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference.

- Jimmy Carter

Fostering a school-university culture of active engagement in the PDS community and making a difference are tenets that are laid down from the first day of the MEdT's cohort orientation (NAPDS Essential 2). Being an active participant and agent of change is not a choice but an expectation of being a member of the PDS stakeholder team in both the PDS and University settings. Instead of beginning with a handbook or guidelines for the program, we began with a philosophical discussion about the call to teaching and how the variety within the cohort allows for strength. While each candidate's call to teaching might differ, they were all called upon to embrace the idea of being actively involved in their classroom, school, and community and were expected to act upon it, in their own way, as agents of change.

The design of the MEdT Program, as a two-year program where the TCs are together in a cohort for the entire length of the program, made the call to action much easier to put into motion. Since all TCs were located at one school, we developed a "critical mass" of candidates, which allowed TCs to increase their hours of fieldwork, and immediately become contributing members of the school and greater community. The contributions the TCs made were immediate, but all contributions were part of a bigger picture and an ongoing process. The foundation of everything we do began with developing and nurturing the relationships between stakeholders which started with carefully designed learning experiences that helped TCs understand the socio-cultural, historical, and political nature of their relationships within the school community, the University setting, and with their peers.

We began by attempting to build a free and open communication structure by asking our PDS partners for input that included their needs. This initial dialogue became a signature component of the relationship and a piece that was sustained through continual conversation, frequent check-ins, and with the understanding that the process would be an ongoing commitment. To be clear, however, this needs-inventory approach was always considered a journey and not a destination. The results of the needs assessment included after school tutors, a volunteer base for working in athletic study halls, Advanced Placement apprentices, and assistant coaches for athletics, to name a few.

Through these conversations and check-ins, we were able to determine where our TCs' skills would be best put to use, helping to lay the groundwork for their journey to becoming agents of change. An additional benefit was that our TCs were immediately welcomed as contributing members of the PDS community and received opportunities not normally associated with a traditional "school placement." The PDS administration treated our TCs like faculty members, holding them to the same high standards, expecting good work ethic, professionalism, collegiality and ethical behavior. We started the cohort by having a two-day in-depth on-site orientation that included information about all school-wide policies, initiatives, and strategies led by PDS administration, faculty, and students. This foundation allowed the TCs to begin their practicum with a clear understanding about the PDS and the fundamental attitude of growth and change.

The primary benefit of the intensive orientation at the beginning of the cohort was that our TCs immediately felt like members of the community and not "guests" of the school. Clearly, this reciprocal relationship was important to the school, as evidenced by the various administrators (e.g. principal, assistant principals, athletic director) taking time out of their day to address the group, to the school issuing IDs to each candidate, and the inclusion of TCs immediately into action groups, house meetings, data teams, department meetings, focus groups, and the like.

The immediate welcoming and inclusion of our TCs into the school community provided them with a variety of benefits. The PDS' open door policy on campus encouraged all of the faculty and staff to embrace and mentor the TCs, not limiting their experience to one mentor teacher or even one department. Teacher Candidate Bruce said,

We were encouraged to observe and interview a number of teachers, both in and outside of our discipline, that created a broad spectrum of professional approaches to teaching and also created a portfolio of strategies to use that directly addresses equity from a multitude of angles.

This policy also allowed our TCs to interview and observe Special Education teachers, English Language Learner teachers, and a variety of different content area teachers. Teacher Candidates were also given free reign to help advise and work with clubs, organizations, and athletics with the understanding that these extracurricular commitments would not affect either their classroom teaching or University program requirements. These relationships provided our TCs with, among other things, the opportunity to (a) apply for paid tutoring positions; (b) take on leadership roles; (c) serve as Senior Project judges; (d) plan and execute a school-wide community fair; (e) enroll in a Substitute Teaching course tailored to the TCs' schedule and needs; and (f) teach summer school and simultaneously take a University class designed to incorporate the PDS' (summer school teaching) and University's (curriculum development and field experience) needs.

The reciprocal nature of the PDS relationship allowed our TCs to (a) fill open positions on campus as emergency hires, long-term substitutes and in contracted teacher positions; (b) tutor students after school in a variety of areas, including but not limited to, SAT/ACT prep, core subjects, a Summer Bridge program for freshmen, college bound students with deficient SAT scores, athletes on academic probation, and Advanced Placement students; and (c) make community contributions such as working together as a team to collaborate, innovate, and execute a large school/community project which met Hawaii's Department of Education's General Learner Outcomes.

While the in-program experiences shaped the TCs into teachers who would always be grounded in active community engagement, the promise of TCs continuing with this philosophy was an essential component as well. Teacher Candidate Diana said,

One of the last assignments I was given in my pre-service [preparation] asked me to reflect on where I'd like to be professionally in ten years. This assignment was given to our class shortly after we watched the documentary *American Teacher*, a film that offered a sobering look at the tough realities facing teachers today. The documentary was a solemn note on which to end our time together as a class, but the film and its accompanying homework assignment left us with important questions to answer: "Are we willing to weather these real challenges, and stick with this profession for the long haul? Without sugarcoating the realities of teaching, what would *we*, personally, do to rectify the inequities in our profession?" Implicit in the writing prompt was the assumption that, ten years from now, we *would* still be teachers, we *would* be advocates, and we *would* be agents of change.

This “larger than me,” globally-driven, equity and access focused framework that TCs were asked to consider as part of their teaching philosophy was one that resonated with many TCs as they completed the program. Teacher Candidate Reed said,

I think that being an agent of change is realizing that there is more that you can do in a classroom with your students to change the flawed society that produces this kind of poverty. And people can argue that you'll never get rid of poverty, inequality, corruption, or whatever. Not with that attitude. Guess who can help change an attitude?

This attitude of working to become a contributing member of the school community had the TCs involved in a variety of ways including: (a) taking what was learned in a place-based ethnomathematics professional development, bringing it back to the classroom, and sharing it with the greater school community; (b) integrating culture, place, and action by helping the students create an *imu* (traditional Hawaiian underground oven); and (c) participating in a variety of extracurricular activities like the drum line, speech & debate, coaching, etc. Our TCs' commitment to make a difference wherever, whenever, and by doing whatever they could for the school community was the foundation of everything they did. In the following section, we look at how not only the TCs sought out opportunities and responded to the needs of the school, but more importantly, how all of the stakeholders of the partnership discovered, defined, formulated, and executed plans to satisfy each other's needs in mutually beneficial ways.

PDS Essential #3: Needs-based Responsiveness

No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence. - *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The sentiments in the preceding quote are what allowed us to focus on providing needs-based, ongoing, and reciprocal professional development (PD) for all members of our PDS community (PDS Essential 3). During the past year, our TCs and the PDS have shared multiple resources including (a) offering PD opportunities for TCs and PDS personnel in a variety of areas including the use of technology (e.g., SmartBoards, apps, etc.); (b) including TCs in the PDS' ongoing new teacher mentoring sessions; and (c) sharing of content and pedagogical resources.

University courses also contributed to this need-based focus by (a) creating the summer elective course where TCs taught or co-taught courses that provided the partner school with the ability to staff and offer more selections of summer courses for their students; (b) giving TCs additional opportunities for field experience prior to student teaching through real-world experience with support and the opportunity to develop curricula; (c) making the TCs' capstone project focus on topics and issues relevant to the classroom, valuable to the context of the school, and something that would be of benefit to the school and associated stakeholders; and (d) hosting a statewide Job Fair where TCs volunteered as manpower and were able to experience the event as observers, have opportunities to talk with administrators, and engage in community service to the greater educational community.

The conversations that occurred between the MEdT program and the PDS staff allowed for the needs-based inventory to be updated and assessed on a continuous basis. Having TCs fulfill these needs was a way to sustain their involvement in the school and community and continue their preparation in areas normally outside a program's reach, while providing critical manpower and/or skills to the PDS. Teacher Candidate Bruce said,

One assignment stands out above all else and that is the Safety Fair. The Safety Fair is put on every year by WHS and the first semester of our time in the MEdT program, our cohort was responsible for taking over the responsibilities in preparing for the fair. It was really challenging. We were given free reign over the fair, which really exposed our inadequacies as student-teachers in a lot of ways. The project was a fantastic realization that teaching is more than just the 20' by 20' learning sanctuary that we provide for ourselves and our students. Teaching involves professional collaboration with other teachers, administration, and the entire community.

Other examples of responses to specific needs on the part of the school, University, or the community include (a) mathematics professional development for the school math department led by University faculty; (b) end-of-course exam for TCs led by district personnel; and (c) substitute teacher preparation and certification for TCs and other community members on site.

The work from all members of the partnership was significant in that it was based on the needs of the school community. The University was able to meet needs by aligning course work with school goals and providing professional development opportunities. In turn, this allowed our TCs to give back to the community by planning and facilitating a school event. By paying attention to the needs of all involved, the partnership was able to come up with innovative ideas that addressed multiple stakeholder needs. The concept of innovation and reflection will be explored in more depth in the next section.

PDS Essential #4: Innovation and Reflection

The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination.

- Albert Einstein

One of the most powerful illustrations of how innovative and reflective practice can transform a school and community (PDS Essential 4) can be seen by our TCs every time that they look at the PDS principal. By thinking outside of the box, focusing on success through innovation, having the courage to act on one's ideas and convictions, honoring the vision he has for the school and by defying odds too numerous to list here, the leader of WHS has steered the school and the community out of the shadows and into the forefront of education in Hawaii, to the point where, when the US Secretary of Education came to visit the state of Hawaii, WHS was one of the first schools on his agenda.

One example of this commitment to innovative practices is WHS's adoption of the Design Thinking (DT) framework (Rowe, 1987). According to the PDS' School Improvement Resource Teacher (SIRT), Linda,

Design Thinking has helped educators and students at Waipahu High School develop a "can do" mindset, encouraging all contributors to think outside of the box to innovate for solutions that benefit both the user/customer and his/her community. By learning and implementing DT the PDS teachers and students have learned to welcome any challenge because they believe that solutions are possible.

Our team of University and PDS personnel show commitment to innovative and reflective practices by collaborating on research and projects that later become presentations for conferences and papers for publication. In the past year, members of our PDS team have presented at and have had papers published in international, national, and local conferences and journals.

We believe that the best way for TCs to learn is by doing. The PDS and University enhance student learning by (a) committing to honor a mutually beneficial relationship and make it the priority for all stakeholders; (b) having TCs serve as willing volunteers in a variety of roles; (c) documenting and publicizing the PDS teachers' best practices, which may have formerly been unrecognized or underappreciated; (d) honoring outstanding programs at the school, to enhance what is already in place, and to help fill any remaining gaps; (e) having TCs serve as a means of gathering new ideas and strategies; and (f) having TCs fill substitute teaching jobs, emergency hire positions, and become part of a high-quality pool of applicants familiar with the school and its culture to hire for openings. As TC Diana describes,

My goal as a teacher is to help my students develop certain habits of mind -- I want them to become curious, questioning and creative truth-seekers. To that end, I think teachers need to model those qualities, too. Within our pre-service [preparation], my classmates and I were constantly engaged in inquiry-based, project-based, collaborative and discussion oriented learning. We were expected to embody the same probing, experimental, passionate attitude in our teaching that we hoped to nurture in our students. ...So, one essential question I've developed recently is: "how does one foster a school culture of critically thoughtful, self-reflective teaching that is open to experimentation?" Qualities like metacognition and inquiry, both of which were emphasized in my pre-service [preparation], are what I think will ultimately lead to more enriching educational experiences for students and teachers alike.

Another view comes from TC Hank, who found reflection to be an important part of the program. Hank was able to take his skills in reflection and find ways to blend them with the sometimes frenetic pace of teaching and to create a plan for next year.

I know that one of my flaws (or strengths) is in the art of rumination. My mind is most active, when I am doing nothing. Unfortunately, doing nothing doesn't bode well for educational practitioners, and the time that I would have liked to devote to meticulous and scrupulous upfront research and planning had to be put aside to give way for impromptu executions and last-minute turns of the tide. Teachers simply cannot rely entirely on proactive and preventative measures, they must also be skilled in reactive or responsive measures as well. The latter, and I presume much more valuable and difficult to come by, grows with experience. A craft is best learned through apprenticeship, first-

hand practice and experience. My plan for next year is, well, to plan enough but not too much. My new mantra: As simple as possible, and as complex as necessary.

To reiterate Einstein's words, "the true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination." Whether it be by observing the innovative ideas of the PDS principal, adopting and implementing the Design Thinking framework, learning by doing, or reflecting on past actions, imagination can take many forms and is a key component for our TCs to use the knowledge that they have to benefit the school community. While the learning and the creation of knowledge is both a commendable and worthwhile endeavor, it is the dissemination or sharing of what one knows with others that truly helps to create a community of learners. The next section will describe how the PDS stakeholders, realizing that self-reflection and learning from one another are critical parts of creating a knowledge base, attempt to create opportunities to share their successes with others.

PDS Essential #5: Sharing Successes

To know, is to know that you know nothing. That is the true meaning of knowledge.

- *Socrates*

At first glance, the Socrates quote may seem a bit harsh, but in reality it is just succinctly stating the idea that self-reflection is a key component of not only knowing oneself, but also in coming to the realization that we as individuals cannot know everything and that, to be truly knowledgeable, we must acknowledge this fact, share what we know, and make use of the skills, talents and experiences of others. What we know about not only ourselves, but one another - especially when related to what we do in the classroom - is a critical piece of our PDS.

The best practices of any educator are rarely shared outside of a small group. In our PDS partnership, both PDS and University personnel believe that best practices should be open, accessible, and celebrated (PDS Essential 5). Toward this end, the MEdT Program has required each TC, as part of a class assignment, to interview a variety of teachers to determine their best practices. No one teacher can be interviewed more than once, and each TC must interview teachers in their content area, outside of their content area, in ELL, SPED, etc. This information is collected, organized and presented for the entire school community to access and view at any time. This assignment serves multiple purposes, including (a) TCs get to know a variety of teachers who they may not otherwise seek out; (b) all the best practices of teachers are recorded and available for all members of the school community to access and view; and (c) PDS teachers' work is shared with a greater audience and celebrated.

Additional sharing of these best practices takes place beyond the stakeholder community when the members of the PDS are fortunate enough to be able to attend local, national or international conferences to present about the University-PDS relationship or write papers such as this one for a wider audience. The COE also participates in the sharing of successes by compiling the results of the surveys given to the PDS stakeholders and sharing the information on its website.

With first-hand experience in sharing the PDS' success with others on local, national, and international levels, PDS SIRT Linda describes her experience as follows,

Presenting at national conferences provided the team with the opportunity to reflect upon and share successful practices, as well as provide implementation support to other interested schools. In the sharing process, the partnership also learned about practices other schools found success with that could be beneficial to our PDS. Meeting with other PDS educators helped to broaden our support network, gave us ideas for new research based practices to implement, and provided us with encouragement that our efforts were on the right track.

Sharing information with one another inside of the PDS, within the University setting, and on a national level has helped create the foundation of shared understanding between all stakeholders. Through reflecting and sharing our successes with others, we have learned what works in this partnership, but also realized that like Socrates instructed, there is still much to learn. While this sharing has been extremely beneficial for the PDS and University, other schools within the same complex as our PDS recognized the benefits that were being reaped by our partner school and wanted to find a way to also participate. The following section details the creation of a complex-wide articulation - something that had never been done before in the scale and scope that we were attempting.

PDS Essential #6: Complex-wide Articulation

Do I dare disturb the universe?

- *T.S. Eliot*

Is there a better way? The answer to this simple question can easily form the basis for great change. Previous COE relationships with partner schools followed a more traditional, hierarchical model of teacher education where the University provided TCs and the school provided placements where TCs could practice what they learned in their classes. Little, however, was done by either party to go beyond the completion of observation, participation, and student teaching hours and the knowledge that the school and community could provide to the TC was neglected (Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015). The relationship described in this paper was started with the vision that it did not need to follow the status quo and could and would become something different.

The current PDS arrangement started with two cohort coordinators from the MEdT Program and a few teachers and administrators from the PDS discussing and agreeing to what TCs would be doing in the course of their teacher education program. By the second year of the relationship, PDS stakeholders (School, DOE, Program, University, etc.) formalized an articulation agreement defining the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder (NAPDS Essential 6). In 2014, the agreement grew to include the entire school complex - from elementary to middle to high school, involving all of the school principals, the complex area superintendent, COE Dean, Associate Dean, various department chairs, and many faculty. The newest 2016 version will include a general agreement between all schools in the complex and the University, with addendums addressing each school's specific needs. There will be a governing committee and provisions for a more formalized structure since more people are involved - that is there will be multiple cohorts, multiple PDS sites, and many different administrators and faculty involved.

The initial vision for this complex-wide articulation started as a straightforward conversation reflecting on the benefits of working together towards mutually beneficial goals. Its creation did, in effect, “disturb the universe” because nothing like it had ever been done before in the scope and scale that we were attempting. One major component that will be essential to the success of this endeavor, described in the next section, is both self-reflective and metacognitive in nature but stems from the ability to be open with one another - typified by having open access and communication.

PDS Essential #7: Open Access and Dialogue

To know that we know what we know, and to know that we do not know what we do not know, that is true knowledge.

- Nicolaus Copernicus

In order to find out what we know, what we think we know, and what others know and think about us, it is essential to begin, expand and continue an open dialogue between all stakeholders (NAPDS Essential 7). The relationship between WHS and the MEdT Program has always been one of open access, where any stakeholder could simply pick up the phone or email another if questions or problems arose. The willingness and openness among all stakeholders to communicate with one another is the foundation of our relationship - and just as importantly, it must be something that can be initiated from either side, depending on the needs at the time.

The key, as it is in any successful partnership, is having open lines of communication. Both the University and PDS recognize the importance of this and have designated an individual from each partner to serve as a liaison so that there is always a go to person to contact when necessary.

The importance of open access and dialogue cannot be understated and is the foremost reason why the PDS created a liaison position to work directly with the University. PDS liaison Linda describes her role as follows

A PDS liaison is vital to the partnership. The PDS liaison's role is to help the TCs by working with administration and faculty members to provide opportunities for the TCs to learn about the school - its history, current educational practices, cultural practices, traditions, teachers, students, parents, and community. The PDS liaison works with the PDS partners to create the first day orientation experiences, organize community tours of the different feeder schools and neighborhoods to provide TCs with an understanding of student's backgrounds and home situations, and are always looking for opportunities/roles for the TCs to learn and be a part of the school.

Another example of the open access and dialogue in action includes the proactive rather than reactive communication necessary to deal with issues that may arise between a TC and/or mentor teacher (MT). If a situation like this occurs, the MT or school administrator would immediately notify the MEdT cohort coordinator about the issue with the candidate. A meeting would be held with all parties involved in order to clarify the situation and, based on the results of the meeting, appropriate actions would be taken.

As PDS liaison Linda eloquently describes, in order to capitalize on the connections we cultivate:

Open access and dialogue are key...By clearly communicating what our school needs help with, our PDS partner was able to work with the TCs to fill those needs. Both the school and the TCs benefited from the partnership.

Open access to each other and open dialogue at any time, allow stakeholders to share and use information to make the best possible decisions for all of the parties involved and allows us to know what we otherwise may not have known. Transparency is a key component in creating a trusting working relationship and information sharing creates the foundation for each stakeholder to work together for the common good. This collaboration among stakeholders is described in the next section.

PDS Essential #8: Stakeholder Collaboration

Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

- Henry Ford

The successful creation and cultivation of the PDS partnership were feats to be proud of, but the continued work in sustaining that success was what stakeholders could truly take pride in. The collaborative effort of all stakeholders was the crucial piece that allowed for steady growth and it is one of the foundational pillars of our PDS relationship.

While there are formal roles in both the PDS (principal, assistant principals, teachers, mentor teachers, etc.) and the University (Dean of College of Education, department chairs, instructional faculty, field supervisors, etc.) the relationships are fluid (NAPDS Essential 8). That is, each individual functions in the manner as delineated in their job description, but is also able to work in other capacities as required by the situation. For example, field supervisors often take on the role of mentor for the TCs when needed, and MTs often take on field supervisor responsibilities, as the situation requires it. This flexibility can be a blessing as described by TC Bruce.

I think the beauty of this program is its freedom to find your niche, your teaching style. There are immense amounts of guidance and mentoring along the way, but the candidates get out what they put in. We were given a lot of autonomy within the classroom to “figure things out.” We were encouraged to experiment with a variety of strategies, and we bounced practice and ideas off each other.

Another view, based on experiences in the UHM summer school class created to work in concert with the WHS summer school class she was teaching, comes from TC Sue.

I know that student teaching and my future teaching positions may not be structured in this exact same way [*with the need to collaborate with many different teachers and to plan things out on a quickly changing timeframe*] but I will have to be flexible. As a teacher, there are any number of things that are unpredictable....through it all, I need to

try to remain as calm and collected as possible and not lose sight of why I am there in the first place.

While there was a great deal of stakeholder collaboration in the creation and development of the merged University and PDS summer school program, there was an additional layer of collaboration that was required for a portion of the cohort. One TC, Jean, along with several other candidates, was selected to teach in a special program within the WHS summer school lineup, called Summer Bridge. Summer Bridge, designed to ease the transition for incoming freshmen, incorporated collaboration between the lead summer school teacher, an unseasoned TC serving as co-teacher, a team of veteran teachers who served as curriculum guides, and college-aged volunteer assistants. Collaboration with the intermediate and middle schools also took place, ensuring a smooth passage for the students. Jean recalled,

Working with another teacher, especially one who has more experience...caused a few changes to occur. In the middle of a lesson sometimes there would be a request or suggestion because of her experience...and I had to be ready to adjust on the spot....It made me think of a single school year and how fast a quarter will most likely go by.

The view of stakeholder collaboration looks very similar to those described by the TCs when seen from the PDS side of the relationship as described by SIRT Linda.

The TCs hired as Summer Bridge teachers were integral to the program's success. The TCs were responsible for designing and teaching math and literacy lessons, as well as taking the lead in facilitating DT career pathway projects for the students. The TCs had great ideas to share and were excited to implement the different teaching strategies learned in their University preparation courses. The veteran teachers learned new strategies from them as everyone collaborated to design different learning experiences for the students.

Our TCs learn early and often that collaboration is something that the MEdT Program not only encourages but requires. We believe, and emphasize to the TCs that, while they could work alone to complete any or all of their tasks, collaborating will allow them to leverage each individual's talents. The benefits of this collaboration are not just additive but rather, multiplicative or at times exponential and are a great example of the group being stronger than the individual. Toward this end, it is imperative that we share what we know with one another. This facet of our PDS is described in the next section.

PDS Essential #9: Sharing the Wealth

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.

- *Helen Keller*

While working together usually means the workload is lessened, the opposite is true of sharing the fruits of the labor. By sharing resources across both the PDS and University settings,

all stakeholders are able to make the formal rewards and recognition meaningful parts of an authentic partnership that shares both the work and the wealth (NAPDS Essential 9).

One of the most meaningful examples of sharing resources occurred on the very first day that the TCs met the members of the PDS. The relationship building began when members of the PDS, including the principal, the assistant principals, the athletic director, the MTs, and a variety of other stakeholders coordinated and hosted a two-day intensive session about the PDS and school culture. This served as an introduction for the TCs and allowed them to get a feel for the school, the community, and the students; along with helping the TCs become contributing members of the school community from day one.

A second example occurred when members of the PDS (school liaison and two TCs) accompanied members of the University (two faculty members) to a national conference to do a presentation covering the intricacies of the partnership. Two other TCs from the partnership accompanied a third instructor to a national conference to present about their experiences in the PDS and shared their experiences with the cohort. These relationships also formed the basis for additional articles and presentations.

A third example occurred when a TC shared his expertise with the PDS faculty by doing a PD session on how to integrate SmartBoard technology into the classroom. This session, based on a shared need by both the cohort TCs and the PDS faculty, was attended not only by these two groups, but also members of the school community.

Physical resources are also shared. An explicit example of this occurred when the TCs were given the opportunity to plan and execute a school-wide community event for the school and surrounding community. Over 2000 students, 180 faculty and many members of the surrounding community attended this event that brought together businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, members of the armed forces, and others. Another example of physical resource sharing occurred when the PDS or University needed a place to conduct meetings or classes – each partner willingly found the other a place to conduct the event.

One of the most joyous occasions the PDS partnership shared with all stakeholders was the end-of-program celebration, held on the PDS campus. After laboring over the course of two years, PDS faculty, TCs, community members, and University faculty came together to celebrate and commemorate the partnership and its results. This shared event that included a welcome by the PDS principal, slideshow, student performances, food, and fellowship allowed people who worked closely within the partnership as well as those who contributed in peripheral roles to see and hear from the TCs themselves. Program evaluation, while a continually ongoing process, was also a highlight of this event. The celebration set the tone for the evaluation, which encouraged all participants to openly assess the strengths and contribute solutions to improve any facet of the program.

This mindset, to celebrate the accomplishments of others and share the benefits with all stakeholders, influenced the TCs as demonstrated by what Sue did for her students.

Today was the last day of Summer Bridge and the other teachers and I decided to hold a mini-graduation ceremony for our students. We presented a slideshow with pictures that were taken throughout the five weeks that we were together and called up every student to receive a Summer Bridge diploma. As I watched the students come up to be recognized, I started to tear up because despite all of the challenges, I was proud of them. Following the ceremony, one student approached me and said, “Thank you for everything

Ms. Richards. I hope all of my high school teachers are like you!” With those words, I was reminded of why I wanted to become a teacher.

All stakeholders in the partnership have the goal of helping TCs become the best teachers that they can be. It is, however, the TC who must take in and internalize the shared philosophy of the University and the PDS. When this happens, it is clear that the TC has grown into someone who is an agent of change. TC Diana described her experience with a global perspective.

I think this actually connects back to the idea of a “poverty of gratitude” that Levy (Smoot, 2010) [talked] about. If we become so attached to our own entitlements, our own sense of material well-being, our own ego-attachments, we lose some very crucial human values that allow us to see the larger picture of what we’re doing here on earth, and what really has significance.

With big picture, introspective views like this, clearly, this would be a TC that any program would be proud of.

Another critical key in the cultivation of the University-PDS partnership is documentation of all that has been done, the challenges encountered, solutions discovered, and roads that lay ahead. The principal method of recording these data has been in the form of reflection. As one of the MEdT Program’s four guiding principles, reflection is a tool that we not only preach, but practice as well. Reflective pieces are gathered not only from TCs, but also University faculty, PDS stakeholders, and community constituents.

This documentation of progress within the PDS also allows various partners to assess the impact of the partnership on all collaborators and the students we serve. This assessment is based on the following areas: (a) student teaching/practicum evaluations; (b) mentor teacher surveys; (c) PDS hiring from within the cohort; (d) student surveys; (e) PDS faculty surveys; and (f) TC reflections.

One of the most formidable challenges of documenting and assessing PDS progress and impact has been trying to get all stakeholders together at the same time. While the data has been plentiful, the opportunities to meet and share what has been done have not been, because the constituents in this PDS, University and other stakeholders are busy doing the work that they have been called to do. However, because the team understands the importance of sharing what we do with one another, it has resolved to work diligently to create more opportunities in which all parties can come together for assessment, evaluation, and celebration.

Conclusion

During the initial stages of our partnership, we worked diligently to cultivate the relationships that were essential to developing the trust necessary to create effective working relationships. We then worked to connect all of the various stakeholders and to capitalize on their expertise and experiences to constantly evolve and improve what we were doing.

With the nine PDS Essentials in mind, the accomplishments and achievements of the PDS partnership that we are most proud of are demonstrated by the quality of the teacher candidates that come out of the MEdT Program. Over half of the TCs in Cohort A were hired prior to or during their student teaching semester. These individuals, guided by both the University and PDS personnel, were all hired after completing the University program by public, private, or charter schools in the state. This is the ideal result for the TCs in a successful University-PDS partnership. Cohort B saw an even better outcome with nearly three-quarters of the group being hired before or during student teaching. Most notable was the partner school's interest in hiring these candidates who were "homegrown" by being trained in the PDS. The deep belief in the candidates that the PDS staff had, was instrumental in developing TCs into knowledgeable, effective, and caring educators and illustrates the commitment to sustaining the partnership that cultivates, connects, and capitalizes on our merged spaces.

In its most basic form, this University-PDS partnership is a successful alternative to the traditional teacher preparation model. The collaboration between all stakeholders and the merged spaces of this University-PDS partnership empowered our teacher candidates to develop skills in teacher leadership, advancing access and equity and responsiveness to critical needs, along with foundational competence in collaboration, innovation, and reflective practice. The voices of the TCs and PDS personnel are evident in the examples documenting the contributions that have been made, which echo the sentiment that the seeds have been planted and will continue to grow. This collaboration has allowed all the stakeholders of the partnership to capitalize on the skills and talents of everyone involved and reflect on what was, is, and, most importantly, what could be.

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